



BUZZ POINTS

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TRUE POINT

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New Notices Issued to Former Telangana CM KCR as Phone-Tapping Probe Intensifies

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

The ongoing Telangana phone-tapping case has taken a significant turn as the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has reportedly issued notices to key political figures, including former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR). The notice calls upon KCR to appear for questioning in connection with allegations of unauthorized phone surveillance and related irregularities. The SIT is expected to conduct the questioning at an official location, highlighting the case's increasing prominence. This move marks a major escalation in the investigation, which began as a probe into alleged illegal tapping of mobile phones during the previous government's tenure. The case has already seen multiple senior leaders being questioned. In recent weeks, prominent BRS leaders, including Harish Rao and BRS Work-



ing President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), were summoned and questioned extensively by SIT officials. The issuance of a notice to KCR is seen as a significant development in the investigation and underscores the broadening scope of the SIT probe. Political analysts note that this step could potentially clarify alleged surveillance activities and the involvement of high-profile figures during the earlier administration. Authorities have not yet disclosed the specific nature of the questioning or the timeline for KCR's appearance. However, officials

stress that the investigation remains ongoing and that all procedures are being conducted according to legal norms. The move has already triggered political discussions, with parties expressing differing views on the implications of the SIT's actions. While the investigation continues, government sources have emphasized that it is part of a systematic inquiry into the allegations, rather than a politically motivated exercise. As the SIT schedules further hearings and interactions with KCR and other key figures, the case is

expected to dominate Telangana's political landscape in the coming weeks. Officials have assured that the investigation will proceed in a transparent and impartial manner to ensure that all facts are properly examined. The SIT is also coordinating with other agencies to monitor compliance and gather evidence, signaling the seriousness with which the authorities are treating the case. Political observers and the public are now closely watching the developments, anticipating further announcements on hearings and findings.

Revanth Reddy Interacts with Harvard Business School Students

Cambridge (USA), January 28 | TPN Bureau:

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy interacted with students of the Harvard Business School (HBS) during his visit to the Harvard University campus in Cambridge, following an invitation from a group of predominantly Indian students pursuing management studies at the globally renowned institution. Despite an extremely busy schedule filled with official engagements and academic interactions, the Chief Minister made time to visit the campus and engage with the students. The interaction reflected his emphasis on connecting with young professionals and encouraging global exposure combined with a commitment to India's growth. During the meeting, CM Revanth Reddy listened to the students as they shared their academic journeys, career aspirations, and the professional challenges

they face in a highly competitive global environment. He appreciated their dedication and encouraged them to view their international education as a tool to contribute meaningfully to society. Sharing insights from his own life and political journey, Revanth Reddy spoke about his mantra for success, highlighting the importance of discipline, perseverance, adaptability, and integrity. He underlined that leadership is built through consistent effort and a strong sense of responsibility toward people and institutions, rather than through positions or titles alone. The Chief Minister also elaborated on the vision of Telangana Rising, the state government's roadmap aimed at accelerating inclusive growth and sustainable development. He outlined Telangana's progress in key sectors such as information technology, startups, manufacturing, infrastructure, and innovation-led governance. Revanth Reddy noted that Hy-

derabad has emerged as one of India's leading global cities, offering vast opportunities for entrepreneurship, investment, and research. Urging the students to actively engage with India's development story, the Chief Minister encouraged them to leverage their global networks and professional expertise for the benefit of the country. He invited the HBS students to act as brand ambassadors for Hyderabad and Telangana by sharing the state's strengths, opportunities, and investor-friendly environment with international peers and institutions. The interaction concluded on a positive note, with students appreciating the Chief Minister's candid interaction and practical guidance. Several students expressed interest in contributing to Telangana's growth initiatives in the future, underscoring the value of such engagements between policymakers and the global Indian academic community.



KCR Responds to SIT in Phone Tapping Case

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

In the ongoing Telangana phone tapping case, former Chief Minister and BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) has responded firmly to the Special Investigation Team (SIT), offering full cooperation and suggesting that the inquiry include the Erravalli area as part of the probe. This marks a significant development after the SIT recently issued a notice to KCR seeking his appearance in connection with the case.

The SIT's notice asked KCR to make himself

available for questioning under Section 160 of the Criminal Procedure Code, giving him the option to be examined at a place of his convenience in Hyderabad due to his age. KCR's response indicates his willingness to engage with the investigation and provide any information that may be relevant to establishing facts, even as political controversy surrounds the case. Over the past week, the SIT has intensified its activities, summoning several senior figures from the BRS party. KTR, the party's working president, was questioned for nearly seven

hours during a detailed session on alleged misuse of police intelligence units. Former BRS minister T. Harish Rao and former MP Joginapally Santosh were also summoned and questioned in relation to the probe, which revolves around allegations that phones of political leaders, journalists, and others were illegally monitored during the previous BRS regime. Political reactions have been sharp and animated following the SIT's move. BRS leaders have condemned the notices to KCR and other senior colleagues, alleging that the

SIT's actions are politically motivated and aimed at diverting public attention ahead of municipal elections. Protests have been staged in various parts of Telangana, with party members asserting that targeting KCR is an insult to the state's self respect. However, figures from the ruling party have maintained that the investigation is being conducted in accordance with legal procedures, emphasizing the need to ascertain the facts and hold any responsible parties accountable, regardless of political affiliation. As the SIT prepares

for further hearings, KCR's decision to engage with the probe, including calling for investigations in areas like Erravalli, underscores the high stakes nature of the case. Authorities have indicated that they will continue expanding the inquiry as required, with more notices and examinations likely in the near future. With political tensions rising and several rounds of questioning already completed, the phone tapping investigation is expected to remain a focal point of public discourse in Telangana's political arena in the coming days.



Record Devotee Turnout at Medaram Jatra

TPN Bureau | January 29:

The Medaram Sannakka-Sarakka Jatra has witnessed unprecedented crowds this year, with nearly 80 lakh devotees offering their prayers since the festivities began. Telangana Minister for Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said on Friday. Speaking to the media in Medaram, the minister noted that officials estimate the number of devotees climbing the Sannakka hill could surpass one crore by the peak hours of the festival. Devotees from Telangana as well as neighbouring states, including Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Chhattisgarh, have thronged the pilgrimage site in large numbers. The government is continuously monitoring arrangements to ensure devotees do not face any inconvenience, Minister Reddy added. For the permanent development of Medaram, the government has already ac-

quired 29 acres of land, with an additional 41 acres in the process of acquisition. The plan covers around 70 acres in total, where permanent infrastructure such as cottages, function halls, more restrooms, and bathing facilities will be established to accommodate the growing number of devotees. Minister Reddy also highlighted the government's plan to build a Temple Circuit from Basar to Bhadrachalam at an estimated cost of 2,500 crore, aiming to enhance Medaram's significance among South India's pilgrimage centres. Medaram will be integrated into the development of prominent temples along the Godavari basin. Regarding water arrangements, the minister said efforts are underway to maintain year-round water flow in the Jumpanna Vagu. A pipeline project from Ramappa-Laknavaram to Jumpanna Vagu, announced by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with check dams, will ensure perma-



nent water storage for the area. A comprehensive master plan for Medaram has already been prepared, covering internal road development, eco-park creation, and expansion of tourist amenities. Minister Reddy urged devotees not to pay attention to misinformation circulating on social media, assuring that all arrangements are in place for their comfort and safety. Speaking at the event, State Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, and Women & Child Welfare Minister Danasari Anasuya (Seetakka) noted that 70-80 lakh devotees had already visited in just two

days, a record number. She praised the government and officials for completing infrastructure works in a very short time, including four-lane roads that have significantly eased access. Seetakka emphasized the need for permanent water systems, additional restrooms, and large-scale tree planting to address summer heat and ensure future preparedness. Minister Reddy requested devotees to patiently continue their darshan until Saturday evening at 4 PM, when the deities will return from the hill to the forest entrance.

Clean Air Is the Foundation of True Development: Bhatti

TPN Bureau | January 29:

Deputy Chief Minister Vikramarka Mallu on Wednesday asserted that true development is possible only when economic growth goes hand in hand with clean air and environmental protection. Addressing a conference on Air Quality Index (AQI) and Air Quality Management at the Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute (MCRHRD), he said the Telangana Government is adopting a scientific, target-driven, and people-centric approach to ensure a healthy environment across the State. Speaking as the Chief Guest at the conference organised by the State Planning Department, Bhatti Vikramarka said that under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the entire Cabinet is committed to providing clean air to the people of Hyderabad and Telangana. "Development and environmental protection are not

opposing goals. They must move forward together," he stressed. Highlighting Telangana's rapid growth, the Deputy CM said Hyderabad has emerged as a global hub for IT, life sciences, manufacturing, and innovation. While this progress is a matter of pride, it also places a responsibility on the government to manage environmental risks effectively. "Development without clean air is not progress; it is delayed damage," he warned. Bhatti Vikramarka underlined that air quality is not merely an environmental parameter but also a public health, productivity, and economic indicator. Citing global studies, including the 2024 State of Global Air Report, he said air pollution is now the second leading cause of death worldwide, accounting for over eight million premature deaths annually. A World Bank study, he added, estimates that air pollution causes more than four trillion dollars in losses to the global economy every year. Explaining the State's strategy, the Deputy CM

said Telangana has doubled its air quality monitoring network in 2024 by establishing 40 new monitoring stations across major towns, ensuring real-time and reliable data. He said the State Clean Air Action Plan formulated in 2025 is already under implementation, addressing pollution from vehicles, road dust, construction, industries, and open burning. He detailed initiatives such as promotion of clean mobility through electric vehicle subsidies, e-buses, metro expansion, charging infrastructure, and vehicle scrapping facilities. On the industrial front, continuous emissions monitoring systems have been linked to Pollution Control Board servers, while cleaner fuels and stricter enforcement are being encouraged. Under the Renewable Energy Policy, Telangana aims to achieve 20,000 MW of renewable capacity by 2030. Expressing concern over industries located in residential areas, particularly in places like Jeedimetla, Bhatti Vikramarka warned of serious safety and health



risks. He called for industrial restructuring, zoning reforms, and improved land-use planning. He also announced that a public Air Quality Dashboard would be launched soon and special response teams would be piloted to address pollution-related complaints swiftly. Concluding his address, the Deputy CM said clean air is a shared responsibility. "The government alone cannot achieve this. Citizens, industries, and institutions must work together," he said, urging people to adopt green practices. "Our legacy should be a modern Telangana with healthy citizens, not pollut-

Ponguleti Tours Medaram on Bike, Monitors Jathara Arrangements

Medaram, January 29 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy set a striking example of people-centric governance during his visit to Medaram, where the world-famous Sammakka-Saralamma Jathara is underway. Shunning protocol, convoy culture, and ceremonial grandeur, the Minister chose to personally mingle with devotees and assess ground-level arrangements to ensure a smooth and hassle-free pilgrimage.

From the early hours of Thursday, Minister Ponguleti surprised officials and devotees alike



by stepping directly into the field. Having closely monitored development works in Medaram over the past few days, he shifted focus to the welfare of the lakhs of devotees arriving for the sacred tribal festival. His objective, he said, was to personally witness the difficulties faced by pilgrims and ensure that necessary facilities were reaching them without delay.

After offering prayers along with his family to the presiding deities who reached the gaddelu on Wednesday night, the Minister began his day at dawn, moving around Medaram not as a digni-

tary but as a service-oriented volunteer. His approach reflected a deep commitment to public service and sensitivity toward the sentiments of devotees.

In a move that drew widespread attention, Minister Ponguleti opted to inspect the arrangements by riding a bike instead of using an official vehicle. Accompanied by Mulugu District Collector T.S. Diwakar, who sat pillion, the Minister personally rode through the narrow lanes of Medaram village. Breaking protocol barriers, he interacted freely with devotees and local residents, review-

ing facilities street by street.

At the Jampanna Vagu, a crucial transit point for pilgrims, the Minister stopped to closely examine the amenities being provided. He spoke directly to devotees, enquiring about drinking water, queue management, medical services, sanitation, and crowd regulation. Based on feedback received on the spot, he issued immediate instructions to officials to address shortcomings, reiterating that no devotee should face inconvenience during the Jathara. Adding a human touch to the visit, the Minister

paused at a roadside tea stall, shared tea with devotees, and engaged in informal conversations. He even exchanged light-hearted remarks with the tea vendor, creating a moment that resonated strongly with the public.

Fellow Minister Adhuri Laxman Kumar also accompanied him during parts of the inspection. The visit underscored Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy's commitment to accessible leadership, earning appreciation from devotees who welcomed the Minister's hands-on approach and simplicity at one of Telangana's most revered religious gatherings.

Ponnam Prabhakar Offers Prayers at Sammakka-Saralamma Temple

Karimnagar, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

State Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Wednesday visited the Sammakka-Saralamma temple at Shankarapatnam mandal headquarters in Manakondur Assembly constituency of Karimnagar district, where he offered special prayers seeking divine blessings for the welfare of the people and the progress of the State.

The Minister had a darshan of the revered tribal deities Sammakka and Saralamma and performed special pujas amid devotional fervour. As part of his vows, he presented niluvettu bangaram (gold equivalent to his body weight) to the presiding deities and fulfilled his prayers. The visit witnessed participation from local lead-

ers, temple authorities, and devotees, who welcomed the Minister with traditional rituals.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar extended warm greetings to the people on the occasion of the Sammakka-Saralamma Jathara. He said the blessings of the forest goddesses Sammakka and Saralamma are a source of strength and faith for lakhs of devotees across Telangana and neighbouring States. "With the divine blessings of the vanadevathas, I pray that everyone should live in good health, peace, and prosperity," he said. The Minister further prayed for timely and abundant rainfall in the State, which would ensure agricultural prosperity and good yields for farmers.



He expressed hope that Telangana would continue to progress with rich crops, economic stability, and social harmony, bringing happiness to every household. Minister Ponnam Prabhakar also sought divine blessings for the successful implementation of welfare schemes and devel-

opment programmes being undertaken by the people's government. He stated that the administration is committed to inclusive governance and welfare-driven development, particularly aimed at uplifting the poor and marginalised sections of society. "I prayed to the goddess

that all programmes being implemented for the welfare of the poor should continue uninterrupted and achieve resounding success," the Minister said, reiterating the government's resolve to work with dedication for the overall development of the State.

Medaram Maha Jathara Progresses Smoothly Under Constant Government Supervision



Medaram, January 29 | TPN Bureau

The world-renowned Medaram Maha Jathara, often described as Telangana's Kumbh Mela, is progressing smoothly with elaborate arrangements in place to ensure the safety, comfort, and convenience of lakhs of devotees. The Telangana government is closely and continuously monitoring the conduct of the Sammakka-Saralamma Jathara so that pilgrims do not face any inconvenience, said State Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy.

On Thursday morning, Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy conducted an extensive field inspection of the Jathara arrangements along with Mulugu District Collector T.S. Diwakar and senior officials. In a notable departure from conventional protocol, the Minister toured the Jathara area on a bike, personally reviewing facilities and interacting with officials on the ground.

During the inspection, the Minister examined the bathing arrangements for devotees at the Jampanna Vagu and assessed sanitation conditions in and around the area. He issued sev-

eral on-the-spot instructions to officials to further strengthen facilities, particularly in high-footfall zones, and emphasized the need for continuous vigilance given the massive turnout of devotees.

Addressing officials, Minister Ponguleti stressed that no devotee should face any hardship during the Maha Jathara. He stated that special arrangements have been made to reunite missing persons with their families, including the establishment of dedicated missing persons camps to handle such cases efficiently amid the large crowds.

The Minister highlighted that sanitation is being given top priority during the Jathara. He said the government has deployed extensive sanitation teams to ensure regular removal of waste and maintenance of cleanliness across the Jathara area. Cleanliness measures are being strictly implemented not only in Medaram but also across all sectors leading to the deity platforms and along the devotees' movement routes.

Special sanitation drives are underway near the sacred gaddelu (platforms) of Sammakka and Saralamma, where offerings such as jaggery and

other materials are made by devotees in large quantities. The Minister noted that sanitation staff are working continuously to clear offerings and waste at regular intervals to maintain hygiene and prevent congestion.

Emphasizing healthcare preparedness, Minister Ponguleti reiterated that adequate medical arrangements have been made to ensure timely treatment for devotees in need. Medical camps, emergency response teams, and ambulances have been positioned strategically to handle health emergencies promptly.

The Minister also directed officials to maintain constant coordination among all departments involved in Jathara management, including revenue, police, health, sanitation, and transport, to ensure seamless operations throughout the festival period.

District Collector T.S. Diwakar and other concerned officials accompanied the Minister during the inspection. The government's hands-on approach and continuous monitoring have been widely appreciated by devotees, who expressed satisfaction with the arrangements at one of the largest tribal religious congregations in the world.

Jaggareddy Calls for Strong Action Against Blackmail, Urges Protection of Women's Privacy



Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

Senior Congress leader Jaggareddy has expressed serious concern over the growing incidents of blackmail targeting women, stating that some miscreants are exploiting women's fears and emotional vulnerability for personal gain. He said such acts are not only criminal but also deeply damaging to the dignity and lives of women and their families.

Welcoming recent police initiatives aimed at supporting women, Jaggareddy said decisions such as registering FIRs at victims' doorsteps are progressive and reassuring. He described the recent statement by senior CID officer Charu Sinha as a "powerful weapon" for women and parents of girl children, as it sends a strong message that the police stand firmly with victims.

Jaggareddy pointed out that several offend-

ers are taking photographs with young women and later using them to blackmail families. He strongly urged the police not to disclose complaints given by women or their parents under any circumstances. "If such sensitive information is leaked, it destroys privacy and could even put lives at risk," he warned.

He stressed that police action must ensure that the victim does not face further trouble after be-

ing trapped by criminals. Leaders, officials, and the media must exercise restraint, he said, adding that publishing news related to personal relationships or private lives of individuals is unethical and dangerous.

Calling upon print, electronic, and social media platforms to act responsibly, Jaggareddy said privacy and personal choices should never be violated. "No one has the right to interfere in another person's private life," he asserted.

He noted that there are clear laws and judicial mechanisms to deal with blackmailers and psychological offenders. As a political leader, he said he would stand with the police in their fight against such crimes, even while acknowledging that policing and politics often intersect.

Referring to past incidents, Jaggareddy recalled that during the YSR regime, offenders

who harassed a woman were eliminated in an encounter, and a similar incident occurred during the BRS government. While stating that encounters cannot be constitutionally justified, he admitted that many people personally support such actions in extreme cases. "Sometimes, fear itself acts as a deterrent," he remarked.

He observed that mobile phones, meant for communication, are increasingly being misused for criminal activities. He reiterated that photographs of victims should never be released by police officials.

Praising Charu Sinha's approach once again, Jaggareddy urged the police to conduct secret operations against criminals but keep them out of the public eye. He concluded by saying that police action should increase confidence in victims while creating fear among those who even think of committing

Telangana Pushes Efficient Utilization of Central Agricultural Funds

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Agriculture Minister Tummala participated in a high-level video conference convened by the Union Agriculture Ministry with ministers from six states to review central agricultural schemes. Speaking on behalf of the Telangana government, Minister Tummala highlighted that the

state has effectively utilized the funds allocated under central schemes in the last financial year.

The minister informed the Union Minister that previous state governments had left central allocations unutilized over a decade, causing losses to farmers. However, under the guidance of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy,

Telangana ensured that the funds allocated for 2025-26, along with the state share, were fully deployed for the intended programs, demonstrating efficient fund management.

Minister Tummala further emphasized the state's initiatives to promote agricultural mechanization. Subsidized agricultural implements are being provid-

ed to farmers to improve efficiency and productivity. He added that an additional allocation of 200 crore on top of last year's funds would enable better implementation of flagship schemes such as the National Mission on Agricultural Mechanization, Per Drop More Crop, and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture.

During the conference, the Union Minister appreciated Telangana's efforts in promoting oil palm cultivation. The Minister also highlighted a long-standing request from southern states to increase the import duty on palm oil, noting that higher tariffs could help protect domestic prices. Currently, the low import duty has kept palm

oil prices suppressed, affecting farmers' profitability. By raising the duty, the price per quintal of palm oil could rise by approximately 25, significantly enhancing the economic benefits to cultivators.

Minister Tummala urged the Union Minister to continue advocating with the Prime Minister's office for a revision in the import

duty on palm oil to support farmers and strengthen the domestic oil palm sector. He stressed that such measures would not only benefit Telangana farmers but also contribute to the nation's agricultural self-reliance and rural development.

The conference reinforced the importance of coordinated action between the central and

state governments to maximize the impact of agricultural schemes, improve farmers' incomes, and address challenges in the sector. Telangana's proactive approach in fund utilization and policy advocacy was acknowledged as a model for other states seeking to achieve tangible results for farmers.

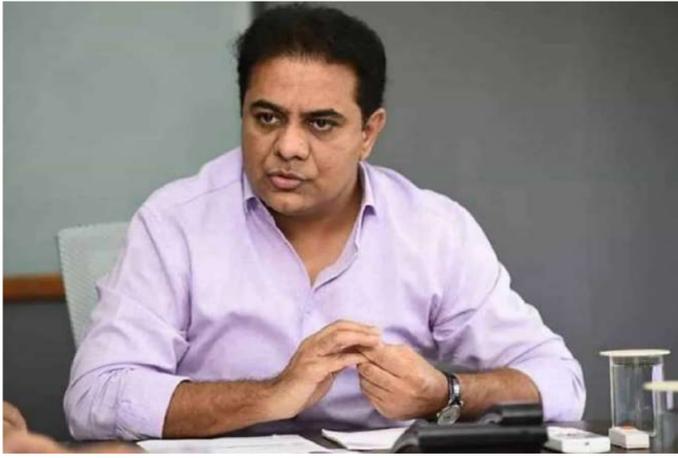
KTR Slams Congress Over SIT Notice to KCR

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

BRS Working President K. T. Rama Rao (KTR) has strongly criticised the Telangana Congress government following the issuance of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) notice to party president and former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) in the ongoing phone tapping case, calling it a "political vendetta" rather than a genuine investigation.

Reacting to the SIT's move on Thursday, KTR said the notice represents an attempt by the ruling party to divert public attention from its own governance failures and unmet promises. He described the action as driven by political malice and revenge, asserting that it is not rooted in legal necessity but in the ruling party's desire to cover up its shortcomings.

KTR emphasised KCR's legacy, saying he



is a leader who led the Telangana statehood movement with unwavering resolve and later guided the state's development for a decade. He highlighted KCR's role in ushering in major welfare and infrastructure initiatives, portraying him as a visionary who nurtured all sections of society and

worked tirelessly for the State's growth.

"Targeting a leader of KCR's stature with such notices is not justice—it is political malice," KTR said, adding that the Congress government, within its short tenure, has failed to deliver on its promises and is resorting to such tactics to distract people from real

issues. He stated that no investigation can erase KCR's contributions or diminish his place in the hearts of the people of Telangana.

KTR argued that the Congress government's strategy reflects insecurity and desperation. He warned that attempts to undermine the achievements and reputation of

KCR and the Telangana movement would not succeed, and that public sentiment would ultimately respond. He reaffirmed the BRS's commitment to standing by the people and continuing to challenge what he described as unjust actions by the government. The phone tapping case has already seen several senior BRS leaders, including KTR himself and former ministers, questioned by SIT teams. KTR's forte reactions now escalate the political discourse surrounding the notice to KCR, making the case a focal point in current Telangana politics. KTR's criticisms come amid rising tensions between the state government and opposition, with the phone tapping investigation increasingly being portrayed by the BRS as politically motivated rather than purely legal or procedural in nature.

Congress Using Phone Tapping Case as Political Diversion: Singireddy Niranjan Reddy

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

Former Minister and senior BRS leader Singireddy Niranjan Reddy has strongly condemned the issuance of notices to BRS supremo and former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao in the phone tapping case, terming it the "height of political madness" by the Congress government. In a statement released on Wednesday, Niranjan Reddy alleged that the Congress was resorting to diversionary politics to hide its failures in governance.

He said the people of Telangana were closely watching and recording every mistake committed by the Congress government. "Under the guise of questioning KCR as a witness, the Congress and a section of the media are deliberately portraying him as an accused. This is nothing but political vendetta," he alleged. The former minister stated that the conduct of the SIT, the Congress leadership, and a section of the media in the phone tapping investigation had become highly questionable.

Niranjan Reddy pointed out that for the past two years, BRS leaders have been subjected to harassment in the name of investigation. "They claimed to dig a mountain but have not even caught a mouse. There is no coherence between the investigation and the



publicity being generated around the case," he said. He accused the Congress government of misusing SIT probes to divert public attention from its complete failure in delivering development and welfare.

Highlighting the government's unfulfilled promises, the BRS leader said February was approaching, yet there was no mention of Rythu Bharosa assistance for farmers. He alleged that the government had given up on promises like one-tola gold for women and was delaying schemes like Kalyana Lakshmi to the extent that benefits were being pushed far beyond relevance. "They promised welfare, but instead erased existing schemes," he remarked.

Niranjan Reddy further alleged that farmers were suffering due to acute shortage of urea, with even women carrying in-

fants forced to stand in long queues. He said the Congress government had not even discussed increasing pensions and had completely scrapped popular schemes like KCR Kits and nutrition kits, which benefited mothers and children. Accusing Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy of neglecting governance, he said the CM was frequently abroad while administration was left in disarray. "After luring people with six guarantees, the Congress has pushed existing welfare schemes into the river," he alleged.

The former minister warned that the Congress would inevitably have to pay a heavy political price for its actions. "The people of Telangana will not tolerate political witch-hunts in the name of investigations. Congress sins will not go unpunished," Niranjan Reddy asserted.

BRS Condemns SIT Notices to KCR as Political Vendetta

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) on Thursday strongly condemned the issuance of Special Investigation Team (SIT) notices to former Chief Minister and party president K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) in connection with the alleged phone tapping case, terming the move a clear act of political vendetta by the Congress-led Telangana government.

Former minister and BRS Legislature Party Deputy Leader T. Harish Rao said targeting KCR was equivalent to attacking Telangana's self-respect. He described KCR as the "architect of Telangana" and a leader revered by crores of people for realising the dream of statehood and leading the State for a decade. Any attempt to malign such a historic leader, he said, was akin to "spitting at the sun."

Harish Rao alleged that the Congress government, led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, had failed in governance and was resorting to diversionary politics to cover up its shortcomings. He claimed that the SIT notices were issued to divert public attention from alleged irregulari-



ties such as the Singareni coal issue and to deflect growing public dissatisfaction against the government.

Stating that such political harassment was aimed at gaining mileage in the upcoming

municipal elections, Harish Rao said this reflected the Congress leadership's "political bankruptcy."

"Those who created history are KCR, while those trying to tarnish that history are historyless leaders,"

he remarked, warning that power and arrogance were never permanent.

Echoing similar views, BRS MLC Shambipur Raju also denounced the SIT notices, calling them a

vindictive act against the first Chief Minister of Telangana. He said KCR had devoted ten years of tireless service to the people and that issuing notices to him under the guise of investigation was nothing but political persecution.

Raju alleged that the Congress government was using investigative agencies as political tools to harass opposition leaders instead of addressing pressing public issues. He cautioned that the people of Telangana would never tolerate attempts to undermine the dignity and legacy of KCR under the pretext of the phone tapping case. Both leaders stressed that an SIT was expected to function impartially, but public perception suggested it was being misused for political ends. They asserted that the BRS would not be intimidated by such actions and would continue to fight for democratic values and the rights of the people under KCR's leadership. Reaffirming the party's resolve, the BRS leaders said that no amount of notices or pressure tactics could silence a leader who symbolises Telangana's self-respect, and warned that the people would deliver a fitting response at the appropriate time.

BRS MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra Condemns Notice to KCR

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

BRS Parliamentary Party Deputy Leader and Rajya Sabha member Vaddiraju Ravichandra has strongly condemned the issuance of a notice to Telangana's first Chief Minister and BRS leader, K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR), in connection with the ongoing phone tapping case. Describing the move as politically motivated, Ravichandra termed it a blatant attempt to target the popular leader and divert public attention from pressing governance issues.

In a statement released on Wednesday, the BRS leader said that the notice and investigation are part of a larger campaign to malign KCR, who, over a decade-long tenure, successfully led Telangana to significant development and socio-economic progress. He criticised the SIT (Special Investigation Team) process, asserting that the manner in which the inquiry is being conducted, alongside media narratives by certain sections, raises doubts about impartiality. Ravichandra compared the investigation to a television serial, highlighting how it appears more like a spectacle than a serious probe.

"The government has failed to address immediate issues facing the people. Instead, it is resorting to diversionary politics while entangled in corruption and scams," Ravichandra said, referring to the alleged lapses of the



Revanth Reddy-led Congress administration. He pointed out that the notice and investigation are part of a larger campaign to malign KCR, who, over a decade-long tenure, successfully led Telangana to significant development and socio-economic progress.

Ravichandra emphasised that targeting KCR, a leader admired by millions across the state, for a case with no direct connection to him, is deeply unjust. He accused the government of misusing state machinery to intimidate opposition leaders under the pretext of investigation.

Highlighting public sentiment, the BRS MP asserted that Telangana citizens fully support KCR and will respond appropriately to these political maneuvers at the right time. "No amount of notices or procedural harass-

ment can stop the BRS from continuing its fight for the welfare of the people and exposing governmental corruption and scams," Ravichandra said.

He warned that, irrespective of political diversions or conspiracies, the BRS movement would persist in holding the government accountable for misgovernance and ensuring that public interests are safeguarded. The party is committed to continuing its struggle in the public domain until all inquiries are completed and justice is served. Ravichandra concluded by asserting that political harassment of a popular leader like KCR will not deter the party, which remains resolute in protecting the state's autonomy, upholding public trust, and pursuing transparency and accountability in governance.

Balaraju Yadav Slams SIT Notices to KCR

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

Former State Corporation Chairman Dr. Balaraju Yadav on Wednesday strongly condemned the issuance of Special Investigation Team (SIT) notices to Telangana's first Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR), describing the move as politically motivated and driven by vendetta politics under the Congress government led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.

Addressing the media, Balaraju Yadav said KCR is not merely a former chief minister but a symbol of Telangana's self-respect and collective aspiration. He asserted that targeting KCR through investiga-

tions amounts to an attack on the very spirit of the Telangana movement. "Issuing SIT notices to KCR is an attempt to tarnish the image of a historic leader who played a pivotal role in achieving statehood and led Telangana for a decade with vision and stability," he said.

The former chairman accused the Congress government of pursuing revenge politics in the name of people's governance. According to him, the ruling party is deliberately diverting public attention from its administrative failures and unfulfilled promises by focusing on opposition leaders. "Instead of solving real issues faced by farmers, youth, and common citizens,

the government is indulging in daily political dramas. SIT notices are being used as tools for political harassment," Balaraju Yadav alleged.

Warning Chief Minister Revanth Reddy against what he called irresponsible statements, Balaraju Yadav said making baseless allegations against KCR reflects political insecurity. "KCR is a firebrand leader with a spotless record in both the Telangana movement and governance. Reckless allegations against him will only expose the government's frustration and fear," he remarked.

Balaraju Yadav further demanded that the SIT focus on alleged irregularities in Sin-

gareni tenders and conduct a fair probe into the role of those currently in power. He questioned why the government was silent on allegations involving Singareni and individuals close to the Chief Minister. "If the Congress government truly believes in transparency and accountability, it should order an impartial investigation into Singareni tender irregularities instead of selectively targeting the opposition," he said.

Criticising the government for failing to honour its electoral promises, Balaraju Yadav stated that public dissatisfaction was steadily growing. He alleged that assurances given to various sec-

tions of society remain unfulfilled, while governance has been reduced to confusion and blame games. "The people are not fools. They understand that these investigations are meant to hide governance failures," he said.

Reaffirming the resolve of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), Balaraju Yadav said the party would not be intimidated by political pressure. "No matter how many conspiracies are hatched or how many notices are issued, our fight for Telangana's rights and democratic values will continue. The people of Telangana will give a fitting reply at the appropriate time," he asserted.

Mahesh Kumar Goud Calls for Transparent Probe into Phone Tapping Case

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president Mahesh Kumar Goud on Wednesday asserted that a transparent and comprehensive investigation is essential to bring out the truth in the alleged phone tapping case. Speaking to the media at Gandhi Bhavan, he said the people of Telangana are keenly watching the developments and want facts to come out without any political bias.

Mahesh Kumar Goud said the Congress party holds former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) in respect as

a leader who emerged from the Telangana movement. However, he made it clear that respect for an individual does not mean silence on serious allegations. "There is information available about who were involved in the phone tapping episode. More than 500 phone numbers were reportedly tapped, which is a grave violation of democratic rights," he said.

Responding to reports that notices may be issued in the case, the TPCC chief said he did not have complete clarity on who would receive notices, but emphasised that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has



the authority to issue notices to anyone if it helps uncover the truth. "To understand what really happened, the SIT can question anyone. Only a full and impartial probe will reveal the facts," he stated.

Mahesh Kumar Goud underlined that such large-scale surveillance could not have taken place without the knowledge of the political executive. "Without the involvement or awareness of the then Chief Minister and ministers, such actions cannot occur. Officials alone would not dare to carry out such serious acts on their own," he said, adding that accountability

must be fixed at all levels.

He rejected allegations that issuing notices to KCR was driven by political vendetta. "There is no political malice in this. The demand is only for truth and justice. Even the public wants the real facts to come out," he said.

On municipal elections, the TPCC president expressed confidence that the Congress party would win a majority of municipal bodies across the State. He said there was no need for "diversion politics" ahead of municipal elections, as the party is focused on governance,

development, and welfare.

Mahesh Kumar Goud also clarified that in-charge ministers have complete freedom in matters related to the issuance of B-Forms for municipal elections. He said the party leadership trusts its ministers and local leadership to take appropriate decisions based on ground realities. Concluding his remarks, the TPCC chief reiterated that transparency, democratic values, and people's trust remain the Congress party's top priorities, both in governance and in addressing sensitive issues like the phone tapping case.

New Wave in Engineering Education: BAJA SAEINDIA-2026 at BVRIT

Quthbullapur, January 29 | TPN Bureau

In a move aimed at promoting young engineers and strengthening experiential engineering education, BAJA SAEINDIA-2026 will be hosted at B. V. Raju Institute of Technology (BVRIT), Narsapur, from February 25 to March 1, 2026. The event is being organised jointly by BAJA SAEINDIA and Sri Vishnu Educational Society, which signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to conduct the national-level competition.

BAJA SAEINDIA is part of the prestigious BAJA Student Series and challenges engineering students from across India to design, fabricate, and race all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Participants will demonstrate their technical expertise in vehicle design, cost management, and safety standards through static events, while dynamic track events will test the real-world performance of their creations. The competition offers students a platform to engage with hands-on engineering challenges, bridging the gap between classroom theory and practical application.

Speaking about the event, Sri Vishnu Edu-



cational Society Vice Principal Srinivas said, "Hands-on learning and industry engagement form the core of our educational philosophy. Hosting a national-level BAJA event at our institute is a matter of pride. This competition plays a crucial role in developing technical knowledge and problem-solving skills among students to meet future mobility challenges."

Following the Phase-3 physical round of the competition, the HR Meet will be held on March 2 and 3, 2026. Key dignitaries attending include Sri Vishnu Educational Society Vice Chairman Ravichandran Rajagopal, BAJA SAEINDIA Organising Committee Chairman Balaraju Subrahmanyam, Director P. Srinivas Raju, BAJA SAEINDIA 2026 Convener Ali Syed, BVRIT Narsapur Principal Dr. Sanjay Dubey, BVRIT Hyderabad Ba-

chupally Principal KVN Sunitha, along with faculty members, students, and participants from across India.

Organisers emphasised that the event is not only a competition but a learning platform that exposes students to design thinking, teamwork, and innovation. With its rigorous structure of static and dynamic challenges, BAJA SAEINDIA-2026 is expected to inspire the next generation of engineers to develop practical solutions to complex engineering problems while preparing them for careers in automotive, mechanical, and mobility sectors.

This initiative marks a significant step in fostering industry-ready engineers, offering them exposure to advanced technologies, design innovation, and professional collaboration at a national level.

CM Cup Sports Competitions Inaugurated at Duddigul ZP High School

Quthbullapur, January 29 | TPN Bureau

The CM Cup sports competitions were officially inaugurated at the Duddigul Zilla Parishad High School premises under the Duddigul Circle by Deputy Commissioner N. Venkateshwar Nayak. The event marks a significant effort by the administration to promote physical fitness, mental well-being, and holistic development among students across the region.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Nayak emphasised the role of sports in shaping young minds. He highlighted that participation in physical activities not only strengthens the body but also nurtures essential life skills such as discipline, leadership, teamwork, and a competitive spirit. "Sports instill resilience and determination in students, which are vital qualities for both academic and personal success. Every student must balance studies with active participation in sports to achieve overall growth," he stated.

The Deputy Commissioner also stressed the importance of regular

practice and consistent effort in sports. He encouraged students to embrace both victories and setbacks as learning experiences, fostering a mindset of perseverance and continuous improvement. The event, he noted, provides an opportunity for students to compete at various levels, showcasing their talent, skill, and dedication.

The inauguration ceremony saw participation from several key officials, including Duddigul Gandhi Maisamma Tahsildar N. Rajeshwar Reddy, the Head Master of Duddigul ZP High School, Physical Director Kavita, PETs, teachers, and local student athletes. Their presence ensured the smooth and successful conduct of the event while motivating students to give their best performances.

The CM Cup competitions are designed to offer a structured platform for young athletes to demonstrate their abilities in various sports disciplines. Apart from encouraging physical activity, the event aims to build a sense of camaraderie and healthy rivalry among students



from different schools and wards in the region. By exposing students to organized competitions, the initiative seeks to cultivate leadership qualities, strategic thinking, and confidence in young participants.

The Deputy Commissioner urged teachers, parents, and local authorities to actively support and mentor stu-

dents in sports activities, ensuring a balance between academics and extracurricular pursuits. "A child who engages in sports alongside studies grows into a well-rounded individual, equipped to face future challenges with confidence and determination," he said.

The event also included preparatory sessions on sportsmanship, team-

work, and fair play, emphasizing the ethical and moral aspects of competitive sports. The administration plans to continue the CM Cup as an annual event, nurturing future talent and encouraging students to embrace healthy, active lifestyles while achieving excellence both on and off the field.

iBomma Ravi's Bail Petition in Telangana High Court

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

The legal proceedings regarding iBomma Ravi's bail petition reached a key stage in the Telangana High Court on Wednesday, with arguments concluding and the court deferring its verdict. Ravi, the alleged operator of the infamous iBomma piracy network, is seeking bail after being in judicial custody since his arrest last year.

Ravi is accused of running a large-scale online piracy network that distributed thousands of copyrighted films without authorization. Authorities also allege that his operations were linked to online betting and gaming platforms, raising concerns over cybersecurity, financial exploitation, and intellectual property violations. He remains lodged in Chanchalguda Jail as multiple cases continue under the Information Technology Act, Copyright Act, and other relevant laws.

During the High Court hearings, iBomma Ravi's defence team argued for



bail on procedural grounds, highlighting factors such as the duration of custody and compliance with legal procedures. Meanwhile, the prosecution opposed bail, citing the seriousness of the offences, the need to safeguard digital evidence, and the ongoing scope of investigation into his network. The court has reserved its decision, indicating that a verdict will be announced at a later date.

Legal experts note that the case is being closely watched due to

its wider implications on digital piracy enforcement, judicial oversight in cyber-crime, and the balance between individual rights and investigation integrity. Ravi's operations are said to have caused significant financial losses to the film industry while posing risks to digital security infrastructure.

As the court deliberates, Ravi remains in custody, and authorities continue to investigate his alleged involvement in cybercrime activi-

ties. The outcome of the bail petition is expected to set a precedent for similar high-profile cybercrime cases in Telangana, influencing how courts handle requests for bail while ensuring the protection of ongoing investigations.

The Telangana High Court's decision will likely have implications for both the legal and digital security domains, particularly concerning the enforcement of laws against online piracy and the treatment of accused in-

dividuals in technologically complex criminal cases. The case has generated considerable public and media attention, reflecting growing concerns over digital content protection and cybercrime regulation.

The court is expected to announce its decision on Ravi's bail petition in the coming weeks, with all parties awaiting a ruling that could shape future handling of cybercrime and intellectual property violation cases in the state.

Hyderabad Police Commissioner Issues Strong Warning Against Fake News

Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

Hyderabad Police Commissioner C. V. Anand Sajjanar on Thursday issued a strong warning to the public and media against the creation and circulation of fake news, disinformation and misleading social media content. Speaking at a press briefing, the Commissioner said that false information is spreading rapidly through social networking platforms and messaging apps, causing confusion, fear and unrest among citizens. He emphasised that the spread of fake news poses a serious threat to public peace, social harmony and law and order in the city.

Commissioner Sajjanar pointed out that fake news often originates from unverified sources and is deliberately circulated to mislead the public for political, personal or criminal motives. "In many cases, people share information

without checking its authenticity, and this leads to unnecessary panic and misunderstanding. The police will not tolerate such activities that harm social stability or create chaos," the Commissioner said.

He highlighted several recent examples where fabricated posts and messages regarding crime, public safety and government actions were circulated widely before being verified. Sajjanar said such misinformation travels faster than verified facts, especially when it involves emotive or sensational content. He stressed that all citizens must be cautious about believing or forwarding unverified information, and instead verify such information from official sources.

The Commissioner also underlined the legal consequences of spreading fake news. He reminded the public that under Indian law, deliberately sharing false information



that causes panic or incites violence is a punishable offence. Appropriate legal action will be initiated against those found creating, forwarding, or promoting counterfeit content online, including provisions under the Information Technology Act and relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.

Commissioner Sajjanar urged social media companies and digital platforms to work closely with law enforcement authorities to detect and remove harmful content swiftly. "Tech companies must strengthen their monitoring mechanisms and respond promptly to takedown requests from the police so that misinformation does not spread unchecked," he said.

Election Officials Inspect KTR's Vehicle in Sircilla Ahead of Municipal Polls

Sircilla, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

Against the backdrop of the upcoming municipal elections, election officials on Wednesday conducted a routine inspection of the vehicle of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) in Sircilla town. The checking was carried out as part of the Election Commission's intensified enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct to ensure free, fair, and transparent elections.

According to sources, the inspection took place while KTR was moving through Sircilla as part of party-related engagements. Election officials stopped the vehicle and carried out a standard verification, including checking documents and ensuring that no materials violating election norms were being transported. The process was completed smoothly without any delay or disruption.

KTR fully cooperated with the officials during the inspection and extended all necessary assistance. Party sources said that the BRS leader reaffirmed his commitment to adhering strictly to election rules and democratic procedures. "We respect the Election Commission and its officials. All parties and leaders must abide by the rules laid down for elections," he reportedly remarked during the inspection.

The incident drew attention in Sircilla, KTR's home turf, as local residents and party workers briefly gathered at the spot. However, there was no commotion, and the officials completed their duty in a calm and orderly manner. After the inspection, KTR continued with his scheduled programme.

Election authorities have stepped up vigilance across Telangana with the announcement of municipal elections,



conducting vehicle checks, monitoring campaign activities, and enforcing expenditure limits. Officials stated that such inspections are routine and are being carried out uniformly across all constituencies, irrespective of party affiliation or stature of the leader.

Political observers noted that the episode reflects the heightened alertness of the election machinery as polling day approaches. It also underscored the importance of cooperation between political leaders and election officials in maintaining the sanctity of the electoral

process. The municipal elections are expected to witness keen competition across the State, with all major parties intensifying their preparations while keeping a close watch on compliance with election guidelines.

Harish Rao Slams Congress Over Farmer Distress



Siddipet, January 29 | TPN Bureau

Former Minister and BRS Legislature Party Deputy Leader T. Harish Rao on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on the Congress-led Telangana government, alleging that farmers were facing severe distress due to policy failures and misplaced priorities. Addressing farmers at the Siddipet Market Yard after inaugurating a red gram (kandulu) procurement

centre, Harish Rao said the Congress government had completely failed to provide confidence or timely support to the farming community.

Referring to the Centre's announcement of a minimum support price of 8,000 per quintal for red gram, Harish Rao urged farmers not to fall prey to middlemen and to utilise the procure- ment centres to get fair prices. He also advised farmers to adopt crop di-

versification by shifting from paddy to oilseeds and pulses such as sunflower, oil palm, and pulses, stating that it would improve soil fertility, reduce pest attacks, and increase profitability.

Expressing anguish over the current agrarian situation, Harish Rao said it was painful to see farmers once again standing in queues for fertilisers in the early hours of the morning. He alleged that the BJP-

led Central government had created an artificial fertiliser shortage by cutting subsidies, while the Congress government in the State had failed miserably in distribution. He contrasted this with the previous BRS regime, stating that even during challenging times like demonetisation and the COVID-19 pandemic, farmers never faced fertiliser shortages.

Harish Rao accused the Congress government of neglecting farmers while ensuring uninterrupted water supply to beer factories. He pointed out that crop holidays had been declared for nearly 70,000 acres under Singur and Ganpur projects in Medak district citing lack of water, and questioned how beer factories were receiving full water supply when farmers were denied irrigation. He alleged that excise officials themselves were prioritising water supply to

breweries.

The former minister also criticised the delay in releasing Rythu Bandhu investment support and lack of clarity on the proposed Rythu Bharosa scheme. He said farmers were forced to take loans at high interest rates to invest in crops, increasing their financial burden. He further alleged that compensation promised for crop losses due to hailstorms and unseasonal rains had not been paid even after a year.

Harish Rao demanded the immediate release of pending Rythu Bandhu funds, payment of pending crop bonuses for both Kharif and Rabi seasons, compensation for crop losses, and steps to ensure adequate fertiliser availability. Warning of statewide protests, he said the BRS would launch large-scale agitations if the government continued to ignore farmers' issues.

Ponnam Prabhakar Offers Special Prayers to Sammakka-Saralamma at Mulakanur



Hanumakonda District, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

Telangana Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Wednesday visited Mulakanur village in Bheemadavarapally mandal of Huznabad constituency, where he offered special prayers to Sammakka-Saralamma during the ongoing jatara. The minister paid obeisance to the tribal goddesses amid traditional rituals and participated in the religious proceedings along with local leaders and a

large gathering of devotees.

As part of the rituals, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar offered niluvettu bangaram to the goddesses and fulfilled his vows. Addressing the gathering, he said the Sammakka-Saralamma jatara in Mulakanur was being conducted in a grand and orderly manner with the collective efforts of local leaders and the enthusiastic participation of devotees.

Highlighting the cultural importance of the jatara, the minister re-

called that ceremonial firing as a mark of respect to the goddesses was a long-standing tradition in the area, which



had been discontinued nearly 20 years ago. He said that after local leaders brought the issue to his notice, he held discussions with senior police officials, including the DGP and CP. "Respecting the sentiments and faith of devotees, the government has permitted ceremonial firing this evening when the goddesses arrive at the gaddelu in Mulakanur," he said.

Ponnam Prabhakar noted that the tradition has been followed for over four decades and is deeply rooted in the beliefs of the local people. He described it as an expression of devotion and reverence, emphasizing that such customs reflect

the cultural heritage of the region. The minister said lakhs of devotees visit Mulakanur during the jatara to seek the blessings of Sammakka-Saralamma and offer their vows.

Praying for the welfare of the people, the minister said he sought divine blessings for timely and adequate rainfall, agricultural prosperity, and the health and happiness of all families. He expressed hope that farmers and people belonging to all communities in Bheemadavarapally and Elakathurthi mandals would be blessed with peace, prosperity, and good health.

The minister further prayed that the welfare schemes and development programmes being implemented by the people's government should reach every section of society without hindrance and continue successfully. He concluded by seeking strength and guidance from the goddesses for the government to implement more people-centric initiatives in the future.

Ponnam Prabhakar Offers Special Prayers at Kothagattu Brahmotsavams

Karimnagar, January 29 | TPN Bureau:

State Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Wednesday attended the ongoing Brahmotsavams of Sri Matsyagiri Indra Swamy at Kothagattu village in Shankarapatnam mandal of Manakondur Assembly constituency in Karimnagar district and offered special prayers to the presiding deity.



The minister participated in the religious rituals with devotion and had darshan of Sri Matsyagiri Indra Swamy, marking his continued association with the annual Brahmotsavams, which he said he has been attending for several years. On the occasion of the divine Kalyanam (celestial wedding) of the deity, Ponnam Prabhakar prayed for the well-being of the people of Telangana and sought the blessings of the Lord for prosperity across the State.

Speaking after the darshan, the minister said he prayed for timely and abundant rainfall, agricultural prosperity, and a life of happiness, peace, and good health for all citizens. He expressed

hope that with the blessings of Sri Matsyagiri Indra Swamy, the State would witness progress in all sectors and that people would continue to live in harmony.

Highlighting the importance of temple development, Ponnam Prabhakar stated that sustained efforts would be made to improve infrastructure and facilities at the Kothagattu temple. He assured that with the cooperation of the local MLA, support from the State government, and contribu-

ing provided for the comfort of pilgrims visiting the temple," he said.

Recalling his earlier role as a Member of Parliament, the minister noted that he had consistently worked for the development of the temple in the past and would continue to do so now in his capacity as a minister. He reaffirmed his commitment to supporting the temple's growth as a devotee of Sri Matsyagiri Indra Swamy and as a representative of the government.

Concluding his visit, Ponnam Prabhakar prayed that the divine blessings of the Lord remain with everyone and guide the State towards peace, prosperity, and inclusive development.

Centre Classifies Medigadda Barrage as Category 1 Hazardous Dam



Hyderabad, January 29 | TPN Bureau

The Central Government's Ministry of Jal Shakti has officially declared the Medigadda Barrage in Telangana a Category 1 hazardous dam, marking it as a structure with the highest potential risk. This classification comes after recent inspections highlighted structural vulnerabilities that could pose a serious threat to life and property if not addressed promptly. The decision underscores the critical need for immediate remedial measures to ensure the safety of the barrage and downstream areas.

Category 1 dams are considered the most dangerous, indicating that the structure exhibits significant weaknesses in its design, construction, or maintenance, which could result in catastrophic failure under adverse conditions, such as extreme rainfall or high reservoir levels. The Medigadda Barrage, also known as the Lakshmi Barrage, is a key component of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP), providing essential water for irrigation, drinking water supply, and industrial use across Telangana.

Authorities have pointed out that the

barrage's foundation and construction quality have shown signs of distress, including cracks and settling in certain sections. Block 7 of the barrage, in particular, has been flagged as a point of concern due to potential structural weaknesses. If these issues are not addressed immediately, there could be serious risks to the surrounding communities, agricultural lands, and critical infrastructure downstream.

Telangana state officials are now expected to work closely with central agencies to conduct detailed structural assessments and implement corrective measures. This will include strengthening the dam, repairing damaged sections, and introducing advanced monitoring systems to ensure early detection of any future issues. The government has emphasized that preventive maintenance and timely intervention are crucial to avoid potential disasters.

The announcement has highlighted the importance of rigorous maintenance protocols and adherence to safety standards for dams across the country, especially those built decades ago or handling large water volumes. The central government

has reiterated that all high-risk dams will undergo periodic inspections, hazard evaluations, and continuous monitoring to prevent structural failures.

Officials also stressed that the Category 1 designation is intended not to halt the barrage's operations but to ensure that all necessary safety measures are implemented without delay. Emergency response plans and downstream alert mechanisms are expected to be strengthened to minimize risk to residents and farmland. The central and state governments' collaboration on Medigadda Barrage is likely to set a precedent for proactive safety management of major irrigation infrastructure in India. Ensuring the barrage's structural integrity is critical for protecting livelihoods, agriculture, and the economic benefits derived from the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, while also safeguarding the lives of millions living in surrounding areas.

This step is part of a broader national initiative to upgrade the safety and resilience of dams, reflecting a commitment to prevent disasters and promote sustainable water resource management.

Can Sharad Pawar Salvage the NCP After Ajit Pawar's Death? The Struggle for Survival and Renewal

The sudden and tragic death of Ajit Pawar in a plane crash has thrown the future of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) into profound uncertainty. For more than a quarter of a century, the Pawar family has been the dominant force in western Maharashtra's politics, building networks, institutions, and a hierarchy of influence rooted deeply in sugar cooperatives, legislative politics, and grassroots power bases. Ajit Pawar was not just a senior leader; he was the heir apparent, the political operator whose energy and ambition made him the face of NCP's future. With his unexpected passing, that carefully constructed succession plan has dissolved overnight, leaving the party factionalized, weakened, and vulnerable.

The NCP has long been defined by the towering presence of Sharad Pawar, its founder and patriarch. A veteran statesman whose political career spans decades, Sharad Pawar has played an outsized role in shaping Maharashtra's politics and the party's identity. Yet at 83, he no longer has the time or energy to rebuild a political machine from scratch. The absence of a clear successor with comparable experience and authority is the central dilemma facing the party today.

A Party Divided and Leaderless

The NCP's challenges predate Ajit Pawar's death. In 2023, a major split split the party into two factions — one led by Sharad Pawar and the other by Ajit Pawar — creating damaging ideological and organisational fault lines. These divisions were rooted in divergent strategies: Sharad Pawar's group maintained traditional alliances and party loyalty, while Ajit Pawar's faction aligned with the state government under the BJP-led coalition. This strategic divergence grew into a full-blown rupture, leaving both sides weakened.

In the run-up to the 2025 local corporation elections, the rifts within the NCP became painfully visible. Both factions performed poorly in key areas like Pune and Pimpri-



Chinchwad, long considered NCP strongholds. These defeats underscored a deeper crisis: the party's inability to maintain voter trust or establish a coherent political narrative that resonates beyond its core regions.

The death of Ajit Pawar exacerbates that crisis. It removes a leader who, for many within the party, represented energy, organisational capability, and strategic vision. He was widely seen as the one with the political temperament and ground presence to revitalize the party's base and expand its appeal. With him gone, the question arises: who now can fill that void?

Sharad Pawar's Burden and Legacy

Sharad Pawar's legacy is monumental — he founded the NCP, steered it through turbulent alliances, and helped shape coalition poli-

tics in Maharashtra. But his own attempt to manage internal dissent and prepare the party for a post-Pawar era has been fraught with difficulty. At times, he has appeared to vacillate between resignation and renewed engagement, reflecting both his deep attachment to the party and his recognition of its leadership crisis.

In recent years Sharad Pawar even tried to step aside to make room for new leadership, only to retract his resignation under pressure from party workers. This episode highlighted two things: his enduring centrality to the party's identity, and the vacuum that exists in his absence of formalised succession.

With Ajit Pawar's absence, Sharad Pawar now faces a stark dilemma. He must determine whether to attempt a partial reunification of the two NCP factions, build a re-

newed coalition structure, or preside over a generational transition to younger leaders. Each option carries significant risks.

The Struggle Over Identity and Symbol

One of the most symbolic questions facing the NCP is who will carry the party's emblem — historically represented by a clock. Party symbols in Indian politics are not mere icons; they are potent anchors of identity and continuity. The split had already created disputes over the symbol, which the Election Commission had once awarded to a faction. Resolving this dispute is now part of the broader challenge of redefining the party's identity in the post-Ajit era.

For loyalists and grassroots workers, these symbols embody the legacy of decades of political work. Without

clear leadership or a unified identity, there is a risk that these symbols could lose their meaning, and along with them the emotional connection of the party's supporters.

The Generation Question

With both Pawar elders — Sharad and Ajit — no longer able to steer the party forward in the same way, a new generation must step up. Several younger leaders are available, but none have yet demonstrated the combination of organisational skill and political gravitas needed to lead the party effectively.

Supriya Sule, Sharad Pawar's daughter, is a seasoned parliamentarian with a national presence. Her legislative experience and ability to cultivate cross-party relationships position her as a potential unifying figure. Yet some within the party ques-

tion whether she can command authority on the ground in Maharashtra, where regional politics and local networks matter deeply.

Other potential leaders include Rohit Pawar, a relative with some grassroots experience, and figures from Ajit Pawar's former faction who now find themselves politically orphaned. But the lack of a clear consensus around any single successor raises the risk of further fragmentation.

Opportunity for Political Rivals

As the NCP grapples with its internal struggles, rival parties are eager to occupy the space it leaves behind. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), already dominant in state politics, sees opportunities to further consolidate its influence. The Congress and

other opposition forces also watch closely, seeking alliances to bolster their own positions. But without a coherent NCP to ally with, their strategies remain tentative.

If the NCP fails to present a credible alternative to the BJP at state and local levels, there is a real possibility that its traditional voter base could erode. This could accelerate a political realignment in Maharashtra, diminishing the influence of regional parties that have long served as counterweights to national power.

Revival or Decline?

Sharad Pawar's task now is nothing less than navigating the NCP through an existential crisis. This requires not just organisational restructuring, but a reinvention of the party's political purpose. It calls for an inclusive strategy that engages grassroots workers, addresses regional aspirations, and offers voters a clear vision for the future.

Revival could take the form of a reunited party, led by a blend of seasoned hands and rising stars, grounded in a reinvigorated alliance framework. Alternatively, it could mean a strategic pivot toward broader coalition politics that transcends old rivalries. Either way, the choices made in the coming months will determine whether the NCP can survive as a meaningful political force.

The Pawar name still carries significant weight in Maharashtra. But legacy alone cannot sustain a political movement. What is needed now is a tangible plan for future leadership and renewed connection with the electorate. Without these, the party risks slipping into irrelevance, its influence absorbed by larger national trends or fractured into smaller groups.

In the political arena, as in life, the transition from one generation to the next is seldom smooth. For the Nationalist Congress Party, this moment of transition — marked by loss, uncertainty, and opportunity — will define its role in Maharashtra's political landscape for years to come.

Ajit Pawar: A Strategist in Power Who Never Lost His Compass

Ajit Pawar was one of the most significant figures in Maharashtra politics of the past three decades — a leader who approached power not merely as an end, but as a tool to achieve goals that mattered to him and to the people he served. Even as his life came to a tragic end in a plane crash, the contours of his political journey — ambition tempered by principle, pragmatism blended with purpose — offer a remarkable story of how Indian regional politics works, and what it takes to wield influence in a landscape dominated by shifting alliances and unrelenting ambition.

From the start, Ajit Pawar knew that politics was both about opportunity and real impact. Born into a family deeply enmeshed in the political fabric of western Maharashtra, he learned early that influence was earned through engagement, action, and persistence. But he also came to recognize that influence without purpose is hollow — a lesson that would define his rise and the way he pursued power.

In the late 1990s, when his uncle left the Congress to form a new political party, many young leaders saw a chance to step into prominence. Among them, Ajit Pawar stood out not only for his work ethic but also for his willingness to travel to the farthest corners of the state to build support. While some colleagues viewed politics through the lens of ideology or rhetoric, Pawar was focused on connecting with people where they lived, under-

stood their problems, and crafted solutions that could make a tangible difference. In this sense, politics for him was always grounded in reality — not in gestures that looked good on paper, but in actions that delivered results.

Over the next several years, he proved himself again and again as a competent administrator and a leader capable of navigating the complexities of governance. He occupied key positions, handling portfolios vital to the state's development and financial management. His reputation as a workhorse preceded him; he was known for early mornings, long hours of meetings, and a hands-on approach to bureaucratic work. He was the politician who would read files and push decisions forward, cutting through delays that often bogged down governance.

His ability to connect and to deliver made him a central figure in Maharashtra's governance structure. He held the role of deputy chief minister multiple times — more than any of his predecessors — and repeatedly became indispensable to whichever coalition was in power. Through these deployments, he developed a deep understanding of how the state functioned at every level, from the legislative assembly to the field offices responsible for water distribution, urban infrastructure, and agricultural support.

Yet even as he rose through political ranks, Pawar never hid his ambition to reach the very pinnacle of power — the



chief ministership. For many years, he was widely seen as a leading contender for that post, a goal that he pursued openly and persistently. But despite his record of administrative achievements and political acumen, the chief minister's chair remained elusive. He came close time and again — nearly clinching it on several occasions — but interstate political equations, coalition priorities, and internal alignments meant that he never quite crossed that final threshold. The fact that he occupied the second-most powerful office in the state repeatedly only underscored the irony: he wielded power, shaped policy,

and influenced outcomes, but never wore the top title itself.

This paradox was part of the complexity of Ajit Pawar's career. On one hand, he was a consummate insider, fully embedded in Maharashtra's political ecosystem. On the other, he presented himself as a no-nonsense operator — someone whose loyalty to governance extended beyond marquee positions or ceremonial titles. In a political culture where symbolism often counts for as much as substance, Pawar stood out for his insistence on getting things done. His supporters spoke of him as someone who would not hesitate to tackle problems others

ignored.

Yet his political path was not without controversy. At various points, he found himself navigating allegations and scrutiny that are, unfortunately, common in Indian politics — allegations that drew political fire and offered fodder to critics. But even these moments did not erase the fact that he approached his role with an intensity and seriousness that many of his peers lacked. He was not a politician who shied away from difficult conversations or tough choices; he relished them.

Perhaps the most defining chapter in his career came later, when political realignments

across Maharashtra reshaped long-standing party structures. Strategic differences, evolving electoral landscapes, and shifting priorities led Pawar to make decisions that were bold — if polarizing. Yet even then, he was driven by a pragmatic logic: the belief that power, once attained, must be used to make a difference, rather than sit idle on the periphery. For Pawar, the pursuit of influence was never divorced from the purpose of influence. He wanted the levers of power not for prominence, but to deliver on plans and projects that could uplift sections of society long underserved.

This pragmatic streak earned him praise from allies who saw in him a politician not afraid to take risks, and criticism from opponents who questioned his choices. But more than anything, it reinforced the sense that Pawar was always clear about what he believed. He rarely pretended to be something he was not — his politics was as straight and direct as his style of governance. Those who worked with him noted his ability to balance ambition with an authentic connection to public needs, even as his critics described him as relentless in his quest for influence.

In communities across Maharashtra — from urban centres to rural districts — Pawar's presence left a mark. Infrastructure projects, administrative reforms, and development initiatives bore traces of his hands-on approach. To his supporters, he

was a leader deeply rooted in public life; to his critics, a relentless political strategist whose moves were calculated and driven by necessity as much as conviction.

His sudden death has left a void that transcends titles and statistics. Political colleagues and rivals alike have remarked on the loss of a figure who understood the pulse of Maharashtra like few others. He was a politician shaped by his early years on the ground — in conversations with farmers, in oversight of policy implementation, and in long days spent within the machinery of government. This grounding ensured that his aspirations, while ambitious, were not detached from the realities that millions of citizens faced every day.

Ajit Pawar may not have been a saint in politics — no one who operates in the rough-and-tumble of public life ever is. But he was a politician with purpose, intent on placing the levers of power into motion rather than leaving them idle. His career — with all its achievements, ambitions, controversies, and contradictions — tells a story of a leader who chased power not for its own sake, but for the possibilities it opened for practical governance and public service. The absence of his presence in Maharashtra's political theatre now leaves a question far larger than any office or title: what kind of leadership will emerge to fill the gap left by a strategist who knew both how to rule and why?

Maharashtra Bids Emotional Farewell to Ajit Pawar After Tragic Plane Crash

Maharashtra and political leaders across India gathered in Baramati to bid a final farewell to Ajit Pawar, the state's Deputy Chief Minister and a towering figure in regional politics, after he died in a tragic plane crash earlier this week. Pawar, widely known as "Dada" to his supporters, was cremated with full state honours in his hometown amid a sea of mourners and deep sorrow across the state.

The funeral proceedings began early Thursday morning, with thousands of supporters and party workers gathering along the routes in Baramati as the procession moved toward Vidya Pratishthan ground, where the last rites were performed. His mortal remains were taken in a flower decorated carriage, and crowded streets echoed with chants and slogans as citizens paid tribute to a leader deeply connected to grassroots politics.

Ajit Pawar's immediate family stood by his side during the funeral. His sons Parth and Jay Pawar lit the funeral pyre, marking an emotional and poignant moment that captured the grief of a family and a community mourning the loss of a beloved leader. Senior political figures and dignitaries from both state and national levels were in attendance, showing respect across party lines. Among those present were Union ministers, lead-



ers of various political parties, and supporters who had come from different parts of Maharashtra to honour his memory.

Prominent politicians offered heartfelt tributes and condolences. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde paid their respects at the cremation site, underscoring the significant impact Pawar's leadership had on the state's governance and political landscape. Many recalled his administrative skills, ability to connect with ordinary citizens, and his long tenure in public service, which spanned decades.

Even national leaders reflected on Pawar's life and contributions. Prime Minister Narendra Modi described

him as a "leader of the people," noting Pawar's dedication to public service and his strong grassroots support. Leaders from across the political spectrum expressed shock at the suddenness of his passing and conveyed deep sympathy to his family.

The tragic incident occurred when Pawar's chartered aircraft, a small Learjet, crashed near the Baramati airfield during landing after flying from Mumbai. He was on his way to campaign for upcoming local elections when the crash happened, killing him and four others on board. The loss has not only created a void in Maharashtra's political leadership but has also left many residents in mourning, reflecting on the legacy of a figure who shaped

politics in the region for years.

Maharashtra has declared a period of official mourning, and flags were flown at half mast. The state's institutions observed moments of silence in respect for Pawar's contributions. Across Baramati and beyond, people paused to remember a leader whose influence extended far beyond his constituency, and whose sudden demise has reshaped the political landscape at a critical moment.

As the state comes to terms with this loss, reflections on Pawar's career, his role within the Nationalist Congress Party, and his impact on Maharashtra's governance continue to surface, marking the end of an era in the state's political history.

Economic Survey Projects India's Economy to Grow Around 7.4% in FY 2025 26

India's economy is expected to expand strongly in the current financial year, with growth projected at 7.4 per cent for FY 2025 26 according to the government's Economic Survey 2025 26, presented in Parliament ahead of the Union Budget. This forecast keeps India among the fastest growing major economies globally, reflecting a resilient domestic economy even as global uncertainty persists.

The Economic Survey, prepared by the Chief Economic Adviser and tabled by the Finance Minister, outlines the performance of the Indian economy over the past year and sets expectations for the near future. It highlights that strong domestic demand, investment activity and structural reforms have been key drivers of growth this year.

This 7.4 per cent expansion estimate aligns closely with projections from international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which also foresee robust growth for India in the current fiscal year. The figure represents continued momentum following a slowdown in global growth, underscoring India's capacity to maintain healthy economic



expansion despite external headwinds.

Several factors support this optimistic outlook. Household consumption, which forms a major part of India's GDP, has remained strong, bolstered by rising incomes and consumption activity across both rural and urban areas. Investment levels have also shown improvement, helped by public capital expenditure and greater private sector engagement in infrastructure and manufacturing projects.

In addition to growth projections, the Economic Survey draws attention to low and steady inflation, which has helped support real incomes and purchasing power. Stable prices for essential goods, including food items, have con-

tributed to this stability. With inflation remaining under control, monetary conditions have supported both consumption and investment without exacerbating price pressures.

The survey also points to the impact of recent policy reforms. Changes such as simplified direct tax structures, reforms to the goods and services tax framework, and efforts to liberalise foreign direct investment rules have strengthened the business environment. These measures are intended to attract investment, spur job creation, and increase the economy's long term growth potential.

While the current year's growth forecast is strong, the survey notes that growth is expected to moderate slightly in

the next financial year (FY 2026 27), with the economy projected to grow between 6.8 per cent and 7.2 per cent. Even at this slightly lower pace, the economy would remain on a robust growth path relative to many other major economies worldwide.

The Economic Survey also acknowledges global uncertainties — including trade tensions, geopolitical risks, and volatility in financial markets — as potential threats that could affect India's external environment. Despite these risks, domestic fundamentals such as a strong labour market, sound banking sector health, and increasing diversification of exports provide a supportive backdrop for sustained growth.

In summary, the Economic Survey's projection of 7.4 per cent growth for FY 2025 26 underscores India's economic resilience and highlights why the country continues to stand out amid slower growth in other parts of the world. Policymakers will now look to the Union Budget to build on this momentum and address future challenges, while continuing efforts to strengthen investment, jobs and long-term economic prospects.

Death Toll Rises to 21 in Devastating Warehouse Fire Near Kolkata; 28 Still Missing

At least 21 people have been killed and 28 others remain missing after a massive fire broke out early on January 26 in the Anandapur area of South 24 Parganas district, on the outskirts of Kolkata. The blaze tore through two warehouses and a manufacturing unit, reducing the buildings to rubble and leaving behind charred debris, officials said.

The fire erupted late on Sunday night, and rescue teams worked through the day to search the gutted structures for survivors and victims. So far, 13 additional bodies have been recovered from the debris, bringing the confirmed death count to 21. With 28 people still unaccounted for, authorities fear the toll could rise further as search efforts continue.

The warehouses destroyed in the blaze included facilities used for storage as well as a unit linked to a momo manufacturing operation. The intense heat and rapid spread of flames made rescue efforts extremely challenging, and many of the recovered bodies were



badly burnt, making identification by conventional means difficult. To establish the identities of the victims, police officials said DNA profiling and mapping of remains would be used.

In response to the tragedy and to maintain public order, prohibitory orders were imposed in the affected area. These restrictions were put in place ahead of an expected visit by political leaders to ensure that crowds remained under

control and rescue operations could continue without disruption.

Police have stated that the scale of destruction is such that the possibility of more bodies being found cannot be ruled out. The buildings were reported to be severely damaged, with collapsed roofs and walls complicating the ongoing search. Firefighters and disaster response teams have remained on the scene, working alongside forensic and law

enforcement personnel.

Officials also noted that the cause of the fire has yet to be determined, and investigations are underway to ascertain how the blaze started. The presence of inflammable materials stored inside the warehouses likely contributed to how quickly the fire spread, but definitive conclusions from investigators are pending.

The community around Anandapur has been left in shock as families wait anxiously for news about missing relatives. Local authorities have appealed to residents to cooperate with rescue operations and respect the prohibitory orders in place for safety reasons.

This tragic incident has once again highlighted concerns about fire safety in industrial and storage facilities, especially where there is extensive use of flammable goods. Authorities have said they will review safety compliance and enforcement as part of ongoing investigations into the warehouse fire.

Mystery Deepens Around Rajasthan Sadhvi Prem Baisa's Death After Injection and Strange Instagram Post

The death of Sadhvi Prem Baisa, a well-known religious preacher from western Rajasthan, has sparked widespread suspicion and debate after she died under unclear circumstances at her ashram in Jodhpur. What was initially reported as a sudden medical emergency has now turned into a highly controversial case with questions about an injection she received, a cryptic Instagram post, and a past viral video adding to the confusion.

Prem Baisa was brought to a private hospital from her Boranada ashram by her father, Veeram Nath, after she suddenly became unconscious following an injection administered by a healthcare compounder. The doctor attending her said she was declared brought dead with no signs of life. Her father, who is also her spiritual guru, told authorities that she had been suffering from a cold and cough for some time, which led them to call a compounder to the ashram. Within minutes of the injection, her condition deteriorated sharply.

Police have detained the compounder and seized his medical kit as part of the investigation, but the exact cause of death remains unknown. Questions about the injection's role have intensified speculation—in some local reporting it is being investigated whether the substance itself caused her collapse.

Adding to the mystery is a puzzling Instagram post that appeared on Prem Baisa's social media account about four hours after she had already passed away. The post featured a lengthy message in which she spoke



about her life devoted to the propagation of Sanatan Dharma, her faith in God and saints, and hinted at bidding farewell to the world forever. The caption's tone raised eyebrows because it seemed to read like a farewell or suicide note, even though it was shared after her death was declared. Her father has said the message was sent from her mobile and that "a fellow guru" had forwarded it.

The timing and content of the post have prompted critics to demand a deeper inquiry into whether it was genuinely authored by her, scheduled in advance, or posted by someone else. Some followers and political figures have called for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into what they describe as a suspicious death, arguing that all angles—including potential foul play, suicide, or medical negligence—should be thor-

oughly examined. Complicating the public reaction is a viral video from the previous year that drew controversy. The clip showed Prem Baisa embracing her father in a private setting, leading to accusations aimed at shaming their relationship. She defended the gesture as innocent affection, but the video became a hot topic that later led to police action against those who circulated it widely online.

The unusual circumstances around the injection, the social media message, and the historical controversy have kept the incident in the spotlight, feeding speculation and concern among her followers and wider audiences. Authorities are continuing their investigation, including waiting for post mortem results, to establish the exact cause of death and whether external factors played any role.

Shashi Tharoor Meets Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, Says 'All Is Good' Amid Rift Speculation



Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor met with Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge in the Parliament House complex on Thursday, in what party sources say was an effort to address recent rumours of internal differences and reaffirm party unity.

Tharoor's meeting with the two top leaders came amid ongoing speculation about a possible rift between him and the party leadership. In recent weeks, reports had circulated suggesting that Tharoor had been distancing himself from key meetings and strategies — particularly those related to elections — which fuelled talk of discontent within the party. However, statements after Thursday's meeting sought to dispel those rumours.

Speaking to reporters after the session, Tharoor described the discussion as "very good, constructive and positive." He emphasised that there was no disagreement with the leadership and that they were "all on the same page" moving forward. He reiterated his commitment to the party and dismissed suggestions that he was at odds with its leadership.

The meeting reportedly lasted for over an hour and took place in Kharge's chamber at the Parliament House. Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal was also said to have been present, reflecting the leadership's interest in resolving any internal concerns through dialogue.

Tharoor's comments were aimed at countering media speculation and political chatter about a widening gap between him and the party's top brass. By highlighting a unified front, he and the leadership appear to be signalling that internal discussions are ongoing but not divisive.

Political analysts say such interactions are fairly common in large parties during election seasons and periods of strategic planning. Tharoor's absence from a few recent strategy meetings — including discussions tied to party preparations in states like Kerala — had been interpreted by some observers as a sign of dissatisfaction. However, officials have reiterated that differences of opinion within a party do not necessarily translate into a crisis or rupture.

In his remarks on Thursday, Tharoor also made it

clear that his focus remains on serving the public and working collaboratively with his colleagues rather than pursuing personal positions or roles. He specifically dismissed reports that he was seeking a chief ministerial candidacy or considering other political options outside the party.

The meeting and subsequent statements underscore an effort by Congress leaders to maintain cohesion and present a united front as they navigate critical political moments ahead, including state assembly elections and national strategy debates. By publicly affirming their alignment, Tharoor, Gandhi, and Kharge sought to reassure supporters, party workers, and observers that the leadership remains cohesive despite occasional speculation about internal tensions.

In summary, the latest high profile meeting appears to have eased recent rumblings of discontent, with Tharoor stressing unity and a shared commitment to the party's goals. As the political landscape evolves, such displays of collective purpose are likely to be closely watched by both supporters and critics alike.

US Warns Citizens to Reconsider Travel to Pakistan Over High Security Risks



The United States has issued a fresh advisory urging its citizens to reconsider travel to Pakistan due to serious security concerns, including terrorism, crime, civil unrest, and the risk of kidnapping. This update from the US State Department places Pakistan under a Level 3 travel advisory, a category that signals elevated danger and cautions travellers to think twice before visiting the country.

According to the advisory, Pakistan's security environment is unpredictable, and terrorist attacks could occur with little or no warning. The State Department emphasised that various public and private places — such as transportation hubs, hotels, markets, shopping malls, airports, trains, schools, hospitals, places of worship, tourist spots, government buildings, and military sites — could potentially be targeted in violent acts.

In addition to the nationwide Level 3 warning, certain regions within Pakistan have been designated Level 4: Do Not Travel areas. This highest level of warning is reserved for

zones where the risk to personal safety is extreme and where the US government may have limited or no ability to provide assistance in emergencies. Parts of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa fall under this category due to ongoing threats from extremist groups and sustained violence. Under a Level 4 alert, US citizens are advised not to travel to those regions under any circumstances.

The advisory also highlights that local laws in Pakistan can pose challenges for foreigners, including restrictions on protests without permits. The State Department noted that American citizens, including those of Pakistani origin, have been detained in the past for participating in demonstrations. Travellers are cautioned to be aware of these legal conditions to avoid inadvertent violations that could lead to detention or other complications.

Kidnapping has been explicitly included in the travel warning as a distinct risk factor, reflecting incidents where foreigners or officials have been targeted in violent crimes. The US

government's inclusion of kidnapping in its risk indicators underscores the seriousness of the security environment in certain parts of Pakistan.

This advisory is part of the State Department's routine review of global travel risks, which considers factors such as terrorism, civil unrest, crime rates, and the ability of the US government to assist its citizens abroad. A Level 3 advisory does not ban travel, but it strongly recommends that Americans reconsider their plans and exercise heightened caution if they choose to go.

For those already in the country, the advisory encourages vigilance at all times and avoidance of known high risk areas. Travellers are urged to stay informed about local developments and to register with the US embassy or consulate so they can receive security updates or assistance if needed.

Overall, the warning reflects growing concerns about safety conditions in Pakistan and serves as a stark reminder for US citizens to carefully weigh the risks before travelling there.

India Criticises Pakistan Over Lifetime Immunity for Military Chief Asim Munir

India has sharply criticised Pakistan, accusing it of undermining democratic principles and the rule of law by granting sweeping powers and legal protection to Pakistan's military chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir. At a recent session of the United Nations Security Council, India's Permanent Representative urged Pakistan to reconsider constitutional changes that, in New Delhi's view, amount to a constitutional coup rather than genuine reform.

The controversy centers on the 27th Amendment to Pakistan's Constitution, passed in late 2025. Under this amendment, Pakistan created the new post of Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) — a position that places Munir, already one of the most influential figures in the country, in command of all three military services: the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The amendment also provides lifetime immunity from legal prosecution for Munir in his role as CDF, offering protection similar to that of the president. Critics argue this legal shield effectively places one individual beyond



judicial accountability.

India's envoy at the UN argued that the amendment has weakened civilian oversight and increased the military's dominance over Pakistan's constitutional framework. He described the overhaul as an example of how military influence has been enshrined in law rather than being restrained by democratic checks and balances. India's position reflects long-standing concerns about the military's role in Pakistan's politics, particu-

larly in a nuclear-armed state where the balance between civilian institutions and armed forces has historically been contested.

Under the amendment, Munir's role as CDF is set for a five-year term, but the lifetime legal immunity means that even after the term ends, he would remain shielded from prosecution related to his official actions. Similar protections have been extended to the chiefs of the Air Force and Navy, further consolidating the military's

institutional power. Critics argue that reducing government oversight and judicial scrutiny creates an environment where military authority can operate without sufficient accountability, potentially undermining democratic governance.

Supporters of the amendment within Pakistan argue that the restructuring modernises the command hierarchy and streamlines defence leadership amid complex regional security challenges. They claim that integrating the services

under a unified command could enhance operational effectiveness. However, opposition parties and civil rights advocates have voiced strong objections, warning that the extensive constitutional changes were pushed through with limited debate and may weaken civilian institutions.

India's diplomatic criticism highlights broader regional tensions and apprehensions about the implications of the amendment for stability and democratic norms in Pakistan. By urging Islamabad to reflect on the rule of law and the proper role of the military, India signaled that these constitutional changes are not merely an internal matter but could have consequences for governance and power balances in South Asia.

The controversy over Munir's expanded role and immunity reflects deeper debates about constitutional authority, civilian oversight, and the balance between national security and democratic accountability in Pakistan — issues that continue to resonate both domestically and across the region.

US Criticises Europe Over India-EU Trade Deal, Accuses Bloc of Prioritising Trade Over Ukraine



The United States has openly criticised European nations over their newly signed free trade agreement (FTA) with India, accusing them of prioritising economic interests over political solidarity with Ukraine amid the ongoing war with Russia. US officials described Europe's actions as disappointing and inconsistent with its stated support for Ukraine.

The India EU trade pact is being hailed by Euro-

pean leaders as one of the most significant trade deals in years. The agreement aims to deepen economic ties by reducing or eliminating tariffs on most goods traded between India and the EU, potentially boosting commerce and growth on both sides over the coming decade.

From Washington's perspective, this economic momentum has come at a strategic cost. US officials argued that by moving ahead with the

agreement, European countries appeared to place their commercial relationships above a unified approach to isolating Russia and supporting Ukraine through coordinated sanctions and economic pressure. They suggested that European nations had effectively chosen trade over stronger measures aimed at weakening Russia's capacity to continue its invasion.

A key point of contention is how energy and fuel flows have played into this dynamic. Critics in the US note that India continues to import discounted Russian oil, which is then refined into products such as diesel and jet fuel. European countries, in turn, have bought substantial quantities of these refined products. US officials characterised this arrangement as indirectly financing the conflict in Ukraine, even as Europe publicly condemns Rus-

sia's actions. The US also criticised Europe for declining to adopt similarly tough tariffs on India, which Washington has imposed to pressure countries more reliant on Russian energy imports. European reluctance to join in raising tariffs was seen as partly motivated by the desire to keep the India trade deal on course, which, according to the US, undermines the West's collective stance on Russia.

The debate highlights a broader tension within the Western alliance over how best to balance economic priorities, energy security, and geopolitical solidarity. European officials have countered that energy costs and economic stability for their populations remain pressing concerns, even as they support Ukraine militarily and politically. Many argue that maintaining robust economic ties with partners like India is also part of a diversified glob-

al strategy. For its part, the EU India trade agreement represents a landmark in international commerce, with both sides signalling high hopes for expanded market access and tariff removal on a large share of traded goods. Europe has described the pact as a positive step in building resilient economic relations in a shifting global landscape.

US criticism underscores the differences in how the US and European allies view the intersection of trade and geopolitical commitments, particularly in the context of the Ukraine conflict. While economic engagement remains a priority for many governments, Washington expects strategic alignment to be part of such decisions. This episode illustrates the ongoing complexities facing Western diplomacy as leaders navigate competing domestic and foreign policy goals.

Uncertainty Over Who Would Lead Iran If Supreme Leader Khamenei Is Removed

US Senator Marco Rubio has highlighted that there is no clear answer to who would assume leadership in Iran if Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei were removed or if the regime collapsed, underlining the complexity of Iran's political structure and the unpredictability of such a scenario.



Speaking to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Rubio was asked about the implications of a change in Iran's leadership amid rising tensions between Washington and Tehran. Rather than offering a definitive succession plan, he said that "no one knows" who would take over if Khamenei, who has led the Islamic Republic since 1989, were no longer in power. Rubio emphasised that shifting power in Iran would be far more complicated than in recent cases like Venezuela, where a relatively clear alternative leadership emerged after political upheaval.

Rubio explained that Iran's political system is deeply intertwined with its religious leadership, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and multiple constitutional bodies deriving authority from the supreme leader. In such a system, ultimate power is concentrated in one office, leaving little clarity on how authority would be transferred or who could legitimately fill a leadership vacuum. This opaque setup makes predicting outcomes difficult, even for

foreign policymakers. The senator's comments come amid heightened tensions, with US officials warning that military action remains an option if Tehran fails to negotiate on its nuclear program. A large naval presence has been deployed toward the region, and Washington has stressed the importance of preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, signalling that pressure could intensify if talks stall.

Iranian leaders have responded robustly, asserting that any military action would be met with forceful retaliation. Officials have criticised the notion of negotiations under threat, insisting that dialogue must take place on equal footing without intimidation. This stance reflects Iran's long-standing resistance to external pressure while maintaining its sovereign defense priorities.

Rubio also noted the US military's readiness in the Middle East, with tens of thousands of troops positioned within range of Iranian missiles and drones to protect American forces and allies. While high-

lighting the need for preparedness, he expressed hope that preemptive military action would not be necessary.

His acknowledgement of uncertainty about succession underscores how unpredictable a power transition in Iran could be. Unlike more conventional political systems with established succession rules, Iran's leadership is rooted in a theocratic structure where religious authority and political control are deeply fused. If the current regime were to fall, it would be extremely challenging to determine how new leadership could emerge.

In summary, Rubio's remarks highlight a fundamental dilemma: while discussions about regime change surface amid diplomatic and strategic pressures, there is no straightforward answer about who would replace Khamenei or how governance might unfold. This uncertainty complicates foreign policy planning and adds a layer of unpredictability to one of the world's most sensitive geopolitical flashpoints.

US Cybersecurity Chief Madhu Gottumukkala Under Scrutiny After Uploading Sensitive Files to Public ChatGPT

The acting head of the United States' top civilian cyber defence agency has come under intense scrutiny after reportedly uploading sensitive government documents into a public version of ChatGPT, raising questions about data security and the use of artificial intelligence tools within federal agencies.

Madhu Gottumukkala, who serves as the Acting Director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) — the agency responsible for protecting US government networks and critical infrastructure — is said to have taken special permission to use ChatGPT shortly after he began leading the agency in May 2025. At the time, access to the popular AI chatbot was blocked for other employees of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which oversees CISA. However, he was reportedly granted an exception by the agency's technology leader-

ship to use the tool.

Shortly after gaining access, Gottumukkala allegedly uploaded a set of government contracting documents marked "for official use only" into the public version of ChatGPT. While these files were not classified, the designation indicates that they contain sensitive information that is not intended for unrestricted public access. The act of uploading them to a portal used by millions of people worldwide has triggered widespread concern among cybersecurity professionals and government officials.

Automated systems at CISA flagged the uploads multiple times last August, prompting internal security alerts. These warnings are designed to detect and prevent potential data exfiltration or inadvertent disclosure of sensitive material from federal networks. In response to these alerts, senior officials at the DHS launched an internal re-

view to determine whether the incident posed any harm to national security or compromised the integrity of protected information. It remains unclear what the outcome of that review was.

The controversy is particularly sensitive because CISA's core mission is to defend against cyber threats — both foreign and domestic — and to ensure that federal networks and critical infrastructure remain secure. Critics argue that the mishandling of sensitive files by the agency's own leader, even if unintentional, undermines confidence in CISA's ability to execute that mission effectively.

Supporters of expanding the use of AI technologies in government say that tools like ChatGPT can enhance productivity and innovation if used with proper safeguards. However, this incident highlights the risks involved when public artificial intelligence platforms are used to process



sensitive information that was never intended to be shared outside secure environments.

The controversy has also sparked broader discussions about federal policies governing the use of external AI tools by government employees, especially within agencies tasked with national security and cybersecurity. Many experts argue that stricter controls are needed to prevent similar incidents and to protect sensitive government data from being exposed — even in-

advertently — on platforms that aggregate and process user inputs.

Gottumukkala's background includes decades of experience in information technology and cybersecurity, and he was appointed to lead CISA in an acting capacity after previously serving in senior roles. Regardless of intent, the episode is likely to increase scrutiny of both his leadership and federal guidelines on the secure use of artificial intelligence within government operations.

Weak Rupee in Focus: India Shouldn't Panic but Can't Ignore the Slide

The Economic Survey 2026 highlights a key concern for India's economy: the Indian rupee has weakened significantly against major currencies. While this depreciation is not immediately damaging, it deserves attention and strategic management rather than alarm. The rupee is currently "punching below its weight," meaning its value does not reflect India's strong economic fundamentals, even as global headwinds and capital flow shifts exert downward pressure.

Why the Rupee Is Weak

India's economy continues to perform well. Growth has been robust, inflation remains under control, banks and corporates maintain healthy balance sheets, and liquidity conditions are comfortable. Despite these strengths, the rupee has been sliding against the US dollar and other major currencies. This paradox occurs because exchange rates are influenced not just by trade but also by capital flows. When foreign investment slows or investors withdraw money from Indian markets, demand for dollars rises relative to rupees, pushing the currency lower.

In 2025-26, the rupee hit record lows. Foreign portfolio outflows, lower foreign direct investment, and heightened global risk aversion all contributed to this trend. India also runs a trade deficit in goods, meaning imports exceed exports, and while services exports and remittances are signif-



icant, they do not fully offset this gap. This reliance on foreign capital makes the rupee vulnerable when global sentiment shifts.

Weakness: Not All Bad, But Not Harmless

The Economic Survey notes that this weakness does not immediately harm India's economy. A weaker rupee can make Indian goods and services cheaper for foreign buyers, supporting exports, especially amid rising global protectionism. Additionally, inflation linked to imports has remained subdued, partly because crude oil prices have been relatively stable.

However, a persistently weak rupee can deter invest-

mentors. Currency erosion signals risk to global investors, potentially slowing capital inflows that India needs to finance its current account. This means India cannot simply ignore rupee weakness.

Global Context Matters

The decline is not purely a domestic issue. Global economic shifts, geopolitical tensions, and changes in investor risk appetite play major roles. When investors seek safer assets globally, emerging market currencies like the rupee often weaken. India's strategic position, compared with peers with larger reserves or deeper integration into global financial sys-

tems, also adds pressure on the currency.

What Needs Attention

Rather than panic, policymakers should focus on long-term structural strengths:

- Boosting export competitiveness through integration into global value chains
- Encouraging sustained foreign investment by enhancing policy credibility
- Strengthening manufacturing and export industries to reduce trade deficits
- Maintaining fiscal and monetary stability to build confidence among domestic and foreign investors

These measures can help align the rupee's valuation more closely with India's economic fundamentals, mitigating the impact of short-term global pressures.

Balanced Perspective

In conclusion, the Economic Survey emphasizes that a weak rupee is not catastrophic and can offer advantages in certain trade conditions. However, ignoring its implications is unwise, given its potential effect on investor sentiment and capital flows. A measured, structural policy response is essential to navigate the challenges posed by the current weakness while supporting sustainable economic growth.

Budget Day Poses a Crucial Test for Indian Banks: Rally or Sell-Off?

The Indian banking sector is approaching Budget Day at a pivotal moment, with its recent performance raising questions about whether the anticipated Union Budget will trigger a relief rally or lead to a sell-off in bank stocks.

After steady gains for much of 2025—supported by reasonable valuations, improving asset quality, and stable earnings—the momentum for banking shares has softened in early 2026. A combination of global trade tensions, tariff uncertainties, and modest quarterly earnings has prompted investors to remain cautious as markets look to the Budget for fresh direction.

Mixed Performance So Far in 2026

Banking stocks have shown a mixed trend this year. Large private banks, such as HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank, have seen declines, while others, including SBI, Bank of Baroda, Axis Bank, and Federal Bank, have recorded modest gains. This uneven performance highlights the sector's uncertain footing just as policymakers prepare to outline fiscal priorities for the coming year.



RBI Policy Outlook and Interest Rates

Many economists expect the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to maintain its current interest rate stance in its February policy meeting. A pause in rate changes could keep hopes alive for eventual rate cuts later in 2026, which typically support credit growth and banking sector performance. However, the timing and scale of any easing will depend heavily on the fiscal signals that emerge from the Budget.

The Budget's fiscal stance—particularly government borrowing plans and capital expenditure commitments—could influence liquidity in bond markets and overall liquidity conditions for banks. A credible path

for managing the fiscal deficit and a robust capital-spending roadmap may help keep bond yields in check, easing pressure on banks' net interest margins and encouraging investors to buy into financial stocks.

Margins and Profitability Under the Spotlight

While rate cuts can benefit credit growth, they also pose challenges for profitability. The net interest margin, a key measure of bank profitability, is sensitive to rate movements. Early indicators show private lenders have managed to safeguard margins so far, thanks to lower cost of funds and deposit repricing benefits. But as rate cuts fully reflect in earnings, margin com-

pression could become a concern, especially if deposit costs remain elevated.

Many banks have been adjusting strategies to mitigate margin pressures, such as focusing on low-cost deposit mobilisation and adjusting loan portfolios to preserve yield. The approach taken by individual banks in this evolving rate environment will play a key role in investor sentiment ahead of and after the Budget.

Budget Signals Could Shape Market Reaction

Markets are already bracing for the fiscal blueprint, and expectations are high that Budget announcements will shape the near-term trajectory for bank stocks. If the Budget offers clear support for growth, a stable fiscal deficit trajectory, and incentives for credit expansion, it could boost confidence and trigger a market rally in bank shares. Conversely, if fiscal pressures dominate or key reforms are lacking, investors might respond with a sell-off, especially in a sector as sensitive to macroeconomic signals as banking.

In this context, the banking sector stands at a crossroads—poised between optimism and caution—with the Budget acting as a crucial litmus test for investor direction in the weeks ahead.

Markets Maintain Winning Streak for Third Day; Sensex Gains 222 Points, Nifty Holds Above 25,400

Indian equity markets extended their positive run for a third consecutive trading session, closing higher on Thursday despite bouts of intraday volatility. Benchmark indices demonstrated resilience throughout the day, with the Sensex advancing 222 points and the Nifty ending firmly above the crucial 25,400 mark. The continued rally reflects steady investor confidence amid supportive domestic cues and improving sentiment in global markets.

The session began on a cautious note as investors weighed mixed signals, leading to fluctuating movements in early trade. Both the Sensex and Nifty moved between gains and losses during the first half of the session. However, buying interest gradually picked up as the day progressed, helping the indices recover from minor dips and close in positive territory. The ability of the market to absorb selling pressure and still end higher underscored the underlying strength in sentiment.

Market breadth remained healthy, with advancing stocks outnumbering decliners on most



exchanges. This broader participation suggested that the rally was not limited to a handful of heavyweights but was supported by buying across multiple segments of the market.

On the sectoral front, energy, metal, private banking, and real estate stocks emerged as key contributors to the day's gains. Strong buying interest in these sectors provided crucial support to the benchmarks and helped offset weakness elsewhere. Pri-

ivate banks, in particular, continued to attract investor attention due to expectations of stable credit growth and improving asset quality.

In contrast, some defensive and consumption-oriented sectors witnessed mild pressure. Information technology, pharmaceuticals, FMCG, auto, and PSU banking stocks saw selective selling, which capped sharper upside for the indices. Analysts noted that profit booking in these

sectors, following recent gains, was a natural part of market consolidation.

Midcap and smallcap stocks also ended the session higher, although their gains were relatively modest compared to frontline indices. The measured performance in these segments indicates that investors are adopting a selective approach, preferring quality stocks over broad-based risk-taking.

Overall market sentiment has been buoyed by a combination of domestic factors and relatively stable global trends over the past few sessions. The three-day winning streak suggests that buyers remain in control, even as traders stay alert to potential volatility near key technical levels.

Looking ahead, market participants are expected to track upcoming economic data, corporate announcements, and global developments for fresh cues. While the near-term outlook remains positive, analysts advise caution and recommend a stock-specific strategy, as sectoral divergence and intermittent profit booking could continue in the sessions ahead.

MCX Increases Strike Price Steps for Silver Options to ₹1,000 to Boost Tradability



The Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) has revised the strike price intervals for silver options contracts to improve tradability and adapt to sharp price movements. From January 29, 2026, the strike price interval for both Silver and Silver Mini options has been increased from ₹250 to ₹1,000 for all existing and new contracts.

What Changed in the Contract Structure?

The gap between successive strike prices—the preset price levels at which an option can be exercised—will now be ₹1,000 instead of ₹250. This applies to both standard Silver options, based on 30 kg futures contracts, and Silver Mini options, based on 5 kg futures. The wider intervals will be applied to all current contracts with open interest as well as future listings.

Practically, this means that instead of having strike prices like ₹3,99,250, ₹3,99,500, or ₹3,99,750, the listed options will feature prices such as ₹4,01,000, ₹4,02,000, and ₹4,03,000. This change simplifies the strike grid and aligns it better with the current price range of silver.

Why the Interval Was Widened

The move comes in response to significant price volatility in silver markets. When the strike price gap was last set at ₹250, silver prices were much lower, and smaller intervals made sense. With silver prices rising sharply, the previous narrow intervals became impractical, as several strikes ended up far from the prevailing price, making it difficult for traders to find actively traded options near the money.

By increasing the strike intervals to ₹1,000, MCX aims to ensure that tradable strike prices are available even in fast-moving markets. Wider intervals

help streamline the options chain, reduce redundancy, and concentrate liquidity at more relevant price levels, which is particularly useful during periods of sharp price movements.

Impact on Traders and Market Liquidity

For traders, the change means fewer total strike price levels to choose from but more meaningful and potentially better-liquid options around major price points. This can make it easier to execute strategies and manage positions without dealing with an overcrowded list of less relevant strike prices. Wider intervals also simplify the pricing landscape, particularly when the underlying asset's price has moved significantly from the original contract design.

The revision does not directly change the price of the options themselves; it alters how the price levels at which those options are available are spaced. The actual premiums traders pay will continue to be guided by market forces, but the available strike points will now reflect broader steps in the underlying silver price.

Why This Matters Now

Silver prices have experienced heightened volatility in recent months, moving rapidly through several price thresholds. This has shown that narrow strike intervals can become unwieldy in fast-shifting markets. With the wider ₹1,000 intervals now in place, MCX expects smoother option trading, supporting traders in navigating trends and sudden price swings.

Overall, this revision is designed to keep contract specifications relevant to current prices and improve tradability for all participants in silver and silver mini options.

SEBI Introduces Reforms to Strengthen Market Integrity and Investor Protection



The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has announced a series of regulatory reforms aimed at enhancing market integrity, protecting investors, and improving the overall functioning of India's capital markets. These initiatives reflect SEBI's commitment to creating a transparent, resilient, and inclusive securities market ecosystem.

A central focus of the reforms is investor safety. SEBI has introduced a standardized UPI payment structure for all intermediaries collecting funds from investors. This ensures that payments are routed through secure and verified channels, reducing the risk of fraud or misdirected transfers. Additionally, the regulator has launched the "SEBI Check" verification system to make investor payments more reliable and accessible.

To combat financial scams and increase public awareness, SEBI has initiated a nationwide campaign titled "SEBI vs SCAM." The program educates investors on recognizing warning signs, using trusted grievance redressal mechanisms, and adopting safe digital practices. Training sessions have also been organized at the grassroots level to enhance financial literacy in rural areas.

SEBI is also working to reduce regulatory friction for market participants. Stock brokers operating in the GIFT International Financial Services Centre (GIFT-IFSC) can now do so under a designated business unit without separate regulatory approval, easing compliance requirements. Governance norms have

been strengthened with stricter disclosure rules for related-party transactions, protecting minority shareholder interests and promoting corporate oversight.

To simplify investor onboarding, intermediaries are now allowed to use the e-KYC Setu System from the National Payments Corporation of India as an alternative to Aadhaar-based verification. This change aims to make market entry smoother, particularly for new investors who face challenges with traditional KYC procedures.

SEBI is also enhancing transparency in advisory services. The regulator is rolling out the Past Risk and Return Verification Agency to independently verify the claims made by investment advisers, research analysts, and algorithmic trading providers. This initiative seeks to curb misleading performance claims and ensure investors have accurate information when making decisions.

In addition, the Securities Markets Code, 2025, consolidates three key securities laws into a single framework, simplifying regulation and strengthening governance. The Code proposes public consultations for rule-making, clearer enforcement timelines, expanded regulatory board representation, and statutory recognition for market infrastructure institutions.

Together, these reforms aim to provide stronger investor protection, ensure fair and efficient markets, and support the healthy growth of India's capital markets by fostering trust, transparency, and regulatory certainty.

35 Years in the Skies: Emotional Farewell of Air India Air Hostess Moves the Internet



A deeply touching video capturing the final flight of an Air India air hostess after 35 years of service has gone viral, resonating with viewers for its quiet emotion and dignity. The clip shows the veteran crew member making her last in-flight announcement, marking the end of a long and devoted career in aviation.

The video was filmed on a long-haul flight from Chicago to Delhi and shared on social media by her daughter. In it, the air hostess, dressed in Air India's signature blue saree, calmly delivers routine information to passengers — introducing the pilots, sharing standard flight details, and welcoming travellers on board. To most passengers, it may have sounded like any other announcement, but for her and those close to her, it symbolised the conclusion of a professional journey spanning more than three decades.

What struck viewers most was her composure. Despite the emotional weight of the moment, she remained poised and professional, reflecting the discipline and dedication that defined her career. Her daughter's caption revealed the significance of the announcement, noting that it was her mother's final flight and last announcement as a crew member. That simple context transformed an ordinary moment into a powerful tribute to a life spent in service.

Social media users responded with warmth and admiration, praising her

grace, commitment, and longevity in a demanding profession. Many commenters expressed gratitude for her years of service, while others said the video gave them goosebumps. Several people reflected on how rare it is to see such dedication in today's fast-changing work culture and applauded her for completing 35 years in a role that requires constant travel, adaptability, and emotional resilience.

The farewell also prompted broader appreciation for cabin crew members, whose work often goes unnoticed beyond brief interactions during flights. Viewers pointed out that behind every announcement and service routine is a career built on long hours, missed family moments, changing time zones, and unwavering professionalism.

Fellow crew members and passengers were also seen acknowledging the milestone, offering congratulations and heartfelt wishes. The understated nature of the farewell — no grand ceremony, just a final announcement — made it even more moving, underscoring the humility with which she approached her work until the very end.

The viral video serves as a reminder of the human stories behind aviation uniforms. Beyond take-offs and landings are lives dedicated to service, connection, and care. For this Air India air hostess, her final flight was not just the end of a career, but a graceful goodbye to the skies she called home for 35 remarkable years.

Bengaluru Auto Driver Wins Hearts by Returning Passenger's Extra Fare



A simple act of honesty by an auto-rickshaw driver in Bengaluru has earned widespread praise online, reminding people that integrity still thrives in everyday interactions. The incident came to light after a passenger shared his experience on social media, where it quickly resonated with many users.

The passenger had booked an auto for a short ride and chose to pay digitally using UPI at the end of the trip. Due to a technical glitch, the payment did not immediately reflect in the driver's account. To avoid any delay, the driver shared an alternative payment option, and the passenger made the payment again. Unbeknownst to both at the time, the first transaction had also gone through, resulting in the driver receiving the fare twice.

As soon as the driver realised the mistake, he attempted to return the extra amount on the spot. However, further technical issues prevented the refund from going through immediately. Since the passenger was in a hurry to attend a doctor's appointment, he had to leave without receiving the money back. The driver noted

down the passenger's contact details and assured him that the excess fare would be returned later.

True to his word, the driver transferred the extra amount back to the passenger's account a few hours later. The unexpected gesture left the passenger pleasantly surprised, prompting him to share the story online as a reminder that there are still honest people who go out of their way to do the right thing.

The post quickly attracted positive reactions, with many users praising the driver's integrity and sincerity. Several commenters shared similar experiences, noting that such acts of honesty often go unnoticed but deserve recognition. Others pointed out that stories like these help counter negative stereotypes and highlight the everyday goodness present in urban life.

In a city known for its fast pace and daily commuting challenges, this small yet meaningful act stood out. It showed that honesty does not require grand gestures — sometimes, simply returning what does not belong to you is enough to restore faith in human decency.

Nature's Frozen Spectacle: A River of Snow Stuns Himachal's Pangi Valley



A rare and breathtaking natural phenomenon has left residents and viewers across the country spellbound after a dramatic video showed what appeared to be a river of snow flowing through a village in Himachal Pradesh's remote Pangi Valley. The striking visuals, captured in Mindhal village of Chamba district, show massive volumes of snow cascading down a mountainside, moving with a force and fluidity usually associated with water.

The spectacle followed

days of intense snowfall in the high-altitude region, which had already blanketed homes, roads, and fields under thick layers of snow. As snow accumulated heavily on the steep slopes surrounding the village, gravity eventually took over. Large sheets of compacted snow broke loose and began sliding downhill in a continuous stream, creating the illusion of a white river carving its way through the valley.

For locals, the sight was both mesmerizing and alarming. Many residents

stepped out to record the moment, aware that such scenes are rare even in a region accustomed to harsh winters. At the same time, villagers were quick to recognize the potential danger. Traditional warning methods were used to alert others in the area, urging people to move away from vulnerable spots and stay clear of the snow's path. In remote mountain communities like Mindhal, such local knowledge and quick communication are crucial for safety.

Pangi Valley is one of

Himachal Pradesh's most isolated regions, especially during winter when heavy snowfall often cuts off road connectivity for weeks. Life here revolves around adapting to extreme weather, and while residents are familiar with snow slides and avalanches, the sheer scale and visibility of this flowing snow made it particularly dramatic. The snow appeared to move smoothly and continuously, resembling a slow-moving glacier or waterfall rather than a sudden avalanche. The video quickly

spread on social media, drawing admiration from viewers who described the scene as surreal and magical. Many expressed awe at the raw beauty of the Himalayas in winter, calling it a reminder of nature's power and unpredictability. Others, however, pointed out the risks such phenomena pose, especially in regions where emergency services and infrastructure are limited.

Such snow flows typically occur when heavy snowfall builds up on steep terrain and the weight becomes too much for the slope to hold. Factors like wind, temperature changes, or minor disturbances can trigger the movement. While not entirely uncommon in mountainous areas, witnessing it so clearly and close to a settlement is unusual.

As winter continues to grip the Himalayan region, residents of Pangi Valley remain cautious, keeping a close watch on weather conditions. The dramatic river of snow serves as a powerful reminder that in the mountains, beauty and danger often go hand in hand — and that respect for nature is essential for survival in these awe-inspiring landscapes.

Love Without Borders: Indian Couple Spends ₹15 Lakh to Bring Their Pet Dog to Australia

An Indian couple's emotional journey to reunite with their pet dog after relocating overseas has touched hearts across social media, highlighting the deep bond many families share with their animals. Refusing to leave their dog behind while moving to Australia, the couple chose to navigate a long, complex, and expensive process to ensure their four-legged companion could stay with them.

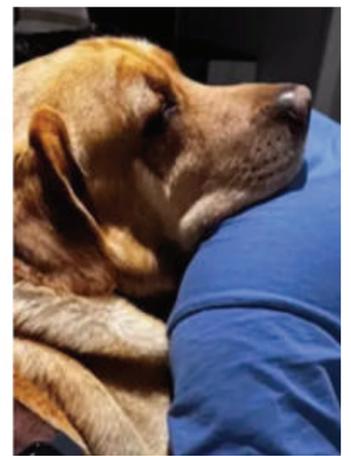
The couple, originally from Hyderabad, were excited about starting a new chapter in Australia but faced an immediate dilemma when they learned about the country's strict biosecurity rules. Australia has some of the toughest animal import regulations in the world, and pets from countries that are not classified as rabies-free cannot enter directly. This meant their dog would first have to stay in a third, rabies-free country for several months before being allowed into Australia.

What followed was a

painstaking process involving extensive paperwork, multiple veterinary tests, vaccinations, international transport arrangements, and long periods of quarantine. Over the course of nearly six months, the couple ended up spending close to ₹15 lakh to complete all the formalities required for their dog's relocation.

To help their pet settle initially, the couple stayed with him for a short period in the interim country before having to leave him in a professional boarding facility to complete the remaining quarantine duration. The separation was emotionally taxing. They relied on regular updates, photos, and video calls to stay connected and reassure themselves that their dog was healthy and well cared for.

Despite the financial burden and emotional strain, the couple never considered giving up. They described their dog not as a pet, but as their child — a member of the family whose place could



not be replaced. After nearly 190 days of waiting, the long-anticipated reunion finally took place when their dog was cleared to travel to Australia.

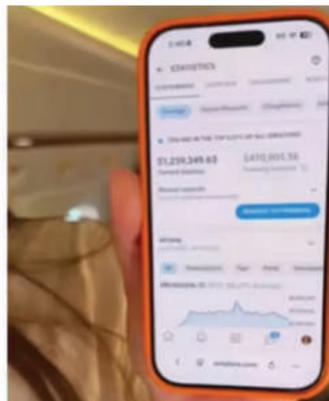
The moment they were reunited was filled with relief, joy, and overwhelming emotion. For the couple, every challenge they had faced sud-

denly felt worthwhile. They acknowledged that not everyone would understand spending such a large amount of money on a pet, but insisted that love and responsibility mattered more than convenience.

Their story quickly resonated online, with many people praising their commitment and compassion.

The response reflects a growing shift in how pets are viewed — no longer just animals, but family members whose emotional value is immeasurable. The couple's experience stands as a powerful reminder that for some, love truly knows no borders, even when it comes with paperwork, patience, and a hefty price tag.

OnlyFans Creator Sophie Rain Says She Earned \$101 Million, Insists Her Claims Are Genuine



OnlyFans creator and social media influencer Sophie Rain has sparked widespread discussion online after claiming she has earned more than \$101 million from the subscription-based platform. Addressing scepticism around the staggering figure, Rain said she has no reason to lie and shared what she described as

proof of her earnings to silence critics.

In a video posted on social media, Rain showed a screen recording of her OnlyFans dashboard, repeatedly refreshing the page to display her all-time gross revenue. The figure visible on the screen crossed \$101 million, prompting intense debate and curiosity about

the earning potential of digital content platforms. Rain said the video would be her final response to doubts surrounding her income and that she wanted to be transparent about her success.

Rain's claim immediately drew attention due to the sheer scale of the amount, placing her among the highest-earn-

ing creators on the platform. While many viewers expressed shock and disbelief, others applauded her for openly addressing questions and sharing evidence rather than ignoring the criticism.

Despite the attention, Rain was careful to point out that her experience is far from typical. She emphasised that the vast majority of OnlyFans creators do not earn anywhere close to such sums. According to her, most users on the platform make relatively modest incomes, and some struggle to earn a sustainable monthly amount. She cautioned aspiring creators against assuming that her level of success is easily achievable.

Rain's rise highlights the growing influence of creator-driven platforms, where a small number of top performers earn enormous sums while many others remain largely un-

noticed. Her success is attributed to a combination of consistent content creation, strong engagement with subscribers, and an already sizeable online following.

The conversation surrounding her earnings has also reignited broader discussions about influencer culture, online monetisation, and the aspirational image often associated with social media success. For some, Rain's story represents the possibilities of the digital economy. For others, it serves as a reminder that viral success stories often reflect rare exceptions rather than the norm.

Regardless of the debate, Sophie Rain's claim has placed her firmly in the spotlight and added another high-profile example to discussions about wealth, transparency, and opportunity in the creator economy.

Aryna Sabalenka Dominates Elina Svitolina to Reach Fourth Straight Australian Open Final

Top seeded Aryna Sabalenka continued her commanding form at the 2026 Australian Open, cruising past Elina Svitolina in straight sets to secure her place in the final for the fourth consecutive year. Sabalenka's dominant performance underscored her status as the world's No. 1 and a strong favourite to lift the trophy again this season.

In the semi-final clash at Melbourne's Rod Laver Arena, Sabalenka overpowered Svitolina with a 6-2, 6-3 victory, taking just over an hour to close out the match. The Belarusian dictated play from the start, using her powerful groundstrokes and aggressive mindset to keep the Ukrainian on the back foot throughout both sets. Sabalenka broke Svitolina's serve early in each set and never looked in danger, finishing with a high number of winners and controlling the tempo with relentless intensity.

The win keeps Sabalenka's impressive unbeaten run for the season alive, and she has now reached her eighth career Grand Slam final — with three



Australian Open titles already to her name from previous editions. More notably, she becomes one of the few women in the Open Era to reach four consecutive finals at the Australian Open, a feat achieved only by the likes of Evonne Goolagong and Martina Hingis.

The match was not with-

out drama. Early in the first set, Sabalenka was penalised a point for hindrance after an extended grunt during a rally, a rare moment that briefly paused her rhythm. However, she quickly regrouped, broke Svitolina's serve shortly after, and maintained control for the rest of the encounter.

Svitolina, a former world top 10 player returning to her best after a break from the tour, had enjoyed a strong run into the semi-finals, including a convincing quarter-final win over a top opponent. She fought hard throughout the match but was ultimately unable to counter Sabalenka's superior fire-

power and consistency. Despite the loss, Svitolina's performance at the tournament boosted her confidence and ranking as she continues to build momentum on the WTA Tour.

With this victory, Sabalenka now awaits the winner of the second women's semi-final between Jessica Pegula and Elena Rybakina, both of whom have enjoyed fine runs in the tournament. The final, scheduled later in the week, promises to be a compelling showdown. Sabalenka will be aiming to add another major trophy to her collection and potentially secure a third Australian Open title in four years, while her opponent will hope to claim one of the biggest achievements of their career.

Sabalenka's relentless power, tactical maturity, and mental toughness have been key to her success in Melbourne. Her deep run at this year's Australian Open once again underlines her dominance on hard courts and places her firmly among the favourites for the 2026 Grand Slam crown.

Sunil Gavaskar Criticises Sanju Samson's Technique After Another Poor T20I Dismissal



Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar criticised wicketkeeper batter Sanju Samson following India's defeat to New Zealand in the fourth T20 International in Visakhapatnam. Samson, who has been struggling for consistency in the ongoing series, was dismissed for 24 runs off 15 balls, and Gavaskar pointed to a glaring technical flaw that he believes contributed directly to the dismissal.

Samson had looked in reasonable touch early in his innings, connecting some boundaries and a six to provide a boost in India's chase. However, when New Zealand spinner Mitchell Santner struck, Samson's footwork — or lack of it — was the centre of Gavaskar's criticism. He said that Samson showed "no footwork at all" when trying to negotiate the ball, standing static and merely making room to play through the off side. This left all three stumps exposed and made it easier for the bowler to hit the target.

Gavaskar stressed that there was "hardly any movement of the feet," highlighting that effective use of footwork is crucial, especially against quality spin bowling. By moving his feet inadequately and drifting outside the leg stump, Samson failed to create the leverage

needed to either defend or aggressively play the delivery, ultimately resulting in his edge and dismissal.

This technical issue has been a recurring problem for Samson. The batter has scored only 40 runs across his last four T20I innings, and his recent lack of impactful performances has intensified discussion around his place in the team, particularly with the T20 World Cup 2026 approaching and competition for batting spots heating up.

India's batting effort in the match fell short overall. New Zealand posted a strong total of 215 for seven, propelled by a quick 100-run partnership in the powerplay, while India were bundled out for 165 in 18.4 overs despite a flurry of runs from Shivam Dube and a solid contribution from Rinku Singh. Santner's bowling effort, including three wickets, proved pivotal in restricting India's reply.

Samson's dismissal and Gavaskar's subsequent critique have added fuel to the ongoing debate about his technique and position in India's T20 set-up. With the final game in the series looming and bigger tournaments ahead, the pressure on Samson to refine his approach and produce consistent scores has never been higher.

USA Cricketer Aaron Jones Provisionally Banned by ICC Over Anti-Corruption Charges



USA batter Aaron Jones, one of the most experienced and prominent players in American cricket, has been provisionally suspended from all forms of the game by the International Cricket Council (ICC) just weeks before the T20 World Cup 2026, dealing a significant blow to the USA team's

preparations.

The ICC announced that Jones, 31, has been charged with multiple breaches of anti-corruption rules under both the Cricket West Indies (CWI) Anti-Corruption Code and the ICC's Anti-Corruption Code. The charges stem largely from incidents during the Bim10 tourna-

ment in Barbados during the 2023-24 season, which falls under the jurisdiction of the CWI, as well as from alleged breaches linked to international matches.

The specific allegations against Jones include attempting to fix or improperly influence the outcome, conduct, or

progress of matches, failing to disclose corrupt approaches to relevant authorities, and not cooperating with investigators probing the possible offences. Additional charges relate to obstructing the anti-corruption investigation itself by concealing or tampering with information that could be relevant to the inquiry.

As a result of these serious accusations, Jones has been provisionally suspended with immediate effect. The ICC's disciplinary process will continue while the suspension remains in place, and Jones has been given 14 days from January 28, 2026 to formally respond to the charges. If he fails to address the allegations, further action could follow.

Jones has been a key figure for USA cricket, featuring in more than 100 international matches for the country, including 52 One Day Internationals and 48 T20 Internationals. He played a major role in the USA's impressive run to the Super Eight stage

on their T20 World Cup debut in 2024 and has also been active in global franchise leagues.

His absence could be a major setback for the USA side as they approach the T20 World Cup 2026, scheduled to begin in early February. Jones had been part of the group of USA players training in Sri Lanka ahead of the tournament, but due to the suspension he is now ineligible for selection until the matter is resolved.

The ICC noted that these charges are part of a broader ongoing investigation, and additional charges against others may be issued in due course, signalling that the probe into alleged corrupt conduct could widen.

The development underscores the ICC's zero-tolerance stance on corruption and match-fixing, and highlights the continued emphasis on enforcing strict anti-corruption measures across international and domestic cricket competitions worldwide.

Iceland Cricket's Viral Joke Offers to Replace Pakistan at T20 World Cup Amid Participation Uncertainty



A light-hearted social media post by Iceland Cricket has gone viral online after the tiny European board jokingly offered its own team as a potential replacement for Pakistan in the ICC T20 World Cup 2026, highlighting growing uncertainty around Pakistan's participation in the tournament. The humorous message spread widely among cricket fans and commentators, adding levity to an otherwise tense off-field situation involving the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and the International Cricket Council (ICC).

The tongue-in-cheek offer was posted on X (formerly Twitter) by Iceland Cricket, which said it was ready to fly to Colombo at short notice if Pakistan decided to withdraw from the World Cup — slated to begin on February 7, 2026 and co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka. The post joked about the logistical challenges of making the long flight from Iceland's Keflavik airport to Colombo in time, quipping that their "opening bat is an insomniac" in a humorous reference to their team's imagined preparedness.

To drive the joke home, the Iceland Cricket account even shared a screenshot of potential travel plans from Keflavik to Colombo, highlighting the absurdity of a last-minute call up for a team from a nation with very limited cricketing infrastructure. The viral message struck a chord with cricket fans who found the surreal scenario amusing, especially given the context of the ongoing dispute.

The backdrop to this jest lies in

the uncertainty surrounding Pakistan's participation in the T20 World Cup. The PCB has not yet confirmed whether their team will compete, as discussions with the government and ICC continue. The hesitation stems from controversy over Bangladesh's exclusion from the tournament earlier, when the ICC replaced Bangladesh with Scotland after the Bangladesh Cricket Board declined to play in India due to security concerns. Pakistan has expressed disagreement with that decision and has been considering its own stance, with officials suggesting that a final decision would be made in early February.

Despite the humorous social media post, the situation carries real implications for the tournament's structure and fan expectations. Pakistan's participation is normally a major draw for audiences worldwide — not least because of its fiercely followed rivalry with India — and any last-minute withdrawal could impact scheduling, broadcast revenues, and the competitive makeup of the event.

While Iceland Cricket's playful intervention is unlikely to translate into an actual replacement scenario, it underscores the growing impatience and attention around Pakistan's pending decision. Fans and commentators have been sharing and laughing over the post as they await official clarity on whether Pakistan will ultimately compete in the World Cup, or if serious discussions about alternatives could arise.

Rajasthan Royals Poised to Become IPL's First Billion Dollar Franchise, RCB Could Follow

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is on track to hit a major commercial milestone as Rajasthan Royals (RR) move closer to becoming the first franchise in league history to be valued at over \$1 billion (about ₹9,200 crore). With strong interest from global investors and multiple bidders lined up, the Royals' potential sale could reshape how IPL teams are valued and traded.

RR's current owners — Emerging Media Ventures along with partners RedBird Capital and Tiger Global — have received striking offers for the franchise. Several bids are reportedly in the \$1.1 billion to \$1.3 billion range, indicating significant confidence among global investment groups in the long-term commercial prospects of IPL teams. These bids come despite RR's mixed recent performance on the field, showing the league's appeal as a financial asset.

The sale process is being managed by a major advisory firm with experience in high-profile sports deals, underscoring the seriousness of the trans-

action. If finalized at current figures, RR would set a new benchmark valuation for cricket franchises not just in India but globally.

Why This Matters

The IPL has grown rapidly into one of the most lucrative sports leagues worldwide, driven by massive media rights deals, sponsorship revenue, and a huge fanbase that spans continents. Over time, franchise valuations have soared, reflecting not just cricketer success but commercial potential. RR's prospective billion-dollar status highlights how investment interest in the league continues to rise, with teams increasingly viewed as long-term brand and media assets.

RCB Could Surpass the Royals

Attention is now turning to another major IPL franchise: Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB). The 2025 IPL champions are widely regarded as one of the league's strongest brands, bolstered by a massive fanbase and title success. RCB's ownership is reportedly exploring a sale or stake reduction.

Market observers be-



lieve that bids for RCB could potentially exceed those for RR, possibly reaching the \$2 billion mark once formal offers are on the table. If that happens, RCB could become not just the second IPL franchise to cross the billion-dollar threshold, but the most valuable in the league.

Investor Appetite and the Future of IPL Valuations

Interest from major pri-

ivate equity firms and global investors — including names linked to bids for both RR and RCB — reflects how the IPL is increasingly seen through the lens of global sports and entertainment investment. As teams increasingly harness digital engagement, sponsorship growth, and international fan reach, their valuations are becoming less tied solely to on-field success and more

to strategic brand and media potential.

If the transactions close at current levels, they could signal a new era in the commercial evolution of the IPL, where franchise valuations regularly enter the billion-dollar league. That would place the IPL alongside some of the world's most valuable sports leagues, strengthening its standing not just in cricket but in the broader global sports economy.

Vijay Sethupathi Finds True Fulfilment in Giving Back to Society



National Award-winning actor Vijay Sethupathi, known for his versatility and grounded personality, has once again won hearts—not through a film performance, but with his honest and inspiring thoughts on life. Speaking during a recent interaction, the popular actor shared his belief that true happiness does not come from fame or wealth, but from helping others and bringing positive change to people's lives.

Vijay Sethupathi revealed that despite his success in cinema, he has always believed in living a simple life and giving back to society. He spoke about his consistent efforts to support people in need, stating that he regularly helps unemployed individuals by assisting them in finding jobs and meeting basic necessities. According to the actor, these acts of kindness give him a sense of fulfillment that no material success can match. "I

earn money so that I can help others. That is where my real happiness lies," he said.

The actor also reflected on his journey as a producer, admitting that not all ventures were financially successful. However, he emphasized that monetary losses never discouraged him from doing the right thing. On several occasions, Vijay Sethupathi reportedly chose not to take his remuneration in order to reduce the burden on struggling producers. He explained that seeing relief and happiness on others' faces matters more to him than personal profit.

Vijay Sethupathi's words underline his philosophy that cinema should not only entertain but also inspire compassion and responsibility. His approach to stardom stands in contrast to the often glamour-driven perception of the film industry. Fans admire him not just for his powerful performances, but also for

his humility and empathy, qualities that have earned him respect across languages and regions.

On the professional front, the actor continues to push creative boundaries with his choice of films. He is currently gearing up for the release of a unique silent film project, which has already generated curiosity for its unconventional storytelling. Known for experimenting with diverse roles, Vijay Sethupathi believes that meaningful cinema can coexist with commercial success.

As he balances a demanding film career with a strong sense of social responsibility, Vijay Sethupathi's message resonates deeply in today's world. His belief that happiness is found in selflessness rather than self-interest serves as a powerful reminder that true success lies not just in achievements, but in the lives one touches along the way.

Amardeep Sumathi Sathakam Trailer Promises a Wholesome Rural Entertainer



The trailer of Sumathi Sathakam, starring Big Boss fame Amardeep Chowdary in the lead role, has been officially released, offering audiences an engaging glimpse into a vibrant rural entertainer filled with humour, romance, and emotion. The trailer has generated positive buzz, especially among fans of village-based storytelling and family-friendly cinema.

Directed by M. M. Naidu and produced by Kommalapati Sai Sudhakar under the banner of Vision Movie Makers, Sumathi Sathakam is set against a rustic backdrop that reflects the cultural flavour and everyday life of a Telugu village. The trailer introduces Amardeep Chowdary as a lively and relatable protagonist whose journey is shaped by love, traditions, and unexpected situations that arise in a rural setting.

The film's narrative appears to balance comedy and emotion, with several light-hearted moments blended seamlessly

ly with heartfelt scenes. Amardeep's character is portrayed with charm and humour, showcasing his growth as a lead actor after gaining popularity on television and reality shows. His performance in the trailer suggests a role rooted in mass appeal, designed to connect with audiences across age groups.

The female lead, Sayli Chaudhari, brings freshness to the film, and the chemistry between the lead pair stands out as one of the highlights of the trailer. Their interactions add warmth to the story and hint at a romantic arc that unfolds naturally within the village environment. The supporting cast, comprising familiar faces from Telugu cinema, further enriches the narrative by adding colour, humour, and emotional depth to the proceedings.

Visually, Sumathi Sathakam captures the essence of rural life through lively locations, traditional settings, and authentic detailing. The

music complements the film's tone, enhancing both the comedic and emotional moments showcased in the trailer. The background score effectively supports the narrative flow, adding energy to key sequences.

With its focus on simple storytelling, local humour, and relatable characters, Sumathi Sathakam positions itself as a wholesome entertainer aimed at families and mass audiences. The trailer suggests a film that celebrates rural culture while delivering clean entertainment, a combination that has traditionally resonated well with Telugu viewers.

Slated for a theatrical release on February 6, 2026, Sumathi Sathakam is expected to appeal to audiences looking for a feel-good cinema experience. With the trailer setting the right expectations, the film is poised to make a strong impression as a light-hearted rural drama packed with entertainment and emotion.

Ranveer Singh's Dhurandhar OTT Release Date Announced

Bollywood sensation Ranveer Singh's blockbuster spy action thriller Dhurandhar is set to make its digital debut soon, delighting audiences who have been eagerly waiting to watch the film from home. After a spectacular theatrical run that drew massive crowds and praise for its high-octane espionage narrative, the movie is now ready to premiere on a popular OTT platform.

Directed by Aditya Dhar, Dhurandhar hit cinemas in early December and quickly became one of the highest-grossing Hindi films of the year, driven by strong word-of-mouth and audience excitement around its gripping storyline. The film stars Ranveer Singh as a daring intelligence agent, supported by an ensemble cast including Akshaye Khanna, Sanjay Dutt, R. Madhavan and Arjun Rampal, whose performances added depth and intensity to the riveting spy drama.

The makers have officially confirmed that Dhurandhar will begin streaming on Netflix on January 30, 2026. The digital release offers viewers the chance to experience the explosive action and layered narrative from the comfort of their homes, following its successful theatrical journey. Fans who missed the initial cinema run have shown strong anticipation for the OTT premiere, which comes a few



weeks after the film's big-screen debut.

Dhurandhar tells the tale of a covert Indian operative who embarks on a dangerous mission to infiltrate and dismantle a powerful network, showcasing patriotic fervour, intense combat sequences, and strategic espionage twists. The film's blend of compelling action and emotional stakes resonated with audiences nationwide, cementing its status

as a major success of the year.

Alongside the OTT announcement, excitement continues to build for the franchise's future. A sequel, titled Dhurandhar 2, is scheduled for theatrical release in March 2026, promising to expand the universe of the original film with even more action and intrigue. This strategic rollout keeps the momentum going, giving fans fresh reasons to revisit the story on streaming platforms

and later return to theaters for the next chapter.

With its compelling digital premiere on Netflix and a sequel on the horizon, Dhurandhar continues to make waves both online and at the box office. The film's move to OTT is expected to bring its thrilling narrative to a wider global audience, reinforcing Ranveer Singh's stature as a leading force in contemporary Hindi cinema.

Melodious Romantic Track 'Payaname' from Seetha Payanam Released



The makers of Seetha Payanam, directed by multi-talented actor-director Action King Arjun, have unveiled the film's melodious roman-

tic track titled 'Payaname', adding fresh momentum to the film's promotional campaign. Released as part of the pre-release promotions, the song has been receiving a warm response from audiences for its soothing composition and heartfelt presentation.

Produced under the banner of Shree Raam Films International, Seetha Payanam is a special project for Arjun, as it marks the on-screen debut of his daughter Aishwarya Arjun as the female lead. The film also stars Niranjana in the lead role, with veteran actors Sathyaraj, Prakash Raj, and Kovai Sarala playing pivotal characters. Arjun himself appears in a special role, while his nephew, Action Prince Dhruva Sarja, makes a cameo, adding to the film's star appeal. The movie is

scheduled for a theatrical release on February 14, perfectly timed for the Valentine's Day weekend.

The newly released song Payaname is penned by Kasarla Shyam and composed by Melody King Anup Rubens, whose music has elevated the romantic mood of the track. Sung by Anup Rubens and Satya Prakash, the song stands out for its soulful melody and soothing vocals. Adding an interesting surprise element, both Arjun and Anup Rubens make special appearances in the song. The lyrical video beautifully captures the chemistry between the lead pair, making it visually engaging and emotionally resonant.

According to the makers, the content released so far—including teasers and songs—has generated strong buzz across platforms. With both

filming and post-production already completed, the team is now fully focused on promotions. Unique marketing strategies are being planned to ensure the film reaches a wide audience ahead of its release.

Seetha Payanam is set for a grand pan-Indian release in Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam, and Hindi. The film boasts a strong technical team, with G. Balamurugan handling cinematography, Dr. Sai Madhav Burra providing dialogues, and Ayub Khan overseeing editing. High-octane stunt sequences are choreographed by Kick Ass Kali, while art direction is managed by Mohan B. Keri, Shiva Kamesh D., and CH Krishna.

With a blend of romance, emotion, and strong performances, Seetha Payanam is shaping up to be a noteworthy Valentine's Day release.

Sriram's 'The Maze' First Look and Title Glimpse Unveiled

Actor Sriram, a familiar and respected name among Telugu audiences for his memorable performances in superhit films like Aadavari Maatalaku Arthale Verule and Okariki Okaru, is set to make a powerful return with his upcoming Telugu film titled The Maze. The makers officially unveiled the film's first look and title glimpse on Thursday, instantly drawing attention for its intriguing theme and intense visual treatment.

Directed by Dr. Ravikiran Gadale, The Maze is positioned as a psychological thriller that ventures deep into the fragile and complex inner world of a man battling a mental disorder. Unlike conventional thrillers, the film promises to explore the human psyche with sensitivity and depth, weaving together themes of memory, perception, identity, and emotional conflict. The title glimpse hints at a narrative that constantly challenges the viewer's understanding of reality, raising a com-

pelling question at the heart of the story: "What is real?"

Elaborating on the concept, director Dr. Ravikiran Gadale explained that the protagonist's psychological state and real life become so intricately intertwined that he appears to exist in a dream-like realm. As the story progresses, the audience is drawn into a maze of thoughts and emotions where reality and illusion blur seamlessly. The mysterious presence central to the narrative remains ambiguous till the climax, leaving viewers to question whether it represents the protagonist's subconscious fears, guilt, unresolved trauma, suppressed memories, or an actual individual connected to his life. This layered ambiguity forms the emotional and narrative backbone of the film.

The film stars Priyanka Sharma and Hrithika Srinivasan as the female leads, playing significant roles that influence

the protagonist's psychological journey. Supporting roles are essayed by seasoned actors Ajay, Ravi Varma, and Ajay Ghosh, adding further depth and intensity to the narrative.

The Maze is jointly produced by Uday K. Reddy Palvai and K. Sridhar Reddy (KSR) under the banner of Uday Reddy Creations, with KSR also presenting the film. On the technical front, the film boasts striking visuals captured by cinematographer Y.S. Krishna, while music composed by Shrawan Bharadwaj is expected to heighten the film's emotional and suspenseful undertones. Editing is handled by Satya Giduturi and M.R. Varma, ensuring a taut and engaging narrative flow.

With its thought-provoking premise, strong technical backing, and Sriram's return in a challenging role, The Maze promises to be a gripping and unconventional cinematic experience for audiences seeking fresh and meaningful storytelling.

