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CM Chandrababu Naidu Says No Clean Chit in Tirupati Ghee Adulteration Case

Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau:

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has firmly rejected claims that the Tirupati laddu ghee adulteration controversy was cleared without fault, stating that no investigative report has given a clean chit to the issue and reaffirming his government's commitment to uncover the full truth. Speaking at a media briefing on Thursday alongside Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and other senior leaders, Naidu highlighted the sensitive nature of the matter and outlined steps his administration is taking to address it comprehensively. Describing the alleged adulteration of ghee used in the preparation of the famed Tirupati laddu — a prasadam revered by millions of devotees — as a grave moral offence against faith, tradition, and devotees' sentiments, the Chief Minister said the controversy remains under intense scrutiny. He reiterated that the government has formed a one man committee to carefully examine the reports submitted by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) and other investigative agencies



to ensure that all lapses are identified and accountability is fixed. Naidu emphasized that every report related to the matter — including laboratory analyses and investigative findings — will be placed before the committee. He noted that while some interpretations have suggested the absence of certain alleged adulterants, no official record has conclusively stated that the ghee was entirely free of adulteration. To dispel confusion and misinformation, he asserted that the committee's review will bring clarity, transparency, and, if necessary, corrective measures. The Chief Minister

also reiterated that those found responsible for any wrongdoing will not be spared, pointing to the government's determination to pursue justice irrespective of political affiliations or positions. He stressed that the investigation is being pursued with utmost seriousness, without political bias, and with respect for devotees' emotions. In his remarks, Naidu underscored the religious importance of the issue, saying that protecting the sanctity of sacred offerings is paramount for the government. He reaffirmed that action would be taken based on the committee's recommendations and the

evidence before it. Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan echoed the Chief Minister's stance, noting that sensitive issues involving religion and public faith deserve careful handling. He reiterated that transparency and accountability remain central to the government's approach, and that no conclusive clean chit has been granted in the case. The Chief Minister's comments come amid continued political debate and public interest in the Tirupati ghee adulteration controversy, underlining the administration's intent to pursue a thorough and credible review of all evidence.



CBI Did Not Give Clean Chit in Tirupati Ghee Adulteration Case, Says Dy CM Pawan Kalyan

Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau:

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has accused leaders of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) of misleading the public regarding the Tirupati laddu ghee adulteration controversy, asserting that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) did not grant a clean chit to the previous government in the case. He made the remarks while addressing the media at Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's residence in Undavalli on Thursday. At the press conference, Kalyan said that faith is a deeply sensitive issue for millions of devotees and stressed that political leaders should exercise caution when discussing matters that touch on religious sentiments. He maintained that although some reports have been interpreted to suggest there was no wrongdoing, the CBI's

findings clearly did not exonerate the former YSRCP administration. Instead, the investigative agency's statement described the disputed ghee as plant-based, not a complete dismissal of adulteration concerns. The controversy stems from allegations made during Chief Minister Naidu's political campaign that adulterated ghee, potentially involving substances such as fish oil or beef tallow, was used in the preparation of the renowned Tirupati laddus during the previous YSRCP government's tenure. Naidu first raised the issue in 2024, triggering nationwide debate and emotional reactions from devotees when claims of compromised prasadam quality surfaced. Kalyan also said the decision to make details of the investigation public was not taken lightly, acknowledging the delicate nature of the matter. He explained that although the govern-

ment initially hesitated to disclose information due to its sensitivity, they ultimately decided that it was necessary for the truth to reach the public. "If we don't inform the public, it is our fault," he said, adding that political leaders have a duty to be transparent on matters affecting faith and public trust. He criticised opposition statements that sought to downplay or dismiss the findings and urged political rivals to refrain from flippant remarks about issues that could hurt devotees' sentiments. Kalyan insisted that the controversy should not be used for political point-scoring, but rather addressed with seriousness and full accountability. The deputy chief minister's comments come amid ongoing political debate and legal scrutiny surrounding the ghee adulteration case, which continues to be a contentious subject in Andhra Pradesh's political landscape.

Centre Approves Major Road Connectivity Project for Andhra Pradesh, Says Nitin Gadkari



Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau: K. Jagan Reddy, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari announced a major infrastructure boost for Andhra Pradesh, unveiling approval for the construction of a 573.77 crore six lane external road project to improve connectivity to Machilipatnam Port. The project is expected to enhance logistics efficiency, reduce travel time, and facilitate smoother transport of goods to and from the port, benefiting trade and commerce in the region. The new road will directly link the national

highway network to Machilipatnam Port through a six lane corridor, providing seamless access from key highways. The project will include the construction of three flyovers and a railway overbridge (ROB) along the route to ensure uninterrupted traffic flow and prevent bottlenecks. Service roads will also be built to support local traffic and improve overall network capacity. Once completed, the route is expected to significantly reduce transit time between key logistics hubs and the port, helping exporters, importers, and freight operators. Gadkari emphasized that improved connectivity to the port will

also decongest city roads by diverting heavy transport vehicles, positively impacting road safety and commuter convenience in nearby districts. The project reflects the Centre's focus on developing infrastructure that supports industrial growth and enhances economic activity in Andhra Pradesh. The minister highlighted the government's intent to expedite planning and execution to ensure timely completion. He stressed that strong road links are essential for boosting trade and attracting investment, particularly in coastal areas emerging as key economic corridors. This external connec-

tivity project complements other highway development initiatives in the state aimed at improving national highway networks, enhancing freight mobility, and reducing logistics costs. With dedicated flyovers, overbridges, and service roads, the project aims to provide a comprehensive and efficient road infrastructure capable of meeting future transportation needs. Officials and stakeholders have welcomed the decision, noting that it will elevate Andhra Pradesh's position as a competitive logistics hub and support the state's long-term growth trajectory in trade and industry.

Supreme Court Directs Continued CBI Probe in Viveka Murder Case



Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau:

The Supreme Court of India on Friday issued crucial directions in the high profile Vivekananda Reddy murder case, instructing the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to continue its probe into the politically sensitive matter without unnecessary delay. The apex court clarified that while the primary investigation has been largely completed, further inquiries into technical aspects must proceed in accordance with established legal procedures. Former Andhra Pradesh minister Y. S. Vivekananda Reddy was found murdered at his Pulivendula residence in March 2019, just weeks before the state assembly elections, prompting a long and complex legal battle involving multiple agencies and political overtones. After initial investigation by state police, the case was transferred to the CBI in 2020 due to concerns about impartiality and the need for a more rigorous inquiry.

During the latest hearing, the CBI informed the Supreme Court that it had finished the core investigative work, but additional technical examinations were still underway as directed by the trial court. The Supreme Court bench, presiding over the matter, made it clear that the agency should have the freedom to question further persons if needed, provided prior permission is obtained and procedures are strictly followed. The court modified an earlier timeline set by the trial court that had required completion of the investigation within one month. Instead, the Supreme Court directed that the probe should be carried out as expeditiously as possible, stressing that unnecessary timelines should not hinder thorough fact finding or due process. Investigating agencies were urged to maintain momentum and avoid undue delays, ensuring that evidence is properly collected, analysed, and presented for trial proceedings. The Supreme Court's order reflects ongoing judicial scrutiny

of the Viveka case, which has seen numerous legal developments over the years, including petitions by the victim's family challenging bail orders granted to some accused and allegations of witness manipulation. The case remains under active legal consideration, with the judiciary closely overseeing the conduct of the investigation to ensure that justice is served. The directions come amid widespread public and political attention, given the victim's status as a former minister and the case's implications in Andhra Pradesh's political landscape. The court's emphasis on procedural integrity and swift progress signals a commitment to ensuring that the investigation maintains both speed and credibility. With the Supreme Court's intervention, the CBI is now expected to intensify its work on remaining technical enquiries and adhere to the judicial guidelines, bringing the case closer to a conclusive phase in the pursuit of justice for the slain leader.

Andhra Pradesh Palm Oil Farmers Enjoy Record Prices, Kinjarapu Atchannaidu Receives Special Thanks

Amaravati, February 5 | TPN Bureau:

For the first time in the history of palm oil cultivation, farmers in Andhra Pradesh are receiving higher prices than those in neighboring Telangana, sparking widespread enthusiasm among growers across the state. The milestone has been attributed to the pro-farmer policies of the coalition government, prompting palm oil farmers and association members to extend their gratitude to State Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu during a meeting at his

Vijayawada camp office.

Farmers highlighted that an increasing number of cultivators are now turning to palm oil from traditional crops, thanks to government support. Minister Atchannaidu's timely announcement of a fair and remunerative price has provided financial assurance to farmers, boosting confidence in crop diversification. Palm oil cultivation is now emerging as a reliable alternative income source, reducing dependence on a single crop. Farmers also praised the government



for providing subsidies on drip irrigation equipment at the right time, helping reduce cultivation costs.

"By ensuring minimum support prices are announced promptly after harvest, farmers can

avoid market fluctuations and receive fair compensation," said farmers. They credited the coalition government's forward-looking policies with opening new avenues for palm oil cultivation and ex-

pressed optimism that Andhra Pradesh will continue to lead in palm oil production. Farmers also lauded the consistent support of the government under Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and the leader-

ship of Minister Atchannaidu in strengthening the agricultural sector.

Record Minimum Support Price for 2025-26 Oil Year

Minister Atchannaidu announced that for the 2025-26 oil year, with a 20.01% oil extraction ratio (OER), Andhra Pradesh palm oil farmers will receive 20,680 per metric ton, surpassing Telangana farmers, who get 20,456 per metric ton—a difference of 224 per ton in favor of Andhra Pradesh growers. He highlighted that Andhra Pradesh leads

the country in oil palm area, production, and productivity, with 1.97 lakh farmers cultivating 2.49 lakh hectares, turning the crop into a profitable venture.

For the 2024-25 oil year, the government's key decisions resulted in an average MSP of 19,579 per ton, the highest in the past decade, fostering confidence and encouraging further expansion. During 2025-26, 24,535 hectares of new palm oil plantations were added, marking a record increase over the last ten years. The government has released 181.28 crore, di-

rectly crediting 137.28 crore into farmers' accounts, while providing free saplings, cultivation incentives, and equipment subsidies under the National Oilseeds Mission to establish palm oil as a future-oriented crop in the state.

The PR Office of the Agriculture, Cooperation, Marketing, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries Ministerial Office issued the statement highlighting the government's sustained commitment to farmer welfare and agricultural growth.

All Power Infrastructure Works Must Be Ready Before Godavari Maha Pushkaralu: Gottipati Ravi Kumar

Rajahmundry, February 5 | TPN Bureau:

With the Godavari Maha Pushkaralu fast approaching, State Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar has instructed officials to ensure that all power sector works in East Godavari district are completed well within the stipulated timelines. The Minister emphasized that a robust and reliable power infrastructure is essential to provide devotees with a smooth and uninterrupted experience during this major religious event.

During his tour of the district, Minister Ravi Kumar held a detailed review meeting with senior power department officials at a private guest house in Rajahmundry. He highlighted the importance of advance planning and seamless execution to meet the increased power demand expected



during the Pushkaralu. Officials were instructed to prioritize the timely establishment of additional substations, transformers, and power lines wherever necessary. The Minister noted that land identification for new substations had already begun and urged officials to earmark suitable locations, taking long-term power requirements into account.

Reviewing progress under the RDSS scheme, the Minister directed officials to accelerate implementation

and stressed that all AP Transco substation works in the district must be completed by March 2026. He also went through DPRs for 17 proposed substations, instructing officials to closely monitor progress at every stage and ensure adherence to timelines.

Quality assurance was another key focus. The Minister emphasized that solar equipment being distributed to SC and ST beneficiaries under the PM Surya-ghar programme must strictly meet prescribed standards. He directed

officials to promptly report any issues related to substation construction or other power-related works to his office for immediate action.

Minister Ravi Kumar concluded by reiterating that ensuring uninterrupted and quality power supply is a top priority, particularly during the Godavari Maha Pushkaralu. He called for coordinated and proactive efforts from all wings of the power department to ensure that infrastructure readiness matches the scale of the event and that devotees receive reliable electricity without any disruptions.

This directive underscores the government's commitment to supporting large-scale religious and cultural events with robust infrastructure, while also improving long-term power availability in the district.

Change Has Begun... Amaravati Progressing at Quantum Speed - Vasamsetti Subash

Amaravati | 07-02-2026 | TPN Bureau

Amaravati, the capital of Andhra Pradesh, marked a historic milestone on February 7, 2026, with the foundation-laying ceremony of the Quantum Valley project, a flagship initiative set to position the state as a global hub for advanced technology, research, and innovation. Speaking on the occasion, Labour Minister Vasamsetti Subash highlighted that the project is not merely an infrastructure initiative but a long-term vision that will define the future of the state and establish Amaravati on the world stage.

Minister Subash stated, "Change has begun... Amaravati is progressing at quantum speed." He emphasized that the Quantum Valley initiative will transform Andhra Pradesh into a global leader in cutting-edge technology, innovation, and research, creating a sustainable ecosystem for the knowledge economy. The minister also praised the foresight

and vision of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, whose extensive experience in technology has been pivotal in shaping Amaravati as a future-ready capital.

The project aims to attract international investments and create a world-class ecosystem for research, innovation, and hi-tech industries. Minister Subash stressed that the government's long-term focus on knowledge-based sectors, innovation, and high-tech industries will be the foundation for Andhra Pradesh's economic growth. "Amaravati is being built to compete globally and attract international investors, ensuring the state remains at the forefront of technological advancement," he said.

He also credited Nara Lokesh, whose youthful leadership and forward-thinking approach are driving the "Quantum Amaravati - Global Andhra Pradesh" concept. The initiative prioritizes op-



portunities for youth in global-standard jobs, startups, and emerging fields such as deep tech and quantum technologies, aiming to retain talent within the state.

Quantum Valley is expected to generate thousands of high-skill jobs and futuristic career opportunities, revolutionizing employment prospects in the region. Minister Subash underlined that the labour department is committed to providing skill training, employment security, and fostering a modern work culture for industries within the project.

He further explained that Amaravati's development extends beyond

physical infrastructure, aiming to deliver long-term opportunities, global recognition, and respect for future generations. With the foundation of Quantum Valley, Andhra Pradesh takes another significant step toward becoming a world-class technology hub, blending innovation, education, and industry to shape the state's future and attract international attention.

The event reflects the state government's commitment to visionary planning, youth empowerment, and sustainable growth, reinforcing Amaravati's role as a capital with global ambitions.

Andhra University Receives Bomb Threat via Email; Campus Swept Clean by Police



Visakhapatnam | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

A bomb threat emailed to Andhra University in Visakhapatnam on Thursday triggered a major security alert across the sprawling campus, prompting a thorough search by police and specialised squads before authorities declared the threat a hoax. Early on Thursday morning, threatening emails were received by officials at Andhra University, including communications sent to the principal's offices of both the AU College of Engineering and the Women's Engineering College. The messages claimed that an explosive device had been planted somewhere on the campus, creating tension among students, faculty and staff.

University authorities immediately alerted local police and the cyber crime wing, leading to a swift response by law enforcement. Teams from the city police, bomb disposal squads, and sniffer dog units were deployed across the university grounds to conduct intensive searches. Inspectors and security personnel meticulously checked key locations, including academic buildings, administrative offices, hostel premises and open spaces, using metal detectors and other scanning equipment to rule out the presence of any suspicious materials.

Despite the heightened alert and multi-agency involvement, the search yielded no evidence of any explosive devices or threatening

objects. After a comprehensive sweep of the campus, officials declared the threat to be unfounded, reassuring students and staff that the university environment was safe.

Following the exercise, the university requested further assistance from the cyber crime department to trace the origin of the threatening emails and identify those responsible for sending them. Investigators emphasised that such threats, even when ultimately false, must be treated with the highest seriousness due to the potential risk they pose and the disturbance they cause to public safety.

In response to the incident, campus security has been tightened as a precautionary measure,

with personnel on high alert and additional patrols put in place to ensure student and staff safety. University administrators have urged the campus community to remain calm but vigilant, and to report any unusual activity to authorities immediately.

The swift action by police and specialised squads underscored the priority given to safety in educational institutions and demonstrated coordinated preparedness in handling possible security threats. While the bomb threat proved to be a hoax, the incident has reinforced the importance of rapid response, inter-agency cooperation and ongoing vigilance to ensure that campuses remain secure environments for learning and research.

Ambati Rambabu's Quash Petition in AP High Court Hearing Postponed

Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

Former Andhra Pradesh minister and YSRCP leader Ambati Rambabu appeared before the Andhra Pradesh High Court on Thursday after filing a petition seeking to quash the criminal case registered against him in connection with his controversial remarks about Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and related incidents. Rambabu had approached the High Court challenging the legal proceedings and sought dismissal of the charges against him.

During the hearing, Rambabu's counsel argued that the case registered against him was politically motivated and that the actions taken, including his remand, were unlawful. The defence sought that the court strike down the charges and set aside the trial court's orders.

The High Court, after hearing initial arguments from both sides, directed the police to file a detailed counter affidavit with complete responses to the points raised in Rambabu's petition. The court emphasised



that it would require a comprehensive set of materials before proceeding further with the petition. Consequently, the court adjourned the hearing to February 11, giving law enforcement authorities time to submit their counter submission and supporting documents.

Separately, a related bail and custody petition in the Guntur court was also heard, with the judge adjourning that matter to the next day. Rambabu has been in judicial custody after his arrest in the matter, and the legal proceedings regarding his bail and custodial conditions

are progressing in the lower court.

Ambati Rambabu's legal troubles stem from a criminal case filed by the police alleging that his statements and actions, particularly regarding derogatory remarks and conduct during political events, triggered public unrest and violated legal norms. He was arrested in Guntur and later remanded to judicial custody, prompting his party and supporters to raise concerns over due process and alleged political targeting.

The High Court's decision to adjourn the hearing reflects its approach to allow full ex-

amination of the state's counter arguments and evidence before deciding on whether to quash the case. Legal experts say that quash petitions require careful scrutiny, particularly when they involve sensitive political and public order issues. Rambabu's defence team will now prepare to argue further once the police file the counter affidavit as ordered by the High Court. The matter continues to draw political attention in Andhra Pradesh, as it involves a senior political figure and allegations linked to freedom of expression and political rivalry.

Chandrababu Naidu Meets Water User Associations to Bolster Water Management in Andhra Pradesh

Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday convened a key meeting with representatives of Water Users Associations (WUAs) at Amaravati, under the aegis of the Water Resources Department, to chart strategies for improved water conservation, irrigation management, and sustainable utilisation of water resources across the state. The session saw active participation from WUA presidents and leaders from distributary networks, alongside senior officials from the water resources department.

Naidu highlighted the critical role that WUAs play in ensuring effective on ground water management, urging them to take proactive ownership of water distribution, canal maintenance, and groundwater recharge efforts. He emphasised that collaboration between government agencies and local water users is essential to address long standing irrigation challenges and maximise the benefits of major water infrastructure projects.



During the discussions, the Chief Minister reiterated the state government's commitment to strengthening irrigation systems that had suffered setbacks in recent years. He encouraged association leaders to actively engage in planning and execution of water management initiatives, including river linking, tank rejuvenation, and improved canal operations, to ensure that every field receives adequate irrigation. Naidu stressed the

importance of improving groundwater tables and conserving every available drop of water to make Andhra Pradesh more resilient to drought conditions. He urged WUA members to support ongoing efforts to recharge aquifers and maintain water levels in minor irrigation structures, aligning local practices with the government's broader water security agenda.

The meeting also focused on reviewing progress of major projects,

including Polavaram, Handri Neeva, Veligonda, Galeru Nagari and other critical irrigation works, and identifying ways in which WUAs can contribute to timely completion and efficient utilisation of these resources. Naidu pointed out that reservoir levels in key regions have shown improvement and called for sustained efforts to maintain this trend through coordinated water use and management. Officials assured the Chief Min-

ister that steps are being taken to clear pending issues, streamline project execution and address grievances raised by farmers and water users. The government also highlighted plans to support WUAs in capacity building, technical training and resource mobilisation to enhance their effectiveness in local water governance.

The engagement with WUAs underscores the state's emphasis on participatory water management and reflects a broader commitment to harness community leadership to tackle water challenges. By strengthening grassroots involvement and fostering a cooperative approach, the government aims to ensure long term water security, improved agricultural productivity and equitable distribution of water across Andhra Pradesh. The meeting concluded with a call to WUA leaders to maintain momentum in their efforts and work closely with government departments to translate policy objectives into measurable outcomes on the ground.

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy Served Notice by Vijayawada Police Ahead of Planned Visit



Vijayawada | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leader YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has been issued a notice by the Vijayawada City Police in connection with his planned visit to Ibrahimpatnam on Friday. The notice comes as part of police efforts to ensure public safety, prevent traffic congestion, and maintain law and order during the movement of high-profile political leaders in the city.

City police officials explained that Jagan's visit involves a route that passes through heavily trafficked areas of Vijayawada, particularly during the morning hours. The notice specifically directs the YSRCP leader's convoy to take the West Bypass route instead of Durgamma Varahi and other central city roads. This measure aims to minimise disruption for daily commuters and ensure smooth vehicular movement across the city.

The planned visit is scheduled to begin

around 10:30 a.m., with Jagan departing from his residence in Tadepalli. During the visit, he is expected to meet party leader Jogi Ramesh and his family in Ibrahimpatnam. The return journey is anticipated to conclude by early afternoon, with authorities emphasising that strict adherence to the suggested route will prevent unnecessary traffic jams and ensure public convenience.

The notice highlights several residential and commercial localities that may be affected by the convoy. Police have urged the YSRCP team to coordinate closely with law enforcement officials, comply with route guidelines, and manage supporters accompanying the former chief minister. The city police also stressed the importance of planning and cooperation to ensure effective crowd control, particularly given the large number of party workers expected to join the visit.

Authorities noted that such notices are routine when high-profile political fig-

ures plan public engagements in urban areas. The action underscores the need for careful traffic management, public safety measures, and coordinated planning to avoid inconveniences. Police assured that the notice is intended solely to streamline the event while allowing Jagan to engage with the public safely.

Sources within the YSRCP stated that the party would review the police guidelines and work closely with officials to finalise the itinerary. While no official statement on modifications to the schedule has been released, the party has indicated readiness to cooperate fully with law enforcement for a smooth and orderly visit. Officials reiterated that notices like this are standard protocol for managing urban traffic and public gatherings involving prominent leaders. They encouraged both the political team and local residents to follow guidelines to ensure a safe, secure, and disturbance-free environment during the visit.

Payyavula Keshav Alleges Adulteration in Tirumala Laddu Ghee During YCP Rule

Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh BJP leader Payyavula Keshav has renewed allegations of adulteration in the ghee used to prepare the sacred Tirumala Tirupati Laddu prasadam, asserting that the controversial practice occurred during the previous YCP government's rule. Speaking at a press briefing on Thursday, Keshav criticised the YCP for misleading the public on the matter and demanded a thorough investigation to uncover the truth behind the allegation.

Addressing the media, Payyavula Keshav said that while some reports have attempted to downplay the issue, there are serious reasons to believe that adulterated ingredients were used in the ghee supplied for prasadam preparation. He argued that the controversy remains unresolved and that the people of Andhra Pradesh — particularly devotees — deserve clarity and accountability.

Keshav also questioned the handling of the case by investigative agencies and raised concerns about gaps in previous inquiries that, according to him, failed to conclusively address all aspects of the alleged adulteration. He urged the government to ensure a transparent and credible probe to reassure devotees and restore public faith.

Highlighting the emotional significance of the Tirumala laddu prasadam for millions of devotees, Keshav described the issue as not simply a matter of consumer rights but also one deeply intertwined with religious sentiment and public trust. He asserted that any compromise in quality or integrity of prasadam ingredients would be an affront to devotees' faith and the temple's sanctity.

The BJP leader called for a multi agency review of all laboratory findings, procurement records, and supply chain documentation related to the ghee used during the period in



question. He emphasised that full disclosure of investigative findings is essential to end speculation and settle the controversy once and for all.

Payyavula Keshav also criticised opposition leaders who have dismissed the allegations as politically motivated, stating that the focus should remain on truth and transparency, rather than partisan point scoring. He maintained that all political

parties have a responsibility to uphold communal harmony and respect for religious traditions, regardless of political differences.

The renewed allegations by Keshav come amid ongoing public and political debate over the laddu ghee controversy, which has drawn national attention and sparked intense discussion across the state's political spectrum. With devotees and political fig-

ures alike seeking answers, the issue continues to be a flashpoint in Andhra Pradesh's public discourse.

Keshav urged authorities to expedite the investigative process, involve independent experts if necessary, and make the outcome public to ensure that no doubts remain about the integrity of sacred offerings consumed by millions of pilgrims every year.

AP Sees Strong Investment Influx Due to Growing Confidence, Says Minister Chintakayala Vijay



Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Industries and Commerce Minister Chintakayala Vijay has stated that the state is experiencing a significant surge in investments, driven by increasing confidence among domestic and international investors in the state's policies, infrastructure, and business environment. Speaking to the media, the Minister highlighted that Andhra Pradesh's proactive governance, strategic location, and consistent policy reforms have made it a preferred destination for new investments.

Vijay emphasized that investors are particularly interested in sectors such as manufacturing, information technology, renewable energy, logistics, and agro processing. He attributed this renewed confidence to the state government's efforts to simplify procedures, provide clearances efficiently, improve infrastructure, and maintain a stable policy framework. These measures, he said, have positioned Andhra Pradesh as a reliable and competi-

tive investment hub.

The Minister pointed out that Amaravati has become a major center for high-value investments, with both global and national companies planning to set up operations in the state. Initiatives like Quantum Valley and other innovation-focused projects are attracting investors looking for opportunities in research, development, and advanced technology sectors. According to Vijay, such developments not only enhance investor interest but also help diversify the state's economic profile.

Over the past year, several memorandums of understanding (MoUs) have been signed with leading companies, reflecting growing investor confidence. Vijay noted that investments are flowing into traditional sectors like manufacturing and infrastructure, as well as emerging sectors such as IT services, clean energy, and start-ups, which will help strengthen the state's economy and create new job opportunities.

highlighted the government's focus on facilitating investments through single-window clearance mechanisms and streamlined approval processes to reduce bureaucratic delays. Additionally, skill development programmes are being implemented to ensure that local youth are prepared to meet the demands of new industries.

Vijay further emphasized the government's plans to develop industrial corridors and economic zones to channel investment into sectors with high growth potential. These measures, he said, will generate employment, boost exports, and strengthen Andhra Pradesh's industrial output.

Concluding his remarks, the Minister said, "The confidence shown by investors is a reflection of the state's inclusive and competitive policies. We remain committed to creating a business-friendly environment where investments lead to real economic benefits, employment, and development for the people of Andhra Pradesh."

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy to Visit Jogi Ramesh's Family in Ibrahimpatnam

Amaravati | 05-02-2026 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) president and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is scheduled to visit Ibrahimpatnam in Krishna district today to meet and console the family of senior party leader Jogi Ramesh, who was recently targeted in a violent incident. The visit comes amid heightened political tensions in Andhra Pradesh following a series of attacks on opposition leaders' residences.

According to party sources, Jagan will depart from his Tadepalli residence in the morning and travel by road to

Ibrahimpatnam. He is expected to reach Jogi Ramesh's home by late morning, where he will spend time with the family to offer support and solidarity following the recent attack that damaged the leader's property.

Jogi Ramesh, a senior YSRCP figure and former housing minister, and his family were reportedly affected by a petrol bomb attack allegedly carried out by political opponents, resulting in significant property damage and unsettling the household. The incident has drawn sharp criticism from YSRCP leaders, who have alleged that the attacks are part of a

broader pattern of political intimidation in the state.

During the visit, Jagan will offer reassurance to the Ramesh family and discuss the incident's impact before returning to Tadepalli in the afternoon. Party sources indicated that the meeting is intended to demonstrate YSRCP's solidarity with its leaders amid what they describe as continued political hostility from rival parties.

This visit follows Jagan's earlier trip to Guntur district to console the family of former minister Ambati Rambabu, who was recently embroiled in legal controversies. Both

visits reflect the party's efforts to show unity and support for its leaders and cadre in the face of recent violence and political challenges.

YS Jagan's decision to travel personally to Ibrahimpatnam underscores the political sensitivity surrounding the attacks and the importance of addressing the concerns of its members. The visit is expected to attract attention from supporters and the public, with the incident and its aftermath continuing to feature prominently in Andhra Pradesh's political discourse.

Security arrangements for the visit have

reportedly been coordinated with local authorities to ensure a smooth and orderly movement of Jagan's convoy through Vijayawada and its suburbs. Officials have indicated that necessary measures are in place to handle the visit without disrupting traffic or public safety.

As political leaders converge and conversations around law and order intensify, Jagan's visit to Jogi Ramesh's family is set to be a defining moment in the ongoing political narrative in Andhra Pradesh, resonating with party supporters and the wider public.

Manipal Hospital Vijayawada Strengthens Advanced Hematology Services with Key Clinical

Vijayawada: Manipal Hospital Vijayawada has further reinforced its advanced medical services with the appointment of Dr. Bhavani Mandava, Consultant – Clinical Hematology. The appointment marks an important step in expanding comprehensive care for patients with complex blood and bone marrow disorders and significantly enhances the hospital's capabilities in managing both malignant and non-malignant hematological

conditions. Dr. Bhavani Mandava brings clinical experience in managing a wide spectrum of hematological diseases, including leukemias, lymphomas, aplastic anemia, hemolytic anemias, bleeding and coagulation disorders, bone marrow failure syndromes, hemoglobinopathies, plasma cell disorders, myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), and myeloproliferative neoplasms (MPNs). Her clinical approach emphasizes ac-



curate diagnosis, risk-adapted treatment strategies, and long-term disease monitoring. With expertise in stem cell and bone marrow transplantation, along with targeted therapy and immunotherapy, Dr. Mandava plays a key role in delivering personalised, evidence-based treatment for patients requiring advanced hematology care. Her focus on integrated, multidisciplinary management supports improved

outcomes for patients with complex and chronic conditions. Commenting on the appointment, Mr. J. Ramjaneyya Reddy, Hospital Director, Manipal Hospital Vijayawada, said, "The addition of Dr. Bhavani Mandava reflects our ongoing commitment to building strong clinical depth in specialised area hematology. Her experience in managing complex blood disorders and advanced therapies will help us deliver timely,

comprehensive, and patient-focused care to individuals across Vijayawada and neighbouring regions." With this strategic appointment, Manipal Hospital Vijayawada continues to strengthen its position as a leading centre for advanced hematology services, combining specialised clinical expertise, modern therapeutic options, and compassionate care to meet the growing healthcare needs of the region.

Young Man Dies in Reckless Stunt While Filming Reels in Kadapa



Kadapa | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

A tragic incident in Kadapa district has once again highlighted the dangers of risky social media stunts after a young man died while performing dangerous manoeuvres on a motorcycle for reels on Wednesday night.

The deceased, identified as Mubarak, was a resident of Kadapa and worked at a garment shop in the city. According to local police reports, Mubarak and a friend rode a two wheeler for nearly three kilometres while filming the reel. During the ride, they allegedly performed stunts, including lifting the bike and driving recklessly on public roads in the city.

At one point during the stunt, the rider lost control of the motorcycle and both Mubarak and his friend fell to the ground. Mubarak sustained severe injuries and was pronounced dead at the scene. The other youth suffered serious injuries and was immediately shifted to a near-

by hospital for treatment.

The shocking accident has sparked concern among residents, who say that daredevil acts performed in the name of creating content are putting young lives at risk. Locals expressed alarm over the incident and urged authorities to take stringent action against individuals who engage in dangerous driving for social media attention, noting that such behaviour endangers not only participants but also other road users and pedestrians.

Police officials have reiterated that performing stunts on public roads is illegal and poses a significant threat to public safety. They emphasised that reckless riding, especially during late hours and without proper safety measures such as helmets, significantly increases the risk of fatal outcomes.

Investigating officers said they are reviewing footage and statements to determine the exact se-

quence of events leading up to the crash. A case has been registered, and law enforcement has assured the public that strict measures will be enforced to deter similar incidents in the future.

The tragic death of Mubarak is the latest in a series of fatal accidents involving young people attempting risky stunts for social media content. Safety advocates and community members have called for awareness campaigns to educate youth about the consequences of dangerous riding and to encourage responsible road behaviour.

Authorities stressed the importance of obeying traffic laws and warned that reckless behaviour will lead to strict enforcement and penalties. The community continues to mourn the loss of the young man, with many expressing condolences to his family and urging others to avoid putting their lives in danger for online fame.

CM Chandrababu Naidu Focuses on Irrigation, Water Management Initiatives in Andhra Pradesh

Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has reiterated his government's firm commitment to strengthening irrigation and water management across Andhra Pradesh, underlining the critical role of water security in boosting agricultural productivity and ensuring sustainable development. Speaking on Thursday, Naidu outlined key priorities and strategic interventions designed to enhance water availability, optimise resource use, and support farmers and rural communities statewide.

Addressing senior officials and stakeholders, the Chief Minister said that effective water management is central to the state's economic and social wellbeing, especially in the face of erratic rainfall patterns and increasing climate challenges. He emphasised that the government is pursuing a multi-

pronged approach to ensure judicious utilisation of surface and groundwater resources for agricultural and allied purposes.

Naidu highlighted the ongoing efforts to expedite the completion of major irrigation projects such as Polavaram, Handri Neeva, Veligonda, and Galeru Nagari, noting that improved connectivity and water flows through these systems would provide reliable irrigation to thousands of hectares of agricultural land. He said that ensuring steady water supply to farmers is a top priority and that departments must work cohesively to address project bottlenecks.

The Chief Minister also underscored the importance of Water Users Associations (WUAs) in decentralised water governance, urging local stakeholders to take active ownership of water distribution, canal maintenance, and com-



munity level tank systems. He called upon WUAs to collaborate closely with government agencies to ensure equitable water distribution and timely interventions at the grassroots level.

Naidu stressed the need to fully leverage minor irrigation systems, including tank desiltation, catchment area treatment, and groundwater recharge structures, to enhance local water availability and reduce dependency on major reservoirs alone. He highlighted that nurturing these smaller assets is equally important to strengthen

rural resilience and support the cropping needs of small and marginal farmers.

In addition, the Chief Minister emphasised the integration of advanced water saving technologies, such as drip and sprinkler irrigation, and the promotion of climate smart agricultural practices among farming communities. These measures, he said, will ensure optimal use of water while improving crop yields and farmers' incomes.

Naidu also advocated for the establishment of robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track water usage pat-

terns, reservoir levels, and performance of irrigation infrastructure. He directed officials to adopt real time data systems and enhance coordination with the agriculture department to address emerging challenges promptly.

Highlighting the significance of community awareness, the Chief Minister urged water managers and local leaders to engage in outreach programmes that educate farmers on best practices for water conservation and sustainable farming. He said that public participation is essential to build a water secure future for Andhra Pradesh.

Naidu's renewed focus on irrigation and water management reflects the government's broader vision of driving agricultural growth, fortifying rural livelihoods, and ensuring ecological sustainability — a strategy he describes as vital for the state's long term prosperity.

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's Bhimavaram Visit Draws Public Attention

Bhimavaram | 05-02-2026 | TPN Bureau

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy visited Bhimavaram in West Godavari district, engaging with local leaders, party workers, and residents, reinforcing his presence ahead of upcoming political activities. During the visit, Jagan participated in community events, including attending a marriage reception of a prominent local figure, where he interacted closely with grassroots supporters. These interactions allowed him to connect directly with the public and strengthen his rapport with

constituents.

In addition to social engagements, Jagan met with Bhimavaram constituency representatives and party members to discuss organizational matters and electoral prospects. These meetings are part of efforts to consolidate support among local cadres and ensure that the party remains responsive to constituent concerns. Observers noted that although no formal public rally was held, Jagan's presence carried significant symbolic weight among supporters.

Local authorities coordinated traffic and security arrangements to ensure smooth conduct

of his visit. The visit also comes at a time when the YSRCP has been vocal on key public issues, signaling the party's commitment to addressing local concerns directly. Party insiders suggested that the Bhimavaram visit is part of groundwork for broader engagement strategies, aimed at maintaining visibility and connectivity with voters across Andhra Pradesh.

Throughout the visit, Jagan emphasized the importance of being accessible to the public and understanding their needs. His interactions with residents and party workers focused on listening to local griev-

ances, pledging support for community initiatives, and reinforcing the party's focus on welfare and development. By engaging directly with local leaders and constituents, Jagan sought to maintain his influence in the region and ensure that party activities are coordinated effectively at the grassroots level.

Political analysts suggest that such visits help leaders maintain organizational cohesion and public trust, particularly in competitive political environments. Jagan's approach of combining informal public interactions with structured meetings reflects a strategy to bal-

ance visibility with targeted organizational outreach. Overall, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's Bhimavaram visit highlights his ongoing efforts to strengthen ties with local communities, reinforce party support at the grassroots, and ensure that public concerns are addressed promptly. The visit demonstrates the leader's commitment to remaining actively engaged with his constituents and preparing the party for future political challenges. This visit also serves as a reminder of the significance of direct public engagement in building and sustaining political influence in Andhra Pradesh.

Bill Gates to Visit Andhra Pradesh on February 16

*Meets CM Chandrababu Amaravati | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau

The much anticipated visit of tech mogul Bill Gates to Andhra Pradesh has been rescheduled. Originally slated for February 18, Gates will now arrive in the state on February 16, during which he is expected to meet Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. The visit will focus on strengthening collaborations in agriculture and education through advanced AI technologies. Gates, along with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will enter into

agreements with the Andhra Pradesh government to expand digital solutions aimed at improving farming efficiency, educational access, and healthcare delivery. One of the key initiatives highlighted during the visit includes the launch of digital health cards in partnership with the Gates Foundation. The program, currently implemented in Chittoor district under the 'Sanjeevani' initiative, aims to streamline healthcare access and record keeping for residents across the state. The Andhra Pradesh government plans to ex-



pand this program statewide with support from the Foundation.

In addition to social initiatives, the visit is expected to bring clarity on Microsoft's investment plans in Amaravati, potentially strengthening the state's position as a technology and innovation hub. The meeting with CM Chandrababu is likely to cover strategies for leveraging AI and digital technologies in public services, agriculture, and governance. Following his Andhra Pradesh visit, Bill Gates will participate in the AI Summit in New Delhi on Febru-

ary 19, where he will discuss global advancements in artificial intelligence alongside industry and government leaders. The rescheduled visit underscores Andhra Pradesh's commitment to embracing cutting edge technologies and fostering partnerships with global foundations and tech companies. Officials believe this collaboration could significantly enhance agricultural productivity, digital education, and healthcare services, aligning with the state's broader vision of smart governance and technological innovation.

Mandapeta: Gottipati Ravi Kumar Highlights 95% Public Satisfaction Target in Power Sector

Mandapeta, February 5 | TPN Bureau: Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar toured Mandapeta and Teku villages in East Godavari district on Thursday, inaugurating newly constructed 33/11 kV substations, each built at a cost of 2.61 crore. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister emphasized that the government aims to achieve 95% consumer satisfaction in electricity services, in line with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's vision. Minister Ravi Kumar stated that in the 19 months since the coalition government took office, electricity charges have not been increased even by a single rupee. He highlighted that under previous administrations, especially the

YSRCP government, multiple hikes burdened the public with an additional 30,000 crore, including nine rounds of tariff increases and a 5,000 crore additional levy imposed by APERC in December. The current government has implemented reductions, including a 13 paise per unit true-down, and plans a further reduction of 1.19 per unit before the upcoming elections. As part of the Rajahmundry Distribution Strengthening Scheme (RDSS), Minister Ravi Kumar said that works worth 175 crore are underway in East Godavari district, including feeder bifurcation to provide 9 hours of free electricity for agriculture. Consumers in the district



will also benefit from 24-hour power supply. The Minister emphasized that approximately 75,000 new agricultural electricity connections have already been provided since the coalition

government assumed office. The Minister also criticized YSRCP leaders for creating unrest and attempting to disturb public peace through objectionable language, claiming their political tactics are aimed at fomenting conflicts. He highlighted that while the opposition has 15 members, the coalition government has effectively addressed public issues, ensuring welfare programs and developmental schemes reach citizens. Minister Ravi Kumar further outlined the government's welfare measures, including 33,000 crore in pensions, free bus services for women, 20,000 financial assistance to farmers, and 10,000 grants for children. He reiterated the

administration's commitment to improving the electricity infrastructure with over 200 substations being constructed across the state to ensure uninterrupted supply, minimize voltage issues, and meet long-term energy demands. Local MLA Vegulla Jogeswara Rao and senior electricity department officials attended the event, reaffirming the government's focus on reliable power, agricultural support, and public welfare initiatives. This comprehensive approach underscores the coalition government's commitment to strengthening the power sector while maintaining affordability and public satisfaction across East Godavari and the broader state.

CPM Demands Restoration of Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Scheme

Palakoderu (Bhimavaram), February 5 | TPN Bureau: The Communist Party of India (Marxist) staged a strong protest on Thursday demanding the immediate restoration of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), alleging that the newly introduced WBGRY employment scheme undermines guaranteed employment for the poor. Organised under the CPM banner, the protest included the submission of a memorandum to Tehsildar Vijayalakshmi, calling for urgent government action to reinstate the original employment program and halt the WBGRY initiative. CPM State Secretariat member B. Balaram criticised the central government, accusing the Modi-led BJP administration of dismantling schemes that provide jobs to the poor while favouring corporate interests. He stated that the original Mahatma Gandhi scheme offered vital support to rural populations, guaranteeing employment and income for families in need. According to Balaram, the new WBGRY program has replaced the MGNREGA and even removed the Mahatma Gandhi name, misleading the public through false claims of 125 days



of guaranteed work, when in reality only around 50 days are being fulfilled. He highlighted that the new program imposes additional restrictions, such as capping work at 60 days and introducing complex conditions for fund release, measures that were absent under the original MGNREGA. Previously, the central government contributed 90% of the scheme's funds while the state provided 10%, ensuring smooth implementation. Under the new WBGRY system, the Centre provides 60% and the state 40%, with the state being required to disburse funds before the central release, creating procedural hurdles that effectively dilute the employment guarantee. Balaram warned that these changes severely impact the poor, who rely on guaranteed rural employment to sustain their livelihoods. He demanded the immediate continuation of the original MGNREGA and the cancellation of the WBGRY program. He also cautioned that the CPM would intensify protests and mobilise further action if the government fails to heed their demands. The protest was attended by CPM mandal secretary Sheshu Asriya and local leaders, including Dunna Mariyamma, K. Gopal Raju, Thota Satyam, Thota Venkanna, and Challa Ramanujay Vasu, who actively participated in the demonstration and voiced support for the reinstatement of the original employment scheme. Balaram emphasised that MGNREGA is critical for rural develop-

Tiger Sightings Prompt Vigilance in Rajanagaram: Officials Urge Public Cooperation

East Godavari, February 5 | TPN Bureau: Following recent incidents of tiger attacks on cattle in Bhupalapattanam and G. Errampalem villages in Rajanagaram mandal, East Godavari district, local authorities have urged residents to remain alert and fully cooperate with forest officials to ensure safety. Rajanagaram MLA Battula Balaramakrishna and District Collector Keerthi Chekuri visited G. Errampalem on Thursday to assess the situation on the ground after three cattle deaths were reported, including one confirmed tiger attack, according to the forest department. Officials suspect that the tiger may be residing near palm oil plantations in the area. The Collector stated that coordinated efforts involving the forest, police, revenue, and municipal departments are underway to mitigate risks. Special rescue teams have been deployed from Rajahmundry, working under the guidance of the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), Rajahmundry, using thermal drones, trap cages, and camera traps to monitor and track the tiger. Veterinary doctors and wildlife experts are actively involved, ensuring that the animal can be safely captured once



located. During the field inspection, MLA Battula Balaramakrishna and Collector Keerthi Chekuri were accompanied by SP D. Narasimha Kishore, Municipal Commissioner Rahul Meena, DFWO B. Prabhakar Rao, while forest officials including Principal Chief Conservator P.V. Chalapathi Rao, CCF B.N.N. Murthy, DFWO Prabhakar Rao, FRO S. Daviduraju Naidu, NTCA officer Rajasekhar, and wildlife veterinarians monitored the situation continuously. Collector Keerthi Chekuri emphasized that the tiger is a highly sensitive wild animal and must not be disturbed. Any disturbance could cause the tiger to move to other areas, complicating efforts to track and safely capture it. Residents are urged to strictly follow officials' instructions, remain vigilant within a one-kilometre radius of the incident sites, and avoid tampering with tiger tracks or evidence. Authorities reassured the public that the tiger may return to areas near where attacks occurred, and residents should remain calm and patient while following all safety protocols. The combined efforts of forest and law enforcement teams aim to ensure both human safety and the humane capture of the animal, highlighting the importance of community cooperation in handling wildlife-human interactions. Officials continue to closely monitor the tiger's movements and maintain round-the-clock surveillance to prevent further incidents, stressing that public support is crucial for the success of the rescue operations.

Viswa Teja Dredger Reaches Milestone at Moolapeta Port Construction

Srikakulam | 05 02 2026 | TPN Bureau: A significant milestone has been achieved in the construction of the Moolapeta Port in Srikakulam district, with the "Viswa Teja" dredger reaching the port's berth area for the first time, marking major progress in the greenfield port project. The development is being seen as a key landmark in the port's journey toward becoming operational and contributing to the region's economic growth. The arrival of the Viswa Teja, operated by the contracting firm overseeing the port construction, signifies that dredging operations — essential for creating deep water access for larger vessels — are moving into advanced stages, paving the way for upcoming port activities. This event has been described by local experts and stakeholders as an important turning point in the project's development, bringing the facility closer to functional readiness.



The Moolapeta Port, being developed as a green-field maritime hub, is expected to transform the

economic landscape of north Andhra Pradesh. Once completed, the port is projected to support a high annual cargo handling capacity as part of its first phase of construction. The increased maritime capacity is anticipated to attract major commercial players and industries, fostering regional industrialisation and growth. Officials believe this milestone will improve logistics and trade prospects for the district, helping reduce transportation costs and providing a boost to exports and imports via the eastern coast. The port's development also carries the potential to generate thousands of direct and indirect jobs, significantly impacting local employment opportunities and contributing to the broader economic upliftment of the coastal region. The Moolapeta port project is being constructed at an estimated cost running into several thousand crores, and includes features designed to handle a variety of cargo types, including bulk and container shipments. State planners have also highlighted the potential for the port to serve landlocked states by providing access to international shipping routes, broadening its strategic significance. While construction faced delays earlier due to adverse weather conditions, the arrival of the dredger at the berth has injected fresh momentum into the project. Officials and contractors are now working with the aim to complete port infrastructure in phases — beginning with berth readiness — with eventual full operationalisation targeted within the revised project timeline. Local authorities and industry representatives have welcomed this development, calling it a major step forward in realising the long held vision of establishing a modern, deep water port that would play a pivotal role in the region's economic expansion.

The Rising Spectre of a 'Greater Balochistan': Why Pakistan Is Losing Sleep Over a New Internal Challenge

In one of the most dramatic escalations of the long-running Baloch insurgency, Pakistan was shaken by a large-scale, coordinated militant offensive in Balochistan that exposed deep cracks in the country's internal security framework. The operation, carried out by the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), involved dozens of near-simultaneous attacks across multiple districts, including high-security zones and urban centres such as Quetta. For Pakistan's military and political leadership, the scale, coordination, and audacity of the attacks marked a troubling shift in the nature of the insurgency — from sporadic strikes to a more organised and strategic challenge.

While the state quickly claimed that the situation was under control and that the attackers had been neutralised, the episode left behind uncomfortable questions. How could such a widespread operation take place in one of Pakistan's most heavily militarised provinces? And more importantly, what does it say about Islamabad's decades-old strategy of managing Balochistan primarily through force?

A Province on the Margins

Balochistan has long occupied a paradoxical position within Pakistan. It is the country's largest province by area and one of its most resource-rich regions, endowed with natural gas, minerals, and a strategically vital coastline along the Arabian Sea. Yet it remains its poorest and most underdeveloped province. For many Baloch, this disparity is not accidental but the result of systematic political neglect and economic exploitation.

Since Pakistan's creation, relations between the central government and Baloch leaders have been marked by mistrust. Repeated dismissals of elected provincial governments, the marginalisation of local political voices, and dis-



The External Enemy Narrative

putes over resource sharing have fuelled a sense of alienation. Several insurgencies have erupted over the decades, each suppressed militarily but never fully resolved politically. The latest wave of violence suggests that the underlying grievances remain not only unaddressed but intensifying.

Militarisation and Its Limits

Pakistan's response to dissent in Balochistan has overwhelmingly relied on security operations. The province is dotted with military checkpoints, cantonments, and intelligence networks. Human rights organisations and local activists have long alleged enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and collective punishment, claims the state routinely denies or

downplays. Rather than crushing the insurgency, this approach appears to have radicalised it. Groups like the BLA have adapted, modernised their tactics, and broadened their operational reach. The recent coordinated attacks demonstrated a level of planning and intelligence that challenges the notion that the insurgency is merely a fringe or fading threat.

For ordinary residents, life is increasingly squeezed between militants and the state. Civil administration functions under fear, development work is sporadic, and trust in institutions remains thin. This environment has created fertile ground for insurgent recruitment, particularly among disaffected youth who see little future in existing political arrangements.

In the aftermath of the attacks, Pakistan's establishment reverted to a familiar explanation: foreign interference. Officials and commentators accused hostile intelligence agencies of orchestrating the violence, with India frequently named as the primary culprit. Other narratives went further, suggesting involvement by Western powers or regional rivals seeking to destabilise Pakistan.

While external support for insurgent groups cannot be entirely ruled out, the heavy emphasis on foreign conspiracies serves a political purpose. It shifts focus away from internal failures and reinforces a siege mentality that discourages introspection. By framing the Baloch

insurgency as an externally manufactured problem, the state avoids confronting uncomfortable truths about governance, inclusion, and accountability.

This pattern mirrors Pakistan's broader strategic culture, where internal unrest is often explained through the lens of external sabotage rather than domestic discontent.

The Fear of a 'Greater Balochistan'

What has particularly alarmed policymakers in Islamabad is the growing discussion around the idea of a "Greater Balochistan." This concept envisions a transnational Baloch entity that could encompass Baloch-populated areas of Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan. While largely theoretical at present,

the idea carries symbolic power and strategic implications that deeply unsettle the region's states.

Across the border in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province, Tehran faces its own resurgence of violent intimidation rooted in ethnic and sectarian grievances. Though the Pakistani and Iranian Baloch movements differ in ideology and objectives, they share ethnic ties, smuggling routes, and a porous border. Periodic cross-border attacks and retaliatory strikes have already strained relations between Islamabad and Tehran.

For Pakistan, the nightmare scenario is a convergence of these movements, amplified by regional rivalries and global geopolitics. Even if the prospect of a unified Baloch state remains remote, the fear of sustained

cross-border instability is very real.

Development Without Inclusion

Mega-projects such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) were promoted as game-changers for Balochistan. Gwadar port, highways, and energy projects promised jobs, infrastructure, and integration into global trade networks. Yet for many locals, these projects have reinforced feelings of dispossession rather than opportunity.

Land acquisitions, demographic anxieties, limited local employment, and heavy security around Chinese interests have deepened resentment. Development that bypasses local communities or treats them as security risks rather than stakeholders risks becoming another flashpoint rather than a solution.

A Choice Pakistan Can No Longer Avoid

Pakistan today stands at a crossroads in Balochistan. The continued reliance on force may suppress violence temporarily, but it has consistently failed to produce lasting peace. Each cycle of repression seems to generate a more determined and sophisticated insurgency.

A sustainable solution would require a fundamental shift: meaningful political dialogue with credible Baloch representatives, fair resource-sharing mechanisms, respect for human rights, and genuine provincial autonomy. Such steps would demand political courage and a willingness to rethink long-held security doctrines.

The alternative — doubling down on militarisation while blaming foreign hands — risks turning Balochistan into a perpetual conflict zone. As the spectre of a "Greater Balochistan" looms larger in strategic debates, Pakistan's greatest threat may not be external at all, but the unresolved contradictions within its own borders.

How Old Mafia Shadows Return: Bollywood's Underworld Past and the Rohit Shetty Firing Incident

The sudden firing outside the home of celebrated Bollywood filmmaker Rohit Shetty has shocked India's film industry and reignited fears of a dark chapter many believed long buried — the era when organised crime once wielded real influence over Bollywood. The incident has forced a reluctant reckoning with how the underworld, in its earlier guise as mafia syndicates, once controlled the fates and finances of filmmakers, and whether a newer generation of gang influences is trying to reassert itself.

A Startling Incident in Mumbai

In the early hours of a quiet Sunday morning, shots were fired at the residence of Rohit Shetty, one of Hindi cinema's top directors and producers. Several rounds were discharged at his home in Mumbai's Juhu area. Fortunately, no one was injured, but the incident sent shock waves through Bollywood. Security around Shetty's home and film sets was promptly tightened, with additional protection assigned to him personally.

Initial police investigations uncovered that the bullets fired were from a high-powered rifle, indicating a premeditated act rather than a stray accident. Soon after, the notorious Lawrence Bishnoi gang — an organised criminal network with roots in extortion and violent crime — was linked to the incident, and a social media post purportedly from the group claimed responsibility, issuing chilling warnings about future violence if its warnings went unheeded.

The connection of this at-

tack to a gang known for terror acts — including past threats and violence against high-profile targets — has amplified fears within the film community. It suggests that Bollywood, which many believed had moved beyond its underworld era of the 1980s and '90s, may once again be vulnerable to outside intimidation.

Echoes of the Underworld's Golden Age

To understand why this firing has stirred such deep unease, it is important to revisit the history of Bollywood's relationship with organised crime. In the late 20th century, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s, Mumbai's underworld — led by gangsters such as Dawood Ibrahim, Chhota Rajan, Abu Salem, and Arun Gawli — exerted substantial influence over the Hindi film industry. These mafias were not just criminals; they were financiers, power brokers, and sometimes arbiters of who succeeded and who suffered in Bollywood.

At that time, Bollywood struggled to attract legitimate investors who could provide large sums of money for film production. The industry's financial infrastructure was weak, and banking regulations made it difficult to secure loans for movies. Crime syndicates filled this vacuum, providing funds — often as a way to launder illicit earnings — and in return, demanding control over profits, casting decisions, and creative content. They would threaten filmmakers and stars who failed to comply, sometimes with brutal violence.



Some of the most infamous episodes of that era included the murder of film producer Mukesh Duggal in 1997 and attacks on several directors and producers who resisted paying protection money. These acts of retaliation were designed to create fear, impose dominance, and force compliance not just from the immediate victim but from the wider film community.

Yet, this was also a period when Bollywood stars occasionally shared the limelight with the underworld in more public, almost symbiotic settings. Reports and visuals from the time showed actors performing at events organised by gang leaders abroad, and several actors and actresses developed personal relationships with men linked to criminal networks. Such associations blurred the lines between glamour and crime, and while they were celebrated by some, others saw them as dangerous

entanglements. Eventually, stronger law enforcement actions, better financial options for film production, and a maturing Bollywood industry gradually pushed the old-school mafia's influence to the sidelines. Criminal dons were arrested, imprisoned, or left without the clout they once wielded. It was widely thought that Bollywood had moved on — that the days of underworld guns and hidden ledgers were over.

The Bishnoi Threat: New Faces, Similar Tactics

The recent firing at Rohit Shetty's home, linked to the Bishnoi gang — a criminal network that gained mainstream notoriety after high-profile violent crimes in recent years — seems to mirror some tactics of the old underworld. Earlier, this same group was implicated in a brazen shooting outside the home of superstar Salman Khan, which was similarly

viewed as an intimidation tactic.

Unlike the structured mafia syndicates of decades past, the current generation of gangs does not necessarily operate with the same centralised control or long-term investment interests in film projects. But the strategy — targeting prominent film personalities to send a message and create fear — is reminiscent of the past. In both cases, the goal appears to go beyond personal vendetta; it aims at psychological impact and widespread unease within the industry.

These modern gangs are also using young associates and loosely affiliated networks to carry out their plans, often employing social media and digital communication to spread threats and claim credit. This makes their violence more visible and their intimidation more overt than the coded phone calls and encrypted messages of old.

What the Fear Means for Bollywood

For an industry that thrives on visibility, fan adoration, and public engagement, the resurgence of violent intimidation represents a serious threat. In the past, attacks on film personalities were not merely criminal acts — they were signals to an entire ecosystem that no star or director was untouchable if they crossed certain lines or resisted illicit control.

While the current situation with Shetty and earlier with Salman Khan has not yet shown evidence of an organised effort to extort or control Bollywood finances, the psychological effect cannot be ignored. Producers and stars, who once confidently navigated their careers without fear of physical danger, are now forced to consider security concerns that feel out of place in an industry that has otherwise modernised and prospered.

The firing has also sparked internal discussions within Bollywood about safety protocols, the need for collective action, and whether celebrities and filmmakers need to be more vocal and coordinated when dealing with threats. In the past, silence and individual caution often allowed criminal influence to thrive; many believe that a unified stance could prevent such intimidation from gaining traction again.

Lessons from History

History shows that when fear replaces confidence, it alters behaviour. In the underworld era, fear-driven compli-

ance often led to toxic dependencies, creative compromises, and a blurring of moral boundaries. Bollywood's gradual recovery from that period was linked to transparency, better regulation, stronger law enforcement collaboration, and broader access to clean investment.

Today's warning signs should be interpreted not just as isolated incidents but as calls for systemic resilience. Strong legal action, industry-wide solidarity, and robust protection for creative professionals are essential to ensure that violence and intimidation do not become recurring motifs.

The Road Ahead

The recent firing at Rohit Shetty's residence is a stark reminder that the shadows of the past can resurface if underlying societal issues are ignored. Bollywood must remain vigilant, but it must also resist allowing fear to dictate its future. Industry leaders, law enforcement, and political authorities all have roles to play in safeguarding artistic freedom and personal safety.

If lessons from history hold true, the strength of Bollywood lies not only in its box office numbers but in its collective courage to confront threats, uphold the rule of law, and protect the creative spirit that has made it one of the most influential film industries in the world. The industry's response in the coming weeks and months will determine whether this episode remains an anomaly or the start of something more troubling.

Madras High Court Bans Discrimination at Madurai Temples Ahead of Major Festival

The Madras High Court has issued a significant order prohibiting discrimination against any community at temples in and around Madurai, Tamil Nadu, especially as the region prepares for a major upcoming festival that draws thousands of devotees. The ruling emphasises that no group — whether based on religion, caste, community or other status — should be given preferential treatment or excluded at places of worship.

The court's directive came in response to petitions highlighting incidents where certain groups were allegedly denied access to specific temple precincts or faced restrictions based on identity or community affiliation. Addressing these concerns, the bench stressed that religious institutions must operate in a manner that reflects constitutional principles of equality and non discrimination.

In its order, the High Court made it clear that all devotees — irrespective of their background — have the right to worship without barriers or differential treatment. The judges underscored that temples are places of spiritual significance meant to be open and welcoming to all, and that any exclusionary practices could not be justified under



the Constitution.

The ruling is particularly timely as temples across the region gear up for a major festival season, with large crowds expected in and around Madurai. The court emphasised that festival arrangements and temple practices must be managed in ways that uphold dignity and equality for every visitor.

Officials and temple committees were directed to ensure that rules and conduct

around places of worship adhere strictly to this principle. The court stressed that temple authorities and administrators must take proactive steps to prevent discrimination, segregation or preferential treatment of any sort.

Legal experts noted that this ruling reinforces the constitutional guarantee of equality before the law and non discrimination, especially in religious settings where social divisions have some-

times influenced behaviour. The judgment also serves as a reminder that traditions and rituals must evolve in ways that are inclusive and respectful of every citizen's rights.

As the festive season approaches, the High Court's order is expected to guide administrators and devotees alike, ensuring that religious celebrations are conducted in a spirit of inclusiveness and harmony.

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma Invokes Gandhi, Calls for "Non Cooperation" Against 'Miyas'

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has urged people in the state to adopt what he described as Mahatma Gandhi's principles of non cooperation and civil disobedience — aimed at making life difficult for "Miyas," a term he uses for Bangladeshi-origin Muslims whom he alleges are illegal migrants in Assam.

Addressing a public gathering in Sivasagar district, Sarma said the government continues to push back 20 to 30 individuals daily along the Assam border as part of efforts to curb illegal immigration. He argued that creating conditions in which "they cannot stay in Assam" would encourage them to leave voluntarily, urging locals not to provide land, vehicles, rickshaws, or shelter to such individuals.

Sarma invoked Gandhian philosophy, describing non co-



operation and civil disobedience as legitimate tools to address the issue. He claimed that if Assamese people implemented these ideas at the grassroots level, illegal residents would depart without the state having to forcibly remove them. He emphasised that his stance is directed at "Miyas" as alleged foreign na-

tionals and not at Muslims in general, insisting that genuine Indian Muslims should not be targeted.

The comments come amid an ongoing special revision of electoral rolls in Assam and ahead of the state's assembly elections, giving them political significance. Opposition parties have criticised Sar-

ma's rhetoric, accusing him of polarising communities and using divisive language for electoral gains. Complaints have also been filed alleging that his remarks could incite hostility between communities. Sarma, however, defended his approach as part of broader efforts to uphold state security and identity, framing his demand for non cooperation as a strategic measure rather than a call for discrimination.

The episode highlights rising tensions in Assam's socio-political landscape, with migration, identity, and electoral politics intersecting sharply in public discourse. Sarma's use of Gandhian concepts in this context has drawn both support and criticism, reflecting the deep divides over how demographic and migration issues should be addressed in the state.

Mamata Banerjee Slams BJP During Assembly Debate on Governor's Address



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee launched a strong attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) during a heated discussion in the state Assembly over the Governor's speech to the House. The session was one of the last major legislative gatherings before the upcoming state elections, and Banerjee's remarks underscored the intense political rivalry in Bengal's political landscape.

During her address, Banerjee sharply rebutted BJP criticism over issues such as illegal immigration and the revision of the electoral roll, dismissing her opponents' accusations as baseless. In a pointed remark directed at the opposition, she declared that the BJP was "zero and will be zero," asserting that the people of Bengal would reject the party at the polls. She warned that even extensive efforts by central agencies would not help the BJP secure seats in the state assembly.

Banerjee also defended the Governor's address, which was criticized by BJP legislators for omitting references to women's safety and law and order. She explained that the Governor had

spoken within the time he had available and had conveyed the relevant points, likening the situation to similar practices followed in Parliament. She countered the opposition's claims by questioning their interpretations of the speech and its omissions.

On the issue of alleged illegal immigration, Banerjee challenged the BJP's narrative, arguing that key central departments responsible for sharing data with state authorities had failed to do so for years. She pointed out that past practices involved better cooperation between central agencies and state police, which she said had now diminished, undermining Bengal's ability to address such concerns effectively.

Throughout the debate, Banerjee maintained a defiant tone, framing her responses as both a defence of her government's actions and a political message ahead of the elections. Her remarks reflected ongoing tensions between the state government and the opposition, and highlighted wider disagreements over governance, security, and electoral politics in West Bengal's run-up to the 2026 polls.

No Escape Route for Bengal Government After Supreme Court Orders Payment of DA Dues



The Supreme Court has delivered a major blow to the West Bengal government by directing it to pay a portion of long-pending dearness allowance (DA) dues to state government employees. The court ordered the state to clear 25 per cent of the outstanding arrears within a fixed deadline, while appointing an independent committee to assess the remaining amount payable.

The ruling has been welcomed by the opposition, with Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari describing it as a decisive verdict that leaves the state government with no option but to comply. He said the judgment confirms that DA payments are a legitimate entitlement of employees and criticised the prolonged delay in settling the dues.

According to the court's direction, the remaining arrears will be examined by a panel comprising retired judges, tasked with determining the exact liability of the state. The panel has been asked to complete its assessment within a specified time frame to

ensure the issue is resolved without further delay.

The DA issue has been a long-standing point of contention in West Bengal, with government employees demanding parity with central government allowances. The delay in payments has triggered protests, legal battles, and political sparring over the years.

The opposition has seized on the verdict to question the state government's financial management and commitment to employee welfare, especially with Assembly elections approaching. Critics argue that the ruling highlights governance and fiscal accountability issues, while the government now faces mounting pressure to meet the court-mandated deadline.

With the Supreme Court's order in place, the focus shifts to implementation. The ruling has significantly narrowed the state government's room for manoeuvre, making timely compliance a crucial test of its administrative and financial resolve.

Parliament Budget Session Disrupted as PM's Address Deferred Amid Opposition Protests



Proceedings in the Lok Sabha during the Budget Session were disrupted amid intense opposition protests, leading to the deferment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled reply to the Motion of Thanks on the President's address. The disruptions highlighted growing tensions between the government and the opposition, with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi emerging at the centre of the controversy.

The Prime Minister was expected to respond to the debate on the President's address, a key parliamentary tradition where the government outlines its priorities and addresses criticism. However, repeated interruptions and protests prevented the House from functioning normally, forcing multiple adjournments and ultimately derailing the

planned address. Opposition members raised objections over parliamentary procedure, claiming that Rahul Gandhi was not given adequate opportunity to speak. The protests escalated inside the House, with members crowding the well and raising slogans, prompting the Speaker to adjourn proceedings repeatedly.

Despite the disruptions, the Lok Sabha later passed the Motion of Thanks on the President's address without the customary reply from the Prime Minister — an unusual development that underscored the extent of the impasse. Leaders from the ruling party accused the opposition of deliberately obstructing parliamentary business, while opposition parties maintained that they were defending democratic

norms and the right to be heard.

The unrest was not limited to the Lok Sabha, as heated exchanges were also witnessed in the Rajya Sabha, reflecting the broader political friction during the session. Instead of focusing on economic issues and legislative priorities associated with the Budget Session, Parliament remained dominated by procedural disputes and political confrontation.

The episode has once again raised concerns over the smooth functioning of Parliament, with both sides trading blame for the disruption. As the Budget Session continues, attention remains on whether dialogue between the government and opposition can restore order and allow critical legislative business to proceed.

Lok Sabha Passes Motion of Thanks Without Prime Minister's Reply After Disruptions



In an unusual turn of events, the Lok Sabha passed the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address without a reply from the Prime Minister, following major disruptions in the House. The session was marked by repeated interruptions by opposition members, which prevented routine parliamentary business from being completed as expected.

Typically, after the President's Address is presented to Parliament, a motion thanking the President is debated by members, followed by a government response — usually given by the Prime Minister. However, on this occasion, persistent protests and demands by opposition MPs led to delays and disorder, ultimately forcing the Speaker to proceed without the customary government reply.

The disruptions were triggered by opposition objections to parliamentary procedure as well as demands for extended speaking time

for certain leaders. Opposition members repeatedly raised slogans, crowded the well of the House, and resisted calls for order, prompting several adjournments. As a result, the planned address by the Prime Minister was postponed and did not take place before the motion was put to vote.

Despite the chaos, the Lok Sabha completed the debate on the President's Address and adopted the Motion of Thanks, fulfilling a key constitutional requirement. The Speaker emphasised that adopting the motion was necessary to keep the session's business on track, even if procedural norms could not be followed fully amid the turmoil.

The absence of the Prime Minister's reply is considered rare in parliamentary practice and underscores the impact of the session's disruptions. Government leaders and opposition parties offered contrasting narratives about the episode —

while ruling party members accused the opposition of deliberately stalling proceedings, opposition MPs argued that they were asserting parliamentary rights and ensuring meaningful debate on key issues.

The incident reflects broader political tensions in the run up to major legislative priorities, with the Budget Session intended to focus on economic policy, taxation, and government programmes. Instead, political confrontation took centre stage, delaying substantive discussions and highlighting the deep divisions among political parties.

With the Motion of Thanks now passed, attention will likely turn to resuming the Prime Minister's reply at a later date and moving forward with the session's legislative agenda. Lawmakers from both sides have acknowledged the need to restore calm so that essential business can proceed in the coming days.

India-US Trade Deal With 18% Reciprocal Tariff Likely to Be Signed Next Week

India and the United States are set to sign a long-awaited trade agreement as early as next week, according to sources familiar with the matter. The deal will introduce a reciprocal tariff rate of 18%, marking a significant step toward easing trade tensions and strengthening economic ties between the two countries.

Under the proposed agreement, the United States will lower tariffs on a range of Indian exports, while India is expected to reduce duties on select American goods. The reciprocal tariff mechanism is aimed at creating a more balanced and predictable trade framework, replacing earlier punitive or uneven tariff structures.

The agreement is expected to benefit several Indian export-oriented sectors, including textiles, engineering goods, leather products, gems and jewellery, and footwear. Lower tariffs are likely to make Indian products more competitive in the U.S. market, potentially boosting export volumes and supporting manufacturing growth.

Government sources indicated that India has taken care to protect sensitive domestic sectors such as agriculture, dairy, and fisheries. These areas will not see immediate or broad tariff reductions, addressing concerns related to farmer livelihoods and food security.

In addition to tariff adjustments, the deal is also expected to include commitments on



increased trade and investment flows. India may expand purchases of U.S. goods in areas such as energy, technology, and defence, while American companies could gain improved access to select segments of the Indian market.

A joint statement outlining the broad contours of the agreement is likely to be issued first, followed by a formal signing and implementation

process. Once finalised, the U.S. is expected to issue an executive notification to operationalise the revised tariff structure, with a more detailed legal framework to follow.

The development comes at a time when both countries are looking to strengthen strategic and economic cooperation amid global supply-chain realignments. Markets and indus-

try bodies have reacted positively to the prospect of tariff relief, viewing the deal as a boost to bilateral trade and investor confidence.

If implemented smoothly, the agreement could mark a turning point in India-US trade relations, providing greater certainty for businesses and laying the foundation for deeper economic engagement in the years ahead.

Bangladesh Tribunal Sentences Former MP and Others to Death in Ashulia Lynching Case

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal has sentenced a former Member of Parliament and several others to death for their role in a brutal incident involving the killing and burning of protesters in the Ashulia area near Dhaka. The tribunal ruled that the acts amounted to crimes against humanity, carried out during a period of intense nationwide unrest.

The former lawmaker was found guilty along with five co-accused of participating in the killing of multiple individuals during violent clashes. According to the court's findings, the victims were lynched and their bodies were later set on fire in an attempt to destroy evidence. In one particularly disturbing detail highlighted during the trial, at least one victim was reportedly alive when the fire was started.

In addition to the death sentences, the tribunal handed down life imprisonment to several other accused, including



senior police officials who were found to have played a role in the incident or failed to prevent the violence. A few more individuals received shorter prison terms, while one accused who cooperated with investigators was acquitted.

The verdict was delivered by

a three-member bench after a lengthy trial that examined witness testimonies, forensic evidence, and official records. Of the total accused, some were in custody at the time of sentencing, while others remain absconding.

The tribunal observed that the crimes were not spontane-

ous acts of mob violence but were carried out in a coordinated manner, with attempts made afterward to conceal the killings. The judgment noted that such acts represented a grave abuse of power and a serious violation of human rights.

The case has drawn widespread attention within Bangladesh, given the severity of the crimes and the involvement of political and law enforcement figures. The ruling is being viewed as a significant step in efforts to hold individuals accountable for large-scale violence during periods of political instability.

Authorities have said the legal process will continue in accordance with the law, including the right of the convicted individuals to appeal the verdict. The judgment underscores the tribunal's stance that crimes of such magnitude will face the harshest punishment under the legal system.

Russia Says India Free to Buy Oil From Any Country Amid India-US Trade Deal

Russia has dismissed suggestions that India will stop purchasing Russian oil following the recently announced trade agreement between India and the United States. Responding to speculation around the deal, Russian officials said New Delhi remains free to source crude oil from any country based on its own national interests.

Moscow clarified that it has received no official communication from India indicating any decision to halt or reduce imports of Russian oil. Russian authorities stressed that energy cooperation between the two countries continues to be mutually beneficial and remains an important part of their long-standing economic relationship.

The comments came after claims that India's trade agreement with the United States could involve restrictions on oil purchases from Russia. Russian officials described such assertions as misleading, noting that India has historically diversified its crude oil imports and has never relied exclusively on any single supplier.

India, one of the world's largest importers of crude oil,



has consistently maintained that its energy procurement decisions are guided by considerations such as affordability, supply security, and strategic requirements. Officials have reiterated that ensuring stable and cost-effective energy supplies remains a top priority for the country.

The India-US trade agreement focuses primarily on reducing tariffs and expanding trade in goods and services. It

does not include any binding commitments related to energy imports from third countries. Analysts note that linking the trade deal to oil purchases oversimplifies the broader economic and strategic objectives of the agreement.

Russia's response underscores the view that India's energy policy remains independent and pragmatic, shaped by market conditions rather than

geopolitical pressure. As global energy markets remain volatile, India is expected to continue sourcing oil from a diverse range of suppliers to protect its economic interests.

The clarification from Moscow is likely to ease concerns about disruptions in India-Russia energy ties, while highlighting India's balancing act as it deepens economic engagement with multiple global partners.

Bangladesh 2026 Elections: How Citizens Living Abroad Can Cast Their Vote



Bangladesh is set to allow its citizens living overseas to vote in national elections for the first time, marking a major shift in the country's electoral process. The move comes ahead of the 2026 general elections, which will be the first polls held since the removal of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

To enable overseas voting, the Election Commission has introduced a postal ballot system designed specifically for expatriate Bangladeshis. Under this system, eligible voters living outside the country can register remotely and cast their votes without travelling back home.

Registration is being carried out through a dedicated mobile application developed by the Election Commission. Citizens abroad must provide their national identity details

and an overseas address where ballot papers can be sent. Once the registration process is completed and verified, ballot papers are dispatched well in advance of polling day.

After receiving the ballot, voters can mark their choices and return the completed papers by post. To be counted, the ballots must reach the concerned election authorities before the close of polling. The system allows overseas voters to participate in both parliamentary elections and any national referendum held alongside the polls.

The Election Commission has clarified that all Bangladeshi citizens living abroad are eligible to vote under this mechanism, provided they meet the registration requirements. This includes people residing overseas for work, education, or long-term assignments.

Apart from expatriates, the postal voting facility also covers certain categories of voters within Bangladesh who may be unable to visit polling stations on election day, such as election officials on duty or voters posted outside their home constituencies.

The introduction of overseas voting is being seen as a landmark reform aimed at making Bangladesh's democratic process more inclusive. Millions of Bangladeshis living abroad have long held the right to vote, but the lack of practical arrangements had prevented them from exercising it.

With the new system in place, the 2026 elections are expected to see significant participation from the Bangladeshi diaspora, potentially influencing the political landscape at a crucial moment in the country's history.

US Ambassador Sergio Gor Says India-US Engagement Is at "Highest Levels", Signals Deeper Partnership Ahead



The United States and India are currently engaged in high-level diplomatic and strategic talks, underlining a renewed push to strengthen their bilateral relationship across multiple fronts.

U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor highlighted the deepening ties between the two countries, saying that engagement "is happening at the highest levels" and that Washington is ready to elevate the partnership even further. The ambassador's comments reflect growing cooperation on areas such as trade, economic collaboration, and broader strategic issues.

Ambassador Gor shared his views on social media alongside images of meetings between India's External Affairs Minister and senior U.S. officials. He described the relation-

ship as having "limitless potential," signalling optimism about future cooperation and joint initiatives.

The remarks come amid ongoing talks on a major India-U.S. trade deal, efforts to enhance cooperation on critical minerals, and discussions on energy security and defence ties. Both sides have been holding regular meetings to expand economic engagement and address shared global challenges, including supply chain resilience and regional security.

The renewed diplomacy follows months of negotiations and diplomatic activity aimed at resolving earlier trade tensions and moving toward a comprehensive framework for cooperation. The focus now shifts to translating high-

level engagement into concrete outcomes that benefit both nations.

India and the United States have increasingly coordinated on issues of mutual interest, balancing economic, technological, and strategic priorities. The nations' leaderships have maintained sustained contact across defence, trade, and geopolitical forums, reflecting a broader commitment to a long-term partnership.

With formal agreements in the pipeline and ongoing dialogue at senior levels, the India-U.S. relationship appears poised to enter a new phase of deeper engagement and collaboration. Their combined efforts now span commercial ties, global supply networks, and strategic partnerships in an evolving geopolitical landscape.

RBI MPC Meeting: Date, Time and How to Watch Governor Sanjay Malhotra's Policy Announcement



The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by Governor Sanjay Malhotra, is meeting this week to review the country's monetary policy stance. The committee's discussions began in early February and will conclude with a policy announcement on Friday morning.

The MPC meets periodically to assess economic conditions and decide on key policy measures — most importantly, whether to change the repo rate, which influences borrowing costs across the economy. This February meeting comes shortly after the government presented its Union Budget, and markets are keen to hear how the central bank will position policy in light of recent economic developments.

When and Where to Watch the RBI Governor's Speech

Governor Sanjay Malhotra is scheduled to announce the outcome

of the MPC meeting at 10 a.m. on Friday. His address will be streamed live on the Reserve Bank of India's official platforms, including its website and social media channels such as YouTube and X. A press conference by the Governor and senior RBI officials is expected to follow around noon, where they will explain the rationale behind the policy decision and offer insights on inflation, growth, liquidity conditions, and other economic indicators.

Viewers can also follow live updates from financial news websites and dedicated market blogs, which will carry real-time coverage of the announcement and key takeaways from the press briefing.

What Markets Are Watching

Ahead of the policy outcome, market participants and economists have been closely watching key indicators like inflation

trends, GDP growth forecasts, credit conditions, and global financial cues. With inflation remaining moderate and growth momentum intact, many analysts expect the RBI to maintain its current interest rate rather than make a fresh cut — though views vary and the final decision will be clarified during the announcement.

Aside from the headline rate decision, investors and businesses will pay close attention to the RBI's commentary on liquidity management, transmission of past rate actions, and any guidance on future policy direction, as these signals can influence loan pricing, investment decisions, and financial markets.

In summary, Friday's policy announcement and Governor Malhotra's live speech will be a key event for anyone tracking India's monetary policy outlook, financial markets, and broader economic trends.

Anti-Corruption Court Rejects Plea Seeking FIR Against SEBI and Exchange Officials



A special anti-corruption court in Mumbai has dismissed a petition seeking the registration of a corruption case against senior officials of the securities market regulator and leading stock exchanges. The court termed the plea baseless and warned the complainant against repeatedly approaching multiple legal forums with similar allegations.

The application alleged that officials of the market regulator, stock exchanges, and related authorities had acted improperly while allowing the listing of a technology company, claiming regulatory lapses and corruption. The complainant sought directions for the registration of a First Information Report (FIR) under anti-corruption laws.

After examining the submissions, the court found that the allegations were unsupported by any concrete evidence. It observed that the complainant failed to present material

proof of bribery, misuse of authority, or deliberate regulatory violations. The judge noted that the claims were speculative in nature and did not meet the legal threshold required to initiate criminal proceedings.

The court also pointed out inconsistencies in the complainant's arguments and highlighted that several officials named in the plea were not even holding their respective positions during the period in question. This, the court said, further weakened the credibility of the allegations.

In its order, the court strongly criticised what it described as "forum hunting," noting that the complainant had approached multiple courts and authorities with similar grievances despite earlier rejections. Such conduct, the court observed, amounts to an abuse of the judicial process and unnecessarily burdens the legal system.

The judge warned that litigants must not

misuse anti-corruption laws to settle personal grievances or pursue unfounded claims against institutions and public officials. Courts, the order stated, are obligated to protect individuals and bodies from harassment arising out of frivolous litigation.

Consequently, the court refused to direct the registration of an FIR and dismissed the plea. While no fresh penalties were imposed in this case, the court took note of earlier adverse orders passed against the complainant in related matters.

The ruling underscores the judiciary's position that serious allegations against regulatory authorities must be backed by clear evidence and proper legal grounds. It also reinforces the principle that repeated and meritless litigation will not be entertained, particularly when it targets key institutions responsible for maintaining stability and trust in the financial markets.

Sensex and Nifty Slip as Markets Turn Cautious on February 5

Indian stock markets experienced a notable downturn on Thursday, with both the BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty 50 ending lower after snapping a three-day winning streak. Profit-booking in key sectors and weak global cues weighed on benchmarks, reversing some of the recent positive momentum.

The Sensex fell sharply, dropping by several hundred points, while the Nifty slid below key psychological levels. Selling pressure was broad-based, with most sectors, including technology, metals, and pharmaceutical stocks, underperforming. Mid-cap and small-cap stocks also lagged behind, reflecting cautious investor sentiment across broader market segments.

Information technology stocks were a major drag on the market, with leading names witnessing significant declines. This continued pressure on tech counters amplified losses in the benchmark indices. Metal stocks also weighed heavily, as commodity prices remained under pressure amid global headwinds.

Despite the negative trend, a few pockets of strength emerged. Public sector banking stocks



showed relative resilience, and some heavyweight names managed to hold up better than the broader market, limiting the overall decline to an extent. However, these gains were not enough to offset the widespread selling across other sectors.

In overseas markets, weakness in global equities, particularly in technology and commodity-linked stocks, contributed to a risk-off mood that spilled over into Indian

markets. Investors are also keeping a close eye on upcoming policy announcements, including expectations around the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy stance, which could influence near-term market direction.

Sectoral indices painted a mixed picture. While defensive segments showed stability, cyclical and export-oriented sectors struggled. Precious metals ex-

change-traded funds (ETFs) saw renewed selling pressure, further reflecting risk aversion among investors.

Market analysts characterised the session as part of a consolidation phase, following recent gains linked to positive trade news and capital inflows earlier in the week. With volatility still high and global cues remaining unpredictable, traders are watching key support and resistance levels

closely for signs of a sustained trend.

Overall, the market's cautious tone underscores the current balance between domestic optimism around economic fundamentals and external uncertainties, particularly in global tech and commodity markets. This mixed backdrop suggests that investors may continue to prioritise risk management as market dynamics evolve.

Indian IT Stocks Slide Further as AI Fears Deepen — Jefferies Warns "More Pain Ahead"



Indian IT shares continued their downward trend in early trading, extending losses for a second session as investor concerns over artificial intelligence and heightened competition weighed on the sector. The Nifty IT index dropped again, adding to recent sharp declines that have wiped out significant

value from major technology firms.

Heavyweight names such as Infosys and HCL Technologies were among the stocks trading in the red, with others like Mphasis, Coforge, Persistent Systems, Wipro, Tech Mahindra, LTIMindtree and TCS also showing losses. The broader slide

has been driven by worries that advances in AI could disrupt traditional IT services revenue, which forms a large part of these companies' businesses.

The recent sell-off was triggered in part by the launch of new productivity and automation tools by a U.S. AI firm. These

tools are seen as capable of automating tasks across legal, sales, marketing and data analysis functions — areas historically served by Indian IT services — prompting investors to reassess future demand for human-led outsourcing work. This has heightened fears that artificial intelligence might erode application and services revenue over time.

Analysts at brokerage Jefferies highlighted that application services — often accounting for 40-70% of revenue for Indian IT firms — could face continued pressure from AI-driven automation. In a recent note, the firm warned of "more pain ahead" for the sector, suggesting revenue growth could be restrained as deflation in traditional services outweighs potential gains from AI adoption in the near term.

Market participants have also become more cautious due to a broader global sell-off in technol-

ogy stocks, with U.S. and other international tech equities weakening amid similar concerns. This has influenced sentiment in domestic markets, especially for companies with large U.S. exposure and reliance on global demand for software services.

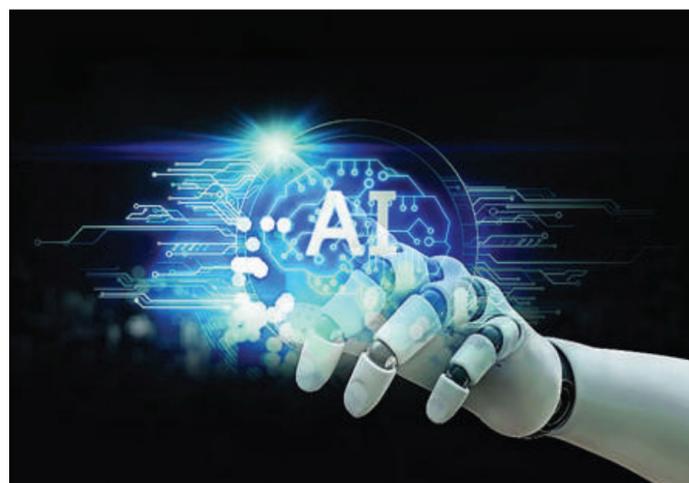
Despite the sell-off, some analysts argue the reaction may be partly driven by sentiment rather than fundamental change, as not all IT revenues are equally vulnerable to automation. Nonetheless, the risk of AI-led disruption has clearly shifted market perceptions, leaving Indian IT stocks under pressure.

Overall, the trend reflects a market grappling with the implications of rapid advances in AI — balancing opportunities from technology adoption against the threat of reduced demand for traditional IT services — with investors cautious ahead of firmer signs of industry adaptation and earnings resilience.

AI Fears Rattle Indian IT Stocks: Is the Risk Already Priced In?

Indian information technology stocks have come under heavy pressure as investor concerns grow over the potential impact of artificial intelligence on traditional IT services. A sharp sell-off across major IT companies has raised an important question for markets — have these risks already been factored into stock prices, or is there further downside ahead?

The recent decline was triggered by the emergence of advanced AI tools capable of automating complex tasks that were previously handled by human-led IT services. These tools can improve productivity across areas such as data analysis, legal workflows, software testing, and business operations. As a result, investors are reassessing the long-term demand outlook for labour-intensive outsourcing services, which form the backbone of revenue for many Indian IT firms.



Following the sell-off, share prices of leading IT companies corrected sharply, dragging sector valuations closer to long-term averages. This correction reflects growing uncertainty over future growth rather than any immediate collapse in demand. Market participants fear that faster adoption of AI could

lead to pricing pressure and slower revenue growth as automation reduces the need for large workforces.

However, there is also a view that market reaction may be driven more by sentiment than by fundamentals. Many IT companies have already begun integrating AI into their service offerings and are reposition-

ing themselves as partners in clients' digital and AI transformation journeys. This adaptation could help offset some of the risks by creating new revenue opportunities, even as traditional service lines face pressure.

Analysts note that while certain application and maintenance services could see defla-

tion over time, large IT firms still benefit from strong client relationships, diversified revenue streams, and healthy balance sheets. The shift towards AI is expected to be gradual rather than disruptive overnight, giving companies time to adjust their business models. From a valuation perspective, the sector now trades at more reasonable levels compared to recent peaks. For long-term investors, this has sparked interest in selectively accumulating stocks of companies best positioned to monetise AI adoption while managing cost pressures.

In conclusion, AI-related fears have clearly unsettled Indian IT stocks, but whether the full risk has been priced in remains uncertain. The coming quarters — marked by deal wins, margin trends, and AI-led revenue growth — will be critical in determining whether the sector stabilises or faces further repricing.

French Hospital Evacuated After WWII Artillery Shell Found in Man's Rectum



A truly unusual and alarming discovery in France led to the evacuation of a hospital this week after surgeons preparing to operate found a World War I artillery shell lodged in a man's body. The bizarre case highlights both the long shadow of century-old battlefields and the extraordinary situations modern doctors sometimes face.

The incident began when a man was brought to a hospital in northern France with severe abdominal pain and rectal discomfort. Medical staff prepared to carry out routine examinations and possible surgery, but imaging scans revealed something nobody expected — a large, cylindrical metallic object deep inside the patient's lower intestine.

Further review showed that the object was not a typical foreign body but a military ordnance piece, later confirmed by experts to be an artillery shell dating back to the First World War. Authorities believe the shell was likely a remnant from battles fought in the region more than a century ago, when huge numbers of munitions were fired and many unexploded shells remained buried in the soil.

Because of the volatile nature of the device, the hospital was immediately evacuated as a precaution. Staff and patients were moved out of the building while bomb disposal experts were called in to assess the situation. Military technicians with experience handling old ordnance arrived shortly afterward and carefully secured the device, ensuring that it posed no risk of explosion.

The discovery stunned both medical and defence personnel, as well as the local community. It is extremely rare for relics of historical warfare — particularly explosive shells — to appear in medical cases, let alone inside a person's body. How the shell came to be

ingested or inserted remains unclear, with investigators looking into the circumstances that led to its presence there.

Local officials pointed out that areas of northern France still occasionally yield unexploded ordnance from the First World War, a conflict that devastated large swaths of the countryside and left behind millions of shells, many of which were never detonated. Farmers and construction workers sometimes uncover these remnants while ploughing fields or digging foundations, but they are usually detected and removed safely before causing harm.

Doctors who treated the patient described the situation as "one of the most unusual" cases they have encountered. While they could not comment on the exact medical circumstances out of respect for the patient's privacy, they emphasised the importance of imaging scans before any surgical procedure — a decision that in this case likely prevented a catastrophic outcome.

The evacuation and controlled removal of the shell attracted local media attention and renewed conversations about the legacy of past wars and the surprising ways remnants of conflict can affect the present. People in the area expressed relief that no one was hurt during the incident, and praised the rapid and professional response by medical and bomb-disposal teams.

As for the patient, he remains under medical care, with doctors expected to address any health issues arising from this extraordinary situation once the immediate danger has passed. The case serves as a rare reminder that history can sometimes linger in the most unexpected places — even inside the human body.

This Bengaluru Dog's LinkedIn Profile Has Gone Viral — and the Internet Can't Get Enough



Drogo Mohanty · 3rd

Top Dog at thePack.in

Bengaluru, Karnataka, India · [Contact info](#)

LinkedIn, a platform best known for job updates and professional milestones, recently saw an unexpected star rise from Bengaluru — a dog. A cocker spaniel named Drogo has captured the internet's attention after his LinkedIn profile went viral, delighting users with its humour, creativity, and wholesome charm.

The profile was created by Drogo's owner, an entrepreneur who works in the pet care space. Instead of a traditional résumé filled with corporate achievements, the account presents Drogo as the "top dog" at a pet-focused community. Complete with a cheerful profile photo and playful descriptions, the page stands out sharply from the platform's usual formal tone.

What makes Drogo's LinkedIn presence special is how effortlessly it blends humour with personality. The bio, written from the dog's point of view, describes his "role" in a light-hearted way that pokes fun at corporate jargon while still fitting naturally into the LinkedIn ecosystem. For many users scrolling through routine professional posts, the sight of a dog's profile was an unexpected and refreshing surprise.

The response online was swift and overwhelmingly positive. Users shared the profile widely, leaving comments praising its creativity and calling it the most enjoyable thing they had seen

on the platform in a long time. Some joked about sending connection requests, while others said Drogo had already achieved more visibility than many professionals trying to build their personal brand.

The viral moment also reflects a broader cultural shift in how people view pets — not just as animals, but as family members and emotional companions. In recent years, workplaces and online spaces alike have become more pet-friendly, recognising the positive impact animals can have on stress, morale, and overall wellbeing. Drogo's popularity taps into this sentiment, offering a small but powerful reminder of the joy pets bring into everyday life.

Beyond LinkedIn, Drogo is also active on social media, where glimpses of his daily life further showcase his playful and affectionate nature. These posts help bridge the gap between the online persona and the real-life dog behind the profile, making the story even more endearing to followers.

Ultimately, Drogo's viral LinkedIn profile succeeds because it breaks expectations. In a space often dominated by polished success stories and professional pressure, a dog's playful presence feels humanising. It reminds users that creativity, humour, and warmth still have a place — even in the most serious of digital spaces.

"Money Can't Buy Happiness?" Elon Musk's Remark Ignites a Lively Online Debate



A brief social media post by Elon Musk has triggered a global debate on one of life's oldest questions: can money really buy happiness? The billionaire entrepreneur, known for leading companies such as Tesla, SpaceX, and X, shared a reflective comment suggesting that the popular saying "money can't buy happiness" may hold more truth than people assume. Coming from one of the world's wealthiest individuals, the remark instantly grabbed

attention and sparked widespread reactions online.

Musk's statement struck a nerve because it appeared to challenge the assumption that immense wealth automatically guarantees a fulfilling life. While he did not elaborate on what prompted the comment, its timing and tone invited both serious reflection and light-hearted scepticism. Many users interpreted it as an expression of the emotional complexities that can ex-

ist even at the highest levels of success and privilege.

Supporters of Musk's view argued that happiness is shaped by factors far beyond financial status. They pointed out that meaningful relationships, mental health, purpose, and inner peace play a far greater role in long-term contentment than material possessions. According to this perspective, money can offer comfort and convenience, but it cannot prevent loneliness, anxiety,

or dissatisfaction.

Others, however, responded with humour and irony. Social media users jokingly challenged Musk to share his wealth so they could personally test the theory. Comments like "give me a billion first and then we'll talk" flooded timelines, reflecting a common belief that financial struggles often make philosophical reflections on happiness feel distant or unrealistic. For those grappling with rising living costs and economic

uncertainty, money still appears closely tied to peace of mind.

Several voices took a more balanced stance, suggesting that money may not create happiness directly but can remove many barriers to it. Financial stability can reduce stress related to healthcare, housing, education, and daily survival, allowing people the freedom to pursue passions, relationships, and personal growth. In this sense, money may not buy happiness outright, but it can create conditions where happiness becomes easier to achieve.

The conversation also highlighted a broader social divide. People with basic financial security may see happiness as an emotional or philosophical pursuit, while those struggling financially often view money as a gateway to dignity and stability. This contrast explains why reactions to Musk's remark varied so sharply.

Ultimately, Musk's comment served as a reminder that happiness is deeply subjective. Wealth may shape life's possibilities, but it does not automatically define fulfilment. The debate it sparked shows that the relationship between money and happiness remains as complex — and as personal — as ever.

Mumbai Police Officer's Kind Act for a Homeless Mother and Baby Wins Hearts Online

A simple act of compassion by a Mumbai police officer has struck an emotional chord on social media, reminding people that humanity often shines brightest in the smallest gestures. A short video showing the officer helping a homeless mother and her infant has gone viral, drawing widespread praise for its empathy and quiet dignity.

The incident took place late one evening when the officer was returning home after completing his duty. As he walked along a pavement, his attention was drawn to a young mother and her baby sleeping beside the road. What particularly concerned him was the infant resting in a fragile, makeshift wooden cradle that appeared unsafe and exposed to the elements.

Instead of walking past, the officer chose to act. The video captures him carefully removing the improvised cradle and replacing it with a proper, sturdy one, ensuring that

the baby had a safer and more comfortable place to sleep. The mother, visibly emotional, watches as he sets up the cradle beside her, offering reassurance through action rather than words.

The clip was later shared online and quickly gained millions of views. Social media users flooded the comments with messages of appreciation, calling the gesture heartwarming and deeply moving. Many said the moment restored their faith in everyday kindness, especially at a time when negative news often dominates public discourse.

What stood out for viewers was not just the help itself, but the manner in which it was offered — with respect and sensitivity. The officer did not treat the mother as a problem to be managed, but as a human being deserving care and dignity. For many, this distinction made the act even more powerful.

The video also sparked



conversations about the role of police officers beyond enforcing law and order. Commenters noted that while policing is often associated with authority and discipline, moments like these reveal the compassionate side of those in uniform.

Several people praised the officer for using his position not just to maintain public safety, but to

bring comfort to someone living on the margins of society.

In a city as fast-paced and unforgiving as Mumbai, stories like this resonate strongly. They highlight the daily struggles of the homeless while also showing how individual choices can make a meaningful difference, even without grand gestures or official programmes.

At its core, the viral moment is a reminder that kindness does not require power, wealth, or recognition — only awareness and empathy. One officer's decision to stop, notice, and care turned an ordinary night into a moment of hope, inspiring thousands to believe in the quiet power of human compassion.

Plastic Found in Elephant Dung Sparks Alarm Over Pollution in Forest Areas



A disturbing discovery inside a forest has reignited concerns about the growing reach of plastic pollution into natural habitats. A recent video showing plastic embedded in elephant dung has gone viral on social media, shocking viewers and highlighting how human waste is affecting wildlife far beyond urban areas.

The footage was recorded in a forested region in southern India and shows a pile of elephant dung containing a visible piece of plastic, believed to be part of a discarded food packet. The sight is unsettling, particularly because the location is far from dense human settlements, reinforcing fears that plastic waste has penetrated

even remote ecosystems.

The person who recorded the video described the scene as deeply troubling, pointing out that elephants are meant to forage on natural vegetation, not ingest synthetic materials. The presence of plastic in the dung suggests that the animal unknowingly consumed waste left behind in the forest, likely

mixed with grass or other edible plants.

Wildlife experts note that elephants, as large grazing animals, are especially vulnerable to plastic pollution. When plastic waste is scattered along forest fringes, roads, or trekking routes, animals may ingest it accidentally while feeding. While some plastic may pass through their digestive system, it can also cause internal injuries, blockages, or long-term health issues.

The video triggered strong reactions online, with many users expressing sadness and anger over human carelessness. Several commenters called it a wake-up call, urging people to be more responsible with waste disposal, especially in and around forests. Others pointed out that plastic pollution is no longer an abstract environmental issue but a direct threat to wildlife survival.

Conservationists warn that this is not an isolated

incident. Similar cases of plastic found in animal droppings have been reported across different regions, suggesting a widespread problem. Once plastic enters an ecosystem, it can remain for decades, affecting animals, soil, and water sources.

The incident underscores the urgent need for better waste management practices and stricter enforcement of anti-littering rules. Reducing single-use plastic, improving recycling systems, and increasing public awareness are seen as crucial steps to prevent further damage.

For many viewers, the image of plastic in elephant dung serves as a powerful reminder of how deeply human behaviour impacts nature. It is a stark signal that environmental responsibility cannot be limited to cities alone — protecting wildlife begins with everyday choices made far beyond the forest.

Bangladesh Voices Surprise as Pakistan Boycotts India Match at T20 World Cup

Bangladesh has reacted with surprise and disappointment after Pakistan announced it would skip their scheduled match against India at the 2026 ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Officials from the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said they did not expect such a decision and hinted it could have wider implications for the spirit of the tournament.

In comments after Pakistan's boycott announcement, Bangladesh's cricket leadership expressed that no team likes to forfeit games, especially in a major event like the T20 World Cup. They noted it was particularly surprising because Pakistan had recently participated in other high-profile matches, including an Under-19 fixture against India on the same day the boycott was declared. For them, that fact raised questions about the consistency of Pakistan's reasoning.

Bangladesh officials underscored the importance of playing all scheduled matches, not just for competitive integrity but also for fans, broadcasters, and host nations who anticipate full participation. They said the T20 World Cup is a global celebration of cricket and that



teams have a responsibility to uphold the competitive structure once they agree to take part.

The remarks from Bangladesh come amid broader controversy over Pakistan's decision, which has divided cricketing opinion. While some governments and cricket boards have weighed strategic or political con-

cerns, others feel the decision undermines the tournament's purpose. Bangladesh's response reflected a desire to see full participation and an assurance that sporting contests proceed as planned without unexpected withdrawals.

Bangladesh's reaction also touched on fairness and logistical challenges.

Teams prepare their schedules, travel plans, and strategies months in advance, and a boycott disrupts the balance of competition. Officials stressed that other teams should not be forced into unequal or unplanned situations due to one country's choices.

With the T20 World Cup underway and global at-

tention on every match, Bangladesh's comments have added another layer to the ongoing debate about Pakistan's boycott. As the situation continues to evolve, cricket officials and fans alike are watching closely to see how governing bodies address both the sporting and diplomatic impact of this unprecedented move.

Why Pakistan's India Match Boycott Could Trigger a \$144 Million Financial Crisis for PCB



Pakistan's decision to boycott its high-profile T20 World Cup match against India could prove to be a massive financial setback, potentially costing the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) up to \$144 million in lost revenue. What began as a political and sporting controversy is now threatening the board's economic stability.

Under the current ICC revenue distribution cycle, the PCB is entitled to a substantial share of global cricket earnings. This funding, spread over several years, forms the backbone of Pakistan cricket's finances and supports everything from international tours and domestic tournaments to player payments and infrastructure development. A refusal to play a scheduled World Cup fixture, however, puts this revenue stream at serious risk.

Tournament regulations require all participating teams to honour their match commitments. Failing to do so without valid justification could be treated as a breach of agreement. If the ICC determines that Pakistan's boycott does not qualify under exceptional circumstances, it may impose penalties, including withholding revenue distributions or levying fines.

The financial impact extends beyond administrative penalties. Matches between India and Pakistan are among the most commercially valuable events in world cricket, generating enormous inter-

est from broadcasters, sponsors, and advertisers. The absence of this marquee clash could lead to revenue losses across the tournament, prompting broadcasters to seek compensation or renegotiate commercial terms. Any reduction in overall tournament earnings would further shrink the amount distributed to member boards, including Pakistan.

For the PCB, ICC funding is not supplementary income — it is essential. The board relies heavily on these funds to maintain operations, fund domestic cricket, and meet contractual obligations. A significant reduction could strain its ability to pay players, support development programs, and sustain leagues such as the Pakistan Super League.

Beyond immediate financial damage, the boycott could also undermine long-term planning. Reduced income may force the PCB to delay infrastructure projects, cut development spending, or scale back international commitments. It could also affect investor and sponsor confidence, making future partnerships harder to secure.

In essence, Pakistan's decision risks turning a symbolic boycott into a long-lasting economic problem. While the final outcome depends on how governing bodies respond, the potential loss of up to \$144 million highlights just how costly a single missed match can be in modern international cricket.

BCCI Rejects Pakistan's 'Force Majeure' Defence in T20 World Cup Boycott Row



The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has publicly responded to talks that the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) might cite a "force majeure" clause to justify skipping their scheduled T20 World Cup match

against India. In the ongoing dispute, the PCB is reportedly preparing to use the legal defence to avoid potential sanctions if it does not play the February 15 group game, but the BCCI says this argument is weak and unlikely to

stand. Under tournament rules, if Pakistan refuses to participate in the India fixture, India would be awarded two points by default and the PCB could face sanctions or financial penalties from the Inter-

national Cricket Council (ICC). A "force majeure" defence refers to extraordinary circumstances outside a party's control that might excuse contractual obligations. Pakistan is believed to be planning to base its argument on government statements instructing the boycott decision, claiming it was an uncontrollable directive.

However, BCCI sources made it clear that the situation in question does not meet the standard for such a clause. They pointed out that Pakistan's Under-19 side recently played India on the same day the boycott announcement was made, undermining the idea that extraordinary conditions prevented participation. BCCI officials further highlighted that Pakistan's cricket board and its government are closely linked, with the prime minister often serving as the board's chief patron — making it hard-

er to separate administrative instructions from cricket decisions.

The BCCI also accused both Pakistan and Bangladesh cricket boards of mixing politics with sport, noting that despite assurances from Indian authorities about security and neutral venues, teams have opted out for non-cricketing reasons. For now, the BCCI stands by the ICC's position and has dismissed the proposed force majeure defence as insufficient to justify skipping a marquee match.

Amid this controversy, Pakistan's prime minister reiterated his government's decision to boycott the game, and the PCB is expected to formalise its stance as the World Cup progresses. The situation continues to raise tensions in international cricket, with broadcasters, fans, and governing bodies all watching closely.

Cristiano Ronaldo May Boycott Another Match as Al-Nassr Exit Speculation Grows



Cristiano Ronaldo is reportedly considering boycotting another Saudi Pro League match, intensifying speculation about a possible exit from Al-Nassr. The Portuguese superstar has already missed one game and may sit out again as tensions between the player and the club continue to rise.

Ronaldo's dissatisfaction is believed to stem from concerns over Al-Nassr's direction and long-term ambition. He is reportedly unhappy with recent management decisions and feels the club has not strengthened its squad enough to compete at the

highest level, especially compared to rival teams in the league.

The forward is said to have voiced frustration over what he perceives as unequal support and investment, which has affected his confidence in the club's project. His absence from recent fixtures has been interpreted as a form of protest aimed at pushing for changes within the club's structure and sporting strategy.

Reports suggest Ronaldo could also skip an upcoming high-profile fixture if his concerns remain unaddressed. While his contract with Al-Nassr still has time remaining, discussions around a potential early departure have begun to surface, with an exit no longer being ruled out.

Despite the uncertainty, Ronaldo has continued training and has shared glimpses of his sessions, indicating he remains physically ready to play. However, his future participation appears to depend on whether the club responds positively to his demands.

The situation has sparked widespread debate, with fans and analysts questioning how the standoff will be resolved. With Ronaldo keen to maintain peak performance ahead of major international commitments, the coming weeks could prove decisive in determining whether he stays at Al-Nassr or seeks a new chapter elsewhere.

Ishan Kishan's Comeback: How Hard Work, Mental Strength and Throwdowns Sparked His Return



Ishan Kishan's return to top-level cricket is a story shaped as much by mental resilience as by runs and technique. After stepping away from the Indian team due to mental fatigue, the wicket-keeper-batter found himself out of the national setup and without a central contract, forcing him to rebuild his career from scratch.

Instead of retreating from the game, Kishan returned to his roots in Patna, where he immersed himself in training. He spent long hours in the nets working with a throwdown specialist, focusing on sharpening his reflexes, improving shot selection, and regaining rhythm. These demanding sessions became the backbone of his technical revival. To stay connected with cricket and give his days structure, Kishan set up a small academy and even prepared practice pitches at home. Coaching young players helped him rediscover joy in the game and reinforced his own fundamentals. The process was as much about healing mentally as

it was about improving skills.

A tight circle of childhood friends played a crucial role during this phase. Their constant support helped Kishan block out criticism and pressure, allowing him to focus inward rather than on public expectations. Alongside this, he leaned on personal reflection and faith to regain balance and clarity.

Gradually, performances at the domestic level began to reflect his renewed confidence. When an opportunity arose at the international level, Kishan seized it, delivering impactful performances that reaffirmed his ability and hunger for success.

Kishan's journey back is more than a cricketer's resurgence. It highlights the importance of mental health, patience, and perseverance in professional sport. From uncertainty and self-doubt to discipline and purpose, his comeback stands as a reminder that setbacks can become stepping stones when met with determination and support.

"Our Flight Is Booked": Suryakumar Yadav Clears India's Stand on T20 World Cup Boycott Row



India's T20 World Cup captain Suryakumar Yadav has addressed the growing controversy surrounding Pakistan's decision to boycott its scheduled match against India in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, making it clear that India remains fully committed to playing the fixture.

Speaking ahead of the tournament, Suryakumar stated that India has never refused to play Pakistan and that the team's preparations and travel plans remain unchanged. He emphasised that any decision to skip the match has come from Pakistan's side, not India's.

The Indian captain revealed that the team's travel arrangements are already in place, confirming that the squad will head to Colombo as scheduled for the February 15 match. He said India would complete its earlier group games and then travel according to the official itinerary, regardless of the uncer-

tainty surrounding Pakistan's participation.

Suryakumar stressed that the Indian team is following ICC protocols and will honour all fixtures assigned to it. He added that India has accepted the tournament schedule in full and will be present at the venue as required. If Pakistan chooses not to take the field, India will still comply with tournament regulations.

The statement was widely seen as a calm but firm response to the boycott row, reinforcing India's position that cricketing commitments should be upheld. While the controversy continues to spark debate among fans and administrators, India remains focused on its World Cup campaign and preparation.

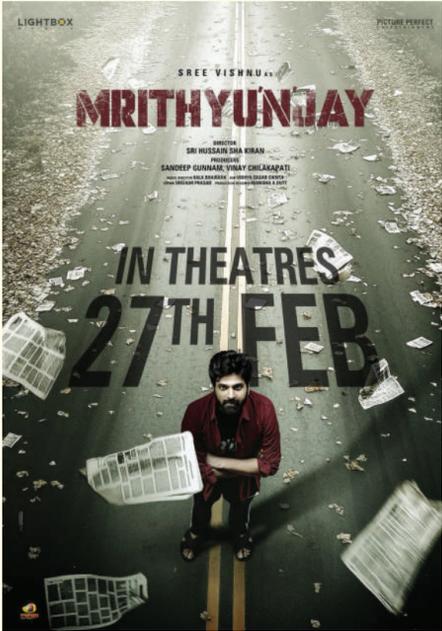
With his simple declaration — "our flight is booked" — Suryakumar sent a clear message that India is ready to play and will not allow off-field developments to disrupt its approach to the tournament.

Sree Vishnu's Investigative Thriller Mrithyunjay Set for Worldwide Release on February 27, 2026

Sree Vishnu, fondly known as the "King of Entertainment" for his knack of selecting unique and content-driven scripts, is gearing up to enthrall audiences once again with his upcoming investigative thriller Mrithyunjay. Directed by Hussain Sha Kiran, the film promises a gripping cinematic experience packed with mystery, suspense, and sharp storytelling. The makers have officially announced that Mrithyunjay will hit theatres worldwide on February 27, 2026.

Produced by Sandeep Gunnam and Vinay Chilakapati under the banners of Lightbox Media and Picture Perfect Entertainment, the film is presented by Ramya Gunnam. The project has already generated strong buzz within the industry, largely due to its genre and the creative team backing it. Investigative thrillers have been gaining popularity among audiences, and Mrithyunjay aims to raise the bar with a compelling narrative anchored by Sree Vishnu's performance.

Adding to the excitement is the casting of Reba John as the female lead. She reunites with Sree Vishnu after the blockbuster success of Samajavaragamana, making their on-screen pairing one of the highlights of the film. Their chemistry, which was widely appreciated earlier, is expected to bring added depth to the story. The release date announcement came with a striking poster that instantly grabbed attention. In the poster, Sree



Vishnu is seen standing on a deserted road completely covered with scattered newspapers. The powerful imagery hints at hidden truths, buried secrets, and an intense investigation at the core of the film. This intriguing visual has sparked curiosity and speculation among fans, further building anticipation around the project.

Technically, Mrithyunjay boasts a strong crew. Cinematography is handled by Vidhya Sagar, who is expected to bring a gritty and immersive visual tone suitable for the thriller genre. Acclaimed composer Kaala Bhairava is in charge of the music, promising a background score that

heightens tension and emotion. National Award-winning editor Sreekar Prasad is overseeing the editing, ensuring a sharp and engaging narrative flow, while Manisha A. Dutt takes care of production design, adding authenticity to the film's world.

With proper promotions lined up and exciting content at its core, Mrithyunjay is poised to be another memorable addition to Sree Vishnu's diverse filmography. As the release date approaches, expectations are high for this investigative thriller to impress audiences and critics alike when it arrives in cinemas this February.

"Sumathi Sathakam" Set for February 6 Release with Affordable Ticket Pricing



Vision Movie Makers' upcoming Telugu film Sumathi Sathakam is all set to hit theatres worldwide on February 6, promising wholesome entertainment for family audiences. Produced by Sai Sudhakar Kommalapati and directed by M.M. Naidu, the film stars Amardeep Chowdhary and Shayli Chowdhary in the lead roles. In the Telugu states, the movie will be released through the prestigious production and distribution house Mythri Movie Makers, while it will also see releases in Kannada and Tamil markets through other distributors.

The makers have generated a steady buzz with the film's first look, teaser, trailer, and songs, all of which have received encouraging responses. Amardeep Chowdhary's energetic dance moves have been particularly appreciated, while music director Subhash Anand's compositions have added to the film's youthful and entertaining appeal. Promotional

activities, including a tour across the Rayalaseema region, further strengthened positive word of mouth ahead of the release.

A grand pre-release press meet was recently held, where the team interacted with the media and shared their confidence in the film. One of the key highlights announced at the event was the decision to keep ticket prices affordable—₹100 in single screens and ₹150 in multiplexes—making the film accessible to a wider audience.

Speaking at the event, lead actor Amardeep Chowdhary described Sumathi Sathakam as a crucial milestone in his journey. He expressed gratitude to the producers and director for trusting him and said the film would entertain audiences without dull moments. He also acknowledged actor Ravi Teja as his inspiration and mentor. Lead actress Shayli Chowdhary shared that she felt privileged to be part of the project and hinted that

her character would emotionally connect with audiences once revealed on screen.

Director M.M. Naidu thanked the media and credited producer Sai Sudhakar Kommalapati for supporting him at every stage. He praised the dedication of the cast and crew, noting Amardeep's commitment even while shooting with an injury. Producer Sai Sudhakar Kommalapati stated that feedback from censor and content screenings has been highly positive and reiterated his confidence in the film's success.

Several cast and crew members, including actress Shailaja, music director Subhash Anand, actor Tasty Teja, JDV Prasad, and writer Naidu, echoed similar optimism, calling Sumathi Sathakam a clean, family-friendly entertainer. With strong content, positive pre-release buzz, and audience-friendly ticket pricing, Sumathi Sathakam aims to make a warm impact at the box office this February 6.

Sangeeth Shobhan-Niharika Konidela's Raakaasaa Locked for Worldwide Theatrical Release on April 3, 2026

The makers of Raakaasaa have officially announced that the film will arrive in theatres worldwide on April 3, 2026. Presented by Z Studios and produced under the banner of Pink Elephant Pictures, the film is written and directed by Manasa Sharma. Niharika Konidela, along with Umesh Kumar Bansal, serves as producer, backing the project with a strong focus on concept-driven storytelling.

The release date announcement marks an important milestone for Raakaasaa, which has now completed its entire shooting schedule and entered the post-production phase. With principal photography fully wrapped, the team is currently concentrating on editing, music, sound design, and visual finishing, aligning all creative elements toward its planned big-screen release in early April 2026.

The announcement was accompanied by a newly unveiled poster that reflects the film's imaginative tone and genre positioning. Earlier, the teaser offered audiences their first glimpse into the world of Raakaasaa. Rather than revealing plot details, the teaser established the film's tonal identity, blending humour with fantasy elements and subtle moments of tension. This approach positioned the film as a theatrical experience designed specifically for large screens, relying on atmosphere and character-driven appeal rather than overt nar-

rative exposition.

Since its initial announcement, Raakaasaa has generated steady interest within the Telugu film industry. The buzz has largely been driven by its genre blend and the makers' measured promotional strategy. Instead of frequent reveals, the team opted for a gradual rollout, allowing curiosity and anticipation to build organically. With the release date now locked, the film enters a more defined promotional phase, giving audiences and trade circles a clear timeline to look forward to.

The film stars Sangeeth Shobhan and Nayan Sarika in the lead roles and is supported by a strong ensemble cast including Vennela Kishore, Brahmaji, Tanikella Bharani, Ashish Vidyarthi, Getup Srinu, Sukwinder Singh, Aruna Bikshu, Ramana Bhargav, Vasu Inturi, Rohini, and Rohan. The ensemble is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the film's humour, character dynamics, and layered fantasy narrative.

Production involved a major action-heavy schedule choreographed by Vijay, followed by extensive comedy-driven and story-focused portions, ensuring a balanced tonal structure. On the technical front, Raakaasaa features music by Anudeep Dev, cinematography by Raju Edurolo, and editing by Anwar Ali. Production design is led by Ramanjaneyulu, with Pulla Vishnu Vardhan as art director and Sandhya Sabharavapu supervising



costumes.

With its worldwide theatrical release set for April 3, 2026, Raakaasaa now moves into its

final stretch, positioning itself as a fantasy-comedy entertainer with clear big-screen ambitions.

Rajasaab to Stream on JioHotstar from February 6 with Extended Cut



The much-discussed film Rajasaab is all set for its digital premiere, with JioHotstar officially announcing that the movie will begin streaming on the platform from February 6. Adding to the excitement, the OTT giant revealed that the streaming version will feature an Extended Cut, offering audiences a more immersive experience than the theatrical version.

The announcement was made through JioHotstar's official social media handles, instantly sparking widespread discussion among fans and film enthusiasts. The release of the Extended Cut has been particularly welcomed, as it promises additional footage and deeper narrative elements that were not part of the original theatrical run.

Rajasaab stars Prabhas in the lead role, an actor widely celebrated as India's biggest superstar. Known for his mas-

sive pan-Indian appeal and record-breaking fan following, Prabhas continues to command attention across platforms, and the digital release of Rajasaab is being seen as another major event for his fans. His presence has been central to the film's promotions, with JioHotstar prominently highlighting his stardom in its marketing campaigns.

Alongside the streaming announcement, JioHotstar also unveiled a new trailer for the film. Described as a "hypnotic thriller," the trailer places strong emphasis on suspense, mystery, and atmospheric storytelling. The visuals and background score hint at a gripping narrative filled with intrigue, reinforcing the film's positioning as a genre-driven entertainer rather than a conventional commercial outing.

Audience reactions to the renewed promotions have been largely posi-

tive. Fans have taken to social media to express their excitement about watching the Extended Cut, with many suggesting that the digital format will allow the film to be appreciated in greater detail. Discussions around key moments, Prabhas' screen presence, and the film's thriller elements have gained momentum following the trailer's release.

The digital premiere is expected to give Rajasaab a fresh wave of viewership, especially among audiences who may have missed it in theatres or are eager to revisit the story with added content. With the combination of an Extended Cut, an intensified promotional push, and Prabhas' unmatched star power, Rajasaab is poised to make a strong impact in the OTT space.

Rajasaab will be available for streaming exclusively on JioHotstar from February 6.

Feel-Good Romantic Entertainer "Sky" Set for Grand Theatrical Release on February 13

The upcoming Telugu film Sky, touted as a feel-good romantic entertainer, is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on February 13. Produced under the Valour Entertainment Studios banner, the film is backed by a collaborative team of producers—Nagireddy Guntaka, Sri Lakshmi Guntaka, Murali Krishnam Raju, and Prudhvi Pericherla. The movie features Murali Krishnam Raju, Shruti Shetty, and Anand Bharathi in the lead roles, with Prudhvi Pericherla also taking charge as the director.

Initially planned for a February 6 release, Sky was postponed due to unavoidable circumstances. The makers have now officially locked February 13 as the new release date and are confident about reaching audiences with a refreshing cinematic experience. With its promotional material and melodious lyrical songs

already out, the film has been steadily creating curiosity among moviegoers, especially those looking for light-hearted and emotionally engaging content.

Sky promises to explore romance and relationships in a simple yet heartfelt manner, blending youthful emotions with relatable situations. The film's tone has been positioned as wholesome and family-friendly, making it suitable for audiences across age groups. Adding to the film's appeal is the introduction of a new music director, Shiva Prasad, whose compositions have been receiving encouraging responses for their freshness and soothing quality.

Director Prudhvi Pericherla, who has also co-written the story and dialogues along with Murali Krishnam Raju, is said to have crafted the narrative with a strong emo-



tional core. The film's visual aesthetics are handled by experienced cinematographer Rasool Ellore, while editing duties are taken care of by Suresh RS, ensuring a smooth and engaging flow.

The supporting cast includes Rakesh Master, MS, KLV Mani Bamma,

and others, who are expected to add depth and entertainment value to the story. On the technical front, the film is backed by a solid team, with publicity designs by Krishna Digitals and digital promotions managed by Vineeth Goud. The lyrics, penned by director Prudhvi Pericherla him-

self, further reflect the film's emotional and romantic sensibilities.

With strong confidence from the makers, positive buzz around its music, and a clear positioning as a feel-good romantic entertainer, Sky is aiming to strike a chord with audiences when it arrives in theatres on February 13.