



**BUZZ POINTS**

Andhra Pradesh Launches App-Based Kisan Drone Services for Farmers



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# Chandrababu Meets Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to Boost Agriculture Support



Amaravati/Delhi, February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu held a key meeting in New Delhi with Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan to seek greater central support for agricultural initiatives and allied sectors. The discussion, part of a series of high-level engagements during the Chief Minister's visit to the national capital, focused on strengthening cooperation between the state and the Centre to benefit farmers and rural communities.

During the deliberations, Chandrababu highlighted Andhra Pradesh's efforts to promote sustainable and natural farming practices and called for enhanced financial assistance to expand these programmes. He outlined the state's achievements in reducing chemical fertiliser use and detailed plans to increase the adoption of organic farming across more agricultural land. The Chief Minister also urged the release of central funds to support key schemes and incentives that encourage farmers to transition to eco-friendly cultivation methods.

In addition to natural farming, Chandrababu sought support for developing the coconut sector through investments in processing parks, modern marketing infrastructure, and training for growers. He also requested financial backing for other crop development initiatives that could generate employment and improve farmer incomes.

The Chief Minister's appeal for the release of pending central funds under multiple agricultural support schemes was a major point of discussion. Enhancing cooperation on irrigation-linked crop support and price deficiency payments were among the issues raised, reflecting the state government's emphasis on ensuring financial stability for farming communities.

Chouhan acknowledged Andhra Pradesh's contributions to the nation's agricultural output and signalled the Centre's willingness to collaborate on strengthening rural and farm development. He emphasised the importance of integrating state-level initiatives with national schemes to achieve sustainable growth and improve the livelihoods of farmers across the state.

The meeting is part of a broader push by the Chief Minister to secure central cooperation on sectors critical to Andhra Pradesh's economy, including agriculture, water resource management, and infrastructure. Chandrababu is scheduled to hold further talks with other Union Ministers to advance development projects and financial support, aiming to accelerate progress on priority sectors while ensuring long-term benefits for the people of Andhra Pradesh.

# Nara Lokesh Announces Good News for Students

TPN Bureau | Amaravati, February 10, 2026 :

Andhra Pradesh Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh has brought encouraging news for students across the state, reaffirming the government's commitment to strengthening educational opportunities and support systems. In recent communications with students and officials, Lokesh outlined several initiatives aimed at enhancing academic support, opportunities and future prospects for learners of all ages.

At a recent engagement with student groups, Lokesh emphasised that the government is focused on creating a conducive environment for learning and skill development. He highlighted ongoing efforts to ensure quality education, better infrastructure and student centric reforms across government schools and colleges. Lokesh urged students to stay motivated, work hard and take full advantage of the support being rolled out to help them succeed academically and professionally.

One of the key aspects of his announcement was related to pending fee reimbursements, which have long been a concern for many families. The minister assured that the government is taking decisive steps to clear backlog payments and streamline the process so that eligible students receive their due support without further delay. This move has been welcomed by students and parents who had been awaiting reimbursements for academic expenses.

Lokesh also reiterated the state government's focus on preparing students for competitive environments, including national level examinations and future careers. He encouraged students to make use of additional learning aids, modern facilities and planned programmes that aim to improve subject mastery, critical thinking and employability.

In his message to students, Lokesh under-

scored the importance of balanced growth—academically, socially and ethically. He shared that the government's long term vision prioritises access to quality education for every child, coupled with efforts to bridge gaps in skill development and higher learning opportunities.

The minister's communication has sparked positive reactions among student communities, educationists and parents, who see these efforts as timely support in an increasingly competitive academic landscape. With reforms and financial assistance measures underway, students across Andhra Pradesh are hopeful about improved educational outcomes and enhanced support structures that can pave the way for greater achievements.

Overall, Lokesh's announcement reflects a renewed push by the state government to prioritise youth development, reduce financial barriers for students and create an empowering educational ecosystem where every learner can thrive.

# AP Assembly Budget Session Begins Today

Amaravati, February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly is set to convene its Budget Session from February 11, kicking off a crucial legislative period that will shape the state's financial and policy direction for the coming year. The session will open with the customary Governor's address to the legislature, signaling the start of detailed discussions on governance priorities, spending plans and legislative business.

Governor S. Abdul Nazeer is scheduled to begin proceedings in the morning, setting the tone for what is expected to be a multi-week session focused on the state's economic strategy and reforms. Lawmakers from all major parties will participate in debates and scrutiny of government proposals, with the initial days dedicated to addressing the motion of thanks on the Governor's speech and broad policy issues before moving into specific budget matters.

A major highlight of this session will be the presentation of the state budget for the financial year 2026-27, scheduled for February 14. Finance Minister Pyavula Keshav will table the budget, outlining expenditure priorities, revenue plans, development schemes and fiscal management strategies. On the same day, the Agriculture Minister will present a separate agriculture budget, reflecting the government's focus on the farming sector and rural economy. The upcoming budget session is particularly significant as it marks

one of the first full budget cycles under the current administration. Officials expect extensive discussions on infrastructure, education, health, social welfare and economic growth initiatives. With Andhra Pradesh's developmental ambitions gaining pace, lawmakers are likely to engage deeply on allocations for major programmes and public services. Among innovations this year, the Assembly Speaker has introduced digital attendance using facial



recognition technology to record MLA participation more accurately, a move aimed at enhancing transparency and legislative discipline. Additionally, the Assembly has opened a limited number of gallery seats for students to observe proceedings, encouraging civic engagement and awareness of parliamentary processes. Political observers say the Budget Session will also see debates on key policy reforms and bills beyond the budget itself. With a range of issues

on the agenda and heightened public interest, the session promises active participation from both the ruling party and the opposition. The Assembly is expected to remain in session through early March, with lawmakers working through budgetary approvals, committee reports and legislative proposals. The outcomes of this session are likely to influence Andhra Pradesh's developmental trajectory and policy priorities for the year ahead.

# Pawan Kalyan Dedicates Salary to Support Orphans in Pithapuram



TPN Bureau | Pithapuram, February 10, 2026:

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has announced a compassionate initiative to support orphaned children in his Pithapuram Assembly constituency. He has pledged to dedicate his entire legislative salary to the welfare of orphans, providing them with financial assistance to improve their living conditions and future prospects.

On Friday, Pawan Kalyan began the programme by distributing monthly financial aid of 5,000 each to 42 orphan children from the Pithapuram area. He personally handed over the first instalments to 32 children present at the event, while arrangements were made for the remaining ten children to receive their support through local administrative channels.

The Deputy Chief Minister emphasised that the salary he earns as an MLA belongs to the people, and he has chosen to use it for the well-being of the most vulnerable members of the constituency. He pledged that as long as he holds office, his full salary will be directed towards the welfare and future needs of these orphans, including education and daily living support.

Pawan Kalyan expressed that investing in the future of children without parental care reflects both a moral duty and a commitment to social responsibility. He hopes the assistance will provide stability, nourishment, schooling and opportunities for these children to grow into confident, capable adults.

The initiative has received widespread appreciation from local residents, party workers and well-wishers, who praised it as a meaningful effort

to uplift marginalised sections of society. Janasena Party leaders confirmed that the monthly assistance would be delivered directly to the children's homes to ensure convenience and dignity in receiving support.

This orphan support programme is part of Pawan Kalyan's broader focus on constituency development and social welfare, as he continues to engage with communities on education, health, livelihoods and infrastructure issues. The initiative is being seen as a tangible demonstration of his commitment to prioritising vulnerable groups and making a real difference in their lives.

The programme reflects a combination of political responsibility and personal commitment to social causes, setting an example for public representatives to use their resources for community benefit.

# Jagan Slams Chandrababu Government Over Srisailem Incident

Amaravati, February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party president and former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has strongly criticised the Andhra Pradesh government led by N. Chandrababu Naidu over an incident involving devotees at Srisailem, calling it a clear example of the administration's failure to ensure safety and proper arrangements for pilgrims. Jagan's remarks come amid rising political

tensions in the state, with rival leaders clashing over governance, public welfare, and festival management.

The controversy arose after reports claimed that police used force against devotees who had gathered for religious rituals, pointing to what Jagan described as glaring lapses in crowd management and inadequate facilities. He termed the use of baton charges on pilgrims as "unacceptable" and highlighted the government's failure to anticipate the heavy in-

flux of visitors during the festival period.

Jagan emphasised that authorities did not make sufficient arrangements for essential amenities such as drinking water, queue control, medical support, and seating, leaving devotees, including children and the elderly, to endure long hours of discomfort. He criticised the reduction of traditional pilgrimage hours without corresponding improvements in infrastructure, which compounded the diffi-

culties faced by visitors. The YSRCP leader also referred to past incidents at religious sites across Andhra Pradesh, arguing that similar shortcomings had been repeatedly observed under the current government. He suggested that lessons from previous events were ignored, resulting in repeated administrative failures to protect pilgrims and manage crowds effectively. Jagan further questioned why Chief Minister Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan had not

addressed the issue publicly or apologised to affected devotees. He urged the government to accept responsibility for the lapses, issue an apology, and implement strict measures to prevent such incidents in the future. The opposition leader's comments underscored the political fault lines emerging around public safety during religious festivals. By highlighting what he called administrative negligence, Jagan aimed to portray the government as lacking empathy and efficiency

# Chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu Demands Justice for Employees and Pensioners

Vijayawada | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau  
 APJAC Amaravati State Chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu has called upon the coalition government to deliver justice to government employees and pensioners who reposed faith in the new administration, demanding immediate clearance of long-pending financial dues with priority to retired and deceased employees.  
 In a statement issued on Tuesday, Bopparaju Venkateswarlu said that resolutions passed during the Fourth State General Body Meeting of APJAC Amaravati, held on February 5 in Vijayawada with the par-

ticipation of nearly 12,000 employees, were formally submitted in writing to Chief Secretary K. Vijayanand. The meeting was conducted in the presence of State Ministers Payyavula Keshav and Satyakumar Yadav. He informed that the newly elected APJAC Amaravati state executive committee was also introduced to the Chief Secretary during the meeting. Bopparaju highlighted that dues payable to government employees and pensioners have accumulated to nearly 40,000 crore, including about 25,000 crore pending from the previous government.  
 Stressing the urgency of the issue, he demand-



ed that retirement benefits and pending settlements of pensioners and deceased employees be cleared on a priority basis. He also urged the government to transparently disclose employee-wise pending dues by clearly reflecting them in individual pay slips, including arrears related to the 11th Pay Revision Commission (PRC), surrendered leave, leave encashment, and other entitlements.  
 Bopparaju further de-

manded the immediate restoration of the Additional Quantum of Pension, which was reduced from 15 percent to 10 percent by the previous government, urging that it be reinstated to 15 percent without delay.  
 The APJAC resolutions also included demands for resolving financial and non-financial issues across departments, addressing the concerns of outsourcing employees, extending welfare schemes to outsourcing staff and low-income pensioners receiving less than 10,000 per month, and ensuring equitable benefits for all sections of employees.  
 Appreciating the coalition government's re-

cent decisions, Bopparaju described the relaxation of the Child Care Leave age limit—allowing women employees to avail it anytime until retirement—as a historic and progressive step, benefitting nearly 60 percent of the workforce. He also expressed gratitude to the government for issuing 11 Government Orders restoring facilities to APSRTC employees that were withdrawn after the merger, following representations made by APJAC Amaravati and RTC Employees' Unions.  
 Several APJAC state leaders were present during the meeting with the Chief Secretary.

# Andhra Pradesh Launches App-Based Kisan Drone Services for Farmers

Amaravati | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau  
 In a significant push towards technology-driven and sustainable agriculture, the Andhra Pradesh Department of Agriculture has pioneered the "Uberisation of Kisan Drones", enabling farmers across the State to access drone-based crop spraying services through a digital platform similar to app-based cab booking systems.  
 Chairing a State-level review meeting with agricultural officers on Monday, Director of Agriculture Dr. Manazir Jeelan Samoon, IAS, announced that hire-based

Kisan Drone services have been operationalised statewide. Farmers can now book drone spraying services for fertilisers and plant protection chemicals anytime and anywhere through the Uberisation of Kisan Drones mobile application, available on the Play Store and through QR code access.  
 Dr. Samoon said drone-based spraying ensures rapid, precise, and efficient coverage of large agricultural areas, particularly during pest and disease outbreaks. This technology helps prevent further spread of infestations, minimises crop losses, and signifi-



cantly reduces turnaround time. He added that drone usage optimises pesticide application, lowers input costs, addresses labour shortages, and enhances farmer safety while ensuring better environmental outcomes.  
 Highlighting the encouraging response from

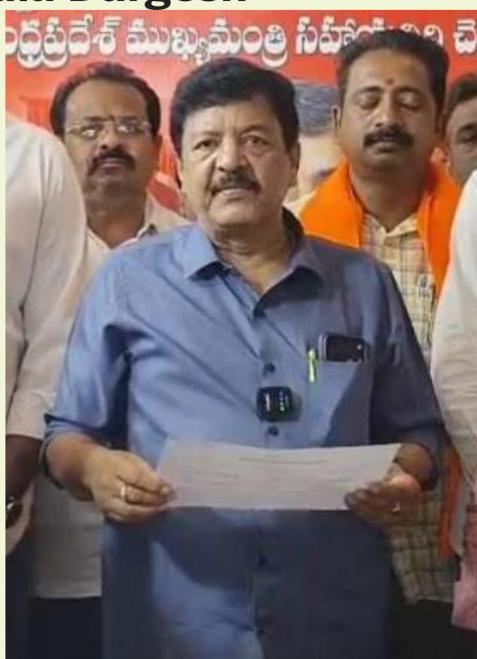
the farming community, the Director revealed that within just two weeks of the launch, 10,342 farmers have registered on the platform. Of these, 2,654 farmers have already raised service requests, while 155 farmers have availed drone spraying services covering an area of 356 acres, indicating strong acceptance at the field level.  
 Among the districts, Anakapalli has emerged as the top performer in terms of farmer registrations, service demand, and area covered under drone operations, followed closely by Kona-seema district.

To ensure seamless and large-scale service delivery, the Department has onboarded 980 drone service providers on the platform. Dr. Samoon clarified that new service providers must upload DGCA-authorized certification issued by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and complete the approval process through the District Agriculture Officer's login, ensuring strict adherence to national aviation and safety norms.  
 The Director instructed District Agriculture Officers to intensify awareness campaigns and capacity-building programmes for both

farmers and service providers. Special focus will be placed on app registration, service booking procedures, and operational protocols under the hire model. He also emphasised that Rythu Seva Kendras staff will play a crucial facilitation role at the grassroots level.  
 The review meeting was attended by senior departmental officials, during which Sri N. Polappa, Executive Engineer (Agriculture), presented a detailed overview of the implementation progress and operational framework of the initiative.

# Opposition Resorting to Diversion Politics, Says Minister Kandula Durgesh

Nidadavole | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau  
 Andhra Pradesh Minister for Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Kandula Durgesh on Tuesday alleged that opposition parties are resorting to "diversion politics" as they are unable to digest the rapid development and growing public support achieved by the ruling coalition government. He was speaking to the media at his camp office in Nidadavole after distributing Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) cheques to beneficiaries.  
 The Minister said the coalition government's development initiatives and welfare programmes have earned widespread appreciation from people across the state. "Unable to tolerate this positive response, opposition leaders are indulging in unnecessary criticism and attempts to mislead the public," he remarked. He particularly took strong exception to what he described as the opposition's attempts to create unrest in the name of condolence visits (Odarpuyatras).  
 Durgesh said that condolence visits should remain humanitarian in nature and not turn into displays of political strength. He alleged that such programmes were causing inconvenience to the general public and, in some cases, even leading to tragic incidents. "Creating chaos in the name of sympathy is unacceptable. The opposition must act responsibly and extend constructive suggestions instead of disrupting peace," he said, urging opposition parties to cooperate with the government in the larger public interest.  
 Referring to the statewide tourism festivals recently organised by the government, the Minister said they received an overwhelming response from citizens, reflecting public



confidence in the government's policies. He accused opposition leaders of attempting to tarnish this image through baseless allegations.  
 Speaking about the upcoming Assembly session, which begins on Wednesday, Durgesh said the month-long session would witness the introduction of several key legislations aimed at accelerating state development and strengthening welfare delivery. "The coalition government will bring progressive laws, and I will actively participate in the Assembly while remaining accessible to the people of Nidadavole," he assured.  
 The Minister also said efforts are underway to mobilise funds for the comprehensive development of the Nidadavole constituency, keeping in view future requirements, including infrastructure development ahead of the upcoming Godavari Pushkaralu. He reiterated the

# Minister Reviews AP Drone Corporation Progress

Amaravati | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau  
 Andhra Pradesh Minister for Investments and Infrastructure, B.C. Janardhan Reddy, on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive review meeting on the progress and future roadmap of the AP Drone Corporation at the R&B Department office in the Secretariat. The review focused on investments, infrastructure development, skill creation, and policy initiatives aimed at strengthening the state's drone ecosystem.  
 During the meeting, the Minister took stock of the ongoing development initiatives undertaken by the AP Drone Corporation and emphasized the need to work in alignment with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's vision of transforming Andhra Pradesh into the "Drone Capital of India." He stressed that the corporation should function with a clear strategy to position the state as a national hub for drone manufacturing, training, testing, and applications.  
 Key discussions were held

on the proposed Drone City, including the requirement of securing a dedicated airspace for drone testing. The Minister reviewed the status of approvals from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and underscored the importance of expediting clearances to ensure timely implementation of drone-related projects.  
 The Minister also examined the institutional structure of the AP Drone Corporation, noting that it is currently functioning as part of AP FiberNet. He directed officials to explore measures for granting greater autonomy to the Drone Corporation to enable faster decision-making, improved operational efficiency, and focused growth.  
 Highlighting the increasing role of drones at the grassroots level, the Minister reviewed their usage in agriculture and allied sectors, particularly for crop spraying, monitoring, and data collection. He also sought details on public awareness initiatives related to drone applications. Despite growing demand for



drone services, officials flagged a shortage of trained drone pilots, prompting focused deliberations on skill development.  
 To address this gap, the Minister instructed officials to establish drone training centers in every district headquarters during the upcoming summer. He emphasized the need to prepare a sufficient number of pilots ahead of the next Kharif season, ensuring that trained manpower is readily available for agricultural operations.  
 The Minister further suggested leveraging technical expertise from IITs, polytechnic colleges, and other technical institutions to deliver structured drone training programs. He directed

officials to assess future demand and design vocational skill courses tailored to drone pilot training and allied technical roles.  
 In line with inclusive growth objectives, the Minister also asked the corporation to examine proposals for training women from DWCRAs (Self-Help Group) associations as drone pilots, in accordance with the Chief Minister's vision of women-led skill empowerment.  
 The review meeting was attended by AP Drone Corporation Managing Director Shaurya Man Patel, Additional CEO P. Praveen Kumar, and senior officials of the department, who briefed the Minister on current initiatives and upcoming plans.

# Cycling Can Protect the Environment and Improve Health: Minister Kollu Ravindra

Machilipatnam | February 10, 2026  
 State Minister for Mines, Geology and Excise Kollu Ravindra on Monday emphasised that increased use of bicycles can play a crucial role in protecting the environment while also promoting better public health. He urged citizens to reduce dependence on bikes and cars and adopt cycling as a daily habit.  
 The Minister was speaking at the Market Yard in Machilipatnam, where he participated in the distribution of bicycles to DWCRAs women beneficiaries. During the event, he fondly recalled his childhood memories associated with cycling and highlighted its long-term physical and mental health benefits.  
 Kollu Ravindra said the

State Government has launched a scheme to provide electric bicycles at subsidised rates, keeping in mind the future of the younger generation and the growing need for eco-friendly transportation. "Cycling is not just a means of transport; it is a lifestyle that ensures good health and a clean environment," he stated.  
 Referring to global trends, the Minister pointed out that bicycle usage has increased significantly in many developed countries as part of sustainable urban mobility initiatives. Under the government scheme, bicycles worth around 35,000 are being provided at a subsidised price of 24,000, enabling beneficiaries to own them at affordable costs. He added that by paying a small amount every month, people



can save money, improve their health and avoid unnecessary fuel expenses.  
 As part of his personal commitment towards promoting cycling, Kollu Ravindra announced that 10 bicycles would be installed at Manginapudi Beach under the Kollu Foundation, entirely at his own expense. These bicycles will be made available to visitors coming to the beach, encouraging them to enjoy cycling while experiencing nature.

The Minister made a special appeal to DWCRAs women to make full use of this opportunity. He noted that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu envisions a "Happy Andhra Pradesh," and stressed that good health is the foundation of happiness and economic well-being. "Only when we are healthy can we be happy, and only when we are happy can we earn better livelihoods," he said.  
 Urging people to take responsibility for their own health, Kollu Ravindra advised citizens to incorporate regular exercise into their daily routine. He cautioned that neglecting physical activity could lead to lifestyle-related diseases at a young age and encouraged cycling as a simple and effective solution.

# Gottipati Distributes 7,000 Bicycles to Students in Addanki Constituency

Addanki | February 10, 2026

Energy Minister Gottipati Ravikumar on Tuesday said that over 7,000 bicycles have been distributed free of cost to students in the Addanki Assembly constituency with the support of donors, aimed at encouraging education and easing transportation for students from rural areas. He added that another 4,000 bicycles will be distributed shortly.

The Minister toured the Addanki constituency on Tuesday and inaugurated a community hall constructed at a cost of 20 lakh in Kondamanjuru village of J. Pungaluru mandal. He also inaugurated a Gokulam shed in the same village. Speaking on the occasion, Gottipati Ravikumar stated that the coalition government is firmly committed to strengthening rural infrastructure and ensuring basic amenities at the village level.

Later, at Koniden village in Ballikurava mandal, the Minister distributed bicycles to 237 students of the Zilla Parishad High School. Addressing students, teachers and parents, he said that the government is implementing the "Thalliki Vandanam" scheme strictly beyond political considerations, ensuring that benefits reach eligible students without any political symbols or colours.

He clarified that bicycles, textbooks and school bags are being distributed without political branding and that 15,000 is being provided per eligible student per family under the scheme. The Minister stressed that headmasters bear the responsibility of ensuring students receive all benefits under the Thalliki Vandanam scheme, including financial assistance, books and bags.

Gottipati Ravikumar appreciated public sector and private institutions such as SAIL, NEDCAP, ASSIST and other CSR partners for playing a crucial role in providing bicycles to students. He urged students to follow traffic safety rules while commuting to school and advised teachers and parents to educate students



tor and private institutions such as SAIL, NEDCAP, ASSIST and other CSR partners for playing a crucial role in providing bicycles to students. He urged students to follow traffic safety rules while commuting to school and advised teachers and parents to educate students

on road safety precautions.

Fish Seed Release to Support Fishermen Livelihoods

Earlier in the day, the Minister released 2.5 lakh fish fingerlings into the Gundlakamma River near Manikeswar village under the Meenotsavam programme, aimed at improving the livelihoods of fishermen. He stated that 20 lakh fish fingerlings were released last year and that the government continues to support fishermen by providing subsidised boats, nets and financial assistance during fish-

ing ban periods.

Criticising the previous YSRCP government, the Minister alleged that the Gundlakamma project was weakened, resulting in losses to fishermen. He said that after the formation of the coalition government under Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, new gates were installed at the project, enabling storage of 2 TMC of water, along with large-scale fish seed release.

Officials, farmers and local fishermen participated in the programme.

# Purandeswari Says Union Budget Lays Strong Foundation for Viksit Bharat

East Godavari | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Rajamahendravaram MP Daggubati Purandeswari on Monday offered a comprehensive response in the Lok Sabha during the discussion on the Union Budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Congratulating the Finance Minister for presenting the Budget for the ninth consecutive time, Purandeswari said the document clearly outlines India's future economic direction and reflects a responsible, forward-looking vision.

She stated that the Budget has been designed with a focus on India's long-term development goals, striking a balance between growth and macroeconomic stability. With nearly 7 per cent GDP growth, controlled inflation, and a steadily improving fiscal deficit, India's economic funda-

mentals remain strong despite global uncertainties in trade and geopolitics, she observed.

Highlighting the decision to cap the fiscal deficit at 4.3 per cent, Purandeswari said the government has prioritised stability over abrupt fiscal tightening. She noted that the post-Covid approach of gradual economic strengthening reflects prudent financial management.

The MP described the increase in capital expenditure as the Budget's major highlight. Raising CapEx from 11.2 lakh crore to 12.2 lakh crore demonstrates the government's commitment to infrastructure development and long-term investments. She said prioritising investment over consumption subsidies is a fiscally responsible move that will yield sustainable growth.

Referring to global developments such as



free trade negotiations with the European Union and uncertainties surrounding US tariffs, Purandeswari stressed the need to strengthen domestic manufacturing capabilities. Allocations such as 10,000 crore for the biopharma mission, 40,000 crore for electronic component manufacturing, and the Semiconductor Mission 2.0 would significantly advance the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' vision, she said.

She welcomed the special focus on the services sector, which contributes 55 per cent to India's GDP. Measures such as the enhancement of the safe harbour margin and threshold limits would boost the IT and software sectors. The target of achieving a 10 per cent global share in services exports was termed ambitious and commendable.

Calling the focus on rare earth minerals

timely, Purandeswari said indigenisation has become essential amid China's export restrictions. The removal of customs duty on monazite would attract investments, especially in coastal states like Andhra Pradesh with significant reserves.

She also highlighted measures supporting manufacturing, MSMEs, healthcare, fisheries, agriculture, and women empowerment. Initiatives such as MSME growth funds, AI-based agricultural guidance systems, and women-led development programmes would expand employment opportunities and inclusive growth.

Concluding her speech, Purandeswari said the Budget, built on fiscal responsibility, infrastructure growth, and human development, lays a strong foundation for achieving the goal of "Viksit Bharat 2047" amid global uncertainty.

## Speaker Takes Key Decision After YSRC MLAs' Absence in Assembly

Amaravati, February 11 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Assembly Speaker Thammenni Seetharam has taken a significant procedural decision following the absence of several YSRC MLAs during a recent session. The action comes as part of efforts to strengthen legislative accountability and discipline in the House, especially at a time when important discussions and decisions are underway.

During the session, a noticeable number of YSRC lawmakers did not mark their presence, raising concerns about participation in critical proceedings. In response, Speaker Seetharam decided to implement digital attendance through facial recognition technology for all MLAs. The new system aims to accurately record attendance and eliminate discrepancies that can arise with manual entries, ensuring that members are present and engaged during House business.

The Speaker emphasised that attendance is a fundamental duty of every legislator, especially when key bills, budget matters and debates are on the agenda. He noted that frequent absences not only disrupt the flow of discussions but also undermine the democratic process



and the expectations of the electorate. By adopting modern attendance tracking methods, the Assembly seeks to enhance transparency and uphold the dignity of the legislature.

Seetharam also reminded all members that active participation in debates and legislative work reflects respect for the offices they hold and the people they represent. He added that while absenteeism can sometimes be due to legitimate reasons, consistent non-attendance without prior intimation would be scrutinised and documented.

The decision has triggered mixed reactions from political circles. Supporters of the move argue that it will promote responsibility among legislators and prevent avoidable walkouts or absences during important sessions. Critics, however, question whether

technological measures alone can address deeper political differences and insist that dialogue between parties remains essential for effective governance.

With the Assembly gearing up for the Budget Session, expectations are high for robust debates, policy discussions and strategic planning for the state's fiscal year ahead. The Speaker's announcement underscores an effort to ensure that all elected representatives are present to contribute meaningfully to these proceedings.

Overall, the introduction of facial recognition attendance is seen as a step toward strengthening legislative discipline and reinforcing the principle that public office carries with it the responsibility of active engagement in the state's governance.

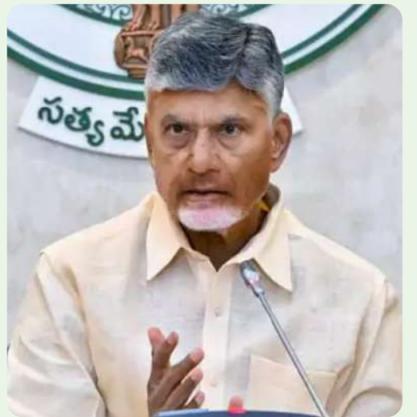
## Chandrababu Reviews Crowd Management and Facilities at Shiva Temples Ahead of Maha Shivaratri

Amaravati, February 11 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu conducted a high level review of preparations for devotees at major Shiva temples across the state as the Maha Shivaratri festival approaches. With an expected surge in pilgrim turnout, the Chief Minister stressed the importance of seamless crowd control and adequate facilities to ensure a safe and spiritually fulfilling experience for all visitors.

During the review, CM Naidu examined arrangements for crowd management, queue systems, accommodation, sanitation, drinking water and food distribution at key temple towns, with particular focus on Srisaillam — one of the state's most visited Shiva pilgrimage centres. He emphasised that devotees should not face inconvenience, regardless of how large the gatherings become, and directed officials to fine tune their planning to handle the expected crowds efficiently.

Senior ministers and top administrative officials participated in the briefing, where the Chief Minister underlined the need for effective coordination among departments involved in managing festival arrangements. He asked for close collaboration between the Endowments Department, local administrations and law enforcement to ensure orderly flow of



devotees and to prevent overcrowding at narrow access points within temple complexes.

CM Naidu also highlighted special considerations for elderly pilgrims, children and those observing religious vows, urging that they be given priority and assisted promptly. He instructed authorities to ensure that amenities such as seating areas, medical aid stations and relief centres are easily accessible, particularly during peak hours of darshan.

The Chief Minister stressed the importance of providing clean and hygienic facilities, including well maintained rest areas, drinking water points and toilets, to enhance the overall experience for visitors. He made it clear that preparations must be in place well ahead of the festival date, with contingency plans ready to address any emergencies that might arise.

Officials have been directed to deploy additional personnel at

key locations and to monitor crowd movements in real time. The Chief Secretary has been asked to supervise inter departmental coordination to swiftly address logistical challenges, while police have been tasked with enforcing safety norms and facilitating smooth movement throughout temple precincts.

With Maha Shivaratri drawing near, the government's proactive approach reflects a commitment to both public safety and cultural tradition. CM Naidu's review underscores the importance of pre-emptive planning and thoughtful execution to ensure that devotees can celebrate the festival with peace of mind and without undue hardship.

The review meeting highlights the state's focus on creating a secure, comfortable and spiritually enriching environment for thousands of worshippers who will visit temples across Andhra Pradesh during the festive period.

# Mana Mitra WhatsApp Platform Enables Faster, Paperless Services for Farmers: Atchannaaidu

Amaravati | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh government has further strengthened its commitment to farmer-centric digital governance by integrating the Andhra Pradesh Micro Irrigation Project (APMIP) into the "Mana Mitra" WhatsApp-based governance platform. State Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaaidu said on Tuesday.

In an official statement, the Minister said the initiative is aimed at providing farmers with faster, transparent, and completely paperless services by using simple and widely accessible digital tools. With the inclusion of APMIP, farmers can now access key horticulture and micro irrigation services directly from their mobile phones, without the need to visit government offices.

Explaining the process, Atchannaaidu said farmers can send a "Hi" message on WhatsApp to 9552300009, select the Horticulture Department (APMIP) option, and avail a range of services from the comfort of their homes. These include registration for subsidies, checking the status of applications, filing grievances, and making non-subsidy payments. He noted that this system significantly simplifies procedures that were earlier time-consuming and paperwork-intensive.

The Minister highlighted that services related to drip irrigation systems, sprinkler irrigation, and solar pumps are now available through online booking under the Horticulture Department. Farmers can also make secure digital payments, ensuring greater transparency and eliminating the role of middlemen. This, he said, not only



saves time and money for farmers but also improves trust in government service delivery.

Atchannaaidu stated that the Mana Mitra platform is a major step towards leveraging technology for rural development. By adopting a WhatsApp-based interface, the government has ensured that even small and marginal farmers, who may not be familiar with complex digital applica-

tions, can easily access services using a simple mobile phone.

He instructed agriculture and horticulture department officials to undertake extensive awareness campaigns across villages to promote the use of the Mana Mitra platform. Field-level staff have been directed to guide farmers in registering on the platform and utilizing its features effectively, so that

the benefits reach every eligible farmer.

Reaffirming the coalition government's focus on farmers' welfare, Atchannaaidu said the initiative reflects the government's broader vision of strengthening the rural economy through technology-driven governance. He credited Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu's forward-looking leadership for introducing innovative digital solutions that enhance efficiency, accountability, and service delivery at the grassroots level.

The integration of APMIP into the Mana Mitra WhatsApp platform, the Minister said, marks a significant milestone in Andhra Pradesh's journey towards inclusive, efficient, and farmer-first governance, ensuring that vital agricultural services are just a message away for the farming community.

# Dr. A. V. Subba Reddy Wins APMC Election with Thumping Majority

Vijayawada | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

In a highly prestigious election to the Andhra Pradesh Medical Council (APMC), Dr. A. V. Subba Reddy of Madanapalle registered a resounding victory, securing an overwhelming majority and emerging as one of the most prominent representatives of the medical fraternity in the state.

The counting of votes was held on Tuesday at the Directorate of Secondary Health Building, Tadepalli, Vijayawada, in the presence of Returning

Officer Sri Chakradhar, IAS, Health Chief Secretary Sri Saurabh, APMC Registrar Dr. Ramesh, and other election officials. Following the counting process, Dr. Subba Reddy was officially declared elected with an absolute majority and was presented with the winning certificate by the Returning Officer.

The APMC elections witnessed enthusiastic participation from doctors across Andhra Pradesh. Of the nearly 57,000 eligible voters, around 32,000 doctors exercised their franchise, reflecting strong engagement in the democratic process within the medical community.



Dr. A. V. Subba Reddy

currently holds several key leadership positions, including National Organisational

Secretary of the Federation of Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association of

India (FPHNH), State President of the Andhra Pradesh Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association, State Vice President of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), and Executive Member of the Kurnool Medical College Alumni Association. With his election to the APMC, he now represents and holds membership in almost all major official and unofficial doctors' organisations in the state.

Notably, Dr. Subba Reddy stands out as the only doctor in Andhra Pradesh to be actively associated with both

private medical organisations and a statutory regulatory body like the AP Medical Council. This achievement is being widely hailed as a matter of pride for the medical fraternity.

Traditionally, leadership roles in doctors' associations have been dominated by professionals from major cities. Dr. Subba Reddy's rise from Madanapalle, a small town, to influential positions at both state and national levels, and now his election to the APMC with a decisive mandate, marks a significant shift in this trend.

Speaking after his victory, Dr. Subba Reddy said his priority would be to address long-pending issues faced by Foreign Medical Graduates, challenges related to registration renewals for senior doctors, the menace of unqualified medical practice (quackery), and several other longstanding concerns affecting doctors across the state. He assured that he would work towards permanent and comprehensive solutions through coordination with the government, council members, the Registrar, and the National Medical Council.

## Chandrababu Reviews Devotee Crowd and Facilities at Shiva Temples

Amaravati, February 10 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu reviewed preparations for devotees at major Shiva temples, including the famous Srisailem Mallikarjuna Swamy Devasthanam, ahead of the upcoming Maha Shivaratri festival. With an anticipated surge in pilgrim turnout, the Chief Minister assessed arrangements with senior ministers and state officials to ensure smooth darshan and a comfortable experience for visitors.

During the review, CM Naidu examined crowd management plans, queue systems, lodging, sanitation, drinking water and food facilities. He emphasised that pilgrims, particularly those travelling from distant areas, should not face any inconvenience. Special attention was directed toward ensuring orderly darshan, sufficient accommodation, and timely assistance for devotees.

Home and Endowments ministers participated in the briefing, highlighting the need



for careful coordination across departments to manage the expected increase in visitors. The Chief Minister instructed officials to plan dynamically to avoid congestion and ensure smooth movement within temple precincts.

CM Naidu also stressed that devotees observing religious vows and senior citizens should be accorded special care and assistance. Measures

were to be taken to prevent delays, overcrowding or any form of discomfort during peak worship days.

Officials were directed to deploy additional staff as needed and maintain close coordination among the Endowments Department, local administration, and police to handle crowd patterns effectively. Quick assistance services were to be made available to ensure a safe and hassle-

free experience for all devotees.

The review reflects the government's proactive approach in managing large religious gatherings. By focusing on improved facilities and strict crowd control ahead of Maha Shivaratri, the state aims to provide a safe, orderly, and spiritually fulfilling experience for pilgrims visiting Shiva temples across Andhra Pradesh.

## Minister Mandapalli Reviews APSRTC Promotions and Appointments

Amaravati, February 10 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Transport and Youth Services Minister Mandapalli Ramprasad Reddy conducted a detailed review of the APSRTC at his chamber in the Secretariat on Tuesday, focusing on promotions, appointments, retirements, and pending issues affecting the corporation. Officials briefed the minister on employee promotions, vacancy fillings, financial settlements, compassionate appointments, seniority lists, and ongoing court cases.

The review highlighted that under the 2025-26 Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC), 7,514 eligible employees are undergoing the promotion process, with the goal of completing all panels by February 20, 2026. Proposals have been submitted to the government to conduct DPCs based on seniority lists of Levels 3, 4, 5, and Executive Engineers.

Officials also discussed filling 7,673 vacant posts across various departments, seeking government approval. While the APSRTC had 51,488 employ-

ees in 2020, the current workforce stands at 44,131, with a significant number expected to retire between 2026 and 2028. Minister Reddy stressed prioritising critical positions such as drivers, conductors, and mechanics to maintain smooth operations.

Regarding retirements due to medical reasons, officials reported that 682 employees have retired since January 1, 2020. Of these, 36 were offered alternative positions, while 646 require financial compensation, estimated at 15 lakh per employee, amounting to a total liability of 96.90 crore.

The minister was also briefed on pending compassionate appointments, particularly in the Kadapa region, where 191 applications remain unprocessed due to the absence of conductor vacancies. Certificate verification was completed in September 2023, but appointments have not yet been made despite repeated follow-ups with the Collector's office. Additionally, 80 conductors from Kadapa are currently posted in other regions.

Senior officials updat-



ed the minister on seniority lists and court cases, mentioning that a memo for reviewing various cadres' seniority lists was issued on January 30, 2026. They clarified that promotion files after 2016 are with APSRTC, while records prior to 2016 are with TG-SRTC. Consolidating all records will require at least 45 days.

The review also covered 88 contempt cases related to the transport department, with 23 cas-

es having the Special Chief Secretary as the respondent. The Law Department is closely monitoring these matters to ensure proper legal compliance.

Minister Mandapalli Ramprasad Reddy emphasised timely completion of promotions, efficient filling of vacancies, and resolution of pending issues to strengthen APSRTC's operational efficiency and ensure employee welfare.

## Tight Security Planned for AP Assembly Budget Sessions: Speaker Ayyannapatru



Amaravati, February 10 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyannapatru has instructed police authorities to ensure strict security arrangements for the upcoming Assembly Budget Sessions, scheduled to begin on Wednesday. The Speaker emphasised that the sessions must proceed in a peaceful and orderly manner, with no disruptions to legislative proceedings.

Ahead of the sessions, Ayyannapatru held a high-level meeting with senior police officials on Tuesday to review security and safety measures. He directed that tight police arrangements be in place in all areas where Assembly members stay and along routes they travel to attend the sessions. Ensuring smooth traffic movement and prevent-

ing any disruptions to member arrivals were key points of focus.

The Speaker also instructed authorities to take proactive measures based on past experiences, ensuring that no inconvenience arises during the sessions. With ample vacant space available around the Secretariat, he called for four-sided security deployment, supported by advanced surveillance, information, and technological systems for monitoring and control.

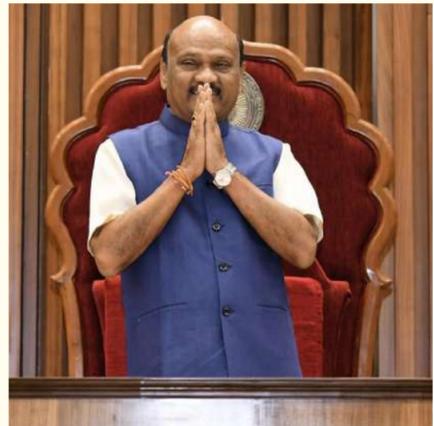
Ayyannapatru stressed that police officers and staff must perform their duties vigilantly and without lapses, maintaining full alertness throughout the session. The safety of legislators and uninterrupted proceedings were highlighted as the top priorities.

The meeting was at-

tended by Deputy Speaker K. Raghurama Krishna Raju, DGP Harish Kumar Gupta, Assembly Secretary General Suryadevara Prasanna Kumar, and other senior police officials.

By putting in place robust security protocols, the AP government aims to ensure that the

Budget Sessions are conducted smoothly, reflecting both the importance of legislative business and the safety of elected representatives. The Speaker's directives underline a commitment to disciplined and secure functioning of the Assembly during one of its most crucial sessions.



## Chandrababu Secures Approval for Visakhapatnam Metro Rail Project

Amaravati/Delhi, February 10 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has received the central government's approval for the Visakhapatnam Metro Rail project, marking a major milestone in the state's urban infrastructure development. The decision, announced during Naidu's visit to New Delhi, comes after detailed project proposals and discussions with Union urban affairs authorities, highlighting the strategic importance of modern public transport for the rapidly growing port city.

The Visakhapatnam Metro project aims to provide a reliable, efficient, and eco-friendly urban transport system that can alleviate rising traffic congestion, reduce travel time, and support sustainable urban growth. With central approval secured, the project can now move to the next phases, including funding arrangements, tendering, and mobilisation for construction activities. Officials believe that timely execution will

enhance connectivity across key areas of Visakhapatnam, benefiting daily commuters, students, working professionals, and tourists.

This initiative forms part of the Andhra Pradesh government's broader plan to modernise urban transport in the state. Alongside Visakhapatnam, metro rail projects in Vijayawada and other major urban centres are being pursued in coordination with the central government. Naidu has consistently emphasised the importance of metro projects in major cities to accommodate population growth, improve mobility, and support economic expansion.

The Visakhapatnam Metro is expected to have long-term social and economic benefits. Apart from easing traffic pressure, the project will contribute to reducing carbon emissions by promoting public transport over private vehicles. It will also create significant employment opportunities during the construction and operational phases, contributing to the city's overall economic mo-



mentum. Experts highlight that modern transport infrastructure like metro rail is crucial for attracting investment, improving the standard of living, and ensuring a smooth flow of goods and services in a growing urban hub.

The Chief Minister's successful engagement with central authorities reflects cooperative federalism at work, ensuring that Andhra Pradesh's development priorities align with national urban development goals. The approval also underscores the state government's focus on implementing forward-looking infrastructure projects that combine technology, sustainability, and citizen convenience.

With the green signal from the Centre, the Andhra Pradesh government plans to swift-

ly finalise detailed project reports, start construction, and implement modern safety, ticketing, and operational systems. The metro rail network in Visakhapatnam is poised to transform urban commuting, strengthen the city's economy, and enhance quality of life for residents. Chandrababu Naidu described the approval as a "historic step" for the city, underlining his administration's commitment to delivering world-class urban infrastructure that meets the demands of the 21st century.

This project signals a new era for Visakhapatnam, positioning it as a modern, connected, and sustainable urban centre ready to meet future growth and mobility challenges.

# ECoR Secures Third Place in All-India Rail Hindi Quiz 2025

Vizianagaram | February 9, 2026 | TPN Bureau

East Coast Railway (ECoR) has brought laurels to the zone by securing third position in the prestigious Akhil Rail Hindi Quiz Competition - 2025, an all-India level event organized under the aegis of the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board). The competition was held at the Indian Railway Institute of Financial Management (IRIFM), Secunderabad, and witnessed enthusiastic participation from across the Indian Railways network.

A total of 28 teams representing various Zonal Railways and Production Units took part in the competition, with more than 120 officers

and employees competing. The quiz was aimed at promoting awareness, interest, and progressive use of Rajbhasha Hindi among railway personnel and encouraging its effective implementation in official correspondence and day-to-day administrative work.

The event was conducted in a highly competitive and knowledge-intensive environment, testing participants on Hindi language usage, official language rules, terminology, and related aspects of railway administration. East Coast Railway's strong performance against teams from across the country underlined the dedication and preparation of its participants. The competition was



graced by Ms. V. G. Bhooma, Additional Member (HR), Railway

Board, as the Chief Guest, and Dr. V. Suguna, Director (Official

Language), as the Guest of Honour. Both dignitaries appreciated the

initiative of organizing such competitions to strengthen the role of

Hindi as the Official Language and to foster healthy inter-zonal participation.

In recognition of this significant achievement, the East Coast Railway team was felicitated on February 9, 2026, by Shri Parameshwar Funkwal, General Manager, East Coast Railway, at a special function. Congratulating the team, the General Manager remarked that securing a prize at the all-India railway level is a matter of immense pride, particularly for a zone located in a non-Hindi speaking region.

He further encouraged officers and staff of East Coast Railway to actively participate in national-level competitions and continue

their efforts towards enhancing the usage of Hindi in official work. He emphasized that such achievements reflect not only linguistic proficiency but also the commitment of employees to the values and policies of Indian Railways.

The success in the Akhil Rail Hindi Quiz Competition - 2025 highlights East Coast Railway's sustained commitment to Rajbhasha implementation and its encouragement of employee participation in prestigious national forums. The achievement stands as a testament to teamwork, dedication, and the zone's growing presence in all-India railway platforms.

## Bid to Rename Employment Guarantee Scheme Is a Move to Scrap It: KVPS



Palakollu | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

The proposal to rename the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is nothing but a calculated conspiracy to eventually scrap the programme, alleged K. Kranti Babu, District General Secretary of the Kula Vivaksha Porata Samiti (KVPS), on Tuesday.

Speaking during an interaction with agricultural labourers at Digamarti outskirts in Palakollu mandal, KVPS district leaders raised serious concerns over the Centre's reported move to introduce a new scheme under the name "VBG Ramji". Kranti Babu questioned how the new scheme would benefit the poor and challenged

Union Minister Bhupatiraju Srinivasa Varma to come forward for an open public debate on the issue.

Addressing the gathering along with KVPS District Assistant Secretary Kaneti Balaraju, Kranti Babu said the Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Scheme has been a lifeline for millions of rural poor by ensuring wage employment and food security. "Changing the name of such a historic and people-centric scheme is equivalent to diluting and dismantling it," he alleged. He accused the Centre of attempting to mislead the poor through what he termed as false propaganda around the proposed new scheme.

The KVPS leaders pointed out that while

the VBG Ramji scheme claims to provide 125 days of employment, it simultaneously introduces restrictions such as a 60-day work ban, which they said defeats the very purpose of employment guarantee. "Promising 125 days on paper while restricting actual work availability is nothing but cheating the poor," Kranti Babu said.

He further criticised the reported shift in the policy framework, alleging that the Centre is trying to replace the existing legal guarantee of work with a fund-linked model. "Under the present Act, work must be provided irrespective of funds, and wages must be paid to labourers. Proposing that work will be given only if funds are avail-

able directly snatches away the right to livelihood of the rural poor," he warned.

Condemning Union Minister Srinivasa Varma's claims that the new scheme would benefit the poor, KVPS demanded clarity and accountability from the Centre. The organisation urged the Union government to immediately continue the Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Act without any changes.

Warning of intensified agitation, KVPS leaders announced that if the Centre fails to withdraw the proposed changes and protect the existing employment guarantee law, they would launch a statewide movement in defence of workers' rights.

## Kollu Ravindra Vows to Transform Machilipatnam into a Model of Development

Machilipatnam | February 10, 2026 | TPN Bureau

State Minister for Mines, Geology and Excise Kollu Ravindra on Tuesday reaffirmed his commitment to transforming Machilipatnam Assembly constituency into a symbol of development by prioritising basic infrastructure such as roads, drinking water and drainage facilities.

The Minister laid foundation stones for several cement concrete (CC) road works under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. CC roads worth ₹90 lakh were inaugurated near Manginapudi Beach, while another set of works costing ₹60 lakh was launched near the Pothepalli Jewellery Park.

Addressing the gathering, Kollu Ravindra stated that every street and every village in the Machilipatnam constituency would be provided with quality roads and safe drinking water. "Infrastructure development is our top priority. I am committed to making Bandarua a model constituency," he said.

The Minister later visited several units and shops at the Pothepalli Jewellery Park and interacted with entrepreneurs to understand the processes of jewellery manufacturing, packing and marketing. He described the Pothepalli Jewellery Park as a symbol of local identity and assured that steps would be taken to preserve the traditional gold-covering jewel-



lery industry while ensuring proper recognition and improved facilities for industrialists.

Speaking further, Kollu Ravindra revealed that ₹54 crore has already been spent on rural road development in the Machilipatnam constituency. He noted that all village roads have been completed and that preparations are underway to complete drainage works as well. With the ongoing development of Manginapudi Beach, population inflow is increasing, and future infrastructure needs are being addressed accordingly, he added.

The Minister emphasised the need to develop the Pothepalli Jewellery Park into a model industrial

park, pointing out persistent issues related to drinking water, roads and drainage. Despite being home to renowned gold-covering jewellery units, lack of basic amenities has caused hardships to workers, especially women, who are reportedly facing health issues due to poor drainage conditions.

He assured that road construction and drainage works would be taken up simultaneously and instructed officials to ensure that sewage does not stagnate on roads. If required, he said, road levels should be raised to prevent waterlogging.

Kollu Ravindra also announced that the community hall constructed earlier

with Rajya Sabha MP Chiranjeevi's funds would be completed soon. Responding to concerns over drinking water shortages in the Autonagar area due to the absence of an overhead tank, he said consultations would be held with APIIC to install an overhead water tank at the earliest.

He further assured that the damaged walking track around the local lake, neglected over the past five years, would be renovated and beautified as part of a broader development plan.

RTC Chairman Konakalla Narayanarao, DCMS Chairman Bandi Ramakrishna, Gopu Satyanarayana and others participated in the programme.

## IG Ashok Kumar Calls for Awareness Drives on Cybercrime, Drugs and Road Safety Across East Godavari

Rajamahendravaram, 10 Feb 2026 | TPN Bureau

Eluru Range Inspector General of Police G.V.G. Ashok Kumar has directed police officials to conduct extensive awareness programmes across East Godavari district on cybercrimes, social media misuse, anti-drug campaigns and road safety rules, stressing the need for preventive policing and public participation.

The IG was addressing the media in Rajamahendravaram after conducting annual inspections of Rangampeta and Bommuru Police Stations. Earlier, he was accorded a warm reception by East Godavari District Superintendent of Police D. Narasimha Kishore and other senior officers, followed by a guard of honour by reserve police personnel.

During the inspections, IG Ashok Kumar examined station records, reviewed case registrations, verified CCTV surveillance systems and assessed overall station functioning. He offered several

suggestions and guidelines to improve investigation standards, public interface and crime control measures.

Speaking to reporters, the IG emphasized that special focus must be placed on crimes against women and children, as well as missing person cases. He instructed police to maintain strict surveillance over social media platforms to curb misinformation and unlawful activities. To prevent road accidents, he called for a dedicated action plan, urging the police to enhance night patrolling and strictly enforce traffic regulations.

The IG underlined the importance of technology-driven policing, stating that digital tools must be used effectively to strengthen law enforcement and crime prevention. He also discussed district-level law and order measures with the SP and advised all personnel to remain vigilant and proactive.

Highlighting the importance of public trust, Ashok Kumar said police should deal with complainants with empa-



thy and sensitivity, ensuring their grievances are addressed promptly within the framework of law. He also stressed the need to prioritize police personnel welfare alongside operational duties.

At Bommuru Police Station, the IG and the District SP jointly inaugurated a newly constructed Court Monitoring Cell building, aimed at strengthening coordination between police and judiciary.

Addressing upcoming festival arrangements, the IG said elaborate security measures have been put in place for Maha Shivaratri, especially at Godavari ghats and Shiva tem-

ples. Surveillance will be strengthened using drone cameras and solar-powered cameras, while temporary control rooms will be set up wherever necessary to ensure smooth crowd and traffic management.

On anti-narcotics enforcement, the IG revealed that stringent action is being taken against drug trafficking. Based on credible intelligence, police recently detained several individuals involved in drug transportation within the Kovvur police station limits. He added that PIT NDPS Act has been invoked against 19 offenders across the district so far.

The IG also urged two-wheeler riders to compulsorily wear helmets and appealed to all citizens to strictly follow traffic rules. The inspection concluded with the IG and SP planting saplings in the police station premises.

Senior officers, including DSPs, inspectors, sub-inspectors and police staff, were present during the inspection and review meetings.

## Vasamsetti Subash Receives "Praja Vijeta" Award

Ramachandrapuram, February 11 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Labour Minister Vasamsetti Subash was honoured with the prestigious "Praja Vijeta" award on Tuesday by the Modern Foundation, under the aegis of Modern Educational Institutions in Ramachandrapuram. The award recognised his relentless efforts toward the development of the Ramachandrapuram constituency and his dedication to public service.

During the ceremony, Modern Foundation chief Dr. Lion G. V. Rao praised Minister Subash for his consistent commitment to constituency development and welfare initiatives. He said the foundation regularly acknowledges individuals contributing significantly to public service and expressed pride in presenting the "Praja Vijeta" award to Minister Subash.

The minister also interacted with students



of the JEE section at Modern Junior College, enquiring about their performance in the recently conducted JEE Session-1 examination.

The students shared their confidence in having performed well and expressed hope for improved results in upcoming assessments.

Minister Subash lauded Dr. G. V. Rao for his efforts in making quality education accessible to all and commended Modern Educational Institutions for maintaining high academic standards. He expressed his delight in receiving the "Praja Vijeta" award, de-

scribing it as motivation to continue serving the people with dedication.

The event was attended by Intermediate Principal C. H. Rajesh, Vice Principal P. S. Prakash, Academic Advisor C. H. Srinivas, along with Modern Foundation staff and students, who participated in celebrating the occasion.

The award ceremony underscored the partnership between educational institutions and public service, highlighting the importance of community engagement and the promotion of both educational and developmental initiatives.

# India's Oil Reality Check: Why Replacing Russian Crude Is Easier Said Than Done

Recent claims by former US President Donald Trump that India is ready to stop buying Russian oil and instead shift to supplies from the United States and Venezuela have sparked debate across diplomatic and economic circles. While such assertions make for dramatic political messaging, a closer look at the numbers tells a far more complex and grounded story. India's current dependence on Russian crude is deep, structural, and driven by economic realities that cannot be overturned overnight — or even in the near future.

At the heart of the issue lies a simple question: can India realistically replace Russian oil completely? The answer, based on trade volumes, refinery constraints, market dynamics, and geopolitical uncertainties, is a clear no.

## The Political Claim Versus India's Official Position

Trump's statement suggested that India had agreed to halt Russian oil purchases as part of broader trade negotiations and in response to US pressure. However, India has firmly rejected this narrative. New Delhi has reiterated that its energy policy is guided solely by national interest, with energy security for its 1.4 billion people as the top priority.

India has made it clear that it does not take energy decisions based on political pressure or external timelines. Instead, it follows a strategy of diversification — buying oil from multiple sources depending on price, availability, and logistical feasibility. This approach has become even more crucial as global energy markets remain volatile.

## The Scale of Russia's Role in India's Oil Basket

The biggest challenge to replacing Russian oil lies in sheer scale. In the most recent fiscal year, India imported close to 88 million tonnes of crude oil from Russia. This represents a dramatic rise



over the past few years and has made Russia India's single largest oil supplier.

By comparison, imports from the United States stood at just over 10 million tonnes, while Venezuela supplied less than 3 million tonnes. Combined, US and Venezuelan crude accounted for barely a sixth of what India sourced from Russia.

Even in a hypothetical scenario where India maximised imports from both countries, the gap would remain enormous. The numbers simply do not support the idea of a quick or complete replacement.

## Why Growth Rates Don't Solve the Problem

Supporters of the replacement theory often point to

high growth rates in imports from the US and Venezuela. While it is true that imports from these countries have increased sharply in percentage terms, percentages can be misleading when starting from a low base.

Even if imports from the US continue to grow at over 35 percent annually, it would take nearly five years just to reach current Russian supply levels — assuming Russian imports remain flat and no disruptions occur. Venezuelan crude, despite even higher growth rates, would take longer due to political instability and infrastructure limitations.

When combined, US and Venezuelan imports would still require more than five years of sustained, uninter-

rupted expansion to approach Russia's current contribution. Such assumptions ignore market shocks, geopolitical tensions, and logistical constraints that are almost guaranteed to arise.

## Economic Reality: Discounts and Refinery Compatibility

One of the main reasons Russian oil has become so central to India's energy strategy is pricing. Russian crude has been available at significant discounts, making it highly attractive to Indian refiners operating in a price-sensitive market.

Replacing discounted oil with more expensive alternatives would directly impact fuel prices, inflation, and overall economic stability.

For a fast-growing economy like India's, these costs are not politically or economically trivial.

Additionally, many Indian refineries are specifically configured to process the grade of crude supplied by Russia. Switching suppliers is not as simple as signing new contracts — it requires technical adjustments, higher processing costs, and sometimes even physical modifications to refinery infrastructure.

## Logistics and Supply Chain Constraints

Beyond price and refinery issues, logistics play a major role. Russian crude has been flowing steadily to India through well-established shipping and insurance ar-

rangements. Replacing this volume would require not just new suppliers, but also expanded shipping capacity, insurance coverage, and port handling capabilities.

The United States already exports crude to multiple global markets, and diverting large volumes exclusively to India would be difficult. Venezuela, on the other hand, faces ongoing political and economic challenges that limit its ability to scale up exports reliably.

These constraints mean that even if political intent existed, physical supply chains would struggle to keep pace.

## Geopolitics Versus Energy Security

India's position reflects a

broader reality in global energy politics: countries prioritise energy security over geopolitical alignment when vital economic interests are at stake. For India, ensuring uninterrupted, affordable oil supplies is non-negotiable.

This does not mean India is abandoning diversification. In fact, it continues to expand its supplier base across the Middle East, Africa, and the Americas. But diversification is a long-term strategy, not an emergency switch.

Abruptly cutting off Russian oil would expose India to price shocks and supply risks — outcomes that policymakers are keen to avoid.

## The Bigger Picture

Trump's claims, while politically charged, overlook the structural realities of India's energy system. Oil trade is governed by infrastructure, contracts, refinery compatibility, pricing, and logistics — not just diplomatic statements.

Even under the most optimistic assumptions, replacing Russian oil completely would take several years and require sustained global stability, massive investment, and cooperative market conditions. None of these can be guaranteed.

## Conclusion

The idea that India can simply replace Russian oil with US or Venezuelan supplies may sound appealing in political speeches, but the numbers tell a different story. Russia's dominance in India's oil imports is the result of economics, infrastructure, and strategic calculation — not convenience.

For now and the foreseeable future, Russian crude will remain a central pillar of India's energy security. Any transition away from it, if it happens at all, will be gradual, pragmatic, and driven by market realities rather than political pressure.

# China's 'Secret' Nuclear Test: Myth, Reality and What It Means for Global Security

In early February 2026, a new and contentious chapter opened in the discourse on global nuclear arms control. Senior United States officials publicly alleged that China conducted a covert nuclear explosive test in 2020 — a claim that, if true, would shake the foundations of decades-old norms against nuclear testing and raise troubling questions about transparency, restraint, and strategic stability among nuclear powers.

According to the U.S. assessment, China carried out a clandestine nuclear detonation on June 22, 2020, at its Lop Nur test site in the remote Xinjiang region. The alleged event was described as having a measurable explosive yield, meaning it was more than the low-key subcritical tests nuclear states sometimes conduct for weapons reliability research. Moreover, U.S. officials asserted that Chinese authorities employed sophisticated methods to blunt seismic signals and obscure the explosion from international monitoring systems. The timing — shortly after a deadly border clash between Indian and Chinese forces at Galwan Valley — added geopolitical weight to the accusation and underscored how nuclear issues intersect with broader strategic rivalries.

The U.S. disclosure comes at a pivotal moment. With the expiration of the New START treaty between the United States and Russia in February 2026, the last remaining bilateral constraint on the world's two largest nuclear arsenals has lapsed. In this environment, Washington wants to press not only Moscow but also Beijing into a new framework of arms control that reflects a multipolar nuclear landscape. Casting the spot-

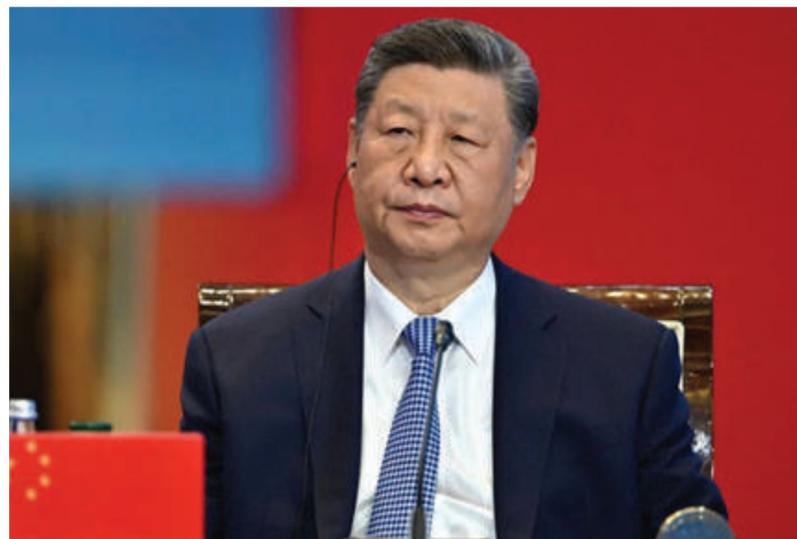
light on China's alleged past test serves that strategic aim by highlighting, from the U.S. perspective, the insufficiency of existing norms and the need for broader, more inclusive negotiations.

Beijing has vehemently denied the allegations. Chinese officials labeled the U.S. claims as "groundless" and "outright lies," accusing Washington of inventing excuses to justify its own possible return to nuclear testing. China has asserted that it adheres to a moratorium on explosive nuclear tests and opposes any narrative that portrays its defence policy as clandestine or destabilising. From the Chinese standpoint, such accusations are less about verifiable facts than about geopolitical posturing by a rival power seeking to regain leverage in nuclear diplomacy.

This dichotomy — accusation on one side, denial on the other — reveals deep fissures in how the major nuclear powers view verification, compliance, and the very architecture of arms control in the 21st century.

## The Allegation: A New Challenge to the Test Ban Norm

The core of the U.S. allegation is straightforward: China conducted a nuclear explosive test that it did not disclose publicly or to international monitoring regimes. If true, this would contravene the spirit — though not the letter — of global test prohibition norms. China, like the United States and Russia, signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the 1990s. However, Beijing has never ratified the treaty, leaving its legal commitment in limbo. Without ratification, China is not legally bound by



the treaty's provisions, but it has publicly maintained a voluntary moratorium on explosive testing for decades.

The claim also alleges that China's approach was crafted to evade detection. By manipulating seismic signatures or using techniques that reduce the visibility of underground blasts, Beijing would, according to the U.S. assessment, have exploited verification blind spots. This allegation feeds into broader strategic concerns in Washington about opacity and competitive advantage, especially in areas where China seeks to modernise, expand, and diversify its nuclear arsenal.

China's nuclear force development over the past decade has been marked by rapid growth and modernisation. New missile silo fields, advanced delivery systems such as mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and hy-

person glide vehicles, and an expanding stockpile signal China's intent to bolster its second-strike capabilities.

From a U.S. strategic perspective, this modernisation is occurring without the same levels of transparency that characterised U.S.-Soviet relations during the Cold War. The alleged secret test, therefore, is cast not as an isolated event but as part of a pattern of behaviour that challenges existing arms control norms.

## The Denial: China's Counter-Narrative

China's reaction has been resolute. Beijing categorically rejects the notion that it has ever conducted a secret nuclear blast. Chinese officials argue that the U.S. narrative is a pretext for justifying renewed American nuclear testing and undermining China's international standing. In official statements, China has reiter-

ated its commitment to responsible behaviour on nuclear issues and accused Washington of attempting to distort facts for strategic gain.

This response plays into a broader narrative that China has promoted internationally: that it is a responsible nuclear power committed to restraint, and that U.S. efforts to castigate it are rooted in strategic anxiety rather than empirical evidence. From Beijing's viewpoint, highlighting alleged test activity without presenting transparent data or involving independent verification mechanisms undermines trust and erodes the prospects for constructive dialogue on arms control.

## Verification and Evidence: The Hard Truth

One of the most challenging aspects of this debate is that independent monitoring bodies have not publicly con-

firmed any event consistent with a full-scale nuclear explosion in China in 2020. Organisations tasked with global seismic and radionuclide monitoring have not reported evidence that proves or disproves the U.S. claim. In the realm of nuclear test monitoring, seismographs, infrasound detectors, and other technologies are extraordinarily sensitive; yet none have identified a blast of sufficient magnitude at the time and location cited.

This absence of confirmation deepens the uncertainty and reflects the difficulties inherent in verifying compliance in the absence of binding treaties. While underground nuclear tests are typically detectable through seismic waves akin to small earthquakes, certain techniques — such as decoupling an explosion within a large cavity — can reduce the signal strength and complicate detection. Whether such methods were used, and with what effect, remains subject to technical debate among experts and cannot be conclusively assessed in public forums.

## Implications for the Global Nuclear Order

Regardless of the ultimate truth of the alleged 2020 test, the political impact is already significant. The accusation underscores the fragility of the post-Cold War nuclear order and the challenges of forging new agreements in an increasingly multipolar world. With longstanding arms control treaties expiring and no clear successors in place, trust between nuclear powers is eroding, and strategic competition is intensifying.

For the United States, the allegation against China is part of a broader effort to galvanise support for a new era of trilateral

arms control that includes Beijing alongside Washington and Moscow. For China, the denial is part of a broader effort to resist what it sees as undue pressure and narrative framing by Western powers.

The broader international community watches these developments with concern. Nations outside the immediate nuclear club have limited influence over verification and compliance mechanisms, yet they have a deep stake in preventing nuclear proliferation and escalation. If nuclear weapon tests become shrouded in secrecy, and if major powers refuse to engage in transparent verification, the risk of mistrust and strategic miscalculation grows.

## Conclusion: Between Perception and Reality

The story of China's "secret" nuclear test — whether myth, misinterpretation or something in between — highlights the challenges facing the global non-proliferation and arms control architecture. Accusations and denials, made in the absence of transparent evidence, deepen mistrust at a time when cooperation is needed more than ever. Without robust verification mechanisms and renewed commitment to restraint, the world risks entering a new era where nuclear competition, rather than cooperation, sets the tone of global security.

The debate over whether the alleged test really happened tells us less about one isolated event and more about the state of international norms, power dynamics, and the future trajectory of nuclear diplomacy. The stakes are high: inaction or miscalculation could undermine decades of progress in keeping nuclear weapons from the brink.

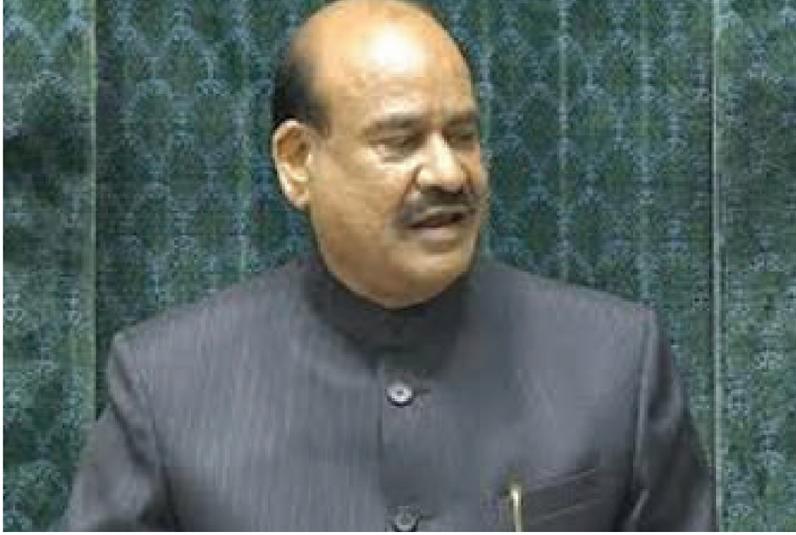
## Opposition Moves No-Confidence Motion Against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla

Opposition parties in the Lok Sabha have formally submitted a no-confidence motion against Speaker Om Birla, escalating tensions in Parliament during the ongoing Budget session.

Leaders from multiple opposition parties handed over a notice seeking the Speaker's removal, accusing him of partisan conduct and alleging misuse of his constitutional position. The motion has been backed by more than a hundred Members of Parliament, meeting the procedural requirement to initiate the process.

The opposition has claimed that the Speaker has repeatedly denied fair opportunities to opposition members during key debates, curtailed speaking time, and allowed what they describe as uneven enforcement of parliamentary rules. They have also objected to the suspension of several opposition MPs, arguing that such actions have disrupted democratic functioning in the House.

The move comes amid frequent disruptions in the Lok Sabha, marked by heated exchanges between ruling party and opposition members. Opposition leaders say the decision to bring the motion reflects growing frustration over how proceedings are being



conducted and the shrinking space for dissent.

Under constitutional provisions, a Speaker can be removed through a resolution passed by a majority of the House, following a mandatory notice period. The notice submitted by the opposition will now be examined by the Lok Sabha Secretariat before further steps are taken.

The ruling party has rejected the allegations, maintain-

ing that the Speaker has acted strictly in accordance with parliamentary rules and conventions. Government leaders have accused the opposition of politicising the office of the Speaker and undermining parliamentary institutions for political gain.

Not all opposition parties are on the same page, with some allies yet to formally endorse the motion. This has highlighted internal differenc-

es even as the broader opposition seeks to project unity on issues of parliamentary procedure.

If the notice is admitted, the motion can be taken up for discussion and voting after the prescribed period. Until then, the development adds another layer of confrontation to an already contentious parliamentary session, with both sides preparing for a prolonged political and procedural battle.

## Kiren Rijiju Blasts Congress After Sharing Video of Lok Sabha Showdown

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju has sharply criticised the Congress party and other opposition MPs after releasing video footage of a chaotic incident inside the Lok Sabha earlier this month, calling their conduct "the most degrading behaviour" seen in Parliament.

Rijiju shared the video showing scenes from the February 4 Budget session, when proceedings were disrupted just before Prime Minister Narendra Modi was scheduled to reply to the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. The footage depicts several opposition women MPs moving towards the treasury benches and standing near the Prime Minister's seat amidst a tense atmosphere, with some holding banners and refusing to step back despite repeated requests to do so.

In his public statements and social media posts accompanying the video, Rijiju accused the opposition of staging a deliberate confrontation that nearly forced a physical clash inside the chamber. He argued



that if ruling party MPs had not been restrained, the situation could have escalated into a serious altercation, compromising the dignity and sanctity of the House.

Rijiju's comments drew a clear contrast between what he described as orderly restraint by members of the ruling alliance and disruptive actions by opposition members. He said the ruling party chose to show maturity by avoiding escala-

tion, even as tensions rose. The minister's remarks also suggested broader political blame on the opposition for creating an environment where significant parliamentary business could not proceed smoothly.

The video release has intensified political confrontation in Parliament, coming amid other flashpoints during the Budget session, including a no-confidence motion against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and

heated disputes between government and opposition benches over parliamentary conduct and procedural fairness.

Opposition leaders, meanwhile, have rejected Rijiju's account and defended their members' actions as legitimate protest within parliamentary norms, accusing the ruling side of overstatement and selective portrayal of events. They have argued that the disruption was rooted in deeper disagreements over legislative handling and alleged partiality.

The controversy highlights ongoing tensions inside the Lok Sabha, where political battles increasingly play out not only through speeches and motions but also through public dissemination of footage and narratives aimed at shaping perception beyond the parliamentary precincts. As both sides continue to trade accusations, the incident has become another flashpoint in the broader struggle over conduct, decorum and power in India's national legislature.

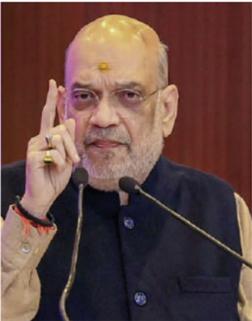
## From Chhattisgarh, Amit Shah Warns Naxals and Appeals to Women Cadres to Surrender

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has issued a strong warning to Maoist cadres operating across central and southern India, while also making a direct appeal to women involved in the insurgency to abandon violence and return to mainstream life.

Speaking at a public event in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, Shah reiterated the government's commitment to ending left-wing extremism and said security forces would continue firm action against those who persist with armed activities. He indicated that Maoist groups may still be active in parts of Telangana and cautioned that there would be no leniency for those engaging in violence, including attacks on civilians and infrastructure.

At the same time, the Home Minister stressed that the government's fight is against extremism, not against people. He urged Maoist cadres, particularly women, to surrender and take advantage of rehabilitation and welfare schemes. Shah said many women had been drawn into the movement at a young age and deserved an opportunity to rebuild their lives with dignity and security.

He appealed to Maoist leadership to release women cadres and allow them to join rehabilitation programmes, highlighting that governments at both the Centre and state levels have introduced support measures such as fi-



nancial assistance, housing, education and skill training for those who give up arms.

Shah also underlined the government's broader strategy of combining security operations with development initiatives. He said efforts were underway to improve infrastructure, healthcare, education and employment opportunities in tribal and remote areas, particularly in Bastar, to address conditions that have historically allowed extremism to take root.

Reiterating a timeline for eliminating Naxal violence, Shah said the government is determined to restore peace and development in affected regions. His remarks reflected a dual approach of warning and outreach, signalling continued pressure on armed groups while keeping the door open for those willing to choose peace.

## Sunetra Pawar Takes Charge as Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister



Sunetra Pawar on Tuesday formally assumed charge as the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, marking a significant political transition in the state following the recent demise of her husband, senior leader Ajit Pawar.

She took charge at the Mantralaya in Mumbai and later attended her first cabinet meeting in her new role. Her elevation comes after she was unanimously elected leader of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) legislature group, a step that paved the way for her appointment to the post.

Sunetra Pawar, a Rajya Sabha member, has been entrusted with several key portfolios, including state excise, sports and youth welfare, and minority development. The finance and planning departments earlier handled by Ajit Pawar will remain with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis.

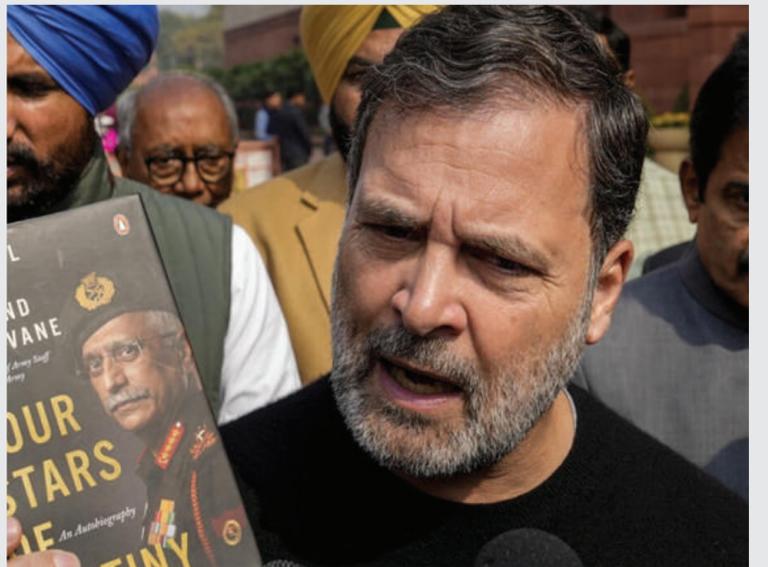
Her appointment is seen as an effort to ensure conti-

nunity and stability within the ruling coalition after a period of political uncertainty. Party leaders have described her elevation as a move to preserve organisational unity while respecting the legacy of Ajit Pawar, who was one of Maharashtra's most influential political figures.

Earlier in the day, Sunetra Pawar paid visits to prominent religious and memorial sites before beginning her official duties, underscoring the solemn backdrop against which she has taken office.

As she assumes responsibility, Sunetra Pawar has said her focus will be on governance and public welfare, signalling her intent to carry forward development initiatives while navigating the complex political landscape of the state. Her appointment also marks a notable moment in Maharashtra politics, reflecting the growing role of women in senior leadership positions.

## Political Row Erupts Over General Naravane's Unpublished Memoir After Rahul Gandhi's Accusations



A political controversy has erupted in New Delhi over an unpublished memoir by former Indian Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane, titled 'Four Stars of Destiny', after Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, challenged the official account of the book's status.

The dispute came to the forefront during the ongoing Budget session, when Rahul Gandhi attempted to refer to passages from the memoir in Parliament as part of his criticism of the government's handling of the 2020 India-China standoff. Parliament's Speaker ruled that he could not quote from the book because it has not been officially published, prompting a sharp backlash from the opposition.

The issue escalated further when the book's publisher issued a statement saying that it holds exclusive publishing rights to 'Four Stars of Destiny' and that the memoir has not yet

been published in any form — neither in print nor digitally. The publisher also warned that any copies circulating online or elsewhere without authorisation could constitute copyright infringement.

In response, Rahul Gandhi held up what he said was a copy of the book outside Parliament and accused the publisher of lying. He cited an earlier social media post attributed to General Naravane promoting the book and argued that either the former Army chief's own statements were untrue or the publisher's denial was false. Gandhi insisted he believed the Army chief over the publisher and raised questions about why the book has been delayed or blocked from release.

The disagreement over the memoir has spilled into the streets of Indian politics, with opposition leaders arguing that the book contains important perspectives on national security that should be openly discussed. The situation trig-

gered disruptions in Lok Sabha proceedings, and several MPs were suspended from the session in the ensuing clash over parliamentary speech and privilege.

Separately, police have registered a case to investigate reports of an unauthorised circulation of portions of the manuscript, including a purported digital copy circulating on social media. Authorities are examining whether security protocols were breached in the distribution of material from a book that has yet to receive official publication clearance.

The controversy has drawn attention to the broader issue of how sensitive material involving national defence is handled in public discourse and the rules governing what can be cited in Parliament. As the episode continues to unfold, political leaders from multiple parties are using it to bolster their competing narratives about transparency, defence policy and parliamentary procedure.

## Chidambaram Slams Budget as "Cautious, Forgettable" and Says Reform Agenda Is Stuck



In a sharply worded critique during the Rajya Sabha discussion on the Union Budget 2026-27, senior Congress leader and former finance minister P. Chidambaram described the government's financial plan as "cautious," "parsimonious" and "forgettable," while asserting that the much-touted reform agenda has lost momentum.

Opening the debate in the Upper House, Chidambaram criticised key aspects of the Budget, saying that public, private and foreign investment in India remains weak, and that capital expenditure was cut significantly in the current fiscal year, contrary to what he believes the economy needs. He questioned whether the government had truly engaged with the findings and warnings contained in the latest Economic Survey.

Chidambaram argued

that gross capital formation has been stagnant at around 30% of GDP for over a decade, and pointed to a sharp drop in net foreign direct investment and a lacklustre performance by private investors. He also echoed broader concerns about slowing growth, noting that nominal GDP growth has eased over recent years.

The Congress leader dismissed the slogan that the "reform express is well on its way," saying instead that the reform engine is stuck — not derailed, but not moving forward either. He also raised concerns about fiscal consolidation, suggesting that at the current pace it would take about a decade for India to achieve its own fiscal deficit target.

Chidambaram's attack reflected wider opposition unease with what many see as insufficient focus on job creation, investment incen-

tives, and real-world challenges facing farmers, youth and the unorganised sector. He said the government's high-level announcements too often lack meaningful budgetary backing, and warned that reductions in allocations for key ministries could hurt development outcomes.

Other opposition MPs also voiced criticism, with some alleging that non-ruling states were being sidelined in budget priorities. In contrast, government supporters defended the Budget as balanced and growth-oriented, arguing that it strengthens macroeconomic fundamentals and enhances India's global standing.

The debate on the Budget will continue, with divisions over economic strategy and fiscal priorities setting the tone for a broader political contest in Parliament.

## Inside the India-US Trade Deal: What Trump's 'Zero-Tariff' Claim Really Means

India and the United States have unveiled what both sides are calling a historic trade framework, aimed at easing long-standing trade tensions and significantly expanding bilateral commerce. The announcement gained global attention after former US President Donald Trump claimed the deal would move towards "zero tariffs." However, a closer look at the agreement shows that while tariff reductions are central to the framework, the reality is more nuanced than a complete elimination of duties.

### Tariff Cuts, Not a Blanket Zero

At the core of the deal is a commitment by the United States to substantially lower tariffs on a wide range of Indian exports. These reductions are designed to improve market access for Indian goods such as textiles, pharmaceuticals, engineering products, and select manufactured items. In some product categories, duties may be reduced to zero, but this will apply selectively rather than across all goods.

On the Indian side, New Delhi has agreed to reduce or eliminate tariffs on several US exports, particularly in agriculture and industrial goods. These include products such as pulses, edible oils, nuts, alcoholic beverages, and certain industrial inputs. India has also committed to easing non-tariff barriers that have historically restricted US companies' access to the Indian market.

### Major Purchase Commitments

A headline feature of the framework is India's pledge to significantly increase purchases of US goods and services.



These purchases span multiple sectors, including energy, agriculture, defence-related manufacturing, and advanced technology. While a large aggregate figure has been mentioned publicly, officials on both sides have indicated that these purchases will be phased over time and subject to commercial viability.

### Digital Trade and Regulatory Cooperation

The agreement also addresses digital trade, a key area of friction in recent years. India has agreed to roll back certain digital services taxes and work towards a more predictable regulatory environment for US technology firms. Both countries have committed to closer cooperation on digital trade rules, data flows, and emerging technologies.

Additionally, the deal outlines plans for stronger coordination on customs procedures, standards, and rules of origin.

This is intended to ensure that tariff benefits apply only to goods genuinely produced in each country and to prevent misuse of trade preferences.

### Strategic and Supply Chain Focus

Beyond tariffs, the framework places strong emphasis on supply-chain resilience and strategic cooperation. India and the US aim to reduce dependence on single-country supply chains by encouraging joint manufacturing, technology partnerships, and investment flows. Cooperation in critical sectors such as semiconductors, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing forms an important part of the broader vision.

### Clarifying the 'Zero-Tariff' Narrative

While Trump's "zero-tariff" claim has dominated headlines, officials have clarified that this phrase reflects the di-

rection and ambition of the relationship rather than an immediate policy outcome. The agreement is best understood as a step toward progressively lower trade barriers rather than a sudden shift to duty-free trade across the board.

### What Comes Next

The current framework is an interim arrangement, with both countries planning further negotiations toward a comprehensive trade agreement. Future talks are expected to cover services, investment protection, labour mobility, and deeper regulatory alignment.

Overall, the India-US trade deal marks a significant reset in economic relations. While it stops short of delivering universal zero tariffs, it lays the groundwork for expanded trade, reduced friction, and closer strategic alignment between the two economies.

## As Starmer Faces Mounting Pressure, Is Shabana Mahmood Emerging as a UK Leadership Contender?



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer is under increasing political pressure amid controversy linked to the handling of issues connected to Jeffrey Epstein-era associations within diplomatic and political circles. The row has sparked criticism across party lines and intensified scrutiny of Starmer's leadership, triggering speculation about possible successors should the crisis deepen.

While Starmer has rejected calls to step aside and insists he retains the confidence of his party, the controversy has exposed internal unease within Labour. Senior figures have voiced concerns over judgement and political optics, and the episode has reignited debate about leadership accountability at the top of government.

Against this backdrop, attention has turned to Shabana Mahmood, one of the most senior figures in the current cabinet, whose profile has risen steadily over recent years. A seasoned politician with a strong legal background, Mahmood is widely regarded as a capable administrator and a firm communicator, qualities

that have gained prominence amid the present turbulence.

Mahmood represents Birmingham Ladywood and has served in Parliament since 2010. Over the years, she has held several senior roles, building experience across justice, home affairs, and internal security. Her current position places her at the centre of some of the government's most sensitive policy areas, including policing, immigration, and national security — giving her visibility and authority unmatched by many of her peers.

Supporters argue that Mahmood's calm, disciplined approach contrasts with the uncertainty surrounding the prime minister. They point to her ability to manage complex portfolios and defend government policy under pressure as signs she could command confidence within the party if a leadership transition were to occur.

However, political analysts caution that talk of succession remains speculative. In the UK system, a sitting prime minister can only be replaced through internal party processes that re-

quire substantial backing from MPs. At present, Starmer still controls the party machinery, and no formal challenge has been initiated.

Mahmood herself has not indicated any ambition to replace the prime minister, and close allies say she remains focused on her current responsibilities. Nevertheless, her emergence in public discussion reflects broader uncertainty within Labour as it seeks to contain political damage and maintain stability.

If circumstances were to shift dramatically, Mahmood's elevation would mark a historic moment in British politics, underscoring the changing face of leadership in the UK. For now, though, her potential rise serves more as a symbol of contingency planning within the party rather than an imminent change at the top.

As the controversy continues to unfold, much will depend on whether Starmer can regain political momentum — or whether internal pressure forces Labour to consider alternative leadership options sooner than expected.

## Russia Accuses US of Pushing India Toward Costlier Energy as Tensions Over Oil Policy Escalate

Russia has strongly criticised recent actions by the United States that it says are aimed at limiting India's ability to buy inexpensive Russian energy, accusing Washington of trying to force New Delhi and other countries into purchasing more expensive American liquefied natural gas (LNG) and energy supplies.

The comments from Russian officials came after assertions by the US government in connection with a broader trade and energy policy push that reportedly seeks to encourage countries to reduce their reliance on Russian oil. Moscow has dismissed these actions as coercive and contrary to fair competition, arguing that the measures effectively penalise countries that engage in energy trade with Russia while promoting American exports.

According to Russian statements, the United States is deploying a combination of tariffs, sanctions and other restrictions that amount to an attempt to block access to Russian oil — which has been



widely discounted on global markets — and steer buyers toward US energy products, including LNG at higher prices. Russian officials also characterised such moves as part of a broader effort by the US to exert control over global energy supply routes and assert economic dominance.

The criticism highlighted concerns about what Moscow calls a "war" against energy tankers and trade flows, which it claims violates international norms and undermines the

rights of sovereign states to choose their energy sources. Russian leaders emphasised that major emerging economies such as India, China, Indonesia and Brazil should remain free to engage in energy cooperation with all trading partners, including Russia, without artificial obstacles being created by third parties.

India has responded separately to US comments about its oil import policy by reaffirming that its energy procurement decisions are guided

by national interest and market conditions. New Delhi has emphasised that as a major importer of crude oil, it must prioritise adequate availability, fair pricing and reliable supply for its large and growing economy.

New Delhi's position has been consistent: India will continue to diversify its energy sources and engage with multiple partners to meet its needs, and it has not publicly confirmed any policy shift to stop buying Russian oil solely at the behest of another country.

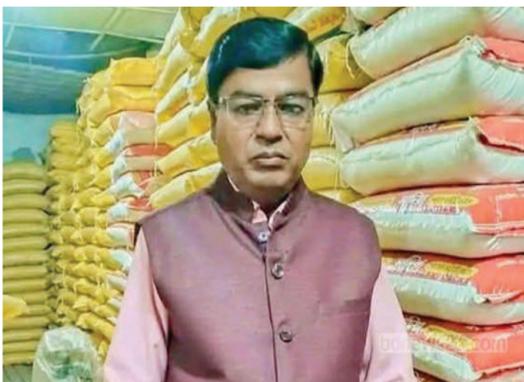
The broader debate over energy purchases, trade measures and geopolitical pressure underscores the complex intersection of economic interests, strategic alliances and global energy security — particularly as countries navigate shifting patterns of supply, sanctions and international competition. The tensions illustrate how energy policy remains deeply entwined with broader diplomatic and economic negotiations involving major powers and emerging markets alike.

## Hindu Businessman Killed in Bangladesh Days Ahead of National Elections

A Hindu businessman was brutally killed in Bangladesh just days before the country's national elections, triggering fear and concern among minority communities and raising fresh questions about security ahead of the polls.

The victim, a 62-year-old trader, was attacked late at night inside his shop in the Mymensingh region. According to local accounts, unidentified assailants entered the premises and assaulted him with sharp weapons. He was found critically injured and covered in blood by family members and neighbours, and was rushed to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

The businessman was a well-known figure in the local market and earned his livelihood through a small trading enterprise. Residents described him as a quiet and hardworking individual with no known disputes, making the attack all the more shocking for the community.



The killing has taken place just days before Bangladesh goes to the polls, intensifying anxiety over law and order during a politically sensitive period. Minority groups, particularly Hindus, have expressed concern about their safety, noting that incidents of violence and intimidation tend to rise around election time.

Police have launched an investigation and said they are examining the crime scene, questioning witnesses and reviewing any available surveillance footage. Officials have stated that efforts are underway to identify and apprehend those responsible, though no arrests have been announced so far. Authorities have not yet confirmed whether the mur-

der was targeted due to religious identity, business rivalry, or other motives.

Community leaders have condemned the killing and urged the government to ensure the safety of minorities and traders, especially in the lead-up to voting. Some local residents have called for increased police patrolling and stronger security measures in market areas and residential neighbourhoods.

The incident has added to broader concerns about stability and public confidence during the election period. Observers say such acts of violence, regardless of motive, risk undermining trust in the electoral environment and heightening social tensions.

As Bangladesh prepares to vote, the killing has cast a shadow over the campaign atmosphere, underscoring the challenges authorities face in maintaining security and reassuring citizens during a crucial democratic exercise.

## Iranian Man's Final Video Appeals Against Talks With Tehran Before Death



An Iranian man has drawn international attention after posting a video message urging former US President Donald Trump and Western leaders not to negotiate with Iran's ruling establishment, shortly before his death by suicide. The video has circulated widely on social media, sparking debate over Iran's internal situation and international policy toward Tehran.

In the recorded message, the man, identified as Pouria Hamidi, speaks directly to global leaders in English, stating at the outset that the video was meant to be watched after his death. He describes conditions inside Iran as deeply oppressive and accuses the authorities of violently suppressing dissent and protests.

Hamidi argues that diplomatic engagement with Iran's leadership would

only strengthen those in power while betraying ordinary citizens who, he claims, have suffered under state crackdowns. He urges Western governments to abandon negotiations and instead adopt a far more confrontational approach, claiming that Iranians are unable to challenge the country's powerful security apparatus on their own.

During the video, he appeals directly to Trump, asking him not to pursue agreements with Tehran and to consider stronger measures. He also expresses support for Iranian opposition figures abroad and calls for unity among those opposed to the current leadership.

Toward the end of the recording, Hamidi switches from English to Persian, addressing fellow Iranians. He encourages solidarity, urges people not to lose

hope, and speaks emotionally about the desire for a different future for the country.

Reports indicate that Hamidi died shortly after posting the video, although independent verification of the exact circumstances remains limited. His death has underscored the depth of anger, despair and political frustration felt by some Iranians, particularly amid ongoing repression and uncertainty about Iran's relations with the West.

The incident has reignited international discussion over how foreign governments should engage with Iran, balancing diplomatic efforts with concerns over human rights and internal unrest. It also highlights the intense personal toll political conflict and repression can take on individuals living under prolonged pressure.

## Auto Stocks Extend Rally as Trade Deal Lifts Prospects for Indian Auto Parts Exporters



Indian auto and auto ancillary stocks continued their upward momentum for a second straight session, driven by optimism surrounding a new trade framework between India and the United States. The rally reflects expectations that Indian auto parts manufacturers will gain improved access to the US market, boosting exports and long-term growth prospects.

The Nifty Auto index rose for the second consecutive day, outperforming several other sectoral indices. Buying interest was particularly strong in auto component manufacturers, as investors factored in the benefits of reduced tariffs and improved trade terms under the new agreement. The broader market's positive tone also supported the sector's gains.

According to market analysts, the trade framework offers preferential tariff treatment for Indian auto parts entering the US, with several categories expected to attract zero or significantly lower import duties. This change enhances the price

competitiveness of Indian suppliers, allowing them to compete more effectively with global peers and potentially increase their market share in one of the world's largest automotive markets.

Indian auto parts exporters already have an established presence in the US, supplying components across passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles and electric mobility segments. The improved trade terms are likely to strengthen India's position within global automotive supply chains, encouraging US manufacturers to source more components from Indian companies.

Another supportive factor is currency dynamics. A relatively weaker rupee improves export realizations for Indian manufacturers, further enhancing margins and earnings visibility. Combined with tariff relief, this creates a favourable operating environment for export-oriented auto ancillary firms.

Stock prices of several leading auto and component companies moved higher during

the session, reflecting investor confidence in the sector's improved outlook. Market participants believe that companies with existing US exposure and diversified product portfolios are best placed to benefit from the evolving trade environment.

Beyond near-term gains, the development signals deeper economic engagement between India and the US in manufacturing and industrial sectors. Analysts note that sustained policy support and stable trade relations could encourage fresh investments, technology partnerships and capacity expansion within India's auto components industry.

Overall, the auto sector's continued rally highlights how trade policy developments can directly influence market sentiment. With improved access to the US market and strengthening global demand, Indian auto parts exporters appear well-positioned to capture new growth opportunities in the coming years, supporting the sector's positive momentum.

## SEBI Halts NCDEX and MSE Plans to Enter Equity Options Market



India's market regulator, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), has put on hold the plans of the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) and the Metropolitan Stock Exchange (MSE) to enter the equity options market. The move reflects SEBI's cautious stance on the rapid expansion of derivatives trading and its emphasis on ensuring market stability and investor protection.

Both exchanges had sought regulatory approval to expand their operations into the equity cash and derivatives segments. NCDEX, which is primarily focused on agricultural commodity futures, and MSE, which has largely operated in currency derivatives and select market segments, were looking to diversify their offerings and tap into the fast-growing equity derivatives space.

According to regulatory assessments, SEBI wants exchanges to first establish a strong and

liquid cash equity market before being allowed to launch complex derivative products such as options. The regulator believes that a well-functioning underlying cash market is essential for effective price discovery and risk management in derivatives trading.

The decision also comes amid concerns over the disproportionate growth of options trading compared with cash market activity in India. Equity options volumes have surged in recent years, raising regulatory worries about excessive speculation, concentration of risk and potential systemic vulnerabilities. SEBI has been taking steps to tighten oversight and ensure that derivatives growth is aligned with the depth and maturity of the underlying market.

While both NCDEX and MSE have invested in upgrading technology and strengthening infrastructure, SEBI has indicated that technical preparedness alone is not

sufficient. Exchanges must demonstrate sustained liquidity, broad participation and stable operations in the cash market before they can be considered for entry into equity derivatives.

The move effectively maintains the dominance of established exchanges in the equity options segment for now, while signalling the regulatory challenges faced by smaller or specialised exchanges seeking to expand. For NCDEX and MSE, the focus is likely to shift towards building scale in cash equities, enhancing market participation and meeting regulatory expectations.

Overall, SEBI's decision underscores its priority of market integrity and risk control over rapid expansion. While competition and innovation remain important, the regulator appears determined to ensure that any expansion into derivatives is backed by a strong market foundation and safeguards for investors.

# Why the Sell-Off in Data and Information Companies Is Misplaced and Overdone

A growing downturn in the share prices of business-to-business (B2B) data and information companies has sparked widespread concern in financial markets. Many investors are interpreting recent declines as evidence that artificial intelligence (AI) will rapidly make traditional information providers obsolete. However, this narrative oversimplifies the value these companies offer and misunderstands how technological change actually affects them.

The current sell-off, which has hit firms whose business models are based on providing high-quality data, analytics, and workflow support to enterprises, is rooted in fears that AI platforms will supplant their services. Investors worry that intelligent tools capable of aggregating and interpreting information will render traditional paid data feeds and professional services redundant. But these fears reflect surface-level thinking rather than a grounded view of industry fundamentals.

The underlying logic of the pessimism is that AI can perform many tasks that historically required specialised data providers. While AI models have indeed become more capable at processing and summarising information, they still rely heavily on structured, authoritative data from established companies. AI tools excel when they are built on robust datasets and deeply



embedded in professional workflows — the very strengths that legacy data companies have developed over decades.

Moreover, data and information providers are deeply integrated into critical business processes such as financial compliance, risk assessment, regulatory reporting, and specialised research. These are areas where accuracy, provenance, and domain expertise are vital — not easily replicated by generic AI offerings. In many cases, these firms have longstanding client relationships and mission-critical contracts that provide recurring revenue and resilience against short-term market sentiment.

History also offers valu-

able perspective. Previous technological disruptions — including the rise of the internet and cloud-based software — were expected to kill off established players but often created opportunities for them instead. Many incumbents embraced change, integrating new technologies into their offerings and expanding their value proposition rather than being displaced by it. The same dynamic is likely to play out with AI, where companies that embed cutting-edge tools into their platforms can strengthen customer lock-in and expand their addressable market.

In this context, the recent drop in valuations among data companies presents a potential buy-

ing opportunity for long-term investors. The downturn appears driven more by fear and narrative-driven selling than by fundamental deterioration in business models or competitive positioning. Many of these firms continue to generate strong cash flows, maintain profitable operations, and serve indispensable roles in the functioning of capital markets, legal compliance, and business intelligence.

The panic selling also fails to recognise the role AI can play as an enabler rather than a disintermediator. When used effectively, AI augments human decision-making and can deepen the value of curated datasets by making them more accessible

and actionable. This is particularly true in specialised sectors where domain expertise and data quality cannot be easily substituted.

In summary, the so-called "meltdown" in data and information stocks overstates the threat posed by AI and underestimates the enduring strengths of these businesses. Rather than assuming they will be rendered irrelevant, it's more realistic to view AI as enhancing their capabilities and expanding demand for high-integrity data. For investors who focus on fundamentals rather than headlines, the recent correction may offer an attractive entry point into companies with long-term competitive advantages.

## Indian Family Businesses Buck Global Uncertainty, But Internal Gaps Could Limit Future Growth

Indian family-owned enterprises are displaying remarkable confidence and growth ambition compared with their global counterparts, according to a recent PwC survey. While external global shocks such as inflation, supply-chain disruption or geopolitical risks have had relatively limited impact on Indian family firms, internal challenges around governance, technology adoption and succession planning are emerging as key constraints for long-term competitiveness.

The survey — part of PwC's 12th Global Family Business Survey — highlights a striking contrast between Indian family businesses and their worldwide peers. Only about four in ten Indian businesses reported being significantly affected by major global risks, compared with a higher share globally. Issues such as labour shortages, technological disruption including AI, and climate pressure were felt less acutely among Indian respondents than elsewhere. This relative insulation has helped fuel optimism about growth prospects. A very large majority of Indian firms expect to expand in the next two



years, and more than half are targeting aggressive growth strategies, far outpacing global averages.

This upbeat outlook reflects several structural strengths. India's large and growing domestic market, young workforce and entrepreneurial culture have contributed to resilience amid global volatility. Many firms continue to explore new verticals, adjacent markets, and even international markets, demonstrating a risk appetite that contrasts with more cautious peers abroad, who have prioritised stability over expansion.

However, the survey also reveals important internal challenges that could temper this optimism. Indian family businesses report greater difficulty when it comes to succession planning and governance structures. A significant number lack clear leadership transition plans, and resistance from senior generations is often cited as a barrier to preparing the next generation of leaders. In addition, boards are often composed predominantly of family members, with limited external or diverse perspectives, which can constrain strategic decision-making at scale.

Technology adoption is another area of concern. While many Indian family firms express strong intent to embrace digital transformation and view technology as a key driver of competitiveness, only a small share are early adopters. A larger proportion adopt a cautious or selective approach, which could slow their progress relative to global peers who are investing more aggressively in innovation, AI and advanced analytics.

Experts argue that bridging these internal gaps — by strengthening governance, formalising succession pathways and accelerating strategic technology integration — will be critical for sustaining long-term growth as Indian family businesses scale and enter more competitive global arenas.

In summary, Indian family businesses are riding a wave of confidence and outward ambition, buoyed by domestic strengths and lower exposure to global shocks. But structural gaps within organisation, leadership and technology readiness remain key areas that could shape their future trajectory.

## Indian Markets Extend Rally for Third Day; Sensex Gains 208 Points, Nifty Tops 25,900

Indian equity markets continued their upward momentum for the third consecutive session, ending the day firmly in positive territory as investor sentiment remained supportive. Benchmark indices posted moderate gains, aided by buying interest in select heavyweight stocks and improving confidence around domestic and global cues.

The BSE Sensex closed 208 points higher, while the Nifty 50 reclaimed the crucial 25,900 mark, signalling sustained optimism among market participants. The steady rise over the past three sessions reflects a gradual recovery after recent consolidation, with investors selectively adding to positions rather than engaging in broad-based risk-taking.

A key driver of the rally was the return of foreign institutional investor (FII) inflows, which provided much-needed support to the market. Foreign investors were net buyers during the session, reversing the cautious stance seen in previous weeks. Their participation helped stabi-



lised sentiment and reinforced confidence in India's medium-term growth outlook.

Sectoral performance was mixed, though the overall bias remained positive. Auto and metal stocks emerged as notable gainers, benefiting from expectations of improving demand and firm global commodity prices. Select banking and financial stocks also contributed to the benchmarks' gains, offsetting weakness in a

few defensive pockets of the market.

The broader market mirrored the positive trend, with midcap and smallcap stocks also ending higher. This indicated improving market breadth and suggested that the rally was not confined only to index heavyweights. Analysts noted that such participation across segments often signals strengthening underlying sentiment.

Global cues remained supportive as Asian markets traded with a positive bias, which helped boost risk appetite among domestic investors. Stability in overseas markets, coupled with easing concerns over global monetary conditions, encouraged investors to maintain a constructive stance on equities.

Market experts, however, advised caution near higher levels. The 26,000 level on the Nifty is seen as an important psychological and technical resistance. A sustained move above this zone could open the door for further upside, while failure to hold gains may lead to near-term consolidation.

Overall, the third straight day of gains reflects renewed confidence driven by foreign inflows, selective sectoral strength, and supportive global cues. While the trend remains positive, investors are expected to stay stock-specific and closely monitor upcoming macroeconomic data and global developments for further direction.

## Family Making Sandwiches on Train Triggers Online Debate on Public Etiquette



A short video showing a family preparing sandwiches inside an Indian Railways train compartment has gone viral on social media, sparking a heated debate about civic sense and appropriate behaviour in public spaces. What seemed like a harmless travel moment to some quickly turned into a larger discussion on etiquette, shared spaces, and personal responsibility.

The video shows several members of a family seated on their train berths during a journey. They are seen opening packets of bread, spreading chutney, cutting vegetables, and assembling sandwiches on their seats. The relaxed, casual activity appeared routine to many viewers, but it did not sit well with everyone online.

Critics of the video argued that a train coach is a shared public space and not the right place to prepare food from scratch. Many social media users described the act as inconsiderate, saying it could inconvenience fellow passengers through food smells, clutter, or hygiene concerns. Some commented that travellers should either carry ready-to-eat food or depend on railway catering services rather than turning a seat into a makeshift kitchen.

Others widened the discussion to civic behaviour in general, saying such actions reflect a lack of awareness about how individual comfort can affect others in confined spaces. A few users suggested that stricter enforcement of rules related to cleanliness and public conduct on trains is necessary, arguing that guidelines often exist but are rarely followed.

On the other side of the debate, many people defended the family, stating that there was nothing wrong with preparing simple food as long as no mess was created and co-passengers were not disturbed. Supporters pointed out that assembling sandwiches does not involve cooking or the use of any appliances, making it far less intrusive than people claimed.

Several users also highlighted that homemade food is often healthier, more affordable, and more hygienic than outside meals, especially during long train journeys. They questioned why such a basic activity was being treated as a serious offence and accused critics of overreacting to a harmless situation.

Some defenders added that context matters — whether the family cleaned up afterward, whether the compartment was fully occupied by them, and whether anyone nearby objected. Without that information, they argued, judging the family harshly was unfair.

The viral clip has ultimately ignited a broader conversation about how people perceive personal freedom in shared spaces. While opinions remain divided, the incident underlines how everyday actions can quickly become internet flashpoints, reflecting changing expectations around public behaviour and coexistence during travel.

## Husband, Wife and Career Clash: Viral Divorce Case Sparks Debate on Roles and Expectations

A social media post about a couple's divorce has ignited widespread discussion online, centering on modern marriage, career aspirations and traditional family expectations. The story, shared on the microblogging platform X, describes a tech couple — both engineers — whose marriage reportedly ended after the wife refused to quit her job to care full-time for her ailing mother-in-law.

According to the account that went viral, the couple were school sweethearts who built a successful life together. They married, had two children, and were financially self-sufficient. The wife was described as hardworking and committed to her profession, even working until late in her pregnancies and returning to a better-paying role after maternity breaks. Despite this, tension arose when the husband's mother fell ill and he expected his wife to leave her career to become her full-time caregiver.

The woman reportedly offered alternatives: she proposed that she continue working to provide financial support while the husband took a career break, offered help around the home, and even suggested that her own mother could assist with child-



care. However, these suggestions were allegedly dismissed, with the couple's family insisting that the daughter-in-law's primary duty was to care for the mother-in-law. As disagreements intensified, emotional strain mounted, and the wife eventually moved back to her parents' home with their children.

The narrative claims that the husband later sent a legal notice threatening divorce. Feeling that her autonomy and professional identity were being undermined, the wife filed for divorce herself. The couple reportedly parted ways, with the

woman asserting her right to make decisions about her own life and career.

The story quickly drew reactions from users on social media, sparking a heated debate. Many people expressed support for the wife's decision, arguing that in a modern, egalitarian society, both partners should be able to pursue their careers without being pressured into traditional caregiving roles. Commenters criticised the notion that women should automatically be expected to give up their professional ambitions for family obligations, particularly when

both partners are capable of sharing responsibilities or hiring professional care for elderly relatives.

Some users also questioned why alternatives weren't more seriously considered, such as professional caregiving services, and emphasised that responsibility for one's parents should not be shifted solely onto a spouse. Others pointed out that resentment and ego could also play a role when traditional expectations clash with changing realities of dual-career households.

Critics of the couple's split noted that relationships require communica-

tion and compromise, while supporters of the woman's choice highlighted the importance of autonomy and equality in marriage. The online debate reflects broader societal tensions in India and beyond about gender roles, career priorities, and the evolving nature of family responsibilities.

The viral post resonated widely, as many people saw in this case a larger conversation about how careers, caregiving duties and personal ambitions intersect within modern relationships — and how far cultural norms will adapt in the face of shifting expectations.

## Kanpur Lamborghini Crash Brings '4018' Number into Spotlight, Sparks Online Curiosity

A high-speed accident involving a luxury Lamborghini in Kanpur has not only raised concerns about road safety but has also triggered intense curiosity on social media over a four-digit number seen on the car's licence plate — 4018. In the days following the crash, the number has become a talking point online, with users speculating about its significance and repeated appearance.

The incident took place on a busy stretch of road in Kanpur when a Lamborghini reportedly being driven at a very high speed lost control and rammed into multiple vehicles and pedestrians. Several people were injured in the accident, creating panic among bystanders. Police quickly reached the scene, seized the vehicle and launched an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the crash.

The supercar involved in the accident was a Lamborghini Revuelto, one of the most expensive and

rare models seen on Indian roads, with a price tag running into several crores. While the car's luxury and power drew attention, what truly caught the internet's imagination was its registration number — 4018 — which soon began trending across social media platforms.

Online users noticed that the same number reportedly appears on multiple high-end vehicles linked to the owner's family. This repetition sparked speculation, with some suggesting the number might hold personal or symbolic importance. Others took the discussion further, linking the number to numerology and attaching various interpretations to the digits, even though such beliefs have no scientific basis.

Eyewitness accounts of the crash added to the intensity of the discussion. According to those present, the speeding car first hit an autorickshaw, then struck a parked motorcycle before crashing into a



roadside structure. The force of the collision reportedly threw the motorcyclist several feet away. Locals quickly gathered at the scene, and the situation became tense before authorities intervened.

The driver, identified as the son of a well-known businessman, was taken into custody for questioning and medical examination. Police have stated

that a detailed investigation is underway to determine whether speeding, negligence or other factors played a role in the accident.

As the legal process continues, online attention has drifted from the accident itself to the symbolism surrounding the number 4018. While some see it as mere coincidence, others view it as a reflection

of how sensational incidents involving luxury, wealth and power often take on a life of their own on the internet.

Ultimately, the focus on a licence plate number highlights how quickly public discourse can shift in the age of social media — turning a serious road accident into a mix of safety concerns, speculation and viral curiosity.

## Pune Man's Matrimony Tracker Excel Sheet Goes Viral, Sparking Mixed Reactions



A creative take on the age-old tradition of arranged marriage has recently taken social media by storm. A young data analyst from Pune shared an Excel spreadsheet he made to organize and track all the potential partners suggested to him during his arranged-marriage search — and the idea quickly went viral with thousands of views and likes.

The man, who goes by Vikas on Instagram, explained that he built the spreadsheet to manage the constant stream of matches his parents were proposing and to provide them with regular updates. As he scrolled through biodata, conversations and decisions, he realized he needed a structured way to keep everything in order. So, like any organised data professional would, he turned to his trusted spreadsheet tool and built what he jokingly calls his "Weekend Tracker."

On the spreadsheet, Vikas lists the first names of each prospective bride along with key details about the interactions. Multiple columns capture feedback from both sides — his impressions, their responses, and notes such as "good conversation," "no vibe," "no follow-up" or "values aligned." In some cases, he even tracks follow-up call dates and the overall status of the match. The template became not just a tool for him, but something he shared with friends who were going through similar matchmaking journeys.

In his Instagram caption, Vikas

wrote a light-hearted line that resonated with many: "When life gives you arranged marriage, build a tracker." The simple phrase struck a chord online, with many users finding the organised approach amusing, clever and highly relatable.

Comments under his post ranged from laughter to earnest engagement. Some people joked about the likelihood of "dashboard review meetings" with parents and relatives to discuss match progress. Others shared stories from their own experiences with arranged marriage, with one person noting how their own Excel sheet had grown to include hundreds of names and helped them reflect on what went well or didn't in past conversations.

Not all reactions were just about humour. Many users pointed out how challenging the modern arranged-marriage process can be, especially when balancing work, family expectations and personal preferences. For those navigating multiple profiles and conversations at the same time, a structured tracker clearly seemed like a sensible idea.

What started as a practical exercise for one person has now turned into a viral moment capturing the quirks, frustrations and occasional humour of arranged marriage in contemporary India. Whether viewed as a fun idea or a functional tool, the spreadsheet-based approach has definitely struck a nerve among people wrestling with the matchmaking maze.

## Bengaluru House Help's Thoughtful Anniversary Gesture Wins Hearts Online



A simple yet deeply touching moment from Bengaluru has captured the internet's attention, proving once again that kindness does not need grandeur to leave a lasting impact. A video showing a house help surprising the

couple she works for on their wedding anniversary has gone viral, winning hearts across social media platforms.

The video, shared by the couple themselves, shows the house help standing shyly with a rose and a

chocolate, ready to surprise them. Earlier, during a casual conversation, she had learned that it was their wedding anniversary. Without being asked or prompted, she decided to mark the special day in her own heartfelt way.

What makes the moment especially touching is the thought behind the gesture. The woman reportedly asked her husband to arrange the rose and chocolate through a delivery service so that everything would be ready on time. Her effort reflected genuine affection rather than obligation, turning a small act into a meaningful celebration.

The couple's reaction added warmth to the moment. Visibly moved, they thanked her sincerely and expressed their appreciation with affection and respect. In a touching exchange, the couple even bent down to touch her feet, requesting her continued blessings — a gesture that resonated strongly with viewers and highlighted mutual respect beyond social roles.

Social media users were quick to respond with praise and admiration. Many described the moment as "pure," "wholesome," and "emotionally

uplifting." Viewers appreciated both the house help's kindness and the couple's humble response, noting how rare and refreshing such genuine interactions are in an age dominated by curated and flashy content.

Several commenters pointed out that the video stood out precisely because it showcased simple human values — gratitude, care and emotional connection. Others remarked that respect and warmth in everyday relationships matter far more than expensive gifts or grand celebrations.

The viral clip has since become a reminder of how small, sincere gestures can create powerful emotional moments. In a digital world often filled with negativity and excess, this quiet act of kindness from a Bengaluru home offered a refreshing pause — reminding people that empathy and thoughtfulness still thrive in everyday life.

# How Suryakumar Yadav Fought His Slump by Slowing Down and Finding Balance

Suryakumar Yadav, one of India's most dynamic white-ball batters, recently went through a rare and testing phase in his career — a prolonged slump that forced him to reassess not just his technique, but also his mindset.

Known for his fearless strokeplay and ability to score all around the wicket, Suryakumar found himself struggling for runs over several matches. The timing that once made his shots look effortless seemed to disappear, and with expectations mounting, the pressure began to take a toll. For a player accustomed to success, the lean patch was both frustrating and mentally draining.

Rather than forcing his way out of trouble, Suryakumar made an unusual but deliberate choice: he stepped away from the game for a short period. He decided to put his cricket kit aside, distance himself from the daily grind of practice and matches, and allow his mind to reset. This break, he later acknowledged, was essential.

During this phase, he also made small but mean-



ingful changes to his routine. High-energy music gave way to devotional songs, helping him slow down and find calm amid the noise of elite sport. The shift was less about superstition and more about restoring emotional balance — something he felt had been missing during the slump.

Technically, opponents had begun targeting him early, denying him the

freedom he usually enjoys. But the bigger challenge was mental. By taking time off, Suryakumar stopped chasing form and instead focused on clarity and confidence, trusting that the runs would eventually follow.

When he returned, the difference was visible. His movements at the crease looked more composed, his shot selection more measured. Instead of rush-

ing into risky strokes, he showed patience, built partnerships and allowed his natural flair to resurface gradually.

A crucial innings in the T20 World Cup showcased this renewed balance. It wasn't just about the runs he scored, but the way he scored them — adapting to conditions, reading the game situation and blending caution with aggression. The knock signalled

not just a return to form, but a player who had grown through adversity.

As India's campaign progresses, Suryakumar's journey serves as a reminder that even the most gifted players go through difficult phases. Sometimes, the way forward isn't more practice or harder effort — but stepping back, regaining perspective and trusting the process.

## Pakistan's U-Turn on India Match Averts Huge Revenue Hit at T20 World Cup

Pakistan's decision to reverse its earlier stance and agree to play India in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 has prevented a massive financial setback for the tournament organisers and cricket's global governing body.

The proposed boycott of the India fixture — one of the most commercially valuable matches in world sport — had threatened to disrupt key revenue streams tied to broadcasters, sponsorships, advertising and hospitality. Industry estimates suggested that cancelling the India-Pakistan clash could have cost hundreds of millions of dollars in total commercial value, with losses stemming not only from broadcast rights but also from associated advertising and matchday revenues. A boycott would likely have triggered contract penalties and rebates under existing media and sponsorship deals, further amplifying the financial



fallout.

After several days of intense negotiations involving the International Cricket Council (ICC), the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and other cricket boards, Pakistan agreed to field its team for the scheduled February 15 match in Colombo. Reports indicate

that this U-turn saved an estimated ₹1,460 crore (around \$174 million) that might otherwise have been lost if the fixture had been dropped. This figure includes potential losses from broadcasters, sponsors and other commercial partners who depend on the India-Pakistan

match's enormous global viewership and advertising pull.

The fixture is widely regarded as the marquee game of the tournament — drawing peak audiences across television, digital platforms and social media — and is central to the financial health of the

World Cup cycle. Its reinstatement ensures that contractual obligations with major rights holders remain intact and that the tournament's broader economic model stays on track.

Pakistan's reversal also eased pressure on the ICC's broader commercial framework, which relies heavily on marquee matchups to sustain high-value deals. For smaller cricket boards that depend on revenue distributions from global events, preserving the full schedule of high-profile matches is critical for financial stability and long-term development.

Overall, the decision by Pakistan to honour the India fixture not only upheld the integrity of the World Cup schedule but also safeguarded a significant portion of the tournament's projected revenue — a financial outcome that resonates far beyond the match itself.

## India Frustrated With World Cup Pitch in Match Against USA

The Indian cricket team has reportedly expressed displeasure with the pitch used in their T20 World Cup 2026 match against the United States of America, with sources saying team management felt the surface did not play in line with their expectations. India's opener was held to a competitive but modest total and the unfamiliar behaviour of the pitch became a talking point after the match.

India's campaign got off to a challenging start in their opening World Cup fixture, where they posted a score that was below their usual expectations at a venue traditionally seen as batting-friendly. What made the game tougher was a surface that offered assistance to bowlers and variable bounce, making run-scoring more difficult than anticipated. This prompted the team's support staff to raise concerns with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) about the nature of the wicket.

Usually, Indian batting lineups relish flat, high-scoring wickets where batsmen can play freely. In this encounter, however, the unexpected grip



and turn on the surface required the players to alter their customary approach, forcing more cautious and adaptive batting than initially planned. This adjustment was highlighted by the early collapse and the need for a strong recovery from middle-order batters.

Despite the tricky wicket, India managed to recover and secure a victory over the USA, thanks to key contributions from senior players who adapted to the conditions. But within the dressing room and among team strategists, there was a sense that the pitch did not suit India's preferred style of play — especially in a match they would typically expect to dominate comfortably.

Analysts suggest that

while pitch conditions are always part of international cricket and teams must adjust, the specific behaviour of this surface caught them off guard. The Indian management's feedback to the board appears to reflect a desire for more predictable or standard conditions for future matches in the tournament.

As the World Cup progresses, India will be looking for surfaces that better align with their aggressive batting strengths, while continuing to prepare strategies for varying pitches. In the meantime, the team's response to unfamiliar conditions — and its ability to adapt successfully — will remain key talking points in their quest for T20 World Cup glory.

## Buttler Says Cricket Trails Other Sports as England Uses Walkie-Talkies in T20 World Cup

England's senior batter Jos Buttler has playfully acknowledged that cricket is still catching up with other sports in how teams communicate with players on the field, after a notable moment in the ongoing T20 World Cup 2026.

During England's match against Nepal, head coach Brendon McCullum was seen using a walkie-talkie to send messages to captain Harry Brook during a drinks break, drawing plenty of attention from fans and commentators. Buttler commented on the incident, suggesting that cricket as a sport hasn't traditionally adopted real-time coaching communication to the same extent as some other major sports.

Buttler pointed out that in sports like Formula 1, teams regularly relay technical and strategic information directly to drivers via radio, and in games such as football and rugby, managers can communicate with players in real time from the sidelines. In contrast, cricket has typically kept on-field communication between players themselves, with coaches having limited direct influence once a match begins.



The England batter also defended McCullum's approach and described the practice as part of evolving tactics in the modern game. He emphasised that McCullum, despite a relaxed outward demeanour, is a very sharp coach who remains deeply engaged in match strategy, and the walkie-talkie exchange was simply a way to relay helpful information in a tightly contested game.

Buttler reflected that as cricket continues to adapt with technology and strategic innovation — such as seen in franchise T20 leagues — more direct forms of communication between coaching staff and players could become more common in the future.

Overall, his remarks suggest a view that cricket, while rich in tradition, is gradually embracing new methods to keep pace with other professional sports in how tactical insights and decisions are communicated during high-pressure matches.

## Pakistan's T20 World Cup U-Turn Sparks Meme Frenzy Across Social Media



Pakistan's sudden reversal on playing India at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 has triggered a wave of memes and online jokes, with social media users seizing on what they see as a dramatic flip-flop by the Pakistan Cricket Board.

The controversy began after Pakistan signalled that it might boycott its high-profile World Cup match against India, citing broader political and security concerns linked to regional developments. The possibility of Pakistan pulling out of the marquee clash — one of the most watched and commercially valuable fixtures in world cricket — immediately drew global attention.

However, within days, Pakistan backed down from its earlier stance and confirmed that it would play the match as scheduled at a neutral venue. The reversal ended the uncertainty surrounding the game but opened the floodgates for online ridicule.

As soon as the decision was announced, social media platforms were flooded with memes, sarcastic posts and humorous videos mocking Pakistan's change of position. Many users portrayed the move as a reluctant surrender to cricketing and financial realities, while others joked about the contrast between

initial tough talk and the eventual agreement to play.

Indian fans, in particular, were quick to join the meme fest, sharing pop-culture references, movie clips and tongue-in-cheek captions highlighting the sudden U-turn. Several former cricketers and well-known online personalities also weighed in with playful jabs, further amplifying the viral moment.

The memes ranged from light-hearted rivalry humour to sharp satire aimed at cricket administration and decision-making. While some posts focused purely on entertainment, others pointed out how difficult it is for any team to walk away from an India-Pakistan match given its massive global audience and commercial significance.

Despite the online trolling, the resolution ensures that fans will once again witness one of cricket's most intense rivalries on the world stage. With the match now confirmed, attention is shifting back to on-field action — even as the memes continue to circulate.

The episode once again underlines how cricket decisions in the subcontinent rarely stay confined to boardrooms, quickly spilling into politics, public debate and, inevitably, the internet's humour machine.

## Why Mohammed Shami and Sarfaraz Khan Were Left Out of BCCI Central Contracts



The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) recently announced its central contract list for the 2025-26 season, and among the notable absentees were fast bowler Mohammed Shami and batsman Sarfaraz Khan, along with a few other familiar names. Their omission has sparked discussion among fans and pundits about the reasons behind the decision.

### Main Reason: Lack of International Appearances

The primary reason both Shami and Sarfaraz were excluded from this contract cycle is straightforward: neither player featured in an international match during the relevant evaluation period. The BCCI's contract policy heavily factors in a player's recent participation and performance across formats. Since both Shami and Sarfaraz did not play internationally in the past cycle, they did not meet the criteria for retainership.

Shami, a veteran pacer who was previously part of India's senior setup and played a key role in earlier campaigns, has been absent from national selection since the 2025 Champions Trophy. Injuries and lack of fitness opportunities at the highest level kept him out of the team, and without recent international appearances, he was not included in the central contracts list.

Similarly, Sarfaraz Khan — despite showing promise and earning selection in past squads — did not play a match for India in the period under review. Although he was part

of the touring squad for Australia, he did not get game time, and this absence from match participation ultimately affected his eligibility for a contract.

### Contract List Overhaul and Selection Focus

The latest central contract list also saw structural changes, including the removal of the top-tier category and a trimming of the overall retained player list. This has put greater emphasis on current availability, playing time and performance in international fixtures as key determinants for contract awards.

Under the updated structure, players who have maintained consistent involvement across formats and recent matches were prioritized, while those without appearances — regardless of their past achievements — were omitted. This explains why figures like Shami and Sarfaraz, both of whom have long-standing reputations, missed out this time.

### Looking Ahead

Being left out of the central contracts does not permanently rule out a player's return. Continued strong performances in domestic cricket or a return to international duty could prompt future reconsideration. But for this particular contract cycle, availability and active participation in India's international schedule were decisive factors in determining who made the cut — and who didn't.

## Nikhil Siddhartha's Swayambhu Explores the Ancient Legacy of the Sengol



Actor Nikhil Siddhartha has shared intriguing insights about his upcoming period drama Swayambhu, revealing that the film's core narrative revolves around the Sengol, a powerful symbol deeply rooted in Indian history and mythology. The actor said the story draws inspiration from the Sengol's rich legacy, which traces back to Lord Ram and represents righteous rule, justice, and dharma.

Speaking about the film, Nikhil explained that while the Sengol has recently come into public discussion, its origins are far more ancient and significant. According to traditional lore, the Sengol was first associated with Lord Ram and later passed down through generations as a symbol of moral governance. Over time, it became an important emblem in powerful dynasties, especially during the Chola reign, signifying authority balanced with responsibility and fairness. Swayambhu uses this historical and cultural foundation to build a fictional yet emotionally

grounded cinematic narrative.

Directed by Bharat Krishnamachari, Swayambhu is being mounted on a grand scale and is designed as a high-budget period action drama with strong mythological and historical undertones. The film aims to blend intense drama, action, and emotion while staying rooted in Indian cultural values. Nikhil stated that the story is not just about power or warfare but about the philosophy behind leadership and the consequences of deviating from righteousness.

The film is produced by Bhuvan and Shreekar under the Pixel Studios banner and is planned as a pan-India release, reflecting the universal appeal of its theme. The makers are leaving no stone unturned in recreating the period authentically, with detailed production design, costumes, and large-scale visuals playing a crucial role in the storytelling. The technical team is said to be working extensively to ensure that the world of Swayambhu feels immersive and visually striking.

Adding to the excitement, the makers have announced a grand teaser launch event scheduled for February 11, to be held simultaneously in two major cities. This unique promotional strategy underlines the confidence the team has in the film and its content. The teaser is expected to offer a glimpse into the film's epic scale, intense conflicts, and the central role played by the Sengol in shaping the narrative.

With a planned worldwide theatrical release on April 10, 2026, Swayambhu is emerging as one of Nikhil Siddhartha's most ambitious projects to date. Given the actor's track record of choosing distinctive scripts and the film's strong historical foundation, expectations are high.

As audiences show growing interest in stories rooted in Indian history and mythology, Swayambhu promises to deliver a powerful cinematic experience that combines spectacle with substance, anchored by the timeless symbolism of the Sengol.

## Anil Ravipudi Breaks Silence on Rumours Surrounding His Upcoming Film Projects

Tollywood director Anil Ravipudi has addressed swirling rumours about his upcoming film ventures, especially speculation linking him to certain high-profile projects. The filmmaker, known for delivering consistent box office successes, recently spoke to the media while promoting his current work, offering clarity on his involvement and expectations as rumours circulate.

At the centre of recent chatter has been the much-talked-about Tamil film Jana Nayagan, starring Vijay, which some fans speculated might be a remake of Ravipudi's acclaimed Telugu film Bhagavanth Kesari. Instead of fueling speculation, Ravipudi maintained a diplomatic stance, saying he hasn't seen the final version and that it's best to treat Jana Nayagan as Vijay's own project until the film releases. He stressed the importance of judging the movie on its own merit, rather than labelling it a remake before audiences get a chance to watch it. His measured response reflects a professional courtesy toward fellow filmmakers and avoids unnecessary comparisons before audiences have seen the final product.

Ravipudi's remarks also come amid the success of his recent films. Having delivered multiple hits at the box office, he continues to be one of Telugu cinema's most bankable directors.



While he remains grounded despite his track record, he also emphasises the importance of clear communication when addressing rumours—especially those that link him to projects he isn't directly part of or details that aren't yet confirmed.

Beyond addressing rumours, Ravipudi's recent public interactions show his active engagement with the industry and his peers. Whether commenting playfully at events or offering thoughtful takes during press meets, he appears committed to staying connected with both media and fans without over-hyping unverified reports. Meanwhile, Ravipudi's

slate remains busy. He continues to develop new ideas and collaborations, riding the momentum of his recent successes and keeping audiences intrigued about his next moves. By responding to speculation with clarity rather than dismissal, he reinforces his reputation as a seasoned filmmaker who balances creativity with professionalism—even when faced with rampant internet buzz.

With fans eagerly awaiting updates on his future projects, Ravipudi's balanced approach to rumours sets a tone of respect for cinema and audiences alike, while keeping the focus on the work itself rather than unverified hearsay.

## Santosh Soban Promises an Engaging Romantic Journey with Couple Friendly

Actor Santosh Soban expressed strong confidence in his upcoming romantic musical Couple Friendly, calling it an engaging and emotionally rich journey of its lead characters, Shiva and Mitra. Speaking at the film's pre-release press meet held in Hyderabad, the actor said audiences would connect deeply with the story once they experience it on the big screen.

Couple Friendly stars Santosh Soban and Manasa Varanasi in the lead roles and is directed by Ashwin Chandrasekhar. The film is produced under the banner of UV Concepts and presented by the prestigious UV Creations, with Ajay Kumar Raju P. serving as co-producer. The film is set for a grand bilingual release in Telugu and Tamil on February 14, coinciding with Valentine's Day. Producer and distributor Dheeraj Mogilineni is releasing the film across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Addressing media queries, Dheeraj Mogilineni clarified the controversy surrounding the film's title and certification. He explained that while the censor board suggested a title change, the team decided to retain Couple Friendly as all promotions were already completed. This resulted in an A certificate in Telugu, though the Tamil version received a UA certificate. Dheeraj strongly dismissed rumours of adult content, stating that the film is



a clean love story rooted in family values. He added that the narrative features strong family characters and can be enjoyed by audiences of all age groups. Expressing confidence in the lead pair, he said the film would mark a major turning point in Santosh Soban's career and praised Manasa Varanasi for her committed performance. He also revealed that special premieres are planned in major cities a day ahead of release.

Manasa Varanasi shared her excitement over the positive response to the trailer and spoke about the effort that went into

adapting the Tamil script into Telugu without losing its rhythm. She highlighted the strong sense of teamwork on the project and said the film taught her the true meaning of collaborative filmmaking. She urged audiences to watch the film in theatres and witness the sincerity behind the performances.

Santosh Soban noted the overwhelming support the film has received during promotions and said the story's emotional core has been intentionally kept under wraps. He described Couple Friendly as a journey

that explores how Shiva's life transforms after meeting Mitra and the extent to which he goes for love. Calling the title perfectly suited to the story, he said the film's true essence can only be experienced in theatres. He also expressed gratitude to Prabhas for sharing the trailer, calling it a gesture of pure encouragement.

With music by Aditya Ravindran and cinematography by Dinesh Purushothaman, Couple Friendly is positioned as a heartfelt romantic entertainer aimed at Valentine's Day audiences.

## "Nawab Cafe" Set for February 20 Release, Team Expresses Confidence



The upcoming Telugu film Nawab Cafe is gearing up for its theatrical release on February 20, with the makers expressing strong confidence

that the film will strike an emotional chord with audiences. A grand press meet was held recently, where the cast and crew interacted with the me-

dia and shared insights into the journey behind the film.

Nawab Cafe stars Shiva Kandukuri, Rajeev Kanakala, and Teju Ashwini in lead roles. The film is produced under the Harshika Productions banner by Radha V Papudippu, with Venkat R Papadippu serving as co-producer. Written and directed by Pramod Harsha, the film promises a heartfelt narrative rooted in sincerity and real-life emotions.

Speaking at the event, hero Shiva Kandukuri revealed that the film was initially titled Chai Wala. He explained that while the team worked extensively under the original title, they later decided to rename the film Nawab Cafe in adherence to censor guidelines. Interestingly, Shiva shared that director Pramod Harsha had always envisioned Nawab Cafe as the story's true title, even from the scripting stage. Calling it a matter of destiny, Shiva

said the final title perfectly reflects the soul and essence of the film.

Shiva emphasized that despite facing challenges related to the title change and censor concerns, the producers never compromised on their vision. He described Nawab Cafe as a film made with honesty and emotional depth, expressing confidence that it would resonate with audiences across all sections. "After watching this film, people will feel the urge to call their fathers and share their emotions," he said, hinting at the film's strong emotional core.

Producer Venkat R Papadippu clarified that there was no official directive forcing a title change, but discussions with the censor authorities made it clear that the earlier title could not be used. After considering multiple alternatives, the team unanimously finalized Nawab Cafe. He expressed hope that audiences and the media would extend the same

support to the new title as well.

Director Pramod Harsha shared that the story is inspired by incidents he has personally witnessed and experienced. He reiterated that the title change was made in full respect of censor rules and urged the media to help take Nawab Cafe to a wider audience.

Heroine Teju Ashwini, making her debut with this film, said that content ultimately matters more than the title. She expressed optimism that audiences would embrace the film and called the journey a test of faith that has strengthened the team's resolve.

With music by Prashanth R Vihari, cinematography by Kranti Varl, and a strong supporting cast including Rajkumar Kasireddy and Chaitanya Krishna, Nawab Cafe is poised to offer an emotionally engaging cinematic experience when it hits theatres on February 20.

## Ravi Babu Completes Shooting of Razor, Power-Packed Glimpse Unveiled

Actor and filmmaker Ravi Babu has completed the shooting of his upcoming Telugu film Razor, and the makers have released an intense glimpse that has created strong buzz among movie lovers. Known for his bold choices and unconventional storytelling, Ravi Babu appears in a fierce and raw avatar in this action-packed project, which promises to be a gritty cinematic experience.

The recently released glimpse gives a clear indication that Razor will be high on violence, intensity, and dark emotions. Ravi Babu is seen in an aggressive mode, delivering brutal action with striking visuals. The glimpse establishes the film's hard-hitting tone and suggests that the story revolves around harsh realities, justice, and revenge. The tagline and visuals together hint that the film will explore a darker side of human na-

ture, staying true to its title.

Razor marks another ambitious venture for Ravi Babu, who is not only playing the lead role but also directing the film. Over the years, he has carved a niche for himself by experimenting with different genres and presenting stories that stand apart from mainstream cinema. With Razor, he seems to be pushing boundaries further by attempting a raw action thriller that is expected to be unlike anything he has done before.

The film is backed by a strong technical team that aims to elevate the intense narrative with striking cinematography, impactful background score, and realistic action sequences. The visuals showcased in the glimpse indicate a gritty color palette and a grounded treatment, adding to the realism of the film. The action choreography appears to be designed to



feel brutal and organic rather than stylized, enhancing the overall impact.

With the shooting now wrapped up, Razor has entered the post-production phase. The team is currently working on editing, sound design, and music, with plans to deliver a technically polished and emotionally charged film. The mak-

ers are expected to announce the release date soon, and expectations are that the film will hit theatres later this year.

The glimpse has already sparked curiosity and discussions among fans and film circles, with many praising Ravi Babu's intense transformation and daring approach. Given his reputation for presenting

thought-provoking and unconventional cinema, Razor is being seen as one of the most intriguing upcoming Telugu films.

As anticipation builds, audiences are eager to see how Ravi Babu blends raw action with storytelling depth in Razor, which promises to be a bold and uncompromising cinematic experience.