



**BUZZ POINTS**

**Morgan Stanley Sees Big Upside in Reliance Industries on AI Investment Push**



# TRUE POINT

PRGI REGISTRATION NO. "TGENG/25/A2485"

HYDERABAD | VOL-1 | ISSUE-75 | 21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2026 | SATURDAY | PAGES 12 | PRICE: ₹ 5 PUBLISHED FROM: VIJAYAWADA • HYDERABAD • DELHI • BENGALURU

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*Seethakka Unveils 'Goddess of Folk' - Sammakka Saralamma Jatara' Coffee Table Book*



PAGE 02

*CM Cup 2026 Kicks Off at Gachibowli, Vakiti Srihari Felicitates Athletes*



PAGE 02

*AICC Praise for Revanth Govt a Matter of Pride: TPCC Leader Dayakar*

PAGE 03

*Quthbullapur Youth Eyes Everest Dream*

PAGE 04

## Revanth Reddy Calls for National AI Leadership at India-AI Summit

New Delhi, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Te l a n g a n a Chief Minister Revanth Reddy delivered the keynote address at the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 held at Bharat Mandapam, outlining an ambitious roadmap for India to emerge as a global leader in artificial intelligence.

Addressing policymakers, global technology experts, innovators and industry leaders, the Chief Minister described artificial intelligence as "mankind's greatest invention," calling the current phase a transformational moment comparable to the discovery of fire, the invention of the wheel and the Industrial Revolution. He congratulated the Government of India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister for Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnav for organising the summit.

He emphasised that AI represents not merely technological progress but a fundamental shift in human capability, combining intelligence, autonomy and decision-making power. While earlier innovations enhanced human physical strength, he said AI challenges intel-



lectual supremacy and, when integrated with robotics, creates systems with both cognitive and physical abilities.

### Call for National AI Strategy

Highlighting the need for decisive action, the Chief Minister said India must not miss the AI revolution as it did earlier industrial transformations. He noted that although India excelled in services and software, it must now transition from being primarily a user of global platforms to becoming a creator and owner of core AI technologies.

He urged India to lead across the full AI value chain, including GPU chip manufacturing, green energy and data storage, core platforms and languages, and AI-driven applications and

### Key Proposals

The Chief Minister proposed establishing a National AI War Room with participation from both the Centre and states to monitor rapid technological developments, adding that Hyderabad is ready to host such an initiative if approved. He also called for a world-class AI University with campuses across the country to drive original research.

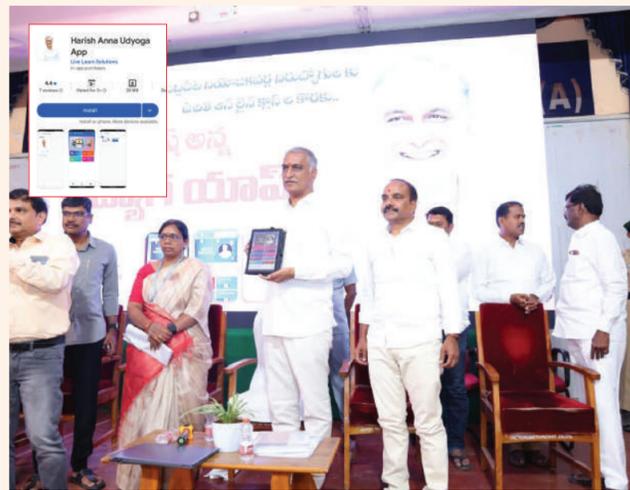
Among other recommendations were accelerating domestic GPU manufacturing, integrating India into the global AI supply chain, assessing job displacement risks, investing heavily in re-skilling programmes, and creating a National AI Fund to support start-ups and youth innovation. He

also proposed setting up an AI Start-up Village in Telangana to serve as a national innovation hub.

### Governance Framework

To ensure effective oversight, the Chief Minister advocated establishing an India AI Council, similar to the GST Council or NITI Aayog, along with a dedicated AI Ministry to frame regulations, prevent misuse and promote ethical deployment for social justice and poverty alleviation.

Concluding his address, Revanth Reddy invited global institutions and industry leaders to collaborate with Telangana in advancing AI innovation, positioning the state as a key partner in India's digital future.



## Harish Rao Launches Free 'Udyoga App' for Siddipet Youth

Siddipet, February 20 | TPN Bureau

F ormer minister and MLA T. Harish Rao on Thursday launched the free online coaching platform "Harish Anna Udyoga App" aimed at helping youth in Siddipet prepare for competitive examinations and secure employment opportunities.

Speaking after inaugurating the initiative, Harish Rao said the app was designed to provide high-quality coaching at no cost, easing the financial burden on students who otherwise spend significant amounts on private coaching in cities like Hyderabad. He described the platform as a "game changer" that could boost confidence among aspirants and help them plan their preparation more effectively.

The MLA emphasised that Siddipet had been transformed into a major educational hub with the establishment of multiple institutions, including

medical, paramedical and nursing colleges, along with an IT Tower generating local employment. He said the region's growth in education and infrastructure was part of a broader vision to create opportunities closer to home for young people.

Encouraging students to aim higher, Harish Rao said youth should not limit themselves to seeking jobs but strive to become entrepreneurs who create employment for others. He urged them to avoid distractions such as excessive mobile phone usage and focus on disciplined study, noting that a year of dedicated effort could significantly change their future.

Highlighting inspiring examples, he said children from modest backgrounds—including those of tailors and auto drivers—had gone on to secure medical seats and pursue professional careers, proving that determination and hard work can overcome economic barriers. He stressed that poverty should never be seen

as a limitation and called on students to compete confidently in an increasingly competitive world.

The former minister also recalled his association with the Government Degree College in Siddipet, noting its historical significance and contribution to public life. He praised faculty and staff for their role in maintaining academic standards and nurturing talent over the years.

Harish Rao said the app would offer structured preparation, guidance and resources tailored for government job aspirants. He urged students to make full use of the platform, saying consistent effort and a clear strategy were key to success rather than the number of years spent preparing.

Concluding his address, he expressed hope that the initiative would empower youth across Siddipet to achieve their career goals and build a better future, while also contributing to the region's continued progress.

## Sridhar Babu Says Telangana to Become Model for Digital Governance

New Delhi, February 20 | TPN Bureau

T el a n g a n a IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu on Friday said the State is striving to emerge as a national model for digital governance by harnessing advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, quantum computing and blockchain.

Speaking at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 held at Bharat Mandapam, the minister emphasised that technology is being positioned as a core driver of transformation under the State's long-term Telangana Rising 2047 vision. He noted that the government is actively integrating digital tools with public services to improve efficiency, transparency and accessibility for citizens.

Sridhar Babu said the administration is focused on bridging the gap between the government and the public through technology-enabled govern-



ance, ensuring faster service delivery and better responsiveness. He highlighted that digital transformation is not only about innovation but also about making governance more inclusive and citizen-centric.

Listing key initiatives, the minister pointed to ambitious projects such as Bharat Future City, AI City, AI University, AI-KAM, the AI-driven Telangana

Digital Exchange, and Bhu Bharati, which are designed to strengthen the State's digital ecosystem. According to him, these initiatives collectively aim to build robust digital infrastructure while enabling data-driven decision-making across departments.

Emphasising inclusive innovation, Sridhar Babu said the government is exploring the

use of Agentic AI to ensure that technological advancements benefit all sections of society, particularly marginalised communities. He added that the focus is on responsible adoption of emerging technologies to maximise public good while maintaining ethical standards.

The minister further stated that Telangana is expanding the use of digital technologies across multiple sectors, including agriculture, climate resilience, healthcare, sustainable urban development, clean energy and disaster management. He said these efforts are intended to build a resilient and future-ready economy capable of addressing complex challenges.

Concluding his remarks, Sridhar Babu reiterated that Telangana's goal is not just to adopt new technologies but to lead in digital governance innovation, setting benchmarks for other States to follow while ensuring that growth remains inclusive and sustainable.

## Tummala Nageswara Rao Highlights Telangana Agri-Tech at Global AI Summit

New Delhi, February 20 | TPN Bureau

T el a n g a n a 's growing leadership in technology-driven agriculture received international recognition at the India AI Impact Summit held at Bharat Mandapam, with Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao stating that the State continues to remain at the forefront of integrating technology into farming.

The minister said it was a matter of pride that Telangana's digital agriculture initiatives and technological innovations were discussed on a global platform, drawing appreciation from international experts, including a German agricultural counsellor. He credited the forward-looking vision of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for accelerating technology-led reforms in the agriculture sector.

The discussion took place during a high-level session on "Standards & Policy Pathways for Scaling AI-Enabled, Farmer-Centric Agri-food Systems," jointly organised by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Germany's Fraunhofer Heinrich Hertz Institute. Global policymakers, scientists and industry experts deliberated on governance frameworks, standards and the adoption of farmer-centric AI solutions.

Experts noted that challenges such as fragmented farmer identification systems, inconsistencies in land



records, lack of interoperability between platforms and scattered advisory services have slowed agricultural digitalisation. They emphasised the need for a comprehensive Digital Farm Infrastructure (DFI) built on common standards to enable seamless integration of services.

During the session, Telangana's ACRAT (Accelerating Climate-Resilient Agriculture in Telangana) project was highlighted as a model initiative. Implemented through collaboration between the Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University, the AgHub Foundation and global partners, the project integrates farmer registries, land data, crop information, scientific advisories and market interfaces on a unified digital platform aligned with international standards.

Speaking after the session, the minister

said Telangana has already introduced several technology-based interventions, including mobile fertiliser booking systems, satellite mapping, IoT sensors, crop forecasting tools and weather-based advisory services to support farmers. He added that a pilot programme using satellite imagery to detect soil nutrients and analyse them through AI modelling is underway and will soon be scaled up across the State to provide precise soil insights and crop recommendations.

Reiterating that Telangana's experience can serve as a blueprint for both India and the world, Tummala said the State will continue to lead in technology-enabled agricultural reforms, aiming to improve productivity, sustainability and farmer incomes while building a resilient agri-ecosystem for the future.

## Court Returns Charge Sheet in Sandhya Theatre Stampede Case

Hyderabad, Feb 20 | TPN Bureau

A city court has returned the charge sheet filed in connection with the stampede incident at Sandhya Theatre, bringing renewed focus to the case linked to actor Allu Arjun.

The incident dates back to December 2024, when a massive crowd gathered at the theatre during a special screening event of the blockbuster Pushpa 2: The Rule. The overwhelming turnout led to chaos and a stampede outside the venue, resulting in the death of a woman and serious injuries to a child. The tragedy sparked widespread concern over

crowd management and safety arrangements at high-profile film events. Following the incident, police registered cases against several parties, including members associated with the event's organisation, theatre management and security staff. Investigators later filed a charge sheet detailing the sequence of events, alleged lapses in crowd control measures and the roles of those involved.

However, during a recent hearing, the court returned the charge sheet, reportedly pointing out procedural deficiencies and asking investigators to address them before resubmitting the document. Legal experts note that such returns are not uncommon

and typically occur when courts seek additional clarity, corrections or supporting material to ensure the case proceeds on solid legal grounds.

The development is expected to delay the next stage of the judicial process, as authorities will now review the court's observations and revise the report accordingly. Officials have not disclosed specific details of the shortcomings but indicated that the required corrections will be made.

The stampede had triggered intense public debate at the time, with discussions focusing on the responsibilities of event organisers, security preparedness and the need for stricter enforcement



of safety norms during celebrity appearances. In the aftermath, city authorities also reviewed guidelines for managing large gatherings at theatres and public venues.

Meanwhile, the case continues to draw attention given its legal and public safety implications. Once the revised

charge sheet is filed and accepted, the court is expected to proceed with further hearings.

Investigators are currently working on incorporating the necessary changes, and further developments are anticipated in the coming weeks as the legal process moves forward.

## CM Cup 2026 Kicks Off at Gachibowli, Vakiti Srihari Felicitates Athletes



Gachibowli Stadium, February 20 | TPN Bureau

The second edition of the CM Cup 2026 was inaugurated with grandeur at Gachibowli Stadium on Friday, with Telangana Minister for Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries, Youth Services and Sports Vakiti Srihari leading the opening ceremony and felicitating distinguished athletes.

During the event, the Minister honoured medal-winning athletes associated with the National Masters Athletes Association who have achieved international, national and state-level recognition across various disciplines. He lauded their dedication and perseverance, noting that athletes aged between 30 and over 70 years had brought laurels to both India and Telangana on global platforms.

Vakiti Srihari urged the younger generation to draw inspiration from these athletes, emphasising that their achievements demonstrate how discipline, commitment and passion for sports can lead to excellence at any stage of life. He said the government remains committed to promoting sports culture and providing opportunities for athletes across age groups.

The inauguration ceremony witnessed the presence of Shivasena Reddy, Chairman of the

State Sports Authority, and Sony Bala Devi, Managing Director of the Sports Authority, along with senior officials from the sports department.

The programme began with the rendition of the national song "Vande Mataram" followed by the Telangana state song "Jayahe Telangana," formally marking the commencement of the CM Cup 2026 celebrations. The ceremony reflected a strong sense of sporting spirit and cultural pride.

A ceremonial march-past by students representing schools and colleges from all 33 districts of Telangana added colour to the occasion. The Minister received the guard of honour, acknowledging the enthusiasm and participation of young athletes who turned up in large numbers for the event.

Officials said the CM Cup aims to identify and nurture sporting talent at grassroots level while encouraging youth participation in competitive sports. The tournament is expected to host multiple sporting disciplines and provide a platform for emerging athletes to showcase their skills.

## Oil Palm Expansion to Boost Farmers' Incomes: Tummala



Kamareddy, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao on Friday said oil palm cultivation is set to usher in a new phase of prosperity for farmers in the State, as the government intensifies efforts to expand the crop's coverage.

The minister was speaking after participating as chief guest in a mega oil palm plantation programme held at Palvancha Marri village in Palvancha mandal of Kamareddy district. The initiative was organised jointly by the Horticulture Department and Hindustan Unilever Limited. Tummala planted oil palm saplings in a six-and-a-half-acre farm belonging to local farmer Singireddy Balaram to mark the occasion.

Addressing farmers, the minister said oil palm offers long-term financial security compared to traditional crops, which often expose cultivators to losses due to fluctuating market prices and climatic uncertainties. He noted that for India to achieve self-sufficiency in palm oil production, nearly 70 lakh acres must be brought under oil palm cultivation nationwide.

According to the minister, oil palm is currently grown on about 2.88 lakh acres in Telangana. Since the present government assumed office, as many as 32,923 farmers have taken up the crop across 1,05,455 acres. For the current financial year, the State has allocated ₹456 crore to expand cultivation to 1.25 lakh acres.

Tummala said two processing mills are already operational in

Bhadradri Kothagudem district under Oil Fed, while a new factory in Narmetta of Siddipet district has been completed and will soon become operational. He added that farmers can earn additional income by cultivating intercrops during the initial years, as oil palm begins yielding in about four years and can provide returns for 30 to 40 years.

The minister also highlighted government incentives, stating that farmers taking up oil palm cultivation are being provided saplings, fertilisers and drip irrigation facilities on subsidy. A financial assistance of ₹51,000 per acre is being extended, he said, urging farmers to take advantage of the scheme. He estimated that farmers could earn up to ₹2 lakh per acre annually once the crop stabilises, noting that the crop also offers assured market support.

Telangana Agriculture Advisor and Banswada MLA Pocharam Srinivas Reddy called upon farmers in Kamareddy district to emulate Khammam and Kothagudem districts in expanding oil palm cultivation.

Representing the company, Varun Mehta of Hindustan Unilever said the firm is extending full support in cultivation and marketing and is offering an additional ₹5,000 incentive towards drip irrigation support.

Officials from the Horticulture Department, district administration and company representatives were present at the programme, which drew participation from a large number of farmers from the region.

# T. Harish Rao Slams Government Over Farmers' Urea Shortage

Hyderabad, February 20, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Senior BRS leader and former minister T. Harish Rao on Thursday launched a sharp attack on the state government over the ongoing difficulties faced by farmers in accessing urea, accusing the administration of adopting "impractical and insensitive" policies.

Addressing the media, Harish Rao alleged that the government's decision to distribute urea through a mobile application instead of conventional retail channels has created widespread hardship, particularly among small and marginal farmers. He questioned whether the distress calls of farmers were reaching Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, saying the policy had failed to account for ground realities.

The former minister said the situation was not limited to a single region but was visible across the state, citing Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district as one of the areas where farmers were reportedly struggling to secure fertilizer supplies. According to him, the scenes of farmers waiting in long queues were reminiscent of earlier shortages, contradicting the government's claims of reform and improved delivery systems.

Harish Rao also highlighted the digital divide in



rural areas, arguing that lakhs of farmers either do not own smartphones or are unfamiliar with app-

based systems. Implementing such a mechanism without adequate infrastructure and awareness, he said, re-

fects a lack of sensitivity toward the farming community. He added that the issue has triggered anger

among cultivators, who depend on timely fertilizer availability during the crop season.

Demanding immediate corrective steps, the BRS leader urged the government to scrap the app-based distribution model and restore the earlier system of supplying urea through fertilizer shops without restrictive conditions. He said ensuring uninterrupted fertilizer supply is crucial to protect crop yields and farmers' incomes.

Harish Rao further warned that if the government fails to respond swiftly, protests could intensify across Telangana, as frustration among farmers continues to grow. He called on the administration to engage directly with farmer groups and agricultural experts to design a more practical distribution framework.

The remarks have added fresh political heat to the fertilizer supply issue, with the government yet to issue a detailed response. The controversy is expected to remain a key talking point in the state's political discourse in the coming days, as farmer organisations and opposition parties continue to press for policy changes.

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## Seethakka Unveils 'Goddess of Folk – Sammakka Saralamma Jatara' Coffee Table Book

Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

A coffee table book titled "Goddess of Folk – Sammakka Saralamma Jatara" was unveiled at Praja Bhavan on Thursday, celebrating the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of the iconic Medaram tribal festival. The launch ceremony was attended by prominent dignitaries, retired civil servants, and cultural enthusiasts, highlighting the importance of documenting Telangana's living traditions.

Minister Seethakka, who attended the event as the chief guest, formally released the book and commended the efforts behind its creation. She congratulated the Kakatiya Heritage Trust for compiling a visually compelling publication that preserves the essence of the Sammakka Saralamma Jatara, one of the largest tribal congregations in the world. She noted that such initiatives play a vital role in safeguarding indig-

enous history and passing it on to future generations.

The coffee table book stands out for its rare and evocative photographs capturing the vibrant rituals, devotional fervour, and cultural diversity witnessed during the Medaram Jatara. From the sea of devotees to the sacred ceremonies performed deep in the forest region, the visuals present a powerful narrative of faith and community spirit. Organisers said the publication aims to serve both as a collector's edition and a reference document for scholars, students, and cultural historians.

In her address, the minister emphasised that the Sammakka Saralamma tradition represents the identity and pride of Telangana's tribal communities. She said documenting such festivals not only honours their legacy but also helps introduce the richness of folk culture to a wider audience at national and international levels.



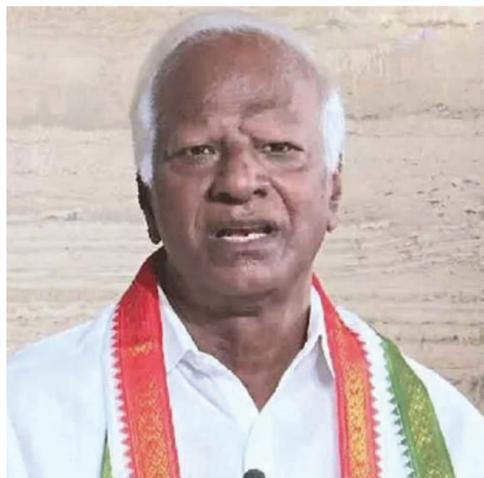
Several retired IAS and IPS officers, along with noted cultural figures, attended the programme and appreciated the initiative. Speakers highlighted that the book will contribute to greater awareness about the historical and social significance of the festival, which symbolises resistance, cour-

age, and devotion. Seethakka also praised the photographers whose work forms the heart of the publication, acknowledging their dedication in capturing rare moments from the Jatara. As a gesture of appreciation, members of the heritage trust and photographers were felicitated

with shawls during the ceremony.

Organisers expressed hope that the book will inspire more efforts to document Telangana's folk traditions and ensure that the stories of its people continue to be celebrated and preserved for generations to come.

## BRS Leaders Criticise Kadiyam Srihari at Telangana Bhavan



Hyderabad | TPN Bureau

Leaders of the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) on Thursday launched a sharp political attack on Kadiyam Srihari during a press interaction held at Telangana Bhavan, accusing him of opportunistic politics and betrayal of party leadership.

Former MLA Nannapaneni Narender alleged that Srihari's recent remarks against BRS leadership were inconsistent with his own political journey, claiming he had benefited from key positions in the past. Narender said the party cadre and supporters were closely watching the



developments and demanded that Srihari clarify his stand before the public. Several speakers at the briefing accused the senior leader of frequently switching political loyalties and questioned his criticism of former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR). They asserted that KCR had

played a major role in Srihari's political rise, citing his appointments to prominent posts over the years. The leaders also took exception to Srihari's comments on the current government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, alleging that his statements were politically motivated.

They called on him to "respect the mandate" and accused him of undermining party workers.

BRS representatives Kommula Narender and Bommera Rammurthy echoed similar sentiments, saying Srihari should apologise to party leadership for his remarks. They also urged him to resign from his legislative position if he wished to pursue a different political path, stating that ideological clarity was important in public life.

Throughout the interaction, speakers emphasised loyalty to party leadership and highlighted what they described as the BRS government's contributions to Telangana's development. They said the party would continue to counter criticism politically and take its message to the people.

The episode reflects intensifying political exchanges in Telangana as parties sharpen their rhetoric ahead of future electoral battles, with both sides seeking to consolidate their support bases.

## BRSV Protest Against Arrest of Balka Suman



Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Protests broke out at Osmania University after members of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi's student wing staged a demonstration opposing the arrest of former MLA and student leader Balka Suman. The protest took place near the NCC Gate, where activists raised slogans against the state government and burned effigies of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Minister Vivek.

The demonstration was organised by BRSV leaders who alleged that Suman's arrest was politically motivated. Police maintained a presence on campus to monitor the situation and ensure law and order, while the protest concluded without major incidents.

Speaking at the protest, BRSV State General Secretary Chatari Dasarath accused the ruling Congress of attempting to undermine democratic processes despite what he called a clear public mandate in favour of the BRS in Kathanapalli. He alleged that the government was trying to take control of local bodies through "undemocratic methods" rather than respecting the people's verdict.

Dasarath also criticised senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, saying it was disappointing that he had not reacted to the political developments in Telangana. He claimed that while Congress leaders speak about protecting

constitutional values at the national level, the situation in the state reflected a different reality.

The student leader further alleged that since the Congress came to power, incidents of political pressure and intimidation had increased. He claimed that in municipalities where results were hung, attempts were made to influence elected representatives through inducements or threats, thereby disregarding the electorate's mandate.

Referring to Kathanapalli municipality, he said the Congress had won only a handful of seats but was still trying to form the administration by using its authority. He maintained that the municipality rightfully belonged to the BRS and reiterated that Balka Suman's arrest was unjustified.

Several BRSV leaders, including Jangaiah, Katam Shiva, Kompalli Naresh, Srinu Naik, Srikanth Mudiraj, Nagesh Rao, Nikhil Patel, Rakesh and Sai Goud, took part in the protest and demanded the immediate release of Suman and withdrawal of cases against him.

There was no immediate response from the state government on the allegations. The episode highlights intensifying political tensions in Telangana, with university campuses once again emerging as focal points of political mobilisation.

# Palla Rajeshwar Reddy Hits Out at Kadiyam Srihari Over Remarks on KCR



Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

BRS MLA Palla Rajeshwar Reddy launched a scathing attack on senior politician Kadiyam Srihari, strongly condemning his recent comments against former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR).

In a strongly worded statement, the Jangaon legislator said Srihari's remarks were "highly objectionable" and amounted to a personal attack on a leader who had played a pivotal role in Telangana's political history. He alleged that Srihari's statements reflected

political opportunism and accused him of repeatedly changing loyalties for personal gain.

Reddy said Srihari had enjoyed a long political career under multiple leaderships, recalling his association at different times with N. T. Rama Rao, N. Chandrababu Naidu, KCR, and now Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He alleged that despite receiving several opportunities, including ministerial and legislative positions, Srihari was now targeting the very leadership that had supported his political rise.

According to the MLA,

KCR had given Srihari significant political space and responsibilities, which helped him remain relevant in public life. Criticising Srihari's latest comments, Reddy described them as "ungrateful" and said leaders should show restraint and maintain dignity while expressing political differences.

He further accused Srihari of attempting to gain political mileage by making provocative statements and said such rhetoric undermines healthy democratic debate. Reddy emphasised that personal attacks and harsh language only lower

the standards of political discourse and divert attention from public issues.

The BRS leader expressed confidence that people were closely observing the developments and would respond appropriately. He said public trust is earned through consistency and commitment to public welfare, not through shifting political positions or making controversial remarks.

Reddy also reiterated his party's respect for KCR's leadership, highlighting his role in the Telangana statehood movement and governance. He said attempts to tarnish the former chief

minister's image would not be accepted by party workers or supporters.

The exchange marks the latest escalation in political tensions in Telangana, where verbal sparring between leaders has intensified in recent weeks. With political alignments continuing to evolve, statements from senior leaders are drawing sharp reactions across party lines.

As the controversy unfolds, it underscores the increasingly confrontational tone of state politics, with both sides trading accusations and counter-accusations in the public arena.

## AICC Praise for Revanth Govt a Matter of Pride: TPCC Leader Dayakar



Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) General Secretary Chanagani Dayakar said the appreciation expressed by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) for the state government's performance reflects the growing recognition of what he described as "people-centric governance" under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Speaking to the media, Dayakar said the commendation from national leadership was a matter of pride for the state and its people. He stated that in the two years since the Congress assumed office, welfare initiatives and a focus on social justice had increased public support for the government.

He credited the municipal election outcomes to what he termed the collective efforts of the Chief Minister and the cabinet, saying the results reflected public confidence in the administration's policies. According to him, development that had not materialised over the previous decade was being achieved within a short span under the present government.

Dayakar also took a swipe at BRS leader T. Harish Rao, questioning why the opposition was critical when AICC leaders praised the state's governance. He said criticism from the opposition stemmed from political frustration rather than substantive issues.

Drawing comparisons between parties, he said the Congress functioned on democratic principles, while alleging that opposition parties lacked inter-

nal democracy. He asserted that both the BRS and the BJP would find it difficult to compete with the Congress in the state's political landscape, claiming that the BJP was struggling to expand its electoral footprint in Telangana.

The TPCC leader said the Chief Minister had proven his administrative capability and earned recognition as a dynamic and effective leader. He added that several governance initiatives were in the pipeline and described them as major innovations that would further strengthen the state's development trajectory.

Expressing confidence about future electoral prospects, Dayakar predicted that the Congress would secure a decisive mandate in the next elections. He also said the party expected results similar to municipal polls in other local body elections, including the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, citing what he called consistent public support.

He further alleged that the opposition was raising issues primarily in areas where it had not performed well electorally and accused some leaders of making "politically motivated" statements. According to him, such reactions indicated that rival parties were struggling to maintain relevance.

Dayakar concluded by saying the Congress government would continue focusing on governance and welfare while leaving electoral verdicts to the people, whom he said had already begun endorsing the administration's performance.

## Jaggareddy Urges Congress Leadership to Ensure Respect for Jeevan Reddy

Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Senior Congress leader T. Jagga Reddy on Friday appealed to the party's central and state leadership to ensure that veteran leader T. Jeevan Reddy is treated with due respect within the organisation.

In a statement shared with the media, Jaggareddy said he was expressing his personal opinion as a Congress worker and leader and urged party in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan and the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) chief to take proactive steps in this regard.

He noted that Jeevan Reddy had been given opportunities by the party in the past, including tickets to contest for both Parliament and Assembly elections, though electoral outcomes did not favour him due to prevailing circumstances. Despite setbacks, Jaggareddy said, Jeevan Reddy remained committed to the Congress and

continued to serve the party faithfully.

Highlighting his political journey, he said Jeevan Reddy stood by the party during its decade-long stint in the opposition, serving as both MLA and MLC and contributing to organisational activities. He added that even when political offers came his way, Jeevan Reddy chose to stay with the Congress, demonstrating loyalty during challenging times.

Jaggareddy emphasised that leaders who remained with the party during difficult phases should not feel sidelined when the political climate changes. He urged the leadership to ensure that no situation arises that could be perceived as disrespectful to senior leaders who had contributed significantly to strengthening the party.

The Congress leader also appealed for constructive engagement within the organisation, saying that acknowledging the contributions of



long-serving members would boost morale among cadres across the state. Ensuring respect and recognition, he said, would reinforce unity within the party and help it focus on governance and organisational strengthening.

Jaggareddy concluded by requesting the party in-charge and the TPCC president to take appropriate measures so that Jeevan Reddy receives the recognition and dignity befitting his seniority and service.

The statement comes at a time when internal discussions and organisational adjustments are underway in the Telangana Congress, with leaders voicing opinions on party affairs through public and internal forums.

## Harish Rao Urges 'Realistic Budget', Seeks Funds for Congress Promises



Siddipet, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Former minister T. Harish Rao on Thursday called on the Telangana government to present a "realistic and people-centric" budget and allocate adequate funds to fulfil the promises made by the ruling Congress party. He made the remarks while inaugurating a BRS party of-

ice in Siddipet town and later addressing the media ahead of the Assembly's budget session scheduled to begin on February 26.

Harish Rao questioned the implementation of the Congress party's six guarantees, which he said were promised to be rolled out within 100 days of coming to power. Referring to assurances

made by leaders including Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, he alleged that even after a long period, there was little progress on their implementation.

The BRS leader said the government had promised a 4,000 monthly pension for the elderly, beedi work-

ers, handloom workers, toddy tappers and other vulnerable groups soon after assuming office, but claimed the enhanced pensions had not yet been delivered. He urged Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka to ensure allocations for the scheme in the upcoming budget.

Harish Rao also criticised the government over its promise of ₹2,500 monthly financial assistance to women, alleging that beneficiaries were yet to receive payments. He demanded that the scheme be included with clear funding provisions in the budget.

Raising concerns about welfare and education, he said fee reimbursement introduced during the tenure of former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao was not being implemented effectively. He further alleged that programmes announced for youth and workers had not translated into tangible benefits on

the ground.

The former minister also referred to various declarations related to SCs, BCs, farmers and youth, claiming they remained largely unfulfilled. He said the government should avoid "rhetoric" in the Assembly and instead present a budget grounded in fiscal reality and focused on delivery.

Harish Rao maintained that the BRS would continue to press the government inside and outside the Assembly to honour its commitments. He said people were expecting clarity on welfare measures and expressed hope that the upcoming budget would prioritise social security, women's support schemes and farmer welfare.

The remarks come amid intensifying political exchanges in Telangana as parties gear up for the budget session, with the opposition stepping up pressure on the government over welfare delivery and fiscal priorities.

# Nagaraju Nadendla Appointed Telangana Executive Member of Human Rights Forum

Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Nagaraju Nadendla has been appointed as the Telangana Executive Member of the Telangana Human Rights Justice Forum, the organisation announced on Thursday. The appointment was confirmed in an official statement issued by Chairperson Dr. Yyasabhath Sriyani Chowdary.

According to the statement, the Forum recognised Nadendla's commitment to social causes and his involvement in public issues while entrusting him with the new responsibility. The appointment is expected to strengthen the organisation's outreach and advocacy efforts across the State.

Speaking to the media after assuming charge, Nadendla expressed gratitude to the Chairperson and the leadership for reposing confidence in him. He also thanked senior members, including General Secretary Jatla Padmavathi, for their support in facilitating his

appointment.

Nadendla said he would work diligently to uphold the principles of justice and equality while contributing to the organisation's mission of protecting human rights. "I will strive to ensure that the voices of the affected and marginalised are heard and that necessary action is taken whenever rights are violated," he said.

He added that the new role brings greater responsibility and an opportunity to expand the Forum's activities. Nadendla emphasised that he would focus on strengthening organisational systems, enhancing public awareness and ensuring timely interventions in cases involving rights violations.

The newly appointed executive member further stated that he would collaborate closely with civil society groups, legal experts and community representatives to ensure effective implemen-

tation of the Forum's programmes. He underscored the importance of collective action in addressing social issues and building a more equitable society.

Members of the trust, local dignitaries and social activists congratulated Nadendla on his appointment and expressed confidence that his leadership would contribute to the organisation's growth and impact. They said his experience and dedication would help the Forum expand its initiatives and reach more people in need of support.

The Telangana Human Rights Justice Forum has been actively engaged in advocacy, awareness campaigns and support initiatives aimed at safeguarding civil liberties and promoting justice across the State. Officials said the new appointment is part of the organisation's efforts to strengthen its leadership structure and intensify its activities in the coming months.



# Complaint Seeks Protection of Government Land in Quthbullapur



Quthbullapur, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Allegations of encroachment on government land in the Dundigal area have prompted a formal complaint to district authorities, with local leaders urging immediate action to safeguard public property.

According to local sources, nearly 48 acres of government ceiling land located in survey numbers 322/2, 223/2, 324/2, 359/2, 360/2, 361/2, and 362/2 in Dundigal village are reportedly being subjected to illegal activities. It is alleged that a private construction firm has fenced the land, levelled the terrain, and begun preliminary construction work.

Raising concerns over the issue, BJP leader Akula Satish submitted a representation to Medchal district Additional Collector Vijender Reddy, seeking urgent intervention. He stated that protecting government-owned land is the responsibility of the authorities and called for a thorough inquiry into the alleged encroachment. He also demanded strict legal action against those found responsible.

Satish emphasised that public land must be preserved for community use and warned that failure to act swiftly could lead to further unauthorized construction. He urged officials to conduct field inspections and ensure that any illegal expansion is removed without delay.

Representation on Vaidhyanagar Land Allocation In a related development, the BJP leader also submitted a sep-

arate memorandum regarding land allocation for a Hindu Vaidhyanagar in the Nizampet circle. He requested that 3.20 acres of land be surveyed and officially allotted in accordance with an earlier government order.

The memorandum specifically called for identification of land in survey numbers 186 and 346, followed by fencing and protection measures. Satish further urged the administration to sanction funds for basic infrastructure such as internal roads, water supply, and electricity to facilitate development of the crematorium facility.

He stated that the Vaidhyanagar project is an essential requirement for local residents and appealed to the district administration to expedite the process so that construction can begin at the earliest.

Responding to the representations, Additional Collector Vijender Reddy reportedly assured the delegation that the petitions would be examined and appropriate action taken in accordance with rules.

BJP leaders and local activists were present during the submission of the memoranda, reiterating their demand for swift administrative action to protect government land and address civic infrastructure needs in the constituency.

The issue has drawn attention locally, with residents expressing hope that authorities will act promptly to resolve the concerns and prevent further disputes over public land.

# No Compromise on Ration Rice Quality: Commissioner



Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Civil Supplies Commissioner M. Stephen Ravindra conducted a surprise inspection at the Civil Supplies warehouse in Bag Lingampally on Friday, directing officials to maintain strict quality standards in the supply of ration rice.

The Commissioner, who

also serves as Principal Secretary of the Civil Supplies Department, stated that the Telangana government is committed to ensuring that economically weaker sections receive fine-quality rice through the public distribution system. He emphasized that poor households deserve the same quality food as any other section of

society and warned that no compromise would be tolerated in this regard.

During the inspection, Ravindra spent nearly two hours examining rice stocks stored at the warehouse. He personally checked multiple bags selected at random to assess parameters such as broken grain percentage and moisture content. Offi-

cials present at the site were asked to provide detailed explanations on quality control procedures and stock verification processes.

He instructed warehouse authorities to conduct thorough inspections at the time of procurement itself and to reject any stock that does not meet government norms. Stressing accountability, the Commissioner cautioned that strict action would be taken against any lapses in maintaining standards. He also urged staff to ensure that every grain distributed to beneficiaries meets quality expectations.

To ensure transparency in the supply chain, Ravindra reviewed stock registers, inward and outward movement records, and transportation documentation. He directed officials to ensure timely dispatch of rice to fair price shops so that beneficiaries do not face inconvenience or delays.

The Commissioner also interacted with hamalis

working at the facility, enquiring about their working conditions and available amenities. He reiterated that the government remains committed to the welfare of workers involved in the public distribution network and assured that their concerns would be addressed.

"Public trust is our biggest strength. To sustain that trust, quality must remain our benchmark. Even minor lapses in ration rice standards will not be tolerated," Ravindra said during the visit.

Hyderabad District Manager K. Sai Arun, Additional District Manager Deepti, and warehouse in-charges Gopalakrishna and Kiran were among the officials present during the inspection. The visit forms part of the department's ongoing efforts to strengthen monitoring mechanisms and improve service delivery across the state's public distribution system.

# Quthbullapur Youth Eyes Everest Dream

Quthbullapur, February 20 | TPN Bureau

A young mountaineer from Baurampet in Quthbullapur is preparing to scale the world's highest peak, Mount Everest, this April, turning his long-cherished dream into a mission that has inspired local residents and youth alike.

Palpunoori Tulasi Reddy met Quthbullapur MLA KP Vivekananda at his camp office in Pet Basheerabad on Friday to share details of his upcoming expedition, training regimen and long-term goals in mountaineering. The legislator congratulated the young climber and described his attempt as a proud moment for the constituency, assuring him of full support from the local community.

Addressing the gathering, the MLA said that a youth from Quthbullapur aspiring to conquer Everest reflects the growing confidence and ambition among youngsters in the region. He expressed hope that Tulasi Reddy would achieve success and bring national recognition to the constituency, adding that such achievements motivate other young people to explore adventure sports and pursue excellence beyond conventional paths.

Sharing his journey, Tulasi Reddy said he has already climbed four major peaks as part of his long-term goal to complete the Seven Summits challenge. His previous expeditions include Kang Yatse I (6,400 metres), Kang Yatse II (6,250 metres) and Jo Jongo (6,200 metres) in Ladakh, along with the demanding Kashmir Great Lakes trek. These experiences, he said, helped him build the technical skills, en-



duration and mental strength required for high-altitude climbing.

He further explained that he has undergone months of intensive preparation for Everest, including running, swimming and cycling for stamina, along with strength and conditioning exercises to improve resilience in extreme weather conditions. According to his plan, the expedition will begin on April 10 and is expected to take around 55 days, depending on weather patterns and acclimatisation requirements.

Former Baurampet councillor Srinivas Reddy said the youth's Everest mission is a matter of pride for the entire locality and expressed confidence that he would successfully summit the peak and return safely. He noted that Tulasi Reddy's determination and perseverance would inspire many other youngsters to aim high and represent the region on global platforms.

Family members, local leaders and supporters were present on the occasion, extending their wishes to the mountaineer as he embarks on what promises to be the most challenging and defining expedition of his career.

# OU JAC Chairman Greets Minister Lakshman Kumar



Hyderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Kottapalli Tirupati, Chairman of the Osmania University Joint Action Committee (OU JAC), met Telangana SC and ST Welfare Minister Adhuri Lakshman Kumar at the State Secretariat on Thursday to extend his congratulations following the Congress party's strong performance in the recent municipal elections across the State.

During the meeting, Tirupati conveyed his appreciation to the Minister, stating that the electoral outcome reflected public confidence in the welfare initiatives and governance approach of the State government. He noted that voters across several erstwhile districts had given a clear mandate in favour of the ruling party, enabling it to secure a majority of municipal chairperson and mayor posts.

Speaking on the occasion, Tirupati said that the implementation of

welfare schemes and the government's focus on inclusive development had played a crucial role in strengthening public support. He added that the municipal election results demonstrated people's endorsement of the administration's efforts toward grassroots governance and social justice.

Minister Lakshman Kumar thanked the delegation for their wishes and reiterated the government's commitment to continuing welfare programmes aimed at improving the lives of marginalised communities. He emphasised that the administration would work to further strengthen delivery mechanisms so that the benefits of government initiatives reach every eligible household.

The interaction also included a brief discussion on issues concerning students and youth, with Tirupati expressing hope that the government would continue to

prioritise education, employment opportunities and social empowerment. The Minister assured that the government remains focused on policies that promote equal opportunities and sustainable development across all sections of society.

Leaders and representatives who accompanied Tirupati included TPCC ST Cell Vice President Bhim Rao Naik, along with Srinivas, Rajender, Charan, Arun, Ramesh and Shivaji. They collectively congratulated the Minister and expressed optimism about the State's development trajectory under the current administration.

The meeting concluded with both sides expressing confidence that continued cooperation between public representatives, student organisations and community leaders would help strengthen participatory governance and accelerate welfare initiatives across Telangana.

# Drainage Project Clears Hurdles in Padmarao Nagar

Secunderabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

A long-pending drainage issue on the main road behind Gandhi Hospital in Padmarao Nagar has finally moved toward resolution, with officials clearing key obstacles that had delayed the project. The proposed drainage pipeline, estimated at a cost of ₹42 lakh, is expected to significantly ease water stagnation problems faced by residents and commuters in the area.

The works were earlier inaugurated by Sanath Nagar MLA and former minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, but progress stalled due to the presence of an underground high-voltage power cable network. The technical complication made it difficult to begin excavation and pipe-laying operations, leading to concerns among locals over persistent drainage woes.

Following directions from the MLA, senior officials from the Water Board, the Electricity Department, and the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation conducted a joint inspection of the affected stretch on Friday. BRS constituency in-charge Pawan Kumar Goud and division president Venkatesham Raju also participated in the visit to review the ground situation and coordinate next steps.

Officials explained that laying the drainage pipeline would require a temporary shutdown of the 33-kV power supply line serving Gandhi Hospital. A formal request was submitted to Water Board General Manager Vinod Kumar and Electricity Department DE Brahma-



dam, seeking alternative arrangements to ensure uninterrupted power to the hospital during the execution of works. The Electricity Department assured full cooperation, stating that public interest would be given priority while planning the shutdown and diversion.

Speaking to the media, Pawan Kumar Goud said the issue reached a breakthrough due to coordinated efforts among multiple departments, including civic authorities and traffic police. He noted that daily consultations with senior officials helped in identifying a workable solution without disrupting essential services.

He added that technical hurdles are common in major infrastructure works and expressed confidence that the administration has the expertise to resolve them efficiently. Goud also criticized what he described as politically motivated allegations surrounding the delay, saying development initiatives should not be viewed through a partisan lens.

With inter-departmental coordination now in place, officials indicated that the drainage pipeline works are likely to commence shortly. Once completed, the project is expected to improve sanitation, prevent waterlogging, and enhance road conditions in Padmarao Nagar, offering long-awaited relief to residents and daily commuters.

# Harish Rao Slams Govt Over Devadula Project Pump Shutdown

Warangal, February 20 | TPN Bureau

BRS leader and former minister Harish Rao on Thursday launched a sharp attack on the State government, alleging negligence in operating pumps under the Devadula Lift Irrigation Project and accusing it of failing to protect farmers' interests in Warangal district.

Speaking to the media after inspecting the Devannapet pump house, Rao claimed that all three pumps at the facility were non-functional despite adequate water flow in the Godavari River. He said that around 16,000 cusecs of water was flowing near Sammakka Sagar, yet lifting operations had been halted, leaving farmers without irrigation support during a critical crop period.

The former minister alleged that irrigation infrastructure created during the previous BRS government was being neglected, resulting in hardship for farmers across Jangaon, Palakurthi and Station Ghanpur constituencies. According to him, pump failures and delays in maintenance have disrupted water supply for several days, while lift points such as Gandiramuram have also stopped functioning.

Rao further claimed that last year's delay in operating pumps led to crop losses



across nearly 60,000 acres, causing significant financial damage to farmers. He accused the government of not releasing adequate maintenance funds and said contractors were not paid on time, which he alleged contributed to the shutdown of pumping systems.

Highlighting the scale of the Devadula project, he said the scheme includes one of the world's deepest pump houses and a nearly

49.5-km tunnel stretch, adding that the BRS government had completed a majority of the works and expanded irrigation coverage substantially. He alleged that in the past two and a half years, the present administration had neither expanded ayacut nor taken up new canal works.

Rao also questioned the government over its irrigation targets, asking what

progress had been made toward the proposed 12-lakh-acre ayacut and whether farmers would receive bonuses for the current rabi season. He demanded immediate restoration of all Devadula pumps and full-capacity operations to ensure irrigation to at least 3.5 lakh acres.

Accusing the government of failing to safeguard Telangana's share of river waters, Rao alleged that both

the Krishna and Godavari resources were being underutilised. He warned that continued inaction would severely impact farmers and agricultural productivity in the region.

The BRS leader said the party would continue to press for urgent corrective measures, calling on the government to prioritise irrigation management and provide timely support to farmers.

## Academic Review Held at Adilabad Residential School

Adilabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

An academic inspection was conducted at the Urban Residential School in Adilabad on Friday under the supervision of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen teaching standards and school management practices across the district.

Officials carried out a detailed review of academic activities, classroom processes and institutional systems to assess the effectiveness of teaching methodologies and overall learning outcomes. The inspection was led by B. Laxman, who is serving as Academic Monitoring Officer (AMO), along with Assistant AMO Ajay.

During their visit, the officials directly observed classroom teaching to evaluate instructional practices and student engagement levels. They interacted with teachers and offered practical suggestions aimed at enhancing the quality of les-



son delivery, effective use of teaching aids and better classroom management. The team also shared guidelines on strategies to improve students' comprehension levels and academic performance through continuous assessment and learner-centric approaches.

In addition to academic review, the inspection team examined the school's infrastructure and support facilities. The kitchen and store room were inspected to ensure adherence to hygiene and safety standards. Staff members were instructed to strictly maintain cleanliness and proper

storage practices, with officials emphasising that there should be no compromise when it comes to students' health and safety.

The visiting officials expressed satisfaction with the school's overall administration, discipline and academic environment. They commended the staff

for maintaining good educational standards and for their commitment to providing a supportive learning atmosphere for students.

Special Officer Prashanth Reddy, along with teachers Ravikanth Reddy, Ganesh and Harika, participated in the programme and extended full cooperation during the review process.

Officials noted that such periodic inspections play a crucial role in identifying gaps, sharing best practices and ensuring accountability in schools. They reiterated that continuous monitoring and capacity building of teachers would remain key priorities to achieve improved learning outcomes and holistic development of students across the district.

The initiative forms part of broader efforts to strengthen public education systems by focusing on quality teaching, safe infrastructure and effective school governance.

## Harish Rao Slams Govt Over Retired SI's Death

Khammam, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Former minister and BRS Legislature Party deputy leader T. Harish Rao strongly criticized the state government following the death of a retired police sub-inspector from Khammam district, alleging administrative negligence and delay in releasing retirement dues.

Expressing shock over the incident, Harish Rao said it was deeply distressing that a police officer who dedicated his life to public service had to struggle financially after retirement. The retired AR SI, identified as Maisaiah, reportedly passed away while awaiting payment of his retirement benefits, which the leader claimed had been pending for nearly a year.

According to Harish Rao, the deceased officer was supposed to receive dues amounting to around ₹60 lakh after retiring in February last year. However, the delay in disbursement allegedly pushed the family into severe financial hardship. He stated that the family



struggled to meet medical expenses when both the officer and his spouse fell ill, highlighting what he described as a failure of the welfare system.

The BRS leader alleged that the situation became so dire that fellow retired police personnel had to pool money to transport the body home after his death. Calling the episode "tragic

and avoidable," he accused the government of failing to ensure timely financial support to retired employees.

Harish Rao also expanded his criticism to broader issues affecting the police force. He claimed that not only retirees but also serving personnel were facing difficulties due to delays in clearing surrender leave bills and gaps in welfare

measures. According to him, the lack of financial backing for police families reflects systemic neglect.

He further alleged that the health security scheme meant for police personnel was not functioning effectively, forcing families to bear heavy medical costs. In addition, he said funds meant for routine maintenance of police stations

were not being released on time, compelling officers to manage expenses from their own pockets.

Describing Maisaiah's death as a "warning sign," Harish Rao said many retired employees across the state were still waiting for their dues and were struggling to afford healthcare. He urged the government to immediately release all pending retirement benefits and extend financial assistance to the bereaved family.

The former minister demanded that the government announce a special ex-gratia for the family and provide full medical support to the officer's wife. He also called for urgent restoration of welfare measures, including surrender leave payments, health coverage, and adequate maintenance funds for police stations.

Harish Rao said ensuring dignity and financial security for both serving and retired personnel is essential for maintaining morale within the police force and urged the government to act without delay.

## Uma Rani Assumes Charge as Nizamabad Mayor; Leaders Promise Development Push



Nizamabad, February 20 | TPN Bureau

The swearing-in ceremony of Uma Rani as Mayor of the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation was held amid a large gathering of party leaders and supporters on Thursday. Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president Mahesh Kumar Goud and Minister Ponnam Prabhakar attended the event as chief guests and extended their congratulations to the newly elected Mayor and Deputy Mayor Salma Tahseen.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar congratulated the new civic leadership and thanked voters for supporting the Congress in municipal and local body elections across the state. He said the state government was committed to strengthening employment opportunities and urban development in municipalities and corporations, adding that the cabinet would work collectively to accelerate growth initiatives.

The minister recalled the passage of the Telangana statehood legislation in Parliament and said the aspirations of the people had guided the state's progress since its formation. He noted that Telangana was moving forward with long-term development goals, including the Vision-2047 framework, and reiterated that the principles of water, funds and jobs remained central to governance priorities.

Prabhakar urged the Union government led by Narendra

Modi to extend greater financial support to Telangana's development and called on central ministers and MPs to cooperate in securing funds for the state. He also paid tribute to those who participated in the Telangana movement and said the government was committed to fulfilling assurances made to activists, including welfare measures and support initiatives.

Speaking on the occasion, TPCC chief Mahesh Kumar Goud congratulated the newly elected Mayor and Deputy Mayor and thanked the people of Nizamabad for backing the Congress. He said the government, under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, would mobilise the necessary resources to accelerate the city's development, including improvements in drainage, roads and civic infrastructure.

Nizamabad Rural MLA Bhupathi Reddy also congratulated the newly elected representatives and called for all parties to work together beyond political differences to ensure the city's growth. He appealed for constructive cooperation to address local issues and strengthen development initiatives.

The ceremony concluded with leaders expressing optimism that the new civic administration would focus on infrastructure, employment and inclusive growth, setting a fresh course for Nizamabad's urban development.

## Vakiti Srihari Leads Sevalal Jayanti Celebrations, Inaugurates CM Cup Kabaddi in Makthal



Makthal, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Minister for Sports, Dairy Development and Animal Husbandry Vakiti Srihari on Thursday took part in a series of public events in Makthal, calling for social progress through education and cultural unity while also inaugurating the second edition of the CM Cup state-level kabaddi tournament.

Earlier in the day, the minister attended the 287th birth anniversary celebrations of Sevalal Maharaj at Thimmareddypalli Thanda in Utkoor mandal. Addressing members of the Banjara community, he urged people to follow the ideals of Sevalal Maharaj, describing his teachings as a guiding force for unity and social upliftment.

He emphasised that education remains the key to empowerment and said every family in tribal habitations must ensure children pursue schooling to build a secure future. The minister reiterated the government's commitment to tribal welfare and inclusive development, adding that discipline and service to society would help communities progress.

In a festive highlight, Srihari joined locals in traditional Lambada dance along with District Collector Sikta Patnaik and Superintendent of Police Vineeth Raj, drawing enthusiastic participation from residents. Community leaders appreciated the government's continued focus on

tribal welfare initiatives.

Later, the minister inaugurated the CM Cup kabaddi tournament as chief guest, lighting the ceremonial lamp and interacting with players. The four-day event features participation from 60 teams representing all 33 districts, making it one of the largest kabaddi competitions in the state.

Speaking at the inauguration, Srihari thanked Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for enabling state-level sporting events to be hosted in Makthal. Calling the occasion a matter of pride, he recalled playing on the same grounds in his youth.

He announced plans to construct a modern stadium in Makthal at an estimated cost of 25 crore to strengthen local sports infrastructure. The minister also assured that athletes selected for national competitions would receive government support, including financial assistance.

Highlighting the administration's focus on sports development, he said a new sports policy aims to identify rural talent and that higher allocations for the sector are expected in the upcoming budget. He also spoke of incentives for international medal winners and plans for a dedicated sports hospital in Gachibowli.

The events drew participation from local representatives, officials and sports enthusiasts, reflecting both cultural pride and growing momentum for sports development in the region.

# The New Face of Indian Consumption: Why the “YOLO” Consumer Narrative Matters

In recent years, India has been celebrated for its robust economic growth, rising middle class, and youthful population. Yet, a subtle transformation in how people spend their money reveals something deeper about modern Indian society. This shift isn't just about rising incomes or changing tastes — it reflects how Indians are living, thinking, and prioritizing in ways that both mirror and challenge traditional assumptions.

## The Story CPI Tells

Every month, India releases an inflation figure based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This index is more than a number — it's a snapshot of what people actually spend on. But to stay relevant, the CPI must periodically update its methodology to reflect current consumption patterns. Recently, statisticians replaced the nearly decade old base year with a new one grounded in the latest household survey data. This new CPI basket includes goods and services that were once absent — such as video streaming, personal care services, and modern transport expenses — while removing outdated ones like video cassettes. The idea is simple: measure what people really buy today.

But behind these updates lies an intriguing insight. Within the mix of items that now carry greater weight in the CPI, there is a noticeable tilt toward categories that suggest a more aspirational and lifestyle oriented spending pattern. At the same time, staples traditionally seen as essential — basic food, education expenditures — now account for a smaller share of total household spending. In public discourse, this has led to the idea that Indian consumers are increasingly embracing a “you only live once” or YOLO mindset — prioritizing experiences, convenience, and comfort over long term investments.

## What Changed in the Consumption Basket?

Under the updated consumption survey, Indians are spending less, as a share of their budget, on traditional essentials. Basic food costs — cereals, pulses, vegetables — have a lower weight in overall spending than before. Even the share of education expenses has



fallen.

Instead, higher weights have been assigned to categories like personal care, transportation, entertainment, and digital or leisure services. Whether it's smartphone based entertainment subscriptions, ride hail services, or discretionary travel, these areas are taking up a larger proportion of Indians' wallets.

The emerging picture is not of a nation obsessed with luxury alone, but of one that increasingly values immediate experience and convenience. In rural as well as urban areas, households are spending more on processed foods and beverages, technology driven entertainment, and lifestyle services compared to staple nutritious foods or investments in skills and formal education.

## What Drives This Pattern?

At first glance, this shift might appear trivial — just another trend among many in a fast changing consumer market. But beneath it lie structural forces shaping India's society and economy.

One factor is the sheer size of the so called middle class and aspiring

consumer segment. Millions of Indians now have discretionary income they didn't have a decade ago. But rising income does not always translate into traditional forms of spending like education or savings. Instead, many choose to spend on things that enhance daily life or provide immediate gratification. This can include better food (even if processed), lifestyle products, gadgets, travel, or entertainment.

Another influence is the spread of technology. Internet penetration has soared, with millions accessing streaming content, social media, ride hailing, e commerce, and other digital platforms. Smartphones are ubiquitous, but ownership of computers — tools more directly tied to education and skill building — remains relatively low. In other words, digital connectivity is often used for consumption rather than creation or productivity.

Social media and influencer culture also play a role. Visual platforms make aspirations tangible and immediate. Experiences, outings, gadgets, and lifestyle purchases become not just personal choices but social statements. This isn't unique to India, but in a

tion with multiple overlapping generations, it highlights how modern norms intersect with deep rooted cultural expectations.

## Is YOLO India Entirely Accurate?

Labeling the Indian consumer “YOLO” simplifies a much more complex reality. It can mislead us into thinking citizens are reckless or frivolous. The data does reflect rising spending on categories associated with comfort and leisure, but it does not mean people are ignoring their responsibilities or future security.

For many households, spending on processed foods and packaged beverages is partly about convenience and access. Rural spending shifts may reflect availability and marketing more than conscious choice. Urban households' greater expenditure on transport and services largely reflects life in modern cities where distance, time savings, and flexibility matter.

Similarly, lower formal education spending may not indicate disregard for learning — it might reflect systemic issues like the perception of quality in available educational institutions, rising pri-

private tutoring costs, or employers valuing skill certifications more than formal degrees.

The Wage and Inequality Factor Another layer to this narrative is wage dynamics and inequality. Despite headline GDP growth rates and rising employment numbers, many households' real incomes have not kept pace with inflation. Casual sector wages may have grown, but much of the workforce still subsists on low income relative to cost of living in urban areas.

Consequently, a significant portion of spending remains devoted to meeting basic needs, even if the share on certain categories appears to shrink in aggregate statistics. Meanwhile, wealthier urban consumers — whose spending patterns disproportionately affect CPI weightages — may have more lifestyle oriented expenditure. This skews the picture toward an aspirational consumer profile that may not accurately represent all Indians.

## What This Means for Policy and Markets

Because CPI influences mone-

tary policy decisions, fiscal budgeting, and social planning, shifting weightages have broader implications. If statistics suggest people value leisure more than staple nutrition or education, policymakers might underestimate demand for social services or education investment. At the same time, businesses and investors see an opportunity in evolving consumer patterns — fueling growth in sectors like personal care, digital services, travel, and lifestyle retail.

India's economy is increasingly driven by consumer demand. Global and domestic firms alike are eyeing the Indian market as a growth engine, seeking to cater to changing tastes. This includes everything from premium packaged foods and beverages to health and wellness products. Indian consumers are also becoming more conscious about value, often willing to experiment with new products and brands based on quality, convenience, and perceived lifestyle enhancement.

## A New Narrative or an Old One Repackaged?

The idea of the YOLO consumer can be provocative, but it should not be taken as a wholesale judgment on Indian society. It is a narrative lens — one that highlights how consumption patterns are evolving in a society where aspirations, technology, and economic realities intersect.

What's clear is that Indians are not a monolith. Traditional values of saving, education, family welfare, and long term planning remain strong across large parts of the population. Simultaneously, modern influences shape a generation's expectations and spending patterns in ways that would be unimaginable just a decade ago.

Rather than viewing the rise of lifestyle spending as frivolous or irresponsible, it may be more accurate to see it as an expression of a society in transition — balancing the desire for comfort and experience with the pursuit of stability and future security.

In this context, the “YOLO” label is less a condemnation and more an invitation to understand the complex, layered realities of modern Indian consumption — a blend of necessity, aspiration, and choice.

# Bangladesh's Turning Point: Triumphs, Transitions, and the Road Ahead

Bangladesh stands at a historic crossroads. What once seemed like political turbulence spiralling into instability has, in recent times, evolved into a story of democratic resurgence, civic engagement, and renewed aspiration. The 2026 general election — marked by a decisive change in government — is not merely a traditional transfer of power; it represents a profound shift in the political and social fabric of the nation. This shift carries implications not only for Bangladesh's future but also for the broader regional landscape.

At its core, this transition is a testament to the resilience of the Bangladeshi people, especially its youth, whose collective determination helped transform political disillusionment into active participation. For years, much of the region viewed Bangladesh through the lens of democratic backsliding: low voter turnout, disengaged electorates, and deep political polarization. But the narrative of disappointment and apathy has given way to one of civic revival — a watershed moment for a nation long yearning for accountability and representation.

## The Rise of Civic Energy

What makes Bangladesh's recent political shift remarkable is the renewed zeal of its citizens. Large sections of the population — especially young people — rejected passivity and made their presence felt. Voter turnout surged significantly compared to previous years, indicating that citizens were not merely spectators but key stakeholders in the democratic process. This energised participation wasn't accidental. It was the culmination of

years of frustration, agitation, and aspiration among those who felt marginalised or voiceless.

Behind this surge in civic energy was a powerful social movement — an uprising that captured national attention and challenged entrenched authoritarian leanings. Fueled by young activists, students, and grassroots organisers, this movement shook the foundations of the political establishment and demanded change. It became clear that the country's future would be shaped not by complacency, but by activism, debate, and collective will.

## The Election as a Turning Point

The 2026 polls brought to power a party that had spent nearly two decades in the political wilderness, returning with a sweeping mandate. Its rise was not rooted in nostalgia for past ideologies or personalities, but in a concerted effort to present itself as a reinvigorated force committed to constitutional reform and broad based governance.

What distinguished this election from those of recent past decades was its emphasis on inclusivity and reform. The victorious party presented a platform that sought to strike a balance between national renewal and respect for pluralistic values. It pledged to dismantle vestiges of one party dominance and to enact institutional safeguards against the return of entrenched authoritarianism. For many citizens, the election became a referendum on hope rather than a mere contest of old political rivalries.

In his first address as the



newly elected leader, the prime minister spoke to a vision of Bangladesh as a haven for all its citizens — regardless of religion or background. In a country shaped by a rich tapestry of cultural and religious identities, these words resonated with many who had long feared marginalisation. This emphasis on inclusivity struck a chord not only within Bangladesh's borders but also among neighbouring nations watching closely.

## Repositioning on the Regional Stage

For neighbouring countries, particularly India, the political evolution in Dhaka carries significant strategic and diplomatic weight. Stability in Bangladesh has long been viewed as key to regional security, economic cooperation, and social harmony. India's proximity — geographically, economically, and culturally —

makes the health of Bangladesh's democracy particularly salient.

The shift in Dhaka's political landscape offers an opportunity for renewed engagement between the two nations. For years, diplomatic relations were perceived as skewed toward one dominant political figure and party. The emergence of a new government allows policymakers in neighbouring capitals to reset ties, transcending past grievances and focusing on constructive engagement rooted in mutual benefit.

In this context, rebuilding trust and cooperation will require careful diplomacy. The transition offers an opening to focus on issues such as trade, connectivity, and cultural exchange. People to people bridges — through education, tourism, and arts — can reinforce bilateral ties. Economic corridors that connect mar-

kets and infrastructure networks have the potential to unlock substantial growth for both economies.

## A Rejection of Extremism

One of the most striking features of Bangladesh's electoral outcome was the nuanced stance of its electorate toward regressive forces. While some political groups with conservative or exclusionary rhetoric garnered increased visibility, voters ultimately rejected them as primary governing agents. Instead, they placed trust in a more moderate and centre oriented approach.

This decision reflects a level of political sophistication among Bangladeshi citizens — particularly women and young voters — who appear to have weighed broader social cohesion and democratic values over divisive appeals. In doing so, they signalled a col-

lective desire for a balanced political future that safeguards civil liberties and promotes social stability.

For regional observers, this rejection holds significance. It suggests that Bangladeshis are not easily swayed by polarising narratives and that they value a political environment conducive to peace and progress. Such discernment is crucial in a region where extremism and radical agendas have, at times, posed threats to stability.

## Challenges Ahead

Despite these positive developments, challenges loom large for Bangladesh. The nation's history over the past few decades has included episodes of communal tension, mob violence, and lawlessness that have left deep scars. Addressing these challenges will require sustained institutional reform, effective law enforcement, and an unwavering commitment to uphold the rule of law.

The new government's mandate extends far beyond rhetorical promises. It must confront structural issues that hinder justice and equality — from ensuring the safety of minority communities to rebuilding trust in public institutions. For the Bangladeshi electorate, the real test will be the implementation of meaningful change that translates into everyday improvements in people's lives.

Economic reforms are another pressing priority. While Bangladesh's garment industry and export sectors have earned global recognition, diversification and modernization of the economy are essential for long term sustainability. Investments in technology, ed-

ucation, and infrastructure will be critical to creating jobs and raising living standards across the nation.

## Looking Forward Together

For neighbours and global partners, supporting Bangladesh's renaissance means extending a hand rooted not in patronage but in respect for its sovereign choices. Robust diplomatic engagement — in areas like security cooperation, economic partnerships, and cultural exchanges — can reinforce Bangladesh's transition and help ensure that democratic gains are preserved and strengthened.

Sporting and cultural collaborations, such as inviting Bangladeshi teams to international tournaments and facilitating artistic exchanges, can serve as powerful symbols of unity and mutual respect. These gestures, while symbolic, contribute to a broader narrative of partnership and shared destiny.

Bangladesh's journey from political uncertainty to hope infused renewal underscores a universal truth: democracy thrives when citizens believe in agency — in the power of their vote, their voice, and their collective action. The 2026 election has reminded the world that even longstanding challenges can yield to civic courage and constructive engagement.

As Bangladesh turns this new page, the hard work of rebuilding begins in earnest. But with renewed energy, inclusive leadership, and thoughtful engagement both within and beyond its borders, the nation stands poised to chart a path of progress that reflects the aspirations of its people.

## Vibrant Villages Phase II: ₹6,839 Crore Plan to Transform 1,954 Border Villages

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has launched the second phase of the government's ambitious Vibrant Villages Programme, aimed at accelerating development in India's border regions. The initiative, unveiled during his visit to Assam's Cachar district, seeks to upgrade infrastructure and improve living conditions in 1,954 villages across the country.

With a total financial outlay of ₹6,839 crore, the programme will be implemented over the next few years, covering border areas in 15 states and two Union Territories. These include strategically important regions such as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and several northeastern states. Of the total villages identified, around 140 are located in Assam, highlighting the government's focus on the region.

The scheme builds on the first phase launched in 2023, which targeted 662 villages along the northern border. While the earlier phase focused largely on areas along the China border, the second phase expands the scope to include villages along other international borders, including those adjoining Bangladesh.

The core objective of the programme is to ensure holistic development of remote bor-



der villages. This includes improving road connectivity, electricity supply, education, healthcare access, and livelihood opportunities. The government also plans to ensure saturation of welfare schemes so that residents receive the full benefits of central and state initiatives.

A key aspect of the programme is its strategic dimension. By enhancing infrastructure and economic opportunities, the government aims to reduce migration from border villages and encourage people to remain

in these areas. A stable population in border regions is seen as vital for national security, as local residents can play an important role in supporting border management.

During the launch, Shah emphasized a shift in perspective—stating that border villages should no longer be viewed as the “last villages” of the country, but rather as the “first villages” of India. This reflects a broader policy approach that places border communities at the forefront of development planning.

The programme also in-

cludes security-related initiatives and connectivity projects, ensuring that development efforts align with strategic priorities. Improved infrastructure is expected to boost economic activity, create employment, and integrate these remote regions more closely with the national economy.

Overall, Vibrant Villages Phase II represents a significant push to transform India's border areas through targeted investment, better infrastructure, and inclusive growth, while simultaneously strengthening national security.

## Dhami Orders Probe into Ad Hoc Appointments, Services Terminated in Uttarakhand

Pushkar Singh Dhami has ordered a detailed probe into controversial ad hoc appointments made in the Uttarakhand Vidhan Sabha secretariat, as the government moves to address allegations of irregular recruitment and enforce accountability.

The controversy involves around 227 ad hoc appointments made between 2016 and 2022, reportedly without following due recruitment procedures. These appointments were approved during different administrations, raising serious concerns about the misuse of discretionary powers and lack of transparency in hiring.

Taking a firm stance, Dhami wrote to Ritu Khanduri Bhushan, urging a fair and comprehensive inquiry into the matter. He emphasized that if irregularities were confirmed, strict action should be taken, including cancellation of such



appointments and reforms to ensure transparent recruitment in the future.

Following this directive, a committee comprising retired officials was formed to examine the issue. The panel reportedly found multiple violations of established norms in the appointment process. Acting on

its recommendations, authorities moved to terminate the services of those hired through the ad hoc system.

The state government has reiterated its commitment to maintaining zero tolerance toward corruption and administrative lapses. Officials indicated that this action is part of

a broader effort to strengthen governance and restore credibility in public institutions.

The issue has also highlighted longstanding concerns regarding recruitment practices within the Assembly secretariat, where rules were allegedly bypassed. While the termination of services marks a significant corrective step, questions remain about accountability for those responsible for approving the appointments in the first place.

The government is now expected to introduce safeguards to prevent similar irregularities in the future, including stricter adherence to recruitment norms and improved oversight mechanisms.

Overall, the probe and subsequent action signal a strong message from the Uttarakhand administration on the importance of transparency, fairness, and accountability in public sector hiring.

## Vijay Rules Out BJP Alliance, Signals Independent Political Path in Tamil Nadu



Vijay has firmly ruled out any alliance between his party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), and the Bharatiya Janata Party ahead of the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, underlining a clear independent political stance.

Party leaders stated that despite alleged pressure to align with the BJP, Vijay remained resolute and refused to compromise on his party's ideological position. According to them, attempts were made to influence the decision, but the actor-turned-politician chose to stay firm, reinforcing his commitment to his principles.

Vijay has consistently projected the BJP as an ideological rival, making it clear that any alliance would contradict the core values of TVK. His decision signals a definitive political direction as the party prepares to make its electoral debut in the state.

The move reflects TVK's broader strategy of building its own identity rather than relying on alliances. Vijay has emphasised that the party aims to emerge as a strong alternative to existing political

forces by directly engaging with voters and addressing key issues.

TVK leaders also took aim at rival parties, particularly the ruling DMK, suggesting that their early alliance discussions indicate concern over the growing popularity of Vijay and his party. The entry of TVK into active politics has added a new dynamic to Tamil Nadu's political landscape, traditionally dominated by established players and coalition politics.

Political observers note that while contesting independently allows TVK to maintain ideological clarity, it also presents challenges. Building a strong grassroots network and converting popularity into electoral success will be crucial for the party's performance.

Vijay's decision to go solo sets the stage for a competitive and potentially multi-cornered contest in the upcoming elections. It also positions TVK as a party seeking to redefine political engagement in Tamil Nadu by appealing directly to the electorate without traditional alliances.

## Indian Railways Plans to Ease Boarding Rules for Greater Passenger Flexibility

Indian Railways is considering a significant change to its boarding rules that could make train travel more flexible and convenient for passengers. The move comes as part of efforts to modernise systems and improve the overall travel experience.

At present, passengers are required to board the train from the boarding station selected at the time of booking. If they fail to do so, their seat may be marked as vacant and can be allotted to another passenger after a few stations. This rule often causes inconvenience, especially for those who are delayed due to traffic, personal emergencies, or changes in travel plans.

To address these concerns, the Railway Board has proposed relaxing the existing rules. The proposal has been sent to the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS), which manages the digital infrastructure of railway bookings and passenger data. CRIS has been asked to explore the necessary technical changes to implement the revised system.

Under the proposed changes, passengers may be allowed to board from subsequent stations without automatically losing their reserved seats. This would eliminate the current risk of seat reassignment if a passenger fails to board at the designated point. The idea is to provide more flexibility while ensuring that seats are



not unnecessarily marked as vacant.

Officials believe that the current system is too rigid and does not account for real-world challenges faced by passengers. By introducing more adaptable rules, Indian Railways aims to make the journey smoother and less stressful, especially for long-distance travelers.

However, implementing such changes will require careful planning. The system must still ensure that vacant seats can be efficiently allocated to waitlisted passengers when genuinely unused. Balancing flexibility with optimal seat utilisation will be key to the success of the proposal.

The move is part of a broader push by Indian Railways to digitally upgrade its services and adopt passenger-centric reforms. If approved and implemented, the revised boarding rules could significantly enhance convenience and reduce disputes related to seat allocation.

For now, the proposal is under consideration, and passengers will need to follow existing rules until any official changes are announced.

## Supreme Court Criticises 'Blame Game' in Electoral Roll Process



The Supreme Court expressed displeasure over what it described as an “unfortunate blame game” between authorities involved in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The court stressed that such an approach only hampers progress in an already time-bound and crucial democratic exercise.

During the proceedings, the bench directed the concerned High Court to take a more proactive role by appointing judicial officers to oversee aspects of the SIR process. The aim is to ensure transparency, accountability, and smooth coordination among agencies responsible for updating voter lists.

The SIR exercise is conducted periodically to revise electoral rolls, remove ineligible names, and include new voters. Given its importance in maintaining free

and fair elections, the court underscored that administrative inefficiencies or conflicts between institutions cannot be allowed to derail the process.

The judges observed that instead of passing responsibility, authorities must work collaboratively. The court noted that delays or mismanagement could affect voter inclusion and ultimately weaken the electoral framework.

To address these concerns, the Supreme Court instructed that judicial officers be deployed to monitor the process on the ground. Their role would include supervising implementation, resolving disputes, and ensuring that guidelines are followed properly.

The court's intervention comes amid concerns raised about the execution of the SIR exercise in certain re-

gions, including allegations of irregularities and lack of coordination. By involving judicial officers, the court hopes to bring greater credibility and efficiency to the process.

Additionally, the bench emphasized that electoral roll revision is not merely a routine administrative task but a foundational element of democracy. Therefore, all stakeholders—including election authorities and state administrations—must treat it with seriousness and urgency.

The Supreme Court's remarks serve as a reminder that institutional cooperation is essential in safeguarding democratic processes. By discouraging blame-shifting and encouraging accountability, the court aims to ensure that the electoral roll revision is completed in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

## Sukhu Flags Attacks on Kashmiris, Criticises India-US Trade Deal



Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, raised concerns over recent attacks on Kashmiri traders while speaking during his visit to Srinagar. He also strongly criticised the trade agreement between India and the United States, warning of its potential impact on farmers.

Addressing party workers and local leaders, Sukhu described incidents involving attacks on Kashmiris as isolated and politically driven. He assured that authorities in Himachal Pradesh have acted swiftly, with arrests made promptly in such cases. Referring to a recent assault on a Kashmiri shawl seller, he stressed that such events are not representative of the state's overall atmosphere.

The Chief Minister highlighted that Kashmiris have long been part of Himachal Pradesh's social and economic fabric, often living and working there peace-

fully. He urged traders from Jammu and Kashmir not to feel threatened and encouraged them to continue their livelihoods without fear. Sukhu also directed law enforcement agencies to take strict action against those responsible for any harassment and appealed to victims to report incidents immediately.

He suggested that some of these episodes are amplified for attention, particularly on social media, and do not reflect widespread hostility. According to him, maintaining harmony between communities remains a priority for his government.

Shifting focus to economic concerns, Sukhu criticised the India-US trade deal, calling it detrimental to farmers, especially in hill states like Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. He pointed out that both regions rely heavily on horticulture, particu-

larly apple cultivation, which sustains a large section of the population.

He warned that lowering import duties could result in a surge of cheaper foreign agricultural products such as apples, walnuts, and almonds. This, he said, would make it difficult for local farmers to compete, especially those who have invested significantly in modern storage and farming infrastructure.

Sukhu cautioned that the long-term effects of the agreement could harm domestic producers and weaken the rural economy. He emphasised the need for policies that prioritise Indian farmers and protect their interests in an increasingly competitive global market.

His remarks combined reassurance on maintaining social harmony with a strong warning about economic challenges facing agricultural communities.

# Trump Claims He Prevented India Pakistan War Using Tariff Threat



At a recent Board of Peace event in Washington, U.S. President Donald Trump asserted that he played a decisive role in halting last year's military escalation between India and Pakistan. Trump claimed he had warned both nations that he would impose a 200% tariff on each country if they did not stop fighting, arguing that "nothing is like money" to force peace. He also stated that "11 very expensive jets" had been shot down during the conflict and that his threat persuaded the sides to halt hostilities.

Trump said Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reportedly expressed gratitude, telling Trump that the tariff threat saved "25 million lives," and he described personal

phone calls with leaders from both capitals. The U.S. president also highlighted his personal relationship with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as part of his narrative about applying diplomatic pressure.

The Indian government has firmly denied any third party mediation in the India Pakistan ceasefire, stating that the truce was reached bilaterally through direct military to military talks rather than U.S. intervention. Officials rejected the notion that Trump's tariff threat or involvement influenced the cessation of fighting in May 2025.

Analysts and commentators have questioned the accuracy of Trump's account,

noting there is no public evidence that 11 jets were downed or that tariff threats affected decision-making by either government. Many observers view Trump's remarks as part of his broader strategy to highlight his foreign policy credentials ahead of ongoing political debates in the U.S.

The Board of Peace meeting — intended to spotlight diplomatic efforts on peace and conflict resolution — drew international attention partly due to Trump's sensational framing of the South Asia conflict. Reports described awkward moments as Trump called on Sharif to stand and publicly reinforce the U.S. role, which some commentators characterized

as turning into political theatre rather than grounded diplomacy.

The India Pakistan conflict Trump referred to followed the Pahalgam terror attack in April 2025 and subsequent military clashes later that spring. The ceasefire understanding was formally announced on May 10, 2025, and was welcomed by regional and global actors as a de-escalation of tensions.

In summary, Trump reiterated his claim of stopping the India Pakistan conflict using economic pressure, but his account has been challenged by Indian authorities and lacks independent confirmation, making it a subject of debate rather than an established diplomatic fact.

# Indian Origin Executive Convicted in \$1.2 Million 'Ghost Job' Fraud in the US



An Indian origin former senior executive of Optum Inc., a subsidiary of United-Health Group in the United States, has been convicted in a major fraud scheme that siphoned over \$1.2 million from the company through a long running "ghost job" and kickback arrangement.

Karan Gupta, 47, who served as a senior director of data analytics at Optum in Minnesota, was found guilty by a federal jury after a six day trial on multiple charges, including conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering.

**How the Scheme Worked**

Prosecutors detailed that the fraud began in 2015 when Gupta arranged for a life-long friend to be hired into a managerial data engineering role at Optum even though the friend was not qualified for the position. Gupta allegedly provided a fabricated résumé to secure the job and became his friend's direct supervisor.

Over the next nearly four years, the friend did virtually no work for the company. Evidence showed he sel-

dom sent emails, rarely interacted with other employees, and in some periods did not even log into his company computer. Despite this, the friend continued to receive a substantial salary, which started at more than \$100,000 and increased with raises and bonuses.

**Kickbacks and Concealment**

In return for the "job," Gupta demanded that his friend pay more than half of his unearned salary back to him as kickbacks. The pair employed elaborate methods to conceal these illicit payments. Initially, the friend withdrew cash from his bank account and deposited it into a bank branch linked to Gupta's account so Gupta could access it. Later, the friend opened a new checking account for salary deposits and mailed Gupta the debit card, which Gupta then used to withdraw funds from ATMs.

**Discovery and Legal Outcome**

The fraud was uncovered after Gupta was terminated in November 2019 following

the discovery of a separate fraud during an internal review at Optum. A deeper investigation revealed the ghost employee and kickback scheme, leading to his prosecution by federal authorities.

The total loss to the company from Gupta's fraudulent activities has been estimated at more than \$1.2 million. He now faces potential federal prison time, financial penalties and restitution orders when he is sentenced at a later date.

**Official Response**

Officials highlighted that such schemes undermine legitimate business operations. Authorities stated that individuals in positions of trust must be held accountable, especially when their actions harm employers and potentially burden others indirectly.

In summary, Karan Gupta's conviction underscores the severity of "ghost job" and kickback frauds in corporate settings and marks a notable case of legal accountability for high level executive misconduct in the United States.

# Area 51 Explained: The Real Story Behind the UFO Legend

Area 51 is one of the most famous and mysterious places on Earth, instantly bringing to mind images of UFOs, extraterrestrials, and secret alien technology. But the real reason this remote military base in the Nevada desert is so strongly linked to alien lore has more to do with history, secrecy, and public imagination than with actual proof of extraterrestrial life.



**What Area 51 Actually Is**

Area 51 is a highly classified U.S. Air Force testing site situated about 130 km north of Las Vegas. It forms part of the expansive Nevada Test and Training Range and was established in the 1950s. Its original mission was to develop and test high altitude reconnaissance aircraft — most notably the U 2 spy plane — under extreme secrecy during the Cold War era.

The existence of Area 51 wasn't officially acknowledged until 2013, when the U.S. government declassified documents detailing historic flight test programs conducted there. Those files made it clear that the base's core purpose was testing advanced military air-

craft, not researching or housing alien spacecraft.

**How Alien Myths Took Hold**

So how did Area 51 become synonymous with aliens? The answer lies in its extreme secrecy and timing. In the 1950s and 1960s, reports of unidentified flying objects surged across the U.S., especially near Nevada. Many of these sightings were later understood to be classified aircraft flying at unprecedented altitudes, unfamiliar to civilian observers and radar operators.

The 1950s Roswell incident — where debris initially

thought to be from an alien craft was later explained as parts of a secret balloon project — further fueled conspiracy theories. High profile figures like Bob Lazar, who claimed in 1989 to have worked at Area 51 on alien technology, also entrenched the base's otherworldly reputation, even though his claims were widely discredited.

**Pop Culture and Public Fascination**

Movies, TV shows, books, and online culture have amplified Area 51's alien connections over decades. Fictional

portrayals blurred the line between reality and fantasy, embedding the idea of hidden extraterrestrials deep into public consciousness — even though no reliable evidence ever supported such claims.

**Recent Reignited Interest**

Interest in UFOs and unidentified aerial phenomena (UAPs) has surged in recent years. Statements by public figures suggesting that aliens might exist — even while acknowledging that no concrete proof of contact has been found — have kept Area 51 in the spotlight. Some governments have responded by releasing or planning to release previously classified files related to UFO sightings and UAP investigations, adding to public intrigue.

**What's Real and What's Not**

Despite decades of speculation, there is no verified evidence that Area 51 ever housed alien bodies, spacecraft, or any extraterrestrial technology. Its enduring mystery stems largely from its strategic secrecy as a defense testing facility, which inadvertently bred speculation and fascination.

# Dubai Set to Launch Air Taxi Service in 2026 — 36 km Trip in Just 10 Minutes



Dubai is gearing up to introduce a cutting edge air taxi service in 2026 that could transform urban travel in the Emirate and position it as a global leader in futuristic mobility solutions. This new electric vertical take off and landing (eVTOL) service aims to drastically cut travel times between key locations — for instance, a trip from Dubai International Airport to Palm Jumeirah, a distance of about 36 km currently taking around 45 minutes by road, could be completed in just around 10 minutes by air taxi once operations begin.

**What Is the Air Taxi Service?**

The plan involves launching a fleet of fully electric air taxi aircraft designed to carry a pilot and up to four passengers at speeds of up to 320 km/h. These aircraft are quiet, powered by electricity with zero direct emissions, and make use of specially developed vertiports — dedicated facilities for take off and landing without the

need for traditional runways.

**Network and Vertiports**

Initially, the service will operate from four main locations:

- Dubai International Airport (DXB)
- Palm Jumeirah
- Dubai Marina
- Downtown Dubai

At each site, vertiports are being built with two zones for take off and landing, air conditioned passenger lounges, parking, and charging stations for the aircraft. Each facility is expected to support tens of thousands of flights annually, helping to relieve ground traffic congestion and offer a seamless, rapid transport option.

**Commercial Launch and Goals**

Officials have confirmed that trials and infrastructure buildup are well underway with the aim of commercial air taxi operations commencing in 2026. The goal is not only to provide a premium travel choice for residents and visitors but

also to integrate aerial mobility with Dubai's public transport system — including metro lines, buses, and micro mobility last mile services.

**Why It Matters**

This initiative exemplifies Dubai's strategy to adopt innovative and sustainable transportation technologies. By slashing travel times dramatically — such as turning a lengthy airport to Palm journey into a matter of minutes — the air taxi service is expected to appeal to commuters, business travelers, and tourists alike. It reinforces the city's ambition to become a global hub for next generation mobility.

**Looking Ahead**

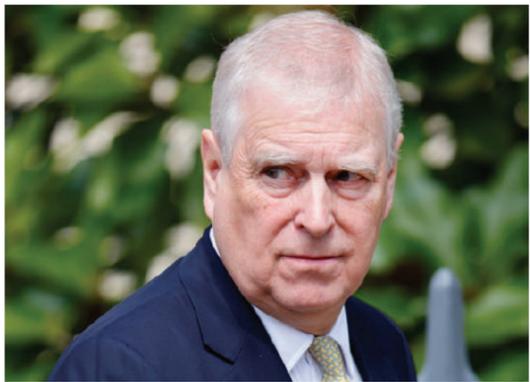
As the air taxi network prepares for launch, work continues on regulatory frameworks, aircraft certification, and vertiport construction. If successful, Dubai's service could become a model for other cities around the world exploring urban air mobility solutions in the years ahead.

# Prince Andrew Released Under Investigation After Arrest for Misconduct

Prince Andrew Mountbatten Windsor, the younger brother of King Charles III, was released under investigation after being arrested on suspicion of misconduct in public office in the United Kingdom. Police held him for about 11-12 hours before releasing him as inquiries continue, meaning he has not been charged but remains subject to ongoing investigation.

The investigation stems from allegations linked to the Jeffrey Epstein files, which suggest Andrew may have shared sensitive government or commercial information during his tenure as the UK's trade envoy between 2001 and 2011. Police are also searching properties associated with him in Norfolk and Berkshire as part of their inquiries.

This arrest marks a historic moment, believed to be the first time in modern history that a senior member of the British royal family has been



taken into police custody on suspicion of a serious public office related offense. Senior royals rarely face this level of legal scrutiny, and the case has drawn global attention.

King Charles III publicly acknowledged the situation, emphasizing that "the law must take its course" and that police have the royal family's full co-

operation. Other members of the family, including the Prince and Princess of Wales, have echoed support for due process. Buckingham Palace was reportedly not informed in advance of the arrest.

At this stage, Andrew is not charged, and police have stressed the matter is active and ongoing. Misconduct in

public office is a serious offense under British law that can carry a maximum life sentence, though such cases are complex and rarely prosecuted.

This episode occurs against a backdrop of long standing controversy over Andrew's links to Jeffrey Epstein, including a previously settled U.S. civil lawsuit related to sexual abuse allegations (not directly part of the current misconduct probe). The broader inquiry into the newly released Epstein documents has prompted multiple law enforcement assessments in the UK.

In summary, Prince Andrew has been released under investigation after being arrested on suspicion of misconduct in public office linked to documents in the Epstein Files. The case remains open, with police carrying out searches and inquiries, and the former royal continues to deny wrongdoing.

## Strong Close for Dalal Street: Nifty Above 25,550, Sensex Surges 317 Points as Power & Metal Stocks Lead, IT Lags



Indian equity markets finished Friday on a firm footing, with key indices staging a robust recovery after early volatility. The BSE Sensex rose 316.57 points (0.38%) to 82,814.71, while the Nifty 50 climbed 116.90 points (0.46%) to 25,571.25, comfortably above the 25,550 level.

The rally was broad-based, with strength seen across several key sectors. Power, metal, capital goods and PSU bank stocks were among the top performers, helping to lift sentiment and underpin the market's advance. Major gainers on the Nifty included names like Hindalco Industries, NTPC, SBI Life, L&T and Coal India, all benefiting from sustained buying interest during the session.

In contrast, IT stocks underperformed, acting as a drag on the overall market gains. Heavyweights such as Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies and Wipro ended the day in negative territory, with the

broader IT index down about 1%, underscoring sector-specific weakness. Media stocks also lagged behind the broader market's rally.

The broader market displayed mixed performance. The Nifty Mid-cap index rose by around 0.5%, while the Smallcap index closed slightly lower, highlighting some divergence in risk sentiment among mid and smaller-sized companies. Despite this, the overall advance-decline ratio favoured gainers, suggesting healthy participation across various segments of the market.

Trading was not without its challenges. Early in the session, markets grappled with geopolitical concerns and elevated crude oil prices, which had initially weighed on sentiment. However, as trade progressed, bargain hunting and fresh buying emerged, helping to reverse the early losses and drive the benchmarks higher.

Stock-specific action

remained active. Several mid and small-cap stocks hit 52 week lows, indicating that while broad indices were strong, underlying volatility persisted in select segments of the market. Nonetheless, fresh buying in sectoral leaders prevented this from derailling the overall positive trend.

On a weekly basis, both Sensex and Nifty posted modest gains, showing resilience despite mixed global cues and intermittent profit-taking. The rally into the weekend, led by cyclical sectors such as power and metals, reflects investors' willingness to rotate into segments expected to benefit from sustained economic activity.

In summary, the Indian equity market ended the week on a high note, buoyed by broad-based buying, strong performances in cyclical sectors, and a rebound from early session weakness — even as IT stocks continued to lag behind.

## Morgan Stanley Sees Big Upside in Reliance Industries on AI Investment Push

Global brokerage Morgan Stanley has highlighted Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) as one of its top stock picks, projecting strong long term upside driven by the company's ambitious plan to spend heavily on artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure and related businesses. The firm maintains an "overweight" rating on RIL shares and has set a target price significantly above current levels, implying potential gains of around 28% over its recent market price.

At the centre of Morgan Stanley's optimism is RIL's massive capital allocation blueprint. The company has unveiled plans to invest roughly ₹10 lakh crore over the next seven years in AI, digital platforms, and related energy supply infrastructure — a strategic shift that mirrors the bold expansions it made earlier in telecom and consumer businesses. This planned outlay is seen as the next big pivot in the conglomerate's evolution, with potential to reshape its earnings profile over the long term.

RIL's AI strategy was recently outlined by Chairman Mukesh Ambani, who revealed plans to construct multi gigawatt AI ready data centres, backed



by renewable energy capacity of up to 10 GW, advanced energy storage systems, and AI computing infrastructure. The first phase is expected to generate an initial 120 MW of capacity in the second half of 2026, with a steady scale up over subsequent years.

Morgan Stanley's positive view stems not only from the scale of investment but also from the return potential of the proposed "intelligence" business. Analysts estimate that the new AI fo-

cus capabilities could deliver post tax returns on capital employed above 12% and return on equity nearing 18% over five years — figures that are materially better than what RIL achieved from previous major capex cycles.

Execution is expected to involve partnerships with global technology players, leveraging both RIL's existing digital ecosystem and external expertise. The overall strategy aims to build sovereign AI computing capability in India

while potentially unlocking new revenue streams from enterprise services and digital offerings.

Financially, the firm's significant annual operating cash flows — estimated in the US \$14-15 billion range — provide a strong funding base for the initiative, helping cushion the investment and reduce dependence on external financing.

Market reaction to both the AI plan and Morgan Stanley's outlook has been positive. RIL's stock has seen gains, reflecting in-

vestor confidence in the company's strategic direction, while its market capitalisation remains among India's largest, underlining sustained institutional interest.

In summary, Morgan Stanley's bullish stance on Reliance Industries centres on the belief that its extensive AI and digital infrastructure investment could be the next major growth driver — one capable of delivering meaningful returns and reshaping the company's long term earnings trajectory.

## UPL Approves Move to Carve Out a Listed Pure Play Crop Protection Business



UPL Limited, the major global agro chemical and seeds company, has received board approval for a significant group reorganisation that will reshape how its crop protection business is structured and valued. The plan centres on creating a separately listed pure play crop protection arm — a strategic move designed to unlock value for shareholders and sharpen the focus of its core agricultural

chemicals operations.

At present, UPL operates through a diversified portfolio that includes crop protection, seeds, specialty chemicals, and related agri tech solutions. As part of the reorganisation plan approved by the board, the company intends to consolidate its crop protection business into a standalone entity that will be listed independently on stock exchanges. This new pure

play crop protection arm is expected to bring greater clarity to the business and help investors more accurately assess its performance and growth prospects.

The rationale behind the move is rooted in creating a more streamlined corporate structure where high growth, high focus segments can operate with dedicated strategies and capital allocation. By spinning off crop protection into

its own listed vehicle, UPL aims to improve operational focus and give this business area the autonomy to pursue its full growth potential. This separation also enables more transparent valuation of the core crop protection business apart from other UPL segments such as specialty chemicals and seeds, which have different market dynamics.

In addition to enabling value recognition, the reorganisation is likely to help UPL attract targeted investments specifically for the crop protection arm. Investors who are keen on the agricultural chemicals sector may find the pure play entity more aligned with their focus and risk profile, compared with holding shares in a broader diversified conglomerate.

The board's approval follows an earlier phase of strategic realignment in which UPL created distinct pure play platforms for its domestic crop protection and seeds businesses, as well

as other segments. That earlier exercise involved transferring specific operations into wholly owned subsidiaries and bringing in private equity participation, with the aim of unlocking value and enhancing growth prospects.

Breaking out a listed crop protection arm comes at a time when UPL is also navigating broader industry pressures, including managing debt and operational efficiency. Analysts have noted that restructuring efforts like this can help the company sharply define strategic priorities while managing capital more effectively.

Overall, the board's approval for the proposed reorganisation lays the groundwork for a major structural transformation at UPL. By creating a separately listed pure play crop protection entity, the company is aiming to unlock shareholder value, refine strategic execution, and attract focused investor interest in one of its most important business verticals.

## RBI's Revised Bank Exposure Rules Will Change How Brokers Fund Margin Trading, Not Client Leverage



The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest revision of bank exposure rules has sparked debate across broking circles, but the central point of the update is often misunderstood. Rather than altering how individual traders use margin trading facilities, the changes focus primarily on how brokers themselves are funded for such activities.

Previously, RBI rules had an operationally complex requirement that banks taking exposure to brokers' margin trading facilities (MTF) must pledge client securities. Brokers found this structure impractical, and it effectively shut the door on banks providing direct funding for MTF books. The latest circular removes this clause, reopening a more workable funding route. This means brokers may once again explore bank funding options for their MTF exposures — something that had nearly vanished in practice. In essence, the central bank is tweaking the mechanics of bank-to-broker funding, not tightening client-level leverage limits.

Leading broking executives have pointed out that the new circular is not a reaction to out-sized growth in margin trading. Contrary to some initial interpretations, it does not reduce clients' ability to take leveraged positions through MTF. The leverage frameworks that determine how much a client can borrow against their stock holdings remain governed by established norms set by market regulators and stock exchanges.

Industry insiders explain that the revised rules aim to clarify and streamline how banks evaluate and support broker balance sheets. While banks were largely already reluctant to fund brokers' MTF positions given past complexity, the updated rules remove a specific constraint — potentially making a clearer path for such funding in future, subject to individual bank policies. This can help bring if any, a more standardized approach toward financing brokers' risk exposures.

Broker representatives have also stressed

that risk concentration limits, such as those on single-stock exposures within margin trading books, continue to be monitored. These limits help ensure that risk remains manageable and that brokers do not overextend their lending to clients regardless of how funding is sourced. The structure still comes with higher margins compared to other trading products like derivatives or normal delivery trades.

While some commentary in market circles has linked the RBI move to a broad tightening of retail leverage, brokers clarify that the client-facing experience won't fundamentally change because of this circular. Margin trading will continue to operate under existing risk, reporting, and margin requirements set by regulators. In summary, the RBI's updated exposure rules represent an adjustment in how banks and brokers interact, potentially enhancing clarity around funding, but do not directly alter the leverage available to retail traders.

## RBI's New MTF Rules Won't Lower Client Leverage, But Could Influence How Retail Traders Use It

The Reserve Bank of India's latest circular on Margin Trading Facility (MTF) has stirred fresh discussion in broking and trading circles. Although the new guidelines do not directly change how much leverage retail investors can use, they could meaningfully shape how traders think about and apply leverage in practice.

At its core, the RBI's updated framework tightens how brokers themselves borrow funds from banks to support their MTF books. The rules require that any funding must be fully secured with high quality collateral, demand larger haircuts on pledged equity securities, and impose more stringent cash backing for loans. These measures target the broker to bank funding relationship — not the client level leverage that individual investors enjoy while using margin products. Brokers have been quick to emphasize that

existing margin requirements, leverage limits, and risk controls for MTF remain under the jurisdiction of India's market regulator (SEBI) and the stock exchanges. In other words, how much a retail trader can borrow against shares in their account isn't altered by this circular. What does change is the economics behind how brokers fund their own obligations, which indirectly affects the cost structure of margin trading.

One key point raised by industry executives is that many retail investors underestimate the total cost of leverage. While attention often focuses on headline interest rates charged on MTF borrowings, the actual cost to a trader also includes brokerage fees and how quickly borrowing costs accumulate — especially for short term positions. Higher funding costs for brokers could translate into more visible charges for traders



who underestimate the expenses tied to leveraged positions.

Some brokers predict that this renewed clarity around funding costs may lead to a temporary moderation in the use of margin trading. As traders reassess the true costs of holding leveraged positions, they may adjust their trading habits, particularly for very short holding periods where

costs can quickly erode profits.

Others in the industry stress that the circular doesn't equate to a crack-down on retail MTF usage. Since banks were already not heavily financing MTF exposure in practice, brokers are expected to continue relying on internal accruals, commercial paper markets, or non bank lending lines — meaning the un-

derlying mechanics for clients stay broadly the same.

Overall, while the RBI's changes introduce stricter funding discipline for brokers, they stop short of tightening retail leverage limits. Instead, the shift puts a spotlight on the true economics of leverage, potentially encouraging more informed usage of margin facilities among retail investors.

## ₹4 Lakh for Kindergarten? Viral Post Sparks Debate on Rising Education Costs



A recent social media post by Aviral Bhatnagar, an alumnus of IIT Bombay, has ignited a widespread debate about the soaring cost of early education in India. His reaction to an unusually high kindergarten fee structure has resonated with thousands online, highlighting growing concerns about affordability in the education sector.

The controversy began when Bhatnagar shared that his cousin's daughter, enrolled in an Upper Kindergarten (UKG) class at a private school in Mumbai, was paying nearly ₹4 lakh annually. What made the revelation even more striking was his comparison: the amount was roughly half of what he had paid for his entire four-year engineering degree.

This stark contrast quickly captured public attention. For many, it underscored a troubling reality—education costs, even at the most basic levels, are rising at an alarming pace.

Bhatnagar described this phenomenon as a form of “hidden inflation,” suggesting that while traditional economic indicators may not fully capture it, families are increasingly feeling the burden. His comment also pointed toward a possible future solution, proposing that artificial intelligence-driven tutors might one day make education more accessible and affordable.

The post soon went viral, drawing significant engagement and sparking a heated discussion on social media. Many users expressed shock and frustration, questioning how preschool education could command such high fees. Several pointed out that early education, which was once considered relatively affordable, is now becoming a luxury for many families.

Some users argued that the issue reflects deeper structural problems within the system. They claimed that sectors like education, healthcare, and even weddings have become highly commercialized, making them inaccessible for the average household. Others criticized the state of public institutions, suggesting that declining quality in government schools has in-

directly pushed parents toward expensive private options.

However, not everyone agreed with this perspective. A section of users viewed the situation differently, arguing that such high fees are often linked to lifestyle choices rather than necessity. According to them, premium schools cater to affluent families who are willing to pay more for perceived quality, brand value, and additional facilities. In this view, the rising costs are less about inflation and more about market demand and social status.

Some even suggested alternative approaches, such as homeschooling or choosing more affordable schools, emphasizing that parents still have options if they are willing to look beyond elite institutions.

The discussion also raised broader questions about inequality in education. As private schools continue to increase fees, access to quality education may become increasingly divided along economic lines. This could have long-term implications for social mobility and equal opportunity.

Amid this debate, Bhatnagar's mention of AI tutors added another dimension. With rapid advancements in technology, many believe that personalized, AI-driven learning tools could disrupt traditional education models. Such tools might offer high-quality instruction at a fraction of current costs, potentially bridging the gap between affordability and quality.

While this vision remains speculative, it reflects a growing belief that technology could play a key role in reshaping education in the future.

Ultimately, the viral post has done more than just highlight a shocking fee figure. It has opened up an important conversation about the direction of education in India—one that touches on affordability, accessibility, and the evolving role of technology.

As costs continue to rise, the question remains: will education become increasingly exclusive, or will innovation help make it accessible once again?

## Why Finnish PhD Graduates Receive a Hat and Sword



In Finland, earning a PhD is not just an academic milestone—it is marked by a unique and symbolic tradition involving a top hat and a sword. This centuries-old custom reflects the country's deep respect for scholarship, knowledge, and intellectual responsibility.

At Finnish universities, doctoral graduates participate in a formal ceremony known as a “doctoral conferment.” During this event, they are awarded a black top hat, often called a “doctoral hat,” which signifies academic freedom and the status of a scholar. The hat is a visible representation of the intellectual independence that comes with achieving the highest level of education.

Alongside the hat, many graduates also receive—or more accurately, gain the right to acquire—a ceremonial sword. This sword carries a powerful symbolic meaning: it represents the graduate's commitment to defend truth, knowledge, and ethical values. Rooted in traditions dating back to the 19th century, the sword embodies the idea that scholars must stand up for what is right and contribute responsibly to society.

The sword is not merely decorative.

It reflects the historical belief that education equips individuals with the tools to “fight” ignorance and misinformation—not through force, but through reason, evidence, and critical thinking. In this sense, the sword becomes a metaphor for intellectual courage.

The tradition is particularly prominent at institutions like the University of Helsinki, where the conferment ceremony is a grand and formal affair. Graduates dress in elegant attire, wear their doctoral hats, and carry their swords during processions and celebrations. These ceremonies often include speeches, music, and rituals that highlight the importance of academic achievement.

Interestingly, not all graduates automatically receive the sword; many choose to purchase it themselves. Despite this, it remains a cherished symbol of accomplishment and pride.

Finland's doctoral traditions stand out globally for their blend of ceremony and symbolism. By combining the top hat and sword, the country emphasizes that education is not just about acquiring knowledge, but also about upholding truth, integrity, and responsibility in the wider world.

## “I Belong Here Now”: A Traveller's Emotional Goodbye to Goa



A foreign traveller's heartfelt farewell to Goa has struck a deep emotional chord online, capturing the essence of what makes the coastal Indian state so special. After spending two months exploring its landscapes, culture, and people, the traveller—identified as Fran—shared a moving message that resonated with thousands.

Fran documented his journey through a video posted on social media, reflecting on his time in Goa and the profound impact it had on him. What began as a temporary visit evolved into an experience that reshaped his feelings about India, leaving him with a sense of belonging that he hadn't anticipated.

In his farewell message, Fran expressed that leaving Goa did not feel like a final goodbye. Instead, it felt more like a pause in an ongoing relationship. He described his stay as transformative, noting that the connections he made and the warmth he experienced went far beyond what he had expected from a short trip.

During his time in Goa, Fran encountered people who left a lasting impression on him. He spoke about how strangers quickly turned into friends and, in some cases, even felt like family. This sense of community played a major role in shaping his experience, making his departure all the more emotional.

What stood out most to him was not just the scenic beauty or the well-known tourist attractions, but the spirit of the people. He observed that the locals offered a unique perspective on India—one that emphasized openness, kindness, and a relaxed way of life. This, he said, changed how he viewed the country as a whole.

Fran admitted that he arrived as an outsider but gradually began to feel like he belonged. The emotional connection he developed with Goa made him question the idea of temporary travel. By the end of his stay, the place no longer felt foreign—it felt like home.

His reflections highlighted that travel is not

only about visiting new destinations but also about personal transformation. For Fran, Goa became more than just a stop on a journey; it became a place that influenced his outlook, values, and emotional world.

In his message, he also shared a desire to return. He made it clear that his connection to Goa was not fleeting and that he intended to come back, not just as a visitor but as someone who wants to contribute positively. He mentioned hopes of engaging in meaningful activities, including helping local communities and animals.

The emotional tone of his farewell was captured in his words, where he emphasized that Goa changed something within him. He reflected on how the experience was shaped by feelings rather than just sights or activities. The atmosphere, the relationships, and the everyday moments all combined to create something deeply meaningful.

The video quickly gained attention online,

drawing thousands of views and a flood of comments. Many viewers appreciated how authentically Fran portrayed his experience. Locals, in particular, responded warmly, expressing gratitude for the way he represented their home.

Several commenters noted that his words perfectly captured what makes Goa unique. Some shared their own similar experiences, saying that the state had affected them in the same way. Others invited him to return, assuring him that he would always be welcome.

For many, Fran's story reflected a broader truth about travel in India—that the country's impact often goes beyond its physical attractions. Visitors frequently find themselves touched by the people, culture, and emotional depth of their experiences.

Goa, in particular, has long been known for its ability to leave a lasting impression. Its blend of cultural diversity, laid-back lifestyle, and strong sense of community creates an environment where visitors can feel

both relaxed and connected. Fran's story is a testament to that enduring appeal.

His journey also highlights how travel can bridge cultural gaps. Despite coming from a different background, Fran found common ground with the people he met. This connection transcended language, nationality, and other differences, reinforcing the idea that human experiences are often universal.

In the end, Fran's goodbye was not marked by sadness alone but also by gratitude and hope. While he acknowledged the difficulty of leaving, he also celebrated what he had gained—a deeper understanding of a place and a stronger sense of connection to the world.

His message serves as a reminder that sometimes, the most meaningful journeys are the ones that change us from within. For Fran, Goa was not just a destination—it became a part of who he is.

And as he said in his farewell, this was not truly a goodbye, but simply a promise to return.

## “Safe, Welcoming And Diverse”: Australian Vlogger Urges Tourists To See The Real India

A viral video by an Australian travel vlogger has captured widespread attention online, offering a refreshing perspective on India and challenging long-held stereotypes about the country. Through his experiences, the creator highlights why he believes India is not only safe to visit but also incredibly diverse and worth exploring in depth.

The vlogger, who has been travelling across India as part of a global journey, shared his thoughts after spending considerable time interacting with locals, visiting different regions, and immersing himself in everyday life. His central message is simple: India is often misunderstood, and many of the fears surrounding travel in the country are exaggerated.

One of the key points he emphasized is safety. Contrary to common perceptions, he explained that he felt comfortable during his travels. While acknowledging that every country has its challenges, he noted that India should not be judged solely based on negative portrayals often seen online or in the media. His own experiences suggested that, with basic precautions, travelling in India can be both safe and enjoyable.

Beyond safety, the vlogger focused heavily on India's diversity—something he believes sets the country apart from most destinations. From landscapes and languages to food and traditions, he described India as a place



where every region offers a completely different experience. This richness, he suggested, is often overlooked by tourists who limit their visits to a few well-known cities.

He encouraged travellers to step beyond typical tourist circuits and explore lesser-known destinations. According to him, doing a bit of research and venturing beyond popular urban hubs can reveal a side of India that is far more authentic and rewarding.

Another highlight of his journey has been the warmth of Indian hospitality. The vlogger shared multiple instances where locals went out of their way to help him—whether by offering food, guiding him through unfamiliar areas, or simply

welcoming him into their daily lives. He described this generosity as something unique and deeply memorable, reinforcing his positive view of the country.

He also spoke about how social media often distorts reality. Many viral travel videos, he pointed out, focus disproportionately on poverty or chaos, creating a one-sided narrative that does not reflect the full picture. While he did not deny that such issues exist, he stressed that they represent only a fraction of what India has to offer.

Instead, he urged viewers to approach travel with an open mind and to form their own opinions. By doing so, he believes more people would dis-

cover the country's cultural richness, historical depth, and everyday vibrancy.

Food was another aspect he praised enthusiastically. From street meals to more formal dining, he found Indian cuisine to be consistently flavorful and diverse, adding to the overall travel experience. For him, the culinary journey was just as important as the destinations themselves.

The video quickly resonated with audiences online, many of whom appreciated the balanced and positive portrayal. In the comments, users thanked him for showing a side of India that often goes unnoticed and for countering negative stereotypes with genuine experiences.

At a broader level, the vlogger's message reflects a growing trend among international travellers who are redefining how India is perceived globally. Rather than focusing solely on its challenges, they are highlighting its strengths—its people, culture, and diversity.

Ultimately, the video serves as both an invitation and a reminder. India, as the vlogger puts it, cannot be understood through a single narrative. It is a country of contrasts, where complexity is part of its identity.

For those willing to look beyond assumptions, his message is clear: India is not just a destination—it is an experience—safe, diverse, and deeply rewarding.

## T20 World Cup Super 8 Format Sparks Widespread Criticism

The ICC's decision to implement a pre-seeded Super 8 stage in the T20 World Cup 2026 has sparked significant controversy among fans, players, and cricket experts. Critics argue that the new format undermines competitive fairness and diminishes the excitement that fans expect from a major global tournament.

The controversy centers on the pre-determined placement of teams in the Super 8 round. Under this system, the top team from each of the four initial groups is given a fixed slot, regardless of performance metrics or relative strength. As a result, all four group winners — India, Zimbabwe, West Indies, and South Africa — end up in the same Super 8 group, while the second-placed teams — Pakistan, Sri Lanka, England, and New Zealand — are clustered in the other group.

This arrangement has drawn criticism for creating a disproportionate imbalance between the two groups. Stronger teams are concentrated together, making their path to the semi-finals more challenging, while teams finishing second in their initial groups enjoy an easier route. Traditionally, topping the group is sup-



posed to offer a competitive advantage, but in this setup, finishing first offers little benefit and, in some cases, may even be a disadvantage.

Fans have also raised concerns about how this format affects the tournament's excitement. Since Super 8 placements are predetermined, the significance of later group-stage matches is reduced. Early victories no longer guarantee meaningful ad-

vantages, and the drama and unpredictability that make the T20 World Cup thrilling are partially lost.

Additionally, co-hosting considerations have caused complications. Sri Lanka, despite hosting initial matches, may be required to travel to India for crucial knockout games, depriving the team of home advantage and local fan support. Critics argue that this ar-

range prioritizes logistical convenience over sporting fairness.

The ICC has defended its approach, citing the need to manage venues, broadcasting, and travel efficiently across two host nations. However, many observers feel that administrative considerations should not come at the cost of competitive integrity.

Overall, the Super 8 format controversy high-

lights a tension between organizational efficiency and the spirit of fair competition. Fans are calling for a system that rewards performance, ensures balanced group compositions, and maintains the suspense and intensity that define the T20 World Cup. How the ICC responds could shape perceptions of the tournament's credibility and fairness in the years to come.

## “Beta Perform Karo”: Afridi’s Fiery Call to Shadab Khan After Criticism Row



Former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi put the spotlight firmly back on performance after a public back and forth with current all-rounder Shadab Khan during the ongoing T20 World Cup 2026. The exchange was triggered by comments Shadab made in response to criticism of the team's performances following Pakistan's heavy loss to India.

The controversy began when Shadab, reacting to remarks from former players, highlighted that the current squad achieved something his predecessors could not — a World Cup win over India in 2021. He said that criticism is part of cricket and pointed to that victory to defend himself and the team, suggesting that current players had earned respect through that achievement.

Afridi, however, was unimpressed with words alone and used a recent TV appearance to deliver a blunt message. He reminded Shadab that while the win over India was a milestone, it should not be used as a shield against criticism, especially when the team's recent form has been inconsistent. Afridi stressed that former players, including himself, have stood by Shadab during tougher times — defending him publicly when his place in the team was under threat due to poor form.

In a pointed rebuke, Afridi urged Shadab to let his cricket do the talking. “Beta perform karo,” Afridi

said — essentially telling the all-rounder to respond with strong performances on the field, rather than engaging in verbal sparring. He went further, challenging Shadab to replicate meaningful contributions not only against weaker opposition but also against stronger teams like New Zealand, which Pakistan faced in the Super 8 stage.

Afridi acknowledged that cricket naturally attracts opinions from players and pundits, but emphasized that the best way to silence critics is through impactful displays in big matches. He recalled how, during their playing days, performances against top teams were what ultimately defined careers and earned respect.

The exchange reflects a deeper tension within Pakistan's cricketing circle — between generations of players and how they view success, criticism and accountability. Shadab's initial comments were meant to defend the current squad's achievements, yet Afridi's response refocused attention on the importance of consistency and contributions in key games.

As Pakistan navigates the Super 8 phase of the tournament, the expectation now falls on players like Shadab to back up their words with performances, just as Afridi called upon them to do. The challenge remains clear: on the global stage, actions often speak louder than statements.

## New Zealand Batters Gear Up to Tackle Pakistan’s Spin in Super 8 Clash



As the T20 World Cup 2026 Super 8 stage gets underway, New Zealand's batters face a crucial challenge against Pakistan's spin-heavy attack. The match in Colombo is expected to be pivotal for both teams, with performance here likely influencing their chances of advancing further in the tournament.

New Zealand's top or-

der, led by Tim Seifert and Finn Allen, has delivered strong starts in earlier games, providing the team with quick runs and momentum. However, the middle order — featuring Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mark Chapman, and Daryl Mitchell — has struggled to maintain consistency. Converting promising starts into match-winning in-

nings remains a pressing concern. Against Pakistan's experienced spinners, New Zealand will need disciplined partnerships and intelligent shot selection to post or chase a competitive total around the 180-run mark.

Pakistan's spin attack, well-acquainted with the slow and turning Colombo surface, presents a formidable obstacle. Bowl-

ers such as Usman Tariq, Abrar Ahmed, Saim Ayub, Mohammad Nawaz, and Shadab Khan are expected to exploit the pitch conditions to maximum effect. The battle between New Zealand's batters and Pakistan's spinners will likely define the outcome of the match, with patience, timing, and strategic stroke play proving essential.

While Pakistan's bowling appears potent, their batting has been inconsistent so far. Aside from tournament top-scorer Sahibzada Farhan, the rest of the lineup has struggled to contribute significant scores. Even star batsman Babar Azam has faced difficulty finding rhythm, raising the possibility of tactical adjustments in the batting order to strengthen the team's scoring depth. Such changes could be decisive in building totals capable of challenging New Zealand's bowlers.

New Zealand's bowling attack must also adapt to the spin-friendly conditions. Pacers Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Jacob Duffy, and James Neesham will need to vary their deliveries, including slower balls, cutters, and bouncers, to unsettle Pakistan's batters. Meanwhile, spinners Mitchell Santner and Ish Sodhi will play a key role in controlling the run rate and taking timely wickets to maintain pressure.

Ultimately, the match promises to be a tactical contest between New Zealand's batting resilience and Pakistan's spin mastery. Middle-order contributions, intelligent shot selection, and clever use of the bowling attack are likely to determine which team gains the upper hand. With Super 8 stakes high and the Colombo pitch favoring spin, both sides face a challenging yet exciting battle that could shape the early trajectory of the tournament.

## Afghanistan Coach Jonathan Trott Bids Emotional Farewell After T20 World Cup

Afghanistan's head coach Jonathan Trott grew visibly emotional during his final press conference following the team's campaign in the T20 World Cup 2026. The 44-year-old, who has guided Afghanistan since mid-2022, struggled to contain his feelings as he reflected on his journey with the team and officially announced that this was his last day in charge.

Trott's tenure saw several milestones for Afghanistan cricket. Under his guidance, the team nearly reached the semifinals of the 2023 ODI World Cup and progressed to the knockout stages of the T20 World Cup 2024. These achievements helped elevate the country's standing in international cricket. Despite exiting the 2026 campaign after the group stage, Afghanistan ended on a positive note with a morale-boosting win in their final match.

During the press conference, Trott spoke about the pride he felt in witnessing the growth of his

players, many of whom have become world-class talents despite limited resources and challenging conditions in Afghanistan. His connection with the squad went beyond coaching; it was rooted in admiration for their resilience, dedication, and passion for the game.

Trott revealed that he initially took the coaching role almost by chance but quickly found it immensely rewarding. He emphasized how fulfilling it was to watch players mature not only as cricketers but also as individuals, contributing positively to their families and communities. His approach to coaching focused on building character, discipline, and a team culture that fostered both personal and professional development.

Afghanistan captain Rashid Khan and other teammates paid tribute to Trott during the press conference, acknowledging his significant impact on the team's performance and morale. In a touching gesture, star



batter Ibrahim Zadran dedicated his Player of the Match award in the team's final game to Trott, highlighting the respect and appreciation the players had for their coach.

While Trott did not specify his next professional move, he hinted at potential future coaching opportunities, including

a possible return to coaching roles in England, the country where he had once represented as a player. His departure marks the end of an era for Afghanistan cricket, but his legacy remains evident in the team's growth, professionalism, and rising international stature.

Trott's emotional fare-

well underscores the strong bond he developed with the Afghan squad and his dedication to nurturing cricket in a country that continues to make its mark on the global stage. His tenure has left a lasting impression, both on the players he coached and on the trajectory of Afghanistan cricket as a whole.

## Amir’s Bold Take: From Criticising Abhishek Sharma to Predicting India’s Super 8 Fate



Former Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Amir has stirred conversation in the build up to the T20 World Cup 2026 Super 8 stage with two outspoken comments about the Indian team — first targeting opener Abhishek Sharma, and then making a daring prediction about India's chances of reaching the semifinals.

Amir initially sparked debate by referring to Abhishek as a “slogger,” suggesting the young batter's approach — looking to hit every ball hard — leaves him vulnerable at the highest level. Abhishek, one of India's most destructive T20 hitters in recent years, has struggled for runs in this tournament so far, recording several ducks early in the competition. Amir argued that consistent international bowlers would exploit technical weaknesses, especially if a batter relies too much on power hitting and does not rotate the strike or play more nuanced cricket.

That smack talk did not sit well with many fans, particularly as Abhishek's struggles became a talking point across cricket forums. While some defended him as a talented power hitter who can change games if he finds form, others acknowledged that early failures can happen in pressure tournaments like the World Cup.

But Amir didn't stop with Ab-

hishek. As the Super 8 groups were set, he made a provocative call about India's overall prospects. Despite India entering the Super 8s undefeated in the group stage and being one of the favorites, Amir predicted they would not make it to the semifinals. He backed South Africa and West Indies to qualify ahead of India from their group — a view that surprised many given India's strong record in ICC events.

Amir justified his stance by pointing to the inconsistency in India's batting outside of the marquee win against Pakistan. In his view, apart from that match, the Indian batting unit has shown vulnerabilities that stronger Super 8 opponents could exploit. This comment has added fuel to debates on social media, with fans and commentators divided over whether India's recent form is a genuine concern or simply a narrative being magnified by critics.

While predictions like Amir's are part of the colourful banter surrounding major cricket tournaments, they also underline the pressure on India's batters — especially those struggling for form — to perform when the stakes are highest. The Super 8 stage will test both India's depth and their ability to respond to criticism with results on the field.

## Hey Balwanth Roars with Laughter at Box Office



The hilarious entertainer Hey Balwanth, starring Suhas and Shivani Nagaram, is witnessing a strong theatrical run, with audiences packing cinemas and responding with thunderous laughter. Directed by Gopi Acharya and produced by B. Narendra Reddy under Trishul Visionary Studios, the film released on February 20 and quickly gained blockbuster momentum.

Presented by the successful duo Bunny Vas and Vamsi Nandipati through Nandipati Entertainments and Bunny Vas Works, the film has earned both audience appreciation and positive critical response. With strong word-of-mouth, the team recently celebrated the film's success at a grand success meet, where cast and crew shared their excitement over the overwhelming reception.

Speaking at the event, Vamsi Nandipati revealed that the film received an excellent re-

sponse across all centers. Overseas premieres reportedly collected close to the 100K mark, while premiere shows in the Telugu states ran houseful. He added that collections saw a steady jump from morning shows to matinees, describing the film as "a stress-buster that leaves audiences refreshed." He expressed confidence that the film would reach break-even over the weekend.

Director Gopi thanked audiences for their support, noting that the positive feedback began from paid premieres itself. He said viewers have been calling the film "fantastic" and praised its ability to make audiences laugh non-stop while delivering emotional moments. Producer Narendra Reddy echoed the sentiment, calling the response "extremely encouraging" and labeling the film a blockbuster for their banner.

Cast members also shared their joy. Actress

Sravanti said audiences are not only laughing but also connecting emotionally, urging families to watch the film in theatres. Actor Sudharshan noted that theatres are "shaking with laughter," while Shivani expressed happiness at returning to audiences with a feel-good film that families are enjoying together.

Suhas described the film as the biggest opening of his career, admitting he was surprised by the collections and delighted by reports of audiences laughing throughout the screenings. Veteran actor Nareesh shared an emotional note, saying the theatrical experience was rare and heartwarming, with viewers giving a standing ovation during the climax.

With rising collections and strong family appeal, Hey Balwanth is continuing its successful run, positioning itself as one of the season's most talked-about entertainers.

## Mrithunjay Release Shifted to March 6



The release of the much-anticipated thriller Mrithunjay, starring Sree Vishnu and Reba John, has been officially postponed. The makers announced that the film will now arrive in theatres worldwide on March 6, instead of its earlier scheduled date of February 27.

Sharing the update with fans, Sree Vishnu took to social media with a playful note that read, "The release date has changed, not the thrill," confirming that the suspense-driven film will hit the big screen a week later than planned. The announcement has heightened curiosity among audiences who have been eagerly waiting for the project since the release of its intriguing title teaser.

Directed by Hussain

Sha Kiran, the film has already generated strong buzz within film circles. The teaser hinted at a gripping crime thriller packed with mystery and psychological tension. It also revealed that Reba John will be seen playing a police officer, while brief glimpses of Sree Vishnu sparked speculation among viewers that he may portray a prisoner or a character with a complex past. The makers, however, have kept the storyline tightly under wraps, adding to the intrigue.

Produced by Sandeep Gunnam and Vinay Chilakapati under Light Box Media and presented by Ramya Gunnam, the film promises a slick technical package. The production house earlier described the narrative as a high-stakes

game where every clue and every move carries risk, suggesting a layered investigative plot.

On the technical front, the film features music by Kaala Bhairava, while veteran editor Sreekar Prasad handles editing duties. Cinematography is by Vidyasagar, and production design is by Manisha, raising expectations for a visually engaging cinematic experience.

With its release date now locked for early March, Mrithunjay is poised to enter the summer movie race with strong anticipation. Fans of Sree Vishnu are particularly excited to see the actor in what appears to be a darker, more intense role, while the film's mystery-driven premise continues to build momentum ahead of its theatrical debut.

## Seetha Payanam Records Modest Four-Day Collections

The family drama Seetha Payanam, directed by Arjun Sarja, has posted modest numbers at the box office in its first four days, according to trade estimates. The film, which hit theatres on February 14, generated initial curiosity among audiences, particularly as it marked the lead debut of Aishwarya Arjun opposite Niranjan Sudhindra.

The opening day saw a slow start, with collections remaining on the lower side across major territories. Over the next few days, the film maintained steady but limited momentum, with no significant surge during the weekend. Trade circles suggest that while the film managed to hold its ground without sharp drops, the overall four-day total remained modest compared to expectations for a wide release.

Across key markets in the Telugu states and other southern regions, the film's occupancy levels were described as average, with family audiences forming the core footfall. Industry observers note that the film's emotional theme and clean storytelling have resonated with a section of viewers, but this positive word-of-mouth has

yet to translate into strong box-office growth.

Mounted on a sizeable budget for a mid-scale drama, the film will likely require sustained weekday performance and improved weekend trends to move towards a comfortable recovery zone. Trade analysts believe that the coming days will be crucial in determining whether the film can build gradual momentum through family audiences and repeat viewership.

Despite the muted commercial response, Seetha Payanam has received appreciation from viewers who connect with its heartfelt narrative. The story revolves around a young woman whose life takes a transformative turn after a life-altering incident, leading her on a journey of gratitude, relationships and personal rediscovery.

As the theatrical run continues, the makers remain hopeful that steady word-of-mouth will help the film find a stronger footing in the days ahead. For now, Seetha Payanam stands as a content-driven release that has opened on a restrained note at the box office while aiming for gradual growth.



## Anvesh Account Banned After Controversy



Telugu travel vlogger Anvesh, widely known for his popular "Naa Anveshana" travel videos, has landed in controversy after his Instagram account was banned, triggering widespread discussion across social media. The account, which reportedly had around 1.3 million followers, suddenly disappeared from the platform, leaving fans surprised and sparking debate online.

The action came after a complaint was lodged with the CCS police by actress Karate Kalyani, who alleged that Anvesh had made inappropriate remarks about India in some of his videos. Taking the complaint seriously, police initiated an inquiry into the content shared by the travel vlogger across his social media platforms.

During the investigation, officials reported-

ly found posts that they believed could promote communal disharmony and negatively affect the country's image. As part of the procedure, the police first sent a formal communication to Instagram seeking details related to the account. After reviewing the content, authorities sent a follow-up letter to the platform stating that certain posts were objectionable and requesting that the ac-

count be taken down.

Responding to the police communication, Instagram conducted an internal review of the account and its content. After examining whether the posts violated its community guidelines, the platform reportedly concluded that there were breaches of its policies. Soon after, the account was banned, and it no longer appears in search results, confirming its removal from the

platform.

The development has drawn mixed reactions from the public. While some social media users supported the move, saying creators must be responsible for their content, others raised concerns about freedom of expression and the boundaries of online regulation. The incident has once again highlighted the delicate balance between content moderation and creative freedom in the digital space.

So far, Anvesh has not issued a detailed public statement explaining his side of the story or responding to the allegations. Meanwhile, officials have not clarified whether any further legal proceedings are being considered.

The controversy underscores the growing scrutiny faced by digital influencers in India, where social media reach comes with increasing accountability. With millions of followers and wide-ranging influence, online creators are now under closer watch from both authorities and the public, making compliance with platform rules and legal frameworks more crucial than ever.

## Eesha: A Chilling Thriller Finds New Life on OTT

The horror-thriller Eesha, which released in theatres on December 12, has been gaining renewed attention after its recent arrival on OTT. Directed by Srinivas Manne, the film revolves around a gripping narrative centered on four friends and their unsettling encounter with the supernatural.

Featuring Trigan, Hebah Patel, Akhil Raj and Siri Hanumanthu in key roles, the film initially opened to a positive response in theatres, particularly among fans of the horror genre. After its theatrical run, the movie recently began streaming on Amazon Prime Video, where it has been drawing fresh viewership.

In recent years, horror thrillers are often perceived as low-budget ventures that rely more on jump scares than strong storytelling. However, films like

Masooda have helped shift that perception by emphasizing content and atmosphere. Eesha follows a similar path, focusing on suspense and narrative tension to keep audiences engaged.

The story follows four childhood friends who strongly believe that ghosts and spirits do not exist. Determined to expose so-called godmen who exploit people's fears, they make it a habit to debunk such claims. Their journey takes a dangerous turn when they set out to confront a self-styled spiritual figure named Adidev along the Andhra-Odisha border. What begins as an attempt to prove their point soon spirals into a terrifying experience, as the group encounters situations that challenge their beliefs and test their courage.

One of the film's strengths lies in its at-



mospheric storytelling and gradual build-up of tension rather than relying solely on loud scares. The performances of the lead cast, along with the eerie setting, help create a sense of unease that sustains throughout the narrative. Viewers who

expected a routine horror outing were pleasantly surprised by the film's ability to deliver genuine thrills.

With its OTT release expanding its reach beyond theatrical audiences, Eesha is finding a second wave of appreciation.

For fans of suspenseful horror dramas, the film offers a mix of mystery, fear and emotional undertones, making it a noteworthy addition to the recent lineup of Telugu genre films that aim to balance content with commercial appeal.