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BJP MAINTAINS CAUTIOUS APPROACH ON TIRUMALA LADDU CONTROVERSY, WHY?



The alleged adulteration of ghee used in the preparation of the sacred Tirumala Laddu prasadam has triggered intense political debate in Andhra Pradesh. While opposition parties have been vocal about the issue, the response of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has drawn attention, with critics claiming the party has chosen a relatively restrained approach despite the controversy involving one of Hinduism's most revered temples.

The laddu prasadam, prepared by the temple administration of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams at the famous Tirumala Venkateswara Temple, is considered sacred by millions of devotees who visit Tirumala every year. The issue surfaced after allegations emerged that the ghee used in preparing the laddus was adulterated. According to discussions around a Special Investigation Team (SIT) report, the ghee used was reportedly not pure and may have been mixed with other substances.

The controversy gained momentum after opposition leaders such as N. Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan raised the matter publicly, alleging serious irregularities in the procurement and usage of ghee in

the temple kitchen. They argued that the issue hurt the sentiments of devotees and demanded strict action against those responsible.

However, the ruling YSR Congress Party led by Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has strongly rejected the allegations. Leaders from the party have maintained that while questions about quality may be investigated, there is no evidence to support claims that animal fat was used in the prasadam preparation. The ruling party has accused the opposition of attempting to politicize a sensitive religious matter.

As the issue continued to dominate discussions both inside and outside the legislature, attention turned toward the response of the BJP, which is part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the national level. Unlike the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and the Jana Sena Party, which have actively raised the issue in political forums and public platforms, the BJP has largely limited its response to press statements and official remarks.

Political observers and party insiders suggest that the BJP's restrained stance may be guided by strategic considerations. One explanation cited by some leaders is that the party's cen-

tral leadership, including figures such as Union Home Minister Amit Shah, may not want the controversy to escalate to a level that could shake devotees' faith in the Tirumala temple. Since the temple is among the most sacred pilgrimage sites in the country, any prolonged agitation could potentially create wider religious concerns.

Another theory being discussed in political circles is related to future political equations. Some observers speculate that intensifying the campaign against the ruling government could permanently strain relations between the BJP and the YSR Congress Party, limiting the possibility of political cooperation in the future.

Despite the party's overall cautious approach, some BJP leaders in the state have spoken strongly on the issue. Former state BJP president Somu Veerajulu raised sharp questions about the matter in the Legislative Council and criticized the ruling party over the controversy.

As the debate continues in the political arena, the Tirumala laddu issue has become a significant talking point in Andhra Pradesh politics, reflecting the sensitive intersection of faith, governance, and political strategy.



Tree Replantation Policy Soon: Pawan Kalyan

Amaravati, March 5 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has announced that the state government is planning to introduce a comprehensive policy for the replantation of trees whenever they are removed for development works. The proposed initiative aims to ensure that infrastructure development in the state does not come at the cost of environmental degradation.

Speaking at a public programme, the Deputy Chief Minister stressed that development and environmental protection must go hand in hand. He said that while infrastructure projects such as roads, buildings and public facilities are essential for economic growth, the government must also take responsibility for preserving nature and maintaining ecological balance.

Pawan Kalyan pointed out that in many development projects, large numbers of trees are cut down without proper replantation efforts. Such practices, he said, lead to a gradual decline in green cover, which can have serious environmental consequences including rising temperatures, loss of biodiversity and deterioration of air quality.

To address this issue, the government is planning to bring in a clear and structured policy that will make tree replantation mandatory. Under the proposed guidelines, departments and agencies undertaking development works will be required to plant new trees to compensate for those that are removed. The policy is expected to include specific targets for plant-

ing saplings and ensuring their survival through proper monitoring and maintenance.

The Deputy Chief Minister emphasized that simply planting saplings is not enough. Authorities must ensure that the trees grow and survive in the long term. The proposed policy will therefore focus not only on planting trees but also on their protection, regular care and proper monitoring to ensure successful growth.

Pawan Kalyan also highlighted the importance of public participation in environmental conservation. He called upon citizens, especially youth, to actively take part in tree plantation drives and contribute to increasing the state's green cover. According to him, protecting the environment is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation between the government and the public.

He further stated that the government is committed to implementing sustainable development practices across the state. Environmental considerations will be integrated into major projects so that development activities do not permanently damage natural resources.

Officials said the proposed policy will be prepared after consultations with experts, environmentalists and concerned government departments. Once finalized, it is expected to provide a clear framework for protecting green cover while carrying out development works.

The initiative reflects the government's focus on sustainable development and its commitment to safeguarding the environment for future generations while continuing to promote growth and infrastructure development in the state.

IPS Sunil Naik Questioned in Raghurama Raju Custodial Assault Case

Guntur, March 5 | TPN Bureau

IPS officer M. Sunil Naik appeared before investigators in Guntur for questioning in connection with the alleged custodial assault case involving K. Raghurama Krishnam Raju. The questioning is part of an ongoing investigation into allegations that the former Member of Parliament was assaulted while in police custody in 2021.

Sunil Naik arrived at the Crime Control Station office in Guntur and cooperated with the investigators during the inquiry. Officials questioned him about his role during the arrest and detention of Raghurama Krishnam Raju, who at the time was serving as the MP from Narasapuram.

The case dates back to May 2021 when Raghurama Krishnam Raju was arrested by the state's Crime Investigation



Department on charges related to alleged inflammatory remarks against the then government in Andhra Pradesh. Following his arrest, Raju claimed

that he was physically assaulted and subjected to custodial torture while being held at the CID office.

According to investigators, Sunil Naik was serving as a senior officer in the Crime Investigation Department during that period. It is alleged that he visited the CID office on the night when Raghurama Krishnam Raju was detained. Based on the complaint and subsequent findings, investigators later named him as one of the accused in the case.

The investigation gained momentum after Raghurama Krishnam Raju filed a detailed complaint alleging that several officials were involved in the custodial assault. The complaint included serious charges such as criminal conspiracy, abuse of authority and attempt to cause grievous harm.

During the questioning, investigators reportedly sought clarification on the sequence of

events during the night of the alleged incident, the presence of officials at the CID office and the actions taken while Raghurama Krishnam Raju was in custody. Officials are also examining documentary evidence and statements from other individuals connected to the case.

Authorities said the interrogation is part of a broader effort to establish the facts surrounding the incident and determine whether any violations of law occurred. The investigation team is expected to question several other officials and examine additional evidence as part of the ongoing probe.

The case has drawn significant attention in political and legal circles, as it involves allegations of custodial misconduct involving a senior political leader. Officials stated that the investigation will continue in accordance with legal procedures to ensure transparency and accountability.

Absence from Assembly Not an Excuse: Speaker Ayyanna Patrudu

Amaravati, March 6 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu has stated that legislators cannot use their absence from the Assembly as an excuse to avoid responsibility, stressing that elected representatives must attend the House and actively participate in its proceedings.

Speaking on the importance of legislative functioning, the Speaker expressed concern over the growing tendency of some members to stay away from Assembly sessions. He said MLAs are elected by the people to represent their concerns and raise public issues in the legislature, and there-

fore their presence in the House is essential.

Ayyanna Patrudu noted that the Assembly is the most important democratic platform where government policies are discussed, decisions are scrutinized, and matters affecting the public are debated. If members remain absent during such discussions, they cannot later claim that they were not aware of the issues or decisions taken in the House.

He made it clear that participation in Assembly proceedings is a basic responsibility of every legislator. According to the Speaker, frequent absenteeism not only disrupts the functioning of the House but also weakens democratic values. He said members must respect the Assembly and the mandate given to them by the people.

The Speaker also pointed out that legislators receive salaries and allowances from public funds. Therefore, it becomes their duty to ensure that they attend sessions regularly and contribute meaningfully to discussions that affect the development and welfare of the state.

Ayyanna Patrudu warned that continued absence from the Assembly without valid reasons could invite action under the rules of the House. Maintaining discipline and accountability among members, he said, is necessary for the smooth functioning of the legislative process.

He further emphasized that healthy debates and constructive discussions are vital for strengthening democracy. The Assembly, he said, provides an



opportunity for members from both the ruling and opposition parties to express their views and raise issues concerning the people.

The Speaker urged all legislators to take their responsibilities seriously and ensure their regular participation in the House. By doing so, they can uphold the dignity of the Assembly and effectively represent the interests of the people who elected them.

AP Fertility Rate Falls Sharply, Policy Under Consideration

Amaravati, March 5 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has proposed a new population policy aimed at encouraging families to have more children as the state faces a steady decline in its birth rate. Speaking in the Assembly, the Chief Minister said the government is considering financial incentives and welfare measures to address the emerging demographic challenge.

Naidu said the state's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has fallen below the replacement level required to maintain a stable population. He warned that a sustained decline in birth rates could result in an ageing population and a future shortage of workforce, which may affect the state's economic growth and development.

To address the issue, the government is exploring a proposal to provide financial assistance to families with more children. Under the plan being discussed, parents may receive ₹25,000 at the time of delivery if they have a second child or more. The Chief Minister described the proposal as a step toward ensuring balanced population growth and strengthening the state's demographic profile.

Naidu pointed out that earlier government policies focused mainly on controlling population growth and promoting smaller families. In the past, strict measures were introduced to discourage families from having more than two children. However, he said the demographic situation has changed significantly over time, making it necessary for the government to reconsider its approach.

He also noted that several developed countries are currently struggling with declining birth rates and



rapidly ageing populations. These trends have led to labour shortages and increasing welfare burdens in those nations. According to Naidu, southern Indian states including Andhra Pradesh should learn from these global experiences and plan early to maintain a healthy population balance.

The government is also considering supportive measures for working parents. Officials are discussing improvements in maternity and paternity leave policies, along with other welfare initiatives that could reduce the financial and social pressures faced by young couples.

Naidu emphasized that the proposed population policy will be finalized only after extensive consultations with experts, policymakers and public representatives. The discussions will focus on demographic trends, economic implications and social factors that influence family planning decisions.

Officials believe that a carefully designed population strategy will help ensure sustainable development, maintain a strong workforce and support long-term economic stability in Andhra Pradesh. The government is expected to take a final decision after detailed consultations in the coming months.

AGICL MD S.V.R. Srinivas Reviews Ongoing Infrastructure Works in Amaravati



Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN Bureau:

The Managing Director of Amaravati Growth & Infrastructure Corporation Ltd., S. V. R. Srinivas, conducted an on-site inspection of several ongoing development projects in Amaravati on Wednesday to review the progress of key infrastructure works in the capital region.

During the visit, the Managing Director inspected the MLA and MLC Housing project and the NGO Housing project, where large-scale construction activities are currently underway. He reviewed the pace of the works and interacted with officials and engineers at the project sites. Srinivas directed the concerned departments and executing agencies to maintain high construction standards while ensuring that the projects are completed within the stipulated timelines.

As part of the inspection, he also held a review meeting with representatives of KMV and BSR at the KVM Project Office. During the meeting, discussions were held regarding the status of works related to the construction of residential bungalows for judges, ministers and secretaries. Officials briefed the Managing Director about the current stage of construction and explained various project-related issues. Srinivas instructed them to resolve pending issues promptly to avoid delays and to maintain steady progress in the works.

Later, the Managing Director visited the site of the Andhra

Pradesh High Court complex in Amaravati. He inspected the ongoing development activities in and around the court premises and reviewed the progress of infrastructure facilities being developed in the surrounding area.

Following this, Srinivas also reviewed the progress of the AGC Roads and Underground Utilities works, which form an important part of Amaravati's integrated infrastructure network. These works include the development of major road networks, drainage systems, water supply lines and utility corridors designed to support the future growth of the capital city. Officials explained the current progress and the upcoming milestones planned for the project.

During the review, the Managing Director stressed the need for better coordination among various departments, contractors and implementing agencies involved in the capital city development works. He emphasized that timely execution and strict adherence to approved standards are crucial for the successful development of Amaravati.

Srinivas also directed officials to closely monitor the progress of all ongoing projects and ensure that the works are completed as per the approved schedules. He reiterated that accelerating infrastructure development is essential to transform Amaravati into a well-planned and modern capital city for the state of Andhra Pradesh.

PPA Office to Be Shifted to Rajamahendravaram Soon



Polavaram Project Authority (PPA)

Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN Bureau:

The office of the Polavaram Project Authority will soon be shifted from Hyderabad to Rajamahendravaram in order to facilitate better coordination and monitoring of the ongoing Polavaram Irrigation Project. The relocation is expected to take place within the next four months, according to official sources.

The decision to shift the office was communicated by the Ministry of Jal Shakti to the Chief Executive Officer of the Polavaram Project Authority. The move is aimed at bringing the authority's headquarters closer to the project site so that officials can supervise the progress more effectively and address technical or administrative issues quickly.

The Polavaram Project, one of the largest irrigation projects in India, is currently progressing at a rapid pace. Authorities are working with the goal of completing the project by the end of 2027. Relocating the PPA office closer to the project area is expected to strengthen coordination between central and state agencies involved in the construction and management of the project.

In a related development, the Managing Director of the Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation, P. Pulla Reddy, recently inspected the ongoing construction works of the Polavaram Hydroelectric Power Project. During

his visit, he reviewed major civil works as well as hydro-mechanical and electro-mechanical components associated with the power project.

Officials emphasized the need to complete the hydroelectric power station in parallel with the irrigation components of the Polavaram project. Once operational, the project will not only provide irrigation water to large areas of farmland but also generate electricity and supply drinking water to several regions in Andhra Pradesh.

The shifting of the PPA office to Rajamahendravaram is expected to benefit project monitoring and administrative efficiency. Being located closer to the project site will allow officials to conduct frequent inspections, review construction activities more closely and accelerate decision-making related to the project's implementation.

The Polavaram project is considered a crucial infrastructure initiative for Andhra Pradesh, aimed at enhancing irrigation, supporting agriculture, generating hydropower and improving water management across multiple districts in the state. With the relocation of the PPA office and the ongoing construction works, authorities hope to ensure faster progress and timely completion of this nationally important project.

APCRDA Organises Free Medical Camp as Part of National Safety Week

Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN Bureau:

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority organised a free medical camp at its headquarters in Rayapudi, Amaravati, on Thursday as part of the National Safety Week celebrations. The camp was conducted with the support of Manipal Hospitals to promote health awareness and ensure the well-being of employees working in the organisation.

The medical camp was held at the APCRDA Commissioner's Office located in Rayapudi, under Tulluru mandal. The initiative was organised by the Environmental and Social Management Unit (ESMU) of APCRDA under the guidance of Commissioner K. Kannababu, IAS. The programme was aimed at emphasising both workplace safety and the overall health of employees.

Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Kannababu stated that National Safety Week serves as a reminder that safety is not just a responsibility but a culture that everyone must build together. He said the organisation gives high priority to the health, safety and welfare of its employees. According to him, ensuring that every employee remains healthy and safe is a key responsibility of the institution.

He also appreciated the support extended by Manipal Hospitals in conducting the medical camp. The collaboration, he said, helped provide quality



healthcare services and expert medical advice to the staff members of APCRDA.

During the camp, several medical services were provided free of cost. These included general health check-ups, ECG tests for heart health, eye examinations and personal consultations with doctors. Health guidance and preventive care advice were also provided to the participants.

A total of 239 employees participated in the camp and underwent various medical examinations. The camp was conducted by a team of expert

doctors led by Dr Emmanuel from Manipal Hospitals. The medical team included doctors, nurses and paramedical staff who carried out detailed health screenings and offered necessary medical advice to the employees.

The event was organised by the APCRDA Environmental and Social Management Unit (ESMU). The programme was coordinated under the leadership of ESMU in-charge Anita Vani Bhupati. Health coordinator Jyothi and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) officer Gudivada Gopi Krishna played

key roles in ensuring the smooth conduct of the camp.

Officials said that the initiative highlighted APCRDA's commitment to the health and welfare of its employees along with maintaining workplace safety. The authorities expressed gratitude to the medical team from Manipal Hospitals for their support in organising the camp successfully.

APCRDA officials also stated that similar health and welfare initiatives would be organised in the future to promote employee well-being and strengthen workplace safety practices.

Sensational Details in CID Remand Report of Pranay Prakash

Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN Bureau:

Fresh revelations have emerged in the remand report filed by the Crime Investigation Department Andhra Pradesh against Pranay Prakash, exposing several alleged irregularities linked to the liquor policy and financial transactions during the previous government's tenure.

According to the remand report submitted before the court, CID officials stated that Pranay Prakash played a key role in the alleged liquor scam and acted as an important intermediary in the financial dealings connected to the case. Investigators claimed that he maintained close contact with several individuals who were allegedly involved in managing funds and coordinating activities related to the liquor business.

The remand report revealed that Pranay Prakash allegedly handled large sums of money and facilitated the transfer of funds through multiple channels. Investigators suspect that some of these transactions were carried out through unofficial routes in order to conceal the source and movement of the funds. CID officials also indicated that several financial links and digital records have been identified during the



investigation.

According to investigators, Pranay Prakash is believed to have coordinated with key persons involved in the liquor trade and played a role in arranging financial transactions. The remand report stated that the ac-

cused maintained frequent communication with several individuals connected to the case through mobile phones and other digital platforms. Officials are currently examining call data records and digital evidence to establish the extent of

these connections.

The CID further informed the court that the accused allegedly attempted to avoid investigation at certain stages. Officials said they are continuing to trace the flow of money and identify additional individuals who may have played a role in the alleged scam. The investigation team also pointed out that further questioning of the accused is necessary to uncover additional details related to financial dealings and operational coordination.

The remand report emphasized that the investigation is still in progress and several aspects of the case are being examined, including financial transactions, communication records and possible links with other suspects. CID officials told the court that custodial interrogation of Pranay Prakash would help them gather crucial information and verify the involvement of other individuals.

Authorities stated that the case is part of a larger probe into alleged irregularities in the liquor policy and related financial transactions in Andhra Pradesh. The CID continues to collect evidence and analyze financial records as part of its ongoing investigation into the matter.

Free Bus Travel Facility for AP Class 10 Students During Public Exams

Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN Bureau:

The Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation has announced a free bus travel facility for students appearing for the Class 10 public examinations across Andhra Pradesh. The initiative aims to help students reach their examination centres without transportation difficulties during the exam period.

According to officials, the free bus travel facility will be available from March 16 to April 1, the period during which the SSC public examinations will be conducted in the state. Students appearing for the exams can travel free of cost in APSRTC buses while going to their examination centres and returning home after the exams.

Authorities stated that nearly 6.42 lakh students are expected to appear for the Class 10 public examinations this year. To conduct the examinations smoothly, around 3,415 examination centres have been set up across the state. The free travel facility is expected to benefit a large number of students, especially those coming from rural areas who often need to travel long distances to reach their exam centres.



The facility will be available only in selected categories of buses. Students will be allowed to travel free of charge in Palavelugu, Ultra Palavelugu and City Ordinary buses operated by APSRTC. However, the free travel facility will not be available in express or luxury bus services.

To avail the benefit, students must show their SSC examination hall ticket to the bus conductor. The hall ticket will serve as the proof for free travel. Transport authorities have instructed bus staff to cooperate

with students and ensure that they do not face any inconvenience while traveling to examination centres.

Officials said the decision was taken to support students during the examination period and reduce the financial burden on families. By providing free transportation, the government aims to ensure that students reach their exam centres on time and focus on their studies without worrying about travel arrangements.

The Education Department has also made necessary ar-

rangements for the smooth conduct of the examinations. Students can download their hall tickets online through the official website of the Board of Secondary Education or through the state's WhatsApp governance service.

Authorities advised students to carry their hall tickets while travelling and to plan their journeys in advance. The free bus travel initiative is expected to make commuting easier and help thousands of students attend their examinations without stress.

BJP Leader K. Laxman Criticises Opposition, Highlights NDA Governance



Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU:

Rajya Sabha MP and senior BJP leader K. Laxman addressed a press conference in Vijayawada and spoke about national politics, development initiatives, and the performance of the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

During the press meet, Laxman stated that the Central government under the leadership of Narendra Modi has been focusing on inclusive development and welfare-oriented governance. He said that several flagship schemes introduced by the Centre over the past decade have benefited people across different sections of society, including farmers, women, youth, and marginalized communities.

He emphasized that the Union government has prioritized infrastructure develop-

ment, economic growth, and social welfare programs. According to him, initiatives such as improved connectivity, expansion of highways, and modernization of public services have contributed to strengthening the country's development framework.

Laxman also spoke about the importance of cooperative federalism, stating that the Centre has been extending support to states for developmental projects and welfare programs. He said the NDA government has been committed to ensuring that states receive necessary assistance for infrastructure, welfare schemes, and economic initiatives.

Criticizing opposition parties, Laxman alleged that some

political groups were spreading misinformation about the policies and programs of the Central government. He claimed that instead of contributing constructively to governance, certain opposition leaders were attempting to create confusion among the public for political gain.

The BJP leader further said that the Modi government has worked to enhance transparency and accountability in governance. He pointed out that reforms in various sectors, including digital governance and financial inclusion, have helped improve the efficiency of public administration.

Referring to national development goals, Laxman said that India is moving towards becoming a stronger and more self-reliant economy. He noted that the

government's policies aim to promote innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment, which are essential for long-term growth.

He also highlighted the role of the BJP organization in strengthening its presence across states and connecting with people at the grassroots level. Laxman expressed confidence that the NDA would continue to receive public support due to its focus on development and welfare.

The press conference in Vijayawada was attended by several BJP leaders and party workers. Laxman reiterated that the party would continue to work for the welfare of the people and the overall progress of the nation while exposing what he described as the failures of opposition parties.

Ap to Build 200 Substations with ₹6,000 Crore to Strengthen Power Supply



Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU:

The Andhra Pradesh government has taken up the construction of more than 200 new substations across the state with an investment of about ₹6,000 crore to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply. Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar announced this during the Question Hour in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly.

Responding to questions raised by MLAs Aditi Vijayalakshmi Gajapathiraju, Kolla Lali-

tha Kumari, and Muttumula Ashok Reddy, the minister explained that the government had identified the need for more than 200 new 33/11 KV substations in areas experiencing high electricity load. Steps are being taken to establish these substations in order to strengthen the power distribution network and avoid supply disruptions.

The minister said that in Vizianagaram district, the construction of the Venugopalapuram substation is currently in the re-tendering

stage and is expected to be completed by March 2027. He also informed the House that power transmission line works worth ₹46 crore, including 220 KV and 132 KV lines, have already been completed in the district and are ready to be charged soon. In addition, works for a substation costing about ₹77 crore are currently underway at Venugopalapuram.

During the discussion, MLA Aditi Gajapathiraju requested the government to introduce an underground cabling system in Vizianagaram similar to the system implemented in Visakhapatnam. In response, the minister said that underground cabling involves significant expenditure and that the government would examine the proposal depending on the availability of funds and necessity.

MLA Muttumula Ashok Reddy also urged the government to establish a 220 KV substation in the Giddalur constituency. The minister stated that the proposal would be considered based on the feasibility report prepared

by the electricity department.

Minister Ravi Kumar further explained that after the formation of the coalition government under Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, industrial activity in the state has been increasing. As a result, daily power consumption is expected to rise from 263 million units to around 280 million units.

To meet the growing demand, the government is expanding power infrastructure by constructing 400 KV, 220 KV and 132 KV substations across the state. He added that electricity consumption has also increased due to the expansion of agricultural connections, commercial establishments, industries and residential usage.

The minister emphasized that the government's primary objective is to ensure that there is no shortage of electricity anywhere in the state. Keeping future demand in mind, new substations and power lines are being developed in high-load areas across Andhra Pradesh to strengthen the electricity supply system.

Government Committed to Revealing Truth Behind Tirumala Laddu Issue: Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy

Amaravathi 05.03.2026

Andhra Pradesh Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy stated in the Legislative Council that the state government is determined to uncover the truth behind the controversy surrounding the Tirumala laddu prasadam and ensure transparency in temple administration.

Speaking during a discussion in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council, the minister alleged that several irregularities occurred during the previous YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) government in the procurement of ghee used for preparing the famous laddu prasadam at the Tirumala temple. He said that changes in tender procedures and procurement norms during the earlier regime allowed questionable practices to take place.

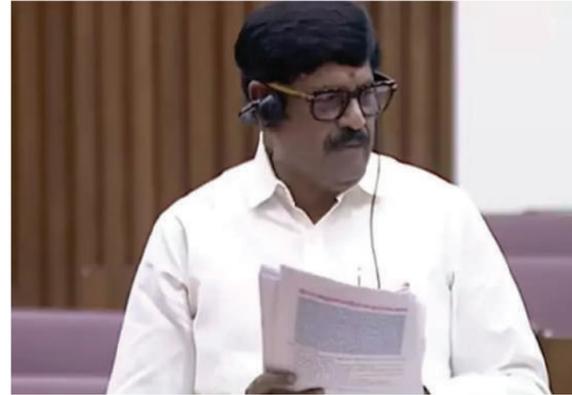
Ramanarayana Reddy accused the previous administration led by former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy of suppressing certain reports related to the quality of ghee used in the preparation of the laddus. According to him, these re-

ports could have revealed important details about the alleged adulteration issue, but they were not made public at the time.

The minister also alleged that tender conditions were altered and procurement guidelines were relaxed to benefit select suppliers. He stated that such decisions compromised the sanctity of the laddu prasadam offered at the temple of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams.

Ramanarayana Reddy further claimed that even some former officials associated with the temple administration had earlier acknowledged lapses in the procurement process. However, he said that leaders of the opposition were now denying those irregularities and attempting to mislead the public.

The minister emphasized that the present government is committed to protecting the spiritual significance of Tirumala and ensuring that temple traditions and practices are maintained with utmost integrity. He said the government would take nec-



essary steps to bring out the facts and ensure accountability if any wrongdoing is proven.

The discussion triggered heated exchanges between members of the ruling alliance and the opposition in the Legislative Council. Members from both sides raised strong objections and accusations during the debate, leading to tense scenes in the House. At one stage, slogan shouting and

protests disrupted the proceedings.

Despite the uproar, the minister reiterated that the government's objective is to maintain transparency in temple affairs and safeguard the faith of millions of devotees who visit Tirumala every year. He assured the Council that appropriate action would be taken based on the findings of the ongoing inquiry into the laddu controversy.

Massive Corruption Alleged in Distribution of Bhagavad Gita Books During YSRCP Rule



Amaravathi 05.03.2026

Allegations of large-scale corruption in the distribution of Bhagavad Gita books during the previous YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) government have surfaced, with Jana Sena Party leader Kiran Royal accusing former officials and leaders of misusing public funds.

Addressing the media in Tirupati, Kiran Royal claimed that irregularities took place in the procurement and distribution of Bhagavad Gita books under certain government-supported initiatives during the YSRCP regime led by former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. He alleged that the scheme, which was meant to promote spiritual values among the public, was misused for financial gains.

According to Royal, the government reportedly spent large amounts of public money on the printing and supply of Bhagavad Gita books, but the process lacked transparency. He alleged that contracts were given to selected agencies without proper procedures and that the cost of printing the books was significantly inflated. Royal said that the books, which could normally be printed at a much lower cost, were purchased at unusually high prices, resulting in heavy losses to the state exchequer.

The Jana Sena leader further claimed that several irregularities occurred in the tendering process. He said that the authorities

failed to maintain proper records regarding the number of books printed, their distribution, and the agencies involved in the project. Royal questioned how public funds were utilized and demanded that the government conduct a detailed investigation into the matter.

He also urged the current Andhra Pradesh government to order a comprehensive inquiry and bring those responsible to justice. According to Royal, if the allegations are proven true, strict action should be taken against officials and individuals who were involved in the alleged scam.

Royal stated that schemes implemented in the name of religion and spirituality should be handled with utmost transparency and accountability. Misusing public money in the name of sacred texts such as the Bhagavad Gita, he said, would hurt the sentiments of people and damage the credibility of governance.

The issue has sparked political debate in Andhra Pradesh, with opposition leaders demanding clarity on the matter. Meanwhile, officials have not yet issued a detailed response to the allegations.

Political observers say that such allegations could trigger further scrutiny of welfare and cultural programs implemented during the previous administration, as the current government continues to review projects carried out under the earlier regime.

Tension During Jagan's Tour in Proddatur as YSRCP Activists Allegedly Overreact



Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU:

Tension prevailed in Proddatur town of YSR Kadapa district during the visit of former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party president Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy after some party activists allegedly resorted to aggressive behaviour, leading to a brief disturbance in the area.

According to reports, the incident occurred when Jagan was touring the region as part of his political visit and interacting with party supporters. A large number of YSRCP workers and supporters gathered along the route to welcome their leader. However, during the program, a few activists reportedly reacted strongly in response to certain situations, creating tension at the venue.

Eyewitnesses said that heated arguments and pushing were seen among some individuals, which briefly disrupted the otherwise orderly gathering. The situation quickly drew the attention of police personnel deployed for security and crowd management during the tour.

Police officials intervened immediately and brought the situation under control to prevent further escalation. Security personnel ensured that the program continued without major disruption and maintained order among the crowd.

Despite the brief disturbance, Jagan continued his visit and interacted with party leaders and supporters in the region. Party workers had gathered in large numbers to express their support for the YSRCP leader during his visit to the town.

Local police sources stated that they were closely monitoring the situation and ensuring that law and order was maintained throughout the tour. Authorities also appealed to political workers to cooperate with officials and avoid any actions that could lead to unrest or inconvenience to the public.

Political tours in the region often attract large crowds of supporters, and authorities usually deploy additional security forces to manage the gatherings. In this case as well, adequate arrangements were made to regulate traffic and crowd movement during the visit.

Meanwhile, the incident triggered discussions in political circles, with some leaders criticizing the behaviour of the activists and urging party workers to maintain discipline during public programs.

However, the situation returned to normal shortly after the intervention of the police, and the tour program continued peacefully. Officials emphasized the importance of maintaining calm and ensuring that political events are conducted in a peaceful manner without causing disturbance to public order.

Nandigama PACS Chairman Badri Attends AP Markfed 13th General Body Meeting in Vijayawada

AMARVATHI 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU

The 13th General Body Meeting of the Andhra Pradesh State Cooperative Marketing Federation (AP Markfed) was held in Vijayawada with the participation of several cooperative leaders, officials and representatives from across the state. Nandigama Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society (PACS) Chairman Kotte Harikrishna, popularly known as Badri, attended the meeting representing the Nandigama cooperative sector.

The meeting was organized at Amma Kalyana Mandapam in Vijayawada under the chairmanship of AP Markfed Chairman Karrotu Bangarraju. Badri participated in the meeting as per the directions of Government Whip and Nandigama constituency MLA Tangirala Soumya and the suggestions of Jana Sena Party coordinator Tamballapalli Ramadevi.

The general body meeting focused on reviewing the functioning of cooperative marketing institutions and strengthening the agricultural marketing network in the state. Discussions were held on improving the performance of cooperative societies and ensuring better marketing support to farmers



through the cooperative system.

AP Markfed Managing Director Manjir Jilani, IAS, addressed the gathering and explained the measures being taken to strengthen cooperative marketing activities. State Commissioner for Cooperation A. Babu, IAS, also participated in the meeting and shared his views on enhancing coordina-

tion among cooperative institutions. State Director of Agricultural Marketing Vijaya Sunitha, IAS, highlighted the importance of strengthening agricultural marketing systems to benefit farmers across the state.

Several AP Markfed directors including Ramakrishna, KC Hari, Shashibhushan Reddy, Tulasi Reddy and Gundubogula Narasimha Rao attended the

meeting. AP Markfed General Manager Srinivasa Rao was also present at the program along with senior officials.

Chairmen of District Cooperative Marketing Societies (DCMS) from different districts participated in the meeting. Among them was DCMS Chairman of the undivided Krishna district Bandi Ramakrishna. District managers, cooperative department officials and PACS chairmen from several regions also took part in the discussions.

The meeting served as an important platform for reviewing the progress of cooperative marketing institutions and discussing future strategies. Key topics included strengthening procurement systems, improving market facilities and ensuring better price support for farmers through cooperative societies.

By attending the meeting, Nandigama PACS Chairman Badri reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening cooperative institutions and supporting farmers in the Nandigama region. The meeting concluded with a collective resolve to enhance the efficiency of cooperative marketing systems and provide better services to farmers across Andhra Pradesh.

Kesineni Shivanath Distributes CMRF Assistance Worth ₹12.24 Lakh to Beneficiaries



AMARVATHI 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU

Kesineni Shivanath, Member of Parliament from Vijayawada, said that the primary objective of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu is to transform the state into a "Healthy Andhra Pradesh" by ensuring that poor people receive timely medical assistance.

Speaking at a programme held on Thursday at the Vijayawada Parliament office in NTR Bhavan at Guru Nanak Colony, the MP distributed Letters of Credit (LOCs) worth ₹12,24,110 under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) to five beneficiaries who require medical treatment. The event was attended by Pothula Balakotayya and Tiruvuru constituency observer Sukasi Srinivas along with other leaders.

Kesineni Shivanath stated that the state government under the leadership of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has been extending financial support to poor and needy people facing health problems through the CMRF scheme. He said the government is not only focusing on development but is also giving top priority to healthcare so that no poor family suffers due to lack of medical treatment.

During the programme, the MP handed over an LOC worth ₹6 lakh to the family members of Bandi Srilakshmi from Cheemalapadu village in A. Konduru mandal of Tiruvuru constituency. She has been suffering from cancer and the financial assistance was sanctioned to sup-

port her medical treatment. Similarly, two other residents from the same village who were injured in a road accident also received assistance. Bhukya Lokesh was given ₹1,77,044 while Bhukya Upendra received ₹2,13,916 under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to cover their treatment expenses.

Another beneficiary, Kalavakollu Durgabhavani from Mallikharjunapeta in Vijayawada West constituency, has been suffering from a brain-related illness. Her family received an LOC worth ₹1,60,225 to help with her medical treatment. In addition, Meka Seshagiri Rao from Vijayawada, who has been suffering from a hernia-related health issue, received an LOC worth ₹72,925 for his treatment.

The beneficiaries and their family members expressed gratitude to MP Kesineni Shivanath for helping them secure financial assistance under the CMRF scheme. They said the support would help them continue their medical treatment without financial stress.

Leaders and party representatives from the Tiruvuru constituency and Vijayawada region also attended the programme, including A. Konduru mandal TDP president Pikla Naik, Vijayawada Market Yard Committee Director Mailapalli Raju and ITDP Vijayawada West constituency president Chaitanya, along with several NDA alliance leaders.

Women Employees Participate Enthusiastically in Cultural and Sports Competitions Organised by APJAC Amaravati

AMARVATHI 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU

The Andhra Pradesh Joint Action Committee (APJAC) Amaravati State Women's Wing successfully concluded a two-day series of sports and cultural competitions held in Vijayawada as part of the celebrations leading up to International Women's Day. The events witnessed enthusiastic participation from women employees working in various government departments across the state.

The competitions were organised at the Sub-Collector's Office premises (Montessori College campus) in Vijayawada. Women employees from different departments, ranging from village secretariat staff to those working in state-level offices, participated together regardless of their positions. The event highlighted unity and teamwork among women employees in the government sector.

Several competitions including musical chairs, singing, dance, quiz contests, rangoli competitions and traditional riddles were organised on the second day. Participants took part with great enthusiasm and showcased their talents in both sports and cultural activities.

In the musical chairs competition, women employees from departments such as APSRTC (PTD), Animal Husbandry, Education, Revenue, CRDA, Civil Supplies, Women and Child



Welfare and Housing participated in large numbers. The competition created a lively atmosphere as participants competed with energy and excitement.

The singing and dance competitions also saw active participation from employees belonging to AP Transco, CFMS, Municipal Administration, CRDA, Animal Husbandry, Information and Public Relations, Revenue, Village and Ward Secretariats, and the

Treasuries and Accounts Department. Women employees from grassroots level offices to state headquarters displayed their artistic abilities during the performances.

The rangoli competition attracted participants from departments including NTR Health, Maritime Board, Panchayat Raj Engineering, Rural Water Supply and Civil Supplies. Women employees from various levels demonstrated

creativity by designing colourful and artistic rangoli patterns.

A traditional attire competition was also conducted, in which women employees from the Revenue, Municipal Administration, Electricity, Village Secretariat and Education departments participated. The event showcased cultural diversity and traditional dress styles.

One of the highlights of the program was the tug of war competition, where women employees from different departments formed four teams and competed enthusiastically. The participants displayed strong determination and team spirit throughout the contest.

APJAC Amaravati Chairman Boppiraju Venkateswarlu stated that the two-day sports and cultural competitions provided a valuable platform for women employees to express their talents and strengthen unity among them. He said the events concluded on the evening of March 5.

Prizes for the winners will be distributed during the state-level International Women's Day celebrations scheduled to be held on March 7 at the Sub-Collector's Office auditorium in Vijayawada. Women and Child Welfare Department Secretary A. Surya Kumari, IAS, and NTR District Joint Collector Ilakkiya S. IAS, will attend the event as chief guests and present the awards to the winners.

VMC Makes Elaborate Arrangements for Maha Kumbhabhishekam

AMARVATHI 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation has completed all necessary arrangements for the upcoming Maha Kumbhabhishekam event to ensure that devotees visiting the city do not face any inconvenience. Commissioner Dhyana Chandra said the civic body has prepared a detailed plan to provide drinking water, sanitation facilities and cleanliness during the three-day religious event.

Speaking about the preparations, the Commissioner stated that special arrangements have been made to supply safe drinking water to thousands of devotees expected to attend the event. A total of five water stock points have been established to ensure a continuous supply of water. In addition, 44 drinking water distribution points have been set up across key locations, where around 1.2 million water bottles will be made available for devotees during the event.

The civic body has also deployed a large sanitation workforce to maintain cleanliness in and around the temple premises and surrounding areas. About



750 sanitation workers will be engaged at the 44 service points to ensure proper waste management and hygiene throughout the programme. To address sanitation needs, the corporation has also arranged 100 temporary toilets at seven different locations in the city.

Commissioner Dhyana Chandra said that special monitoring arrangements have also been made to ensure smooth coordi-

nation of services. Staff members from the secretariat system will be available round the clock at each water distribution point. A command and control room has been set up to monitor the supply of drinking water and sanitation services. Secretariat staff will work in three shifts for 24 hours to ensure that water supplies are replenished immediately from the stock points whenever required.

The Maha Kumbhabhishekam programme will be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In view of the large turnout expected, the Commissioner instructed officials and staff to report to their assigned duty locations early in the morning from 6 a.m. onwards. On Thursday evening, officials briefed the staff regarding their respective duty areas and asked them to inspect the locations in advance to avoid any inconvenience during the event.

The Commissioner also directed supervisory officials to closely monitor the functioning of sanitation teams and water supply arrangements during the event. He stressed that devotees visiting the programme should experience a safe and comfortable environment without any issues related to drinking water or sanitation.

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation expressed confidence that the arrangements would ensure smooth conduct of the Maha Kumbhabhishekam and provide necessary facilities to the large number of devotees expected to attend the religious ceremony in the city.

NDRF FAMEX-2026 to Enhance Disaster Preparedness in NTR District



AMARVATHI 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) will conduct Familiarization Exercise (FAMEX-2026) programmes in NTR district to create awareness on disaster preparedness and response. District Collector Dr. G. Lakshminsha said that proper awareness and advance preparedness are essential to effectively face disasters and minimize damage to life and property.

The Collector chaired a coordination meeting with officials of various departments at the Sri Pingali Venkayya Conference Hall in the Collectorate on Thursday. The meeting was attended by a team from the 10th Battalion of the NDRF stationed at Kondapaluru, led by Inspector Bhupendra Kumar. During the meeting, officials discussed possible disaster-prone areas in the district, especially regions vulnerable to floods. The district covers a geographical area of about 3,31,618 hectares, and several locations within it are considered prone to natural calamities.

The discussion also focused on preparedness measures and the implementation of the District Disaster Management Plan (DDMP). Officials from several departments including Revenue, Fire Services, Panchayat Raj, Police, Transport, Roads and Buildings (R&B), Irrigation, and Agriculture participated in the review meeting. The Collector instructed all departments to coordinate effectively and ensure the successful implementation of the FAMEX awareness programmes.

Dr. Lakshminsha emphasized that the programmes aim to strengthen public awareness and explain the

role of the NDRF during disaster situations. As part of the schedule, awareness and preparedness activities will be conducted across the district for about 15 days. These programmes will be organized in flood-affected areas, schools, colleges, and various industries.

Volunteers from Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), Apada Mitra teams, and National Service Scheme (NSS) will also take part in the programmes with the support of public representatives. Through these initiatives, the administration aims to promote community participation in disaster management and preparedness.

Speaking on the occasion, NDRF 10th Battalion Inspector Bhupendra Kumar said that the FAMEX programmes will be conducted by a 20-member NDRF team to promote safety awareness among the public. He explained that awareness sessions will focus on safety measures to be taken during disasters and the appropriate response during emergency situations.

The team will also educate people about first aid, search operations in collapsed structures, and responses to chemical or biological hazards. In addition, awareness will be created about fire accidents, cyclones, earthquakes, and other natural disasters.

Officials said the primary objective of these programmes is to improve disaster preparedness within the community and ensure that people remain calm and respond effectively during emergencies.

District Revenue Officer M. Lakshminarasimham, Vijayawada RDO T.V. Satish, NDRF team members, and officials from various departments attended the meeting.

A2 Milk and Ghee Can Ensure Sustainable Income for Dairy Farmers: NTR District Collector



Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU:
NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha said that dairy farmers can earn a stable and sustainable income by producing A2 milk and ghee from indigenous cow breeds. He advised farmers to adopt both traditional and modern dairy farming practices and raise native cattle to improve their livelihoods.

The Collector visited the Sai Srinivasa Gosala owned by Chekuri Ramesh Babu at Kambhampadu village in Vatsavai mandal on Thursday. The dairy unit was established in 2021 under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) scheme with a subsidy of ₹15 lakh. At present, the gosala is successfully running with around 55 cows be-

longing to indigenous breeds such as Sahiwal, Gir, Punganur and Ongole.

During the visit, the owner explained that premium quality A2 ghee is being prepared from the milk produced in the gosala. Nearly 60 kilograms of ghee is produced every month and marketed at around ₹3,000 per litre. The ghee is prepared using traditional methods, where milk is first boiled, converted into curd, and then churned to obtain buttermilk which is later processed into ghee. He said the product is in high demand because of its health benefits.

Apart from milk and ghee, the gosala is also producing organic products such as Panchagavya and liquid Jeevamrutham, which are used in natural farm-

ing practices.

Speaking on the occasion, Collector Lakshmisha said the government is taking several initiatives to strengthen the dairy sector in the district and make it more profitable for farmers. He stated that dairy products derived from indigenous cow breeds, particularly A2 milk and ghee, are gaining popularity in the market due to their nutritional and health benefits. This demand provides farmers with an opportunity to earn better prices for their products.

He encouraged farmers to increase their awareness about the benefits of raising native cattle breeds. The Collector also suggested that farmers should make use of the technical guid-

ance provided by the Animal Husbandry Department regarding cattle care, feeding practices and methods to increase milk production.

Lakshmisha directed officials of the Animal Husbandry Department to identify interested farmers and organise them so that they can collectively produce and market A2 milk and ghee. Such initiatives would help improve farmers' income while promoting indigenous cattle breeds.

Nandigama RDO K. Balakrishna, District Animal Husbandry Officer Dr. M. Hanumantha Rao, AD Satya Prasad and other local officials accompanied the Collector during the visit.

ACB Conducts Raids at Pamidi Sub-Registrar Office in Anantapur



Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU:
Officials of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) conducted raids at the Sub-Registrar office in Pamidi of Anantapur district on Thursday. The surprise inspections created a stir in the office as ACB officials began searching records and questioning staff members.

According to sources, ACB Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Prasad Reddy and Circle Inspector Hameed Khan led the raid at the Sub-Registrar office. The officials examined documents and files in the office as part of their investigation. They also questioned employees present at the office to gather information regarding the functioning of the department and possible irregularities.

The raids were reportedly conducted following allegations related to corruption and irregularities in property registration activities. ACB officials are verifying documents and records to identify any illegal practices or misuse of authority. The inspection continued for several hours as officials scrutinized various files and transactions handled by the office.

In addition to the office inspection, ACB teams also carried out searches at the residence of the Sub-Registrar in Anantapur. Officials reportedly locked the house and conducted a detailed search

inside the premises as part of the investigation. The simultaneous raids at both the office and residence indicate that the ACB is examining multiple aspects of the case.

Sources said the ACB team is gathering evidence related to the allegations and verifying financial transactions connected to the office. Officials are also checking whether any illegal money was collected during property registrations or related services.

The raids attracted attention from locals and people visiting the office for registration work. Several individuals gathered near the office premises as news of the ACB inspection spread in the area. However, officials maintained that the operation was part of routine anti-corruption checks carried out to ensure transparency in government offices.

Authorities have not yet released detailed information about the outcome of the searches. The investigation is currently underway, and officials are expected to examine the seized documents and other materials before taking further action.

ACB officials stated that strict action will be taken if any evidence of corruption or irregularities is found during the investigation. Further details about the case are likely to be revealed after the completion of the inquiry.

CPM Praja Chaitanya Yatra Reaches Duvva Village, Leaders Hear People's Issues

Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU:
CPM district secretary JNV Gopalam said that the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is working among the people to resolve public issues. Speaking during the eighth day of the Praja Chaitanya Yatra, which reached Duvva village, he said the party is committed to standing with people and fighting for their rights.

The CPM leaders received a warm welcome from villagers when the yatra entered Duvva village. Party leaders walked through the streets and interacted with the residents, listening to their problems and concerns. Several women submitted petitions highlighting issues related to house sites and housing facilities.

Addressing the gathering, Gopalam criticised the ruling leaders, stating that those who sought votes from the people have now ignored their problems. He alleged that the ruling authorities are focusing on other matters while neglecting the basic needs of the public. He said the CPM has taken up the yatra to raise people's issues



and put pressure on the government to respond.

Gopalam pointed out that the government had earlier promised to provide three cents of land in villages and two cents in urban areas for housing purposes. However, he said the authorities have failed to fulfil these promises even after several years, which he termed as unfortunate. He demanded that the government clarify how many more years it would take to re-

solve the issue of house sites for the poor.

He further stated that the CPM launched the padayatra with the aim of mobilising people and urging the government to address long-pending public issues. According to him, the party will continue to stand by people who are fighting for their rights and basic facilities.

During the programme, representatives also submitted a petition highlighting the prob-

lems faced by Anganwadi workers. Gopalam expressed concern over the alleged pressure and restrictions being imposed on Anganwadi staff by the government, stating that such actions would not be accepted by the public.

He assured that the CPM would continue to support movements and protests related to people's issues. Gopalam also called upon the public to unite and actively participate in the struggle for their rights, adding that the party would remain with the people until their problems are resolved.

The programme was attended by Convener Balla Chinna Veerabhadram and several CPM leaders including Bandaruru Venkateswarlu, Dongala Nageswara Rao, Pindi Subbarao, Thumu Srinu, S. Venkateswara Rao, Ajay Kumari, Poorna, Injeti Srinivas, K. Kranti Babu, Mamidi Ramanjaneyulu, Kaneti Balaraju, M. Anjaneyulu, Bathireddy George, M. Vaikuntha Rao, Karedla Ramakrishna, Pilli Prasadu, Bhupathi Satyanarayana, Venkata Ratnam, Ramu and others.

Undavalli Arun Kumar Raises Safety Concerns Over Polavaram Gap-2 Dam Works

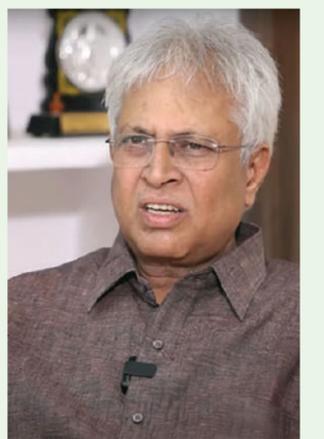
Former MP Undavalli Arun Kumar has written an open letter to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, expressing serious concerns over the ongoing construction works at the Gap-2 section of the Polavaram project's Earth-cum-Rock Fill (ECRF) dam. In the letter, he warned that certain technical deviations in the design and execution of the works could pose potential risks to the safety and stability of the dam structure.

Undavalli stated that the construction of the Gap-2 dam segment appears to be proceeding with significant variations from the originally approved design parameters. He expressed concern that the works are being carried out without obtaining complete and final design approvals, which he termed a risky move considering the magnitude and importance of the Polavaram project.

The former MP also sent copies of the letter to Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and ministers Nara Lokesh, Nimmala Ramanaidu, and Kandula Durgesh, seeking their attention to the issue. He urged the government to carefully review the technical aspects before moving ahead with the construction.

According to Undavalli, the construction activities are reportedly being carried out from a base level of +15.50 meters instead of the riverbed level of +8.32 meters. This difference, he said, raises serious engineering questions about the structural integrity of the dam. He pointed out that a variation of about 7.18 meters in the foundation level could affect the stability of the structure in the long run.

He further cautioned that if sand erosion occurs beneath the foundation, it could result in severe consequences in the future. The former MP also expressed surprise that the works are pro-



gressing rapidly even though the Central Water Commission (CWC) has reportedly raised certain objections regarding the design aspects.

Undavalli mentioned in the letter that there is also a lack of clarity regarding changes in tail water levels and the calculation of freeboard, which are crucial parameters in dam design and safety. He also noted that key design documents from the international consultant AFRY are still pending, which adds to the uncertainty surrounding the project works.

Recalling earlier setbacks, he stated that the failure of the diaphragm wall in the project had already resulted in an additional financial burden of around ₹3,000 crore. In this context, he advised the government not to repeat past mistakes by rushing through construction works.

Undavalli appealed to the state government to thoroughly review and rectify the technical issues before continuing further construction, stressing that the safety of the dam and the interests of the people must remain the top Priority

Nara Lokesh Attends Wedding Ceremony in Mangalagiri

Amaravathi 05.03.2026 TPN BUREAU:
Andhra Pradesh Minister for Education and Information Technology Nara Lokesh attended a wedding ceremony in Mangalagiri on Thursday. The event took place at Gopu Grand Function Hall in the town and was attended by several leaders and supporters of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP).

The wedding was that of Nilesh, son of Kesamaneni Sri Anita, who serves as the TDP president of Duggirala mandal in the Mangalagiri constituency. The ceremony was conducted in a traditional manner with the presence of family members, relatives, political leaders, and well-wishers.

During the event, Minister Nara Lokesh extended his heartfelt wishes to the newly married couple, Nilesh and Aishwarya. He blessed the couple and wished them a happy



and prosperous married life. The minister spent some time interacting with the family members and other guests who attended the ceremony.

The wedding venue witnessed a large gathering of party leaders and local supporters. Several TDP leaders

from the Mangalagiri constituency and nearby areas attended the event to convey their greetings to the couple and their families.

Party leaders expressed happiness over the minister's presence at the function and said his participation added signifi-

cance to the event. They also interacted with the minister and discussed local developments and party activities in the constituency.

The function hall was decorated for the occasion, and the ceremony was conducted in a festive atmosphere. Guests gathered to congratulate the bride and groom and bless them as they began a new chapter in their lives.

Minister Lokesh's visit also drew attention from party workers and supporters in the region, many of whom gathered to greet him during the ceremony. The event concluded with the minister extending his best wishes to the couple and their families.

Several TDP leaders and local representatives were present during the occasion, making the ceremony a notable gathering in the Mangalagiri constituency.

How A Small Group Of London Insurers Brought Shipping In The Strait Of Hormuz To A Halt

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the most strategically important waterways in the world. Every day, millions of barrels of crude oil and vast quantities of liquefied natural gas pass through this narrow channel between Iran and Oman. Nearly one-fifth of the world's oil supply travels through this route, making it a vital lifeline for global energy markets and international trade.

In early March 2026, however, this crucial shipping lane nearly came to a standstill. Tankers stopped sailing, ships waited offshore, and maritime traffic through the strait sharply declined. What made the situation remarkable was that the disruption did not come from a naval blockade or a direct military closure of the waterway. Instead, it was triggered by a decision made thousands of kilometres away in London by a small network of marine insurance firms.

The incident revealed an often overlooked truth about global trade: in modern maritime commerce, insurance can be as powerful as military force.

Modern marine insurance has deep historical roots. Its origins can be traced back to London in the late seventeenth century, when merchants, shipowners and financiers gathered at coffee houses to exchange information about shipping routes and risks. Over time, investors began sharing the financial risks of long sea voyages. They would write their names beneath shipping contracts to indicate the portion of risk they agreed to cover. These individuals became known as "underwriters."

From these early arrangements grew a powerful insurance ecosystem centred in London. Over the centuries, the city became the global hub for maritime insurance, serving the vast majority of ships that operate across international waters. Today, a network of mutual insurance organisations known as Protection and Indemnity clubs



covers most of the world's ocean-going vessels. These clubs insure ships against a wide range of liabilities, including cargo damage, accidents, pollution and crew injuries.

Without such insurance, modern shipping simply cannot function. Ports often require proof of insurance before allowing vessels to dock, banks will not finance shipments without coverage, and cargo owners are unwilling to risk sending goods on uninsured vessels. In practical terms, a ship that cannot obtain insurance is effectively unable to operate.

This reality became clear when tensions escalated in the Middle East following the intensifying conflict involving Iran and Israel. As the situation deteriorated, maritime insurers began reassessing the risks of vessels operating in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

Soon after the conflict esca-

lated, several insurers issued cancellation notices for war-risk coverage for ships passing through the region. War-risk insurance protects vessels against damage or losses caused by conflict, missile strikes, terrorism or other military-related threats at sea.

When this coverage was withdrawn, shipping companies were left with few options. Sailing through the strait without insurance would expose shipowners to enormous financial risk. A single missile strike or attack could destroy a vessel worth tens or hundreds of millions of dollars, not to mention the potential environmental damage and liability claims that could follow.

As a result, many tanker operators decided to halt their journeys. Ships carrying oil and other cargo began waiting in nearby waters, unsure whether it was safe or financially viable to contin-

ue. Within days, traffic through one of the world's busiest shipping corridors slowed dramatically.

The situation demonstrated how financial institutions can exert enormous influence over global trade. While naval forces can attempt to block shipping lanes through military action, insurance markets can achieve a similar outcome simply by declaring a region too risky to insure.

The sudden spike in insurance costs also played a role in the disruption. War-risk insurance premiums for ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz increased sharply as tensions grew. For large tankers worth hundreds of millions of dollars, the cost of insuring a single voyage rose dramatically. In some cases, insurers refused to provide coverage at all, particularly for ships linked to countries directly involved in the conflict.

The structure of the maritime insurance system further amplified the problem. Protection and Indemnity clubs share risks among their members and rely on reinsurance arrangements to protect themselves from large losses. However, the deeper layers of insurance backing often exclude major war-related risks. Once these supporting layers began withdrawing coverage, insurers were forced to cancel policies.

The result was a cascading effect across the shipping industry. Without insurance, shipowners could not sail. Without ships moving through the strait, global oil supplies faced serious disruption.

The episode was reminiscent of earlier conflicts in the region, such as the tanker war during the Iran-Iraq conflict in the 1980s, when merchant ships were frequently attacked in the Persian Gulf. However, there was one key

difference. In those earlier crises, shipping continued despite the risks because insurers continued to provide coverage, albeit at higher prices.

In the 2026 crisis, the withdrawal of insurance happened much more quickly. The strait was effectively paralysed in a matter of days.

Another important factor involved the rights of seafarers working on commercial vessels. International labour agreements classify certain areas of armed conflict as high-risk war zones. When such a designation is applied, crew members are entitled to additional compensation and special protections.

Sailors operating in these regions often receive daily bonuses equivalent to their regular wages, and companies must provide enhanced insurance coverage in case of injury or death. Perhaps more importantly, crew members have the legal right to

refuse to enter dangerous zones and request repatriation at the company's expense.

These labour protections add further complications for shipping companies. Even if insurers are willing to provide coverage, shipowners must still consider whether crews are prepared to sail into a conflict zone.

Governments have begun exploring ways to restore confidence in the shipping routes through the Strait of Hormuz. Some proposals include offering government-backed insurance guarantees or deploying naval escorts to protect commercial vessels. Such measures are intended to reassure insurers, shipowners and crews that the risks can be managed.

For countries heavily dependent on imported energy, the disruption has serious implications. Nations that rely on oil shipments through the strait could face supply shortages and rising energy prices if shipping remains restricted.

The episode also highlights a broader geopolitical reality. In today's interconnected global economy, control over financial infrastructure can be just as powerful as control over territory. Decisions made in financial centres like London can ripple across oceans, affecting trade routes, energy markets and national economies.

For centuries, naval fleets and military power determined who controlled the world's shipping lanes. Today, however, a different kind of power is at play. Insurance firms and financial institutions have the ability to shape global commerce by determining which voyages are considered acceptable risks.

The events surrounding the Strait of Hormuz demonstrate that sometimes the most powerful actors in global trade are not governments or navies, but the quiet underwriters who decide whether a ship can sail at all.

Iran–Israel War: Did Trump Attack Iran Because It Had Nuclear Weapons — Or Because It Didn't?

The latest conflict involving the United States, Israel and Iran has revived one of the most complex and controversial questions in global politics: why did the United States decide to attack Iran? Was it because Iran was close to acquiring nuclear weapons, or because it actually did not yet have them?

At the centre of this debate is the justification given by U.S. President Donald Trump and his administration for launching military strikes against Iran. While the official explanation focuses on preventing a nuclear threat and protecting American allies, critics argue that the reasoning behind the attack reveals deeper strategic calculations.

To understand this debate, it is necessary to examine both the official narrative and the arguments raised by analysts and critics.

The Official Reason: Preventing A Nuclear Iran

The primary justification offered by the Trump administration was that Iran could not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons. For years, Trump repeatedly stated that Tehran must never possess such capabilities, describing a nuclear-armed Iran as a serious threat to global security and stability.

Officials in Washington claimed that Iran had continued enriching uranium and was accumulating material that could potentially be used to build nuclear bombs. According to American officials, the increasing stockpile of enriched uranium raised fears that Iran could eventually de-

velop nuclear weapons.

From this perspective, the military strikes were presented as a pre-emptive action — an attempt to stop Iran before it crossed the threshold of becoming a nuclear-armed state. The United States and Israel argued that waiting until Iran actually produced a bomb would make the threat far more dangerous and harder to contain.

Supporters of the decision say this approach is consistent with decades of American and Israeli policy. Both countries have long argued that Iran's nuclear ambitions pose a serious security threat, particularly to Israel.

In this narrative, the strikes were not simply an act of aggression but a preventive measure intended to stop a potentially dangerous development.

The Pre-Emptive Strike Argument

Another explanation offered by the Trump administration was that Iran was preparing to attack first. Trump said he believed Iran was planning strikes against American interests and that the United States acted to prevent that scenario from unfolding.

According to this argument, the operation was a defensive move designed to stop imminent threats to American forces and regional allies.

However, this claim has been disputed by critics who say there was no clear evidence that Iran was planning an immediate attack on the United States.

Some lawmakers and analysts have argued that the ab-



sence of an obvious "imminent threat" raises serious questions about the legality and necessity of the military action.

This disagreement over whether the strike was defensive or offensive lies at the heart of the controversy surrounding the conflict.

A Strategic Paradox

The debate also highlights a striking paradox in international politics: Iran may have been attacked precisely because it did not yet possess nuclear weapons.

Historically, nuclear-armed states are rarely attacked directly by other major powers. Countries that possess nuclear weapons are considered extremely risky targets because retaliation could escalate into a devastating conflict.

Examples from global politics show that nations with nuclear weapons often gain a powerful deterrent against

military intervention.

Iran, however, occupies a different position. While it has a sophisticated nuclear program and the capability to enrich uranium to high levels, it has not officially demonstrated that it possesses nuclear weapons.

This places Iran in a strategic grey zone. It is powerful enough to raise concerns among its rivals, yet it does not have the full deterrence that comes with possessing nuclear weapons.

From this perspective, critics argue that the attack reflects a difficult geopolitical reality: countries may be most vulnerable before they acquire nuclear deterrence.

Intelligence And Uncertainty

The debate is further complicated by uncertainty surrounding Iran's nuclear program.

Reports have suggested that

Iran accumulated large quantities of enriched uranium, raising concerns that it could theoretically build nuclear bombs if it chose to weaponize the material.

At the same time, intelligence assessments have indicated that Iran had not yet taken the final step of developing an actual nuclear weapon.

This distinction between capability and intent is crucial. Enriching uranium to high levels does not automatically mean a country is building a bomb, but it does shorten the time required to do so if such a decision is made.

For policymakers, this creates a difficult dilemma: whether to act before a weapon exists or risk waiting until the threat becomes irreversible.

Israel's Security Concerns

Israel's concerns also play a major role in the conflict. Israeli leaders have long viewed Iran's nuclear program as a

potential existential threat.

For decades, Israeli officials have warned that Iran's leadership has supported groups hostile to Israel and has maintained strong opposition toward the country.

Because of these concerns, Israeli leaders have consistently argued that preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear-armed state is essential to national security.

From Israel's perspective, waiting until Iran developed a nuclear weapon would carry unacceptable risks.

Questions About The Justifications

Despite these explanations, critics say the justifications for the war appear inconsistent.

Some officials emphasized the nuclear threat as the main reason for the strikes. Others spoke about preventing an imminent attack, while some described the operation as part of a broader effort to weaken Iran's influence in the region.

These shifting explanations have led many observers to question whether the nuclear issue alone explains the decision to launch military action.

Some analysts believe the strikes may also have been influenced by wider strategic goals, including limiting Iran's regional power or forcing political pressure on its leadership.

The Message To The World Regardless of the exact motivation, the conflict sends a powerful message about nuclear deterrence.

It highlights the uncomfortable reality that nuclear weap-

ons can provide a form of security. Countries that possess them are often far more difficult to attack.

This dynamic creates a dangerous incentive. If states believe they are safer once they have nuclear weapons, they may be more likely to pursue them.

In that sense, the conflict may reinforce the very nuclear proliferation fears that policymakers claim they are trying to prevent.

A Question Without A Simple Answer

Ultimately, the question of whether the United States attacked Iran because it had nuclear weapons or because it did not may never have a simple answer.

Both interpretations contain elements of truth.

From the administration's perspective, the goal was to stop a dangerous nuclear program before it became irreversible. From the perspective of critics, the attack demonstrates how countries without nuclear weapons can remain vulnerable to military intervention.

What is clear is that the conflict reflects a deeper tension at the heart of global nuclear politics.

The international community wants to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Yet those same weapons often act as the strongest deterrent against war.

Iran now sits at the centre of that contradiction — a country whose nuclear ambitions triggered a conflict precisely because it had not yet fully realized them.

Amit Shah Launches Mascots 'Pragati' and 'Vikas' for India's First Fully Digital Census in 2027

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday unveiled the official mascots for India's upcoming digital population census scheduled for 2027, marking a significant step in preparations for what is expected to be the world's largest demographic survey. The launch also included the introduction of several digital platforms aimed at modernising and streamlining the census process across the country.

The mascots, named "Pragati" and "Vikas," symbolise female and male enumerators respectively and are meant to highlight equal participation of women and men in the nationwide exercise. Officials said the mascots will serve as the public faces of the campaign, helping spread awareness about the census and encouraging citizens to participate actively in the data-collection process.

The initiative marks the beginning of preparations for India's first fully digital census, which will rely heavily on technology for collecting and managing data. Unlike previous census exercises that largely depended on paper-based surveys, the 2027 census will use digital platforms and mobile applications to record household and population data.

During the event, the government also introduced four key digital tools developed to support the entire enumerating



tion process, from mapping households to monitoring the progress of the census in real time.

One of the platforms is the Houselisting Block Creator, a web-based application that uses satellite imagery to help officials digitally map and create houselisting blocks. This system is expected to improve geographic accuracy and ensure better coverage during the survey.

Another tool is the HLO mobile application, which will allow enumerators to collect and upload data directly through smartphones while conducting field surveys. The use of mobile technology aims to reduce paperwork and speed up the process of compiling information from across the country.

For the first time, citizens will also have the option to provide their details through a

self-enumeration portal. Through this system, members of a household can submit their information online before enumerators visit their homes. After completing the online form, households will receive a unique self-enumeration ID that will later be verified during the door-to-door survey.

The fourth platform introduced is the Census Management and Monitoring System, a centralised digital dashboard that will help authorities track progress, manage logistics, and coordinate operations at district, state, and national levels. The system will enable real-time monitoring of field activities and ensure better efficiency during the nationwide exercise.

The 2027 census will be conducted in two phases. The first phase, known as the Houselist-

ing and Housing Census, will collect information about housing conditions, assets, and household amenities and is scheduled to take place between April and September 2026. The second phase, which focuses on population enumeration, will gather demographic, social, and economic data about individuals across the country and is expected to begin in February 2027.

Officials said the digital approach will make the census faster, more accurate, and easier to manage compared to earlier exercises. The integration of mobile applications, satellite mapping, and online self-reporting tools is expected to significantly reduce delays in compiling and analysing data.

India's census is conducted every ten years and provides crucial data used for policy planning, allocation of government resources, and development programmes. The 2027 census will also play an important role in shaping future governance decisions, including planning for infrastructure, welfare schemes, and representation.

With the introduction of advanced digital tools and the mascots "Pragati" and "Vikas," the government aims to make the census exercise more accessible, transparent, and technologically advanced as the country prepares for its next comprehensive population count.

Military Conflicts Cannot Solve Global Problems, Says PM Modi; Calls For Reform Of Global Institutions



Narendra Modi on Thursday said that military conflicts cannot resolve global problems and stressed the importance of dialogue, diplomacy and reforms in international institutions to address modern challenges. The Prime Minister made the remarks in New Delhi during a joint press statement after holding talks with Alexander Stubb. The discussions covered bilateral cooperation as well as key international issues, including ongoing conflicts in different parts of the world.

Highlighting India's approach to global tensions, Modi said that both India and Finland strongly support the rule of law and peaceful dialogue. He emphasised that disputes between nations cannot be resolved through military action alone and that diplomacy remains the most effective way to address international disagreements.

The Prime Minister pointed to continuing conflicts in regions such as Ukraine and West Asia as examples of why peaceful solutions are urgently needed. He said both countries support efforts aimed at ending hostilities and restoring stability in conflict-affected areas.

Modi also stressed the ur-

gent need to reform global institutions so they can respond better to present-day challenges. According to him, many international organisations were created decades ago and now require significant changes to reflect current global realities.

India has long advocated reforms in institutions such as the United Nations, particularly the United Nations Security Council. The country believes the current global governance structure does not adequately represent emerging economies and developing nations. Modi reiterated that reforms are necessary to make these institutions more inclusive, transparent and effective.

During the meeting, India and Finland also discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in areas such as digital technology, sustainability, innovation and trade. Both sides agreed to enhance collaboration in these sectors as part of their broader partnership.

The leaders also underlined their shared commitment to combating terrorism and addressing global security threats. Modi stated that both nations remain united in opposing terror-

ism in all forms and will continue to work together to counter such challenges.

The Prime Minister noted that the world is currently facing a period of uncertainty, with geopolitical tensions affecting several regions. In such circumstances, he said stronger cooperation between democratic nations and greater respect for international laws and institutions are essential.

The discussions also touched on strengthening ties between India and Europe. Modi said relations between the two regions are entering what he described as a "golden era," with growing cooperation in trade, technology and global governance.

His remarks come at a time of rising global tensions and conflicts. Against this backdrop, Modi reiterated India's long-standing position that dialogue, diplomacy and international cooperation remain the best ways to resolve disputes and ensure lasting peace.

He concluded by emphasising that global stability depends on collaboration among nations and a renewed commitment to strengthening the international system through meaningful reforms.

How Congress Fell In Line And DMK Got Its Way Again In Tamil Nadu

In a carefully choreographed political manoeuvre in Tamil Nadu, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) once again emerged victorious in shaping the state's political landscape — thanks in large part to the support of its alliance partner, the Indian National Congress.

At the heart of this episode lies the selection of candidates and the allocation of seats for upcoming elections. Traditionally, state politics in Tamil Nadu has been dominated by regional parties like the DMK and AIADMK, with national parties such as Congress often playing a supporting role. This time, too, the dynamics were no different.

The DMK, led by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, entered negotiations with its key ally, the Congress, over how to divide the electoral pie. Given the DMK's strong organisational presence across the state, it aimed to claim the most winnable seats. The Congress, facing years of declining influence in Tamil Nadu, found itself in a weak bargaining position.

Rather than push for a greater share of seats, Congress leaders chose to align with the DMK's preferences. Despite internal demands from some party workers for more representation, the party leadership agreed to contest a relatively limited number of



constituencies. This move was seen as a bid to preserve alliance unity and avoid public acrimony.

Senior Congress figures justified their decision by pointing to the alliance's historical success in the state and arguing that contesting fewer seats could enhance the prospects of defeating rival parties. They emphasised that a united front was strategically vital to prevent vote splitting, especially against the AIADMK and other regional contenders.

However, critics within the Congress say the party's leadership capitulated too easily to the DMK's demands. They argue that the Congress failed to leverage its national stature and support base to negotiate better terms. Instead, they

claim the party merely rubber stamped the DMK's choices, reinforcing perceptions that it plays second fiddle to regional partners in states where its own grassroots presence is limited.

For the DMK, the outcome was a political win. The party secured a dominant share of seats in the alliance list and retained control over key constituencies. Analysts say this reflects the reality of Tamil Nadu's political balance of power: the DMK remains the principal force, while the Congress operates as a junior ally.

Observers also note that this pattern has repeated itself over successive election cycles. In the 2019 general election and the 2021 state polls, the DMK led alliance performed well, partly because of

disciplined coordination among partners and a shared strategy to keep nationalist and opposition forces at bay.

The Congress's decision to fall in line, therefore, is not surprising. Tamil Nadu's electoral arithmetic makes it difficult for the party to secure significant victories independently. By aligning closely with the DMK, it hopes to remain relevant in a political ecosystem where regional loyalties and identity politics play a decisive role.

Analysts believe the DMK's strong organisational network, charismatic leadership and strategic seat distribution have helped it maintain an upper hand in alliance negotiations. For the Congress, the challenge remains finding a way to assert itself without destabilising partnerships that are vital for its broader political goals.

In the run up to the elections, this episode highlights the continuing influence of regional parties in shaping political outcomes and the difficult choices national parties like the Congress must make in states where they lack dominant local bases. As Tamil Nadu prepares for yet another electoral contest, the DMK seems poised to carry forward its existing advantage, with its allies — Congress included — aligning behind it.

India Expresses Condolences Over Khamenei's Death, Foreign Secretary Visits Iranian Embassy

India on Thursday conveyed its condolences over the death of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, with Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visiting the Iranian Embassy in New Delhi to formally express the country's sympathies. Acting on behalf of the Government of India, Misri signed the condolence book at the embassy and met Iranian officials, marking New Delhi's first official gesture following the leader's death.

Khamenei, who had served as Iran's Supreme Leader since 1989 and was one of the most influential figures in the country's political and religious establishment, was reportedly killed in a military strike carried out by the United States and Israel earlier this year. His death has triggered strong reactions across the world and heightened tensions in West Asia.

During his visit to the Iranian mission, Misri conveyed India's condolences to the Iranian leadership and people. The gesture was seen as a diplomat-



ic expression of respect toward Iran during a period of mourning. The condolence book has been opened by the Iranian Embassy to allow diplomats, members of the public, and representatives of different organisations to pay their respects to the late leader.

India's outreach comes amid growing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East following the strike that killed Khamenei. The incident has intensified the already volatile situa-

tion in the region, with several countries reacting cautiously and urging restraint. While some nations condemned the attack as a violation of international law, others have called for diplomatic engagement to prevent further escalation.

Alongside the condolence visit by the Foreign Secretary, India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also held a telephonic conversation with his Iranian counterpart, Seyed Abbas Araghchi. The discus-

sion reportedly focused on the evolving regional situation and the need to prevent further escalation in the conflict.

India has consistently maintained a balanced diplomatic approach to developments in West Asia, stressing dialogue and peaceful resolution of disputes. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reiterated that military conflicts cannot provide lasting solutions to complex international issues and that diplomacy remains the most effective path forward.

Khamenei's death marks a significant moment in Iran's modern political history. For decades, he played a central role in shaping the country's domestic and foreign policy, and his influence extended across the wider Middle East.

As Iran observes a period of mourning, India's message of condolence reflects its long-standing diplomatic ties with Tehran and its emphasis on maintaining stable relations in a region crucial to global security and energy supplies.

Three Suspended Congress MLAs Join BJP Ahead Of Assam Assembly Elections



Three suspended Congress MLAs have formally joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Assam just months before the crucial Assembly elections, in a move that could reshape local political dynamics and weaken the opposition ahead of the polls.

The three legislators — who were earlier suspended by the Congress for alleged anti party activities — publicly crossed over to the BJP in a simple ceremony attended by senior party leaders. Their induction into the BJP comes at a time when the ruling party at the Centre is intensifying its campaign in the north-eastern state, aiming to retain power in the Assembly amid strong electoral challenges.

The lawmakers' exit from the Congress underscores ongoing instability within the party's ranks in Assam. Reports had suggested rising factionalism and dissatisfaction among a section of the party's legislators after certain decisions on seat sharing and leadership emerged. These internal disagreements reportedly contributed to their suspension by the Congress leadership in recent months.

By joining the BJP, the three MLAs have bolstered the party's strength in the

Assam Assembly, giving it a numerical advantage over opposition parties. They cited "ideological alignment" with the BJP's development agenda and governance model as key reasons for their decision to defect. They also expressed confidence that the BJP's leadership would take Assam forward and accelerate progress in the state.

The defections are being seen as a strategic gain for the BJP, which has been working to expand its base in the Northeast. Assam has been a key focus area for the party, having won a majority in the state's 2021 Assembly elections and securing significant victories in parliamentary seats during general elections.

For the Congress, the loss of three lawmakers represents a setback ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls. The party has struggled in recent years to retain legislators, with several members either resigning or switching allegiances to rival parties in response to internal disputes and organisational challenges.

Political analysts say defections such as these reflect broader trends in regional politics, where shifting loyalties and tactical alignments often influ-

ence electoral outcomes. In a competitive contest like the Assam elections, even a small number of defections can have a disproportionate impact on vote arithmetic and party morale.

The BJP is expected to capitalise on these developments to project strength and momentum as it campaigns for re-election. Party leaders will likely highlight the defections as evidence of growing support and confidence in the BJP's vision for Assam.

Meanwhile, the Congress leadership is under pressure to regroup, retain its existing cadre and shore up support among voters ahead of what could be a tightly fought election. The party is likely to intensify organisational reforms and outreach efforts to counter the BJP's advance and prevent further defections.

As the election approaches, both parties will focus on consolidating their positions, reaching out to key voter groups and building alliances that could influence the final outcome. The entry of the three suspended Congress MLAs into the BJP adds a new strategic dimension to the contest, highlighting the fluid nature of politics in Assam and the high stakes involved in the state

Nepal Elections 2026: Voting Schedule, Counting Process And When Results Will Be Announced



Nepal is holding crucial general elections on March 5, 2026, in what is being seen as one of the most significant political contests in the country in recent years. The election comes months after widespread youth-led protests forced the resignation of the previous government and triggered the dissolution of parliament, leading to the call for fresh polls.

Voting Time And Election Day Process

Polling across Nepal began at 7:00 am local time and is scheduled to continue until 5:00 pm. Millions of voters lined up at polling stations across the Himalayan nation to elect representatives to the country's federal parliament. Authorities implemented strict security measures nationwide to ensure the smooth conduct of the vote.

According to election officials, around 18.9 million eligible voters are expected to participate in the election. The polling is taking place in a single phase across all constituencies.

These elections will determine the composition of Nepal's 275-member House of Representatives, the lower house of parliament that plays a key role in forming the government and selecting the prime minister.

Electoral System Explained

Nepal follows a mixed electoral system. Out of the 275 parliamentary seats:

- 165 seats are decided through the first-past-the-

post system, where voters elect individual candidates from constituencies.

- 110 seats are allocated through proportional representation, where voters cast ballots for political parties rather than individual candidates.

This system aims to balance direct constituency representation with broader political representation for different communities and groups across the country.

More than 3,400 candidates are contesting the direct elections, while thousands more are listed under party proportional representation lists.

When Will Vote Counting Begin?

Counting of votes will begin soon after polling ends and ballot boxes are transported to designated counting centres. Election authorities have said the process will start once voting materials from all polling stations reach the counting venues.

Because Nepal relies largely on manual ballot counting, the process may take time, especially in remote mountain regions where transporting ballot boxes can be challenging.

When Will Results Be Declared?

Preliminary results from the direct constituency contests are expected within about 24 hours after counting begins. However, the final official results may take longer, as votes under the pro-

portional representation system require additional verification and calculations.

Election officials have indicated that while early trends may emerge quickly, the complete final results for all 275 seats could take several days.

Why These Elections Are Important

The 2026 election is the first national vote since the Gen Z-led protests of 2025, which erupted over issues such as corruption, unemployment and governance failures. The protests eventually forced the government to step down and led to the formation of an interim administration that promised fresh elections.

As a result, the current election is widely seen as a major test of Nepal's political future.

Key Political Players

The contest is largely centred around several major political forces, including:

- The Nepali Congress, one of the country's traditional mainstream parties.
- The Communist Party of Nepal (UML), led by former prime minister K P Sharma Oli, who is attempting a political comeback.
- The emerging National Independent Party, associated with younger leaders and reform-oriented politics.

A prominent figure drawing attention in the election is Balendra Shah, a rapper-turned-politi-

cian and former mayor of Kathmandu who gained popularity among young voters.

Issues Dominating The Campaign

Several key issues have shaped the election campaign:

- Corruption and governance reforms
- Job creation and economic growth
- Youth unemployment
- Relations with neighbouring countries India and China

A large portion of Nepal's electorate consists of young voters, many of whom participated in last year's protests. Analysts believe this demographic could significantly influence the outcome of the election.

What Happens After Results

Once the final results are declared, political parties will begin negotiations to form a government. Since Nepal's political system often produces coalition governments, alliances between parties are likely to play a crucial role in determining who becomes the next prime minister.

The outcome of the election will shape Nepal's political direction and economic policies at a time when the country is dealing with economic challenges and demands for political reform.

For many voters, the 2026 election represents an opportunity to push for change and redefine the future of the Himalayan nation's democratic system.

Two Indians Killed After Oil Tanker Attacked Near Strait of Hormuz Amid Rising War Tensions

Two Indian nationals were killed after an oil tanker was attacked near the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important shipping routes, amid escalating tensions linked to the ongoing conflict involving Iran, the United States, and Israel. The incident occurred near the coast of Oman and highlights the increasing risks faced by commercial vessels operating in the region.

The victims have been identified as Captain Ashish Kumar, a resident of Bihar, and Dixit Solanki from Mumbai. Another crew member from Rajasthan, Dalip Singh, has been reported missing following the attack. Authorities and rescue teams are continuing efforts to determine the full extent of casualties and damage.

The oil tanker involved in the incident, named Skylight, was sailing under the flag of Palau when it was attacked off Oman's Musandam Peninsula, close to the strategic Strait of Hormuz. The strike reportedly took place near Khasab Port, a key location along the busy maritime route used by global oil shipments.

At the time of the attack, the vessel had a crew of 20 members on board, including 15 Indian nationals and five Iranian crew members. Following the incident, most of the crew were rescued and evacuated through a coordinated operation involving maritime authorities and emergency responders.

US Tests 'Doomsday' Minuteman III Missile Capable Of Striking Anywhere On Earth Amid Rising War Tensions

The United States has carried out a test launch of the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), a nuclear-capable weapon often referred to as a "doomsday missile," at a time when tensions are escalating in the Middle East due to the ongoing conflict involving Iran, Israel and the US.

The test was conducted from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California and involved an unarmed missile equipped with two test re-entry vehicles. The launch was part of a long-standing testing programme designed to ensure the reliability and effectiveness of the United States' nuclear deterrent systems.

Officials from the US Air Force Global Strike Command clarified that the missile test had been scheduled years in advance and was not carried out as a direct response to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. However, the timing of the launch has drawn global attention because it coincided with heightened military tensions between Iran and the US-Israel alliance.

During the test, the missile travelled thousands of kilometres across the Pacific Ocean before reaching a predetermined target near Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Military engineers and defence experts collected data during the flight to evaluate the missile's accuracy, reliability and overall performance.

The Minuteman III is one of the most powerful weapons in the United States' nuclear arsenal. It is a land-based ballistic missile stored in underground silos and forms a key component of the country's nuclear



Officials said the bodies of the two deceased Indian crew members were badly burned due to the explosion and fire that followed the strike. One of the victims was reportedly found inside the captain's cabin after rescue teams reached the vessel.

The attack is believed to be linked to the wider conflict in the Middle East, which has intensified in recent weeks. Several ships have reportedly been targeted in or near the Strait of Hormuz as hostilities escalate, raising concerns about maritime safety in one of the world's most sensitive trade corridors.

The Strait of Hormuz is a critical global energy route through which a significant portion of the world's oil supply is transported every day. Any disruption in this narrow waterway can have serious consequences for global energy markets and international trade.

Following the latest attacks, maritime authorities and shipping companies have issued warnings to vessels traveling

through the Gulf region, urging them to exercise extreme caution. Some ships have reportedly changed their routes or delayed their voyages due to the increased risk of attacks.

Insurance costs for ships passing through the area have also risen sharply as the security situation continues to deteriorate. Shipping operators are closely monitoring developments while assessing the safety of crew members and vessels operating in the region.

The attack on the Skylight tanker highlights the broader global impact of the ongoing conflict. As tensions continue to rise across the Middle East, concerns are growing about the safety of commercial shipping, the stability of global oil supply chains, and the risks faced by seafarers working in high-risk waters.

Authorities are continuing investigations into the attack while efforts remain underway to locate the missing crew member and assess the full scale of damage caused by the incident.

Iran-Israel War Disrupts Global Air Travel: Air India, IndiGo, Emirates And Qatar Airways Cancel Or Delay Flights

The escalating conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States has significantly disrupted international air travel, forcing several major airlines to cancel or delay flights across the Middle East and beyond. The crisis has affected carriers such as Air India, IndiGo, Emirates, Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways, leaving thousands of passengers stranded and creating widespread travel uncertainty.

Airspace closures across multiple Middle Eastern countries have been the primary reason for the disruptions. Nations including Iran, Iraq, Israel, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates imposed restrictions on their airspace after military strikes and missile attacks intensified in the region. As a result, airlines have been forced to suspend flights, reroute aircraft or delay departures for safety reasons.

Several international airlines temporarily halted operations to destinations in the Gulf region. Indian carriers were among the most affected because many of their international routes pass through West Asian airspace. Air India suspended flights to and from key destinations including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Qatar while monitoring the evolving security situation.

IndiGo also reduced or suspended several international routes that normally pass through the Middle East. The airline offered passengers the option to rebook their tickets or receive full refunds for cancelled flights. Similar advisories were issued by other airlines operating in the region.



Gulf carriers such as Emirates, Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways also suspended or scaled down operations temporarily. These airlines rely heavily on major transit hubs such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha, which are among the busiest international aviation centres in the world. With regional airspace either closed or considered unsafe, airlines were forced to significantly cut schedules or reroute flights.

Although some airports in the Gulf region later reopened partially, operations remain limited. Airlines have been running only select services, mainly to help stranded passengers return home or reach safe destinations. Authorities have warned that flight schedules could continue to change depending on developments in the conflict.

The disruption has had a ripple effect on global travel. Flights

that normally pass through Middle Eastern airspace—including routes between Europe, Asia and North America—have had to take longer alternative routes. These diversions increase travel time, fuel consumption and operational costs for airlines, while also causing delays for passengers.

Aviation experts say the conflict has created one of the most significant air travel disruptions in recent years. With several key flight corridors closed simultaneously, airlines have had limited options to safely reroute aircraft. As a result, thousands of flights worldwide have been cancelled or delayed.

Passengers travelling to or from the Middle East have been advised to check their flight status before heading to the airport. Airlines have also urged travellers to stay updated through official websites, mobile applica-

tions and customer service channels for the latest information regarding cancellations or schedule changes.

To reduce inconvenience for affected travellers, most airlines are offering flexible options such as free rescheduling, travel vouchers or full refunds depending on the booking conditions.

As tensions in the region continue, aviation authorities and airlines are closely monitoring the situation. While limited services have resumed in some areas, a complete return to normal flight operations may take time and will largely depend on how the geopolitical situation evolves and when regional airspace can safely reopen.

For now, the conflict in the Middle East continues to have far-reaching consequences not only for global politics and security but also for international travel and the aviation industry.



triat, which also includes submarine-launched ballistic missiles and strategic bombers.

The missile has a range of roughly 13,000 kilometres, allowing it to strike targets almost anywhere in the world within a relatively short period of time. It travels at extremely high speeds and is capable of carrying nuclear warheads far more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima during World War II.

Originally, the Minuteman III system was designed to carry multiple independently targetable warheads that could strike different locations from a single launch. However, under international arms-reduction agreements between the United States and Russia, the missile currently carries only a single warhead.

Although the launch was part of a routine testing programme, it has attracted considerable attention because it occurred during a period of escalating geopolitical tensions. The conflict in the Middle East has intensified in recent weeks following military actions involving Iran, Israel and the United States.

The situation has raised concerns about the potential for a broader regional conflict, prompt-

ing many countries to closely monitor military developments in the area.

Military experts say regular missile tests are an essential part of maintaining a nation's strategic defence capabilities. Such tests help ensure that the weapons systems remain operational and allow engineers to analyse performance data that can be used for upgrades and modernization.

Over the decades, the United States has conducted hundreds of similar missile tests as part of its strategic defence programme. These launches are typically unarmed and are carried out strictly for testing and evaluation purposes.

However, given the current geopolitical climate, the latest test has sparked discussions among analysts who believe it could send a strong signal of military readiness. Demonstrations of advanced military capability often carry symbolic importance, particularly during periods of global tension.

As the conflict in the Middle East continues to unfold, developments such as this missile test are likely to remain under close scrutiny by governments, military analysts and international observers concerned about global security and stability.

Sensex Surges Over 1,100 Points as Markets Rebound; Nifty Reclaims 24,800



Indian stock markets staged a strong recovery on Thursday, with benchmark indices rebounding sharply after several days of losses. The rally was driven by improved global sentiment, strong buying in heavyweight stocks, and easing fears around geopolitical tensions in West Asia.

The BSE Sensex surged by more than 1,100 points during the session, reclaiming the 80,000 level, while the Nifty 50 climbed back above the crucial 24,800 mark. This marked one of the biggest single-day gains in recent weeks and helped the markets snap a three-session losing streak.

Relief After Recent Market Decline
The rebound came after Indian equities had experienced significant volatility earlier in the week. Escalating tensions in the Middle East and rising crude oil prices had triggered a sharp sell-off in the previous sessions, sending benchmark indices to lower levels.

Investors had grown cautious amid fears that geopolitical tensions could disrupt global oil supply and push inflation higher. Since India imports a large portion of its crude oil needs, any sharp increase in energy prices tends to weigh heavily on market sentiment.

However, signs of possible diplomatic engagement and hopes of easing tensions between global powers helped calm investor nerves. This shift in sentiment encouraged investors to return to equities, triggering a broad-based rally across sectors.

Global Cues Boost Investor Sentiment

Positive global market cues played a key role in supporting the rally in Indian equities. Asian and U.S. markets showed signs of recovery amid reports suggesting potential de-escalation in the geopolitical conflict.

The improvement in global risk appetite helped restore confidence among investors, encouraging fresh buying across several sectors in the domestic market.

Additionally, expectations that oil supply disruptions may remain limited also helped stabilize market sentiment. Concerns over energy markets had previously triggered fears of rising inflation and economic pressure on oil-importing nations like India.

Heavyweight Stocks Lead the Rally

Large-cap stocks were among the biggest contributors to the market rebound. Shares of Reliance Industries, one of the most influential stocks in the benchmark indices, recorded strong gains during the session. The rally in the company's shares was supported by positive brokerage views that suggested the recent decline in the stock had been excessive.

Strong buying interest in Reliance and other heavyweight companies helped lift the overall market. Gains in energy, metals, and infrastructure stocks also provided significant support to the indices.

Metals and Commodity Stocks

Shine

Metal stocks were among the top performers during the rally. Companies such as Hindalco and National Aluminium witnessed notable gains, supported by rising global aluminium prices and supply concerns in global markets.

Supply disruptions linked to geopolitical tensions have pushed commodity prices higher, which in turn benefited metal-producing companies listed on Indian exchanges.

The rally in these sectors contributed significantly to the broader market momentum and helped strengthen investor confidence.

Broader Market Participation

The rally was not limited to a few heavyweight stocks. A majority of listed shares advanced during the session, reflecting broad participation across sectors.

Out of thousands of stocks traded on the National Stock Exchange, a large number registered gains. This indicates that the rebound was widespread and not confined to a handful of large-cap companies.

Sectors such as metals, oil and gas, real estate, and pharmaceuticals posted notable gains, while some defensive sectors like IT and FMCG witnessed relatively modest movement.

Rupee Recovery Adds Support

Another factor supporting market sentiment was the recovery in the Indian rupee. The domestic currency strengthened against the U.S. dollar after recent weakness triggered by global uncertainties.

A stronger rupee tends to attract foreign institutional investors, as it reduces currency risk for global funds investing in Indian equities. The improvement in the currency also contributed to the overall positive mood in the market.

Analysts Remain Cautious

Despite the strong rally, market experts have advised investors to remain cautious. The broader geopolitical situation remains uncertain, and further escalation in the Middle East could once again affect global markets.

Oil prices remain a key factor to watch. Any sharp increase in crude prices could reignite concerns about inflation and economic stability, particularly for energy-importing countries like India.

Analysts believe that while the current rally reflects relief in the markets, volatility may persist in the near term.

Outlook for Investors

Market experts suggest that investors should focus on fundamentally strong companies and avoid excessive risk during periods of geopolitical uncertainty. Diversification and careful portfolio management are likely to be important strategies in the current environment.

While short-term fluctuations may continue, the long-term outlook for the Indian economy remains relatively strong due to stable

SEBI Seeks Details From Force Motors Over Earnings Disclosure and Share Price Movement



The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has asked Force Motors to provide detailed information regarding its financial results announcements and the movement of its share price during specific periods. The request is part of the market regulator's ongoing efforts to ensure transparency and compliance with disclosure norms in India's capital markets.

The Pune-based automobile manufacturer informed stock exchanges that it had received a communication from SEBI seeking clarification on certain financial announcements made by the company. The regulator has asked the company to provide details about the timing and sequence of events related to these disclosures, along with information about the movement in its share price during the same period.

According to the company's statement, SEBI has specifically asked for

clarification regarding an earlier announcement made on February 12, 2024. That announcement contained the company's unaudited standalone and consolidated financial results for the quarter and the nine months ending December 31, 2023. The regulator has asked the company to explain the price movement in its shares between February 15 and February 20, 2024.

In addition to this, SEBI has also sought details related to another financial results announcement made on October 29, 2024. This announcement included the company's unaudited financial performance for the quarter and half-year ending September 30, 2024. As part of its inquiry, the regulator has requested a detailed chronology of events connected to this disclosure.

SEBI has also asked for information regarding insiders who may have had access to the financial data before it became public. This includes de-

tails of designated persons within the company who were aware of the results before the official announcement. The regulator has also requested extracts from the company's structured digital database as well as records from its internal management information systems.

Such information helps regulators determine whether sensitive financial data was handled appropriately and whether any unusual trading activity occurred before the information was officially disclosed to the market.

Requests of this nature are part of SEBI's standard oversight process aimed at preventing insider trading and ensuring that listed companies follow strict disclosure rules. By examining the timeline of corporate announcements and stock price movements, the regulator can assess whether all investors had access to the same information at the same time.

Force Motors stated that it will respond to SEBI within the permitted timeframe and provide the information requested. The company also clarified that the communication from the regulator does not indicate any confirmed violation or non-compliance at this stage.

The company further noted that there has been no material impact on its financial operations as a result of the regulatory query. It also confirmed that no penalties, restrictions, or sanctions have been imposed by SEBI in connection with the matter so far.

Following the disclosure about the regulator's inquiry, shares of Force Motors witnessed some volatility during trading. The stock declined from its intraday highs as investors reacted cautiously to the development.

Market experts say that regulatory queries related to stock price movements around financial announcements are not

uncommon. Regulators often review such situations to ensure that companies comply with disclosure norms and that no group gains an unfair advantage through early access to price-sensitive information.

Force Motors is a well-known Indian automobile manufacturer that produces a range of vehicles including commercial vehicles, utility vehicles, and engines. The company has longstanding collaborations with global automotive brands and holds a notable position in India's commercial vehicle market.

For investors, the key takeaway is that SEBI's current communication is limited to seeking clarification and additional information. The company has stated that it is cooperating fully with the regulator, and the matter will likely remain under review until SEBI examines the company's response and decides whether any further action is required.

Rupee Volatility Puts Focus on Banking System Liquidity and RBI's Policy Tools

Recent volatility in the Indian rupee has brought renewed attention to liquidity conditions within the country's banking system and the measures available to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to stabilize the currency.

The rupee recently touched a fresh intraday low of around ₹92.30 against the US dollar amid rising crude oil prices and concerns over the expanding conflict in West Asia. The surge in global oil prices—moving above \$80 per barrel—has placed pressure on several emerging market currencies, including India's, as the country relies heavily on imported crude oil.

Despite the currency's weakness, analysts say the Indian banking system currently has sufficient liquidity to absorb short-term volatility. The RBI is believed to have intervened in both the spot currency market and offshore forward markets to prevent a sharper fall in the rupee.

Liquidity Surplus Provides Cushion

Data indicates that the banking system continues to operate with a comfortable liquidity surplus. According to the latest available figures, the surplus liquidity in the system stands at about ₹2.1 lakh crore. This surplus helps ensure that financial markets remain stable even during periods of currency stress.

Liquidity within the banking system plays a crucial role in determining how effectively the central bank can manage exchange-rate volatility.



When liquidity conditions are healthy, the RBI has greater flexibility to intervene in currency markets without disrupting domestic financial stability.

Strong Forex Reserves Offer Support

Another important factor supporting the rupee is India's substantial foreign exchange reserves. The country's reserves were estimated at over \$723 billion in late February. Even after minor declines in recent weeks, the reserves remain among the largest globally and provide a strong buffer against external shocks.

Large forex reserves allow the central bank to sell dollars in the market when the rupee comes under pressure. This helps smooth excessive currency movements and maintain investor confidence.

RBI Using Multiple Liquidity Tools

To maintain adequate liquidity in the financial system, the RBI has al-

ready deployed several policy tools. These include open market operations (OMOs) and dollar-rupee buy-sell swap auctions.

The central bank injected around ₹2 lakh crore into the banking system through multiple liquidity measures during December and January. One of the key steps included a \$10 billion dollar-rupee buy-sell swap with a three-year maturity.

In such a swap operation, the RBI buys dollars from banks in exchange for rupees, immediately injecting liquidity into the system. At the same time, it agrees to sell those dollars back at a predetermined premium at a later date. This allows the central bank to manage both currency volatility and liquidity levels simultaneously.

Interest Rate Environment

The RBI has also eased monetary policy over the past year. Since February

2025, the central bank has reduced interest rates by a total of 125 basis points, bringing the repo rate down to 5.25 percent.

Lower interest rates generally encourage borrowing and support economic activity, while also helping maintain adequate liquidity within the financial system.

Recent indicators suggest that short-term money market rates have even slipped below the policy repo rate, highlighting the presence of ample liquidity in the banking system.

Global Factors Continue to Influence Rupee

Despite these supportive conditions, the rupee remains vulnerable to global developments. Currency markets are currently being influenced by geopolitical tensions, oil price movements, and shifts in global capital flows.

The ongoing conflict in West Asia has heightened

concerns about potential disruptions to global energy supplies. Higher oil prices tend to weaken the rupee because they increase India's import bill and widen the current account deficit.

In addition, global investors often move funds toward safer assets during periods of geopolitical uncertainty, which can lead to outflows from emerging markets.

RBI's Balancing Act

Economists believe the RBI will continue to strike a careful balance between stabilizing the rupee and maintaining adequate liquidity in the banking system.

Intervening heavily in the currency market can sometimes reduce domestic liquidity, so the central bank often offsets this by injecting funds through other policy tools.

Experts expect the RBI to remain active in currency markets if volatility persists, using its combination of foreign exchange reserves, liquidity management tools, and monetary policy measures to maintain stability.

Outlook

While the rupee may remain under pressure in the near term due to global uncertainties, analysts believe India's strong forex reserves and surplus liquidity provide a significant cushion.

As a result, even if the currency experiences fluctuations, the banking system is expected to remain stable and well-supported by the RBI's policy framework.

“Soggy Paper Straw” Memes Go Viral as Global Tensions Dominate Social Media



As global tensions and war-related headlines dominate conversations online, social media users have turned to humour to express their frustration and disbelief. In a surprising trend, the humble paper straw has become the internet's latest symbol of irony, with memes about “soggy paper straws” spreading rapidly across platforms like X, Instagram and Reddit.

The viral meme trend highlights what many users see as a contrast between individual environmental efforts and large-scale geopolitical conflicts happening around the world. In many of these memes, people joke about being encouraged to adopt eco-friendly habits—such as using paper straws instead of plastic—while world leaders simultaneously escalate political and military tensions.

One widely shared meme shows a person struggling to drink through a soft, collapsing paper straw while news headlines about global conflicts appear in the background. The humour lies in the apparent contradiction: individuals are asked to make small lifestyle changes to protect the planet, while major powers appear to engage in actions that could cause far greater damage on a global scale.

Another popular meme jokes that while global leaders talk about serious geopolitical confrontations, ordinary people are trying to “save the planet” with paper straws that quickly become soggy and difficult to use. The relatable frustration has struck a chord with

many internet users, leading to thousands of shares and reposts.

The trend also taps into a long-running complaint about paper straws themselves. Introduced by many restaurants and cafes as an alternative to plastic in order to reduce environmental pollution, paper straws have often been criticised by customers for becoming soft and unusable after only a few minutes. Some social media users humorously claim that the straws start dissolving before they can even finish their drinks.

While the jokes may seem lighthearted, they also reflect how people use humour to deal with serious world events. During periods of political tension, economic uncertainty or conflict, the internet often becomes a place where satire and memes help people process overwhelming news.

Memes have long served as a form of social commentary, allowing users to express opinions and frustrations in a humorous way. In this case, the soggy paper straw has become an unexpected symbol representing the gap many people feel between small individual actions and much larger global issues.

Ultimately, the viral trend shows how quickly everyday objects can turn into powerful internet symbols. What began as a simple joke about paper straws has evolved into a broader reflection on modern life, responsibility and the way people react to major events in the digital age.

Indian Woman Celebrates Holi With Japanese Landlord In US, Viral Video Warms Hearts



A heartwarming video of an Indian woman celebrating Holi with her Japanese landlord in the United States has gone viral on social media, drawing praise for its message of friendship and cultural connection. The clip captures a joyful moment between the two women as they celebrate the festival of colours together, despite being far away from home.

The video was shared on Instagram by the Indian woman, who revealed that she currently lives alone in the US. With no friends or family nearby to celebrate the festival, she expected to spend Holi quietly. However, her elderly Japanese landlord stepped in to make the day special by joining her in the celebration.

In the short clip, the two women can be seen smiling and laughing as they gently apply organic yellow colour to each other's cheeks. The simple yet meaningful celebration reflects a warm bond between the tenant and her landlord. At one point in the video, the Indian woman affectionately refers to her landlord as “pookie,” highlighting the close and friendly relationship they share.

While sharing the video online, the woman explained that her landlord joined her for the festival because she knew she was living alone in the country. She also described the elderly woman as “the sweetest,” expressing gratitude for the thoughtful gesture that made her Holi celebration memorable.

The video quickly gained attention online, with thousands of viewers praising the landlord's kindness and willingness to embrace another culture. Many social media users said the clip was a beautiful reminder that festivals have the power to bring people together regardless of nationality, language or background.

Several commenters admired the warm relationship between the two women. Many described the moment as wholesome and heartwarming, saying it perfectly reflected the true spirit of Holi—a festival that celebrates joy, togetherness and friendship.

Others said the video highlighted how small acts of kindness can have a big impact, especially for people living far away from their families. Some viewers even joked that the landlord should one day visit India to experience a grand Holi celebration in its full spirit.

Holi, often known as the festival of colours, is one of the most widely celebrated festivals in India. It marks the arrival of spring and symbolises the triumph of good over evil. Traditionally, people celebrate by throwing coloured powders, sharing sweets and spending time with loved ones.

For those living abroad, festivals can sometimes feel lonely. However, this touching moment between an Indian tenant and her Japanese landlord shows how compassion and companionship can turn even a simple celebration into a truly special memory.

“Activa Uncle” Helps Stranded Biker in Bengaluru Traffic, Wins Hearts Online

In a heartwarming incident that has captured the attention of social media users, a stranger in Bengaluru came to the rescue of a biker whose motorcycle broke down in the middle of heavy traffic. The simple yet thoughtful gesture has been widely praised online, with many calling it a “true Bengaluru moment.”

The story was shared by a Reddit user who described the stressful experience he faced while returning from a site visit. The man, an architecture student, said his motorcycle suddenly displayed an “Engine Temp High” warning before shutting down completely on a busy road between KR Puram and Kasturinar. With traffic building up around him, he had no choice but to push the bike along the crowded street.

The situation quickly turned exhausting. Surrounded by impatient vehicles and constant honking, the biker struggled to move the heavy motorcycle through the congested road. The challenge became even tougher when he had to push the bike uphill on a bridge while trying to navigate through slow-moving traffic.

Just when the situation seemed overwhelming,



help arrived unexpectedly. An elderly man riding a Honda Activa scooter noticed the struggling biker and stopped to check on him. After learning about the problem, the stranger immediately offered to help push the motorcycle to the nearest service centre.

The two then worked together to move the stalled bike through the busy Kasturinar-Ramamurthy Nagar stretch. The older man carefully assist-

ed the rider as they made their way through the traffic, helping guide the bike around obstacles and vehicles on the road. At one point, they even had to maneuver around a stalled bus blocking part of the route.

During the journey, the pair also had a brief conversation about modern motorcycles and how their sensors can sometimes cause the engine to shut down when certain issues are detected. Despite the

difficulty of the situation, the unexpected help made the experience much less stressful for the stranded rider.

After some effort, they eventually reached a service centre in Banaswadi. However, before the biker could properly thank the man or offer him something in appreciation, the stranger quietly left the spot without waiting for recognition.

Reflecting on the moment later, the rider said

the act of kindness left a strong impression on him. In the midst of chaotic city traffic, the stranger's willingness to stop and help reminded him that compassion still exists in everyday life.

The story has since resonated with many people online, who praised the anonymous “Activa uncle” for his generosity and shared similar experiences of strangers stepping forward to help when it mattered most.

Google Techie's Rs 1.43 Lakh Monthly Expense Breakdown In Bengaluru Sparks Online Discussion

A young professional working at Google has gone viral on social media after sharing a detailed breakdown of her monthly expenses while living in Bengaluru. The video, posted by 24-year-old techie Pooja Narula, revealed that she spent about Rs 1.43 lakh in February, sparking discussions about the rising cost of living in India's technology hub.

In the video, Narula explained that her spending included both regular living costs and several one-time expenses that pushed the total higher than usual. She began by listing her fixed monthly costs, which make up the basic portion of her budget while staying in the city.

According to her breakdown, her rent for a room in Bengaluru came to Rs 22,400 per month. She also spends about Rs 2,800 on services such as hiring a maid and a cook. Utility bills, including electricity and other basic services, add another Rs 2,000 to her monthly expenses.



Apart from essential costs, Narula also shared details about her lifestyle spending. She revealed that she usually spends around Rs 2,000 every weekend on social activities, which totals about Rs 8,000 a month. These outings include meeting friends, dining out and other leisure activities.

However, she clarified that February was not a

typical month for her financially because it included several additional expenses. During the month, she travelled home, which resulted in Rs 16,000 spent on flight tickets and another Rs 2,000 on airport cab rides.

The tech professional also had to move to a new house during the same period. The relocation process cost Rs 3,000 for mov-

ers and packers, and she paid a security deposit of Rs 66,600, which significantly increased her total spending for the month.

In addition to these costs, Narula mentioned that she spent around Rs 20,000 on dining plans and gifts for friends, further adding to the overall amount. After calculating all these expenses, she concluded that her total

spending for February reached approximately Rs 1.43 lakh.

While acknowledging that the figure may appear high, she explained that many of the expenses were temporary and not part of her regular monthly budget. Once those one-time payments are cleared, she expects her future monthly spending to be much lower.

The video quickly attracted attention online, with many viewers sharing their thoughts about the high cost of living in Bengaluru. Some people were surprised by the total amount, while others pointed out that relocation costs and housing deposits can significantly increase expenses in a single month.

The post has since sparked wider conversations on social media about budgeting, lifestyle spending and the financial realities faced by young professionals living in major metropolitan cities.

Man Rescued After Getting Trapped in Manchester Phone Box While Trying to Order Kebab



him tried to help by pulling on the door and attempting to force it open from outside, but their efforts were unsuccessful. The door appeared to be locked with a mechanism that could only be opened using special keys typically held by maintenance workers or telecom engi-

neers. As a result, the man remained trapped while his friends continued trying to free him.

The incident reportedly lasted for more than an hour. During that time, passersby began to notice the strange situation, and some gathered nearby to watch. A few even record-

ed videos of the unusual scene on their phones as the man waited inside the phone box.

At one point, the trapped man attempted to remove a glass panel from the lower part of the booth in an effort to escape. Although he managed to loosen the panel, it

still did not provide enough space for him to climb out safely.

With no other option left, his friends eventually called the fire brigade for assistance. Firefighters soon arrived at the scene and assessed the situation before working to open the stuck door. After a brief effort, they successfully forced the door open and freed the man from the booth.

Once he stepped out, the man appeared both relieved and slightly embarrassed by the ordeal. He reportedly thanked the firefighters who had come to help him and shook hands with them before leaving the area.

The unusual incident has since amused many people online. Social media users have joked about the situation, with some wondering whether the man ever managed to get the kebab he had originally tried to order. Others simply found the story a humorous reminder that even simple plans can sometimes lead to unexpected situations.

Fernando Alonso Could Risk Permanent Nerve Damage Due To Aston Martin's 2026 F1 Car

Fernando Alonso could face the risk of permanent nerve damage if he spends too long behind the wheel of Aston Martin Aramco Formula One Team's 2026 Formula One car, according to a startling revelation by renowned engineer Adrian Newey.

The warning comes just ahead of the opening race of the Formula One World Championship season. Newey revealed that severe vibrations coming from the team's new car are creating serious physical strain for the drivers.

According to Newey, Alonso believes he cannot drive more than around 25 consecutive laps before risking nerve damage in his hands due to the intense vibrations transmitted through the car. His teammate Lance Stroll reportedly faces an even lower tolerance, estimating that he could only manage about 15 laps before reaching a similar risk level.

The issue is linked to the car's power unit and chassis, which are producing unusually strong vibrations that travel directly into the cockpit and steering wheel. These vibrations then pass through the drivers' hands and arms, potentially leading to numbness, nerve strain or long-term injury if exposure continues for extended periods.

The alarming situation has forced the team to consider limiting the number of laps their drivers complete during the season-opening race at the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne.



Team officials are reportedly exploring the possibility that the car may not complete the full race distance if the problem is not resolved in time.

Engineers believe the vibrations are largely coming from

the car's new power unit, which has been integrated into a redesigned chassis for the 2026 regulations. During testing sessions, the vibrations were strong enough to create reliability issues, with certain external com-

ponents loosening due to the constant shaking.

Beyond mechanical concerns, the biggest worry remains the impact on the drivers. Continuous exposure to such vibrations can damage nerves in the hands and arms, especially during long race stints that typically last more than an hour.

The team has already attempted several adjustments to reduce the vibration levels. Engineers have made modifications to the engine operation and other technical components in an effort to limit the intensity of the vibrations reaching the cockpit. However, these efforts have not yet fully solved the problem.

As a precaution, Aston Martin may adopt a cautious strategy during the opening race weekend. The team could restrict the number of laps driven or operate the car below its maximum performance levels while engineers continue working on a long-term fix.

The situation represents a difficult start to the season for Aston Martin, which had entered the year with high expectations following major investments in infrastructure and technical leadership.

Despite the setback, the team remains hopeful that further engineering adjustments will resolve the issue. Until then, protecting the health and safety of the drivers will remain the top priority as the team navigates the early stages of the new Formula One season.

Lakshya Sen Enters Quarterfinals Of All England Championships After Gritty Win

Lakshya Sen delivered a determined performance to reach the quarterfinals of the prestigious All England Open Badminton Championships with a hard-fought victory over Ng Ka Long Angus in Birmingham.

The Indian shuttler showed remarkable resilience and tactical sharpness to overcome his opponent in a thrilling three-game contest. Sen won the match 21-19, 21-23, 21-10 in the Round of 16, securing his place in the last eight of one of badminton's most prestigious tournaments.

The contest proved to be a demanding battle, with both players engaging in long rallies and high-intensity exchanges. Sen started strongly and narrowly took the first game 21-19, displaying excellent control and precision during crucial points. However, Ng Ka Long fought back in the second game, edging past the Indian in a closely contested finish to level the match at one game apiece.

Despite losing the second game, Sen quickly regained momentum in the decider. The



24-year-old raised the intensity of his attacking play and dominated the final game with aggressive strokes and strong court coverage. He raced ahead with a commanding lead and comfortably closed out the match 21-10, sealing victory in emphatic fashion.

Sen's progress in the tournament continues a strong campaign at the historic event held annually in Birmingham, widely regarded as one of the most

prestigious competitions in the sport. The Indian player has previously enjoyed success at the tournament, most notably finishing as the runner-up in the 2022 edition, which remains one of the highlights of his career.

Earlier in the tournament, Sen had already produced a major upset by defeating top seed Shi Yuqi in a gripping three-game encounter. That victory boosted his confidence and set

the tone for an impressive run in the competition.

With this latest win, Sen has kept India's hopes alive in the men's singles category at the tournament. His aggressive style, swift footwork and ability to control long rallies have made him one of the standout performers in the competition this year.

The tournament, which began in 1899, is considered badminton's oldest and most prestigious championship. Winning the title is regarded as one of the greatest achievements in the sport.

Sen will now look to maintain his strong form as he prepares for the quarterfinal clash, where the level of competition is expected to be even tougher. A victory in the next round would bring him closer to another deep run at the historic tournament and potentially a chance to compete for the title.

For Indian badminton fans, Sen's progress in Birmingham offers renewed hope of another memorable performance on one of the sport's biggest stages.

Harry Kane To Miss Bayern Munich Match Against Borussia Mönchengladbach Due To Calf Injury



Harry Kane will miss FC Bayern Munich's upcoming match against Borussia Mönchengladbach after suffering a minor calf injury.

Bayern head coach Vincent Kompany confirmed that the England captain picked up a knock to his calf and has not fully recovered in time for the Bundesliga clash. While the injury is not believed to be serious, the striker will be rested as a precaution to avoid aggravating the issue.

Kompany explained that Kane was close to being availa-

ble for selection but ultimately did not have enough time to regain full fitness before the match. The coach emphasised that the club's medical team is monitoring the situation closely and expects the striker to return soon.

Kane has been in exceptional form this season and remains Bayern Munich's top scorer. Since joining the German giants, the striker has played a key role in their attacking success and has consistently delivered goals in both domestic and European competitions.

The England international recently scored twice in Bayern's dramatic victory over Borussia Dortmund, a performance that further strengthened the team's position at the top of the Bundesliga standings. His consistent scoring run has also placed him among the league's leading goal scorers this season.

Kane's absence will be a setback for Bayern, given his importance to the team's offensive play. His ability to score goals, create chances and lead the attacking line has made him one of the most influential players

in the squad.

However, Bayern still have several attacking options who could step in to fill the gap for the match against Mönchengladbach. The team will aim to maintain its strong league form despite the temporary absence of its star striker.

The club is also dealing with other injury concerns within the squad. Hiroki Ito and Alphonso Davies are currently sidelined, adding to the challenges for the coaching staff as they prepare for the upcoming fixtures.

Despite these issues, Bayern Munich remain in a strong position in the Bundesliga title race. The club currently holds a comfortable lead at the top of the standings and will look to continue their winning momentum.

The medical team is optimistic that Kane's injury is minor and that he will recover quickly. The decision to rest him is primarily aimed at ensuring he returns fully fit for the important matches ahead.

With crucial fixtures approaching in both domestic and European competitions, Bayern will be hoping their star striker returns soon to continue his impressive goal-scoring form and help the team maintain its push for major trophies this season.

Gautam Gambhir Attends Arjun Tendulkar's Wedding Ahead of Crucial T20 World Cup Semifinal



India's head coach Gautam Gambhir was spotted attending the wedding of Arjun Tendulkar in Mumbai just hours before India's high-stakes semifinal clash against England national cricket team in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026.

The wedding ceremony took place on March 5 in Mumbai and drew several prominent personalities from the cricketer fraternity and the entertainment industry. Arjun, the son of cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar, tied the knot with entrepreneur Saaniya Chandhok in a grand celebration attended by close friends, family members and well-known figures from the sports world.

Gambhir, who currently serves as the head coach of the India national cricket team, arrived at the event dressed in traditional attire along with his wife. His presence quickly caught the attention of fans and media because the wedding took place just hours before India's crucial semifinal match against England.

The timing of Gambhir's appearance became a talking point among cricket followers, given the significance of the upcoming knockout match. India is scheduled to play the semifinal at the iconic Wankhede Stadium later in the evening, making it one of the most important games of the tournament for

the defending champions.

Reports suggest that the wedding celebration was held at the same hotel where members of the Indian team were staying ahead of the semifinal. This made it convenient for Gambhir and possibly a few other team members to attend the ceremony briefly without interrupting preparations for the big game.

Arjun Tendulkar, 26, has been building his cricket career over the past few years. A left-arm fast bowler and lower-order batsman, he has played in the Indian Premier League and domestic cricket. Earlier in his career, he represented Mumbai before moving to Goa in domestic competitions. His wedding marked a significant personal milestone for the Tendulkar family and drew widespread attention within the cricketing community.

The celebration also turned into a star-studded gathering, with several former and current cricket stars reportedly in attendance, highlighting the close relationships among members of India's cricket fraternity.

Meanwhile, the focus quickly shifted back to the field as India prepared to take on England in the semifinal of the tournament. With a place in the final at stake, the match is expected to be one of the most intense encounters of the competition.

Finn Allen Credits 'India Factor' For Record 33-Ball Century In T20 World Cup Semifinal



Finn Allen delivered one of the most explosive innings in T20 World Cup history, smashing a stunning 100 off just 33 balls to power New Zealand national cricket team into the final of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026. After the match, the opener revealed that recent experience playing in India played a crucial role in his record-breaking knock.

Allen's breathtaking innings came during the semifinal against South Africa national cricket team at the iconic Eden Gardens. Chasing a target of 170, New Zealand stormed to victory with remarkable ease, reaching the total in just 12.5 overs to seal a dominant nine-wicket win. The explosive century not only helped the Black Caps reach the final but also became the fastest hundred in the history of the men's T20 World Cup.

The 24-year-old batter credited New Zealand's recent tour of India as a key factor behind his success in the high-pressure match. According to Allen, the team had already gained valuable experience by playing several matches in Indian conditions before the tournament. That exposure helped them understand the nature of the pitches and adjust their approach accordingly.

Allen explained that playing on Indian surfaces earlier gave the New Zealand players useful insights into how the ball behaves on subcontinental pitches. The team had developed a clear strategy based on those experiences, which allowed them to attack confidently during the semifinal.

His innings was a display of fearless hitting and exceptional timing. Allen hammered boundaries all around the

ground, combining powerful sixes with crisp fours to dismantle the South African bowling attack. By the time the innings ended, he had struck a total of 18 boundaries, leaving the opposition with little chance of making a comeback.

New Zealand's chase began with an aggressive approach from the start. Allen and opening partner Tim Seifert built a rapid partnership that put South Africa under immediate pressure. Seifert also contributed with a quickfire half-century, ensuring that the momentum never shifted away from the Black Caps.

South Africa had earlier posted 169 runs in their allotted 20 overs, a total that initially appeared competitive in a knockout game. However, New Zealand's explosive batting made the target look far less challenging.

Allen's remarkable innings drew widespread praise from fans, teammates and cricket experts. The knock also highlighted the growing influence of aggressive power-hitting in modern T20 cricket, where matches can turn dramatically within a few overs.

With the victory, New Zealand secured their place in the final and now await the winner of the other semifinal between India national cricket team and England cricket team. Allen said the team is focused on maintaining momentum and delivering another strong performance in the title clash.

The young opener's historic century has already become one of the defining moments of the tournament and a reminder of how quickly a T20 match can change when a batter finds his rhythm.

Nandamuri Balakrishna, Gopichand Malineni Film NBK 111 Officially Goes on Floors



After months of anticipation and fan excitement, the much talked about collaboration between Nandamuri Balakrishna and filmmaker Gopichand Malineni has finally kicked off production. The movie — currently referred to as NBK 111 — began shooting on Thursday night, marking the official start of one of Tollywood's most eagerly awaited projects of the year.

The launch event was a quiet yet significant affair, held with key members of the cast and crew in attendance. Rather than a loud public ceremony, the makers chose an intimate start to principal photography, underlining a professional focus on the work ahead. The first clap and inaugural shot were captured late in the evening, signalling that the team is now fully geared up to bring the story to life.

NBK 111 brings together two of the industry's big names: Balakrishna, known for his larger than life screen presence and loyal fan base, and Gopichand Malineni, one of Telugu cinema's most reliable directors of mass action entertainers. Their collaboration has generated considerable buzz, with fans and trade

circles alike anticipating a hard hitting commercial film that plays to the strengths of both the actor and the director.

Although plot details have been kept tightly under wraps, industry insiders suggest that the film will be a high octane action drama with a strong emotional core — a formula that has worked well in recent pan Telugu successes. The production team has reportedly lined up an experienced technical crew to support the project, including top tier cinematography, choreography and stunt coordination teams that promise to deliver impactful visuals and thrilling sequences.

Balakrishna's fans have expressed their excitement across social media, celebrating the commencement of NBK 111 with trending hashtags and fan art. Many devotees of the star have posted messages of support and good wishes, reinforcing the massive anticipation surrounding the project. Meanwhile, trade analysts see this venture as a strategic step for Balakrishna's ongoing streak of big budget entertainers.

The film is also expected to bring in a strong ensemble cast, although of-

ficial confirmations are still awaited. Casting updates are likely to be revealed in the coming weeks as the team progresses further into production. Music too — always a major component in Balakrishna's films — is expected to be handled by a leading composer, adding to the overall excitement.

With shooting now underway, the focus will shift to how quickly and smoothly the production develops. The makers are understood to be planning a structured shoot schedule, with multiple schedules lined up across key locations. At this stage, there are strong expectations that NBK 111 could target a theatrical release in late 2026 or early 2027, potentially timed with a major festival window to maximise box office impact.

For now, the commencement of NBK 111 is being celebrated as a solid moment for Tollywood — a film that promises to add another memorable chapter to the careers of both Nandamuri Balakrishna and Gopichand Malineni. Fans are watching closely as the journey of this highly anticipated entertainer officially begins.

Sonu Sood Steps In To Help Stranded Passengers In Dubai Amid Travel Disruptions

Actor Sonu Sood has once again come to the aid of people in distress by extending support to passengers stranded in Dubai due to recent travel disruptions. The actor, known for his humanitarian efforts, personally intervened to assist travellers facing challenges abroad, providing essential help at a time when many were struggling far from home.

Reports indicate that a large number of passengers found themselves stranded at Dubai airport after flights were cancelled or delayed because of ongoing disruptions in air travel. With limited support available on the ground and mounting uncertainty about when flights could resume, travellers were left in difficult and stressful conditions.

Upon learning about the situation, Sood — who has a history of assisting Indians abroad during crises — immediately got involved to provide relief. He reached out to those affected and offered support in coordinating logistics, including arranging accommodation and helping passengers navigate travel arrangements until they could return home or continue their journeys.

The actor's intervention was widely appreciated by the stranded passengers, many of whom expressed gratitude for his prompt assistance. Sood's efforts included helping families with children, elderly travellers, and those facing additional hardships due to the unexpected travel complications.



Sood's support comes at a time when a number of countries have experienced travel chaos due to factors such as flight cancellations, airspace restrictions and shifting airline schedules. Passengers caught in these disruptions often struggle to find immediate help, especially when away from home, making individual acts of assistance like Sood's particularly meaningful.

Over the years, Sonu Sood has built a reputation not just as an actor, but as a humanitarian who consistently steps in during challenging times. He first rose to national prominence for his work during the COVID 19 pandemic, when he helped thousands of migrant workers return to their hometowns and

assisted families with essential needs. His efforts during that period drew widespread praise and earned him a lasting place in the public's admiration.

Since then, Sood has continued to extend support to people facing crises, offering help during emergencies, natural disasters, and travel difficulties. His work often includes arranging shelter, transportation, medical assistance and other essentials for those in need.

In the current situation in Dubai, his assistance has made a significant difference for many travellers who were unsure of what to do amid extended layovers and disrupted flight plans. Passengers who received help from Sood noted that his involvement offered not just prac-

tical support but also a sense of reassurance during an uncertain time.

Sood's ongoing commitment to helping people in distress — whether in India or abroad — reinforces his image as a public figure who uses his influence and resources for social good. His latest efforts in Dubai once again highlight the impact that individual initiative can have in easing the hardships faced by people amid unforeseen circumstances.

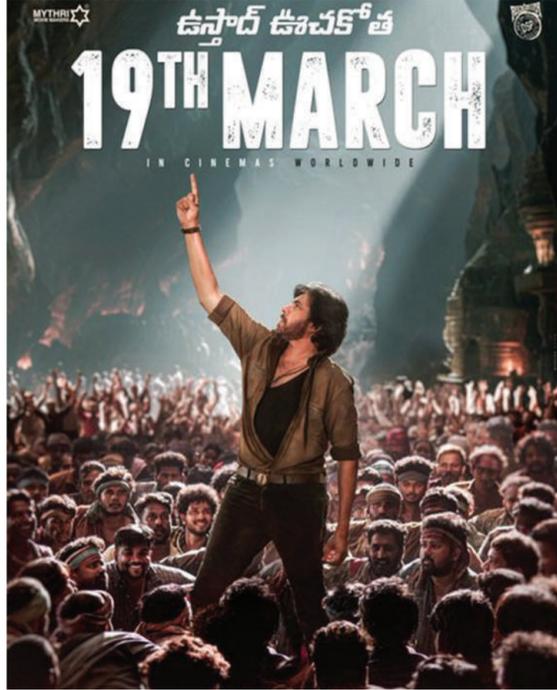
As travel disruptions continue to affect people across regions, many have praised Sood for stepping forward and offering assistance, demonstrating how one person's actions can provide relief and hope when it is needed most.

Pawan Kalyan's Ustaad Bhagat Singh Preponed to March 19 Ahead of Ugadi

The much-anticipated Telugu action drama Ustaad Bhagat Singh, starring Pawan Kalyan and directed by Harish Shankar, will now release a week earlier than initially planned, with the new theatrical release date set for March 19, 2026. The change comes as several films originally scheduled in the March release window have been postponed, leaving a prime slot during the festive period of Ugadi and Ramzan that the makers are eager to utilise.

Originally slated for March 26, 2026, the film will now reach audiences sooner, providing fans with an extended theatrical window and a better chance for strong box-office returns. The production house, Mythri Movie Makers, officially announced the updated release plan, generating excitement among audiences ahead of the Ugadi festival.

Ustaad Bhagat Singh marks a reunion between Pawan Kalyan and director Harish Shankar, following their previous successful collaboration. The movie is expected to be a high-voltage mass entertainer, blending action and drama in a style designed to appeal to mainstream Telugu cinema fans. Alongside Pawan Kalyan, the film features actors Sreeleela and Raashii Khanna in pivotal roles, supported by a strong ensemble



cast. The decision to advance the release date was influenced by the postponement of Toxic, a multilingual film starring Yash,

which moved to a June release due to logistical and market considerations. With the March 19 slot now available, the Ustaad Bhagat Singh team seized the op-

portunity to capitalise on the holiday season and reach a wider audience.

The film's music has added to the anticipation. Celebrated composer S. Thaman has been brought on board to deliver the background score, complementing songs composed by Devi Sri Prasad. The combination of a popular lead actor and a strong musical team has heightened expectations among fans.

March 19 also sees the release of other major films, including Dhurandhar 2, setting the stage for a significant box-office clash. Despite the competition, the Ustaad Bhagat Singh team remains confident that the festive release and Pawan Kalyan's star power will attract audiences in large numbers.

With its official release date now confirmed, excitement is building among fans and trade analysts, who view the film as one of Tollywood's biggest events of the year. The advanced launch ensures Ustaad Bhagat Singh occupies a prime slot in the summer calendar, giving it the best opportunity for a successful box-office run.

Ustaad Bhagat Singh is scheduled to premiere in theatres worldwide on March 19, 2026, marking a high-octane start to the festive season with action-packed entertainment and mass appeal.

Kona Venkat's Band Melam Release Postponed — New Date To Be Announced Soon

The release of the much anticipated Tollywood film Band Melam, written and produced by popular screenwriter Kona Venkat, has been postponed, disappointing fans who were eagerly waiting for its theatrical debut.

Band Melam was scheduled to hit screens in the near future, and early buzz around the movie had generated strong interest among audiences and industry watchers alike. However, the makers have now decided to delay the release, citing the need for additional time to perfect the film's post production work and promotional activities.

In an official announcement, Kona Venkat expressed gratitude to fans for their enthusiasm and support. He explained that while the team had hoped to meet the original release timeline, they ultimately agreed that delaying the launch would ensure the movie reaches audiences in its best possible form. He emphasised that the additional time will allow editors, technicians and creative departments to fine tune the final product and elevate its overall quality.

The decision to postpone the release of Band Melam came after careful discussions between the film's creative team, producers and distributors. Such choices are not uncommon in the industry, especially when filmmakers feel that more time is needed to deliver a compelling cinematic experience.

While an official new



release date has not yet been announced, insiders suggest that the makers are exploring alternative dates in the coming months that may coincide with an upcoming festive window or holiday period, which traditionally boost box office performance.

Fans have reacted to the postponement with mixed emotions on social media. Some supporters expressed disappointment at the delay, while others praised the team for prioritising quality over expediency. Many also took the opportunity to share their high expectations for the film, believing the extra work will result in a stronger final product.

Band Melam is expected to offer a blend of entertainment elements that appeal to a wide audience. Although plot details and the full cast have not been officially disclosed, industry analysts believe the movie will showcase vibrant storytelling, engaging charac-

ters and a soundtrack designed to complement the narrative.

Kona Venkat, known for his successful track record as a writer and producer, has been actively involved in the project. His involvement has only increased viewer interest, as fans anticipate a fresh and impactful cinematic experience backed by his creative vision.

The postponement also gives the promotional team more time to build anticipation and engage with audiences through marketing campaigns and sneak peeks, which could further heighten excitement ahead of the eventual release.

For now, audiences will have to wait a little longer for Band Melam to arrive in theatres. The film industry and fans alike are watching closely for updates on the new release date, hopeful that the extra preparation will make for a memorable cinematic experience when Band Melam finally hits the big screen.

Naga Chaitanya's Next Pan India Film Vrushakarma Officially Announced

Popular actor Naga Chaitanya is all set to headline a new pan India film titled Vrushakarma, marking another major milestone in his career. The announcement has sparked excitement among fans, with the project expected to expand the actor's presence beyond Telugu cinema and appeal to audiences across the country.

The film's title, Vrushakarma, evokes the name of the divine architect in Hindu mythology, hinting at a story with powerful themes and larger than life elements. Producers say the movie will be crafted as a high impact action entertainer with a rich emotional core — a combination that has become a signature style for pan India films aiming to resonate with viewers across multiple languages.

Vrushakarma is being backed by experienced production teams who are known for delivering big scale cinema. The filmmakers aim to position this venture as one of the most ambitious in Naga Chaitanya's career to date, with plans to shoot simultaneously in several Indian languages to maximise its reach in



key markets such as Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Kannada and Malayalam.

Industry insiders indicate that pre production work for Vrushakarma is already underway. With a story designed to blend mass appeal with a compelling narrative, the team has been finalising locations, key crew members, and a musical composer to complement the film's

theme. While the complete cast and crew details are yet to be officially revealed, speculation is already rife about potential collaborators from across Indian cinema.

Fans of Naga Chaitanya have welcomed the announcement with enthusiasm on social media, celebrating the actor's continued growth in challenging and high visibility roles. Many

see Vrushakarma as a defining moment in his career trajectory, especially as he positions himself more prominently in the pan India space following previous successes.

The decision to make Vrushakarma a pan India film reflects a broader trend in Indian cinema, where regional stars are increasingly taking on projects that transcend language barriers. This strategy has helped several actors and films achieve widespread recognition and commercial success across states and linguistic markets.

While the official release date has not yet been confirmed, observers expect Vrushakarma to commence shooting soon, with a planned theatrical release in late 2026 or early 2027. The production team is likely to announce further details, including the film's director and full cast, in the coming weeks.

With its ambitious scope and star led cast, Vrushakarma is shaping up to be one of the notable pan India films in the coming years, and will be eagerly followed by fans of Naga Chaitanya and Indian cinema alike.