



Andhra Pradesh CM welcomes zero excise duty on unbranded raw tobacco

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday welcomed the Central Government's decision to reduce the excise duty on unbranded raw tobacco products to zero. He said that the move will benefit the unbranded tobacco trade in the state. According to an official release, the state government has taken note of the gazette notification issued by the Central Finance Ministry in this regard. The Finance Ministry issued this gazette clarifying the duty structure applicable to unmanufactured tobacco. As per the gazette, from now onwards, the excise duty on retail sales of unbranded tobacco will be zero. The Finance Ministry issued this gazette to ensure uniformity, clarity, and transparency in the taxation of tobacco sales.



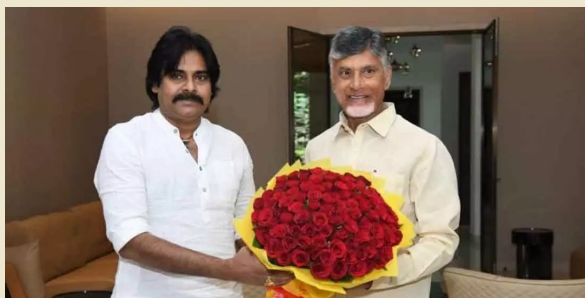
The Chief Minister opined that this decision by the Central Government is a crucial step forward. Previously, due to the lack of a clear distinction between the purchase, sale, and trade of unbranded bulk tobacco, problems arose due to different provisions in the law. In the wake of farmers and traders suffering losses due to such ambiguous policies, the decision was taken to reduce the duty on unbranded products to zero per cent. This gazette will reduce the difficulties caused by different classifications in the law.

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Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said that this decision taken by the Central Government is beneficial to all tobacco farmers. He explained that it will not only ensure a good price for farmers but also benefit traders and exporters. He expressed the opinion that due to clear guidelines and regulations, excise duty evasion will be significantly reduced. He stated that the Andhra Pradesh government supports this policy, which prevents obtaining tax benefits through fraudulent means. The state government has appealed to the Central Government and the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs to strictly implement this notification uniformly across the country.

These changes are effective from February 1, 2026. Tobacco products that are unbranded and not packaged for retail sale, falling under the HS 2401 code, will be subject to zero per cent excise duty. Tobacco sold by farmers in sacks will fall under this category. However, tobacco products packaged in small packets for shops, and tobacco bags and packets with company brand names printed on them, will be subject to an 18 per cent excise duty, as stated by the Central Finance Ministry in the gazette. The state government clarified that these latest changes in excise duty will provide relief to the raw tobacco supply system. It also revealed that there will be no impact on government revenue from products sold for commercial purposes.

Pawan Kalyan Meets Naidu to Discuss Political and Tirumala Ghee Issue



Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan met with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu this morning to discuss various political developments and other pressing matters. The meeting, which began shortly after Pawan Kalyan arrived at Naidu's residence, focused on opposition tactics, the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections, appointment processes, alliance coordination, and efforts to counter YSRCP propaganda. Additionally, the leaders addressed the controversy over adulterated ghee in Tirumala Srivari Laddu prasada. Given Tirumala's global devotee base, the government is emphasising measures to safeguard their sentiments. Following a report from the NDDB, the Chief Minister had previously ordered an inquiry, which led to the formation of a SIT under the CBI after several individuals approached the Supreme Court. The SIT's report, submitted to the cabinet, confirmed adulteration of the ghee. Discussions during Tuesday's cabinet meeting focused on identifying those responsible and holding all facilitators accountable.

Council LoP flays Revanth for 'vulgar remarks' against KCR

Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Madhusudhana Chary on Tuesday condemned the vulgar remarks made by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy against BRS president Chandrashekar Rao. Addressing a press conference, Chary stated that the words of the Chief Minister were intended to influence the ongoing SIT investigation. He clarified that Rao has never refused to face the inquiry but merely requested more time due to his current responsibilities regarding the upcoming municipal elections.

"We have faced many investigations in the last two years and are not afraid. Rao is a national leader who brought statehood to Telangana and remains in the hearts of the people," Chary said, noting that Reddy had no involvement in the original statehood movement.

The BRS leader alleged that despite advice from Justice Sudarshan Reddy against hateful speeches, the Chief Minister continued making derogatory remarks. He compared the nature of Reddy to a dog's tail that can never be straightened, alleging the current government is deceptive and neglects implementing its guarantees. Madhusudhana Chary further alleged that the government miserably failed in conducting the Sammakka Sarakka Jatara. Despite boasts about paranormal arrangements, a massive 15-hour traffic jam occurred, proving a lack of basic preparations.



He noted that under the tenure of Rao, the festival was celebrated grandly with superior action rather than empty words. Chary demanded a public apology to the devotees for the hardships faced. MLC Takkellapalli Ravinder Rao added that the comments of the Chief Minister deeply hurt Telangana society, stating Reddy is not fit to be compared to Rao, who has a history of sacrificing positions for the cause of the state. Former Corporation Chairman Venkateshwar Reddy was also present at the briefing to support the opposition's stance on these administrative and political issues.

The leaders concluded that the focus should remain on developmental goals rather than engaging in personal vendettas that distract from the welfare of the common citizens of Telangana.

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy to Visit Guntur to Console Family of Ambati Rambabu



Former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is scheduled to visit Guntur district today to offer support to the family of former minister Ambati Rambabu amid recent events. He will leave his residence in Tadepalli by road at 10 am, reaching Ambati Rambabu's home in Guntur by 11 am. Jagan will console the family and discuss the recent attack on the nearby YSRCP office with party leaders. The office, located close to Ambati Rambabu's residence, was recently targeted. After the visit, he will depart from Guntur at 12 pm and return to Tadepalli by 1 pm. The visit has heightened political discussions amid ongoing tensions in the region.

AP deputy CM's wife Anna Lezhneva visits historic Bhadrakali temple

Hanumakonda: Anna Lezhneva, wife of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, visited the historic Sri Bhadrakali Ammavari Temple in Warangal city on Tuesday and offered special prayers to the presiding deity. On her arrival, she was accorded a warm reception by temple trustee Thonupunuri

Veeranna. She first offered prayers at the shrines of Adi Shankaracharya and Vallabha Ganapati before proceeding to the main sanctum, where she performed special pujas to Goddess Bhadrakali.

Following the completion of the rituals, chief priest Cheppela

Venkata Nagaraja Sharma, along with Vedic scholar Pradeep Kumar Sharma, conducted the Mahadashirvachanam at the temple's Snapana Mandapam. The priests later presented the sacred silk garments of the Goddess and offered prasadam to Anna Lezhneva.



AI Is Essential for the Textile Sector: NV Choudary



Five-Day Workshop Inaugurated at OU College of Technology Hyderabad, metro udayam February 4 :

With growing competition and rapid advancements in the textile industry, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become indispensable for the sector, said Mr. NV Choudary, Chief Operating Officer of NSL Textiles. He was speaking after

inaugurating a five-day ED-ESDP workshop as the Chief Guest at the Osmania University College of Technology. The workshop is being organized by the National Institute of MSME in association with the Training and Placement Cell of OU College of Technology and is being conducted at the college e-classroom on the theme "Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality for Textile Design."

Addressing the participants, NV Choudary highlighted the growing importance of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) technologies in the textile sector. He explained that these technologies enable designers and manufacturers to visualize textile designs in advance, analyze them effectively, and produce fabrics according to market demand, thereby reducing costs and improving efficiency. Speaking on the occasion, for-

mer Vice President of Godavari Spinning Mills, Mr. Manohar Kodela, appreciated MSME for introducing training programs on emerging technologies. He stated that such initiatives help create skilled professionals for the textile industry. He also pointed out that there is a shortage of experts with AR and VR skills in the Telugu states and expressed hope that this workshop would help bridge the gap. The event was attended by

MSME Program Director Ms. E. Swapna, College Principal Prof. V. Ramesh Kumar, Vice Principal Mr. S. Srinu Naik, Head of the Department of Textiles and Senior Professor J. Hayavadana, Director of Training and Placement Dr. Ayodhya Kavitha, Coordinators Dr. Dheeraj Kumar, Dr. K. Srinivasulu, Dr. Arjun, K. Srinu, Manoj, along with faculty members, textile entrepreneurs, and students.



Bless and develop. Vadapalli Rangamma



Kodada February 04 Metro morning.....

Kodada 23rd Ward Congress candidate Vadapalli Rangamma campaigned on Wednesday. He started his campaign after performing special pooja at Ganasatha in the ward. On this occasion, she said that she is contesting with the aim of solving public problems and asked the people of the ward to bless her. He went to Gadapagadapa and explained the promises of the Congress party to the people. Ward Congress leaders and activists participated in this program.

Bless the Congress candidates...

MLA Uttam Padmavathi Reddy



Kodada February 04 Metro morning.....

Kodada MLA Uttam Padmavathi Reddy stated that comprehensive development of municipalities is possible only with the Congress party. She inaugurated the election office of 22nd Ward Congress candidate Tunam Krishna on Wednesday as part of the municipal election campaign. Speaking on this occasion, the MLA asked the Congress candidates to win with a huge majority to make the town ideal. He called upon the activists to work like soldiers for Tunam Krishna's victory in the ward.



The Bengal Tiger: The Rajbansi Story

The popular film The Bengal Tiger: The Rajbansi Story, chronicling the life and legacy of South African political figure Amichand "The Bengal Tiger" Rajbansi, has been released online on YouTube 31/1/2026 and is now available in full:

Watch the full documentary here: <https://youtu.be/8iUmvLod8Rw> (https://youtu.be/8iUmvLod8Rw)

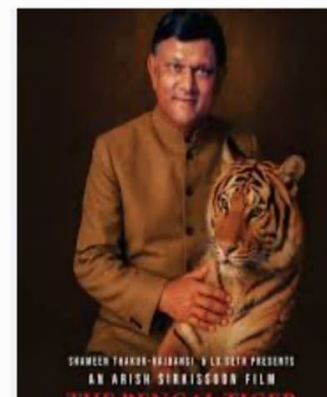
Directed by Arish Sirkissoon (LX Seth) with support from Shameen Thakur-Rajbansi, late Rajbansi wife, the film takes viewers through Rajbansi's journey from early life to decades of political leadership and influence in South Africa. Comments from Viewers & Commentators

Dr Seshni Moodliar Rensburg, a doctor, author, screenplay writer, actress and radio presenter based in UK described The Bengal Tiger: The Rajbansi Story as a powerful and deeply engaging portrayal, capturing the heart and complexity of a leader whose tenacity never wavered. She highlighted how impactful it was to see someone whose courage and determination stood out even in challenging times.

I have known and heard a lot about Rajbansi growing up, and I admired his tenacity and courage in standing firm for his beliefs, a sentiment echoed by many who have watched this film.

Online reactions from those who have seen the film reflect a mix of admiration and thoughtful reflection:

One reviewer said the documentary was inspiring and thought-provoking, sparking conversation about leadership, legacy and identity in South Africa's diverse social landscape. Another commentator described rajbansi as someone who had the heart of the Tiger, assisting many families and individuals personally, and whose influence is still fondly remembered. Many viewers online have said the documentary brings to life both the triumphs and challenges of rajbansi's political journey, blending per-



sonal history with broader social reflection.

These audience reactions show that many appreciate the depth, nuance and emotional resonance of the film — especially in how it portrays an iconic figure in South African political history.

Well done to LX Seth (Arish Sirkissoon), and thanks to everyone who supported bringing this important story to life, helping audiences across generations engage with rajbansi's legacy and remember his impact.

Additional information
Film & Career Opportunity — 2026

For film lovers and aspiring storytellers: LX SETH Academy with Nu

Metro is now open for 2026, offering you a chance to learn, create and experience cinema from the inside out, with industry-focused training and real-world exposure.

Contact details
Phone: 0828222989
Email: jmrseth@mweb.co.za

Also Shameen Rajbansi Thakur is standing for City mayor of Ethekwini Municipality for elections in 2026 for Minority front MF, we wish her the best. For voting details see her Facebook post Shameen Thakur Rajbansi and MF details

By Dr. Seshni Moodliar Rensburg?United Kingdom / India?Doctor, Psychiatrist, Writer, Poet & Cultural commentator

Intense campaigning begins for Telangana municipal elections



The district's municipal election campaign is set to intensify from today, with major political parties entering the fray. Leaders are focusing on victory through door-to-door campaigns, roadshows, and public meetings, making the contest highly competitive. The entry of the Jana Sena party into the elections for the first time has added a new dimension of interest. Meanwhile, the Congress, CPI, and CPM are contesting in an alliance, while BRS and BJP are fielding independent candidates.

The Congress party faces challenges from rebel candidates, especially in Mahabubabad, Narsampet, and Jangaon municipalities. In Warangal district, 1072 candidates are vying for 260 wards across 12 municipalities. The candidates include 249 from Congress, 259 from BRS, 238 from BJP, and 326 independents and others.

Polls should be conducted effectively, says DGP



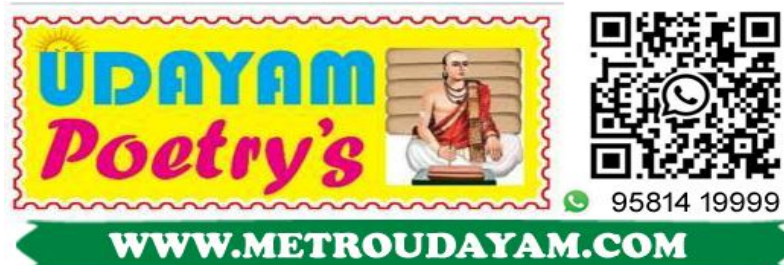
Telangana State Director General of Police Shivadhar Reddy has emphasised to police officers the critical importance of conducting the upcoming municipal elections in strict accordance with the law.

During a video conference on Tuesday, the DGP addressed Police Commissioners, District SPs, and Station House Officers from regions where the municipal elections are scheduled to take place. With elections set for 7 municipal corporations and 116 municipalities across the state, officers have been directed to ensure smooth proceedings in 414 wards under corporations including Kothagudem, Karimnagar, Mahabubnagar, and Nizamabad, as well as 2,582 wards in the municipalities.

The DGP stressed that adhering to regulations is essential to uphold the reputation of the state police and the government. He made it clear that measures must be implemented to avert complaints or unwanted incidents. During the meeting, Hyderabad Police Legal Advisor Ramulu provided an overview of the laws governing election conduct. Shivadhar Reddy highlighted that under the law, severe penalties are unavoidable for those attempting to sway voters, coerce them, or obstruct the nomination process.

Additionally, distributing alcohol to disturb the peace or breaching the Excise Act could lead to imprisonment ranging from six months to two years. Under the Arms Act, individuals with licensed firearms must surrender them to police stations, with non-compliance carrying a prison sentence of one to three years.

The DGP also directed authorities to enforce strict campaign regulations for political parties. He emphasised that using religious institutions for political agendas is a grave offence under the Prevention of Misuse of Religious Institutions Act 1988. Furthermore, individuals engaging in hate speech or inciting division may face up to five years in prison. The conference was attended by high-ranking officials including AIG Law and Order Ramana Kumar, ensuring a unified strategy for a fair and peaceful electoral process across the entire state of Telangana.



FIND OUT REALITY!

Pick up Reality!
Easy to say!
Hard to find!
Fact, fiction alike!
Segregation difficult!

Many a occasion!
People face issue!
Day to day life it is common!
Not of commodity!
Even thoughts of people!

Not so easy to separate
real from fake!
Resemble like twins!
Tactics of seller!
Confuse our attention!
Fiction dominates fact!

Decent word and dress!
Conceals the real character!
Reality is hidden from sight!
Attraction, fantasy, illusion
dominates reality!
By the time reality known,
maximum extent of loss
already borne!



Composed by:
B. Satyanarayana Rao,
(Ba. Sa. Raa)
Vijayawada.

**I came into politics to serve
the people of the ward:
Zukuri Vijaya, Anjaiah....**



Kodada February 04 Metro morning.....

Independent candidate of 12th ward Zukuri Vijaya and Anjaiah toured the ward extensively as part of municipal election campaign. He requested the voters to win him by going door to door. Speaking on this occasion, they said that they are contesting not for power, but with the intention of serving the people of the ward continuously. He wanted to give himself a chance to develop the ward beyond politics. He promised to solve the problems in the ward at the field level.

**Justice for the people of all sections
is with the Congress party.**

Kodada February 04 Metro

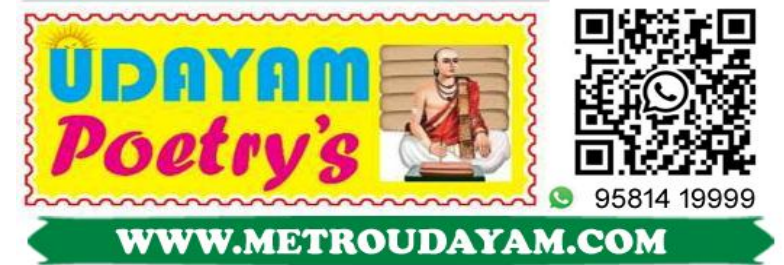
morning.....

Congress Party 14th ward candidate Kandula Koteswara Rao said that justice will be done to the people of all sections only with the Congress Party.

As part of the municipal election campaign, in the 14th ward, he toured the ward extensively on Wednesday. He requested the voters to go door-to-door along with Congress party leaders and workers to help him win. He assured that his main aim is to solve the problems in the ward and if he is voted and blessed, he will work continuously for the development of the ward. He



said that urban development was possible only during the Congress regime and asked people to support him this time. Award People Participated



धर्म मानव के जीवन शैली को पूर्णरूप से बदलता है। क्यों के धर्म मानव के विचार शैली को ही बदल देता है। धर्म कर्मों को शुद्ध करता है।... (शकील उवाव -६०७)

समाज में जो कोई बुराई होती है वह बुराई इंसान की गलतियों से आती है, खुदा (ईश्वर) की तरफ से नहीं होती और धर्म भी कभी बुराई करने का आदेश किसीको नहीं देता। बल्के धर्म कहता है के जब कोई दीन, दरिद्र और अनाथ लोगों की मदद करता है तो वह मदद उन जरूरतमंदों की मदद ना होकर ईश्वर को की गई मदद कही जाती है। अगर कोई खुद को धार्मिक भी कहे और किसी की मदद करने के बजाय उनको लूट लूटकर खाता रहे तो वह फिर कैसा धार्मिक हो सकता है भला?



पैगंबर साहब मोहम्मद (स्व.) के पहिले उत्तराधिकारी इमाम अली इब्न अबू तालिब अलैहिस्सलाम फरमाते हैं के, "गरीब व मिरकीन (दीन, दरिद्र और अनाथ) अल्लाह का फरिस्तदा (ईश्वर का भेजा हुआ) होता है, तो जिस ने उस से अपना हाथ रोका उस ने अल्लाह (ईश्वर) से हाथ रोका और जिसने उसे कुछ दिया उस ने खुदा (ईश्वर) को दिया।" (अब्बास बुक एजेंसी लखनऊ द्वारा प्रकाशित हिंदी धर्मग्रंथ, नहजुल बलागह, उपदेश क्रमांक ३०४, पुष्ट क्रमांक ७७१)।

अगर आदमी ज्ञानी और धार्मिक हो तो मानवतावाद के विशेष कोई कर्म कर ही नहीं सकता। लेकिन जो स्वार्थी, अज्ञानी और अधर्मी हो भले ही खुद को कितना भी बड़ा ज्ञानी और धार्मिक कहते रहे लेकिन उसके कर्म मानवता और धर्म को क्षति ही पहुंचाने वाले जी रहेगे। और ऐसे अज्ञानी और अधार्मिक लोगों के आवरण को धर्म मानकर कुछ लोग धर्म का विशेष करते हैं। लेकिन धर्म मानव के जीवन शैली को पूर्णरूप से बदलता है। क्यों के धर्म मानव के विचार शैली को ही बदल देता है। धर्म सच्चे धार्मिक व्यक्ति के कर्मों को शुद्ध करता है।

हमारे कर्म आवरण में आने के पहिले विचारों में आते हैं। इसलिए विचारों की पवित्रता का भी विशेष ध्यान रखा जाना चाहिये। और बेहोशी में हम यह भी भूल जाते हैं के हमारे द्वारा जुबान पर लये जाने वाली बातें याने कही जाने वाले बातें भी हमारे आवरण का हिस्सा बनती हैं। इसलिये जब भी बात किया जाये पूरी जागरूकता के साथ बात करनी चाहिये। कही जाने वाली बातों की कीमत जो जानता है वही अपनी वाणी का उपयोग योग्य रूप से कर पायेगा। हर कथन करनी का ही हिस्सा होता है।

पैगंबर साहब मोहम्मद (स्व.) के पहिले उत्तराधिकारी इमाम अली इब्न अबू तालिब अलैहिस्सलाम फरमाते हैं कि, "जो शरख (व्यक्ति) यह जानता है के उस का कौल (कथन) भी अमल (करनी, आवरण) का एक जुज (अंश) है, वह मतलब की बातों (सारथक बातों) के व्यातिरिक्त (और कोई) कलाम (बात) नहीं करता।" (अब्बास बुक एजेंसी लखनऊ द्वारा प्रकाशित हिंदी धर्मग्रंथ, नहजुल बलागह, उपदेश क्रमांक ३४९, पुष्ट क्रमांक ७८२)।

जिसने अपनी जुबान पर काबू पा लिया हो वही कामयाब हो सकता है। हमारे द्वारा किये जाने वाले गुनाहों (पापों) में हमारे इंदियों की बहुत बड़ी भूमिका होती है। उन्ही इंदियों में हमारी जुबान (वाणी) की भी बहुत बड़ी भूमिका होती है। हम अपनी जुबान से झूठ बोलना, चुगली करना, निंदा करना, कठोर या कड़वे वचन का उपयोग करना और प्रसंग के विरुद्ध, अनुचित या व्यर्थ की बातें करना जैसे अनेक काम करते हैं जो विनाश का कारण बनते हैं और हमें हमारे मोक्ष मार्ग से भटकाते हैं।

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-डॉ. मोहम्मदशकील ताजमोहम्मद जाफरी (शकील मंवीरी), मंवर, पुणे (महाराष्ट्र) भारत

2.5 Lakh LOC Distributed Under CM Relief Fund

..... M a n d a m u l a
Parameshwar Reddy
Hands Over Assistance
Under Nemali Anil Kumar's
Leadership

Hyderabad, Metro Udayam, February 4: Under the leadership of senior Congress leader Mr. Nemali Anil Kumar from Mallapur Division, a Letter of Credit (LOC) worth ₹2.5 lakh sanctioned from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund was distributed to a beneficiary. With the support of Uppal Congress Party In-Charge Mr. Mandamula Parameshwar Reddy, the financial assistance of ₹2,50,000/- sanctioned under the CM Relief Fund was handed over to Mr. G. Ramu, who is currently undergoing medical treatment at NIMS Hospital. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Parameshwar Reddy said that standing by people during difficult times is the responsibility of public



representatives. He emphasized that ensuring timely delivery of government assistance, especially to families suffering due to serious health issues, remains their primary objective. He expressed

hope that the financial aid would be extremely helpful for Mr. Ramu's medical treatment and wished him a speedy recovery. The program was attended by State Congress Seva Dal General Secretary Mr.

Sadguna, Congress Secretary Mr. Thandra Srikanth Reddy, along with Narasimha, Raju, Sai, and other party leaders.

Mallapur

Jupally Bhaskar Rao appointed as BRS election in-charge for Kalwakurthy

Charakonda, February 04 Metro Udayam : Jupally Bhaskar Rao, former chairman of the Single Window in Veldanda mandal, has been appointed as the BRS party election in-charge for Kalwakurthy Municipality. Valya Nayak, who previously held the position, has been appointed as the in-charge for Bhoothpur Municipality. The party high command entrusted this responsibility to Bhaskar Rao because of his significant political role in the Kalwakurthy constituency in the past. On this occasion, he expressed his heartfelt gratitude to BRS party national president and for-



mer Telangana Chief Minister Kalvakuntla Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) and Working President KTR for appointing him as the election in-charge for Kalwakurthy Municipality, showing their trust in him. He also expressed his gratitude for recognizing his loyalty to the party and entrusting him with this responsibility. He assured that he would work in accordance with their aspirations and party principles, further strengthening the BRS party in Kalwakurthy and striving for a resounding victory in the elections, as stated in a press release on Wednesday.

Speaker asks Kadiyam to attend hearing today

In a significant political development, Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar on Tuesday issued formal notices to Station Ghampur MLA Kadiyam Srihari, directing him to appear for a hearing at 11 am on Wednesday. The Speaker has now issued notices to all ten members facing defection charges. BRS MLA KP Vivekananda filed the initial complaint alleging that Srihari, who won his seat on a BRS ticket, defected to the Congress party. Notices were also served to Vivekananda, requiring his presence at the same hearing scheduled for tomorrow. The Speaker is set to hear arguments from both Srihari and Vivekananda regarding the allegations.

To date, the Speaker has already granted a clean chit to seven other MLAs, ruling that they had not officially changed parties and remain affiliated with the BRS. While a petition against Khairatabad MLA Danam



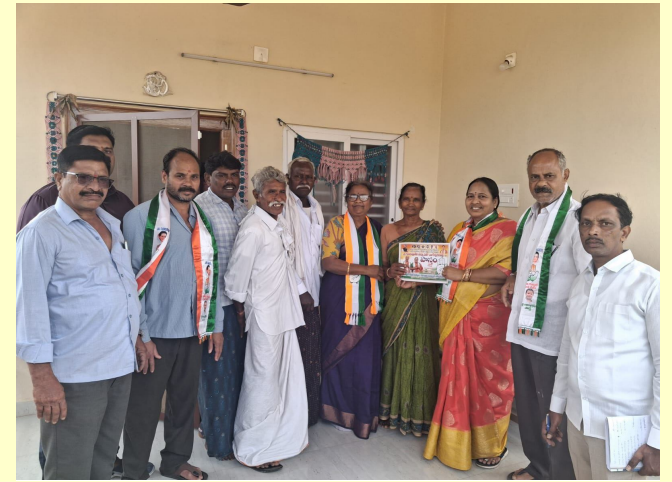
Nagender remains under consideration, the Speaker has reserved orders on the petition against BRS MLA Sanjay Kumar. These proceed-

ings follow a stern directive from the Supreme Court, which recently issued a final warning to Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar. The apex court has granted a two-week window to decide on the disqualification petitions involving BRS MLAs who allegedly joined the Congress.

A bench comprising Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice AG Masih is currently hearing the case. Previously, on 31 July, the Supreme Court had provided three months for a resolution. BRS leader Kaushik Reddy and others subsequently filed a defamation case after the initial deadline passed without a verdict. Most recently, the Speaker completed a hearing for Nagender after issuing similar notices. This hearing marks a critical phase in resolving the long-standing legal battle over legislative loyalties in the state.

Give another chance for ward development...

Gundapoone Padmavathi Nageswara Rao...



Kodada February 04 Metro morning.....

Padmavathi Nageswara Rao, Gundapuneni Padmavathi Nageswara Rao, the Congress candidate for the 12th ward, toured the ward extensively as part of the Kodada municipal election campaign. They went door to door and appealed the voters. On this occasion, she said that she has worked tirelessly for the development of the ward, keeping the trust of the people of the ward who won her as a councilor in the last election. To complete the pending works and further develop the ward, this time also they asked to vote on hand sign and win with a huge majority...

App-based transport workers to go off roads on saturday



App-based transport workers across India, associated with major platforms such as Ola, Uber, Rapido, Porter, and other aggregator companies, have announced a nationwide breakdown on 7 February. The strike serves as a protest against continued government inaction and rampant fare exploitation by digital aggregator platforms. According to the workers' union, despite the notification of the Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines 2025, companies continue to arbitrarily determine fares in open violation of the spirit of these regulations.

Shaik Salauddin, Founder President of the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union, stated that this unchecked practice has pushed drivers into severe income insecurity and mounting debt. He noted that commuters are also adversely affected by unpredictable pricing and surge manipulation due to a lack of effective regulatory oversight. Unions have repeatedly highlighted that the failure of Central and State Governments to notify minimum base fares has allowed platforms to unilaterally slash driver earnings while increasing their own commissions. The workers' demands include the immediate notification of minimum base fares for all services including autos, cabs, and bike taxis finalised in consultation with recognised unions. Furthermore, they seek a strict prohibition on the use of private, non-commercial vehicles for commercial rides unless they are legally converted in accordance with Motor Vehicle laws.

The union has urged immediate dialogue with elected representatives to ensure fair and sustainable regulation. Salauddin warned that continued delays will only deepen the economic crisis faced by millions of workers and their families. Prominent union members including Nagesh Kumar, Abdul Rawoof, Ali Baqri, and R K Reddy were present at the announcement, underscoring a united front against what they describe as unsustainable working conditions that make dignified livelihoods impossible. This nationwide action highlights the growing friction between traditional labor rights and the rapidly evolving digital economy across urban India.

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SC pulls up ED, CBI over delay in Anil Ambani-led RCOM loan fraud probe

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday expressed serious concern over an "unexplained delay" by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in probing alleged large-scale bank loan frauds linked to Reliance Communications Ltd (RCOM), its group companies, and promoter Anil Ambani, involving public funds estimated at Rs 40,000 crore.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant asked the ED to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of senior officers and directed both Central agencies to take the ongoing investigation to its "logical conclusion" in a time-bound manner.

During the hearing, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing on behalf of Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani, gave an undertaking that his client would not leave the country without prior permission of the apex court. The assurance was given amid apprehensions expressed during the hearing that the key



accused could flee India before completion of the probe. While clarifying that it was not passing any coercive or harsh orders at this stage, the Bench, also comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M. Pancholi, observed that the magnitude of the alleged siphoning of public funds warranted a time-bound investigation.

"We expect that the agencies must act independently and swiftly. Today, we are not passing any harsh order," the apex court said, directing the ED and

the CBI to file detailed status reports within four weeks on the progress of their investigations.

Taking note of a sealed-cover report filed by the CBI, the CJI Kant-led Bench was informed that a formal FIR had been registered on the basis of a complaint from the State Bank of India (SBI), and that similar accounts in other banks were also under scrutiny.

However, the apex court questioned why only a single FIR had been registered despite com-

plaints from multiple lenders, observing that each complaint constitutes a separate transaction warranting independent examination.

The Supreme Court also directed the CBI to probe the conduct of bank officials to ascertain whether financial facilities were released with any nexus, connivance or conspiracy involving banks, public officials and the accused entities.

Appearing for the ED and the CBI, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that the ED had already found material indicating forged bank guarantees, that an ECIR had been registered against RCOM, and that investments made by Yes Bank in 2017 in Reliance Commercial Finance Ltd (RCFL) and Reliance Home Finance Ltd (RHFL) were under examination.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the petitioner, contended that despite the enormity of the alleged fraud, the "kingpin" is yet to be arrested.

He argued that the scale of alleged siphoning, running into tens of thousands of crores,

demands robust, independent and expeditious action. On the other hand, senior advocate Rohatgi denied allegations of siphoning and submitted that Anil Ambani's Reliance Group has been making continuous efforts to repay its dues and that genuine business defaults should not be criminalised.

The hearing took place against the backdrop of recent action by the ED under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), which has provisionally attached assets worth about Rs 1,885 crore belonging to Anil Ambani's Reliance Group in connection with the RCOM, RCFL, RHFL and Yes Bank fraud cases, taking the cumulative attachment in the group cases to nearly Rs 12,000 crore.

Last week, the ED also arrested former RCOM director Punit Garg, accusing him of diverting illicit funds to offshore firms and personal expenses. The Supreme Court said the matter would be taken up after four weeks, once the status reports from the ED and the CBI are placed before it.

India's farmers and dairy sector have been protected in US trade deal: Piyush Goyal



New Delhi: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday that the interests of India's farmers have been protected in the India-US trade deal, as agricultural and dairy products are out of its ambit.

The minister said that India has successfully protected sensitive sectors such as agriculture and dairy, while giving full attention to food and farming concerns in the India-US trade agreement.

He said the partnership will create new opportunities for MSMEs, skilled workers, and industry, strengthen bilateral ties, and ensure energy security, which remains a top priority for 140 crore Indians.

The minister said that the trade deal "will simplify the reach to advanced technologies and help in realising India's 'Make in India for the World', 'Design in India for the World' and 'Innovate in India for the World'."

Goyal made his speech amid a ruckus created by unruly MPs of the opposition who resorted to shouting slogans in the Lok Sabha. This led to the adjournment of the Lower House by the Speaker as the business could not proceed amid the chaos.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to respond to the "Motion of Thanks to the President's address" during the ongoing Budget Session on Wednesday, as both

Houses of Parliament are scheduled continue the discussion.

The motion comes after President Droupadi Murmu's address to a joint sitting of both Houses at the start of the Budget Session on January 28.

Earlier on Tuesday, Goyal said that PM Modi had clinched the deal, which was stuck in lengthy negotiations at the official and ministerial levels.

He explained that it was essential to finalise the trade deal, as Indian exports of labour-intensive products such as seafood and textiles to the US were hit due to the higher punitive tariff of 50 per cent imposed by the Trump administration.

"On behalf of 140 crore Indians, I want to thank PM Modi because this deal will bring a lot of opportunities for India's economic growth, for farmers, poor, fishermen, women, and youth," he said. Goyal launched a scathing attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of misleading the country and lacking concern for India's development.

He said, "Leaders with negative thinking, like Rahul Gandhi, are misleading the country. They have no concern for the nation's progress. The Congress government reduced India to the fragile five economies, and if Rahul Gandhi has his way, he will take the country back to the same stage."

Magh Mela Dispute Escalates As Ayodhya Seer Bars Shankaracharya Pending Apology

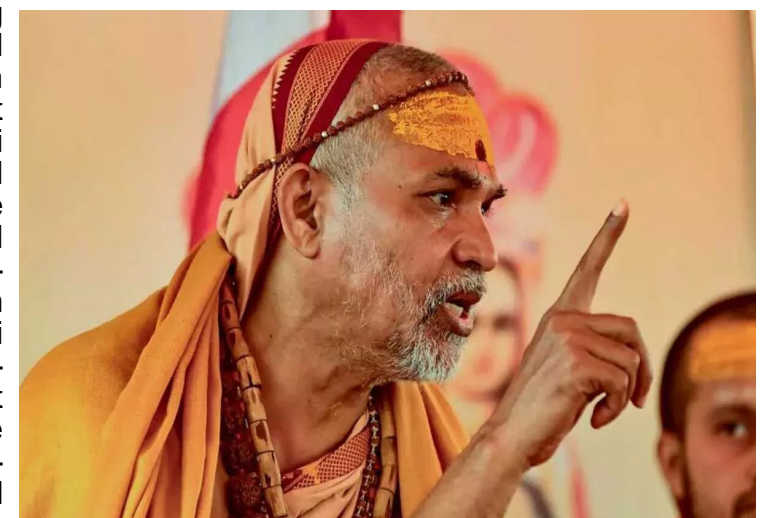
The controversy surrounding the Magh Mela has deepened after a prominent seer in Ayodhya declared that Shankaracharya Swami Avimukteshwarananda would not be permitted to enter the temple town unless he issued a public apology for his comments against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The warning follows an ongoing row that erupted after the Shankaracharya was prevented from taking a ceremonial holy dip at the Sangam in Prayagraj.

Jagadguru Paramhans Acharya, the head of Tapaswi Chhawani in Ayodhya, accused Avimukteshwarananda of making remarks he described as insulting towards the Chief Minister. He said the restriction on entering Ayodhya would remain in force until an apology was offered, asserting that no compromise would be made on the matter.

The dispute dates back to January 18, Mauni Amavasya, when Avimukteshwarananda attempted to proceed to the Sangam in a palanquin to perform the ritual bath. Police and administrative officials stopped his procession near the ghats, citing overcrowding and safety concerns, and asked him to continue on foot like other devotees.

The Shankaracharya termed the move an affront to established religious protocol and the dignity of his position, following which he staged a sit-in protest at the Magh Mela site that lasted for nearly ten days. During the standoff, some of his supporters were involved in brief clashes with police, while the Magh Mela administration maintained that the restrictions were imposed solely to manage crowds and ensure public safety.

Avimukteshwarananda eventually left the mela grounds on January 28 without taking the holy dip, stating that he was departing with deep disappointment. Authorities later alleged that his support-



ers had breached barricades on a pontoon bridge and moved towards the ghats, creating serious law-and-order challenges amid the massive gathering.

The administration subsequently issued a notice seeking clarification from Avimukteshwarananda regarding his claim to the title of Shankaracharya of Jyotish Peeth, pointing to a pending civil appeal before the Supreme Court that has put certain appointments on hold.

The issue further escalated after Chief Minister Adityanath, without naming anyone, warned against figures he compared to "Kalanemi", a demon from the Ramayana who disguised himself as a saint. In response, Avimukteshwarananda challenged the Chief Minister to ban cow slaughter and beef exports from Uttar Pradesh within 40 days and to officially declare the cow as "Rashtra Mata", questioning his credentials as a supporter of Hindu causes.

He also raised questions over why camps run by other claimants to the Shankaracharya title were allowed at the Magh Mela while his own status was scrutinised. With both sides standing firm, the dispute that began over a ritual bath has now widened into a larger confrontation within the religious community, drawing attention to the complex intersection of faith, authority and politics in Uttar Pradesh.

Ticket distribution triggers trouble in Jagtial Congress

Tension prevailed within the Congress party in Jagtial on Tuesday after activists staged a spirited protest at the residence of senior leader Jeevan Reddy. The demonstration erupted as supporters expressed deep dissatisfaction over the distribution of tickets for the upcoming municipal elections. According to internal sources, the agitation followed a decision by the party high command to grant preference to local MLA Sanjay Kumar in the allocation process. Protesting workers alleged that tickets were being primarily allotted to leaders who recently defected from the Bharat Rashtra Samithi, effectively sidelining dedicated Congress loyalists who have served the party for decades.



During the protest, activists conveyed their grievances to Jeevan Reddy, who reportedly expressed his own frustration with the current approach. Sources close to the leader stated that he appeared visibly upset, claiming his views on ticket distribution were being systematically ignored. Reddy is also

reportedly unhappy with the conduct of Sanjay Kumar. Despite this growing unrest, the party high command has not yet taken steps to pacify the veteran leader, leading to speculation that he is being taken lightly by senior leadership.

The rift traces back to the 2023 Assembly elections, when Sanjay Kumar

defeated Jeevan Reddy as a BRS candidate before later joining the Congress. This defection was strongly opposed by Reddy at the time. Since the entry of Kumar, two distinct factions have emerged within the district unit, resulting in frequent clashes. Amid this worsening rivalry, rumours are gaining significant ground that Jeevan Reddy may be considering leaving the party, although no official confirmation has been provided.

The internal crisis now threatens the unity of the party as it prepares for the competitive municipal polls. The high command must act swiftly to prevent a further escalation of this bitter political feud between the two dominant groups.

GI Outsourcing launches AI-first GCC in Hyderabad

Hyderabad's reputation as a premier technology hub has received a fresh boost with GI Outsourcing establishing a new Global Capability Centre at the International Tech Park. The move, announced on Tuesday, is expected to generate 200 professional jobs by 2028 and significantly contribute to long-term income growth for young professionals in the region. The centre has commenced operations with approximately 50 employees and is projected to scale up steadily over the next few years.

Industry observers note that this expansion coincides with a rising global demand for skilled finance, accounting, and AI-enabled services. By integrating artificial intelligence into routine accounting and



knowledge processes, the centre aims to equip youth with future-ready skills, thereby improving their employability and earning potential. Analysts suggest that such AI-first hubs drive indirect income generation through allied services, training ecosystems, and local businesses. Hyderabad's deep pool of finance graduates and technology talent

makes it an attractive destination for global firms seeking cost-efficient yet high-value delivery hubs. This new facility is seen as part of a broader trend where global capability centres are moving beyond traditional back-office roles to become engines of innovation and sustainable employment.

Group CEO Tariq Husain stated that India remains central to the company's growth strategy, while Siddharth Viswanathan from the British Deputy High Commission noted that the launch reflects the deepening economic partnership between the UK and India. This development further strengthens the city's vital contribution to the national digital and knowledge economy.

Collector's hospital visit exposes gaps in patient care

Kumuram Bheem Asifabad: District Collector K. Haritha on Tuesday emphasised the need for improved medical services at government hospitals, stating that patients, particularly those from common and tribal communities, must receive respectful and quality healthcare.

The District Collector made a surprise visit to the government hospital at the district headquarters, where she inspected various wards and departments. She interacted with patients undergoing treatment and sought details regarding the medical facilities and services being provided.

During the inspection, Haritha reviewed the functioning of the blood bank and enquired about the



services rendered by doctors, nurses and other hospital staff. She later held a review meeting with the doctors, stressing the importance of punctuality and diligence in duty.

She directed hospital authorities to maintain cleanliness in wards and hospital, ensure quality standards in the food supplied to patients and provide clean drinking water. She also instructed doctors and staff to continuously monitor patients' health conditions and avoid any form of negligence.

Stating that government hospitals cater largely to economically weaker sections and tribal populations, the District Collector underlined the responsibility of medical staff to treat every patient with dignity and care.

Hospital Superintendent Praveen, Medical College Principal Subodh Kumar, along with doctors and other staff members, were present during the inspection.

Both TDP and YCP betrayed BCs, says BCY president

Srikalahasthi: A month-long bridge course training programme for degree students was launched under the PM-USHA scheme at the Government Degree & PG College for Women, Srikalahasthi. The programme is being conducted by Kautilya Institution, Tirupati, to prepare students for various competi-

tive examinations. The training covers Mental Ability, Reasoning, English, and Communication Skills, with free study material provided to participants.

College Principal Dr B Rajashekar said the programme would help students prepare for Banking, SSC, Railways, Police, APPSC, and

UPSC examinations, besides supporting campus placement readiness. Kautilya Institution Senior Manager N S Reddy and faculty members Mastan, Jyothi, and Ali Likhith are leading the sessions. Dr T Malathi Gabriel is the programme coordinator.

KTR: Respect 'rebel' leaders for pulling out from poll fray



BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Tuesday called upon the party leaders in the district to give due respect to the leaders who have withdrawn from the elections and should be warmly welcomed. Stating that within just two years of coming to power the Congress party was facing strong public resentment and calling up on the cadre to expose the failures of the ruling party and hoist the Pink flag in the municipal elections, Rama Rao said that BRS must register a massive victory in the municipal elections: KTR's directives to party cadres.

He was speaking during a teleconference held on Tuesday with party constituency in-charges, municipal coordinators, and district presidents. He said that within just two years of the current Congress party coming to power, strong public resentment was being expressed towards it. He said that the people were observing the betrayal of the Congress government and its failure to fulfill its promises, thus deceiving the public. In this context, he expressed confidence that a favorable atmosphere prevails for the BRS party across the state, and that the people would definitely teach the Congress party a lesson in these elections.

The BRS leader expressed confidence that if all the party cadres work hard in coordination for the next week, a victory with a huge majority was certain. He recalled that in the last municipal elections, the opposition parties could not stand before the BRS wave, and that the Congress and BJP were then limited to only seven or eight seats. KTR emphasized that coordination was crucial as part of the election strategy.

He requested that rebel candidates, who withdrew their nominations in many places, respecting the party's request, be warmly welcomed. He instructed the candidates to personally visit the homes of every leader who made a sacrifice by adhering to party discipline and to involve them in the campaign. He stated that it is the responsibility of the municipal coordinators to give them due respect and move forward together. Following the conclusion of the nomination process, he instructed that a comprehensive report on the ground situation be immediately sent to the party headquarters.

Focusing on the final stage of the campaign, KTR called for every minute to be utilized effectively. He directed district presidents and former ministers to assess the chances of victory in the municipalities under their purview and prepare the necessary action plan to ensure the success of the winning candidates. He suggested that leaders should also focus on increasing the voter turnout on polling day, in addition to ensuring the victory of the candidates. He asked the municipal coordinators to remain available in their assigned areas until the completion of the election process.

T20 WC: Ticket sales of third stage begin

New Delhi: The BCCI announced the commencement of the third stage of ticket sales for the upcoming T20 World Cup following the two successful ticketing windows, with Phase 1 launched on December 11, 2025, and Phase 2 on January 14, 2026.



This latest phase provides fans with a further opportunity to secure seats for matches across the tournament, which will bring together the world's leading teams, the BCCI said in a release.

The T20 World Cup, starting on Saturday, will be staged at some of India's most recognised cricketing venues, creating an environment where fans can witness elite international players and the intensity that defines the T20 format throughout the competition.

As preparations across host cities move into final stages, the BCCI, in close coordination with the stakeholders, continues to focus on venue readiness, operational planning, and match-day experience.

India nears Naxal-free milestone as security forces enter final phase



New Delhi: As the March 31 deadline approaches, Naxalism is in its last stages. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had said that India will be naxal-free by March this year. He said that they have two options -- surrender or be killed.

Officials say that the operations to eliminate the Naxalites have entered their final stage now. The Intelligence agencies have learnt that only two out of the four parts of the top leadership are active. In the final push, the target would be to either eliminate the top four or get them to surrender.

The four Naxalite leaders are Thippiri Tirupathi, Muppala Laxman Rao, Misir Besra, and Asim Mondal. An Intelligence Bureau official said that out of these, only Tirupathi and Besra want to take the fight forward. Rao is in no position to fight due to his age, and Mondal, too, does not appear to be interested. In all likelihood, Rao and Mondal may surrender, an official said. Several Naxalites and their followers have urged Tirupathi to surrender, but he remains determined to carry on the fight. The current operation will primarily focus on hunting down Besra and Tirupathi, officials said.

Although there are around 200 uniformed Naxalites on the field, the primary aim of the security agencies is to nab the four leaders. This would lead to the automatic surrender of the rest who are part of this movement, officials say.

With regard to the armed cadre, the security agencies are confident of hunting them down. There is a greater chance that they will immediately surrender and are unlikely to put up a fight. Many are part of the movement, not because they subscribe to the ideology. Many have been threatened into joining the movement, while others are in it just for the money. This makes it easier to get these persons since they will not even put up a fight since they do not subscribe to the ideology, officials say.

Out of the 200 Naxalites, most of them are in Chhattisgarh, data shows. In Odisha, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, and Telangana, the numbers in total may be just 40 to 50, officials say.

In recent months, the Intelligence agencies had learnt that attempts were made to revive the movement. Tirupathi, who has been adamant not to surrender, tried talking to his colleagues about reviving the movement. However, this gained no traction, and the plan fell flat.

In the meantime, there was an attempt to spread the ideology once again in the urban areas. During a protest about pollution in Delhi, banners supporting the Naxalite movement had been spotted. Intelligence agencies have been warning that once the movement collapses in the jungles, every attempt would be made to keep the movement alive in the urban areas. Attempts would be made to infiltrate protests, propagate the Naxalite ideology, and then try and incite violence, the agencies have warned. A close watch is being kept on the urban elements and their activities. Officials say that their funding routes are under the scanner, and all efforts are being made to prevent money from coming in to revive the Naxalite movement.

Between 2025 and 2026, the security forces achieved a lot of success in beating down the Naxalites. While top leaders such as Basavaraj were killed, many others surrendered. At least five Politburo members survived before the security forces dealt a massive blow to the Naxal movement.

The major dent was caused following the surrender of senior leaders, Mallojula Venugopal Rao, Chandranna, Raider, and Rupesh. These were part of the Politburo and were leading the movement for a long time. Their surrender also led to scores of cadres laying down arms. In the run-up to these surrenders, the security forces also seized a huge cache of arms and ammunition, which caused a further setback to the Naxalite movement, officials say.

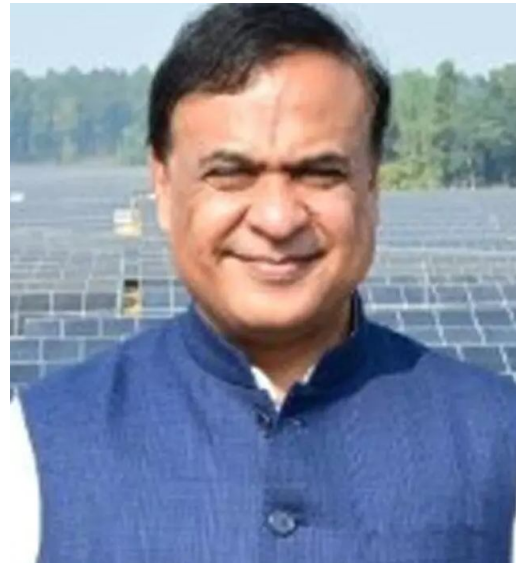
Assam CM expresses gratitude to PM Modi for enhancing state's budget

Guwahati: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Centre for significantly enhancing the state's share of central devolution in the Union Budget, stating that the move reflects New Delhi's continued trust in Assam's development trajectory. In a post on X, CM Sarma said that the Union government has consistently prioritised Assam's growth and rewarded its positive economic momentum under the vision of Viksit Bharat.

He highlighted that Assam has been allocated Rs 49,725 crore this year as part of central devolution, which he said would strongly support the state's ambitious development plans.

"The Union Govt has consistently prioritised development in Assam and has rewarded Assam's positive growth momentum with an increase in share of Central devolution in the #ViksitBharatBudget. Gratitude to Adarniya @narendramodi ji for allotting ₹49,725 crore this year to support our growth ambitions," CM Sarma posted.

Officials in the state government said the enhanced allocation would strengthen Assam's fiscal capacity,



enabling higher investment in infrastructure, education, healthcare, connectivity and social welfare schemes.

The increased devolution is also expected to provide greater flexibility to the state in implementing region-specific development programmes.

The Chief Minister has repeatedly maintained that Assam's improved financial position is the result of sustained reforms, improved governance and focused development initiatives undertaken over the past few years.

According to state finance department officials, Assam has recorded steady growth in its own tax and non-tax revenues, along with better utilisation of central funds.

CM Sarma also underscored that the Centre's support has been instrumental in accelerating major infrastructure projects across Assam, including highways, bridges, railways, inland waterways and urban development initiatives.

He said these investments are crucial for integrating Assam more closely with national and regional markets, boosting employment and attracting private investment.

Political observers note that the increased central devolution comes at a time when Assam is positioning itself as a key growth engine in the Northeast. The state government has been projecting Assam as a gateway to Southeast Asia, with a focus on logistics, tourism, manufacturing and energy sectors.

With the fresh allocation, the Assam government is expected to further scale up its development programmes in line with the Centre's broader vision of inclusive and balanced regional growth under Viksit Bharat, officials added.

TN CM Stalin questions BJP over suspension of eight MPs, says Centre 'afraid of Rahul Gandhi's questions'

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday strongly criticised the BJP-led Union government over the suspension of eight Opposition Members of Parliament from the Lok Sabha, asking why the Centre appeared "afraid" of questions raised by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

The suspension came amid noisy scenes in Parliament during the ongoing Budget Session, where Opposition members protested inside the House.

According to parliamentary proceedings, the MPs were accused of disorderly conduct, including tearing papers and throwing them towards Speaker Om Birla's chair during the protest.

Among those suspended were Tamil Nadu Congress MP Manickam Tagore and CPI(M) MP Su. Venkatesan, along with Congress leaders Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Hibi Eden, C. Kiran Kumar



Reddy, Amarinder Singh Warring, Prashant Padole and Dean Kuriakose.

The suspension will remain in force for the entire Budget Session. The Budget Session of Parliament is scheduled to be held in two phases and will continue until April 2.

Opposition parties have condemned the disciplinary action, calling it excessive and undemocratic.

Reacting sharply, CM Stalin posted a message on social media platform X, questioning the Centre's intentions. He

said the BJP government seemed unwilling to answer legitimate questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition and other members.

He asked why the government was hesitant to engage in debate on matters concerning national security, economic policy and public interest.

CM Stalin stressed that Parliament exists to facilitate discussion and accountability, and that the government must be prepared to respond to elected representatives. He described the mass suspension as an attempt to

silence dissenting voices and weaken democratic functioning.

The Chief Minister also said the action denied MPs their constitutional right to speak on issues of national importance. He urged the Centre to immediately revoke the suspension orders and allow the members to participate in the proceedings.

Political observers note that the incident has further escalated tensions between the ruling BJP and Opposition parties during a crucial session where key financial and policy decisions are expected to be debated.

The controversy has added fresh momentum to the Opposition's criticism that parliamentary space for debate is shrinking. With protests likely to continue, the suspension row has become a flashpoint in the larger battle over democratic rights and accountability in Parliament.

Andhra Pradesh Minister Narayana Tours London Sports Venues

Andhra Pradesh's Municipal Administration Minister Narayana and his team are continuing their visit to London. On the second day of their tour, they visited the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, exploring several sports facilities built for the 2012 Olympics.

The minister inspected key venues including the London Stadium, which hosted football, rugby, and baseball events, as well as the

Aquatics Centre, Hyde Park, and Lee Valley VeloPark. The visit forms part of the government's preparations to develop a new sports city in Andhra Pradesh.

Following the inspections, the team departed for Qatar. The minister was accompanied by Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar, Amaravati Growth and Infrastructure Corporation MD Srinivas, and other officials.



Lisa Ray praises Pamela Anderson for 'dismantling the male gaze in real time'

Mumbai: Actress Lisa Ray has spoken candidly about redefining the idea of a "beach body" in her 50s, describing it as a deeply personal and liberating journey rooted in self-acceptance. Drawing inspiration from Hollywood star Pamela Anderson, Lisa praised her for consciously reclaiming her identity and challenging the male gaze. Taking to Instagram, Lisa shared a series of beachside photographs along with a reflective note on how perceptions of beauty have evolved for her over the years. She recalled a time when beach beauty was defined by rigid expectations, including red swimsuits, red lipstick and the pressure to look flawless—an image that also shaped her early career.

"Unfiltered. Unapologetic. On the beach in my 50s. There was a time when a beach body meant a red swimsuit, red lipstick—that 1991 Gladraggs cover that became its own moment—and the quiet pressure to be perfect. I built a career in that image. I don't disown it—but I don't live there anymore," Lisa wrote.

She added that with time, freedom has become more meaningful than external approval. According to the actress, embracing a body that has lived, healed and changed has brought a sense of peace that impossible beauty standards never could.

Reflecting on Pamela Anderson's journey, Lisa drew parallels between their experiences. She praised Pamela, once seen as the ultimate red-swimsuit fantasy, for deliberately dismantling the male



gaze and reclaiming her sense of self on her own terms.

"I think of Pamela Anderson—once the ultimate red-swimsuit fantasy—now dismantling the male gaze with intention and reclaiming herself in real time," she noted.

Lisa also spoke about choosing authenticity over glamour in certain spaces, saying that while makeup and styling can be enjoyable for appearances, the beach is where she prefers to be her most natural self.

"Yes, I wear makeup for my reels and appearances. Glam can be fun. But on a beach? Catch me in my most natural form—salt on my skin, lines on my face, stories everywhere," she shared.

The actress did not shy away from addressing ageing and skin changes, admitting that sunscreen was rarely prioritised in the 1990s

and that years of sun exposure have left their mark. However, she said she has made peace with it.

"I burned myself to a crisp more times than I can count. Even though that shows up in my skin today, it's okay. I'm okay," she wrote, adding that every line and mark carries a story.

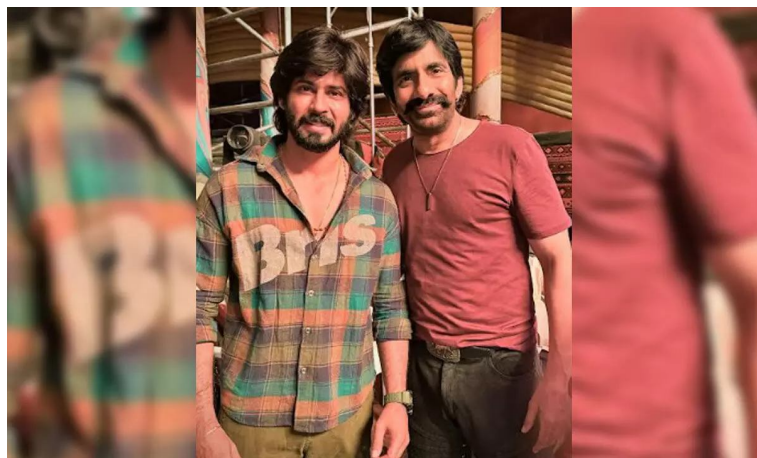
Summing up her thoughts, Lisa said that beach beauty in her 50s is no longer about being admired, but about feeling at home in her own skin and life. She described this shift as a quiet revolution, while also offering a practical reminder.

"Beach beauty in my 50s isn't about being looked at. It's about feeling at home. In my skin. In my life. That, to me, feels like a quiet revolution. But yes—remember to wear sunscreen," she concluded.

Ravi Teja cheers team 'Sumathi Sathakam'

Produced under the Vision Movie Makers banner by Sai Sudhakar Kommalapati and directed by M.M. Naidu, 'Sumathi Sathakam' is a wholesome family entertainer gearing up for a worldwide theatrical release on February 6. The film stars Amardeep Chowdary and Sayli Chaudhary in the lead roles. Renowned production house Mythri Movie Makers will release the film across the Telugu states.

The first look, teaser, songs, and promotional content of 'Sumathi Sathakam' have already received an encouraging response from audiences. Amardeep Chowdary's energetic dance moves in the songs have been widely appreciated, while Subhash Anand's music adds strong emotional and entertainment value



to the film.

As part of the promotions, the film's team conducted an extensive tour across the Rayalaseema region, receiving an overwhelming response. The trailer launch event held at a college in Tirupati turned out to be a grand success, with students enthusiastically responding to the film's hook steps and youthful content.

Popular actor and Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja, who

is widely known as Amardeep Chowdary's inspiration, watched the teaser, trailer, and other promotional content and shared his appreciation. He said,

"I have watched the teaser, trailer, and content of Amardeep's film 'Sumathi Sathakam'. I really liked it. I wish the film great success and hope Amardeep has a bright future ahead."

During the college promotions, the film's catchy

hook steps strongly connected with students, and both the teaser and trailer received a positive response from the youth across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The title 'Sumathi Sathakam' has also created strong recall among audiences.

Adding to its highlights, 'Sumathi Sathakam' received a U/A certificate with zero cuts, which is considered rare. The Censor Board members appreciated the film, stating that it is a feel-good entertainer that audiences will enjoy after a long time.

The film will be released in the Telugu states by Mythri Movie Makers, while overseas distribution in North America will be handled by Vibrant Cinemas, with releases in Dallas managed by Ravi Kollipara and Jai Pakala.

One of the most dangerous teams': Dhoni on India's T20 WC squad



New Delhi: Former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni expressed confidence in the Indian team's prospects for the Men's T20 World Cup 2026, highlighting that they possess the right combination of experience, skill, and balance to perform well in a high-pressure tournament. Dhoni emphasised that the team's strength depends on how well the players handle pressure situations and their clearly defined roles. He noted that players are always in match-ready mode, whether batting or bowling, giving India a crucial edge over competitors.

"It's one of the most dangerous teams. You know, they would have already started batting or bowling. But what all is needed in a good team? Everything is there. They have the experience. Especially when it comes to this format, the experience is vast. They have played under pressure. Whoever is playing whatever roles they are playing in the team, they have been in that situation for a considerable period of time," Dhoni said at an event.

Although Dhoni remained optimistic, he highlighted dew as a factor that can undermine even the most carefully prepared plans in white-ball cricket. He said that dew can significantly affect playing conditions and make toss decisions crucial, potentially creating unfair advantages in matches. "What worries me? Again, I hate dew. Dew changes a lot of things. So, even when I was playing, something that really scared me was dew. Where the toss becomes crucial and all of that. If we are playing 10 matches with some of the best teams, we will come out as winners more often than not. If the conditions remain neutral," Dhoni said.

The former Chennai Super Kings captain also highlighted that T20 cricket is unpredictable, where one bad game or a standout performance by the opposition can completely change the outcome.

"The problem is when some of your players have a day off and somebody from the opposition has a brilliant day. And it can happen in the T20 group. So, that's the time. Whether it happens in the league stage, whether it happens in the knockout stage, that's where all the praying is needed. You know, nobody should get injured. Whatever roles are given, people should accomplish their roles for the team," the former India captain said.

Ranveer Singh's Dhurandhar Brings Back the Yami Gautam-Aditya Dhar Collaboration

It's been months since Aditya Dhar announced the release date of Dhurandhar The Revenge, and today fans finally got the film's teaser online. Unfortunately, instead of rejoicing, fans were left upset. Why? Well, netizens quickly noticed that the dhurandhar sequel cast Ranveer Singh, Arjun Rampal, Sanjay Dutt and R Madhavan was nothing but an edited version of the end-credits scene of Dhurandhar. Rumoured Vicky Kaushal cameo was nowhere to be seen, and neither were Akshaye Khanna's highly speculated flashback sequences as Rehman Daka. Still, we do have commodity new on the effect, which is why suckers can rejoice — Yami Gautam is said to make a special appearance in Dhurandhar 2. Actor Yami Gautam met and fell in love with filmmaker Aditya Dhar during the elevations of their 2019 film Uri The Surgical Strike. Fast forward seven times later, and reports are saying that Yami Gautam and Aditya are getting back together for Dhurandhar 2. That's right, Yami Gautam will be roped in to make a special gem in the film. Last year, weeks after Dhurandhar's release, yami gautam aditya dhar reunion wished she was a boy when she read the script of Aditya Dhar's film. During an interview with News 18 she had said, "When I read his next script, I told him, 'Oh my god Aditya, this is one of those special moments when I wish I were a boy'. The script is amazing. It's a wonderful world. But he (Aditya) said 'I never mix my personal and professional life together'".

Rebel Star Prabhas praises the 'Couple Friendly' Trailer, shares it on Instagram

The trailer of 'Couple Friendly', starring Santosh Soban and Manasa Varanasi in the lead roles, was released recently. Rebel Star Prabhas appreciated the trailer, calling it well-made, and shared it on his Instagram account. He described it as a love story told straight from the heart.

The 'Couple Friendly' team has

expressed their happiness over receiving praise from Prabhas for the trailer. This recognition is a huge boost for the entire team and has raised the buzz surrounding the film.

Presented by the renowned production house UV Creations, the film is being grandly produced by UV Concepts in both Telugu and Tamil. Ajay Kumar Raju P. serves

as the co-producer, and the film is directed by Ashwin Chandrasekhar. Made as a musical romantic love story, 'Couple Friendly' is set to release on February 14, on the occasion of Valentine's Day, in both languages. The film will be distributed in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana by passionate producer and distributor Dheeraj Mogilineni.