WAY TO NEWS

PRGI No: TGENG/26/A6521

ENGLISH DAILY



Telangana | Vol: 01 | Issue:100 | Thursday 19 November 2026 | Price:1/- | Pages: 8

India sitting on 'economic disaster': Rahul



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said the country's economic model ceased to deliver results nearly a decade ago, leaving it with a deepening employment crisis and a weakened manufacturing base.

Speaking at a fireside chat at Columbia University on Tuesday (November 17, 2026), moderated by journalist Lydia Polgreen, Mr. Gandhi said India is sitting on an "economic disaster" that could become far more serious if the country continued on its present course. "The blunt thing is that India is sitting on an economic disaster. That's the reality of it," he said.

"One can brush it aside, the media can brush it aside. But India has got a massive unemployment problem. India's got a massive problem with its education system. And these are things you cannot get away from," he added. Mr. Gandhi identified small and medium businesses, agriculture and manufacturing as the backbone and principal engines of job creation, arguing that the services sector could not absorb India's expanding workforce. "The spine of the economy is small and medium business, which is the job creation engine, and agriculture. That is fundamental in India and required. The spine of the economy has been broken," he said.

The Opposition leader said India could not achieve sustainable economic development without rebuilding its manufacturing capabilities. "We cannot survive successfully without manufacturing, it just cannot be done," he said.

Mr. Gandhi alleged that economic growth was concentrated in a few large business groups while smaller enterprises were struggling.

"Why is there no private investment in India? Why are the only people who are growing in India, businesses that are growing in India called Adani and Ambani? Why is Tata literally being taken over by Mr. [Gautam] Adani?" he asked.

Mr. Gandhi placed the recent student-led Gen Z protests alongside resistance movements by Adivasis, Dalits and farmers against what he called the growing concentration of political and economic power in the last decade. He said the student-led protests showed that fear of "coercive power of the State" didn't work.

"There's a massive concentration of wealth taking place in India, and huge disenfranchisement of people. Vote is just one element of it," he said, alleging that tribal land was being taken without consultation and that minorities, Dalits and farmers were facing growing marginalisation.

PM Modi Calls for a Nationwide Drug-Free India

Urges Ministers to Prevent Maoist Resurgence and Accelerate Poverty Eradication Efforts



New Delhil, Nov 18 (Way to News): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday called for an all-out campaign to rid India of the drug menace and prevent the resurgence of Maoist violence, while urging his ministers to intensify efforts to eradicate poverty. Chairing a meeting of the Union Council of Ministers at Bharat Mandapam here, Modi became emotional while referring to the devastating impact of narcotics in parts of the country, sources said. The Prime Minister stressed the need for decisive action to make the government's "Drugs Free India" campaign a success. He told ministers and officials that if India could make significant progress in reducing poverty, there was no reason it could not overcome the drug menace.

Modi said the gains made against Maoist insurgency must be protected and directed officials to ensure that violence did not return to areas once affected by Naxalism. The meeting also discussed World Bank estimates showing that about 50 crore Indians had moved out of poverty between 2011 and 2023, with the extreme poverty rate falling by about 90 per cent during the period. Crediting ministers, officials and field workers for the progress, Modi said the results demonstrated the effectiveness of a "whole-of-government approach".

He said that while "garibi hatao" had remained a slogan for decades, his government had translated poverty alleviation into concrete results. The Prime Minister also highlighted the expansion of banking services and the success of direct benefit transfer schemes in reaching beneficiaries.

Expressing confidence in India's development prospects, Modi said that if the country could lift 50 crore people out of poverty, there was no reason it could not achieve developed-nation status by 2047, the centenary of Independence.

He recalled that his slogan of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" had initially invited ridicule, but said his government had remained committed to inclusive development. His remarks come ahead of the Assembly elections in Punjab, where drug abuse is expected to be a major political issue. The meeting focused on two key issues lifting 50 crore people out of poverty and the government's campaign against Left-wing extremism. Eleven secretaries from different Union ministries and departments made presentations.

Symbol Of 'Flowers & Grass' Will Remain With Us: Abhishek



Kolkata, Nov 18 (Way to News): Trinamool Congress General Secretary and the party's Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha member, Abhishek Banerjee, on Wednesday claimed that the original party name of "All India Trinamool Congress" and the original electoral symbol of "Flowers & Grass" will ultimately remain with the party faction led by his aunt and the former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

"The original name and electoral symbol had always been with Mamata Banerjee and will continue to remain so in future. Just wait for seven days. We will prove how manipulations were made in filing affidavits to establish the right over the original party name and original electoral symbol. We will display that on the big screen," he claimed while speaking to the media person late in the evening. Abhishek Banerjee's claims come at a point when both the "original but minority" faction in Trinamool Congress led by Mamata Banerjee and him, as well as the "rebel but majority" faction led by the current Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly Ritabrata Banerjee have submitted affidavits to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to establish their respective right over the original party name and the original party symbol.

Revanth Reddy to Launch Family Insurance Scheme, Distribute Sarees in Siddipet



Hyderabad, Nov 18 (Way to News): Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will launch the Indiramma Family Life Insurance scheme, providing Rs 5 lakh in insurance cover to more than one crore families across Telangana, and distribute Indiramma sarees to one crore women across the state in Siddipet on Thursday, marking the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He will also inaugurate and lay foundation stones for development works worth about Rs 544 crore in Siddipet district.

Under the insurance scheme, one member aged 18 to 59 years in each eligible family will be covered. Those born between November 19, 1967, and November 18, 2008, are eligible, with the date of birth recorded on the Aadhaar card being considered. Registration will be held from November 19 to December 18, with special camps to facilitate enrolment. Even if a beneficiary crosses the age of 59 after registration, full insurance cover will continue for at least one year.

Panchayat secretaries will oversee registration in villages and ward officers in urban areas, assisted by help desks. Details will be drawn from the civil supplies department's food security card database. Families without ration cards or whose names are not in the database can submit a separate form containing the insured member's details, Aadhaar-based date of birth, family particulars and nominee details. Ration card numbers will serve as application numbers, while families without cards will be allotted separate codes. Families holding ration cards from other districts can enrol at the nearest camp. The Chief Minister's Siddipet visit also carries political significance, as the Assembly constituency is a BRS stronghold represented by senior leader T. Harish Rao, who has not lost an election from the constituency since his debut in 2004. Before him, BRS chief K. Chandrashekar Rao represented Siddipet from 1985 to 2004, first as a TDP leader and later as the founder of the TRS, now BRS.

The Congress has stepped up its focus on Siddipet, Sircilla and Gajwel, represented by Harish Rao, K.T. Rama Rao and K. Chandrashekar Rao, respectively.

India, Italy agree to boost trade, investment ties



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said on Wednesday that he held a very productive discussion with Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Antonio Tajani on taking the India-Italy Special Strategic Partnership forward, with a focus on unlocking new opportunities in bilateral trade and investment.

The two ministers, in the meeting held in Rome, also held talks on closer industrial cooperation and advanced manufacturing, technology, clean energy and innovation.

"India and Italy share a strong commitment to deepening economic ties and building new avenues of collaboration. Reaffirmed our resolve to take this partnership to new heights and achieve our ambitious 20 billion bilateral trade target by 2029," Goyal said in a post on X.

The minister further stated that he also co-chaired the 23rd India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) with the Italian minister Antonio Tajani.

The two ministers reviewed the rapid progress and broadening of bilateral economic cooperation and explored opportunities to take the partnership forward across key sectors like manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, agriculture, energy and connectivity. Besides, the issues of closer ties in critical minerals, science and technology as well as the tourism sector, figured in the talks.

"Also discussed strengthening trade facilitation, addressing market access challenges, and harnessing new opportunities emerging from the India-EU free trade agreement," Piyush Goyal said. "With strong complementarities between our economies, India and Italy have immense potential to deepen industrial cooperation, boost investments and build resilient supply chains," he added.

India's Commerce and Industry Minister is on an official visit to the Italian Republic from 17 to 18 November.

'Asia-Pacific economies must not halt commitment to openness'



Shenzhen (China), Nov 18 (Way to News): The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a platform for cooperation among 21 economies, and even as trade barriers rise, we must not waver in our commitment to openness, said South Korean President Lee Jae Myung on Wednesday.

Lee made the remarks while delivering a speech at the APEC CEO Summit in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province.

A technological revolution driven by Artificial Intelligence (AI), the climate crisis and shifts in demographic structures, among others, are fundamentally reshaping the industrial landscape, demanding new engines for growth, Lee said.

Against this backdrop, he said that the most urgent priority is expanding trade and investment within the APEC region to create new growth opportunities for businesses.

Lee said that we must ensure that everyone benefits from the AI revolution through inclusive innovation, and we must strengthen cooperation to build stable industrial foundations and supply chains, Xinhua news agency reported.

The city of Shenzhen serves as a vivid testament to how future technologies can transform our lives, and technologies once considered part of the distant future have already become part of daily life here, Lee said.

Noting that the future is something we create together by embracing new possibilities, Lee said he trusts that all parties will join efforts to make APEC a platform for all to cultivate even greater prosperity.

Meanwhile, Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife, Peng Liyuan, on Wednesday hosted a banquet in Shenzhen to welcome guests attending the economic leaders' meeting.

"I wish to extend, on behalf of the Chinese government and the Chinese people, our warmest welcome to all distinguished guests," Xi said in his toast.

Xi said that the success of Shenzhen is also a microcosm of China's reform and opening up, as well as an example of fruitful cooperation across the Asia-Pacific.

India stresses National action to shore up food security



Washington, Nov 17 (Way to News): The USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier has arrived in the Middle East, bringing the number of US carrier strike groups in the region to three amid continued tensions with Iran, a US official confirmed.

The carrier arrived in the area of responsibility of the US Central Command on Sunday, according to US media outlets on Monday (local time). It joins the USS George H.W. Bush and the USS George Washington, which have been deployed in the region since April and August, respectively. The US Navy's presence in the Arabian Sea now includes three aircraft carriers, 13 destroyers, two cruisers and a littoral combat ship, reports Xinhua news agency, citing US media reports. The deployment comes as diplomatic efforts between Washington and Tehran remain stalled and US President Donald Trump is considering whether to resume large-scale military strikes against Iran.

On February 28, Israel and the United States launched joint attacks on Tehran and other Iranian cities. Iran responded with waves of missile and drone strikes targeting Israel and US bases and assets in the region, while tightening its control over the Strait of Hormuz. Meanwhile, US Vice President J.D. Vance has said that President Donald Trump would not allow the conflict with Iran to become a "forever war", rejecting even a two-year American commitment while defending the President's decision to attack Iran's nuclear programme.

In an interview to Fox News host Laura Ingraham on Monday (local time), Vance expressed confidence that Trump would end the conflict successfully. However, he did not set a specific withdrawal date in the remarks reported by Iran International.

Jaishankar, Kishida discuss strategic ties and economic security



Tokyo, Nov 17 (Way to News): External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met with former Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Tokyo on Wednesday and discussed strategic convergence and economic security cooperation. India's Ambassador to Japan, Nagma Mallick, and other officials were also present at the meeting. Kishida also serves as the Chairman of the Japan-India Association.

Following the meeting, EAM Jaishankar on X wrote, "Pleased to meet Former PM and Chairman of the Japan-India Association Fumio Kishida today in Tokyo. Discussed our strategic convergence and economic security cooperation. Appreciate his consistent support to further strengthen our Special Strategic and Global Partnership." Fumio Kishida served as Japan's Prime Minister from October 4, 2021, to October 1, 2024. EAM Jaishankar is currently on an official visit to Japan to participate in the fourth edition of the India-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministers' Dialogue (2+2).

The 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in Tokyo will be co-chaired by EAM Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, along with Japan's Minister of Defence Shinjiro Koizumi and Minister for Foreign Affairs Toshimitsu Motegi. During the dialogue, both sides will review the full spectrum of bilateral strategic and defence cooperation, exchange views on regional and global developments, and reaffirm the shared commitment of the two nations to a free, open, inclusive, and rule-based Indo-Pacific, according to the Ministry of Defence statement.

Building on the momentum from their interactions in New Delhi in August and on the margins of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus in Cebu in October, Singh and Koizumi will discuss advancing defence equipment and technology collaboration, maritime security, enhancing the scale and complexity of joint exercises across all three services, and deepening industrial partnerships.

Sridhar Babu Invites Mumbai Businesses to Expand Operations in Telangana



Mumbai, Nov 18 (Way to News): Telangana IT, Electronics & Communications, Industries & Commerce and Legislative Affairs Minister D. Sridhar Babu has invited Mumbai's business and industrial community to make Telangana their preferred destination for manufacturing, technology, innovation and business expansion, while continuing to retain their corporate headquarters in Mumbai.

"Keep your head office in Mumbai; make, scale and grow in Telangana," the Minister said, presenting Telangana as a complementary investment destination for Mumbai-based businesses and an ideal location to expand their manufacturing and operational capacities.

Addressing industry leaders at the roadshow for the Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026 (ITGS 2026), organised by the Government of Telangana in association with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) at the Four Seasons Hotel, Worli, on Wednesday, Sridhar Babu said the State was keen to build stronger economic partnerships with Mumbai's business community rather than compete with the city for existing investments.

Recalling the longstanding historical and economic ties between Telangana and Mumbai, he noted that generations of workers, artisans and entrepreneurs from Telangana had contributed to Mumbai's growth, while trade and business had connected the two regions for decades. "A century ago, the people of Telangana came to Mumbai to help build its future. Today, Telangana invites Mumbai to come and build ours," he said.

The Minister outlined the State's growing opportunities across technology, Global Capability Centres (GCCs), data centres, pharmaceuticals, textiles and apparel, and media and entertainment. He urged Mumbai-based industrialists and entrepreneurs to leverage Telangana's industrial infrastructure, skilled workforce, business ecosystem and investor-friendly policies to expand their operations. Inviting the industry to participate in the Invest Telangana Global Summit, scheduled from December 7 to 9, 2026, at Bharat Future City, the Minister highlighted the State's commitment to facilitating investments through its time-bound approvals mechanism under TG-iPASS.

In a significant assurance to prospective investors, he announced that every company coming from Mumbai would be assigned a dedicated officer to provide end-to-end assistance throughout its investment journey — from the initial visit to Telangana to the commencement of commercial operations and generation of its first revenue.

Sridhar Babu said Telangana was looking to forge long-term partnerships with Mumbai's industrial and business community by combining the city's financial and corporate strengths with the State's manufacturing capabilities and emerging economic opportunities.

Aarti Kuchibhatla, Vice Chairperson, CII Maharashtra State Council, delivered the welcome address. Shashanka, IAS, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation; B. Ajith Reddy, IDES, CEO, Invest Telangana; and Nikhil Chakravarthy, IA&AS, Commissioner, Industries & Commerce Department, were part of the Telangana delegation. Ajith Reddy addressed the gathering, while Nikhil Chakravarthy made a presentation highlighting the State's investment opportunities and industrial ecosystem. The programme was followed by one-to-one meetings between Minister Sridhar Babu and representatives of Mumbai-based companies to explore investment proposals, expansion plans and potential business partnerships.

Ponnam Distributes Cheyutha Pension Sanction Letters to 612 Beneficiaries

Minister Highlights Welfare Schemes, Announces 5,500 Indiramma Houses for Husnabad Constituency



Siddipet, Nov 18 (Way to News): Telangana Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar distributed new Cheyutha pension sanction letters to 612 eligible beneficiaries from Husnabad Municipality and surrounding villages in Husnabad Mandal. The programme was held at KGR Gardens in Husnabad constituency, where the Minister handed over pension sanction letters to the newly selected beneficiaries.

Speaking on the occasion, Ponnam Prabhakar said the government had sanctioned pensions to eligible beneficiaries belonging to seven categories, including single women, widows and thalassemia patients, whose applications had remained pending for a long time. He urged those who were still eligible but had not received pensions to submit applications, assuring that their cases would be examined and resolved. He also said the government would take a decision on old-age pensions soon.

The Minister highlighted several welfare initiatives introduced by the Congress government, including free bus travel for women in RTC buses within 48 hours of assuming office and 200 units of free electricity per month for eligible poor households.

He said new ration cards were being issued to all eligible families, with provisions for corrections and additions. Fine rice was also being distributed through ration shops. The government was taking steps to resolve ration card applications within 48 hours to three days. Referring to the Indiramma housing scheme, the Minister said that due to the lack of house sanctions during the previous ten years, a large number of applications had accumulated in the constituency. Recognising the housing needs of people, the government had sanctioned 3,500 houses in the first phase and another 2,000 recently, taking the total number of Indiramma houses in Husnabad constituency to 5,500. He said houses were being allocated with equal priority to all villages.

Ponnam Prabhakar reiterated the government's commitment to completing the Gouravelli Project, whose foundation stone was laid in 2007. He said Rs. 250 crore had been sanctioned for land acquisition and canal construction, and efforts were underway to expedite the remaining works to provide irrigation water to farmers by 2027.

The Minister said the government was working to transform Husnabad into a model constituency in education, healthcare, employment and tourism. Several development projects were being prioritised, including four-lane roads towards Karimnagar and Akkannapet, an engineering college, an industrial park, an urban forest, a 250-bed hospital, a postgraduate college, a kabaddi academy and a swimming pool. Steps were also being taken to restore lakes and develop temples.

Highlighting women's empowerment initiatives, he said the interest-free loan limit for women's self-help groups had been increased from Rs. 5 lakh to Rs. 10 lakh. Women's groups across the state had received loans worth Rs. 79,000 crore. RTC buses were also being allocated to women's groups. To reduce plastic consumption, steel plates and other reusable items were being distributed. The government would soon begin distributing Indiramma sarees, he added.

The Minister also announced that the government was launching the Indiramma Life Family Insurance Scheme, extending insurance coverage beyond farmers to all families in the state. He said the initiative aimed to provide financial security to every household.

Emphasising water conservation, Ponnam Prabhakar urged village sarpanches to take up the construction of percolation ponds, farm ponds and soak pits under the MGNREGS in every village to harvest rainwater and improve groundwater levels.

Indiramma Insurance Scheme Guarantees Rs 5 Lakh Family Financial Security



Ranga Reddy, Nov 18 (Way to News): The Telangana State Government is committed to providing financial security to every eligible family through the prestigious Indiramma Family Life Insurance Scheme. Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju directed district officials to ensure the effective and systematic implementation of the scheme across the state.

Addressing a video conference with District Collectors and concerned officials from all districts on Wednesday, along with senior government officials, the Chief Secretary said that the primary objective of the scheme is to provide financial protection of 5 lakh to families in the event of the sudden death of their earning member, thereby preventing them from facing financial hardships. He stated that one earning member aged between 18 and 59 years from each eligible family should be covered under the insurance scheme. In cases where more than one member of a family is earning, the family members should be given the choice to decide who should be enrolled under the scheme. The Chief Secretary emphasized that the benefits of the scheme must reach all eligible families without discrimination based on caste, religion or income. He clarified that the entire insurance premium would be borne by the State Government, ensuring that beneficiaries would not face any financial burden.

As part of the enrolment process, special assistance camps should be organised at the village, town and ward levels to facilitate registration. Officials were instructed to identify eligible families based on ration card details. He further directed that families whose names are not included in ration cards, as well as those without ration cards, should also be provided an opportunity to enrol through a special application process. He stressed the importance of accurately recording the details of the insured person, Aadhaar-based date of birth, family members and nominees without any errors. Since beneficiaries will have the option of selecting more than one nominee, the respective share of the insurance amount allocated to each nominee must be clearly recorded.

The Chief Secretary also informed that application registration and other necessary services would be made available through MeeSeva centres to facilitate the enrolment process. District Collector C. Narayana Reddy, Additional Collector Kiranmayi, CPO Sowmya, DRDA Project Director Srilatha, MEPMA Project Director Venkata Narayana and other concerned officials participated in the video conference.

Sagar & Srisailam Highways Hyderabad's Next Big Wealth Corridors

- **Investors shift focus from saturated West Hyderabad to booming South and East zones**
- **ORR, RRR, Airport, and Fourth City fuel rapid infrastructure and land value growth**
- **Timely investment in clear-title plots builds generational wealth, says Ritesh Bajpai**



Hyderabad, Nov 18 (Way to News): A closer look at Hyderabad's real estate journey reveals remarkable stories of wealth creation. Decades ago, plots in Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills—then rocky terrains with minimal infrastructure—were priced at just Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 per square yard. Those who had the foresight to invest back then now own assets worth well over Rs. 5 lakh per square yard. Similarly, areas like Gachibowli, Madhapur, and Kokapet transformed from ordinary lands into global IT hubs, turning countless middle-class investors into multi-millionaires.

With land prices in West Hyderabad soaring beyond the reach of common and middle-class buyers, real estate expansion is now moving aggressively toward the South and East Hyderabad corridors. Srisailam Highway and Nagarjuna Sagar Highway have emerged as the undisputed hotspots for smart investors. Strategic proximity to the Outer Ring Road (ORR), the upcoming Regional Ring Road (RRR), and the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport provides unmatched connectivity. Furthermore, mega developments like the Fourth City (Future City), Pharma City, Electronic Manufacturing Clusters, and upcoming IT parks are transforming these two corridors into powerful economic growth engines.

The Right Time to Invest

"In my nearly three decades of experience in the real estate sector, I have witnessed the phenomenal rise of West Hyderabad firsthand. The exact early growth indicators we once saw in Jubilee Hills and Kokapet are now clearly visible along the Sagar and Srisailam highways. With rapid infrastructure expansion and wide road networks, land values here are appreciating at a remarkable pace," said Ritesh Bajpai, Project Sales Director at Navabhoomi Developers LLP. He added that hundreds of families have already secured their financial future by investing in safe, clear-title plots through their projects. Emphasizing that a small, well-timed investment in the right location builds lasting generational wealth, he noted that this is the ideal moment for aspiring homeowners and investors to act. For more details and site visits, interested buyers can contact +91 98805 11223.

Tamil and Telugu Films Steal the Spotlight at IFFI 2026

Social Issues, Family Bonds and Environmental Conservation Dominate Themes

Hyderabad, Nov 18 (Way to News): Tamil and Telugu films are emerging as special attractions at the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI–2026), showcasing a diverse range of themes, including social issues, family relationships, human values, individual struggles, environmental conservation and cultural traditions. Screened across feature and non-feature film categories, these movies explore contemporary social challenges and various dimensions of human life through compelling storytelling.

Diverse Storylines in Tamil Cinema

Tamil films at the festival explore a wide range of subjects, from modern technology and family relationships to education, traditional medicine and environmental protection. Directed by Kannan S, 'Scroll' revolves around Aravind, a young man addicted to smartphones. His life takes an unexpected turn after he joins an application called 'Dopa Rush'. What begins as an attempt to overcome his addiction gradually develops into a frightening experience, highlighting the dangers of technology misuse.

'Thaai Kizhavi' (God Mother), directed by Sivakumar Murugesan, portrays family bonds and generational conflicts. The story revolves around a 70-year-old woman, Pavunuthai, and her three sons. The distance between them and incidents from their past form the central theme. When Pavunuthai falls seriously ill, the family reunites, bringing old disputes and hidden family secrets to the surface. The film highlights the importance of relationships and family values.

Education and women's empowerment form the core of 'Arivu', directed by Sathyasiva and set in the backdrop of 1996. The film unfolds in a remote tribal village in the Western Ghats, where a superstition prevails that educating girls would anger the village deity. Kathir, a young teacher, takes up the challenge of breaking this belief. By secretly educating girls who have never attended school, he strives to instil confidence in them and underline the importance of the right to education.

'Attappadi', directed by Vijesh Mani, stands out for its exploration of indigenous



knowledge and traditional tribal healing practices. The film follows Sultan Ahmed Al Mehmoudi, who travels from Arabia to explore the medicinal knowledge and forest traditions of tribal communities living in Kerala's Western Ghats. Through interactions with traditional healers and tribal elders, the film highlights humanity's deep connection with nature.

Environmental conservation and bird protection are the central themes of 'Goodu' (Nest), directed by Joel Vijay. The story is set in Vachathi village in Tamil Nadu, where residents discover a sparrow's nest containing eggs inside an electricity transformer. To protect the birds, villagers decide to remain without electricity for 35 days. Led by village elder Agasthyan, Kathir and other residents face local opposition but remain committed to safeguarding the birds. Their efforts underline the importance of compassion towards nature and wildlife.

Telugu Films Explore Environment, Family and Human Relationships

Telugu films at the festival also present diverse narratives, focusing on environmental protection, family relationships, love, personal ambitions and political life.

'Sing Geetham', directed by acclaimed filmmaker Singeetam Srinivasa Rao, revolves around gold mines, environmental destruction and human relationships. Pratap Manne returns to Kuberapuram village to claim his share of the gold mines left behind by his father. However, he finds himself in conflict with his former business partner, who plans to expand mining operations and destroy even the last remaining tree in the village. As Pratap uncovers truths about his family's past, his perspective begins to change. The film highlights village unity, sacrifice and the importance of protecting nature.

'Mana Shankara Vara Prasad, directed by Anil Ravipudi, focuses on family relationships, professional responsibilities and emotional bonds. Shankara Vara Prasad, a national security officer, gives priority to his duties, which gradually distances him from his wife and children. Six years later, he gets an opportunity to work at the school where his children study, allowing him to reconnect with his family. However, a threat to his family presents another major challenge. His struggle to protect his loved ones and regain their trust forms the central storyline.

International Platform for Diverse Stories

Overall, the selection of Tamil and Telugu films at IFFI–2026 reflects the rich storytelling diversity of South Indian cinema. Going beyond entertainment, these films highlight social awareness, the importance of education, family values, environmental responsibility and human relationships.

The festival provides an international platform for regional stories, helping South Indian cinema showcase its creative diversity and meaningful narratives to audiences across the world.

Indian seafarers safe after tanker hit near Strait Of Hormuz



New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): A Liberia-flagged crude oil tanker carrying three Indian seafarers came under a projectile attack in the Persian Gulf while approaching the Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday, prompting Indian authorities to closely monitor the situation.

All three Indian nationals on board, along with the rest of the crew, are safe and accounted for, Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said. In a post on social media platform X, Sonowal said the vessel, MT NAVIG8 MESSI, was targeted on November 18. While no serious injuries were reported, one Indian officer was shifted to a hospital for first-aid treatment and medical evaluation.

"On Nov 18, Liberia-flagged crude oil tanker MT NAVIG8 MESSI, carrying 3 Indian seafarers, was targeted in a projectile attack in the Persian Gulf while approaching the Strait of Hormuz," he said.

"All 3 Indian nationals, along with the entire crew, are safe and accounted for, with no serious injuries reported. One Indian officer has been shifted to a hospital for first-aid treatment and medical evaluation," the minister added. The minister said the government was maintaining close contact with the ship management company and was continuously tracking developments to ensure the safety and well-being of the crew members.

The incident adds to growing concerns over maritime security in the strategically important Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for global energy shipments. The attack comes just two days after another merchant vessel, the Panama-flagged LPG tanker MT TARA GAS, carrying 24 Indian seafarers, was struck in a missile attack in the Strait of Hormuz on November 16.

Following that incident, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said that 21 of the 24 Indian crew members aboard MT TARA GAS had been safely evacuated to Khasab in Oman. Two injured Indian nationals were admitted to hospital for treatment, while one Indian seafarer remained missing.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Prince William and Princess Kate during their visit to India, with the leaders seen engaging in a conversation amid the Indian and British flags.

Madras HC orders ban on opening new tasmac liquor outlets in Tamil Nadu



Madurai, Nov 18 (Way to News): In a significant development concerning the expansion of liquor sales in Tamil Nadu, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Wednesday directed the authorities not to open any new Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (Tasmac) liquor outlets across the state, observing that the existing number of shops was sufficient.

A Division Bench comprising Justices Velmurugan and Ramakrishnan passed the order while disposing of a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by a resident of Tiruchy district opposing the establishment of a new liquor outlet in his village.

The petitioner, Manikandan, a resident of Navakinathapatti, informed the court that the authorities were taking steps to establish a new Tasmac liquor outlet at Navakinathapatti in Nallampillai village in Tiruchy district. Expressing concern over the proposed establishment, the petitioner sought a direction restraining the authorities from opening the liquor shop, taking into consideration the interests and welfare of the local population.

During the hearing, the Division Bench observed that Tamil Nadu already had an adequate number of Tasmac outlets and that there was no need to establish additional liquor shops.

Considering the larger public interest, the judges issued a statewide direction against the opening of new Tasmac outlets rather than restricting the order to the village mentioned in the petition.

India on Track for 500 GW Renewable Energy Target

New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): India is firmly on course to achieve its target of installing 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030, backed by supportive government policies, market development initiatives and flagship schemes such as PM Surya Ghar and PM-KUSUM, a senior government official said on Wednesday. Speaking on the sidelines of FICCI's Annual General Meeting, Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Secretary in the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), said the government remains optimistic about meeting the ambitious clean energy goal, citing the rapid growth of the sector and sustained policy support.

He said India has made significant progress in expanding its renewable energy capacity over the past few years, aided by policy stability and efforts to create a conducive market environment for clean energy investments.

Schemes such as PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and PM-KUSUM have played a key role in promoting distributed renewable energy generation across the country, he added. According to Sarangi, these initiatives have helped accelerate the adoption of renewable energy at both the household and agricultural levels, strengthening the country's transition towards a cleaner energy future. The MNRE Secretary noted that the combination of policy measures, market-building efforts and targeted government programmes provides confidence.

'Rahul Gandhi defaming India to stay in News': Anurag Thakur



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Anurag Thakur on Wednesday lashed out at Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi for his criticism of India's economy at the Columbia University in the US, accusing the latter of being "obsessed with staying in headlines by defaming India".

Addressing a press conference here, Thakur said: "Once again, Rahul Gandhi has attempted to tarnish India's image on foreign soil. Having lost his political base in India, Rahul Gandhi and the Congress Party have now resorted to increasingly low-level tactics to remain in the headlines. They make false remarks about India and work to defame the country." The BJP leader remarked that the LoP has developed "headline phobia". "He (Rahul Gandhi) is addicted to staying in the spotlight. It is as if he is driven by an obsession: defame India and remain in the news. I would say that what he said on Colombian soil reflects nothing but a mental disorder. It is a serious condition rooted in his desire to stay in the headlines," Thakur added.

According to the BJP MP, Rahul Gandhi may be one of the first politicians to travel abroad and speak "negatively" about his own country. "To remain politically relevant, he (Rahul Gandhi) dreams of regime change with the support of foreign friends, foreign funding, and foreign toolkits. However, that dream will never be fulfilled. Gradually, even his handlers will abandon both Rahul Gandhi and the Congress Party," Thakur claimed. Referring to Lydia Polgreen, the journalist to whom Rahul Gandhi responded at the Columbia University, the BJP MP said: "On August 12, 2010, she (Polgreen) wrote an article titled "Indian Forces Face Broader Revolt in Kashmir".

EC extends SIR 2026 deadline; Final voter list in Jharkhand to be published on Dec 22



Ranchi, Nov 18 (Way to News): The Election Commission of India (ECI) has extended the timeline for the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR-2026) of electoral rolls in seven states and Union Territories, including Jharkhand, with the publication of the final voter list now scheduled for December 22 instead of November 30. The revised schedule issued by the Commission will also apply to Maharashtra, Delhi, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland and Haryana.

According to the revised timeline, the extension has primarily been granted to strengthen the identification and verification of voters falling under the ASDD (Absent, Shifted, Dead and Duplicate) category.

As per the updated schedule, the preparation and printing of enumeration forms for ASDD voters were completed on November 18.

The distribution and collection of these forms through door-to-door visits will take place from November 18 to 30, with Booth Level Officers (BLOs) carrying out the electoral exercise at the grassroots level.

The administrative processing of the collected forms is scheduled to be completed by December 10.

The Commission has also directed that the process of addressing claims and objections related to electoral rolls in Jharkhand be completed by December 15.

Following the completion of all verification procedures and the resolution of discrepancies, the final and updated electoral rolls will be published on December 22.

The Election Commission has instructed the Chief Electoral Officers and District Election Officers of all seven states and Union Territories to ensure wide publicity of the revised schedule so that voters are informed about the changes in time.

It has also directed the authorities to provide written information about the updated timeline to all recognised political parties to ensure transparency and facilitate the smooth and orderly completion of the voter revision exercise.

The revised schedule is aimed at ensuring a more comprehensive verification of electoral records before the publication of the final voter lists.

Govt seals Rs 1,976 crore deal with Israel aerospace to upgrade Indian Navy's barak defence missile system



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): The Ministry of Defence on Wednesday signed a contract with Israel Aerospace Industries for the upgradation and obsolescence management of the Barak Point Defence Missile System onboard Indian Navy ships at an overall cost of Rs 1,976.40 crore, according to an official statement. The upgradation of the Barak system will ensure enhanced features and potent range anti-air defence capability of the Indian Naval platforms. As part of the contract, a comprehensive upgrade will be undertaken of both the hardware and software of the system, the statement said.

The contract, listed under the other capital procurement procedure, was signed here in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh. This is the third contract for the Indian Navy this month, coming close on the heels of the Defence Ministry signing a contract worth Rs 498.58 crore with Cochin Shipyard Limited on November 11 for the normal refit and re-powering of the Indian Naval Ship, Betwa.

Under the contract, INS Betwa, a Brahmaputra-class frigate of the Indian Navy, will undergo a major propulsion system transformation, involving the replacement of its existing steam-based propulsion system with a diesel-engine-based propulsion system. The refit will also include the upgradation of its combat capabilities through the installation of a modernised weapon suite, thereby enhancing the ship's operational effectiveness. The Indian government has accelerated its push to modernise and expand domestic naval shipbuilding and repair infrastructure through major public sector shipyard contracts. Earlier on November 2, the Ministry of Defence signed contracts worth 53,866.50 crore with two public sector shipyards for eight indigenously designed Next Generation Corvettes for the Indian Navy. Under the contracts, Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) in Kolkata will build five corvettes, while Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) in Goa will build the remaining three corvettes.

Goa Polls 2027: Opposition faces unity test amid divergent political ambitions



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): The Opposition's strategy may well be to let the Goa turf war be a chapter bygone when the popular tourist destination goes to poll next year; but how far will the so-called national platform against the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) prevail over regional interests yet remains uncertain.

Even as his party's negotiations continue with the Congress, Goa Forward Party (GFP) leader Vijai Sardesai has reportedly reiterated the need for the Opposition to unite for the 2027 Assembly elections. He has, in fact, stated that the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) stand against both the BJP and Congress is not finding acceptance among Goans. Despite AAP having reportedly proposed a non-BJP, non-Congress alternative to GFP, Sardesai seems inclined toward a wider alliance that would include the Congress. This disagreement reflects a broader strategic dilemma for the AAP between remaining a distinct alternative and joining a larger anti-BJP coalition.

In 2022, the AAP, Congress, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), and even the Trinamool Congress had contested state Assembly elections separately, despite their broader understanding at the national level. The BJP clinched half of Goa's 40 seats, while the Congress won 11, GFP one, and AAP managed two. AAP has since distanced itself from the INDIA Bloc, where it is in direct contest against the Congress in the Punjab Assembly election, due around the same time as in Goa.

Andhra CM thanks Karnataka CM for assistance in restoring power after twin cyclones Arnab, Murasu



Bengaluru, Nov 18 (Way to News): Chief Minister, N. Chandrababu Naidu, has expressed his gratitude to Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar for his government providing timely assistance in restoring electricity supply in areas affected by twin cyclones Arnab and Murasu in Andhra Pradesh.

According to a statement by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) on Wednesday, Chief Minister Naidu has written an official letter to Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, thanking Karnataka for its prompt response and deployment of personnel for power restoration work following the extensive damage caused by the cyclones in Andhra Pradesh.

The intensity of the cyclones had caused widespread damage to electricity infrastructure and disrupted power supply in several parts of Andhra Pradesh. Responding immediately to the crisis, the Karnataka government deployed 592 personnel in 68 teams to assist in restoration work in the neighbouring state.

Within the jurisdiction of the Andhra Pradesh Central Power Distribution Corporation Limited (APCPDCL) alone, electricity supply had to be restored in 1,333 villages affected by Cyclone Arnab and 1,825 villages affected by Cyclone Murasu.

The cyclones also damaged or uprooted 1,852 electricity poles during Cyclone Arnab and 7,850 poles during Cyclone Murasu, highlighting the scale of the damage to the power infrastructure and the challenges faced by restoration teams.

Naidu appreciated the efforts of the Karnataka teams, which worked alongside local personnel under challenging conditions to expedite the restoration of electricity supply.

Within the APCPDCL jurisdiction, 1,580 personnel in 165 teams were deployed following Cyclone Arnab, while 3,292 personnel in 390 teams were engaged in restoration work after Cyclone Murasu. The 68 teams comprising 592 personnel sent by Karnataka provided significant additional support to the local workforce and strengthened the restoration operations, Naidu said. He acknowledged that the timely assistance from Karnataka had helped the state intensify efforts to restore power in the cyclone-hit areas.

The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister said the two states shared close geographical, economic and cultural ties, and such mutual cooperation during natural disasters would further strengthen their relationship.

He assured that the Andhra Pradesh government would extend all possible assistance to Karnataka whenever the state faced a natural disaster or emergency in the future.

The assistance would include deployment of personnel, equipment and machinery, among other forms of support, he said, reiterating Andhra Pradesh's commitment to standing by Karnataka during difficult times.

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

Editorial

SC Calls for Regional NCDRC Benches

The Supreme Court's latest intervention in the affairs of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission lays bare a paradox that has quietly festered within India's consumer justice architecture for years. On one end of the spectrum sits the NCDRC in Delhi, so overwhelmed with cases that it is only now getting around to hearing matters filed in 2018-19. On the other end sit numerous district forums across smaller states and UTs, some with fewer than a thousand pending cases, consuming resources and infrastructure that arguably outstrip their workload. That the apex court has chosen to confront both ends of this imbalance simultaneously is a sign of genuine and overdue institutional concern.

The scale of the NCDRC's backlog is staggering by any measure. A consumer whose grievance is heard in June this year may not see the matter relisted until nearly a year later. Lawyers have told the bench that even when thirty to forty matters are listed for a post-lunch session, disposal rates remain dismally low. For a country with a consumer base of roughly 150 crore people, a redressal mechanism that takes the better part of a decade to hear a case defeats the very purpose for which the Consumer Protection Act was enacted. Justice delayed, in this context, is not an abstract legal maxim but a lived reality for ordinary citizens who often lack the means to sustain a prolonged legal battle.

The Court's proposal to establish regional and circuit benches of the NCDRC deserves serious and swift consideration. The reasoning is sound: a consumer in Guwahati or Thiruvananthapuram shouldn't have to go to Delhi to get help with a small but important problem. Decentralising the Commission's reach would not only ease the physical and financial burden on litigants. Still, it could also meaningfully accelerate disposal rates by distributing the caseload across multiple benches working in parallel. The Court's additional call for performance audits of state and district commissions, and its pointed remark that these forums must not be allowed to become sinecures for retired judicial officers, signals a welcome insistence on accountability rather than mere expansion for its own sake.

Yet the flip side of this crisis is equally instructive. In courts with fewer than a thousand pending disputes, maintaining a full-fledged, separately staffed consumer commission is difficult to justify on financial or administrative grounds. The Court's suggestion, first floated in its February order and reiterated since, that such states be permitted to abolish some district forums and transfer pending matters to serving judicial officers, with the concurrence of the relevant High Court, is a pragmatic response to genuine underutilisation. States such as Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and Goa, along with Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, were specifically flagged as having consumer forums with too little work to sustain independent existence.

Here, however, lies the crux of the practical difficulty the Court itself must eventually confront. Merging or transferring cases from underutilised consumer forums into the regular judicial system is sensible only if the receiving courts have the capacity to absorb the additional load without compromising their own functions. India's district judiciary is, by widespread acknowledgement, already stretched thin. Handing over consumer disputes to judicial officers already managing substantial dockets could relocate the backlog problem rather than resolve it.

Rural Migration and Sustainable Development

Dr Banarsi Lal



In present era international attention is growing on rural migration, its causes, its effects and the way in which it occurs. Rural-urban migration is one of the most widespread global demographic trends. It has been observed that between 2000 and 2017,the total number of international migrants increased from 173 millions to 258 millions and as many as 25 millions are refugees. Rural India constitutes about 70 per cent of the Indian population. It is essential to engage the rural youth in a productive way in tandem by providing them possible opportunities for their growth and development. Presently rural youths are losing interest in agriculture and allied sectors. The interests of the youths in agriculture can be retained by commercializing attractive and make it remunerative. There is need to make agri-based industries in the villages so that income and employment opportunities can be generated for the young generation living in rural areas. Conserving natural environments while feeding the growing human population requires higher productivity per hectare.

Presently India have the youngest workforce in the world and it can become the human resource capital in the world by creating skill among the youths and convert the trained manpower for the growth of the nation economy. In India about 51 per cent of the households survive on income from manual casual labour, 30 per cent from cultivation and 19 per cent from other sources. About 35. 73 per cent of the rural people are illiterate and about 67 per cent have education below or till primary. Women constitute about 48.5 per cent of the population and play significant role in strengthening the Indian economy. Migration is closely associated with fighting hunger, achieving food security and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. Basically, it is a rural phenomenon. According the World Bank, over 75 % of the world's poor are located in the rural areas .Rural people migrate for many reasons in the urban areas for better jobs and education or following of family members who have migrated. The positive aspects of rural-urban migration are not without negative consequences. Rural communities lose human capital especially rural youths who are attracted towards education and job opportunities in urban areas. This often results in losses of traditional knowledge and socio-cultural values, including agro biodiversity and ethanobiological knowledge. In addition, the local social structure often changes as males migrate ,leaving communities with children, women and elderly. These changes affect local environment of villages. Changes in land use and local societies cause a slow down of the rural economy and local organisations will be unable to maintain infrastructure.

It is estimated that about two million people are shifting from rural to urban areas annually. From 2001 migration from rural to urban areas has increased from 27.8 to 31 per cent. Rural migrations to the urban areas have direct impact on agricultural production and productivity. Rural India remains in the focus of the policy makers as 10.1 per cent of its labour force is unemployed as compared to 7. 3 per cent in the urban areas. Agriculture is the dominant employer in the villages followed by construction, manufacturing and community services. Villages are also the source of workforce in the adjoining towns and cities. In rural areas income from the agriculture is not sufficient especially for the small and marginal farmers who are about 85 per cent of the farm holdings and for the dry land farmers who constitute more than half of the cultivated land. There is need to increase the income and employment opportunities for the rural youths to stop the rural migration. Rural youths migrate from rural areas to urban areas in search of income and employment as the agriculture in the rural areas does not suffice their basic needs and desires. In urban areas they face the problem of housing, language and skill especially in the beginning. Due to these factors they are under paid and their growth is affected. The benefits of migration are not common. Migration can reduce inequalities, it can create more problems.

Migration has significant but mixed impacts on rural areas and agriculture. For example, significant migration out of overpopulated rural areas can have a significant impacts by shrinking the local labour poor and causing local wages to rise. Meanwhile, migration into regions with a low rural population can fill critical labour shortages in agriculture. There is need to contemplate on the issue of rural migration. There is need to establish youth hostels in the urban areas which can give shelter to the rural youths especially in the beginning. There is also the need to change the set up of some departments to help the rural youths. The employment office established at each district should be changed for the career guidelines department. Some states in the country have taken initiative in this direction. From thousands of years farming has been sustaining life on the earth. We observe various success stories of the progressive farmers across the nation. Some success stories from Reasi district of J&K where organic vegetables growing, poultry farming, floriculture and diversified farming have transformed the lives of the farmers. These farmers have achieved the great success with the adoption of innovative technologies. With the adoption of innovative technologies they have increased their crops production and productivity. It occurred because of their consistent and arduous efforts.

Give languages room to coexist

Sanjay Hegde



LANGUAGE binds us, divides us and often defines us. Recently, a junior colleague from a Hindi-speaking state sighed at the latest language controversy, calling it a fresh irritant, I reminded him sharply of Rahat Indori's line, "Humarey moonh mein, tumhari zubaan thodi hai" (It's not in my mouth that your language dwells). I argued that the notion of a single national language belonged to an outdated era — 1920s to 1940s. Today, insisting on linguistic uniformity feels as obsolete as driving an Ambassador in the age of Tesla.

Historically, languages have profoundly shaped nations. Kemal Pasha modernised Turkish, solidifying Turkey's identity as distinct from its Ottoman past. Israel brought back Hebrew, once confined to religious rituals, into daily life, creating a sense of cultural pride and unity. Yet, these successes weren't universal. In Pakistan, when Muhammad Ali Jinnah sought to impose Urdu as the sole national language in 1948, students at Dacca University fiercely opposed it. Their demand for equal respect for Bengali ignited the linguistic nationalism that eventually birthed Bangladesh. This vividly illustrates that linguistic imposition rarely achieves unity but instead fuels resistance. India, rich in linguistic diversity, faced even greater complexities at Independence. The framers of our Constitution selected Hindi, crafted in Devanagari script by British scholars at Fort William in Calcutta, hoping it would unify the nation. But resistance erupted soon thereafter. The strongest protests erupted in Tamil Nadu in the 1960s, and resistance echoed across several states, not just in the South.

Punjab rejected Hindi, asserting its right to use Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script. After an intense agitation, Punjab achieved its separate linguistic identity in 1966. Similarly, in eastern India, Oriya speakers resisted the dominance of Bengali, securing Odisha's cultural autonomy. Assam's linguistic anxieties triggered riots against perceived Bengali encroachment, leaving scars still visible in the stereotyping of every Bengali-speaking Muslim as Bangladeshi.

These disputes underline a critical truth: language is deeply tied to identity, dignity and pride. The Supreme Court recently affirmed, "Language is culture. Language is the yardstick to measure the civilisational march of a community and its people… its earliest and primary purpose will always remain communication." Language should serve as a bridge, not a barrier. Yet, it often becomes a tool manipulated by political interests seeking dominance.

Despite historical lessons, periodically, the official impulse to enforce Hindi resurfaces, especially in moments of heightened nationalism. Politicians sometimes view language as an easy shortcut to national unity, overlooking the complex realities of India's multilingual society. But India's unity thrives precisely because of its linguistic diversity, not despite it. Imposing Hindi risks alienation, not cohesion. The notion of linguistic dominance is fundamentally flawed — it breeds division, resentment and social fracture.

Today's digital age, dominated by English, further transforms language dynamics. English has become a global linguistic bridge, essential for international commerce, science, technology and diplomacy. Regional languages, in contrast, have become islands of localised expression. In this new landscape, demanding Hindi exclusivity is impractical and irrelevant. Language flexibility, multilingual capabilities and openness are now prerequisites for global success and even domestic harmony. For instance, a Hindi-speaking businessman who masters Chinese or Russian has enormous global advantages. Can he realistically insist that everyone within India, whether in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal or Punjab, must respond solely in Hindi? Such an insistence would not only harm business interests but also create unnecessary friction. Effective communication thrives on mutual understanding, respect, and linguistic adaptability, not on forced uniformity.

Moreover, the Supreme Court's judgment in April emphasised multilingual coexistence: "Our misconceptions, perhaps even our prejudices against a language, have to be courageously and truthfully tested against reality, which is the great diversity of our nation: Our strength can never be our weakness," wrote Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia in Varshatai vs Maharashtra. Indeed, India's strength lies in its diversity, including linguistic diversity. Social harmony depends on respecting this diversity, not suppressing it.

Educational systems should also reflect an inclusive approach. Linguistic education should aim not merely at proficiency in a single national language but at nurturing multilingual skills, promoting linguistic respect and appreciating diverse cultural heritages. Schools must emphasise linguistic equality rather than superiority. It would foster greater national integration, cultural appreciation and mutual respect among citizens.

Furthermore, languages are repositories of history and culture. They carry unique stories, traditions and perspectives. Suppressing a language or elevating one at the expense of others risks erasing these rich cultural narratives. The push for linguistic homogeneity ignores the deeply emotional and personal attachment communities have to their mother tongues.

Unhealthy signs for health research

DINESH C SHARMA



THE Department of Health Research (DHR), a wing of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, has proposed a national health research policy. The department has been in existence for almost two decades, but it has woken up only now to the fact that India lacks a dedicated policy on health research.

As per the R&D data released in July, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the flagship agency for health research in the country, receives just 3.3% of the national R&D funding, while defence and space get 32% and 15%, respectively. India's expenditure on R&D itself is abysmally low — 0.84% of GDP compared to China's 2.58%.

Among the obvious goals of the new health research policy is to increase the expenditure on biomedical and health R&D. The target is to increase health research investment as a share of GDP from the current 0.024% to 0.072% by 2037 and 0.15% by 2047. While it may appear to be a big jump, it is far too low compared to India's current and projected disease burden as well as emerging health challenges. Moreover, the timelines for the proposed increase are too far away, targets are non-binding and without any budgetary support in the pipeline. How the proposed increase will be achieved is more problematic. The policy says, "Public investment shall rise progressively, complemented by responsible private, philanthropic and non-governmental investment." This formally opens the doors for private investment in health research.

The nature of private investment that the government wants to encourage should cause greater concern. The policy says that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) money from private companies will be allowed to be used for R&D projects in public institutions, and the DHR will formulate necessary policies to facilitate such funding. The approach is different from existing public-private partnerships for drug or vaccine development involving pharma companies and public institutions under specific projects such as the development of Covid-19 vaccines. If CSR funds are allowed from any company — be it pharma or otherwise — or a philanthropic organisation promoted by a company, it may lead to biased research or a hidden agenda like manufacturing "scientific doubt" in contentious topics like environmental health (impacts of air pollution, tobacco, alcohol), occupational health, food safety and climate change.

It is ironic that on the one hand, the government has stifled field research studies by some of the leading health NGOs and public health institutes in the name of foreign contribution regulations, and on the other hand, it is opening the doors for the industry and also foreign foundations to conduct health research. For domestic researchers, scientific collaboration with foreign researchers would still need a permit from a screening committee of the health ministry.

The whole approach seems to be to centralise and bureaucratise health research at all levels. The policy talks of a National Health Research Agenda that will set the priorities at the macro level and a three-tier governance architecture to implement the agenda. At the top would be the National Health Research Stewardship Committee to provide overarching strategic direction. It will be headed by the Principal Scientific Adviser and include several bureaucrats (secretaries of scientific departments) as members. At the second tier will be the DHR, acting as the central nodal implementing agency, and the third tier would be the ICMR, tasked with scientific and technical execution. The proposed governance system undermines the role of states, ignoring the fact that public health is primarily a State subject and 'Medical Education and Research' is in the Concurrent list of the Constitution. By authorising the central stewardship committee to set the health research agenda, states will be reduced to mere implementers.

"States and Union Territories will support alignment with local health needs and translation into programmes, service delivery and public health action," the policy says.

The policy marks another important shift — allowing Ayurveda and other systems of medicine to get access to the research kitty meant for modern medicine in the guise of promoting "integrative health". This is despite such systems having dedicated research funding from the Ayush Ministry and mechanisms operated by it. This is bound to give rise to "validation science", wherein traditional remedies like cow urine could be subjected to modern research so that they could be "scientifically validated." This is already happening through projects funded by other research agencies like the Department of Science and Technology. India is not only a geographically and culturally diverse country but also has myriad health needs as well as disparities in access to health systems. Health indicators and challenges of Kerala, for example, are completely different from those of Bihar or Odisha. Instead of making states implement a "top-down" agenda, states should be guided and helped to build and develop their own health research infrastructure based on their priorities and needs. Health research is not just about testing new technologies or developing new vaccines and drugs.

Government Must Engage Gen Z, Not Lecture Them

Manish Tewari



State assemblies have fared no better. For instance, the Punjab Vidhan Sabha met for only 17 days in 2022, 12 days each in 2023 and 2024, 15 days in 2025 and only 15 days this year so far. Between 2017 and 2022, the Vidhan Sabha met for a mere 85 days out of its 1,825-day term. Parliamentarians and legislators have been reduced to mere intercessors between the people and the executive. This is not their job, notwithstanding the fact that they are elected by the popular will of the masses. Their primary responsibility is to make good laws for the nation or their respective states and deliberate on the grave challenges that fall within their respective remits.

THE washout of the recent monsoon session of Parliament has again drawn attention to the institutional crisis that stares India in the face today, for any democracy is only as strong or weak as the institutions that uphold it. In the summer of 1787, when the founding fathers of the United States of America met in Philadelphia, they were obsessed with transforming the loose alliance of twelve states into a nation and creating a governing architecture that would be the antithesis of monarchy, which was the template across practically the entire known and discovered world at that time.

They resuscitated the doctrine of separation of powers conceptualised by Aristotle and John Locke and refined by Montesquieu to ensure that power does not get concentrated in a single person or an institution, for they were mortified by the tyranny of power. This led to the institutionalisation of three separate branches of the government — the executive, the legislature and the judiciary — to ensure that they checked and balanced one other.

The paranoia against an overbearing 'State' was of such an order in the newly created nation that in 1791, when the Bill of Rights was incorporated into the American Constitution, its 2nd Amendment said: "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." This amendment, designed to protect the liberty of the individual, holds the field even today, despite all the school shootings across the US. Every Constitution written subsequently across the world has the doctrine of separation of powers hard-coded into its very structure. This was also the model that India adopted when wise men and women conceptualised the Constitution between December 1946 and January 1950. This model, however, has collapsed in India. The biggest casualty has been the legislature. The first Lok Sabha (1952-57) met on average for 135 days every year. The 17th (2019-24) averaged only 55 sitting days annually. The 18th Lok Sabha is all set to outdo its predecessor in terms of dysfunctionality.

State assemblies have fared no better. For instance, the Punjab Vidhan Sabha met for only 17 days in 2022, 12 days each in 2023 and 2024, 15 days in 2025 and only 15 days this year so far. Between 2017 and 2022, the Vidhan Sabha met for a mere 85 days out of its 1,825-day term. Parliamentarians and legislators have been reduced to mere intercessors between the people and the executive. This is not their job, notwithstanding the fact that they are elected by the popular will of the masses. Their primary responsibility is to make good laws for the nation or their respective states and deliberate on the grave challenges that fall within their respective remits.

However, disruptions and sloganeering have been the norm and not the exception since the mid-1980s in legislative institutions. Political parties across the board take pride in wiping out entire sessions of Parliament rather than debating laws and issues premised on rational arguments. Parliamentarians and legislators are adjudged on the basis of their ability to scream and shout in the Well of the House or outside rather than the strength of cogent submissions they should be making. Parliament and legislative assemblies have therefore become virtually irrelevant to the national discourse. These institutions are now nothing more than gladiatorial arenas rather than hallowed chambers of calm and meditative deliberations. As far as the judiciary is concerned, India is perhaps the only country where judges of constitutional courts appoint other judges, notwithstanding the Memorandum of Procedure. The attempts made by the UPA government and its successor, the NDA, to enforce judicial accountability and create a 'say' for the executive in judicial appointments, respectively, came to nought. The Judicial Standards and Accountability Bill that was passed in the Lok Sabha on March 29, 2012, failed to get through the Rajya Sabha and subsequently lapsed. The National Judicial Appointments Commission Bill, introduced in conjunction with the 121st Constitution Amendment Bill, was near-unanimously passed by the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on August 13 and 14, 2014. It was ratified by 16 states and notified as law on December 31, 2014. The Supreme Court struck it down on October 16, 2015.

As of August 1, 2026, out of a sanctioned strength of 1,122 judges in the High Courts, 341 posts (30.39%) were vacant. There are 4.98 crore cases pending in district courts, 64.61 lakh in High Courts and 95,469 in the Supreme Court. Out of the 5.3 lakh people in prisons across India, 3.9 lakh (about 73%) are undertrials; 49% are in the age group of 18-30 years; 31% belong to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and 10-15% are from Other Backward Classes.

The executive's performance has been no better. Out of a population of 140 crore, around 94 crore people live in rural India. For the bulk of these residents, the interface with the State regarding civil matters takes place through a patwari, kanungo or at best a tehsildar. In the criminal/penal sphere, it's through a havildar or an assistant sub-inspector (ASI), who is the police chowki in-charge. In urban areas, the interface is through a municipal officer in the civil arena and at best a havildar/ASI in the legal domain. The citizen's experience is never pleasant. The State and its instrumentalities invariably come across as exploitative, extractive and oppressive. The situation is far worse in militancy-prone areas, where the State apparatus is usually clad in olive green.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments that were supposed to bring governance closer to the grassroots have not really taken off even three decades later. They might have widened the representational pool at the local level, but states have been extremely chary of devolving powers or providing financial autonomy to the Panchayati Raj institutions, thereby effectively crippling their efficacy and functioning. A section of the mainstream media has earned the sobriquet 'Godi media', seriously undermining the collective credibility of the Fourth Estate. About the Election Commission of India, the less said the better. What was once an autonomous institution is now perceived as another government department. It has lost the confidence of an overwhelming majority of the Opposition. In the 80th year of Independence, the doctrine of separation of powers, the institutional balance of power and the confidence that people have in the institutions of governance are in tatters. Is anyone even thinking where we are headed as a nation?

Role of Youth in Nation Building



*This is a serious and quite a relevant question, While India has made a lot of progress through programs like Skill India, Digital India, Start up India, National Education Policy 2O2O, NCC, NSS and youth development Schemes, the overall preparation of Youth for nation-building responsibilities remains inadequate. Of course, Several challenges do persist such as: Nation building cannot be achieved by Government alone, nor can youth succeed without institutional support. Both must function as partners The Government should: *Ensure quality and value-based education. *Expand skill development and vocational training. *Encourage innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. *Create employment opportunities. *Promote NCC, NSS, Scouts and Guides, and community service programs.*Introduce civic education and constitutional values at every constitutional level. *Support sports, culture, and leadership development. *Create youth forums where youth can participate in policymaking and governance.*

Puran Chand Sharma

Youth are the greatest asset of any nation. They possess energy, creativity, courage and the adaptability to the changing times. A country's future is shaped not merely by its natural resources or economic strength but by the quality, character and commitment of its young citizens. India, with one of the world's largest youth populations, stands at a historic juncture where its demographic dividend can either become a source of national strength or a missed opportunity.

Youth are the architects of tomorrow. They contribute to nation building in many ways such as: *Driving economic growth through innovation, entrepreneurship and skilled labour. *Strengthening democracy by virtue of informed participation and responsible citizenship. *Promoting social harmony by rising above divisions of caste, creed, region, and language. *Advancing science, technology and research. *Defending national interests through military and civil services *Preserving cultural heritage and research. Defending national interests through military and civil services. Preserving cultural heritage while embracing modernization. Swami Vivekananda had immense faith in young and he declared. "Give me one hundred energetic young men and I shall transform India." This statement reflects the transformative power of youth when guided towards a noble purpose.

This is a serious and quite a relevant question, While India has made a lot of progress through programs like Skill India, Digital India, Start up India, National Education Policy 2O2O, NCC, NSS and youth development Schemes, the overall preparation of Youth for nation-building responsibilities remains inadequate. Of course, Several challenges do persist such as: Nation building cannot be achieved by Government alone, nor can youth succeed without institutional support. Both must function as partners

The Government should: *Ensure quality and value-based education. *Expand skill development and vocational training. *Encourage innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. *Create employment opportunities. *Promote NCC, NSS, Scouts and Guides, and community service programs.*Introduce civic education and constitutional values at every constitutional level. *Support sports, culture, and leadership development. *Create youth forums where youth can participate in policymaking and governance.

Responsibilities of Youth:-* youth must develop discipline, integrity and a sense of duty. * Acquire modern skills and knowledge. *Participate in social service and community development. *Respect constitutional values and democratic institutions * stay mentally and physically healthy. *Reject corruption, extremism and divisive ideologies. *Work for environmental protection and sustainable development. *Place national interest above narrow personal gains. India's development journey requires not only skilled hands but also noble hearts. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul kalam repeatedly emphasized that youth should dream big and work for national development. According to him: "Dream, dream, dream. Dreams transform into thoughts and thoughts result in action." The true measure of youth development is not merely employability but responsible citizenship. ndia aspires to become a developed nation by 2047. This cannot be achieved solely through economic growth. It requires: *Educated minds *Skilled hands *Strong character *Social responsibility *National unity. The youth must become innovators, entrepreneurs, scientists, teachers, soldiers, farmers, administrators, and social reformers who contribute positively to society. Swami Vivekananda regarded the youth as the greatest force for national regeneration. He believed that the future of India rested not in its wealth, political power or natural resources but in the character, strength and determination of its young men and women. His message was not merely spiritual; it was a call for social awakening, national service and self- confidence. Swami Vivekananda had confidence in the power of youth. He famously declared: "Give me one hundred energetic young men, and I shall transform India." This statement reflects his conviction that a small group of disciplined and patriotic youth could bring about revolutionary changes in society. He recognized youth as * Builders of the nation *Agents of social transformation *Carriers of India's cultural and spiritual heritage. *Leaders capable of overcoming poverty, ignorance and social divisions.

uilding. He believed that: "We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet." According to him, a nation can become strong only when its citizens possess: *Honesty, Courage, Discipline, Self- confidence, Compassion and sense of duty. It is noteworthy that sans character, neither knowledge nor wealth can ensure national progress. Swami Vivekananda envisioned youth as the driving force of national transformation. He called upon them to cultivate strength, character, self- confidence and a spirit of service. His vision of nation building was rooted not only in economic progress but also in moral and spiritual upliftment.

His timeless message continues to inspire generations. His bullet points on youth are enumerated herein:-*Youth are the architects of nation's future. * Character-Building is the foundation of national development. *Self-confidence and fearlessness are essential qualities. *Service to humanity is true patriotism. *Physical, mental, and moral strength are indispensable. *Education should empower and build character. *National pride must be balanced with modern scientific outlook. Dedicated youth can transform India into a strong and prosperous nation.

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

Facility to Aid CAQM in Pollution Control



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today inaugurated the world's first- of -its-kind 'Air Pollution Analysis' facility for Delhi NCR. Known as 'Integrated Atmospheric Chemistry and Aerosol Toxicity Analysis Laboratory ' (AATAL), it is also equipped to identify real-time sources of air pollution.

Describing it as a first-of-its-kind integrated facility in the world, the Minister said Delhi-NCR had been chosen in view of the serious public concern over air pollution. He said the facility would take air-quality assessment beyond simply reporting pollution levels to identifying the composition of pollutants, their sources, their relative contributions and their potential health implications, while providing real-time information and advance forecasts to support timely action.

The inauguration took place at IITM's Delhi Branch in the presence of Dr. T. Srinivasa Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr. A. Suryachandra Rao, Director, IITM and DG IMD Dr Mahapatra. The facility has been established under 'Mission Mausam' announced by PM Sh Narendra Modi to strengthen scientific understanding of atmospheric pollution and provide actionable evidence for air-quality management in Delhi-NCR. The laboratory brings together advanced atmospheric measurement instruments, detailed chemical analysis, pollution-source identification and decision-support capabilities within an integrated framework.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Jitendra Singh said India had made substantial progress over the past 10–12 years in air-quality forecasting and analysis. He said the new facility represented a significant step forward because it would help establish not only how much pollution is present in the atmosphere, but also what it consists of and where it originates. "Earlier, the discussion would largely revolve around whether the pollution level was 100 or 200. This facility will help us understand the composition of pollution as well as the contribution of different sources. This is important for addressing the concerns of the people of Delhi and ensuring that action is based on scientific evidence," the Minister said.

AATAL will help scientists distinguish between different sources of air pollution, including vehicular emissions, industrial activity, biomass and crop-residue burning, construction and road dust, and pollutants transported from surrounding regions. By estimating the relative contribution of these sources, the facility will help authorities understand which activities are driving poor air quality at a particular time and where interventions may be most effective. Explaining the significance of real-time source apportionment, Dr. Jitendra Singh cited an instance, while talking to the reporters, the screen showed that at that precise moment, transport was contributing approximately 25 per cent of Delhi air pollution.



The Cabinet Secretary, Dr. T. V. Somanathan launches the Karmayogi Sankalpa on the iGOT Karmayogi platform at the National Workshop on 'Leadership as a Mission', organised by NITI Aayog at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi.

BHASHINI Showcases Multilingual AI for Research Accessibility at ETD-2026



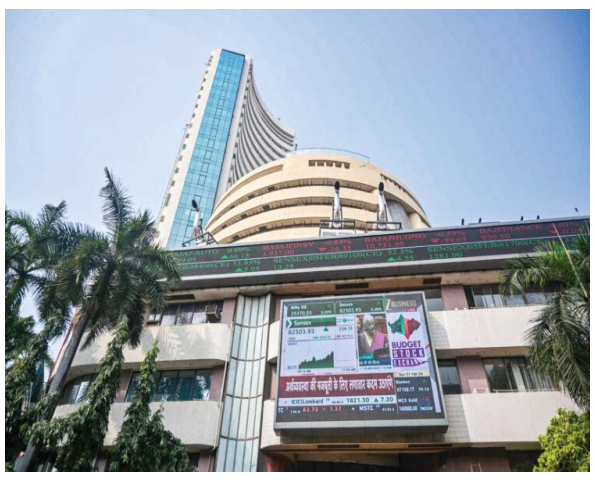
New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): The Digital India BHASHINI Division (DIBD), under Digital India Corporation (DIC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, participated in the 29th International Symposium on Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD-2026), held at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi from 23 to 25 October 2026. Ms. Baishali Chakraborty, speaking on behalf of DIBD, conducted a session on BHASHINI's multilingual artificial intelligence capabilities and their potential to make scholarly knowledge more accessible across languages.

Titled "Workshop on AI BHASHINI: Bridging Divides and Increasing Productivity," the session highlighted how BHASHINI's Language-First Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) can support higher education institutions, libraries and research repositories in addressing language barriers and expanding access to academic content. During the session, Ms. Chakraborty demonstrated how voice-first multilingual AI, speech-to-text, translation, optical character recognition (OCR) and document translation can support multilingual access in academic and research settings. A live demonstration of Shrutlekh showcased real-time speech transcription with simultaneous translation, illustrating its potential applications in lecture halls, research seminars, conferences and academic discussions.

The session also highlighted BHASHINI's broader multilingual AI ecosystem, which brings together language datasets, AI models, APIs and applications to support a range of language technology use cases. BHASHINI has recorded over 10 billion cumulative AI inferences and supports 36 Indian languages for text, 23 Indian languages for voice and 35 international languages. Its website translation plugin enables multilingual access across more than 800 government websites.

Sensex Slumps 500 Points

Nifty Below 25,250 Amid Profit Booking



Mumbai, Nov 18 (Way to News): Indian equity benchmarks ended sharply lower on Wednesday as broad-based selling in consumer durables, metal, information technology and automobile stocks weighed on market sentiment.

The Sensex declined 500.38 points, or 0.61 per cent, to close at 82,031.81, while the Nifty fell 159.45 points, or 0.63 per cent, to settle at 25,227.95. The decline reversed the gains recorded over the previous two trading sessions.

Commenting on Nifty technical outlook, experts said that the profit booking was witnessed in Wednesday's session, with Nifty forming a bearish candlestick pattern, although buying interest emerged from lower levels.

"On the downside, 25,000 remains a crucial support, while 25,300 and 25,500 are immediate resistance levels. Overall, Nifty is expected to trade within the 25,000–25,500 range," analysts stated.

Among the Nifty constituents, Titan Company emerged as the top loser, followed by Hindalco Industries and HDFC Life Insurance Company.

Selling pressure in these counters contributed significantly to the weakness in the frontline indices.

The broader market also remained under pressure, with mid- and small-cap shares underperforming the benchmark indices. The Nifty MidCap 100 index dropped 1.22 per cent, while the Nifty SmallCap 100 index declined 0.35 per cent.

Sectorally, consumer-oriented stocks bore the brunt of the sell-off. The Nifty Consumer Durables index led the losses, followed by the Nifty Metal, Nifty IT and Nifty Auto indices. Weakness in these segments outweighed gains in a few pockets of the market.

In contrast, PSU banking stocks showed resilience, with the Nifty PSU Bank index emerging as one of the best-performing sectoral gauges during the session. Media stocks also bucked the broader trend and closed in positive territory.

Meanwhile, the rupee traded positively, gaining around 0.08 per cent to 93.44, as sustained FII net buying over the past few weeks continued to provide support.

"Going ahead, continued foreign fund inflows and lower commodity prices could help maintain the rupee's positive bias. The near-term trading range is seen between 93.00–93.75," market experts noted.

India–US Trade Deal Nears Conclusion, Awaits US Tariff Clarity



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): India and the United States are close to concluding negotiations on a bilateral trade agreement, with most key issues nearing resolution, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Wednesday.

Speaking at a panel discussion titled 'India's Next Leap: Reforms, Competitiveness and Growth' during FICCI's Annual General Meeting and Annual Convention curtain raiser, Agrawal said that three major aspects of the proposed trade deal have been almost finalised and discussions are approaching their final stages. "The India–US trade agreement is at an advanced stage, with the legal text negotiated and discussions nearing completion," he stated. He, however, noted that the timeline for signing the agreement remains dependent on greater clarity regarding the United States' tariff framework. According to Agrawal, uncertainty persists after the US Supreme Court struck down the previous tariff structure, making it necessary for negotiators to better understand the future tariff regime before moving ahead with the formal conclusion of the pact. "Concluding the negotiations and having everything ready is something that we strive towards as soon as possible," the Commerce Secretary said. Agrawal indicated that India is simultaneously engaged in several trade negotiations with different countries and regions, some of which are currently under review and expected to gather momentum in the coming weeks and months. Meanwhile, commenting on gold imports, the Commerce Secretary said that the country's gold imports are expected to remain manageable at around $30-40 billion this year, with the existing import duty structure having a positive impact on curbing imports.

Agrawal said the recent moderation in gold prices was a positive sign, although gold imports would continue given the precious metal's widespread trading across global markets.

PHDCCI Seeks GST 2.0 Reforms To Cut Compliance Burden, Boost Industrial Competitiveness



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): The PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) on Wednesday recommended a wide-ranging set of reforms under a proposed "GST 2.0" framework aimed at enhancing ease of doing business, reducing compliance burdens and promoting investment across key sectors of the economy. The recommendations were presented during the "GST 2.0 Workshop: From Compliance Burden to Ease of Doing Business", organised by the chamber.

PHDCCI said structural issues related to input tax credit (ITC), inverted duty structures, procedural complexities, tax classification disputes and working capital blockages continue to affect businesses across sectors, including MSMEs, food processing, agriculture, hospitality, aviation, infrastructure, energy and export-oriented industries. PHDCCI President Anil Gupta said the next phase of GST reforms should focus on strengthening tax neutrality, improving policy predictability and reducing compliance burdens.

He said the objective should be to ensure that GST functions as a true value-added tax system by minimising tax cascading and enabling seamless input tax credit across the production and services value chain.

"The next phase of GST reforms should focus on strengthening tax neutrality, improving predictability and reducing the compliance burden on businesses," he said. "The objective should be to ensure that GST operates a value-added tax system, minimising cascading taxation and allowing eligible input tax credit across the production and services value chain," Gupta noted.

A key proposal relates to rationalising input tax credit provisions. According to the chamber, restrictions on ITC in several sectors increase production costs and create avoidable working capital pressures. It has recommended reviewing Section 17(5) of the Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Act to permit eligible ITC on civil infrastructure and capital expenditure used in providing taxable business services. The recommendation covers investment in factories, warehouses, cold storage facilities, hotels, airport terminals, runways and other infrastructure assets. The industry body has also sought ITC eligibility for plant and machinery as well as capitalised assets deployed in taxable business operations.

Microsoft Rolls Out Agentic AI Tools

Copilot Workspaces At Ignite Conference



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): US-based technology giant Microsoft on Wednesday unveiled a broad slate of artificial intelligence (AI) products, models and infrastructure upgrades at its Ignite — annual technical conference. Taking to the social media platform X, Chief Executive Satya Nadella has outlined the company's vision of using AI to deliver real outcomes for businesses and users, days after the software giant detailed the causes of a major global Microsoft 365 outage.

"Our ambition with everything we are announcing at Ignite today is to parlay technological advances into real outcomes and new points of leverage for people, organisations and society at large," Nadella wrote on X. At the centre of the announcements was Copilot Workspaces, a platform designed to enable people and AI agents to collaborate using shared context toward common objectives.

The company also introduced a series of new AI models, including Microsoft-Decision 1.1, Code 2 and Cyber 2 Flash which the company said offers security capabilities that outperform frontier models at a lower cost. It further expanded its model ecosystem by bringing OpenAI's GPT-6.2 to its Foundry platform while also adding Meta's latest models. Among other product launches, Microsoft announced Agent 365 Business Analytics, which Nadella described as an ERP system for AI that helps companies link AI spending to business outcomes and optimise returns on their investments. Nadella said Microsoft Perception is now generally available, enabling security teams and AI agents to work together to identify and respond to threats at machine speed. The company also launched the AI Transparency Initiative, saying it is working with more than 40 organisations to develop open standards for accountable, verifiable and safe AI systems.

Microsoft also announced the general availability of HorizonDB, its distributed PostgreSQL database service on Azure which it said can deliver up to eight times the performance of self-managed PostgreSQL deployments.

Apart from that, Nadella added that Microsoft is rearchitecting core Azure computing, storage and networking infrastructure to support AI agents operating at scale.

India's Biscuit Exports Reach Rs 3,642 Crore: Govt



New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): In a boost to India's processed food exports, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) on Tuesday facilitated the first-ever export consignment of biscuits from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh to Madagascar, marking a significant step towards integrating emerging food-processing clusters with global markets. The export initiative comes at a time when India's biscuit exports continue to gain momentum. According to government data, India exported biscuits worth approximately Rs 3,642 crore under the cereal preparations category during FY 2025-26.

Exports of biscuits to Madagascar during the same period stood at around Rs 7.60 crore. The consignment was shipped by Varanasi-based manufacturer-exporter Shree Tirupati Balaji Industries Private Limited. The cargo was transported by road from Varanasi to Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) at Nhava Sheva in Maharashtra before being shipped by sea to Tamatave Port in Madagascar.

Officials said the initiative reflects the growing export potential of Uttar Pradesh's food-processing sector and is expected to create new opportunities for regional manufacturers seeking access to overseas markets. Trade in APEDA-scheduled products between India and Madagascar currently stands at around Rs 990 crore. APEDA, which functions under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has been supporting the exporter through a range of export-promotion initiatives.

These include facilitating participation in major domestic and international trade exhibitions such as AAHAR 2026 and Gulfood 2026, helping enhance the visibility of products manufactured in the Varanasi region and creating avenues for international business partnerships.

The authority said it remains focused on expanding market access for Indian exporters through trade facilitation, exporter outreach and international marketing efforts. Such initiatives are aimed at strengthening the global presence of Indian processed food products while enabling regional enterprises to tap new export destinations.

Goyal Visits Italy for Trade

New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal is on an official visit to Italy from November 17 to 18. The visit aims to further strengthen the India–Italy economic partnership, with particular emphasis on expanding bilateral trade, promoting investment, deepening industrial and technological cooperation, and strengthening business-to-business and startup linkages.

During the visit, Goyal will hold a bilateral meeting with Antonio Tajani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy. He will also co-chair the 23rd Session of the India–Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) and participate in the India–Italy Business and Innovation Forum.

In addition, the Minister will meet Chief Executive Officers of leading Italian companies and interact with the Indian business delegation. These engagements are expected to provide further impetus to bilateral trade, investment, industrial cooperation and innovation linkages.

India–Italy relations have gained renewed momentum, culminating in the elevation of bilateral ties to a Special Strategic Partnership during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Italy on 19–20 May 2026. The two countries are implementing the India–Italy Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025–29 and have set a target of increasing annual bilateral trade to 20 billion by 2029.

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

Indian Women eye record fourth Asian Champions Trophy title in Bhopal

Bhopal, Nov 18 (Way to News): The Indian women's hockey team will look to extend its impressive run and make history by winning a record fourth Asian Champions Trophy title when the 2026 edition of the tournament gets underway here on Thursday at the International Sports Complex in Nathu Barkheda.



The defending champions will begin their campaign against Malaysia on November 19, aiming to become the most successful team in the tournament's history. India and South Korea are currently joint leaders with three titles each, with the hosts having won the previous two editions held in Ranchi and Rajgir. The six-team competition, scheduled from November 19 to 28, will feature India, China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and Thailand. The teams will compete in a round-robin format, with the top four advancing to the semi-finals on November 27. The final and third-place match will be played on November 28.

India head into the tournament following an outstanding year in which they achieved several significant milestones. The team secured qualification for the FIH Women's World Cup after remaining unbeaten until the final of the qualifiers in Hyderabad. They subsequently won all five matches at the FIH Women's Nations Cup in Auckland to clinch the title and earn promotion to the FIH Pro League. The Indian team continued its strong performances at the Women's World Cup in Belgium, finishing fifth to register its best-ever result at the tournament since 1974. The campaign reached another high at the Asian Games in Japan, where India ended a 44-year wait for gold in women's hockey.

The hosts will now look to carry that momentum into the Asian Champions Trophy, although they face a challenging field led by China, Japan and South Korea. World No. 4 China will be among India's biggest challengers, particularly after losing to the hosts in the Asian Games final last month. China will also be eager to secure its maiden title in the competition, while South Korea will aim to add to its three championships. Japan, which has won the tournament twice, will also pose a strong challenge with its organised defence and quick passing game.

QATAR SQUASH

Senthilkumar Beats Egypt's Omar Said To Reach Semifinals

Doha, Nov 18 (Way to News): India's World No. 38 Velavan Senthilkumar moved into the semifinals with a straight-games victory over Egypt's Omar Said at the QSF 3 PSA Copper 2026 squash tournament in Doha, Qatar, on Tuesday. Second seed Senthilkumar, who won two PSA Copper-level titles this year, beat his fifth-seeded opponent 11-9, 11-1, 13-11 in the quarterfinals of the USD 40,500 prize money tournament for men.



Senthilkumar will next meet the winner of the quarterfinal between local challenger Abdulla Al-Tamimi and Malaysia's Ameeshenraj Chandaran. Earlier, Senthilkumar advanced to the men's singles quarterfinals in Doha with a straight-games win over Frenchman Manuel Paquemar on Monday.

Senthilkumar, who won the second PSA Copper-level title of his career at the Czech Open earlier this month, beat his opponent 11-4, 11-7, 11-4 in the second round after receiving an opening-round bye.

Argentina routs Costa Rica in friendly



BUENOS AIRES, Nov 19 (Way to News): Nico Paz, Julian Alvarez and Franco Mastantuono each scored twice as Argentina cruised to a 7-0 home win over Costa Rica in an international friendly.

Alexis Mac Allister was also on target at the Mario Alberto Kempes Stadium in Cordoba as Argentina repeated the scoreline of its friendly against Burkina Faso in Buenos Aires last month. Costa Rica controlled less than a third of the possession, barely entering its attacking third.

Just seven minutes into the game, Paz pounced on a rebound at the edge of the penalty area and, with an exquisite finish, scored the first goal.

The minutes following the goal were completely controlled by Lionel Scaloni's team, who moved the ball between the midfielders and tried to attack down the wings. Despite this, Costa Rica forced captain Emiliano Martínez into a great save after a counter-attack. Later, around the 30-minute mark, the national team put together another good attacking play, this time with a fine individual effort from Paz and a shot from Roman Vega that went just wide of the right post. Moments later, after a great through ball from Enzo Fernández and a run down the wing by Giay, Julián Alvarez received the pass and scored the second goal of the match. Then, Paz orchestrated a solo run, dribbling past a defender, cutting inside, and unleashing a powerful shot that nestled into the top corner past Patrick Sequeira.

The first half ended with a flurry of goals, as after winning the ball back in the opponent's half, Álvarez dribbled past a defender and fired home to make it 4-0. Three minutes into the second half, Franco Mastantuono fired a low shot past the goalkeeper at the near post, scoring his second goal for Argentina and the fifth goal.

Midway through the second half, the national team continued to dominate possession and attack down the wings. Thanks to this, and with effective pressure after losing the ball, Alexis Mac Allister feinted past two defenders in the penalty area and scored the sixth goal. Late in the game, Mastantuono struck again. After a one-two with Giuliano Simeone, the midfielder finished with precision to seal the 7-0 victory. The result followed Argentina's 2-1 home loss to Uruguay and Costa Rica's 2-0 away defeat to Ecuador on Friday.

CA to open 'independent forum' in ball-tampering claims

Sydney, Nov 18 (Way to News): Nov Cricket Australia (CA) will establish an independent forum for players and support staff involved in the 2018 South Africa tour to share their accounts of the ball-tampering scandal, but has ruled out reopening the investigation into the Cape Town Test. The decision comes amid renewed controversy surrounding the infamous Sandpapergate episode, following fresh allegations by former Australia batter Usman Khawaja in his autobiography, Sabr. The proposed forum will provide those involved with a confidential setting to share their recollections, with participation entirely voluntary. CA said the initiative was intended to allow people to speak openly and help the game move forward, rather than revisit disciplinary proceedings or impose further sanctions. "After careful consideration, the CA Board has decided to establish a forum that will allow players and staff involved in the events of South Africa in 2018 to share their experiences and perspectives," CA chair David Boon said.



Boon described the episode as a difficult chapter for Australian cricket, adding that the continuing debate had increasingly become a distraction from the game. "This forum is not about relitigating the past. It is about creating an opportunity for those who wish to be heard to tell their stories in a respectful environment, and for our sport to listen," he said.

The 2018 scandal has returned to the spotlight after Khawaja claimed in Sabr that the wider Australian team knew about the use of sandpaper on the ball during the Cape Town Test against South Africa. He also alleged that the team had used similar methods during the preceding Test in Port Elizabeth. His account received support from former Australia opener David Warner, who was among the three players sanctioned for the incident, alongside then captain Steve Smith and Cameron Bancroft, who was caught using sandpaper on the ball.

However, current Australia captain Pat Cummins, who was part of the bowling group during the 2018 tour, rejected Khawaja's allegations, describing them as "complete and utter nonsense". The conflicting accounts have reignited questions about what happened during the tour and how much the team knew about the ball-tampering operation. CA says forum will focus on hearing accounts, not imposing sanctions CA chief executive Todd Greenberg acknowledged that the latest developments had been difficult for Australian cricket, while also recognising the governing body's role in the culture that existed at the time.

Warner calls for 'open and independent inquiry' into 2018 Sandpapergate scandal



Sydney, Nov 18 (Way to News): The 2018 ball-tampering scandal during the Cape Town Test against South Africa remains a defining moment in Australian cricket history. During that match, Cameron Bancroft was caught on camera altering the ball's surface with sandpaper.

The incident led to significant suspensions: David Warner and captain Steve Smith each received 12-month bans from international and domestic cricket, while Bancroft was suspended for nine months. Nearly a decade later, the fallout continues to shape conversations around the sport.

On November 18, Warner renewed calls for greater transparency regarding how Cricket Australia addresses the scandal's lingering impact. Todd Greenberg, the Cricket Australia chief executive, and board member David Boon have announced plans for an independent forum designed to provide a confidential space for those involved to share their perspectives.

However, the former Aussie opener has expressed reservations about whether this initiative will deliver the accountability he believes the situation demands. The proposed forum differs fundamentally from a fresh investigation. Cricket Australia has explicitly stated that the process will not re-examine the original findings, impose additional sanctions, or reopen any disciplinary proceedings against those involved. The initiative is voluntary and designed to include individuals who were not interviewed during the original investigation or who feel they did not have adequate opportunity to share their account of events.

Earlier this month, Warner and fellow cricketer Chadd Sayers publicly confirmed that former teammate Usman Khawaja's account of events in his book was entirely accurate. Warner has consistently maintained that those who were present during the South Africa Test should come forward to speak openly about what transpired, emphasising the importance of transparency in resolving the scandal's ongoing impact on the sport.

Cricket Australia said the forum would be conducted independently, with confidentiality intended to encourage participants to speak candidly without fear of public scrutiny.

The initiative is expected to focus on the experiences of those affected by the scandal and the broader lessons Australian cricket can draw from the controversy, including leadership, team culture and accountability.

AIFF lodges complaint over alleged racist gesture by Palestine player

New Delhi, Nov 18 (Way to News): The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has lodged a complaint with the Asian Football Confederation accusing a Palestinian player of making a racist gesture towards India captain Dallalmuon Gangte during the two teams' AFC U17 Asian Cup Qualifier match in Kuala Lumpur.



The Indian U17 men's team trounced Palestine 4-1, overcoming heavy rain to remain unbeaten in Group E of the Qualifiers for the 2027 Asian Cup on Tuesday (November 17, 2026).

"The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has formally lodged a complaint with the Asian Football Federation (AFC) regarding an alleged racist gesture made by a Palestine player towards India U17 men's team captain Dallalmuon Gangte during the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers match between India and Palestine on November 17, 2026 at the Kuala Lumpur Football Stadium," the national federation said in a statement.

During the first-half stoppage time, Palestine midfielder Soueidan allegedly fanned his nose with his hand near India captain Gangte, prompting many viewers and comm entators to interpret the action as a racist stereotype implying an unpleasant smell.

An angry Gangte confronted Soueidan on the pitch, after which match referee Ko Minkuk stepped in to separate the players and issued a warning to both.

In a match in which emotions ran high, another Palestinian midfielder, Mohammed Jamhour, received a straight red card for kicking Indian player Raj Singh Wahengbam twice in the first half. In its complaint, the AIFF has asked the AFC to "review the incident, examine the available match footage, and take appropriate action under the applicable regulations," the Indian football apex body said in the statement posted on X.

The AIFF further said it "considers any form of racism and discriminatory behaviour extremely serious".

Zverev beats Shelton to qualify for ATP Finals semis

Turin, Nov 18 (Way to News): Alexander Zverev qualified for the semi-finals at this year's ATP Finals after the World No. 1 defeated Ben Shelton in a round-robin clash. The German produced an impressive display to take down Shelton 6-2, 7-6(4) in a one-hour, 34-minute victory, guaranteeing his spot in the last four.



Zverev is making his ninth appearance at the prestigious season-ending event, having lifted the trophy in London in 2018 before triumphing in Turin in 2021. The German is now in the semi-finals of the event for the fifth time, after 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2024, according to ATP stats.

Shelton, who is competing at the season finale for a second consecutive year, is now 1-1 in the John McEnroe group. The American claimed his first ATP Finals win on Sunday, edging Arthur Fils. He will now turn his attention to a clash with Rafael Jodar on Thursday.

Zverev was off to a fast start to the first set inside a packed Inalpi Arena. The 29-year-old broke Shelton's serve in the first game to seize control and closed out the set soon after his second break of the American's serve in the fifth game to lead 4-1. The second set was a hard-fought affair dominated by serve. Zverev carved out the first break point of the set at 4-4, 15/40, and converting that would have allowed him to serve for the match. But Shelton fended both off with a decisive volley, then an ace to eventually lead 5-4.

'We have enough in attack to take 20 wickets': Morkel backs India bowling options, leaves Siraj call to Gill

Wellington, Nov 18 (Way to News): India bowling coach Morne Morkel has backed the team's pace resources to deliver the 20 wickets required in the upcoming Test, describing Mohammed Siraj as a world-class performer while making it clear that the final call on the bowling combination rests with captain Shubman Gill. With India looking to settle on the attack best suited to the conditions, Morkel said he had conveyed his confidence in the available options to head coach Gautam Gambhir, while stressing that players who have performed for the team also deserve backing.



"Siraj is a world-class performer, whenever he has stepped in the India jersey, whenever he has played. My feedback to Gautam (Gambhir) was that we have enough in attack to take 20 wickets. Ultimately, the call will be taken by Shubman," Morkel said in the pre-match press conference.

Morkel said the team had also brought in additional options to ensure it was prepared for different demands, but the selection would ultimately depend on the roles required to take 20 wickets.

"That is the reason why we have added a couple of guys even on the wings, you know, so we leave no stone unturned, but also you want to give guys who are doing well in the jersey also that security and that opportunity. For us, we will work out what is the best combination going forward into this Test match, what is going to help us to get those 20 wickets, who do we feel can, like I said in the previous question, who can fulfill roles for us into the wind, with the wind, and in terms of partnerships," he added.

The bowling coach also called for greater accountability from the attack, urging the players to stay focused on their execution rather than get distracted by discussions around conditions."We need to block outside noise and get the ball in the right areas. We cannot afford to lose points. The team needs to take ownership and get quicker to the mark. The responsibility lies with the bowler and the captain," he said. Morkel explained that the wind could influence the way bowlers approached their spells, but said adapting to it required clear thinking rather than overcomplicating plans.

"When you bowl into the wind, you get a bit of shape. Your thought process is important. You can hold your actions a bit longer. Don't overthink conditions," Morkel explained.

He also underlined that Test matches could be decided by spells delivered well beyond the opening day, and that bowlers needed to remain committed throughout the contest.

"The best way of winning is to set the tone in the first session, but the first session doesn't always win a Test. You need guys who can produce a magical spell on the fourth or fifth day," he stated. Morkel expects the bowlers to maintain their intent and body language even when the demands of the game require them to keep working from one end.

"I do believe it is a matter of just having a strong mindset. Somebody needs to do, you know, the job from one end and yeah, I expect our guys to have good body language in terms of still wanting the ball and wanting to do a job for the

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

Rakul Preet Singh flags rising AQI levels

It's our responsibility to protect the planet

Actress Rakul Preet Singh has stressed the need for collective action to tackle rising pollution levels, calling it the responsibility of every individual to contribute towards protecting the environment.

Speaking to about the importance of initiatives, the actress highlighted how small steps, including monitoring one's carbon footprint and vehicle emissions, can make a significant difference in safeguarding the planet for future generations.

"I think cause is very important, as I just said that it is the need of the day. We read that AQI has reached 600, 1000. And this is affecting our health and the future generations," Rakul told. She said that while the present generation may get by, the real question is what kind of planet it is leaving behind for those who follow. "I mean, we will live, but how are we leaving the planet for the next couple of generations? And I think it is the responsibility of all of us to do whatever we can from our side, as much as we can. How much carbon footprint do we have? How much pollution has been checked



from our car? Small, small things, you know. And I think if we all do it, it will be a collective effort. And I am very happy that Earthshot is doing such an event. And it is a step in the right direction."

On the acting front, Rakul was recently seen as Surpanakha in 'Ramayana' directed Nitesh Tiwary. She called it a special journey and expressed pride in being part of a story that has been deeply rooted in Indian culture for generations.

Sharing her thoughts, the actress wrote, "Have been waiting to share the experience of Playing Surpanakha in Ramayana. It has been such a special journey for me. It's not every day that you get to be a part of a story that has been a part of our lives and culture for generations. To see Ramayana being brought to life on such a grand scale is truly something else. Being part of a story that means so much to our country, and seeing it come together on such a scale, makes this journey even more special." 'Ramayana,' which stars Ranbir Kapoor and Sai Pallavi in the lead roles, was released in theatres on, November 5.

Vignesh Shivan pens adorable birthday wish to wife Nayanthara

Says he would want only her even if he were to be reborn

Director Vignesh Shivan has now penned a brief but adorable birthday wish for his wife, actress Nayanthara, in which he has said that he would want only his wife if even he were to be reborn.

Taking to his Instagram page to pen the birthday wish, he wrote, "Meendum pirandhaalum... (If I am reborn again…) neeyaee Vaendum… (I need only you). Love you my Uyir Ulagam. My thangameyyy @nayanthara (heart symbols) #HappyBirthday." It may be recalled that Vignesh Shivan had penned an equally admirable birthday wish for Nayanthara last year as well. Taking to his Instagram page to post a touching birthday wish to Nayanthara, the director had said, "Yennam Pol Vazhkai. Happy birthday my uyir @nayanthara. Nee pirandha dhinam…Varam. Love you truly , madly , deeply my azhagi love you. From your Uyir , Ulag, big uyir, all your beloved people. With an overwhelming heart and a love filled life thanking the universe and God



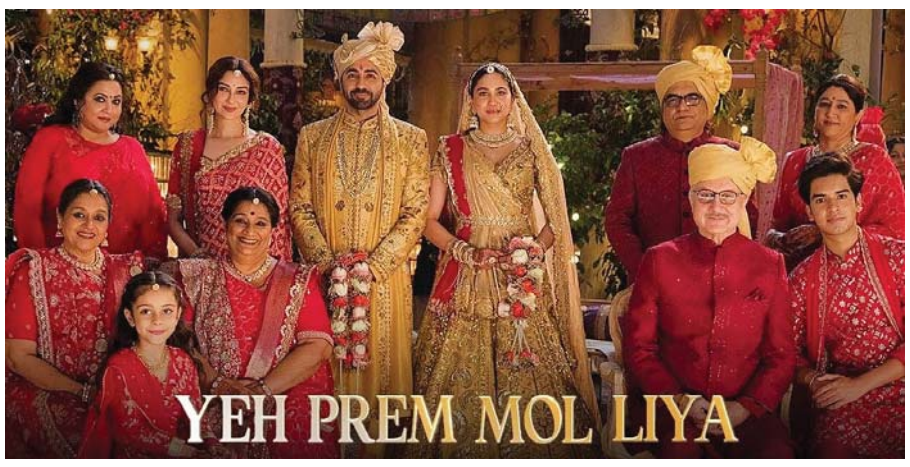
Almighty for always blessing us with the best of moments only filled with abundant love , unwavering positivity & pure good will." Several other fans and film industry professionals too penned birthday wishes for Nayanthara. Notable among those who wished the top Tamil actress was Malayalam actress Manju Warrier.

Taking to her Instagram stories section, actress Manju Warrier wrote, "Wishing you goodness always! Happy birthday Super Duper Star!!! @Nayanthara."

Sri Venkateswara Creations, the production house producing Nayanthara's upcoming film with Salman Khan, took to its X timeline to greet the actress on her birthday.

The production house said, "Wishing the ever graceful and versatile #Nayanthara garu a very Happy Birthday. Team #SVC63 -#SalmanKhanVamshiPaidipally-Film @BeingSalmanKhan @director-vamshi #DilRaju #Shirish @SVC_official #RafiKazi."

Ayushmann & Sharvari challenge the societal expectation with 'Yeh Prem Mol Liya'



The makers of director Manoj NS's 'Moonwalk', featuring actor Prabhudeva in the lead, have now announced that the film will hit screens for Christmas on December 24 this year. The film has triggered huge expectations among fans and filmbuffs as the film will also mark the acting debut of Oscar award winning music composer AR Rahman.Sources say that the ace music director will make a fun cameo appearance in the film. A R Rahman, who took to his X timeline to share the update on the film's release, wrote, "MOONWALK – A FAMILY COMEDY ENTERTAINER! Worldwide theatrical release on December 24! #FamilyLaughter #HolidaysLaughter Starring @PDdancing @iYogiBabu @AjuVarghesee #ArjunAshokan @Satzsathish321 Directed by #ManojNirmalaSreedharan Produced by #ManojNirmalaSreedharan #Divya-Manoj and @praveenelak @behindwoods DOP @Anoopvshylaja." It may be recalled that the film had originally be scheduled for release for Deepavali. Behindwoods Productions, while announcing the film's release for Deepavali, had said the film would deliver to audiences a spectacular festive celebration filled with laughter and unforgettable family moments. Apart from acting in it, AR Rahman has also scored the music for the film. Apart from Prabhudeva, the film will also feature actors Yogi Babu, Aju Varghese, Arjun Ashokan, Satz, Nishma, Sushmitha, Redin Kingsley, Mottai Rajendran, Lollu Sabha Swaminathan, Dr Santhosh Jacob, Deepa Shankar, and Ramkumar Natarajan among others.

Another highlight of the movie, sources say, will be Yogi babu appearing in 16 different roles. Sources claim that 'Moonwalk' will seek to seamlessly blend comedy, music and dance into a vibrant cinematic celebration. The film features cinematography by Anoop V Shylaja, choreography by Sekhar VJ and Piyush Shazia, production design by Shanoo, and costume design by Divya George and Swetha Raju. MOONWALK, produced by Manoj NS, Divya Manoj and Praveen Elak under the banner of Behindwoods Productions, will release simultaneously in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi languages.

Romeo Pictures has acquired the worldwide distribution rights, while Lahari has acquired the film's music rights

Diana Penty shares why Gen Z can be great champions of climate action

Actress Diana Penty believes that the younger generation, particularly Gen Z, can play a significant role in driving climate conservation, as they not only stand by their beliefs but also translate them into action.

Speaking to on the sidelines of the Earthshot Prize Awards, Diana highlighted the importance of individual efforts in protecting the environment. She said people often leave climate conservation to others, assuming that their personal contribution would not make much of a difference.

The 'Cocktail' actress stressed that meaningful change could begin at home through simple everyday practices such as segregating plastic and paper waste for recycling, reducing plastic consumption, choosing sustainable alternatives and avoiding firecrackers. Diana said that although these steps might appear small at an individual level, they could collectively create a significant impact.

"I actually think that we should start at an individual level, and we always think that when it comes to climate conservation, we leave it to somebody else—you know, they will take care of it, or it's not for us to do, and what can we do? We can't do anything. But that's not true. I feel if we start at home, if we start in our own individual way, small steps, you know, whatever we can do at home, whether it means segregating our plastic and our paper waste for recycling, using less plastic, using more sustainable items, avoiding firecrackers if we can, I think those small little steps on an individual level can really make a huge difference if we collectively do it together," she said.

Diana also expressed confidence in Gen Z's ability to champion environmental causes, praising the generation for standing firmly behind its beliefs and



taking concrete steps towards change.

"I actually think Gen Z can be great champions of our climate. In fact, the earth needs Gen Z right now because they really stand behind what they believe in. And they take steps, and it's not all talk. I feel like Gen Z actually puts things into action. So we couldn't have better champions than the current generation and the future generations to take on conservation," she added.

Sameera Reddy redesigns her 2015 maternity outfit after 11 years

Actress Sameera Reddy recently upped her fashion game by giving an old maternity outfit a stylish new life. She recreated the look she wore during her first pregnancy in 2015 and turned it into a message about body confidence, motherhood and embracing oneself at every stage. Sameera shared a seven-picture carousel on her social media account featuring herself in the same pink printed outfit she wore 11 years ago, recreating the look in 2026. The post, shared with a playful tone, also carried the caption, "What comeback? She never left," along with a message for "all my mommies and ladies out there #keepslaying."

In the first picture, Sameera is seen posing indoors in the pink printed outfit, wearing a yellow sash across her shoulder and smiling at the camera. The image reads, "Can she still wear her Maternity Outfit From 2015?"

The second picture shows her posing in the same outfit against an elaborate traditional backdrop featuring peacocks and floral artwork. The text reads, "Glam Mama 2026."

The third click places her in an open courtyard surrounded by traditional sculptures and architecture, with the words, "11 years later" written across the frame.

Another picture shows Sameera standing beside a large portrait of a royal woman, with the words, "Inspired by the Divine Feminine." In another, she walks down a corridor wearing the same outfit, accompanied by the message, "You can wear that dress again girl". The final frame shows two pictures of Sameera in the outfit, underlining her own "2015 to 2026" transformation.

Over the years, Sameera has been often seen openly talking about the dramatic physical and emotional changes she experienced after becoming a mother for the first time. Sameera and businessman Akshai Varde married in a traditional Maharashtrian ceremony on January 21, 2014. Their first child, son Hans Varde, was born in May 2015. Their daughter Nyra was born in July 2019.

Anand Deverakonda movie to be made into Tamil



Tollywood hero Vijay Deverakonda's younger brother, young hero Anand Deverakonda is preparing to make his entry into Kollywood. His crime comedy film 'Gam Gam Ganesha', which he starred in Telugu, is now coming to Tamil audiences. The film is being dubbed and released in Tamil as 'Jai Jai Ganesha'. Producer Vijay Madhavan is releasing this film in Tamil under the banner of JJ Movies. It has been made as an entertaining film with full action, thriller and comedy elements. Nayan Sarika and Pragathi Srivastava are the heroines opposite Anand Deverakonda in this film. Raj Arun plays the role of the villain, and director Uday Bommisetty has directed this film. Vennela Kishore, Satyam Rajesh, and Jabardasth Emmanuel have played other important roles. Anand Deverakonda's performance and entertainment in the role of a small thief in Telugu have impressed the audience. Anand Deverakonda, who has made a name for himself in Telugu with diverse stories, is now ready to entertain Kollywood audiences with 'Jai Jai Ganesha'.

Urmila gets nostalgic recalling 'Judaai' climax on Indian Idol

Bollywood actress Urmila Matondkar was transported down memory lane when contestants on the musical reality show 'Indian Idol Legends Return' performed the song 'Mujhe Ek Pal Chain Na Aaye, Sajna Tere Bina' from her 1997 film 'Judaai'. Urmila, who will appear as a special guest on the show, recalled the emotional memories associated with the film, particularly its climax in which her character leaves India.

She also acknowledged the contribution of musicians and playback singers



in creating the emotional impact of films through their music. Sharing her feelings after the performance, Urmila said, "Mujhe waqai Judaai film ka climax yaad aaya aur mujhe yaad aaya ki kitne saare logon ne duniya bhar mein mujhe bataya hai ki jab main film ke end mein nikal kar India chod kar jaati hoon, toh yeh scene aur yeh gaana ek baar aur play hota hai. Aur main salute karti hoon music ko, musicians ko aur saare playback singers ko jo yeh samaa baandhte hain hamare liye filmon mein. Hum sirf screen pe aakar hamara jo kehte hain na, credit le jaate hain, hats off and lots of love to everyone sitting here."

She said the film's climax and the song had stayed with audiences across the world, adding that musicians and playback singers deserved recognition for creating the magic that audiences experience on screen. The nostalgic moment unfolded after contestants Devender Pal Singh and Mayuri delivered their rendition of 'Mujhe Ek Pal Chain Na Aaye, Sajna Tere Bina', taking the actress back to one of the memorable moments of her cinematic journey. For the uninitiated, 'Judaai', directed by Raj Kanwar, was released on February 28, 1997.



Dia Mirza slams Nawazuddin Siddiqui: Baat karne ki tameez nahi hai

A social media post can sometimes say more than a lengthy statement, and Bollywood actress Dia Mirza has certainly managed to get people talking with her latest Instagram update. The actress took an apparent dig at actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui on Wednesday morning, calling him a "nightmare to work with" and questioning his attitude and manner of speaking.

The post, in which Dia directly tagged Nawazuddin, has sparked curiosity among social media users, with many wondering what transpired between the two actors.

Taking to her official Instagram handle, Dia did not mince her



words while expressing her displeasure. Calling Nawazuddin an "offensive character", she wrote, "Nightmare to work with! Na baat karne ki tameez hai, aur attitude alag hi level ka! Bilkul offensive character! @nawazuddin._siddiqui." She also repeated the same statement in the caption accompanying her post, making her criticism difficult to miss. However, the actress did not provide any further explanation about the incident or the circumstances behind her remarks. As the post started circulating online, social media users were quick to flood the comments section with questions. While some wondered whether the actress was genuinely expressing her frustration, others speculated that the exchange could be connected to an upcoming project or a promotional campaign. The direct mention of Nawazuddin has only added to the curiosity, with fans trying to figure out the reason behind Dia's unexpected remarks. So far, Nawazuddin Siddiqui has not publicly reacted to Dia Mirza's post. It also remains unclear whether the actress's remarks stem from a recent professional interaction or something else. For now, her Instagram post has left fans guessing, with many waiting to see if either actor offers further clarification.

Printed by Published by Owned by Lingala Narender Published at H.No:10-1/-1-1/A, Thrimurthy Colony, Saroor Nagar, Ranga Reddy, Telangana and Printed at Rachakonda Publications H. NO. 5-2-396/P-21, VENKATESHWARA COLONY, SAHEBNAGAR KALAN, RANGA REDDY, TELANGANA- 500035 EDITOR: Lingala Narender, PRGI NO: TGENG/26/A6521, Ph:9010110808