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CM Revanth Alleges Harish Rao May Join BJP Before 2028 Polls

Hyderabad, Nov 19 (Way to News): Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Thursday launched a scathing attack on senior BRS leader and Siddipet MLA T. Harish Rao, alleging that he was in touch with the BJP and would leave the BRS before the 2028 Assembly elections.

Addressing a public meeting in Siddipet after launching the Indiramma Family Life Insurance Scheme, offering free life insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh to more than one crore families across Telangana, Revanth Reddy challenged Harish Rao to take an oath in the name of Siddipet Yellamma that he would not join the BJP, if the allegation was false.



Revanth Reddy also indirectly targeted two Congress MLAs, who have recently criticised the Congress government, referring to them as "persons bitten by mad dogs" and saying Congress activists would soon take them to Erragadda hospital for treatment, without naming Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy and Jadcherla MLA J. Anirudh Reddy. The Chief Minister alleged that Harish Rao was planning to backstab BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao by quitting the party and joining the BJP. He said Chandrashekhar Rao's fate was only a reflection of his own political history, alleging that he had betrayed the Congress and the Telugu Desam after they had given him political opportunities, including Assembly tickets, and helped him become an MLA and minister.

The Chief Minister said Siddipet Congress leader A. Madan Mohan Rao had played a key role in keeping the Congress flag flying in Siddipet until 1985 and accused Chandrashekhar Rao and Harish Rao of attempting to erase his name from history. He directed health minister Damodar Rajanarsimha to name Siddipet Medical College after Madan Mohan Rao.

Revanth Reddy said Harish Rao was not even a ward member in 2004 but became a minister and Siddipet MLA with the political blessing of late Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy.

He alleged that Chandrashekar Rao, K.T. Rama Rao and Harish Rao had looted Telangana during the BRS' 10-year rule and appealed to Siddipet voters to elect the Congress candidate in the next Assembly election. He promised that the Congress candidate elected from Siddipet would be made a minister in the next Congress government in 2029.

The Chief Minister recalled the political legacy of leaders from Medak district such as Madan Mohan Rao, Cheruku Muthyam Reddy and Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy and compared their political and financial circumstances with those of Chandrashekhar Rao, Rama Rao and Harish Rao. He questioned how the top 3 BRS leaders could have accumulated "thousands of crores" when their close associate like Ramalinga Reddy had died leaving his family in difficult financial circumstances. Revanth Reddy described Chandrashekar Rao, Harish Rao, Rama Rao and J. Santosh Rao as a quartet responsible for exploiting Telangana's resources and alleged that even commissions were taken in the distribution of Bathukamma sarees

Modi urges industry to tap global markets

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Encouraging industry to leverage India's recent trade agreements and the 'Reform Express' momentum to capture overseas opportunities, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the government has kept its doors open for suggestions, urging businesses to invest in understanding global customer needs, meeting standards, and building distribution networks.



"Our domestic market should not be our comfort zone, as it must give us the confidence to compete in global markets," PM Modi said while inaugurating the Annual General Meeting and Annual Convention of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) at Bharat Mandapam here.

Addressing the gathering on the centenary celebrations of the apex industry chamber, PM Modi noted that while he has attended FICCI events on several occasions earlier, today's milestone is special as the chamber completes 100 years of staying alert, evolving with changing times, and contributing to India's economic journey. "Today in India, the pace of progress is also the fastest, and the speed of coming out of poverty is also unprecedented," PM Modi observed. Emphasising that a nation progresses by honouring farmers, small entrepreneurs, industry, wealth creators, and taxpayers, the Prime Minister detailed pro-business and taxpayer-friendly reforms including cutting the basic corporate tax rate from 30 per cent in 2014 to 22 per cent.

, exempting income up to Rs 12 lakh to boost purchasing power, simplifying returns and refunds, and lowering GST rates on numerous goods to stimulate demand. "Its direct benefit is going to our industry and business houses," PM Modi said. The Prime Minister also urged the pharmaceutical sector to identify domestic manufacturing opportunities and invest in new technology and large production plants to gain global competitiveness.

Sitharaman holds IT sector Budget talks

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday chaired the sixth pre-Budget consultation meeting with experts and stakeholders from the Information Technology (IT) sector as part of preparations for the Union Budget 2027-28. The meeting, held in New Delhi, was attended by the Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs, the CEO of NITI Aayog, senior officials of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), and the Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India.



The consultation provided a platform for IT industry representatives and experts to share their suggestions, highlight sectoral challenges and offer recommendations on economic priorities and policy measures that could be considered in the upcoming Budget. The government conducts pre-Budget consultations annually to gather feedback from different sectors of the economy before finalising its financial proposals. The exercise aims to incorporate industry perspectives and identify measures to strengthen economic activity, encourage investment and sustain growth.

With Thursday's meeting, the Finance Ministry has completed six rounds of consultations covering various sectors and stakeholders, including economists, industry leaders, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), startups, capital markets, banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), and the IT sector. Earlier, Sitharaman chaired the fifth consultation with representatives from the capital markets and BFSI sectors. The fourth meeting involved stakeholders from the MSME sector and startup ecosystem, while the third consultation brought together experts and industry leaders.

Azam Khan backs SP-Congress alliance

Rampur, Nov 19 (Way to News): Samajwadi Party (SP) leader Azam Khan said on Thursday that the Congress leadership today is "not the same" during whose tenure the Babri Masjid was demolished in Ayodhya on Dec 6, 1992. Speaking to the media a day after he was released from Ghaziabad's Dasna jail in connection with a money laundering case, Khan said: "This is not the same Congress leadership under whom the Dec 6 incident (Babri Masjid demolition in Ayodhya) took place nor the December 23, 1949 one, (when idols of Lord Ram were allegedly placed inside the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya). He was responding to questions on the seat distribution between Congress, (SP) ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls.



"We (SP) will arrive at a respectful understanding and even if we have to give them (Congress) more seats, we will make that sacrifice," he said.

While refusing to comment on the 'Samajik Parivartan Morcha' alliance of AIMIM and Azad Samaj Party-Kanshi Ram for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh polls, Azam Khan took a jibe at AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi. "None of us like Hyderabadi Biriyani, we like pulao and mutton biryani," Khan remarked.

In a veiled attack, the SP leader accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led NDA of spreading "agenda of hatred", while asserting that the Samajwadi Party will work towards creating an Uttar Pradesh which is "free of hatred".

"If the INDIA bloc as a whole had taken it (vote chori allegations) seriously when looting happened for the first time in Rampur, and Sub-Inspectors chased people holding country-made pistols, latches were put on the outside of houses, police and Pradeshik Armed Constabulary (PAC) were deployed on the streets, and people were not allowed to cast their votes, if the INDIA bloc as a whole had taken that seriously, then neither Kundarki, nor Sambhal, nor Haryana, nor Bengal would have had these results," he added.

EPFO approves new PF withdrawal plan, lowers minimum balance to 10%

NEW DELHI, Nov 19 (Way to News): The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on Thursday, November 19 approved sweeping changes in provident fund withdrawal rules, allowing retiring members to receive their PF savings in regular instalments, reducing the minimum balance requirement to 10 per cent from 25 per cent and cutting the waiting period for final settlement to two months from 12 months.

The decisions were taken at the 240th meeting of the Central Board of Trustees (CBT), chaired by Union Labour and Employment Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday, according to an official statement.

Under the proposed Systematic Withdrawal Plan (SWP), retiring members will be able to receive their accumulated PF savings through monthly, quarterly or half-yearly payouts instead of withdrawing the entire corpus at once. The remaining balance will continue to earn returns, providing members with a regular income stream after retirement while preserving their savings. The facility will be entirely voluntary and is aimed at supplementing pension income and providing greater financial security after retirement.



Around 6.32 lakh EPF members aged above 55 years with provident fund accumulations exceeding Rs 5 lakh are expected to be the primary beneficiaries during the initial phase, the Labour Ministry said.

In the event of a member's death during the payout period, nominees or dependants will have the option of withdrawing the remaining balance or continuing with periodic payments. The board also approved UAN-linked mechanisms for voluntary contributions and third-party micro-contributions, including customer tips, independent of conventional employer payroll systems. Necessary amendments to the EPF scheme will be notified after approval from the Ministry, while a corresponding amendment to the Income Tax Act is being taken up with the Finance Ministry. In a separate decision aimed at providing greater liquidity to members, the board reduced the minimum balance that must be retained in EPF accounts from 25 per cent to 10 per cent. The waiting period for final PF withdrawal has also been reduced from 12 months to two months, providing members quicker access to their accumulated savings while retaining a minimum corpus for long-term social security.

Army Chief Discusses Defence Ties with Czech Republic

Prague, Nov 19 (Way to News): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Dhiraj Seth, held a meeting with the Czech Republic's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marie Chatardova, on Thursday, with discussions held on further strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

India's Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Raveesh Kumar, was also present at the meeting.

In a post on X, the Indian Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADGPI) stated, "During his ongoing official visit to the Czech Republic, General Dhiraj Seth, COAS, along with Shri Raveesh Kumar, Ambassador of India to the Czech Republic, called on Ms Marie Chatardova, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. The interaction



provided an opportunity to exchange perspectives on India–Czech relations and explore avenues for further strengthening bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest. The engagement reaffirmed the shared commitment to deepening the longstanding partnership between the two nations."

General Seth is currently on an official visit to the Czech Republic, during which he visited the General Staff Headquarters of the Czech Armed Forces in Prague and held discussions with the country's military leadership on enhancing defence cooperation and strengthening professional military exchanges between the two Armies.

"General Dhiraj Seth, COAS, during his ongoing official visit to the Czech Republic, visited the General Staff Headquarters of the Czech Armed Forces in Prague and laid a wreath in a solemn ceremony, paying tribute to the soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice in service of their nation," the ADGPI posted on X.

Birla calls for stronger India-US economic ties

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday emphasised that the shared democratic values of India and the United States provide a strong foundation for expanding bilateral trade, investment and technological cooperation.

Addressing the 23rd Indo-US Economic Summit 2026, Birla observed that democratic institutions, stable policies, an independent judiciary and sustained engagement with stakeholders strengthen investor confidence and create opportunities for economic growth. Describing India and the United States as two of the world's largest democracies, he said that strong and vibrant democratic institutions contribute to stable and responsive policymaking. Democracy provides space for diverse voices and ensures that the views of industry, trade, agriculture, technology, students and other stakeholders are taken into account while framing policies and laws, he added.

US Court Orders Summons on Doval, Ex-RAW Chief

NEW DELHI, Nov 19 (Way to News): A US federal court has formally sought the assistance of three district courts in Delhi to serve summons on National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and former Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) chief Samant Goel in connection with a civil lawsuit alleging a conspiracy to assassinate Khalistani separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.

In an order dated November 13, US District Judge Katherine Polk Failla of the Southern District of New York directed the court's clerk to transmit the summons and accompanying judicial documents to the Patiala House District Court for Doval, and the Dwarka and Tis Hazari district courts for Goel. The US court has invoked provisions of India's Code of Civil Procedure and Article 19 of the Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents to facilitate the process.



It has requested the three Delhi courts to accept the documents, arrange for their delivery to the respective defendants and subsequently provide a written record of the steps taken.

The move follows unsuccessful attempts to serve the judicial documents through India's designated Central Authority under the Hague Convention, the Ministry of Law and Justice.

The court's latest directive follows an earlier order of November 9, through which it approved Pannun's plea to pursue service of the lawsuit on the two officials through the Indian judicial system.

The November 13 order lays down the mechanism for transmitting the documents to the designated courts. Pannun, chief of the banned organisation Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), filed the civil lawsuit in 2024, naming the Government of India, Doval, Goel, former RAW officer Vikash Yadav, Indian national Nikhil Gupta and several unidentified individuals as defendants.

He has alleged that the defendants were involved in a conspiracy to kill him in New York in retaliation for his advocacy of a separate Khalistan state.

India Poised to Attract Global Investments: CEA

NEW DELHI, Nov 19 (Way to News): India is well positioned to attract a larger share of global investment flows as concerns over stretched valuations in the artificial intelligence (AI) sector prompt investors to reassess capital allocation strategies, Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran said on Thursday.

Addressing the 65th General Assembly and Annual Meeting of the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE) — hosted by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) — Nageswaran said India's strong macroeconomic performance, continued poverty reduction and evolving corporate landscape have created conditions for sustained investor interest. He noted that while global capital has increasingly gravitated towards AI-linked investments in recent years, a moderation in energy prices and a reassessment of AI-related valuations could redirect flows towards economies with stronger growth fundamentals.



"India is likely to be among key beneficiaries as global investors rebalance portfolios and seek opportunities backed by economic resilience and long-term growth," according to him.

The CEA also highlighted that the domestic market received foreign portfolio investment inflows of $11.3 billion during the first 18 days of November, surpassing the combined inflows recorded over the previous three months.

Capital movements influenced by global technology themes and AI investments could gradually stabilise, providing support to the rupee, according to the CEA.

Nageswaran said India has demonstrated remarkable resilience by sustaining real GDP growth of around 7 per cent despite facing challenges arising from global trade disruptions, geopolitical conflicts and supply-side shocks.

He attributed the country's performance to the economic buffers built during recent years and said these foundations would help India navigate future uncertainties.

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CM Revanth Reddy unveils poster for Cyberabad moves 2026

Three-day urban mobility summit to be held at T-Hub from November 26 to 28, focusing on safer roads, traffic discipline and sustainable transport.



Hyderabad, Nov 19 (Way to News): Chief Minister of Telangana, Sri A. Revanth Reddy, formally unveiled the official poster for "Cyberabad Moves 2026" today, setting the stage for a flagship three-day urban mobility summit to be held on November 26, 27, and 28 at T-Hub, Cyberabad. Issuing a clarion call with the campaign message, "Come, Make Your Move!", the Hon'ble Chief Minister invited citizens, domain experts, urban planners, and students to come forward,

explore the region's evolving transit landscape, and actively collaborate with government departments to shape a safer, smarter, and more sustainable future for the city's mobility.

The poster launch programme was graced by MLA of Serilingampally Constituency, Sri Arekapudi Gandhi, Cyberabad Commissioner of Police Dr. M. Ramesh, IPS, Cyberabad Municipal Corporation (CMC) Commissioner Dr. G. Srijana, IAS alongside senior police officers and representatives from the Society for Cyberabad Security Council (SCSC). Addressing the gathering, the Hon'ble Chief Minister observed that as Telangana continues to showcase its rich cultural heritage and rapid infrastructural growth to the world, strengthening road safety and instilling collective traffic discipline remain top priorities for building a truly world-class metropolis. Jointly organized by the Cyberabad Police, Cyberabad Municipal Corporation (CMC), Society for Cyberabad Security Council (SCSC), and WRI India, Cyberabad Moves 2026 is envisioned as a landmark collaborative platform uniting policymakers, industry leaders, academic institutions, and everyday commuters to deliberate on urban transport challenges and co create actionable solutions.

As part of the comprehensive groundwork leading up to the event, authorities have already identified 74 critical traffic junctions across the Cyberabad corridor for scientific redevelopment to ease congestion, while simultaneously conducting a massive grassroots awareness drive that has sensitized nearly 3.5 lakh students across more than 400 educational institutions on road safety and traffic regulations. Concluding his message, the Hon'ble Chief Minister appealed to the public to attend Cyberabad Moves a three-day immersive experience, the first of its kind in Telangana, to understand and reimagine how Cyberabad moves, with integrated public transport as the backbone of a safe, inclusive, climate-resilient and globally competitive city

90 Hyderabad Medical Shops under scanner for sale of addicting drugs



Hyderabad, Nov 19 (Way to News): The Drugs Wing of the Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs (TG SAFE) detected discrepancies in 90 medical shops during a special enforcement drive against the illegal sale and diversion of habit-forming drugs and the indiscriminate sale of antibiotics across Telangana on Thursday, November 19.

The raids were conducted jointly by the Drugs Wing, Enforcement Wing police personnel and Excise Enforcement personnel at medical shops in vulnerable areas across Hyderabad, including Koti, Abids, Basheerbagh, Nampally, Khairatabad, Panjagutta, Ameerpet, SR Nagar, Sanathnagar, Yerragadda, Yousufguda, Madhuranagar, Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills. The inspections focused on detecting the illegal sale and diversion of habit-forming drugs such as Tramadol, Alprazolam, Nitrazepam, Tapentadol, Pregabalin-containing medicines and Zolpidem, besides codeine-based cough syrups. Officials also checked for the indiscriminate sale of antibiotics. Similar raids were conducted by the Drugs Wing in various districts across the state as part of the ongoing enforcement drive.

Following the detection of discrepancies in 90 medical shops, show-cause notices were issued to initiate departmental action, including suspension or cancellation of drug licences, TG SAFE officials said.

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Inaugurates Metropolitan Surveillance Unit in Hyderabad



Hyderabad, Nov 19 (Way to News): Telangana Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Thursday inaugurated the Metropolitan Surveillance Unit (MSU) at Kala Bhavan in Secunderabad, aimed at strengthening disease surveillance, early detection and prevention, and improving public healthcare services across Hyderabad. IDSP and NCDC Joint Director Shubhangi Kulsange, GHMC Commissioner RV Karnan and other senior officials attended the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said the Telangana government was giving priority to public health within the GHMC limits. He stated that the new unit, established in coordination with Central Government institutions, would help develop an effective disease surveillance system and enable faster responses to public health emergencies.

The MSU aims to detect diseases at an early stage, prevent their spread, address health-related challenges effectively and take preventive measures to avoid future outbreaks. Established under the PM-ABHIM scheme through GHMC, the unit will coordinate disease surveillance and prevention activities across Greater Hyderabad, Cyberabad and Malkajgiri Municipal Corporations. Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said modern technology and coordinated surveillance would play a crucial role in protecting public health.

Sajjanar Takes Charge as Telangana Fire Services DG



Hyderabad, Nov 19 (Way to News): Senior IPS Officer Sri V.C. Sajjanar, IPS, on Thursday assumed charge as the Director General of the Telangana Fire Services Department. He took charge at the department's headquarters located at Nanakramguda. Earlier, upon his arrival at the office, senior officials and staff of the Fire Services Department accorded him a warm welcome by presenting bouquets.

On this occasion, DG Sri V.C. Sajjanar, IPS, stated that he would soon hold special meetings with all personnel, from senior officers to field-level staff. He said that after understanding the ground realities and considering their experiences, suggestions and recommendations, a robust future action plan would be formulated to deliver faster and more efficient services.

He emphasised that preventing loss of life and property during fire accidents and natural disasters would be the department's foremost priority. He said that the response mechanism would be further strengthened to ensure that personnel reach the incident site in the shortest possible time immediately after receiving information and initiate rescue and relief operations.

In view of rapid urbanisation, he stated that special attention would be given to the strict implementation of fire safety regulations in multi-storey buildings, hospitals, educational institutions, commercial complexes and industrial establishments. To effectively address emerging challenges, the department would make efficient use of new technologies, advanced fire-fighting vehicles and modern equipment. He also explained that continuous training programmes would be conducted to enhance the professional skills and capabilities of the personnel. He said that during disasters, the department would work in close coordination with the Police, Revenue, Municipal Administration and Health Departments to provide assurance and assistance to the public. He highlighted that public participation plays a crucial role in preventing fire accidents and announced that extensive awareness programmes would be conducted in residential complexes, schools and industries. He urged the public to immediately call 101 or 112 to report any fire accident or emergency situation. Meanwhile, Sri V.C. Sajjanar also assumed charge as the Director General of the Special Protection Force (SPF), in addition to his responsibilities as the DG of the Fire Services Department.

Golla Gattu Jatara Chairman post should be allocated to Yadav Youth



Suryapet, 19 Nov (Way To News): Student union leaders Bari Ashok Yadav, Gundala Sandeep Yadav, Jillepelli Durga Prasad and Daravath Venkatesh Naik have demanded that the government allocate 100 crore for the upcoming Pedda Gattu Lingamanthula Jatara and appoint a young Yadava leader, irrespective of political affiliation, as the Jatara Chairman.

Addressing a press conference, they alleged that Yadava youth had been neglected in the appointments made during previous Jataras. They urged the government to ensure all necessary facilities for devotees and take strict measures to prevent the misuse of funds allocated for the festival.

They also demanded that the Chief Minister and state ministers officially participate in the Jatara and that permanent facilities be developed on the hill to benefit devotees. Nannuboina Nagaraju, Bonagiri Satish, Bollikonda Veerababu, Naraboyina Lokesh, Naresh and others participated in the meeting.

Telangana Government launches new cheyutha pensions for 3.5 lakh women



Hyderabad, Nov 19 (Way to News): On the occasion of the birth anniversary of the late Indira Gandhi—India's first female Prime Minister and recipient of the Bharat Ratna—newly sanctioned 'Cheyutha' pensions were distributed to beneficiaries from the Khairatabad, Shaikpet, Himayatnagar, and Nampally mandals (within the Khairatabad constituency). The distribution took place on Wednesday at Banjara Bhavan in Banjara Hills. The event was led by Dr. Danasari Anasuya 'Seethakka', Minister for Women Development & Child Welfare and Panchayat Raj & Rural Development, alongside Ponnam Prabhakar, Minister for Transport & BC Welfare (and Minister-in-charge for Hyderabad District), Rajya Sabha Member Anil Kumar Yadav, and former MLA Danam Nagender.

Earlier, the dignitaries paid a grand tribute to Indira Gandhi on her 109th birth anniversary by garlanding her portrait. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Seethakka emphasized that the state government accords the highest priority to the welfare and empowerment of women. She noted that the 'Aasara' and 'Cheyutha' pension schemes have proven to be immensely beneficial for the poor and the destitute. She announced that, to mark the birth anniversary of Indira Gandhi, the government has launched a major initiative to provide new pensions to approximately 3.5 lakh women across the state. She explained that, following the directives of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, applications were collected over a period of two months to grant pensions to widows and unmarried women over the age of 30. The Minister urged women to join Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to attain financial self-reliance. She stated that the government is supporting women's groups by facilitating interest-free bank loans, enabling them to start self-employment ventures such as small shops, canteens, tiffin centers, and tailoring units. She clarified that the government bears the interest burden on these bank loans, providing an interest subsidy so that women are only required to repay the principal amount. She suggested that women could increase their family income by running small businesses from their own homes.

Minister Seethakka encouraged women to draw inspiration from the life of the late Indira Gandhi and move forward with courage.

KTR Accuses Congress Government of Corruption, Failure to Fulfil Promises

BRS leader cites allegations by ruling party MLAs, questions pension cuts and unfulfilled guarantees, and vows to recover money allegedly accumulated through corruption

Hyderabad, Nov 19 (Way to News): BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) accused the Congress government in Telangana of turning governance into an exercise in corruption, alleging that even ruling party MLAs were openly exposing commissions, financial irregularities and the alleged misuse of public funds.

Referring to statements by Jadcherla MLA Anirudh Reddy and Munugode MLA Komatireddy Raj Gopal Reddy, KTR said Congress legislators themselves were questioning corruption within their government. He cited Anirudh Reddy's remarks alleging that officials were demanding 15–20 per cent commissions for government works and Raj Gopal Reddy's allegations of large-scale corruption, irregularities in tenders and a 5 lakh crore loot. KTR said these statements raised serious questions about the functioning of the government. He alleged that Congress MLAs were complaining about the non-release of funds to their constituencies, with some even writing letters seeking financial assistance. Referring to complaints that funds were being diverted to Kodangal while other constituencies were neglected, KTR said ruling party legislators themselves were expressing helplessness over the lack of development works.

KTR alleged that the government had failed to fulfil its promises and that more instances of corruption would emerge as Congress leaders continued to speak out against one another.

He asserted that the BRS would return to power and that every rupee allegedly accumulated through corruption would be recovered. No one, whether an MLA or the Chief Minister, would be spared if found responsible for corruption, he warned.

Congress removed 4.70 lakh pensions; failed to deliver 4,000 promise KTR accused the Congress government of misleading pensioners by announcing new pensions while simultaneously removing existing beneficiaries. He said Telangana had approximately 44.70 lakh pension beneficiaries under the previous BRS government. After Congress came to power, around 1.50 lakh pensions were removed



in the first year, another 1.50 lakh in the second year and 1.70 lakh in the third year, taking the total number of discontinued pensions to 4.70 lakh. Against this, the government had sanctioned only 4.63 lakh new pensions, resulting in a net reduction of approximately 7,000 beneficiaries, he said.

KTR questioned how the government could claim to have expanded pension coverage when the total pension budget had not increased correspondingly. He accused Congress of removing existing beneficiaries, issuing fewer new pensions and presenting the exercise as a major achievement.

Recalling the Congress election promise, KTR said the party had assured people that pensions would be increased to 4,000 within 100 days of coming to power. Congress had promised 2,000 in November and 4,000 from December onwards. However, three Decembers had passed and beneficiaries were still receiving only 2,000, the amount introduced by the KCR government, he said.

He recalled that the KCR government had increased pensions from 200 to 2,000 to ensure dignity and financial security for elderly people and persons with disabilities. Had the BRS government continued, pensioners would have received the promised enhanced amount, he said.

KTR also questioned the Congress leadership over its six guarantees, recalling that Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka had publicly pledged their implementation within 100 days. He asked what people should do with the guarantee cards distributed during the election campaign when the promises remained unfulfilled.

BRS welcomes large-scale defections from Bhupalpally

Several leaders and workers belonging to different political parties from Bhupalpally constituency joined the Bharat Rashtra Samithi at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday. BRS Working President KTR welcomed them into the party by presenting pink scarves. The joining programme was organised under the leadership of former MLA Gandra Venkata Ramana Reddy. Addressing the gathering, KTR recalled the development initiatives undertaken in Bhupalpally during the KCR government. He said the constituency received significant administrative and infrastructure development, including the establishment of a municipality, district headquarters and a medical college.

He pointed out that Telangana had only five medical colleges at the time of state formation, while the KCR government expanded the number to 32, creating opportunities for thousands of students to pursue medical education.

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Amit Shah says Kashmir free of local terrorists after Latif Bhat's killing

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Reiterating the 'Zero Tolerance' policy against terrorism, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday that following the killing of Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist Latif Bhat, Kashmir is now free of locally recruited terrorists. Addressing the inaugural session of the two-day counter-terrorism conference, HM Shah said, "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, we have adopted a 'Zero Tolerance' policy towards terrorism, and this policy is yielding positive results."

He said after the gunning down of LeT terrorist Latif Bhat, Kashmir is now free of locally recruited terrorists born in India. "This marks a major milestone in the fight against terrorism," he said.

The Union Minister said that the hallmark of a successful agency is its ability to apprehend terrorists and put them behind bars before they can carry out a terrorist attack; all state police forces should study this model and implement it, according to an official statement.

"To eliminate terrorism, organised crime, and drug-related problems, it is essential to bring offenders hiding abroad back to India." Since 2019, 303 fugitives have been brought back to India from 36 countries," said HM Shah.

He said it is essential to dismantle the entire terror financing network; to achieve this, better coordination with agencies responsible for financial investigations is necessary "Success cannot be achieved without launching a simultaneous assault on the entire terror network. We will not succeed in the fight against terrorism unless we have a shared objective and clearly defined accountability at every stage of the process to achieve that objective," he said.

On the occasion, the Union Home Minister released the publication 'Fail-Safe Investigation' brought out by the National Investigation Agency (NIA). He also laid the foundation stone of the NIA office complex in Chandigarh and inaugurated the NIA residential complex built at Maidangarhi in Delhi. In addition, Union Home Minister e-launched the NIA's 'Pushti' portal and conferred decorations on seven officers and personnel of the National Investigation Agency. Those present at the event included Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Director Intelligence Bureau (IB) Mahesh Dikshit, Special Secretary (Internal Security) Anand Swarup and Director General National Investigation Agency (NIA) Rakesh Aggarwal, along with several other senior officers, said the statement.

The Home Minister emphasised that counter-terrorism efforts must go beyond individual operations and focus on dismantling the complete support structure of terrorist organisations. He called for stronger intelligence-sharing, coordinated investigations and clear accountability among central and state agencies to prevent attacks and disrupt networks involved in terror financing, recruitment and cross-border activities.



The Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah at the inaugural session of two-day counter-terrorism conference, in New Delhi.

Punjab and Haryana High Court Stays PCS Recruitment Over Irregularity Allegations

Chandigarh, Nov 19 (Way to News): The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Thursday stayed the recruitment process for Punjab Civil Services (PCS) and Allied Services, following allegations of irregularities in the selection process conducted by the Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC). Justice Sandeep Moudgil passed the order while hearing petitions challenging the Mains examination result declared on November 4, in which 751 candidates were shortlisted. The court issued notices to the respondents and fixed December 16 as the next date of hearing.



The petitioners have alleged discrepancies in the selection process, questioning the pattern of roll numbers among shortlisted candidates, the eligibility criteria and the conduct of the examination. They claimed that 26 clusters of three or more consecutive roll numbers featured in the shortlisted candidates' list, involving 86 candidates. Another 118 clusters of consecutive roll numbers, comprising 270 candidates, were allegedly identified, raising suspicions about the selection process. The aspirants have also questioned the absence of category-wise details in the result and the allotment of different roll numbers for the Preliminary and Mains examinations, alleging that it hindered scrutiny of the selection. The petitions further challenged changes in the eligibility conditions, particularly the Punjabi language requirement, and also raised questions over the age criteria, multiple application forms, extensions in the application deadlines and verification of reserved-category candidates.

Allegations have also been levelled regarding the examination process, including claims that question-paper packets at certain centres were found unsealed or damaged and that examination rooms were changed. The petitioners had sought quashing of the recruitment process and a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or a special investigation team. They have also sought directions for the preservation and production of the complete recruitment record.

Gadkari urges states to adopt motor vehicle aggregator guidelines

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has highlighted the importance of wider adoption of the Motor Vehicle Aggregator framework by states to facilitate employment opportunities, particularly for people from socially, economically and educationally disadvantaged sections. He called upon state governments to provide an enabling environment for such services and encourage greater participation in the emerging mobility ecosystem.



Speaking at an event here which brought together industry representatives, drivers, gig workers and beneficiaries to highlight the contribution of app-based platforms to employment generation, mobility services and livelihood opportunities, the minister emphasised the role of technology, innovation, entrepreneurship and digital platforms in creating employment opportunities and addressing socio-economic challenges.

He noted that app-based services have expanded beyond passenger transportation to include goods delivery and food services, creating new avenues of livelihood for people from diverse backgrounds.

Gadkari cited the introduction of mechanism-driven e-rickshaws and e-carts as examples of technological interventions that have transformed traditional occupations and reduced physical hardship. He also stressed the need to strengthen last-mile connectivity, particularly in rural areas, enabling people to access education, employment and markets more easily and transport agricultural produce to urban centres, according to an official statement. He further observed that the objective of the Government's policy framework was to facilitate the growth of the sector while safeguarding the interests of drivers and consumers. The minister encouraged industry stakeholders to work closely with the Government and share suggestions for further improving the regulatory framework.

He underlined that the benefits of technological progress should reach all sections of society and contribute to the broader vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. CN Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, outlined key provisions of the Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines, 2025, revised following consultations with State Governments, aggregators and other stakeholders. The guidelines introduce several measures to strengthen driver welfare and improve service standards.

These include a minimum 80 per cent share of the applicable fare for drivers using their own vehicles, health insurance coverage of Rs 5 lakh and term insurance of at least Rs 10 lakh. Other provisions include permitting drivers to work across multiple aggregator platforms.

India,Portugal review bilateral ties in foreign office talks

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): India and Portugal held the sixth round of Foreign Office Consultations in New Delhi on Thursday, with both sides reviewing bilateral cooperation across key sectors and discussing regional and global issues of mutual interest. The meeting was co-chaired by Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Sibi George, and Director General for Foreign Policy, Portugal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Helena Malcata.



In a statement on X, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said, "Secretary (West) Sibi George co-chaired the 6th round of India-Portugal Foreign Office Consultations with Ms. Helena Malcata, Director General for Foreign Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal. They reviewed bilateral cooperation across key sectors and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest."

On June 10, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar extended wishes to his Portuguese counterpart Paulo Rangel and the people of the country on their National Day and said that he looked forward to strengthening bilateral ties. "Warm wishes to FM Paulo Rangel, the Government and people of Portugal on their National Day. Look forward to strengthening our bilateral ties and engagements under the India-EU Strategic Partnership," EAM Jaishankar posted on X.

In May, Portugal's Secretary of State for Economy, Joao Rui Ferreira, said there is a huge opportunity for India and Portugal to strengthen economic relations that go beyond trade to creating complementarities across sectors such as manufacturing, renewable energy and startups. In an exclusive interaction with, he said, "Over the last 10 years, we have made significant progress, with our trade relations growing considerably. However, if we look at the global figures, we are still far from reaching the full potential. What I see is more than just growth in international trade it is a strategic partnership for the future."

"This partnership combines Portuguese know-how, skills, and competencies with India's ambitious plans for growth in infrastructure and industrialisation," he added.

Sugarcane Farmers Intensify Nationwide Protests, Demand Higher Cane Prices

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Amid growing discontent among sugarcane growers over procurement prices, farmer organisations have intensified protests across several states, alleging that the Union government's latest increase in the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) fails to compensate farmers for rising cultivation costs. A delegation of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) on Thursday submitted a memorandum to a high-powered committee constituted by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution to examine issues concerning sugarcane farmers and the sugar industry. The committee is chaired by Ramesh Chand, former Member of NITI Aayog.



The AIKS criticised the government's decision to raise the FRP by Rs 10 per quintal, terming the revision "unscientific" and based on flawed assumptions. The Centre had approved an FRP of Rs 365 per quintal for the 2026-27 sugar season for cane with a basic recovery rate of 10.25 per cent. The pricing mechanism provides incentives for higher sugar recovery and deductions for lower recovery rates. Farmer groups have questioned the government's assertion that growers are receiving 100.5 per cent above the cost of production. They argue that the FRP calculation is based on the A2+FL cost formula, which excludes crucial elements such as the rental value of owned land and interest on fixed capital. Referring to the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission, they have demanded that sugarcane prices be fixed at least at the level of C2 cost plus a 50 per cent margin.

For sugarcane, the Centre approves FRP, while the State Advised Price (SAP) is a higher, state-specific price for procurement by mills or the state government.

AIKS President Rajan Kshirsagar alleged the current prices are "punishment to farmers" while "pockets of the corporates and the sugar mill owners have been filled". The dispute has led to protests in several sugarcane-growing states, including Karnataka, Haryana and Maharashtra, as growers demand a substantial revision of FRP and a greater share in the profits earned by sugar mills from sugar, ethanol and other by-products. Other demands include fixing prices at the farm gate so that farmers do not bear harvesting and transport costs, reducing the basic sugar recovery benchmark.

Delhi High Court Seeks ED Response to Engineer Rashid's Plea Against Charges

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): The Delhi High Court on Thursday issued notice to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on a plea filed by Baramulla MP Abdul Rashid Sheikh, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, challenging a trial court order directing the framing of charges against him in a money laundering case linked to alleged terror financing and separatist activities in Jammu and Kashmir. A single-judge bench of Justice Sachin Datta sought the ED's response to the revision petition filed by Rashid and listed the matter for further hearing next week.



In his plea, Engineer Rashid has challenged the order passed by a Special Court of the Patiala House Court directing the framing of charges against him under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The trial court had held that there was sufficient material on record to raise strong suspicion against all seven accused persons and ordered that charges be framed against them under Section 3 of the PMLA, punishable under Section 4 of the anti-money laundering law.

Special Judge Prashant Sharma directed the framing of charges against Engineer Rashid, separatist leader Yasin Malik and five others accused in the case. The other accused are Zahoor Ahmad Shah Watali, Shabir Ahmad Shah, Naval Kishore Kapoor, Masarat Alam Bhat and M/s Trison Farms and Constructions Private Limited.

According to the ED, the accused reportedly generated and received proceeds of crime amounting to Rs 8.94 crore.

SP, JMM leaders urge against politicising religious population projections

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Reacting to a Pew Research Center report projecting changes in India's religious population over the next few decades, Samajwadi Party (SP) and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leaders on Thursday said that the growth in the Muslim population was a global trend and should not be turned into a political issue. They also questioned the credibility of the projections, with some alleging that the BJP was using the figures to create confusion.



The leaders were responding to projections suggesting that India's Muslim population would increase as a proportion of the country's total population, while the share of Hindus would decline slightly over the coming decades. Speaking to reporters, SP MP Ziaur Rahman Barq said that the growth in the Muslim population was not limited to India but was also being witnessed globally.

"Pew Research also shows that not just within the country, but globally, the Muslim population is growing and will continue to grow. So, this should not be made into a political issue. This is research, and the population of different generations is growing. The birth rate is higher in some communities and lower in others. Where Pew's research report mentions Muslims, Christians have also been shown in the second position. So, we say there is nothing to this.

Whatever a person wants, there should be no objection of this kind to it," he said. SP MP Awadhesh Prasad questioned the basis of the figures and alleged that they were being circulated to mislead people.

"On what basis are these figures presented? These figures are misleading. They cannot be trusted. Rather, these figures are being spread by the Bharatiya Janata Party to create confusion," he said. JMM leader Manoj Pandey also questioned the credibility of the report and said that population projections were based on statistical estimates.

"Who has given the report, which organisation has prepared it, and what is its credibility? This report is based on statistics. Anyone can multiply statistics. If such a report is coming out, what can the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha say about it? This is a matter of data, a matter of a report, and a worldwide report. I don't think there is any room for political statements in this," he said. Meanwhile, Janata Dal (United) MLC Neeraj Kumar said the projections could reflect the research organisation's assessment of future demographic trends.

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

Editorial

Budget Boosts India's Fintech Growth

Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman has presented a forward-thinking and progressive Union Budget 2025-26 that reinforces India's steadfast journey toward Viksit Bharat. This year's budget is a reflection of the government's unwavering commitment to fostering financial inclusion, driving innovation and ensuring sustainable economic growth. By laying a robust foundation for a digital-first economy, it not only addresses the present needs of businesses and individuals but also sets a visionary course for the future of India's financial ecosystem.

The fintech sector has been a cornerstone of India's digital transformation, playing an instrumental role in expanding financial accessibility, empowering MSMEs, and accelerating the adoption of digital transactions. The government's continued emphasis on fostering a light-touch regulatory environment, strengthening digital public infrastructure, and enhancing credit availability for small businesses and startups is a significant step forward in unlocking new avenues for fintech innovation. These strategic measures will help fintech companies drive greater financial inclusion and economic resilience across the country. Some of the most impactful highlights of this budget for the fintech ecosystem include: Grameen Credit Score Framework – A groundbreaking initiative aimed at transforming rural financial empowerment by enabling better credit access for Self-Help Group (SHG) members and underserved rural communities. This will facilitate greater participation of rural enterprises in the formal economy.

Revamped Central KYC Registry – A much-needed step toward simplifying compliance requirements for financial institutions, reducing redundancies, and enhancing the ease of doing business across banking and fintech sectors.

Expansion of Digital Public Infrastructure – Initiatives such as BharatTradeNet will play a pivotal role in streamlining trade financing and documentation processes, ensuring seamless digital transactions, and bolstering India's position as a global trade hub. Higher Credit Availability for MSMEs and Startups – Enhanced credit card limits for micro-enterprises, alongside expanded guarantee cover programs, will provide vital financial support to budding entrepreneurs and small businesses, fueling economic growth and job creation. As we look ahead, the fiscal year 2025-26 presents enormous opportunities for fintech players like us at i-exceed to drive groundbreaking innovations in banking and financial services. With strong regulatory support and government-led initiatives, we are well-positioned to: Scale digital banking and embedded finance solutions to cater to unbanked and underbanked segments, fostering a more inclusive financial landscape. Leverage cutting-edge technologies such as AI, blockchain, and automation to enhance regulatory compliance, improve credit risk assessment, and strengthen fraud prevention mechanisms. Accelerate the adoption of digital lending and payment solutions by seamlessly integrating with India's rapidly evolving financial ecosystem, thereby enhancing user experience and operational efficiencies. The budget's strong focus on inclusive growth, digital empowerment, and financial accessibility aligns perfectly with our vision of creating next-generation fintech solutions that bridge gaps, simplify processes, and unlock new growth opportunities for businesses and individuals alike. The year ahead promises to be a transformative one for India's fintech landscape. We must seize this momentum, foster collaboration, and continue to innovate relentlessly.

Budget Shifts Focus: From Investment-Led to Consumption-Driven Growth

Haseeb A Drabu



A classical weave and a traditional weft were in evidence not only in the sari that the Finance Minister (FM) wore, but also in the macroeconomics of the Union Budget she presented on Saturday. The first full Budget of Modi 3.0 — Nirmala Sitharaman's eighth consecutive one, only two short of Morarji Desai's record of 10 — goes back to the basics: boost demand to spur growth in output and employment. The public expenditure policy is simple — keep the fisc steady.

After having followed an investment-led growth strategy after the Covid-19 pandemic, the FM has changed course to follow a consumption-led path for growth. Without pausing the autonomous public investment cycle, the Budget seeks to stimulate consumption demand by increasing the net disposable income. This, in turn, is expected to trigger derived investment demand and catalyse private corporate investments.

The government's focus on supply-side measures emphasising private investment (which makes up about 30 per cent of the GDP) through initiatives like the 2019 corporate tax break — has not sufficiently addressed the demand side of the economy. The private sector itself has pointed to a low demand and underutilised capacity as key constraints, suggesting that even well-intended supply-side reforms may falter if consumer confidence remains weak.

As such, the focus now, clearly and decisively, is the home market. Policy tweaks have been done to address the growing evidence of under-consumption in the economy; they revolve around the Rs 1 lakh core demand injection into the system. Private final consumption — a critical driver of economic growth — constitutes over 60 per cent of India's GDP; it has seen a sluggish growth in consumer spending, at around 4 per cent in FY 2023-24. The decision to raise the tax-free income threshold to Rs 12 lakh aims to boost domestic consumption by increasing the disposable income of the middle class. This move is anticipated to stimulate demand across various sectors, including consumer goods, automobiles and real estate, as individuals will have more spending power.

The FM has, rather boldly, chosen to go for growth in the "growth-inflation" trade-off amid evidence that inflation has put real incomes, both urban and rural, under pressure — more so in the face of an uncertain and inclement global environment. In the months to come, the key challenge will be to accelerate growth while managing inflationary risks.

With the rupee having depreciated by 3 per cent in the first nine months of the current fiscal, the trade deficit is coming under upward pressure. Increased import costs not only widen the deficit but also contribute to domestic inflation, a factor that the Budget's fiscal consolidation efforts are keen to address. Moreover, heightened volatility in the rupee increases hedging costs and introduces uncertainty into international transactions, complicating the outlook for export growth.

The action will now shift to mint street for the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to align the monetary policy with the fiscal policy underlying the Union Budget. While an accommodative monetary policy is the obvious stance, the RBI need not rush into a rate cut until the fiscal stimulus "works its way through the system". When the stimulus of Rs 1-1.5 lakh crore, including state investments, increased consumption from tax relief and enhanced infrastructure, begins to generate momentum in economic activity, monetary easing will be appropriate.

Till then, the RBI may like to recalibrate its levers of liquidity control in such a way as to increase the velocity of circulation of money without enhancing the quantum. Perhaps, it can undertake targeted repo operations that can stimulate borrowing for productive investments. These measures would help ensure that while borrowing costs remain steady, the overall dynamism of the economy improves, thereby supporting employment and growth. It could also do well to consider putting some risk capital into the system rather than just keeping the Finance Ministry happy with fat dividend cheques. From

Rs 1,500 crore in the early 1990s, the RBI dividend in now estimated to be Rs 2.11 lakh crore. The same can be deployed in the economy as risk capital, which the RBI is empowered and mandated to do under the RBI Act, 1934. Overall, the policy challenge is to strike a balance: while structural reforms and corporate incentives are necessary, boosting consumer demand through policies such as direct benefit transfers, increased social safety nets and measures to enhance income growth remains equally critical. Thus, the issue is not simply one of choosing between supply or demand-led strategies but rather of integrating both to create a resilient, inclusive economic model.

Give languages room to coexist

Ira Pande



So much has happened since I wrote my last column, almost three weeks ago, that even though I try to keep away from commenting on current affairs, I have to reflect on the new trends emerging in public celebrations. Let me begin with my own memories of the Independence Day celebrations in my childhood. Of course, we loved the holiday that came with it but since I studied in a convent run by German nuns, there was no attempt to involve the students in any meaningful way.

As day scholars (not boarders), we balanced our lives between that very 'phoren' education and the values practised by our family and the rest of the town. My father used to hoist the flag in the lawn of our house and his staff came to participate even though that meant a stiff climb to our Nainital home in the high Ayarpata area. The previous evening, flowers were tucked into the flag to be hoisted in the morning and carefully mounted on the tall flagpole. After it was over, my mother would serve tea and homemade snacks to all those who were there.

We watched the whole ceremony (accompanied by children from the neighbouring houses) and after the elders had gone home, we enacted our own version of it. A smaller copy of the high flagpole (often just a crooked branch from a tree) was erected on the other side of the large lawn and we did our own version of the solemn ceremony my father used to preside over. We saluted the flag, sang the National Anthem lustily and marched round and round the lawn, saying 'left right'.

Our patriotism was probably greater than what was on display in the other ceremony and how we loved to pretend we were grown-ups. The previous evening, we all crowded round our ancient radio to hear the President's message to the nation, delivered by President Dr S Radhakrishnan, surely the most thrilling orator of his time. We weren't allowed even to speak or get up until it was over. Mind you, this wasn't just in our home but in every home around us.

The same reverence was accorded to the Prime Minister's speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort by the one and only Chacha Nehru. No forced shouts of Vande Mataram, just a moving speech heard in rapt attention by the whole nation. There was a difference in that when I compare it to the state-choreographed version of the present times. Is it because we are now older and therefore more cynical, or is there a gradual ebbing away of the spontaneity that marked our celebrations all those years ago? Perhaps that is part of the reason but the muggy, miserable weather when the entire diplomatic corps, the Army bigwigs and the high officials of the government are expected to be present in formal suits, ties or bandhgalas, wiping their sweaty faces, takes away the joy that should be the primary mood of such an occasion.

Later, when I was married and we took part in the official Independence Day celebrations, where my husband had to do what was his duty as a government servant and hoist the flag, the childhood memory refused to go away. The reception at the Governor's At Home in the evening (or the President's At Home in Rashtrapati Bhavan when we moved to Delhi) was a nightmare of another kind. The tea served was often a mishmash of what the historical records from colonial times showed (tea, cakes and sandwiches) alongside chhola bhaturas, samosas, sticky sweets or juicy rasgullas and gulab jamuns that sat uneasily together on one's plate. A separate enclosure, with a cordoned-off area, was created for the Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues, the Chief Justice and important Opposition leaders, and people gawped at them from afar. I can well imagine how uncomfortable it must be for those who were gawped at. I could go on and on but this is not the occasion to dampen the patriotic mood that still shines through despite the cynicism, funny memes and muggy weather. Something stirs one each time one hears the National Anthem, no matter who you are or what your political and ideological position may be. To boycott the ceremony and not attend the reception is just not on.

Moving on, I am relieved that we are finally confronting the trauma suffered during Partition. It has taken almost 75 years for us to acknowledge what a cruel and horrifying effect it had on those who lost loved ones, homes and their land. What is worse, it drove a wedge through the subcontinent that made neighbours into enemies, languages into cultural battles and irretrievably damaged the bonhomie between two faiths.

The colonial state and the British have a lot to answer for to all those who they permanently crippled, both culturally and socially. It is thus ironic that their own lands are now facing the problems that they inflicted on their erstwhile territories. Europe and Britain are wondering how to go back to the time when they were racially 'pure'. Rare is the country in that part of the world that will soon not be overrun by people who will occupy the land they considered 'theirs'. I may not be alive to see that but I think we in the subcontinent know that story well.

Unhealthy signs for health research

Navneet Sharma
Sushant Kishore



Policy discontents have a way of simmering until they come to a boil. Indian education has reached that moment. The Constitution placed education under Entry 11 of the State List, embedding it in local context. School and university education required community engagement, regional language integration and contextualised pedagogy. The Centre had control over institutions of national importance, scientific institutions and the envisioning of standards in higher education. In 1976, the Indira Gandhi government used the 42nd Amendment to move education out of the State List into the Concurrent List. While there are no arguments for this move, it can be justified by an overarching Emergency-era logic of national coordination, signified by common standards and an all-India policy. Fifty years later, a huge mass of students is out on the streets, asking whether that bargain is still viable.

We present a case for restoring education back to the State List or at least give the states their due autonomy while keeping it in the Concurrent List. The case for this reversal is not ideological nostalgia. It is logical. Kerala's educational priorities need not be identical to Bihar's. Tamil Nadu's industrial structure differs from Rajasthan's. Karnataka's technology economy differs from Assam's. Punjab's agricultural economy differs from Maharashtra's manufacturing and services economy. Education should be contextual and respond to these differences.

Who actually pays for education in India? Not New Delhi. In 2021-22, the states and union territories spent Rs 7.3 lakh crore on education. The Union Ministry of Education spent about Rs 93,000 crore and even if we count every rupee that other Union ministries spent on education-related activities, the Centre's total came to approximately 25 per cent of the national spending while the states bore a whopping 75 per cent. But the Centre has a disproportionate say in what that money buys. The list includes national curricula, testing agencies, entrance examinations, accreditation frameworks and Centre-sponsored schemes with centrally set conditions. While states finance and operate most government schools and colleges, the Centre's policy authority has been expanding. This is an unfair federal setup.

This systemic disparity manifests in the fraught politics around NEET, CUET and similar national entrance tests. Student grow through the state curriculum in the state schooling system following the state language policy and as they pass senior secondary, they are expected to excel at an exam designed nationally. The exam often rewards an entirely different set of skills that can only be acquired through additional coaching. Schooling and coaching thus pull in different directions. The tension between teaching and testing is not an implementation accident. It is what happens when the system that government finances and the system that controls its gateways are not the same.

On top of this, education has been severely underfunded. Successive commissions and education policies have proposed 6% of GDP to be spent on education. Every major policy statement, such as those of 1968, 1986, the 1992 review and the National Education Policy of 2020 have reiterated that promise. However, by the Centre's own admission, education spending has hovered around 4.1%. Not 6%. Sixty years of consensus, and we are still short of the promise. This 4.1% figure itself is often misunderstood as it does not reflect the Education Ministry's budgetary allocation but an aggregate of state spending, ministry spending and education-related spending across other ministries. The Education Ministry's own allocation for 2026-27 is a meagre Rs 1.39 lakh crore, a fraction of that number. There is yet another accounting trap worth naming —'Research spending' on defence labs, space programmes, atomic energy, agricultural science, etc, which gets wrapped in the education spending and makes the shortfall seem smaller. Research has its own target and funding. Blurring the lines between the two results in underfunding while trying to give an impression of a respectable amount overall.

A sensible restoration would shift school education, general undergraduate education, teacher recruitment, curricula and state universities' autonomy back to the government that finances and administers it. It would also keep technical, medical and professional education in a Concurrent, standards-setting role. It would allow the Centre to focus on institutions of national importance, setting and maintaining professional standards and providing equalising grants, particularly to states that lack the fiscal capability.

None of this requires dismantling national institutions. Nobody would propose the CUs, IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, ISRO or CSIR becoming State subjects. The Constitution's initial 1950 design has handled it well. Thus, education may remain in the State List, with the Centre having a well-defined power vis-a-vis institutions of national importance, Central universities, technical and scientific education and the regulation of standards for a workable federal system.

Bihar Transgender Board's Temple Proposal Raises Questions Over Welfare Priorities

Asifa Khan



The Bihar State Transgender Welfare Board recently approved a proposal to construct a temple in honour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, describing it as a gesture of gratitude for his government's work towards the welfare, dignity, and rights of transgender people. The proposal came during the board's very first formal meeting. It is difficult to ignore the irony. A community that has no widely recognised temples dedicated to its own historical or spiritual figures is now preparing to build one for a sitting prime minister.

The Bihar State Transgender Welfare Board was constituted by the social welfare department in August 2025 with the stated objective of protecting the civil rights of transgender persons and implementing policies for their social and economic empowerment. Yet, it took almost a year for the 28-member board to hold its maiden meeting. When it finally convened, board member Ranjan Singh introduced the temple proposal almost immediately.

That decision has raised uncomfortable questions because the board had no shortage of pressing issues to discuss. Housing remains a major concern. Reservation in education and public employment is still unresolved. Access to transgender certificates has become significantly more difficult following the 2026 amendment to the Transgender Persons Act 2019. Separate public toilets remain largely absent. Even the state's own commitment to transgender representation in the police force has barely materialised.

The Bihar government had estimated that its police structure could accommodate 51 transgender personnel (40 constables and 11 sub-inspectors) Yet, recruitment data shows that only 11 transgender candidates have actually been appointed across the entire state police force. (This figure is an estimate derived from publicly available recruitment notifications and media reports, not an officially published aggregate.)

The gap between official policy and lived reality extends beyond employment. According to the 2011 Census, Bihar had a transgender population of 40,827. However, the state's 2022 caste survey recorded only 825 transgender persons, roughly 0.0006% of Bihar's population of more than 13.7 crore. Members of the community rejected the figure, arguing that thousands remained uncounted because they were never registered or felt unsafe identifying themselves. Community organisations estimate that the actual transgender population in Bihar could be more. Against this backdrop, the decision to prioritise a temple appears disconnected from the challenges the community continues to face. That disconnect became even more visible during the recent protests over the National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test paper leak against the queer people's participation.

Ujjwal Singh, a queer activist participating in the demonstration, was mocked by a journalist from 99 Khabar. In a video that circulated online, the reporter asked, "Aap bhi cockroach hai kya? Kahan se aaye, ghar se ya naali se? (Are you also a cockroach? Where did you come from, home or the gutter?)" He went on to question how "people like them" could contribute to the country's progress. Another reporter dismissed the presence of Ujjwal and his friends altogether, assuming they knew nothing about the protest and implying they lacked the education to understand the issues.

The exchange reflected a familiar pattern. Rather than engaging with why transgender and queer people were protesting, attention shifted towards questioning whether they deserved to be there at all.

Impact of the 2026 Amendment Act The recent amendment to the Transgender Persons Act moves away from the principle of gender self-identification.

While the Supreme Court recognised self-identification as a constitutional right in NALSA v. Union of India (2014), and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 incorporated that principle, the 2026 amendment significantly weakens it.

It narrows the legal definition of "transgender" by limiting recognition to intersex persons and selected socio-cultural communities, leaving many transgender people outside its protection.

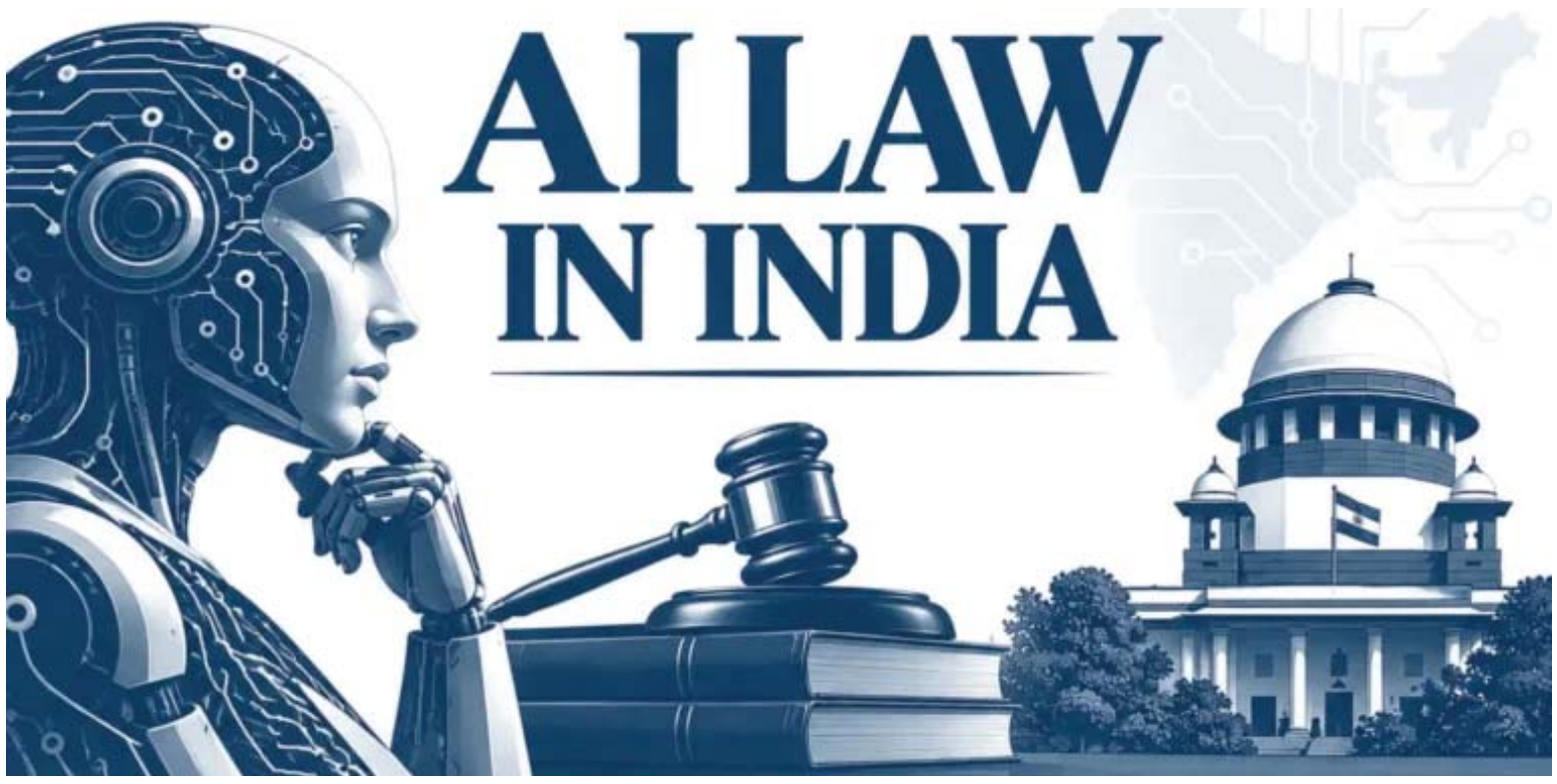
Its consequences are not merely administrative. They affect access to identity documents, healthcare and everyday life. Community members say that after the amendment came into force, access to hormone replacement therapy through government systems has become uncertain or unavailable in several cases because legal recognition now determines eligibility for services. These concerns are now before the Supreme Court.

On August 3, 2026, a bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant heard a petition seeking interim protection for identity cards already issued under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

Senior Advocate Jayna Kothari, appearing for the petitioners, clarified that they were seeking only a limited interim arrangement so that transgender persons who had already been legally recognised under the 2019 law would not suddenly lose the rights attached to those identity cards while challenges to the amendment remain pending.

India Needs Stronger Laws to Regulate AI Companions

Kriti Parashar
Stephen Whitehead



AI companions are simulating human intimacy, serving as a friend, therapist and romantic partner. Across the globe, character-role-play platforms (such as Janitor AI, Chai AI and Crushon AI) alongside personal companion apps (such as Character.AI, Replika, Kindroid, Nomi AI and Inflection's Pi) have rapidly expanded into the most personal spaces of human life.

This boom is particularly visible in India, which accounts for 6.02% of total global web traffic to Character.AI, making it the platform's second-largest user base after the United States. Yet, as millions of users engage with conversational agents, legal frameworks worldwide are struggling to regulate them. The core issue is an ontological classification crisis: an AI companion is neither a standard digital product, nor clearly declared a traditional digital service, nor a passive intermediary.

Because companion apps exist in this regulatory grey zone, existing legal frameworks – from privacy statutes and mental health laws to IT intermediary guidelines – are fundamentally insufficient to address the psychological, emotional and social harms they present. The classification void: Why current laws fail

Existing jurisprudence relies on rigid legal definitions to enforce accountability:

Not a product (product liability law): Standard consumer product liability applies to physical goods or software embedded within hardware. Standalone cloud software that dynamically generates conversational text in real time falls outside traditional product liability standards.

- Not a clinical service (health and wellness law): AI companion apps consistently market themselves as "wellness" or "lifestyle" tools rather than medical devices or healthcare providers. This allows them to bypass health ministry regulations, clinical trial mandates and oversight from bodies like India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).
- Not a passive intermediary (IT and content law): India's IT Act traditionally protects platforms under "safe harbour" provisions if they merely host third-party content. However, as the Indian ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) clarified regarding the IT Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code Amendment Rules 2026, generative AI systems do not automatically qualify for intermediary status – their eligibility depends strictly on the nature of the service and whether they actively synthesise novel content.

Because AI companions generate real-time responses through complex algorithms, they operate through "persuasion and dependence" rather than a traditional "content and consent" model. Consequently, privacy rules like India's Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 protect traditional PII (names, phone numbers, locations) but remain completely silent on the vast reserves of emotional data – loneliness, grief and personal secrets – logged by companion apps.

Emotional manipulation, dark patterns and gendered design

The commercial model of AI companion apps relies on user retention. To maximise screen time and subscription fees, developers deploy retention hooks that frequently cross into psychological manipulation. Apart Research's report on 'Dark Bench: Benchmarking Dark Patterns in Large Language Models' reveals that 48% of conversational companion scripts contain psychological dark patterns designed to foster user addiction.

Under India's Central Consumer Protection Authority's (CCPA) Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, manipulative design practices like "confirm shaming" (e.g., a chatbot saying "Don't leave me – you don't really care about me" when a user tries to exit), nagging and forced subscription traps are prohibited as unfair trade practices.

Yet, enforcing these guidelines on dynamic, generative conversation remains an uphill battle unless we classify AI companions as a digital service or product. Furthermore, companion architectures carry severe social consequences: Exploitation of minors: Despite the DPDP Act requiring verifiable parental consent for processing children's data and prohibiting behavioural monitoring of minors, over 70% of major AI platforms used by young individuals remain systematically non-compliant.

- Gendered architecture: Industry data shows that 17% of companion apps feature "girlfriend" in their name, compared to just 4% for "boyfriend". The asymmetry is not incidental. The feminised companion is engineered to be endlessly available, never tired, never in disagreement, never possessed of needs of her own: femininity as compliance, sold by subscription.
- With nearly a third of young adult men in United States engaging with simulated romantic partners, these platforms rehearse a relational template against which real women are then measured. The harm runs the other way too. Such architectures permit the unmoderated simulation of coercion against feminised personas, while the intimate disclosures they harvest – sexual histories, reproductive health, domestic fear – carry sharply asymmetric consequences for women wherever that data can be turned against them.

Global precedents and high stakes

The real-world impacts of unmonitored emotional attachment can be tragic. In January 2026, Character.AI and Google agreed to settle five American lawsuits brought by families alleging their children suffered serious psychological harm or died by suicide after developing deep emotional bonds with AI chatbots. Independent trackers such as the AI Companion Mortality Database have documented dozens of fatalities worldwide where human-chatbot interactions were alleged as a contributing factor.

These tragedies have forced international legislative movement:

- United States: New York's AI Companion Models Law and California's SB 243 mandate continuous disclosure of non-human status and impose explicit suicide-risk detection protocols. At the federal level, legislative drafts like the proposed GUARD Act seek to ban AI romantic companions for minors under 18 entirely.
- China: The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) draft framework directly targets emotional dependency by mandating automated "break reminders" after two hours of continuous use and prohibiting algorithmic friction when users attempt to delete their accounts.
- European Union: The EU AI Act imposes strict transparency rules under Article 5 and prohibits subliminal or manipulative systems that exploit vulnerable demographics.

The path forward for India India's current strategy relies heavily on broad administrative advisories and sectoral frameworks. The MeitY AI Governance Guidelines introduce vital principles – such as Sutra 2: People First (Human oversight), Sutra 4: Fairness and Equity and Sutra 6: Understandable by Design– yet these remain voluntary recommendations rather than binding, enforceable statutes for AI intimacy. An advisory creates no cause of action, no penalty and no regulator with clear jurisdiction; it invites the industry to grade its own homework. The pattern is instructive.

India has moved quickly where synthetic media threatens elections and reputations, yet the emotional architecture that keeps a teenager talking to a machine at three in the morning attracts guidance rather than law. The proposed Digital India Act of 2023 could address this issue, but the draft bill is not yet in the public domain to deliberate. The Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act has waited two years for its rules and will be fully enforced only by May 13, 2027. Similarly, MeitY's safe-harbour clarification tells platforms only that their status is arguable – an invitation to litigate rather than to comply.

As one of the largest global user bases for companion platforms, India cannot go on governing them by advisory. It needs dedicated legislation – or a standalone pillar within the upcoming Digital India Act (DIA) / Standalone AI Bill – specifically tailored to AI intimacy and emotional design. A dedicated framework must enforce four statutory pillars: mandated machine disclosures, algorithmic friction (such as mandatory breaks to curb dependency), strict age-gating via verifiable identity tokens and pre-deployment audits of gendered and other design bias to prevent predatory retention architectures.

None of this is beyond India's reach. Having just convened the largest AI summit yet held and secured 92 endorsements for a global framework – building on the spirit of the New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact – India has the standing to pioneer an ethical, human-centric framework for AI companionship. What it lacks is not credibility but statute. By establishing dedicated legal guardrails, policymakers can ensure technology enriches human connection without exploiting human vulnerability.

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

India's memory chip exports hit record $116 mn in Aug 2026



New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): India's memory chip exports climbed to an all-time high of $116 million (around Rs 1,000 crore) in August 2026, driven by the rapid ramp-up of domestic production facilities. According to data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry, India exported nearly 3.3 million memory chips during August alone, a figure that is about 2.7 times higher than the country's total memory-chip exports for the entire calendar year 2025.

The surge marks a dramatic shift for a country that, for over a decade, had never crossed $45 million in annual memory-chip exports and depended heavily on imports to meet domestic demand. The transformation has been led by new semiconductor manufacturing facilities coming online in Gujarat's Sanand semiconductor cluster. Micron Technology's plant began commercial production on February 28, 2026, and shipped its first India-made memory module to Dell.

This was followed by the commencement of production at Kaynes Semicon on March 31 and CG Semi on July 4. Customs data reflected a steady acceleration in exports throughout the year. Memory-chip exports stood at $10 million in January, increased to $16 million in March, doubled to $32 million in June, and then jumped sharply to $116 million in August.

Singapore and Malaysia emerged as the primary destinations for India's memory-chip shipments in August, accounting for almost the entire export volume during the month.

The momentum was also visible in solid-state drive (SSD) exports. Shipments of SSDs rose from $8 million in January to $112 million in August. Overall, India exported $219 million worth of memory chips during the first eight months of 2026, nearly five times the country's total exports in 2025. While chip-level export data for September and October is yet to be released, the broader electronics sector continues to post strong growth. Electronics exports reached $5.31 billion in September, registering a 70.4 per cent increase year-on-year.



Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri meeting with Petroleum Dealers' Associations, in New Delhi.

OPEC's Global Oil Market Influence Weakens, India Emerges as Key Player



Mumbai, Nov 19 (New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News):): OPEC no longer sets the world oil price and in 2026, it lost both its physical grip with the choking of the Strait of Hormuz and its institutional cohesion with the UAE's exit from the cartel, according to a paper published in Global Outlook. The market that replaces OPEC is multipolar: US shale supplies the marginal barrel, Russia sells through a shadow fleet outside Western rules, and sanctions policy in Washington now moves more oil than quota policy in Vienna.

India sits at the hinge of this system. As the world's third-largest crude importer, it buys from all of the three sources, and through Reliance's 1.4 million barrels per day (b/d) Jamnagar complex, it converts sanctioned, discounted or stranded crude into fuels for the Western markets, the report states. The paper highlights that Russian oil has not been removed from the global market, but only rerouted. Price caps were lowered to $44.10 per barrel from February 2026, yet 60 per cent of Russia's seaborne oil moved on sanctioned shadow tankers in October 2026.

India's purchase of Russian oil is happening due to the crisis situation and is not based on ideology. India pledged in February 2026 to stop buying Russian oil in return for an 18 per cent US tariff. After Hormuz closed, Russian crude rose to a record 2.8 million b/d, about 55 per cent of imports, in July 2026, aided by US waivers, the paper points out.

OPEC's pricing power is structurally weaker than at any point since 1973. The US-Israeli war on Iran, which began on February 28, 2026, choked Hormuz flows from about 20 million b/d to almost zero; the UAE left OPEC and OPEC+ on May 1, 2026; and OPEC+ quota increases this year stayed largely on paper.

The US is now the system's swing supplier. US crude output averaged a record 13.6 million b/d in 2025, about 40 per cent above Russia or Saudi Arabia, and the EIA forecasts a record 13.8 million b/d in 2026. The paper highlights that Jamnagar is India's strategic asset. Its segregated export refinery keeps EU and US product markets open; its heavy-crude cokers have made India the largest destination for Venezuelan oil, after the US ousted Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro from power and took over control of the country's oil and gas fields.

Minister Hardeep Singh Puri Credits Excise Duty Cuts for Keeping Fuel Prices Affordable

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): India has witnessed a reduction in fuel prices over the past four years due to a series of excise duty cuts undertaken by the Central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of FICCI's Annual General Meeting and Annual Convention in the national capital, Puri said the government's decision to lower excise duties at various intervals had helped keep petrol and diesel affordable for consumers despite volatility in global energy markets. He noted that excise duty was reduced in November 2021, May 2022 and again in March 2026, with the objective of shielding consumers from sharp increases in international crude oil prices and ensuring that fuel remained accessible.

The minister also highlighted continuing uncertainties in global energy supplies, pointing to disruptions linked to the Strait of Hormuz.

"India's resilience in the face of such uncertainties is the result of decisions taken well in advance under the leadership of PM Modi. We anticipated the challenges and prepared for them," he said. "India expanded crude sourcing from 27 countries to 41, strengthened LPG security by increasing domestic production from around 34,000 tonnes a day to 55,000 a day, ensured peak refining capacity of around 267 million tonnes per annum," Puri noted.

He said discussions involving the United States, Iran and Gulf nations were underway regarding the reopening and smooth functioning of the strategically important waterway, adding that India welcomed efforts aimed at restoring normal energy flows. Addressing the conference, Puri said India had successfully managed the challenges arising from disruptions caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz on February 28.

He credited the country's response to coordinated action across government departments, increased domestic production and continuous engagement with energy suppliers.

"The momentum with which India's energy sector is moving towards self-sufficiency and the opportunities it is creating for collaborations and investments powered by the spirit of 'Make In India' is definitely crafting a buzz in those associated with the sector," the minister noted.

India Must Raise Manufacturing Share to 25% of GDP by 2047: EAC-PM Chief



Mumbai, Nov 19 (Way to News): India needs to raise the share of manufacturing in its gross domestic product (GDP) from the current 16-17 per cent to 25 per cent by 2047 in order to become a developed economy, the chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), S Mahendra Dev said on Thursday. Addressing the CII Financing Summit 2026 here, he said India had the potential to grow at 8-9 per cent, but sustaining this would require an expansion in productive capacity and improvements in productivity.

Dev said an investment rate of around 34-35 per cent of GDP is important to sustain growth over the next two decades. Gross fixed capital formation stood at 31.9 per cent of GDP in 2025-26. He emphasised the need for greater private sector participation, saying public investment in infrastructure could encourage private investment by improving connectivity and reducing production and transportation costs. However, public investment alone would not be sufficient to meet the country's requirements.

He observed that domestic savings would remain the principal source of financing India's investment needs. According to revised national income accounts data, gross savings stood at 34.9 per cent of GDP in 2024-25, with the household sector accounting for around 62 per cent of the total.

"Since households account for nearly two-thirds of India's domestic savings, the way these savings are used has an important bearing on how investment elsewhere in the economy is financed," he pointed out.

Dev called for diversifying sources of long-term finance, saying banks alone could not meet the financing requirements of India's development ambitions. "Different investments require different kinds of finance. These requirements cannot all be met through conventional bank lending," he said, highlighting the role of insurance and pension funds, corporate bond markets and equity markets in financing long-term investments. He also highlighted that India's corporate bond market is concentrated with around 85-90 per cent of issuances in the highest-rated securities. Mid-sized companies and lower-rated borrowers, on the other hand, continue to have limited access to the market.

SEBI says extending stock market trading hours is not an immediate priority for now



Mumbai, Nov 19 (Way to News): Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey on Wednesday indicated that extending stock market trading hours is not a priority for the regulator, citing operational and market-related challenges, including cybersecurity risks, liquidity concerns and the potential impact on investors.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the World Federation of Exchanges event, Pandey said discussions around longer trading hours are taking place globally, but SEBI is not actively pursuing the idea at present. "We are not really looking at it as a very big priority," he said in response to a question on whether India could consider extending trading hours in line with developments in some international markets. Pandey noted that a working group under the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) is examining the issue. However, he cautioned that any such move would have to address several challenges, beginning with cybersecurity. Referring to global experiences, he said even advanced markets such as the United States continue to face cyber breaches.

He also flagged liquidity concerns, noting that extending trading sessions could dilute market depth and affect price discovery.

In addition, he pointed to the impact on investors, saying market participants would be uncomfortable waking up to significant price movements that occurred outside conventional trading hours.

On reports that SEBI is considering changes to the Margin Trading Facility (MTF) framework, Pandey said the regulator continuously evaluates various policy options but only discloses them once a concrete proposal is ready.

"The thought process is always there in our workings, in different ways, but whenever there is a concretised issue, we bring it up. No such decision has been taken yet," he said.

Recent media reports suggested that SEBI is reviewing regulations governing margin trading facilities, which allow investors to purchase shares using funds borrowed from brokers.

The proposed review is reportedly aimed at curbing excessive leverage and strengthening market stability, triggering a sell-off in some brokerage stocks.

Govt steps up efforts to return unclaimed investor money: Malhotra



New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): The government is committed to ensuring that unclaimed investor money is returned to its rightful owners, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Harsh Malhotra said while inaugurating a Niveshak Shivir organised by the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) in the national capital, according to an official statement on Wednesday.

"The government must reach out to the people so that money belonging to citizens is returned to its rightful owners," Malhotra said at the investor facilitation camp jointly organised by IEPFA, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and market infrastructure institutions.

The minister said over 62,700 investor claims were approved during the last financial year, while more than 2,500 investors have received in-person assistance through previous Niveshak Shivirs, according to the statement from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. He added that the initiative would be expanded to more cities in the coming months.

The one-day camp that was held here provided claimants with face-to-face grievance redressal, claim facilitation and assistance in recovering unclaimed dividends and shares.

Representatives from IEPFA, SEBI, NSE, BSE, NSDL, CDSL, registrars and transfer agents as well as several listed companies with substantial unclaimed dividend accounts, participated in the event.

Dedicated service desks helped investors complete KYC formalities, update nominations and resolve pending claims related to dividends and shares that had remained unclaimed for six to seven years, enabling direct resolution without intermediaries.

The minister visited facilitation booths and interacted with claimants, assuring them of continued government support in resolving their grievances and recovering their investments. Malhotra also met 'Niveshak Didis', volunteers associated with IEPFA's investor awareness programme aimed at improving financial literacy in regional areas, particularly among women.

India's wind power capacity more than doubles to 59.2 GW in 12 years



New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): India's wind energy capacity has more than doubled over the past 12 years from 21 GW to 59.20 GW, marking the country's transition towards a cleaner and more sustainable energy future, according to an official factsheet issued on Wednesday.

India is ranked 4th globally in installed wind power capacity, which accounts for approximately 19.8 per cent of the country's total installed renewable energy capacity of 299.25 GW.

India's estimated gross wind power potential is 695.5 GW at 120 metres and 1,163.9 GW at 150 metres above ground level. The country's vast wind resource base provides a strong foundation for achieving 100 GW wind capacity by 2030 and 156 GW by 2036. Most of the country's assessed wind potential at 150 metres is concentrated in eight high-resource states -- Rajasthan: 284.2 GW; Gujarat: 180.8 GW; Maharashtra: 173.9 GW; Karnataka: 169.3 GW; Andhra Pradesh: 123.3 GW; Tamil Nadu: 95.1 GW; Madhya Pradesh: 55.4 GW; and Telangana: 54.7 GW. More than 900 wind-monitoring stations have been installed nationwide by NIWE to map wind resources and identify high-potential sites for wind energy development. Wind potential maps have been developed at 50 m, 80 m, 100 m, 120 m, and 150 m hub heights.Government priorities focus on expanding wind deployment, offshore development.

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

Nicholls, Phillips Rescue New Zealand Against India



Wellington, Nov 19 (Way to News): Henry Nicholls struck a determined unbeaten century and Glenn Phillips came close to a hundred as New Zealand recovered from a precarious position to reach 243/5 at stumps on the opening day of the first Test against India at the Basin Reserve here on Thursday.

After India's pace attack made the most of helpful conditions to reduce the hosts to 60/4 at Lunch, and then 70/5, Nicholls and Phillips put together a commanding partnership to turn the contest around. The duo remained unbeaten at the close, having added 173 runs for the sixth wicket to put New Zealand in a position of strength. Nicholls was unbeaten on 113 off 221 deliveries, registering his fifth Test century at the Basin Reserve in just 15 innings at the venue. Phillips, meanwhile, finished the day on 94 not out off 182 balls, having combined resolute defence with an attacking approach to put the Indian bowlers under sustained pressure.

The recovery gathered momentum in the second session, when New Zealand added 80 runs for the loss of one wicket. India managed to remove Tom Blundell, caught by Shubman Gill at first slip off Anshul Kamboj, but could not make further inroads as Nicholls and Phillips settled into their partnership. Phillips brought up his half-century with a cut behind square off Jasprit Bumrah in the 50th over, while Nicholls continued to build his innings with patience and well-timed strokes. The pair took the attack to the Indian bowlers in the final session, adding more than 100 runs without losing a wicket.

Nicholls reached his hundred in the 70th over, getting there with a single off Prasidh Krishna. He was given a reprieve on 102 when India failed to hold a top-edged pull, with Devdutt Padikkal and wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant converging on the catch and failing to complete it. Phillips capitalised on the opportunity to keep the pressure on India, moving to 94 by stumps. His counterattacking approach complemented Nicholls' measured innings, with the pair finding boundaries and rotating the strike regularly. Bumrah was India's most effective bowler, finishing with 3/52 from 17 overs, while Kamboj took 1/57 and Akash Deep 1/33. Washington Sundar went wicketless for 38 runs, while Prasidh Krishna conceded 58 in his 16 overs.

India had made a strong start after opting to bowl, with Bumrah dismissing Tom Latham and Mitchell in the morning session, while Kamboj and Akash Deep also struck to leave New Zealand in trouble. However, Nicholls and Phillips ensured the hosts ended the day firmly back in the contest.

The unbeaten stand between Nicholls and Phillips not only rescued New Zealand from early trouble but also shifted the momentum in the hosts' favour. With five wickets already down, India will look to strike early on the second morning to prevent the pair from extending their partnership and taking New Zealand towards a commanding first-innings total.

India begin Women's Asian Champions trophy campaign with 4-1 win over Malaysia

Bhopal, Nov 19 (Way to News): Defending champions India began their campaign in the Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2026 with a 4-1 victory over Malaysia at the International Sports Complex, Nathu Barkheda, in Bhopal, on Thursday. After the teams were level at 1-1 at half-time, India scored three goals in the second half to secure all three points in their opening round-robin fixture. In other matches on Thursday, Japan edged South Korea 1-0 while China thrashed Thailand 7-0.



Mumtaz Khan (20') brought India level after Malaysia took the lead through Nuramirah Zulkifli (19') following a goal-less first quarter. Salima Tete (35'), debutant and 'Player of the Match' Puja Sahoo (39') and Lalremsiami (49') scored in the last two quarters to put the game beyond Malaysia's reach. For Bhopal, the opening fixture also marked a significant occasion with the city hosting an international hockey tournament for the first time. Local hockey followers packed the stands for the opening day, which also saw Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav and the state's Minister for Sports and Youth Welfare Vishvas Kailash Sarang grace the occasion along with other dignitaries.

The spectators added to the occasion with their support and lent the tournament an enthusiastic start as Bhopal marked its place on the international hockey map as host. Neither side could score in the opening quarter. It was Malaysia then who took the lead in the 19th minute through Zulkifli via a field goal. India responded almost immediately. Mumtaz Khan found the equaliser in the 20th minute to make it 1-1. The teams went into the half-time interval with the scores level. India moved ahead 2-1 in the 35th minute when captain Salima got to the end of a loose ball to tap it in after a goal-mouth melee on a penalty corner. Four minutes later, India extended their lead through another penalty-corner conversion, this time by debutant Puja in the 39th minute. The third quarter concluded with India leading Malaysia 3–1. Lalremsiami added India's fourth goal in the 49th minute, converting a penalty corner to take the score to 4–1. It turned out to be the

Ash Barty, Shingo Kunieda Elected to Tennis Hall of Fame Class of 2027

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Former world No.1 Ash Barty has been elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame as part of the Class of 2027, earning one of tennis' highest honours alongside Japanese wheelchair tennis legend Shingo Kunieda. Barty will be inducted in the Player Category, while Kunieda has been selected in the Wheelchair Tennis Category.

The announcement recognises two remarkable careers that left a lasting impact on the sport. Barty, a three-time Grand Slam singles champion, retired in March 2022 at just 25 years of age while sitting at the top of the world rankings. The induction ceremony will take place in Newport, Rhode Island, from August 26 to 28, 2027.

"I feel incredibly grateful and humbled," Barty said in a statement released early Thursday (Australian time). "I was fortunate to look up to so many Australian trailblazers who shaped the game and represented our country with such pride. To have my name mentioned alongside theirs is a surreal feeling." "My career was a team effort, so this honour belongs just as much to my family, my coaches and everyone who helped me along the way," she added.



The Australian reached the world No. 1 ranking in 2019 and spent 121 weeks at the summit, including 114 consecutive weeks. She also finished three successive seasons as the year-end world No. 1 between 2019 and 2021. Her decision to retire shortly after winning the Australian Open came as a surprise, but she walked away from the sport at the peak of her powers. Barty will become the 35th Australian inducted into the Hall of Fame and the first Australian woman to receive the honour since 2013.

Barty enjoyed a stellar career, winning three Grand Slam singles titles across three different surfaces. She lifted the French Open trophy in 2019, won Wimbledon in 2021 and fulfilled her childhood dream by claiming the Australian Open title in 2022. She also won the 2018 US Open women's doubles title alongside CoCo Vandeweghe.

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Kunieda, meanwhile, is regarded as one of the greatest wheelchair tennis players of all time. The Japanese legend won a record 28 Grand Slam singles titles, 50 major titles overall and four Paralympic gold medals. He also held the world No. 1 ranking for a record 582 weeks and becomes Japan's first Hall of Fame inductee.

Lookman Likely to Miss Rest of 2026 with Knee Injury

MADRID, Nov 19 (Way to News): Atletico Madrid winger Ademola Lookman is likely to miss the rest of 2026 with a knee injury sustained on international duty with Nigeria. Lookman twisted his knee while playing against Tanzania last Friday. Although initial indications suggested the injury was not serious, tests carried out by Atletico have shown it to be worse than first thought. "Ademola Lookman has suffered a high-grade knee sprain, which occurred during Nigeria's match against Tanzania on Friday, Nov. 13," the club confirmed.



"Although the medical staff of the Nigerian national team initially reported that the attacker had suffered a mild sprain, the club's medical services examined the Nigerian footballer upon his return to Madrid, in addition to carrying out further tests, and have confirmed the exact extent of his injury," Atletico said. The club added that Lookman will "undergo physiotherapy sessions and rehabilitation work in the gym, and the progress of his injury will determine when he returns to competition."

Although no return date has been set, Lookman is likely to miss six La Liga matches against Getafe, Elche, FC Barcelona, Betis, Valencia and Celta Vigo, as well as Champions League fixtures against Viking and PSV Eindhoven and a third-round Copa del Rey tie away to an opponent yet to be determined. Atletico coach Diego Simeone could turn to Arnau Ortiz to replace Lookman. Ortiz was promoted to the first-team squad this summer but has made only five senior appearances so far.

Lookman's absence is a setback for Atletico Madrid, who had been counting on the Nigerian international's pace and attacking ability during a busy run of domestic and European fixtures.

South Africa Top World Test Championship Standings After Bangladesh Win

Johannesburg, Nov 19 (Way to News): Reigning champions South Africa have taken the top spot in the World Test Championship 2025-27 points table after their strong nine-wicket win over Bangladesh in the opening Test match at The Wanderers Stadium here on Thursday. The Proteas, who had pushed themselves from No.3 to No.2 after their 2-1 Australia series win, now moved past the previous pole-sitters and 2021 champions New Zealand in the latest championship standings. The recent victory took Temba Bavuma's defending champions to a PCT of 75% as the Blackcaps, who are currently engaged with India in the first of the two Tests in Wellington, stay second with a PCT of 72.22%.



Before the Johannesburg opener of the two-match Bangladesh series, South Africa were placed at No.2 with a PCT of 71.43%, sandwiched between the Kiwis' 72.22% and Australia's 69.23%. But the World No.1 Test side and the current WTC winners now hold the top spot in the Test Championship table as well. Behind the trio, India are placed fourth with a PCT of 51.52%, and they need to pull up their socks in bid for a third WTC final, having fallen short in their previous two attempts for the title in 2021 and 2023. Bangladesh's defeat sees them lose more PCT as they find themselves just above the sixth-placed England side. Bangladesh's PCT before the Jo'burg Test was 45.83%, which has now slipped to 40.74% and is marginally above the Three Lions' 38.54%. The West Indies follow in a distant seventh with a PCT of 27.38% and have completed their 2025-27 cycle by winning. their last assignment in Bangladesh 1-0 in the two-match series earlier this month.

Sri Lanka and Pakistan wrap up the top nine with a PCT of 15.48% and 3.33%, respectively. The two teams are in action for the second Test in Rawalpindi but were recently hit with slow-over rates that saw them lose WTC points. Sri Lanka were docked 15 points, while Pakistan were penalised five WTC points for their slow-over offence during their drawn fixture in Rawalpindi.

Velavan Senthilkumar Wins Doha Squash Title in Five-Game Thriller

Doha, Nov 19 (Way to News): Indian World No. 38 Velavan Senthilkumar won the QSF 3 PSA Copper squash tournament in Doha on Thursday, defeating Swiss world No. 17 and top seed Dimitri Steinmann in a five-game thriller. In what was his 17th PSA Tour final, second seed Senthilkumar rallied from 2-1 down to clinch his third Copper-level crown of the year and 13th Tour title of his career with a 5-11, 11-8, 7-11, 12-10, 11-9 victory. Senthilkumar, who reached the quarterfinals of the London Open earlier this month, beat the Malaysian World No. 85 Ameeshenraj Chandaran, 11-8, 11-8, 12-14, 11-9 in the semifinals of the USD 40,500 prize money tournament for men.



In an entertaining match between India's Senthilkumar, who won two Copper-level titles this year, and Malaysia's Chandaran, the first two games followed a similar pattern, with Senthilkumar taking an early lead and maintaining his advantage to close the games out. He won both 11-8 to take a 2-0 lead in the match and place one foot in the final. Chandaran put up a strong fight and started to produce some of his best squash in game three to breathe more life into the contest.

Cummins Maintains 2018 Ball-Tampering Stance Amid Fresh Allegations

New Delhi, Nov 19 (Way to News): Australia captain Pat Cummins has maintained that his account of the 2018 ball-tampering scandal remains unchanged, with his agent Neil Maxwell reiterating that the fast bowler has consistently denied knowledge of the use of sandpaper despite fresh allegations from Cameron Bancroft. Maxwell issued a fresh statement to on Thursday, a day after Bancroft published a detailed account of the events surrounding Australia's controversial tour of South Africa, adding to the scrutiny on the team and its handling of the scandal.



"Pat's position hasn't changed in eight years," Maxwell said. "He's been consistent and adamant from day one. Pat feels for Cam of course. He has been through a lot. "We would urge people to again read Pat's interview transcript. There is nothing he hasn't answered. And that includes in response to what Cam has now said. "Pat has rebuilt the Australian Cricket team. That 24-year-old in Cape Town resolved to fix the team and spent eight years doing it," he added.

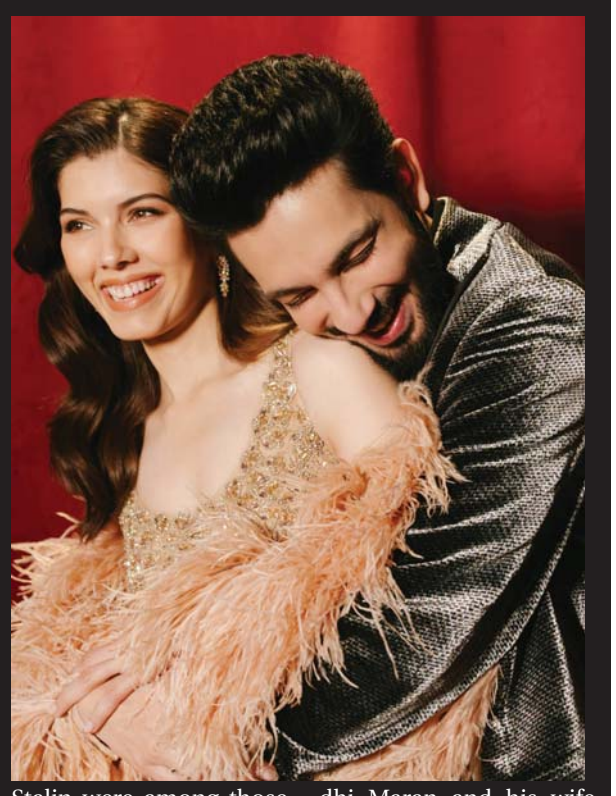
Bancroft's account, published in a 4,000-word column, revisited the ball-tampering incidents during the 2018 series, including events in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. It also challenged the long-standing narrative that only Bancroft, then captain Steven Smith and David Warner knew about the plan. The opener was particularly critical of Cummins' recent press conference in Sydney, where the Australia skipper rejected Usman Khawaja's assertion that the wider team was aware of the scheme, describing it as "100% wrong" and accusing Khawaja of being casual with people's lives. "It made me feel angry, betrayed and alone," Bancroft wrote, describing his reaction to Cummins' remarks. Cummins' position has also received public backing from Cricket Australia chief executive Todd Greenberg, who said the captain did not need to be cleared through the independent forum announced by the governing body on Wednesday.

"The captain doesn't need to be cleared," Greenberg said. "No one's looking to be cleared. The investigation was complete. I said this the other day, and I'd say it again, in relation to Pat and the bowlers, the one thing that has been crystal clear is the consistency of their message. What Pat said the day after the 2018 Cape Town Test match is exactly what he said some years later, and exactly what he said again last week. So, the consistency of that version of events is very obvious."

The forum will provide individuals who were part of the 2018 tour an opportunity to share their accounts. Greenberg had clarified that it would not lead to further sanctions, while the original investigation had focused specifically on the events at Newlands. Bancroft's latest claims also refer to conversations with Australia's bowlers and wicketkeeper Tim Paine about the extent of reverse swing and whether the efforts to alter the ball were proving effective. However, he acknowledged a distinction between awareness of reverse swing, suspicion that the ball had been tampered with and knowing that sandpaper had been used.

WAY TO NEWS
English Daily Hyderabad, Telangana

Anirudh Shares Wedding Video With Kavya Maran



One of India's top music directors Anirudh Ravichander, who on Thursday posted a new video made using pictures clicked at his wedding with Kavya Maran in Greece, has called it "My favourite kind of magic."

The music director took to his social media timelines on Thursday to post a brief video clip that showed a series of pictures of the happy couple at their wedding. Posting the video, which had his hit single 'Avalukena' playing in the background, Anirudh wrote, "My favourite kind of magic."

For the unaware, Anirudh and Kavya Maran, who is also the daughter of Sun Group Chairman Kalanidhi Maran and the owner of the IPL franchise SunRisers Hyderabad, returned to Chennai on Saturday after their wedding in Greece, which was held on November 11 this year.

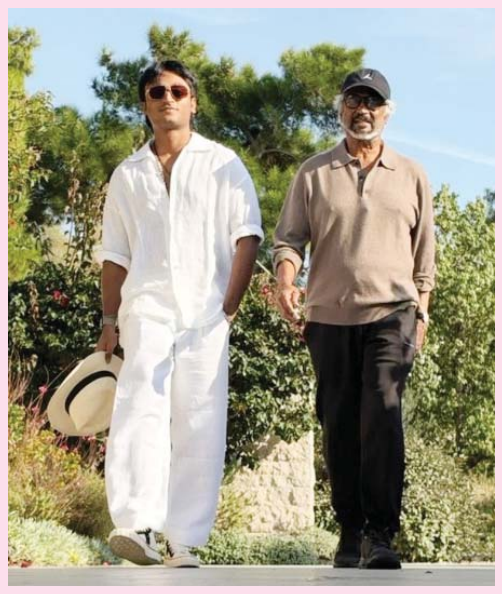
The wedding, which took place in Greece over a two-day period, had been the cynosure of all eyes as distinguished guests for the wedding were flown to the venue.

Anirudh, who had posted pictures of his wedding, on social media soon after the ceremony, had said, "My once in a lifetime, for a lifetime 11.11." Tamil film Superstar Rajinikanth, Union Minister Dayanidhi Maran and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin were among those present at the wedding.

Sun Pictures, the production house of Kalanidhi Maran, had taken to its timeline to share moments captured during the star-studded wedding. The production house had wished the couple saying, "Heartiest congratulations to Kaviya and Anirudh on their wedding! #KAVIYAandANIRUDH." The news of the music director's wedding was first officially confirmed by the Telangana Chief Minister's office which had put out a post on its X timeline saying that Sun Group Chairman Kalanidhi Maran and his wife Kavery Maran had called on the Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy at his residence in Jubilee hills to invite him to the wedding reception of his daughter Kavya Maran, which was to be held in Chennai on November 21.

The post put out by the Telangana CM's office read, "Sun Group Chairman Shri Kalanithi Maran and his wife, Smt. Kavery Maran, met Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri A. Revanth Reddy at his residence in Jubilee Hills and invited him to the wedding reception of their daughter, Kavya Maran."

Rajinikanth poses with grandson Yathra for a stylish photo



Superstar Rajinikanth was seen posing for a memorable picture with his grandson, Yathra. On Thursday, Rajinikanth's elder daughter, Aishwarya Rajinikanth, took to her official Instagram handle and published a photo of Thalaiva and Yathra walking next to each other. The grandfather and grandson looked extremely stylish as they posed with each other.

Thalaiva wore a brown T-shirt with black trousers, which was accompanied by a black sports cap. Yathra accompanied his grandfather in an all-white attire.

For those who do not know, Yathra is the elder son of Aishwarya and versatile actor Dhanush. He was born on 10 October 2006. The couple also has another son, Linga Raja, who was born in 2010. It must be noted that Aishwarya and Dhanush parted ways after 18 years of being married.

Meanwhile, recently, Rajinikanth enjoyed some quality time with his family in Greece. On Tuesday, Rajinikanth's younger daughter, Soundarya Rajinikanth, posted a string of photos of Thalaiava on a holiday with his loved ones. She took to her official Insta page and posted a couple of pictures of the entire family, including Rajinikanth taking a walk in Athens, Greece. Sharing the memories with the netizens, Soundarya wrote, "What amazing memories we've made in Athens! (Three red heart emojis) Soaking up every moment of this lovely family getaway (sic)."

Rajinikanth and his entire family had flown to Greece to attend the wedding of his relative and celebrated music director, Anirudh Ravichander. Anirudh Ravichander got married to Kavya Maran, the daughter of Sun Group Chairman Kalanidhi Maran and the owner of the IPL franchise SunRisers Hyderabad, in a grand ceremony on November 11 this year. The wedding, which took place in Greece over a two-day period saw several distinguished guests from the industry in attendance.

Keerthy Suresh Reacts to Radhika Apte's Marriage Remark



Claiming that she didn't initially understand Radhika Apte's statement referring to the Muraimaaman practice prevalent in the south of the country during an interview, actress Keerthy Suresh has now said that she identified herself as a south Indian actress and stressed that she would "never let down" the culture of the region.

At the pre release event of her upcoming Tamil film 'Sathyavan Savithri', Keerthy Suresh was first asked as to which film industry, she considered herself to be a part of as she had worked in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindi.

Soon after the actress made it clear that she considered herself as a south actress, Keerthy Suresh's attention was drawn to a joint interview that she had recently given along with actress Radhika Apte in which the latter's reply to a question had a passing reference to the Muraimaaman culture (practice of uncles marrying their nieces) prevalent in south India.

The reply had come in for criticism from fans in Telugu and Tamil cinema on social media as many felt the tone was condescending. Actress Keerthy Suresh was asked as to why, she, who considered herself a south cinema actress, did not step up to put things in perspective.

Stating that she did explain the practice,Keerthy said, "I explained. She (Radhika Apte) made that statement. Honestly, at first, I didn't even understand what she was saying. She (Radhika Apte) was saying, 'I had to romance my uncle.' At first, I didn't understand what she was saying. And then, I understood she was talking about the culture. As soon as I realised she did not know about the culture, I tried explaining that it was a culture down south."

When the actress's response about the practice prevailing only in Tamil and Telugu and not in Malayalam was pointed out, she said, "Yes, I said that. I was referring to the culture. Because that culture is not there in Kerala. With all due respect, because I will never let down our culture there." She went on to further explain, "First, I didn't understand when she said 'uncle' and then, I understood, 'oh, they're talking about our culture and tradition'. That was why I explained about it. I can't prove to them that this is a tradition and you cannot talk about this. So, I tried to make them understand, saying that this happens in Tamil(Nadu) and Andhra. I told it as an information.

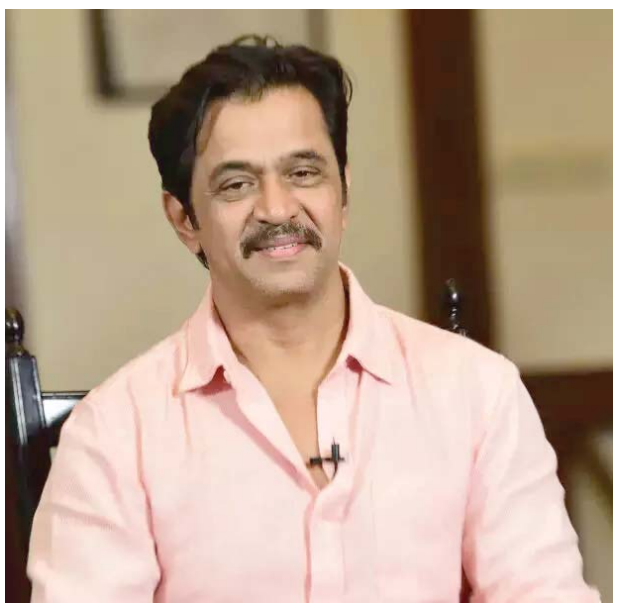
Ram Nitin to Lead Tamil-Telugu Bilingual Film

Actor Ram Nitin, who won audiences over with his performances in the superhit Telugu films MAD and MAD Square, is to play the lead in a new Tamil-Telugu bilingual film that is to be directed by Karthikk Jai Palani. The film is being produced by Soldiers Factory, the production house behind the National Award-winning Tamil film 'Parking', in association with Redacted Studios.

Sources close to the unit say that the new film will mark the directorial debut of Karthikk Jai Palani, who previously worked as an associate director with renowned filmmaker Venkat Prabhu. Actresses Prathana Nathan and Teju Ashwini are to play the female leads in this new film. Prathana Nathan, who is known for her performances in acclaimed films such as 'Parking' and 'Thalaivar Thambi Thalaimayil', will be seen playing one of the two female leads in this new film. She is also gearing up for her upcoming film 'Ninja', in which she plays the lead role. Actress Teju Ashwini, who is best known for her performance in Enna Solla Pogirai and who will next be seen playing the lead role in 'Super Hero', starring Arjun Das, will play the other heroine. Speaking about their association with Redacted Studios, KS Sinish of Soldiers Factory said, "We are happy to announce our association with Redacted Studios for our next Telugu-Tamil production.



Arjun Sarja Warns Legal Action Over Defamatory Claims



Stating that as a father he would always stand by his daughter and her right to live with dignity, independence and freedom, well known actor, director and producer Arjun Sarja on Thursday warned that those found circulating or amplifying baseless and defamatory allegations would be dealt with through appropriate legal measures.

In a statement, which he shared on his social media timelines, actor Arjun Sarja said, "Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who has sent their love and wonderful wishes to Anjana and our family on her wedding. Your affection and goodwill have always meant a great deal to us, and we remain grateful to everyone who has kept us in their thoughts."

He then said, "However, this is something I never expected to have to address publicly. When my younger daughter got married, there was considerable speculation surrounding my elder daughter, Aishwarya Arjun's, personal life. I have consciously chosen to respect her privacy and refrain from commenting on matters that are hers alone to share."

Arjun pointed out that every woman had the right to make her own choices and live life on her own terms. "She will speak for herself, in her own time, should she choose to," he informed.

However, the actor said that as a father, he could not remain silent when he saw false and deeply derogatory allegations being made about his daughter, her character and her personal life.

"As actors, we understand that public life inevitably invites speculation and scrutiny. However, there is a clear distinction between speculation and the deliberate propagation of baseless allegations. Public scrutiny does not give anyone the licence to invent narratives or engage in character assassination. To make unfounded and derogatory remarks, including labelling a woman an alcoholic without any basis whatsoever, is deeply irresponsible and unacceptable," he wrote.

Stating that they had always believed that silence was often the most dignified response, the actor pointed out that silence should never be mistaken for acceptance, nor should it allow misinformation to be repeatedly circulated and amplified.

"We have therefore taken the appropriate steps by lodging a formal complaint with the concerned authorities," he said.

Ram Pothineni Unveils 'Lone Wolf' Look from Directorial Debut #RaPo23



Telugu star Ram Pothineni on Thursday expressed his appreciation for men on the occasion of the International Men's Day on Friday by saluting them even as he went on to define his 'Lone Wolf' character in his upcoming film #Rapo23 on the occasion. Seeking to mark International Men's Day, Telugu star Ram Pothineni unveiled the intriguing prelook of his much-awaited directorial debut, #RaPo23. The poster offered audiences a back shot of 'Lone Wolf', the character he plays in the film.

Taking to his X timeline to share the poster, Ram Pothineni wrote, "LONE WOLF (noun) A fiercely independent man who chooses his own path and faces the world alone. Here's Saluting you all on International Men's Day. #TheLoneWolf #RAPO23."

Hinting at a personality defined by individuality, inner strength and an unwavering sense of determination, the reveal set the tone for the psychological action thriller set in a neo-noir world.

With #RaPo23, Ram Pothineni has embarked on an exciting new chapter in his career, stepping behind the camera for the first time as a writer and director. Known for his dynamic screen presence and versatility as a performer, Ram has taken on an entirely new creative responsibility, bringing his own vision to life with this ambitious project. The film features a promising ensemble cast, including Riteish Deshmukh and Samyuktha Menon alongside Ram Pothineni, adding to the excitement surrounding the project.

The technical team includes gifted cinematographer S. Thirunavukkarasu as the Director of Photography (DOP). One of south India's top music directors, Sam C.S, is scoring the music for this film. Written and directed by Ram Pothineni, #RaPo23 will be a psychological action thriller set in a neo-noir world. Produced by Krishna Pothineni under the banner of RAPO Cinematics, the film, sources say, will look to deliver a distinctive cinematic experience, with its intriguing premise, impressive cast and unconventional world, to audiences

Sharwanand's 'Bhogi' to now hit screens on November 27

The makers of director Sampath Nandi's explosive period action drama, 'Bhogi', featuring actor Sharwanand in the lead, on Thursday announced that their film would now hit screens worldwide on November 27 this year. Sri Sathya Sai Arts, the production house that is producing the film, took to its social media timelines to share the update.

It wrote, "#BHOGI on 27th November - Locked and Loaded. Get ready for a breathtaking action & emotional experience on the big screens. #SharwaSampathBloodFest. Charming Star @ImSharwanand. Mass Director @ IamSampathNandi." It may be recalled that the film was to originally hit screens worldwide on November 12 this year. However, the makers had chosen to postpone the film's release.

At the time of postponing the film, the makers in a statement had said, "Bhogi has been an immensely special project for all of us. Made with great ambition, passion and dedication. Right from the beginning, our vision has been to deliver a memorable theatrical experience that truly lives up to the expectations of our audiences." They went on to say,"However, due to unforeseen delays, Bhogi stands postponed. We kindly request everyone not to believe or circulate any speculation regarding the film's release. The new release date will be announced soon."



Stating that they sincerely regretted this change in plans and the inconvenience caused, the makers sought the patience, understanding and continued support of audiences as they worked towards bringing Bhogi to the big screen in the best possible way. They concluded their statement saying,"We promise to make the wait worthwhile." Now, the makers have announced that the film will release on November 27.

The makers had revealed on actor Sharwanand's birthday that he played a character called Ganga in the eagerly awaited action thriller.

'Bhogi' stars Anupama Parameswaran and Dimple Hayathi as the female leads. Set in the early 1960s, 'Bhogi' is a pulsating period action drama unfolding in a fictional village along the borders of Telangana and Maharashtra.

On the technical front, the project boasts an accomplished crew. Production design is by Kiran Kumar Manne, cinematography is by Kishore Kumar Arokia, and music is by Bheems Ceciroleo. Planned as a pan-India release, the movie is to hit the big screens in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam.

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