

# CBFC under fire over transparency and cultural portrayals



## Cong govt brought perceptible change in 2 years: Ponguleti

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HYDERABAD

STATE Revenue, Housing, and Information and Public Relations Minister Srinivas Reddy on Monday said the Telangana government has demonstrated the change the people desired and upheld public trust in just two years. Addressing the launch of the modernised I&PR Department website at the Secretariat, he said the state was in crisis when the government took office, particularly within the economic sector. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the administration is overcoming challenges step by step while

- Revenue Minister asserts Congress administration has upheld public trust by transforming the state from economic crisis to national welfare model while accelerating development through the ambitious Telangana Rising 2047 vision

accelerating development and welfare programmes. Highlighting reforms across agriculture, education, healthcare, housing, and employment, the Minister said Telangana

has become a role model for the country. He stressed that the Information Department plays a key role in communicating these achievements effectively and instructed officials to leverage technology for the quick dissemination of schemes. Two years is a short period, but the achievements are remarkable. The government has implemented several welfare schemes and is moving forward with the Telangana Rising 2047 vision, which combines global competitiveness with welfare for the poor. I&PR Commissioner Priyanka, Chief Minister's CPRO Malsur, and other senior officials participated in the programme.

VRC PHANIHARAN  
HYDERABAD

THE controversy surrounding the certification of Sumathi Sathakam has once again exposed cracks in the functioning of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), raising serious concerns about transparency, accountability, and cultural sensitivity.

Early on, the storm first broke with the Telugu film Commitment, whose certification records published by CBFC Hyderabad appeared inconsistent and misleading. Initially, the film produced by Taduri Neelima and Baldev Singh was granted an 'A' certificate in January 2021, later modified to 'UA' in March 2021. However, subsequent disclosures revealed that the film title that was listed meant 'No Commitment' at all, but 'enjoy (No Commitments)', certified in 2014 under a different producer. This discrepancy has sparked doubts about whether film names, producers, or even

content were altered, and why such details were concealed until challenged.

Adding to the controversy, CBFC Hyderabad failed to publish the mandatory cut-list details of the 'Commitment'. M Kiran Kumar, a research scholar in film studies, pointed out that similar lapses occurred with CBFC Mumbai, which did not release the cut-list for Laal Singh Chaddha. "These lapses undermine CBFC's credibility as a statutory body entrusted with ensuring transparency in film certification," he said.

The issue goes beyond procedural lapses. While Sumathi Sathakam is the latest controversy, the Commitment film had reportedly used slokas from the Bhagavad Gita as background scores for scenes falling under 'A' certification. Raising concerns about the unchecked misuse of intangible cultural properties. When queried, Member of Parliament Dr K Laxman said that the government at the Centre

is committed to protecting cultural and intangible heritage. However, when brought to his notice about the legislative gap in the existing laws, CBFC, Hyderabad sources clarified that they are not legally mandated to check the legal norms to safeguard intangible properties. He said that he had to look into the legal gaps to take up the issue about the glaring gap in the regulatory framework, if any. Legal experts argue that inconsistent certification records, unexplained changes in film details, and withholding of mandatory public information demand urgent intervention.

Advocate Durga Prasad insists that the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting must step in to streamline CBFC's functioning and restore credibility. Beyond procedural irregularities,



- Does CBFC's Film Certification need more effective oversight?
- Violation of intangible properties turning into a routine
- Communities and identities are portrayed as inherently violent in nature

es, and even state identities, reinforcing harmful stereotypes." This is at a time when the Central government talks about and insists on the celebration of diversity of different states and communities under its EK Bharat and Shreshta Bharat, he added.

The ongoing controversies suggest that CBFC's role as a statutory body is being undermined by opacity, cultural insensitivity, and regulatory gaps. As skeletons continue to tumble out of the closet, the demand for effective oversight grows louder, with calls for reforms that ensure transparency, protect intangible heritage, and prevent the perpetuation of damaging stereotypes.

## KTR LIKENS SUNDAY PROTESTS TO TG MOVEMENT AGITATIONS

**BRS working president alleges vendetta politics, administrative collapse and warns against media trials**

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BRS working president KT Rama Rao said the protests taken out by party cadre on Sunday reminded people of the Telangana movement days as bike rallies and agitations in Hyderabad reflected deep anger over governance failures. Rama Rao stated that making former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao sit for hours in the name of inquiry amounted to an attack on democratic values and was done merely to satisfy the political vendetta of the government.

In an informal interaction with the media, Rama Rao criticised the Congress government, stating that since coming to power it has delivered nothing substantial and was indulging in diversion politics through false propaganda and motivated investigations.

He asserted that the Congress administration was



party cadre and supporters for protests held across Telangana, stating that demonstrations took place in over 12,000 Gram Panchayats. He noted that effigies of the government were burnt in more than 7,000 villages in a single day, claiming these were not merely political events but a spontaneous public response to dissatisfaction with official functioning.

He asserted that the Congress administration was

vested interests were being prioritised over public welfare.

Regarding the SIT questioning of K Chandrashekhar Rao, Rama Rao said the government was trying to derive political mileage rather than uncover the truth, reiterating that phone tapping allegations were baseless.

He demanded a white paper on large scale irregularities in Singareni coal mine tenders involving relatives of the Chief Minister and questioned why the government was reluctant to hand the matter to the CBI or a sitting judge.

He claimed both the NDA government at the Centre and the state government were shielding those responsible.

He also alleged that the Union Budget had dealt Telangana a raw deal and demanded transparency over investment pledges made at Davos, asking how many

projects from 2024 and 2025 had actually materialised.

Rama Rao expressed confidence in a strong performance during the upcoming municipal elections. He warned Commissioner Sajjanar against declaring verdicts outside of court, stating that officers cannot declare something illegal through tweets or selective leaks.

He insisted that if evidence exists, it must be produced before a court of law rather than used for media trials. On the remarks made by Kishan Reddy, Rama Rao stated that BRS leaders were not afraid of inquiries or press conferences and have always faced the media openly to present their side of the story. The working president concluded that the party would continue to stand by its leadership and fight against the undemocratic practices currently being employed by the ruling dispensation.



pends entirely on compliance with Section 5(2) of the Indian Telegraph Act, the Information Technology Act, and safeguards laid down by the Supreme Court in the PUCL case. Any deviation can be determined only through judicial scrutiny, not via official police communications.

By using the expression illegal phone tapping in an official message, the SIT Chief has displayed a preconceived notion about the investigation outcome. Rao said this conduct is unbecoming of a senior IPS officer and runs contrary to the standards of neutrality mandated under the All India Services Conduct Rules 1968. He warned that such premature conclusions in a politically sensitive

matter involving a former Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition create a reasonable apprehension of bias.

Harish Rao recalled that the Supreme Court has consistently held that investigations must not only be fair but must also appear to be fair. When the head of an SIT uses language that assumes guilt before trial, it weakens democratic institutions and erodes faith in the rule of law. Judgments must be delivered by courts, not through police messages, as democracy cannot survive if institutions abandon constitutional limits.

Rao also questioned why the SIT chief does not formally recognise K Chandrashekhar Rao as the Leader of the Opposition in his official capacity. He asserted that the current approach suggests a political motivation rather than a genuine search for the truth, further damaging the credibility of the entire investigative process during this critical period for the state.

## GHMC okays ₹11,460 cr budget for infra push

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THE Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has approved an Rs 11,460 crore budget for the 2026-2027 financial year, focusing on infrastructure development, sanitation, and the growth of merged municipalities.

Major projects including the construction of flyovers, road expansions, and healthcare facilities aim to enhance connectivity and public amenities. The budget covers the existing corporation area and 27 newly merged urban local bodies, with priority given to capital works. Specifically,

- GHMC Budget focuses on infrastructure
- GHMC clears major infra spend

Rs 9,200 crore is designated for current limits, while Rs 2,260 crore is set aside for the newly included municipalities.

The corporation noted that city expansion is placing increased demands on civic services. Therefore, the fiscal plan prioritises financial sustainability and fair resource distribution to ensure the expanded body operates effectively without straining primary revenue sources.

NFCL Junction flyover, the TV9 underpass, and the second phase of the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Programme.

Furthermore, approvals were granted for a 50-bed Community Health Centre at Yakutpura SRT Colony and a new circle office building at Hayathnagar. Other initiatives include a multi-purpose indoor sports complex at Banda Bavi and the development of a 120-feet road from Masjid Banda to the Botanical Garden. With these strategic approvals, Hyderabad is poised for a significant urban transformation. From superior traffic management to improved public health facilities, these initiatives represent a major advancement in making the city more efficient, sustainable, and interconnected for its millions of residents across the expanded administrative zones.



## A dumping yard called Ibrahimbagh lake bund

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HYDERABAD

THE bund of Ibrahimbagh lake has turned into a sprawling dumping ground, choked with construction debris and waste. Moreover, the lake is filled with water hyacinth, which has turned it into a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

According to residents, though the Greater Hy-



Shaik Arif, a resident, said, "There is no distinction between summer and winter. The mosquito menace is a never-ending nuisance in these areas. The situation remains unchanged every season. Even after numerous complaints to the authorities concerned, no action has been taken."

“

derabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) takes up mega sanitation drives across the GHMC limits, no proper sanitation works have been carried out in their area, which comes under Neknampur ward.

The residents also confirmed a severe mosquito menace, highlighting a surge in mosquito numbers across Manikonda, Neknampur and other surrounding areas.

Shaik Arif, a resident, said, "There is no distinction

between summer and winter. The mosquito menace is a never-ending nuisance in these areas. The situation remains unchanged every season. Even after numerous complaints to the authorities concerned, no action has been taken."

The lake is slowly transforming into a dumping yard due to waste and construction debris from surrounding areas. The entire surface of the lake is covered with water hyacinth and has now turned into mosquito breeding spots. We request the officials concerned to clean and save Ibrahimbagh lake," said Suresh, another

resident.

Mohammed Sohail, another resident, demanded that the department concerned, which is meant to protect water bodies, must save the lake from further encroachments and preserve it by clearing construction debris, waste and water hyacinth, and by providing proper inlet and outlet channels to the lake.

**PEOPLE'S VOICE**

tion between summer and winter. The mosquito menace is a never-ending nuisance in these areas. The situation remains unchanged every season. Even after numerous complaints to the authorities concerned, no action has been taken."

Residents pointed out that water hyacinth is spreading rapidly and there is no proper maintenance or treatment, while dumping of construction debris continues unchecked.