

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

BJP Chief Meets Amit Shah Amid Talks About Reshuffle Of Party's Central Team

NEW DELHI, JUL 2: BJP president Nitin Nabin on Thursday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah amid talks of a reshuffle in the party's central team.

According to sources, BJP general secretary (organisation) B L Santhosh was also present at the meeting, which lasted for about three hours at Shah's residence.

While there was no official word, the meeting is learnt to have discussed a range of issues, including the BJP's new team of national office-bearers.

The BJP's new central team under Nabin, who became the party's national president in January, is expected to have a mix of "experienced senior and younger leaders", the sources



said.

They also suggested that some leaders holding positions in the government may

also be moved to the party and assigned key responsibilities.

Names of those to be in-

ducted in the BJP's new central team will soon be announced, the sources added. (Agencies)

Making people laugh today without offending someone a tightrope walk: Raveena Tandon

MUMBAI, JULY 2: Actor Raveena Tandon says humour in the 90s was uninhibited and unapologetic, something that is difficult to replicate in movies today as one never knows what will trigger a social media debate.

Tandon credits comedy hits like "Bade Miyan Chote Miyan", "Aunty No. 1", "Dulhe Raja", "Pardesi Babu", "Aakhion Se Goli Maare" and many more as the backbone of her career in Bollywood. But she believes the landscape has changed drastically over the years.

"Making people laugh without someone getting offended is probably the ultimate tightrope walk today, it is tough... In the 90s, there was an uninhibited, innocent, and totally unapologetic madness to our films. Chi Chi (Govinda) and I would react purely on instinct. We weren't overthinking how a joke would look on a 15-second internet clip or if a line would trigger a social media debate," Tandon told

PTI in an interview.

"...That raw, purely character-driven, loud-and-proud humour of the 90s is rare now because filmmakers are constantly second-guessing themselves. We've become a bit too cautious, and comedy desperately needs freedom to breathe," she added.

The actor has made a comeback to the genre in "Welcome to the Jungle", a multi-starrer comedy that reunites Tandon with her 90s "Mohrra" co-stars Akshay Kumar and Suniel Shetty.

Comedy taught me spontaneity, improvisation, and the importance of losing all inhibitions on screen. It is an incredibly giving genre, if you can successfully make people laugh, they keep you in their hearts forever. Returning to it now with 'Welcome to the Jungle' feels like coming home to a room full of old friends," she said.

"Comedy has honestly been the backbone of my

commercial identity. While intense, dramatic roles like 'Daman' or 'Satta' gave me critical validation and the National Award, it was comedy that built my deep connection with the masses. Even today, kids who weren't even born in the 90s know me because of those loops on television and social media."

Personally, Tandon said she is a fan of Sridevi who she credited for shaping her understanding of the genre. Tandon said the late actor was the ultimate "gold standard" for female comic performances in Indian cinema.

"What she did in 'Mr. India', the whole 'Hawa Hawai' sequence, 'Charlie Chaplin' act and 'Chaal Baaz' was sheer genius. She proved that a mainstream, gorgeous heroine could twist her face, be utterly goofy, do slapstick, and still look absolutely mesmerizing," she said.

Tandon also praised Juhi Chawla's effortless comic timing and the incredible "witty spark" of yesteryear

heroines like Geeta Bali and Madhubala in classic films like "Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi" and others.

The space for female-led comedy in the current landscape has shrunk, she said.

"The space has changed, and frankly, we've lost some of that organic playground we had in the 90s. Today, comedy films have become highly structured and heavily plot-driven, or they are huge ensembles," she said.

"In the process, the heroine comic tracks have shrunk.

Today's girls are incredibly sharp, polished, and have fantastic timing, but the scripts often confine them to being glamorous catalyst characters rather than full-fledged comedic dynamos. We need writers to intentionally create flawed, chaotic, and downright hilarious female protagonists without worrying about making them look perfect or politically correct all the time," the actor said.

development, strengthen supply chain resilience and advance the energy transition.

This partnership with Adani Enterprises reflects that strategy and our shared ambition to develop a world-class integrated aluminium project that creates lasting economic value," he said.

Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain said the investment reflects growing confidence in Odisha's industrial ecosystem and assured that the state government will facilitate timely approvals for the project.

According to the companies, the downstream manufacturing park is expected to attract manufacturers producing components for transport, construction, power, packaging, renewable energy and advanced engineering, while supporting the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the state.

Home to some of India's largest bauxite reserves, Odisha is already a major producer of alumina and aluminium. The companies said the project will strengthen the state's position in the global aluminium supply chain by integrating the entire value chain from mining to downstream manufacturing.

Following the signing of the MoU, the joint venture partners and the Odisha government will begin the next phase of the project, including land acquisition, statutory approvals and infrastructure planning. (ANI)

NITI Aayog unveils roadmap to make Ayurveda a global healthcare and export powerhouse by 2047

New Delhi [India], July 2 (ANI): NITI Aayog has released a strategic roadmap to position Ayurveda as a globally recognised healthcare system and a stronger export industry by 2047, recommending a phased strategy that includes expanding international recognition, strengthening research, upgrading manufacturing standards, and promoting medical value travel.

The report, 'Strategic Roadmap for Making Ayurveda Global', said the roadmap aligns with the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047 and seeks to transform Ayurveda into a "credible, evidence-based, and globally integrated system of healthcare."

"The roadmap outlined in this report is both ambitious and pragmatic. By adopting a phased approach extending up to 2047, it aligns well with India's broader developmental vision of Viksit Bharat@2047. The focus on building globally recognized standards, enhancing manufacturing and export com-

petitiveness, promoting medical value travel, and leveraging India's diplomatic and cultural capital offers a clear pathway for positioning Ayurveda as a credible component of global healthcare systems," NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Ashok Kumar Lahiri said in his message in the report.

Prepared by PwC under NITI Aayog's Research Scheme, the report assesses Ayurveda's current global footprint and identifies policy measures needed to improve its availability, acceptability and global propagation. It notes that while Ayurveda's international presence is expanding, its full potential remains constrained by fragmented regulations, limited scientific validation, restricted practitioner mobility and gaps in globally aligned standards.

According to the report, Ayurveda products are now exported to around 150 countries, with exports rising from USD 1.09 billion in 2014 to USD 2.16 billion in

2023. However, it noted that most products continue to be sold overseas as dietary supplements because of regulatory barriers, limiting the export of higher-value finished Ayurvedic medicines.

To address these gaps, the roadmap recommends creating a Global Ayurveda Register, expanding mutual recognition agreements with foreign countries, introducing Ayurveda electives in international medical schools, establishing a World Federation for Ayurveda and Yoga, and strengthening evidence-based research. It also proposes upgrading India's manufacturing standards to WHO-GMP norms, creating an export-focused Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia, setting up overseas finishing units, and publishing annual global safety and evidence reports.

The report also calls for strengthening international research by establishing more WHO collaborating centres, creating an International Ayurveda Research Alliance, promoting global clinical trials and expanding

collaborations between industry and academia. It recommends developing International Ayurveda Centres of Excellence and introducing joint degree programmes with leading global medical universities to build an international practitioner base.

Highlighting the economic opportunity, the report said the globalisation of Ayurveda has the potential to generate growth across health products, wellness services and medical value travel. It added that India should move Ayurveda beyond its current perception as a wellness and complementary therapy system towards becoming an evidence-based and internationally accepted healthcare model.

"The findings and recommendations of this report are expected to support evidence-informed policymaking and contribute in strengthening India's position as a global leader in traditional medicine and promoting holistic and sustainable healthcare solutions," the report said. (ANI)

After Meta, Centre issues notices to Telegram, Signal over 'username' feature

NEW DELHI [INDIA], JULY 2 : Widening the scrutiny over the 'username' feature, after issuing a notice to Meta regarding the roll-out of the feature on WhatsApp, the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) has now sent notices to Telegram and Signal.

Both Telegram and Signal have been asked to explain their 'username' feature and its safeguards against impersonation and misuse.

Recently, Telegram faced a week-long ban in India ahead of the NEET-UG re-examination in June.

On Wednesday, the Centre issued a notice to Meta regarding the roll-out of the "usernames" feature on WhatsApp in India, stating that it may increase the incidence of online fraud, phishing, and digital arrest scams.

According to Meta, a username is an "optional unique

identifier you can choose for your WhatsApp account". It starts with the @ symbol (for example, @Name123) and can be used by others to message or call a person, while keeping their phone number private.

The Centre has expressed concern, saying that the "usernames" feature may enable "impersonation and identity spoofing," and has asked Meta to furnish a detailed explanation within three days.

The notice stated, "It is felt that the feature may materially increase the incidence of online fraud, phishing, digital arrest scams and impersonation attacks, by enabling bad actors to solicit and message victims. Furthermore, this feature may facilitate impersonation and identity spoofing, including impersonation of individuals, public authorities, financial insti-

tutions, and government agencies, by permitting the adoption of usernames closely resembling those of genuine persons or institutions."

The Centre has asked Meta not to roll out the feature until satisfactory consultation with the government.

"Accordingly, you are directed to explain why regulatory action ought not to be initiated under the Information Technology Act, 2000 (IT Act), the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) and other laws as may be applicable for launching a feature that may increase cybercrimes. You are directed to furnish a detailed explanation, supported by relevant documents, on this new feature, within three days of its receipt. You are also directed

not to roll out this feature until the consultation on this point is achieved to the satisfaction of the Government," the notice read.

However, the messaging service platform claimed they have built "multiple layers of defence against scams".

WhatsApp spokesperson said they have announced the option for people to reserve their preferred username on the platform. "The ability to use a username is not yet live and will roll out slowly later this year. To protect against impersonation, we've held the highest-profile names -- think public figures, government entities, celebrities, verified Meta accounts -- so they can only ever be claimed by their legitimate owners and lookalike derivatives of known names are held as well," the statement read. (ANI)

Adani Enterprises, IHC's IRH to invest USD 11.5 billion in Odisha aluminium project

BHUBANESWAR, JULY 02: Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL) and International Resources Holding (IRH), the Abu Dhabi-based natural resources investment platform through 2PointZero, on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Odisha to develop a USD 11.5 billion integrated green-field aluminium project in the state.<

Under the agreement, Adani Enterprises and IRH will form a 50:50 joint venture to execute the project, which is expected to become Odisha's largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) proposal and India's largest foreign direct investment in the metallurgy sector.

The proposed project, valued at around Rs 1.08 lakh crore (USD 11.5 billion), will include a 4 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) alumina refinery, a 2 MMTPA aluminium smelter, a 4,000-megawatt captive power plant and a 1 MMTPA downstream manufacturing park, along with supporting infrastructure.

The project will be developed in two phases, with investments of about Rs 66,000 crore in Phase I and Rs 44,000 crore in Phase II.

According to the companies, the investment is expected to generate around 53,500 jobs. During the construction phase, the project is expected to create about 35,000 jobs, while mining, alumina refining, aluminium



production and downstream manufacturing operations are expected to support another 18,500 jobs. It is also expected to generate indirect employment in logistics, engineering, maintenance and ancillary industries.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Industries and Skill Development & Technical Education Minister Sampad Chandra Swain and senior government officials.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said, "Today marks Odisha's entry into the global aluminium supply chain. Already India's leading hub for metals and mineral-based industries, the state is now poised to become a global centre for aluminium and value-added manufacturing.

This investment will enable Odisha to develop the complete aluminium value chain, from mining and refining to smelting and downstream manufacturing, creating greater value within the

state. It is an important step towards Samruddha Odisha 2036 and our contribution to Viksit Bharat 2047."

Karan Adani, Managing Director of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) and Director, Adani Cement, said, "The proposed project reflects our confidence in Odisha as a long-term manufacturing destination. The proposed JV between Adani Group and IHC Group will further strengthen our robust partnership. Together with the Government of Odisha, we will build an integrated aluminium ecosystem that creates jobs, expands value-added manufacturing and strengthens India's industrial competitiveness."

Syed Basar Shueb, CEO of IHC, said the partnership reflects the group's strategy of investing in industries that will shape the future global economy.

"Through IRH, we are building an integrated mining and minerals business, investing across critical minerals to support industrial

Microsoft invests USD 2.5 billion in new unit to help customers faster adopt AI

WASHINGTON [US], JULY 2 (ANI): Microsoft has committed USD 2.5 billion to a new operating business called Microsoft Frontier Company that will help its customers utilise artificial intelligence efficiently.<

The Microsoft Frontier Company will embed 6,000 industry and engineering experts with its customers, helping them utilise AI in a way that boosts productivity with measurable business outcomes and demonstrates that the hefty AI investments that have been made are yielding results.

Microsoft claims that this initiative goes beyond what has come to be known as Forward Deployed Engineering (FDE), a practice that puts engineers at clients' facilities to help adopt, customise and implement technology efficiently.

As companies move past the experimentation stage, they are looking for ways in which they can amplify their intelligence and at the same time, protect intellectual property. "It will provide a unique combination of skills inclusive of deep industry knowledge, change management and continuous improvement experience, and enterprise-grade AI engineering expertise," Judson Althoff, CEO, Microsoft Commercial Business, wrote in a blog post.

The move comes just two days after rival Amazon AWS announced that it is investing USD 1 billion in a new FDE unit for customers to harness the power of AI.

The AI race is heating up as massive investments flow in the emerging technology. Top hyperscalers like Amazon AWS, Alphabet, and Microsoft are

spending hundreds of billions of dollars to ramp up data centre capacity as the need for compute infrastructure rises exponentially. Enterprises are deploying agentic AI as the technology gallops from the generative to the agentic phase. Althoff explained the approach in the blog post, saying that a customer's data and IP are something that should not be used to train models that will make them lose the industry advantage that they have. This is something that the Palantir CEO has also backed.

"Central to this approach is a principle that is non-negotiable: a customer's IQ is protected. Their data, their IP, their competitive advantage -- none of it is used to train models in ways that commoditize what differentiates them in their industry," the blog post read. (ANI)

ECI announces July 30 bypolls to three Assembly seats in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat

NEW DELHI, JUL 2: The Election Commission of India on Thursday announced the schedule for by-elections to three Assembly constituencies in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat to fill vacancies caused by resignation, disqualification and the death of sitting legislators. Geographic Reference

According to a press note issued by the Commission, polling for Bankipur Assembly constituency (182) in Bihar, Datia Assembly constituency (22) in Madhya Pradesh, and Manjalpur Assembly constituency (145) in Gujarat will be held on July 30 and the counting of votes will take place on August 3.

nation of Nitin Nabin from the Bankipur seat, the disqualification of Rajendra Bharti from the Datia constituency, and the death of Yogeshbhai Narandas Patel, the MLA from Manjalpur.

Emphasising the importance of updated electoral rolls, the Commission reiterated its commitment to ensuring free, fair and credible elections.

"The Commission firmly believes that pure and updated electoral rolls are the foundation of free, fair and credible elections. Hence, intensive and sustained focus is placed upon improving its quality, health and fidelity," the ECI said.

The poll panel noted that following the amendment to Section 14 of the Repre-

sentation of the People Act, 1950 through the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021, there are now four qualifying dates in a year for enrolment as a voter.

It added that Special Summary Revision and Special Intensive Revision exercises had been undertaken in the concerned states to ensure accurate electoral rolls ahead of the bypolls.

The Commission said the final publication of electoral rolls for the three constituencies had already been completed.

The electoral roll for Bankipur Assembly constituency in Bihar was finally published on September 30, 2025, while those for Datia in Madhya Pradesh and Manjalpur in Gujarat were published.