



**Misri reviews India-Bhutan development cooperation progress**



**Social security coverage reaches 101 crore**



**Indian boxer Preeti Pawar Eyes Gold After Final Berth**



## CAUVERY ROW

# Decision after legal, all-party consultations: D K Shivakumar

DKS reiterated safeguarding farmers and drinking water needs remains priority

BENGALURU

Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Friday said Karnataka would take its next course of action in the Cauvery water dispute only after consulting legal experts and holding discussions with opposition leaders at an all-party meeting.

Addressing a press conference at Vidhana Soudha, he said the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) had directed Karnataka to release 3,500 cusecs of water daily to Tamil Nadu. The State challenged the order before the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA), seeking more time and a reduction in the release, but the appeal was rejected.

Shivakumar said improving reservoir inflows had been cited by the authority while issuing its order. However, he reiterated that safeguarding Karnataka's farmers and drinking water needs remained the government's priority. He added that reservoir levels had improved, with Harangi at 95%, Kabini at 83%, KRS at 36% and Hemavathi at 67%.



**"We are committed to protecting Karnataka's interests. A bandh will not solve the issue."**  
—D K Shivakumar, Chief Minister

The Chief Minister said Karnataka had released only 0.6 TMC of water to Tamil Nadu till the end of July, calling it the lowest July-end release in the past 100 years.

He clarified that the flow largely comprised rainwater and not reservoir releases. Appealing against the proposed bandh over the issue, Shivakumar said protests would not provide a solution and only inconvenience the public.

He also indicated that the proposed August 3 meeting with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay could be postponed until the situation improves.

## Karnataka's Stand

|                     |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>CWRC Order</b>   | 3,500 cusecs daily to Tamil Nadu  |
| <b>Appeal</b>       | Rejected by CWMA                  |
| <b>July Release</b> | 0.6 TMC, lowest in 100 years      |
| <b>Meeting</b>      | TN CM Vijay talks may be deferred |

## DKS urges Vijay to defer visit

Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Friday urged Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay to postpone his proposed August 3 visit, saying the "atmosphere is not right" following the Cauvery Water Management Authority's (CWMA) order directing Karnataka to release 3,500 cusecs of water daily to Tamil Nadu for 15 days. Shivakumar said the meeting should be held in a "cool, calm and cordial atmosphere" for the benefit of both States.

## TN EYES SUPREME COURT

Tamil Nadu has decided to approach the Supreme Court to secure its share of Cauvery water, with Law Minister CTR Nirmal Kumar accusing Karnataka of repeatedly defying water release orders. He said the State would pursue all legal options to protect farmers' interests and alleged Karnataka had long politicised the dispute by resisting releases. Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay is consulting legal experts before announcing the government's legal strategy within a week. Tamil Nadu is also examining options including a fresh tribunal, direct talks with Karnataka and pressing the Centre to enforce existing Cauvery water-sharing orders.

## Tahir Hussain gets life in IB officer murder case

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court on Friday sentenced former Aam Aadmi Party councillor Tahir Hussain and four others to life imprisonment for the 2020 murder of Intelligence Bureau staffer Ankit Sharma during the northeast Delhi riots.

Additional Sessions Judge Praveen Singh of the Karkardooma Court had earlier convicted Hussain of murder, kidnapping, rioting with deadly weapons, unlawful assembly and promoting enmity between groups.

However, he was acquitted of charges related to criminal conspiracy and abetment of mutiny.

The court also sentenced Javed, Anas, Nazim and Kasim to life imprisonment, while acquitting six other accused in the case.

Delhi Police had sought the death penalty for Hussain, arguing that the killing, in which Sharma suffered 51 ante-mortem injuries, qualified as a "rarest of rare" case.

The case was registered on a complaint filed by Sharma's father following the recovery of his body from a drain in Chand Bagh during the 2020 riots.

# 'If there is even a shred of shame left, get Amit Shah to resign': Kharge to PM

NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday accused the Centre of pursuing a "vendetta" against students who protested over the NEET paper leak issue and demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi seek the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

In a post on X, Kharge alleged that BJP governments had gone back on their assurance that no action would be taken against students after they withdrew their agitation. He claimed FIRs were being registered against protesters and that several students were being detained despite the understanding reached after the protests ended.

Referring to the July 20 'Sansad Chalo' march and nationwide demonstrations, Kharge alleged that the government had first used force against students and was now attempting to silence them through legal action. He also claimed that social media accounts of young protesters were being blocked, while some women activists were allegedly being doxxed.



The Congress president criticised Amit Shah for not addressing Parliament on the issue, accusing the government of avoiding accountability.

He said attempts to protect the government's image would not succeed, claiming the youth had understood the Centre's approach towards the protests.

**"If there is even a shred of shame left, get Amit Shah to resign,"**  
— Mallikarjun Kharge

## Background

The controversy stems from protests over the alleged NEET paper leak, culminating in the July 20 'Sansad Chalo' march led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP). Kharge claimed students ended their agitation after receiving assurances that no punitive action would follow. He alleged those assurances were later violated through FIRs, detentions and action against protesters' social media accounts.

## KHARGE ALLEGES VENDETTA

|                        |                                        |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>ISSUE</b>           | Alleged action against NEET protesters |
| <b>DEMAND</b>          | Amit Shah's resignation                |
| <b>ALLEGATION</b>      | FIRs, detentions despite assurance     |
| <b>CONGRESS CHARGE</b> | Centre pursuing "vendetta"             |
| <b>PLATFORM</b>        | Kharge's post on X                     |

# Cabinet extends PM-KISAN, clears offshore, Khelo India schemes

Cabinet approves major farmer, energy and sports initiatives with enhanced five-year financial outlays nationwide.



## Major Announcements

- PM-KISAN:** Extended till 2030-31
- Farmer Aid:** Rs 6,000 annually via DBT
- Samudra Manthan:** Rs 84,084 crore outlay
- Khelo India:** Rs 29,054 crore approved
- Total Sports Outlay:** Rs 36,441 crore

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Friday approved the extension of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme till 2030-31 with an outlay of Rs 3.15 lakh crore, while also clearing the Samudra Manthan offshore exploration programme and an expanded Khelo India scheme.

Briefing reporters after the Cabinet meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said PM-KISAN would continue for another five years, ensuring annual income support of Rs 6,000 to every eligible farmer family through Direct Benefit Transfer in three instalments.

The Cabinet also approved the National Offshore Exploration Scheme (Samudra Manthan) with an outlay of Rs 84,084 crore. The scheme aims to boost offshore oil and

gas exploration, add over 600 million metric tonnes of oil equivalent (MMTOE) to reserves, increase domestic production and generate employment.

In the sports sector, the government approved an expanded Khelo India programme with an allocation of Rs 29,054 crore over five years, alongside Rs 7,387 crore for Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs). The combined outlay of Rs 36,441 crore is intended to strengthen grassroots sports, support elite athletes and prepare India for major global sporting events, including the 2030 Commonwealth Games and a bid for the 2036 Olympics.

The Cabinet also approved new initiatives such as Khelo India Feeder Schools and Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas to integrate sports with education and identify young talent early.

## Major Cabinet Decisions

The Cabinet approved three key initiatives aimed at agriculture, energy security and sports development. PM-KISAN will continue for another five years, ensuring income support for eligible farmers. The Samudra Manthan scheme seeks to boost offshore oil and gas exploration and enhance domestic energy production. The expanded Khelo India programme will strengthen grassroots sports, improve athlete support, introduce feeder schools and sports-focused institutions, and enhance funding for national sports federations as India pursues ambitious international sporting goals.

# LS passes Births, Deaths Bill amid Opposition protests

NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Friday passed the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026 without a debate as Opposition members continued their protests over the alleged police crackdown on students during the July 20 Parliament march.

The Bill was taken up for consideration after the House reassembled at noon with BJP MP Dilip Saikia in the Chair. It was passed by a voice vote amid sloganeering by Opposition members, several of whom entered the Well of the House demanding the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju criticised the Opposition for not participating in the discussion on what he described as an important piece of legislation. He said the government was prepared for a debate and expressed disappointment over the disruption. "It is unfortunate. Please do not repeat this in the future. People who sent you to Parliament will seek answers from you," Rijiju said.

Presiding officer Dilip Saikia also termed it unfortunate that the legislation had to be passed without the cooperation of Opposition members.



# BJP criticizes govt over Cauvery water release

MANDYA

BJP Karnataka president B Y Vijayendra on Friday launched a scathing attack on the Congress government over the release of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu, accusing Chief Minister D K Shivakumar of sacrificing farmers' interests for political reasons.

Speaking during the BJP's protest at the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) dam, Vijayendra alleged that the government ignored an early drought warning issued by the Centre and failed to prepare for a possible water crisis. Instead, he claimed, the State leadership remained preoccupied with internal political issues.

Questioning Shivakumar's handling of the dispute, Vijayendra said the Chief Minister, despite previously serving as Irrigation Minister, had failed to consult legal experts in

**"Even if I lose my chair, I will stand by the farmers and not release water."**  
—B Y Vijayendra, K'taka BJP Chief

time to protect Karnataka's interests. He also criticised the government for convening an all-party meeting only after significant quantities of water had already been released, calling it "too little, too late."

The BJP leader alleged that the proposed all-party meeting was intended to protect the Chief Minister's political position rather than Karnataka's farmers. He asserted that the BJP would join the meeting only if the government firmly committed to safeguarding the State's interests.

Vijayendra reiterated that the BJP would continue its agitation against what it termed anti-farmer policies and intensify protests in the coming days.

## GAZA PEACE PUSH

# Trump claims Hamas disarmament deal, hurdles remain

CAIRO/JERUSALEM

US President Donald Trump on Friday announced that an agreement had been reached for the phased disarmament of Hamas and other armed groups in Gaza, calling it a major step towards ending the conflict.

However, responses from Israeli and Hamas officials indicated that key differences over implementation remain unresolved.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said the deal, part of his "20-Point Plan", envisages phased disarmament, a gradual Israeli military withdrawal and deployment of an

international stabilisation force alongside a new Palestinian police force. He thanked Egypt, Qatar and Turkey for their mediation efforts.

Despite the announcement, Hamas insisted it would not begin disarmament until Israel completed its withdrawal from Gaza.

Israeli officials, meanwhile, reiterated that the complete demilitarisation of Gaza remained a precondition for any agreement, saying the current proposal did not fully meet Israel's security demands.

Negotiators in Cairo reported progress in talks, with discussions continuing over the



## Agreement Overview

- Claim:** Hamas disarmament agreement reached
- Mediator Nations:** Egypt, Qatar, Turkey
- Key Hurdle:** Timing of Hamas disarmament
- Israel's Demand:** Complete Gaza demilitarisation
- Talks:** Negotiations continue in Cairo

## Why Differences Persist

The proposed roadmap links Hamas' phased disarmament with a gradual Israeli military withdrawal from Gaza. Hamas insists Israel must first fulfil its commitments before surrendering weapons, while Israel demands complete demilitarisation as a precondition for implementation. The plan also envisages an international stabilisation force, a new Palestinian governing authority and dismantling of militant infrastructure. Negotiators say discussions are continuing in Cairo.

## QUICK READ

### SC orders MEA nodal officer for war victims' families

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Centre to appoint a nodal officer in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to coordinate with the families of Indians who have died, gone missing or sustained injuries while fighting in the Russia-Ukraine war. A Bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana also instructed the MEA to facilitate DNA matching of family members with mortal remains. It further directed the ministry to assist families in filing compensation claims before the Russian Embassy.



### 18 migrants die in rush to Spain's Ceuta border

CEUTA

At least 18 migrants were killed after thousands of people breached the border between Morocco and the Spanish enclave of Ceuta, triggering a humanitarian crisis and overwhelming local authorities. According to officials, many victims drowned while attempting to swim across the frontier, while others died in a stampede near the Tarajal beach breakwater. Thousands of migrants, including women and unaccompanied children, entered Ceuta, with many forced to sleep in parks and on sidewalks as emergency services struggled to cope.

QUICK READ

Drunken Men Damage Flower Pots, Residents Demand Action

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Two unidentified men allegedly vandalised flower pots and created a disturbance in Mico Layout, southeast Bengaluru, around 10.20 p.m. on Thursday. CCTV footage showed the pair, suspected to be under the influence of alcohol, shouting loudly and damaging flower pots placed outside houses, many of which were used to reserve parking spaces. They reportedly smashed and threw several pots onto the road, leaving debris scattered. Police said no formal complaint had been filed by Friday but officers will contact affected residents and examine additional CCTV footage to identify the suspects and take legal action.

Pet Birthday Parties Turn into Luxury Celebrations

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Pet birthday celebrations in Bengaluru are becoming increasingly lavish, with some events costing as much as 2 lakh. Pet cafés, resorts, and event planners say simple cake-cutting ceremonies have evolved into grand celebrations featuring themed decorations, customised cakes, professional photography, entertainment, pet-friendly menus, games, and return gifts. Many pet owners now treat their animals as family members and are willing to spend generously on memorable occasions. Businesses in the pet care industry report a sharp rise in demand for premium birthday packages, reflecting changing lifestyles and the growing trend of celebrating pets with the same enthusiasm as family members.

Universal Immunization Drive Protects Children’s Health across B’luru

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
The Bengaluru East City Corporation successfully conducted the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) at the K.R. Puram Urban Primary Health Centre, with officials stressing the importance of timely vaccination for every child. Speaking at the event, Commissioner D.S. Ramesh said children’s health remains the top priority and highlighted the Corporation’s efforts to protect young lives from vaccine-preventable diseases through regular immunization programmes. During the programme, children received vaccines according to the National Im-



munization Schedule. These included BCG, Polio, Pentavalent, Hepatitis B, and Measles-Rubella (MR), Diphtheria, and Tetanus vaccines. Health officials said these vaccines help protect children against serious illnesses such as tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, measles, rubella, and several

other infectious diseases. Before vaccination, doctors and healthcare workers examined every child to ensure the correct vaccine was given based on age and medical requirements. A total of six immunization sessions were conducted, benefiting 82 children. Officials also entered the details

Australia Strengthens Education and Investment Ties With Karnataka

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Karnataka Minister for Large and Medium Industries M.B. Patil on Friday inaugurated the new Australian Consulate-General in Bengaluru and the Bengaluru campus of the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Sydney. He said the two developments would strengthen educational, economic, and diplomatic ties between Karnataka and Australia while creating new opportunities for students, businesses, and investors in the State. Speaking after opening the UNSW Bengaluru campus at Manyata Tech Park, Patil said the university is among the world’s top higher education institutions and the sixth foreign university to establish a campus in Karnataka. He said the campus would offer students access to international-quality education closer to home. Initially, undergraduate programmes in Business, Computer Science, and Data Science and Decisions, along with a one-year postgraduate programme in Cyber Security, will be offered, with each course admitting 30 students. The university will follow the



same curriculum and teaching methods as its Australian campus. The Minister said several international universities, including the University of Liverpool, Lancaster University, La Trobe University, Flinders University, and Imperial College London, have already established campuses in Karnataka. He added that the State’s strong industrial base, leading research institutions, and growing innovation ecosystem continue to attract globally recognised universities. Patil expressed confidence that more foreign institutions would choose Karnataka in the coming years. Earlier in the day, Patil inaugurated the Australian Consulate-General on Cunningham Road. He said Australia had made the right decision by opening the Consulate in Bengaluru, where more than 40 Australian companies already operate.

Mosquito Control Drive Seeks Public Support against Diseases

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
The Bengaluru Central City Corporation has intensified its mosquito control campaign to prevent the spread of dengue, malaria, chikungunya, and other mosquito-borne diseases across the city. Commissioner Jagadeesh G. said the Health Department is carrying out continuous operations in dif-

ferent areas and stressed that public cooperation is essential to make the campaign successful and protect community health. The Corporation is conducting insecticide spraying, fogging, and larval control measures in high-risk locations, including residential areas, public places, drains, under-construction buildings,

and other mosquito breeding sites. Officials are also applying approved larvicides in stagnant water to destroy mosquito larvae before they develop into adult mosquitoes. The department said only recommended chemicals that are safe for people and the environment are being used during these operations. Health officials are inform-

ing residents before spraying and fogging activities begin and have advised people to follow the recommended safety precautions. Commissioner Jagadeesh G. said mosquito control cannot be achieved by the Health Department alone and called on citizens to play an active role in preventing mosquito breeding. He urged residents to

avoid water stagnation around homes and workplaces and to regularly remove or dispose of old tyres, coconut shells, open containers, and other items that can collect rainwater. The ongoing campaign also includes public awareness programmes to educate people about preventing mosquito-borne diseases.

RELIEF FOR PEDESTRIANS

Footpath Clearance Drive Restores Public Walkways



**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
The Bengaluru North City Corporation continued its large-scale footpath encroachment clearance drive across the city, reclaiming public walkways to ensure safe and obstruction-free movement for pedestrians. The campaign is being carried out under the guidance of Greater Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda and the leadership of Corporation Commis-

sioner Pommala Sunil Kumar. Officials said the initiative aims to remove illegal structures, improve accessibility, and encourage the proper use of footpaths by residents. As part of Friday’s operation, officials conducted a special drive on Sidedahalli Main Road in the Dasarahalli Division, clearing 1 km of encroached footpath. During the exercise, civic teams removed nine sheets, canopies, and roofing structures, along with 18 illegally constructed steps and ramps. Five advertisement poles and name boards were also removed, while nearly 40 tonnes of construc-

tion debris and soil were cleared from the area. The operation was carried out using one JCB, one tractor, one tipper, another support machine, and a team of 12 staff members. Officials said the month-long campaign has achieved significant results across the Bengaluru North City Corporation limits. Between July 1 and July 31, a total of 175.05 km of footpaths were cleared of encroachments. The drive also resulted in the removal of 414 shops and kiosks, 604 pushcarts, 1,381 AC sheets and canopies, 1,262 steps and ramps, 1,369 advertisement

poles and name boards, and 43 temporary and permanent sheds. In addition, 1,478.20 tonnes of construction debris and soil were cleared, while 8 km of footpaths were restored for public use. The Corporation said the special drive will continue in the coming weeks to reclaim footpaths, improve public spaces, and make walking safer for residents. Officials urged shop owners, businesses, and the public not to encroach on footpaths and appealed for cooperation in maintaining clean, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly streets across Bengaluru.

Masked Men Allegedly Attack Student Protester

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Following a remark made about Prime Minister Narendra Modi, according to the All India Students Association (AISA). The incident has raised concerns among student groups, who have demanded action against those responsible for the alleged assault.

The incident reportedly took place on Tuesday night when a 19-year-old student was attacked by unidentified people. According to AISA, the attackers questioned the student over his comment on the Prime Minister and allegedly threatened him during the confrontation. The student suffered injuries in the incident and the matter was brought to public attention by the organisation. AISA stated that the masked individuals approached the student and confronted him over his views. The group alleged that the attackers used threatening words while questioning the student about his demand for the Prime Minister’s resignation. The organisation has called for a proper investigation and action against those involved in the incident.

A student protester in Bengaluru was allegedly attacked by a group of masked men.



Student groups have expressed concern over growing tensions around political discussions and freedom of expression. They said students should be allowed to share their opinions without fear of violence or intimidation. The incident has also sparked discussions about maintaining a safe environment for young people participating in public debates. Authorities are expected to examine the details of the case and take necessary steps based on the evidence available. The incident has once again highlighted the importance of protecting peaceful expression and ensuring that disagreements are handled through lawful and democratic methods rather than threats or violence.

Corporation Fines Jewellery Store Over Waste Violation

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
The Bengaluru South City Corporation has imposed a hefty fine on a commercial establishment for violating the Solid Waste Management Rules by failing to segregate waste before disposal. Civic officials said the action was part of an ongoing enforcement drive aimed at improving public hygiene and ensuring that businesses follow proper waste management practices across the city. During a routine inspection on Friday morning, Corporation marshals found Bhima Jewellery on 8th Main Road, 4th Block, Koramangala, under the BTM Layout Assembly Constituency, dumping mixed wet and dry waste on a roadside footpath. Officials said the waste had not been separated as required under the rules, creating unhygienic conditions in a public place and posing a risk to public health. Following the inspection, the Corporation imposed



and collected a total fine of ₹50,839 from the establishment. The penalty included a base fine of ₹50,000 along with a service charge of ₹839. Officials also educated the staff about the importance of proper waste segregation and the need to maintain cleanliness to prevent environmental pollution and improve sanitation in public areas. The Corporation said it will continue taking strict action against commercial establishments that fail to comply with waste management regulations. Officials urged businesses and residents to cooperate by separating wet and dry waste before disposal and avoiding littering in public places. They added that responsible waste disposal is essential for keeping Bengaluru clean.

QUICK READ

5K Run Promotes Men's Mental Health Awareness

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Around 1,500 participants took part in a 5K run organised by Pad-mashree Business School and Padmashree Institute of Management and Sciences to promote awareness about men's mental health. The event was held at Kom-maghatta near Kengeri on July 25 with the aim of encouraging open conversations, reducing stigma, and motivating people to seek help without hesitation. Students, faculty members, corporate professionals, and fitness enthusiasts participated in the run. Organisers said the initiative highlighted the importance of emotional well-being and inspired society to recognise that seeking mental health support is a sign of strength.

Suspended BMTC Conductor Reinstated After Apology to Minister

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
BMTC conductor T.G. Ramakrishna has been reinstated after apologising to Karnataka Transport Minister Byrathi Suresh. The conductor had been suspended for allegedly asking the minister to get off a bus during a surprise inspection after he offered a 100 note for a 6 ticket without exact change. Following the apology, the minister directed BMTC to revoke the suspension. However, Byrathi Suresh issued a stern warning to conductors and drivers against misbehaving with passengers over change and instructed transport staff to treat commuters politely, warning that misconduct would invite strict disciplinary action.

6 Deaths Raise Fresh Safety Concerns At Namma Metro

16 suicide attempts have been reported, safety concerns are mounting over Bengaluru's Namma Metro following a rise in suicides, suicide attempts, and other rule violations across the network.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Official data released by the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRL) shows that six people have died on the metro network so far, while. The figures have sparked fresh calls for stronger security measures and improved systems to prevent people from accessing metro tracks.

According to BMRL data, eight people have jumped onto the tracks, while 30 others were found entering the tracks without authorisation. The latest tragedy occurred earlier this week at Huskur Gate Metro Station on the RV Road-Bommasandra Yellow Line, where a 37-year-old man reportedly jumped onto the tracks as a train approached and died. The incident has once again drawn attention to the growing number of safety-related cases re-



Karnataka Moves Ahead with Mangaluru Cruise Plans

Karnataka explores launching cruise tourism services from Mangaluru after in-principle industry support and consultations.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka has taken a significant step towards developing cruise tourism, with Waterways Leisure Tourism Limited agreeing in principle to explore the feasibility of launching cruise services from Mangaluru. The development follows consultations initiated by the Department of Tourism under the direction of Tourism and Energy Minister K. J. George.

A delegation led by Tourism Secretary Dr. V. Ram Prasad Manohar, IAS, held dis-



cussions in Mumbai with senior officials of the cruise operator, including President and Chief Executive Officer Jurgen Bailom and Associate Director for Port Operations Bharat Acharya. The meeting

focused on infrastructure requirements, operational feasibility, market potential and tourism opportunities for cruise services from the Karnataka coast.

The company stressed the need for a detailed assessment of tourism demand, commercial viability and supporting infrastructure before commencing operations. Its technical team is scheduled to visit Mangaluru next month to inspect port facilities and evaluate the city's readiness for cruise tourism.

The Tourism Department has also studied the Mumbai

International Cruise Terminal to understand global-standard passenger facilities and operational systems. Based on those observations, officials have been directed to undertake a preliminary feasibility study for establishing an international-standard cruise terminal in Mangaluru.

Minister K. J. George said the initiative would unlock the tourism potential of Karnataka's coastline, generate employment opportunities, attract investments and strengthen the state's position as a leading coastal tourism destination.

Orange Alert Issued as Heavy Rain Likely Across city

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an Orange Alert for eight districts in Karnataka for the next three days, warning of heavy rainfall in several parts of the State. Officials said intense rain is expected mainly in the coastal and Malnad regions, and people living in vulnerable areas have been advised to remain cautious and follow official weather updates. The alert has been issued to help authorities prepare for possible flooding, waterlogging, and disruptions caused by continuous rainfall.

The Orange Alert covers Udipi, Dakshina Kannada, Uttara Kannada, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Belagavi, Bidar, and Kalaburagi districts. The weather department has forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall in these regions during the next three days. Meanwhile, a Yellow Alert has been issued for Kodagu, Hassan, Dharwad, Gadag, and Vijayapura, where



moderate rainfall is expected. Officials have advised district administrations to stay prepared and monitor weather conditions closely.

In Bengaluru, the weather is expected to remain cloudy, with light rain likely over the next five days. Similar rainfall is also forecast in 14 districts across Karnataka. Although heavy showers are not expected in the capital, residents have been advised to carry umbrellas and exercise caution while travelling, especially during peak traffic hours when rain may lead to waterlogging and slow-moving traffic on several roads.

The weather department

has also warned of strong winds reaching speeds of up to 60 kmph along the Karnataka coast. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea until conditions improve, while people living near coastal areas have been urged to stay alert. Authorities have appealed to the public to avoid unnecessary travel during periods of heavy rain, stay away from flooded areas, and follow instructions issued by local officials. Emergency teams remain on standby to respond to any weather-related incidents, while residents are encouraged to keep track of official forecasts and safety advisories.

Basaveshwarnagar Hosts Grand Annual Lakshmi Puja Celebrations

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The 28th Annual Group Lakshmi Puja was celebrated with devotion and enthusiasm at the Sri Ganpati Temple and Educational Institution (Regd.) in the G.E.M.L. area of Basaveshwarnagar. The religious event, held at the temple premises on Sheshagiri Sri Huttu Venkataramana Swamy Temple Road, brought together hundreds of devotees for special prayers. More than 151 women participated in the group Lakshmi Puja, seeking blessings for peace, prosperity, and the well-being of their families.

Former BBMP Deputy Mayor Hemalatha Gopalayya attended the programme as the chief guest and inaugurated the puja. She greeted the devotees and extended her wishes, highlighting the importance of preserving cultural and spiritual traditions through such community celebrations. The event witnessed active participation from local residents, who gathered in large numbers to

take part in the religious rituals.

Following the group puja, a Mahamangalarati was performed in the evening amid devotional chants. Hundreds of devotees attended the ceremony and later received prasadam, which was distributed at the temple premises. The atmosphere remained festive throughout the day as families and worshippers came together to celebrate the annual event with faith and devotion.

Former BBMP members Padmavati Srinivas, Nagarathna Lokesh, and Prem Chandragauda, along with temple office-bearers and volunteers, were also present during the celebrations. Organisers said the annual Lakshmi Puja continues to strengthen community bonds while promoting religious harmony and cultural values. They thanked devotees and volunteers for making the 28th edition of the event a grand success and expressed hope for even greater participation in the years to come.

Directly Recruit Veterinarians, Says Former Minister

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Former Karnataka Minister A. Manju has urged the State government to recruit veterinarians directly without conducting competitive examinations. Speaking at the Vidhana Soudha on Friday, he raised concerns over alleged irregularities in the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) veterinary recruitment process. He referred to reports claiming that bribes of up to ₹80 lakh were demanded for veterinary posts and called for immediate action to ensure transparency in appointments.

Manju said that in September 2017, when he served as a minister, the Cabinet had approved the recruitment of 650 veterinary officers through direct appointments based on reservation and roster rules. He said the recruitment was carried out to strengthen veterinary services and provide timely treatment for farmers' livestock. Questioning the present government's approach, he asked why a similar recruitment process had

Manju urges direct veterinary recruitment, alleges irregularities in KPSC selection process and appointments.



not been adopted this time. The former minister urged the government to recruit eligible candidates directly according to the prescribed roster and merit system. He said any further delay would only raise doubts about the recruitment process and affect deserving candidates. He also stressed that veterinary services play a vital role in supporting farmers and the livestock sector, making the immediate appointment of qualified veterinary doctors essential.

Manju appealed to the government to address the issue without delay and ensure that recruitment is carried out fairly and transparently. He said direct recruitment would help fill vacancies quickly while restoring confidence among veterinary graduates waiting for employment.

Provide jobs, prevent rural migration: Khandre

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Eshwara B. Khandre has directed Gram Panchayat Chief Executive Officers to provide employment opportunities in villages to prevent farmers from suffering crop losses due to inadequate rainfall. Chairing a meeting at Vikas Soudha with the Chief Secretary, department secretaries, and district Panchayat Chief Executive Officers, the Minister stressed that creating local jobs would help rural families earn an income while supporting agricultural communities during difficult weather conditions.

Khandre said the Central Government has allocated Rs 5,709 crore for the period from July 1 to March 31, while the State Government will contribute Rs 3,806 crore. Together, the available funds total Rs 9,515 crore for the nine-month period. He said the funds should be utilised effectively to strengthen rural em-



ployment and ensure that eligible workers receive timely job opportunities under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

The Minister said the government has the capacity to provide employment to nearly five lakh people every month under the scheme during the nine-month period. However, he expressed disappointment over the slow progress recorded in July and instructed officials to improve implementation from August. He directed district authorities to take up rural infrastructure projects in a planned manner so that permanent community assets are created while generating regular employment.

Central Corporation Launches Massive August Cleanliness Campaign across City

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Central Municipal Corporation has announced a month-long cleanliness campaign under the "Freedom from Waste" initiative to improve sanitation and public health across the city. Commissioner Jagadish G. said the phased campaign will be conducted throughout August 2026 with the objective of making Bengaluru cleaner, healthier, and more beautiful. Special cleaning operations

will cover public places, parks, roadsides, canals, lakes, markets, public toilets, and other important locations. Officials have been instructed to carry out the drive according to a detailed schedule prepared for the entire month.

The campaign will begin on August 1 with the cleaning of bus stands and public transport hubs, followed by parks and playgrounds on August 3, temple surroundings on August 5, railway track areas on August 7, historical monu-

ments and tourist spots on August 10, and flyovers and underpasses on August 12. Other scheduled drives include cleaning waterways on August 14, embankments on August 17, public toilets on August 19, road dividers and traffic islands on August 21, public spitting and open urination spots on August 24, slum areas on August 26, government schools, colleges, and offices on August 28, and BESCOM transformer surroundings on August 30.

RECRUITMENT SCAM

Video Raises Fresh Questions in KPSC Recruitment Scam

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Fresh allegations have surfaced in the alleged Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) recruitment scam after a video, claimed to have been accessed, and emerged showing a person allegedly posing as a middleman speaking to a candidate. The video has raised serious questions about the integrity of the recruitment process, although the claims made in the recording have not been independently verified. According to the video, the

alleged middleman claims that if money is paid, even Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) answer sheets stored in government lockers can be tampered with. The person is also heard claiming that examination marks can be changed and candidates' names can be added to the final selection list. The statements, if proven true, could point to serious irregularities in the recruitment process.

The emergence of the video has intensified concerns surrounding the ongoing KPSC recruitment controversy.



However, there has been no official confirmation that the allegations are genuine or that any OMR sheets were actually altered. Authorities are ex-

pected to examine the authenticity of the video and determine whether the claims have any factual basis.

The latest development has

sparked renewed demands for a thorough investigation into the recruitment process. Opposition leaders and candidates have been calling for greater transparency and accountability in public service recruitment.

Officials are yet to issue a detailed response to the claims made in the video, while further investigations are expected to determine whether any criminal wrongdoing occurred and whether legal action is required against those allegedly involved.





QUICK READ

VTU College hosts  
Interdisciplinary Project  
Model Exhibition

CHIKKABALLAPURA

An innovative models exhibition on science, technology, environment, and social development was organised by the Interdisciplinary Project Learning Laboratory at Chintamani Visvesvaraya Technological University Unit College. Principal Dr. Basavaraj inaugurated the programme and said project-based learning helps students improve creativity, research skills, and problem-solving abilities. Students from CSE, CSE (AI & ML), ECE, and EEE departments showcased models based on smart agriculture, artificial intelligence, environmental protection, and social technologies. The exhibition attracted students, faculty members, and visitors who appreciated the creative ideas and efforts of the participants during the event.

Power supply  
disruption announced  
in Mandya areas

MANDYA

Power supply will be disrupted in several areas of Mandya on August 1 due to emergency maintenance work on the 11 KV Kallahalli and Kottatti NJY power lines from the 66/11 KV Mandya Power Distribution Centre. The outage will continue from 9 am to 5 pm. Villages including Kiragandur and surrounding areas will be affected under the Kallahalli line. Kottatti, Bevinahalli, A. Hullukere, B. Hullukere, Molekoppalu, Lalanakere, Mottahalli, and nearby areas will also face power interruptions. CESC officials requested residents to cooperate during the maintenance work for ensuring better power supply services.

Haveri locals urge  
Collector to open  
ration shops

HAVERI

Residents of wards 29, 30, and 31 in Haveri city have requested the District Collector Dr. Vijaya Mahantesh Danamma to establish fair price shops in their areas. Locals from Makanagalli, Manigara Oni, Talwara Oni, Chandrapatna Road, Mahbub Nagar, Tajnagar, and nearby areas said the absence of nearby ration shops is causing difficulties for poor and middle-class families. Elderly people and daily wage workers are facing challenges in collecting ration from distant shops. Social activists submitted a petition urging authorities to open new fair price shops to provide easier access to essential supplies.

# Grihalakshmi scheme benefits review ordered in Mandya

Chikkalingaiah directed officials to identify deceased and ineligible beneficiaries, update records, and prevent misuse of government funds

MANDYA

Authorities have been directed to ensure that eligible beneficiaries are not deprived of the Grihalakshmi scheme benefits due to any reason. District Level Guarantee Scheme Implementation Authority Chairman Chikkalingaiah issued the instructions during a committee meeting held at the Zilla Panchayat Mini Hall.

Chikkalingaiah asked officials to identify deceased and ineligible beneficiaries and update the records to prevent misuse of government funds. He said the Grihalakshmi scheme, one of Karnataka's major guarantee programmes, is being implemented effectively in Mandya district, which has achieved strong performance.

Officials informed that the scheme reached 98 percent progress by April 2026. Out of 4,66,086 registered beneficiaries, around 4,40,428 eligible women have received direct



financial assistance of ₹88.08 crore. The chairman instructed officials to ensure that genuine beneficiaries continue receiving support without difficulties.

The meeting also reviewed the Annabhagya scheme and stressed the importance of providing quality food grains through fair price shops. Officials were told to maintain proper standards during storage, transportation and distribution. Regular inspections should be conducted, and action should be taken against irregularities, he said.

The progress of other guarantee schemes was also discussed.

Under the Yuvanidhi scheme, 8,968 beneficiaries received financial assistance, while awareness programmes were suggested to help more youth understand the benefits. Officials reported that the Shakti scheme provided free travel facilities to 22.27 crore women passengers in Mandya district. The Griha Jyothi scheme has also benefited more than five lakh registered consumers.

The meeting concluded with directions to strengthen implementation, improve transparency and ensure that government schemes reach deserving people. Several officials and

Progress of  
guarantee schemes

- Grihalakshmi scheme achieved 98 percent progress by April 2026.
- Around 4.40 lakh women received ₹88.08 crore assistance.
- Officials directed preventing misuse through beneficiary record updates.
- Annabhagya scheme reviewed for quality grain distribution standards.
- Shakti scheme provided free travel to 22.27 crore women.
- Yuvanidhi supported 8,968 beneficiaries with financial assistance.

authority members participated in the discussion and reviewed the progress of welfare programmes.

## Irrigation Committee opposes Cauvery water release order

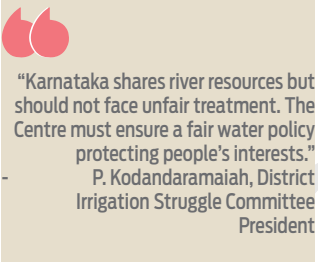
CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

The District Irrigation Struggle Committee has opposed the order to release Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu and urged the central government to intervene in the issue.

Committee president P. Kodandaramaiah said Karnataka is facing severe drought and drinking water problems have increased across the state. The government has already advised people not to take up farming activities due to water shortages.

He said releasing Cauvery water during such difficult conditions was against public interest and affected farmers and residents. The committee, which has fought for the Bhadra Upper River Project for 25 years, supported statewide protests demanding protection of Karnataka's water rights.

Kodandaramaiah stated that Karnataka has often shared river resources with neighbouring states but should not be treated unfairly. He requested the central government to create a fair water policy and



protect the interests of people facing hardships.

He also appealed to state MPs from both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha to raise their voices together for Karnataka's interests. He said political leaders should avoid divisions and work together to solve Cauvery and irrigation concerns. The committee demanded approval for major projects including Bhadra Upper River Project and Mekedatu initiative while seeking justice in water sharing matters.

It urged the state government to continue legal efforts and provide strong support for the Cauvery case. The committee said the issue should not become a political matter and called for permanent solutions through discussion and cooperation.

## MLA inaugurates roads and safety projects in Madikeri

CH NEWS, MADIKERI

Dr. Mantar Gowda, MLA of Madikeri assembly constituency, inaugurated several development works in the city, including a Rs. 50-lakh barrier built to protect a reservoir settlement.

The project was a long-pending demand of residents who faced concerns over safety during heavy rains.

He also inaugurated a new concrete road to Goulibeedi and another concrete road connecting Bhagavathy Nagar to Abbey Falls. The works were completed using funds provided under the Chief Minister's special grant for Madikeri city development. Dr. Gowda said Rs. 3.5-crore has been allocated for layout improvements and assured that more funds would be provided to transform Madikeri into a model city in Karnataka.

Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Raj Organization district president Thennira Maina said



residents of the reservoir settlement had lived with fear of landslides since the 2018 natural disaster. He said the completed barrier work has brought relief and thanked the MLA on behalf of local residents.

Municipal officials, council members and local citizens attended the programme. The project is expected to improve safety and provide better infrastructure for people living in the area.

Dr. Gowda said development activities would continue across Madikeri, focusing on public needs and creating

## District orders insurance meetings amid rain shortage

CHITRADURGA

Chitradurga district has recorded a 29 percent rainfall deficit during June and July, creating concerns among farmers.

District Magistrate T. Venkatesh directed agriculture officials and insurance company representatives to hold taluk-level meetings and recommend sowing failure insurance for affected farmers.

The district was expected to receive 101.7 mm rainfall during the period but received only 72.6 mm. Due to poor rains, only 65,340 hectares of the total 3,39,304 hectares of agricultural land have been sown during the current monsoon season. Officials were asked to explain insurance benefits clearly to farmers and remove confusion regarding compensation. The District Magistrate said farmers registered under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana should receive proper information through farmer contact centres. If sowing fails in more

The District Magistrate urged PMFBY farmers to use contact centres, noting failed sowing over 75% may qualify for 25% compensation

than 75 percent of a notified area due to weather conditions, farmers may receive up to 25 percent of the insured amount as compensation.

Agriculture officials informed that more than 1.23 lakh farmers have registered under the crop insurance scheme in the district. They requested an extension of the registration deadline in five taluks due to delayed rainfall and sowing problems. The deadline for ragi crop insurance in Hosadurga taluk has already been extended.

Insurance company officials said the scheme was designed to support farmers during difficult situations. They added that compensation would help reduce financial pressure caused by crop losses.

## Alupa Dynasty seminar to explore Tulu history

CH NEWS, UDUPI

The Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy will organize a state-level seminar titled 'Alupas in the Pages of History' on August 6 at Sri Pooranaprajna Sandhya College in Udupi.

The programme is being arranged in association with the Mangalore University History Teachers' Association to discuss the history and contributions of the Alupa dynasty. Academy President Taranath Gatti Kapikad will inaugurate the event at 9.30 am, while college principal Dr. Chandrakanth Bhat will preside over the inaugural session. During the seminar, Dr. B. Jagadish Shetty, director of the Rashtrakavi Govinda Pai Research Centre, will deliver a special lecture on the historical background of Udyavara. The first technical session will feature Dr. Ganapayya Bhat speaking about the political relations of the Alupas. Prof. Jayaram Shettigar will discuss Barkur during the Alupa period in the second session.

## CEO Nandini inspects schools and Anganwadis

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Nandini K.R. conducted a surprise visit to government schools and Anganwadi centres in Channapanadoddi village under Belur Gram Panchayat limits of Mandya taluk.

During the inspection, she reviewed educational activities, basic facilities, cleanliness, and student attendance records. She instructed officials to regularly update student attendance through the 'Nirantara' app and maintain accurate records.

The CEO directed Belur Gram Panchayat staff to en-

sure proper cleanliness on school premises and maintain a healthy learning environment for students. She also checked the preparation,

quality, and cleanliness of meals provided under the hot meal scheme and advised officials to serve nutritious food according to government guidelines.

At the Anganwadi centre, she inspected children's attendance, nutrition supply, learning activities, and available facilities.

She instructed the concerned officers to provide all necessary services for the overall development of chil-



dren. Zilla Panchayat Assistant Planning Officer Harsha, along with school and Anganwadi teachers, was present during the inspection.

The visit highlighted the importance of maintaining quality education, hygiene, and child welfare services in rural areas.

## Independence Day preparations begin across Madikeri district

CH NEWS, MADIKERI

District Magistrate S.J. Somashekhar has directed all departments to complete preparations for the Independence Day celebration on August 15 in a meaningful manner.

He spoke at a preliminary meeting held at the District Magistrate's office hall on Friday. Since it is the rainy season, officials decided to hold the event at Madikeri's fort premises with proper arrangements.

The magistrate instructed teams to build a waterproof stage and arrange shamiana,

microphones and other facilities. He asked committees to prepare for flag hoisting, rehearsals and cultural programs featuring songs promoting national unity and integrity. District Physical Education Officer Srinivas said five school teams will perform cultural programs with 345 students participating. RPI Police Inspector Ganesh informed that 22 teams will join the procession with Civil Police, Forest Guard, NCC, Scouts and Guides teams.

The lunch committee was asked to arrange food for children and ensure cleanliness, drinking water and environ-

mental care at the venue. Officials were also instructed to honor achievers in various fields and students with high SSLC and PUC marks. Good performers from health and women development departments will also be recognized.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sahana S. Hadimani directed officials to make necessary arrangements smoothly. Several senior officers from different departments attended the meeting and shared responsibilities. The administration emphasized that all staff should participate and ensure successful celebration.

## Tata Power activates 60-kW DC rapid charger at Sasthan

CH NEWS, UDUPI

Tata Power, recognised as India's foremost EV charging operator, has extended its coverage by installing a 60-kW DC Fast Charging Station at Sasthan, which sits beside National Highway 66 in Udupi district. This addition improves rapid charging availability for commercial fleets, business travellers and tourists who rely on Karnataka's principal coastal highway. Situated along one of the nation's most significant coastal thoroughfares, the facility is built to assist both commercial transport needs and recreational journeys.

## Ballari man accused of killing wife, infant

CH NEWS, BALLARI

A man allegedly killed his wife and seven-month-old daughter with a hammer following a family dispute in Andhral area of Ballari.

The victims were identified as Rajeshwari and her infant daughter Ashbini. The accused, identified as Honnooru Swamy, reportedly escaped from the scene after the incident.

According to police, frequent arguments had been taking place in the family for the past few days. The dispute allegedly turned serious late Thursday night, resulting in the tragic incident.

After receiving information, APMC Police officials visited the spot, conducted an inspection, and shifted the bodies to the hospital for post-mortem examination. Police said the exact reason behind the incident is still under investigation.

A case has been registered at the APMC Police Station, and a search operation has been started to trace the accused.

Officials stated that further investigation is continuing to collect more details about the case and bring the person responsible before the law. The incident has caused concern among local residents.



QUICK READ

Odisha govt reviews flood situation

Bhubaneswar

Odisha Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari on Friday chaired a high-level review meeting on the flood situation in the state with Collectors of flood-affected districts. The meeting was attended by the Chief Secretary, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) and senior officials from various departments. According to the latest official data, 1,362 villages, 446 Gram Panchayats, 57 blocks, and 11 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across 15 districts have been affected, impacting a total of 7,91,846 people. Of them, 2,68,943 people remain stranded in flood-affected areas, while crops on 21,380 hectares of farmland have been damaged by the floods.

Married daughters eligible for compassionate jobs: SC

New Delhi

The Supreme Court has ruled that a married daughter cannot be denied consideration for compassionate appointment merely because a state government policy allows such appointments only to divorced or deserted daughters, holding that such a classification is unconstitutional and violative of Article 14 of the Constitution. A Bench of Justices M.M. Sundresh and Prasanna B. Varale allowed an appeal filed by Sayara Khatoon and her daughter against a Patna High Court order, which had upheld the rejection of the daughter's claim for compassionate appointment following the death of her father.

BJP saves jailed councillor after showdown

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

In a politically charged move that triggered uproar in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation Council, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led administration on Friday secured approval for a six month leave of absence for jailed BJP councillor R. Sugathan, preventing his disqualification under the Kerala Municipality Act. Sugathan, the councillor from Vazhottukonam ward, is currently lodged in Vyyur Central Jail under the Kerala Anti Social Activities (Prevention) Act (KAAPA). Under the Kerala Municipality Act, a councillor who remains absent from three consecutive council meetings without prior leave is liable to lose membership. The leave application, brought before the 101 mem-

PUNJAB HONOURS  
SHAHEED UDHAM SINGH

Punjab CM paid tribute to Shaheed Udham Singh, reaffirming the state's commitment to honouring freedom fighters and preserving their legacy

CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday reaffirmed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government's commitment to upholding the ideals and aspirations of the freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives to liberate India from British colonial rule. Addressing a state-level function organised in Sunam to mark the 87th martyrdom day of Shaheed Udham Singh, the Chief Minister paid glowing tributes to the legendary revolutionary, describing his patriotism and supreme sacrifice as a timeless source of inspiration for future generations. Mann said the nation would always remain indebted to the iconic martyr for his unmatched courage and unwavering commitment to justice. Earlier in the day, the Chief



Minister offered floral tributes and laid a wreath at the memorial dedicated to Shaheed Udham Singh, remembering his extraordinary contribution to India's freedom struggle. Speaking on the occasion, Mann said Shaheed Udham Singh's sacrifice symbolised the determination of countless freedom fighters who laid down their lives to secure independence and build a just and egalitarian society com-

mitted to the welfare of the poor and underprivileged. Recalling the historic significance of Udham Singh's actions, the Chief Minister said the revolutionary avenged the Jallianwala Bagh massacre by assassinating Michael O'Dwyer at London's Caxton Hall. He noted that O'Dwyer, the then Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, had been responsible for the administration under which hundreds of innocent

- Punjab marks 87th martyrdom day of Shaheed Udham Singh.
- CM Bhagwant Mann pays floral tributes at Sunam memorial.
- Reaffirms commitment to freedom fighters' ideals.
- Highlights Udham Singh's revenge for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

and unarmed Indians were brutally gunned down at Jallianwala Bagh. Mann said commemorating the martyrdom day of Shaheed Udham Singh was an opportunity to express the nation's deepest gratitude to one of its bravest sons, whose sacrifice continues to inspire citizens to serve the country with courage, patriotism and selfless dedication.

Meghalaya Panel Seeks Loan Recovery

SHILLONG

The Meghalaya Legislative Assembly's Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU) has directed authorities to submit a detailed report on the recovery of nearly Rs 29 crore outstanding from CMJ Breweries Pvt. Ltd. while seeking an explanation from the Power Department over audit irregularities flagged in two Central rural electrification schemes. The directions were issued during a meeting chaired by legislator Charles Marngar, where the committee reviewed the financial performance of public sector undertakings and examined audit observations made by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). Officials informed the committee that CMJ Breweries Pvt. Ltd., a major industrial unit based in Byrnihat, had availed a loan of Rs 61.94 crore from the Meghalaya Industrial De-

velopment Corporation (MIDC). While the company has repaid Rs 23.98 crore, nearly Rs 29 crore remains outstanding, with the repayment deadline set for August 2026. The committee instructed MIDC to furnish a comprehensive report on the recovery process and said it would continue monitoring the matter until the pending dues are fully recovered. COPU also reviewed the cases of Greystone Smelters and Greystone Strips Limited. Although the MIDC Board approved the accounting write-off of loans in September 2025, the committee clarified that the write-off did not amount to a waiver of liabilities and directed the companies to clear their outstanding dues within a week. The panel was informed that Aura Hotels and Resorts Pvt. Ltd. had fully repaid its Rs 51 crore loan, while dues relating to Badhok Nongmalieh Ford Dealer were settled through the

transfer of a 43.22 lakh square foot property in Ri-Bhoi district. The committee also expressed concern over CAG findings that payments under the SAUBHAGYA and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) schemes were made without verification of mandatory insurance-related documents and sought a detailed explanation from the Power Department. CAG Flags Rural Electrification Irregularities The committee raised concerns over audit observations highlighting payments made under the SAUBHAGYA and DDUGJY schemes without verifying mandatory insurance documents. The Power Department has been directed to explain the lapses, while the Assembly panel will continue monitoring compliance and corrective measures to ensure accountability in the implementation of the Centrally sponsored programmes.

Army Unveils  
Extreme Weather  
Diesel

NEW DELHI

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Dhiraj Seth on Friday launched the indigenously developed 'Xtreme Weather Grade' (XWG) Diesel, a specialised fuel designed to significantly improve the mobility and operational readiness of military vehicles in extreme weather conditions. Speaking at the launch, General Seth described XWG Diesel as a game-changing indigenous innovation that would strengthen the Army's operational capabilities while ensuring greater mission reliability across challenging terrains and severe climatic conditions. Developed jointly by the Indian Army and Oil Marketing Companies, the specialised fuel has been engineered to keep combat and logistics vehicles operational in high-altitude and snow-bound regions where conventional diesel often fails due to freezing temperatures. According to an official statement, conventional diesel thickens at extremely low temperatures, leading to clogged fuel filters and vehicle breakdowns. XWG Diesel addresses this challenge by remaining effective even at temperatures as low as minus

XWG Diesel is a game-changing indigenous innovation that will enhance mobility, operational readiness and mission reliability across extreme climatic conditions -Dhiraj Seth, Army Chief General

42 degrees Celsius, ensuring uninterrupted mobility during harsh winters. The fuel complies with BS-VI emission norms and IS 1460:2025 specifications, enabling its seamless use across the Indian Army's existing fleet without requiring engine modifications or re-homologation. General Seth said the new fuel would eliminate several temporary measures traditionally adopted to keep military vehicles functional during severe winters, thereby enhancing the safety, efficiency and morale of troops deployed in difficult operational environments. He also congratulated the Indian Army team and the Oil Marketing Companies for developing the specialised fuel within a year and expressed confidence that similar indigenous innovations would meet future operational requirements while contributing to the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Online nominations for PMRBP  
2026 to close on August 15

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has extended the last date for submission of online nominations for the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) from July 31 to August 15, an official said on Friday. The nomination process for the PMRBP commenced on April 1, through the National Awards Portal (<https://awards.gov.in>). The awards are conferred on children who have demonstrated exceptional achieve-

ments in the fields of Bravery, Social Service, Environment, Sports, Arts and Culture, and Science and Technology, an official statement said. Any child who is an Indian citizen residing in India, is aged above five years and not exceeding 18 years of age (as on July 31, 2026), is eligible for the awards. Nominations, including self-nominations and recommendations by any citizen, would be accepted only through the National Awards Portal, the statement said.

Haryana CM questions Punjab counterpart over fulfilling 2022 poll promises

CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Friday questioned his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann over the implementation of the 56 promises made by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in the 2022 Punjab Assembly elections. He said that with only about four months left before the next Assembly elections, the people of Punjab deserve to know how many of those promises had been fulfilled. He also questioned whether the Punjab government would be able to fulfil all the remaining promises within the time left. Addressing the 87th martyrdom day event of Shaheed

Sardar Udham Singh in Sanaur town, Chief Minister Saini paid tributes to the legendary freedom fighter and said only a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Punjab could fulfil the dreams envisioned by Shaheed Udham Singh for the development of the youth. Taking a swipe at the AAP government, the Haryana CM remarked that a state's development is driven not by slogans but by intent and commitment. Chief Minister Saini also targeted the Punjab government over the alleged irregularities in the recruitment of Excise Inspectors, describing it as a grave injustice to talented youth. Highlighting the achieve-

ments of the Haryana government, CM Saini said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is scaling new heights of development while taking pride in its rich heritage. He said the Haryana government is working with the same vision and has undertaken several welfare initiatives for farmers, women and youth. Referring to the BJP's election manifesto in Haryana, CM Saini added that the party had made 217 'Sankalps' (promises), of which 70 have already been fulfilled within just one-and-a-half years, while the remaining 147 would also be implemented soon.

Delhi CM Rekha Gupta distributes  
bicycles to over 3,000 girl students

NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday launched the Vidya Vahini scheme, distributing bicycles to over 3,000 girl students of Class IX from different government schools, an official said. At a programme held at the Sports Complex in East Vinod Nagar, the Chief Minister said that under the Vidya Vahini scheme, nearly 1.40 lakh girl students studying in Delhi government schools will receive free bicycles in a phased manner. She also interacted with the students, asking them about their studies, future aspirations and dreams, said an of-



ficial statement. The programme is a celebration of Nari Shakti and of the collective resolve to empower every daughter through education, she said. She encouraged them to pursue education with confidence and dedication and strive to achieve their goals in life. The students also presented her handmade paintings,

which she appreciated, praising their creativity and talent while wishing them a bright future. Union Minister of State and Delhi BJP president Harsh Malhotra, Delhi Education Minister Ashish Sood, Patparganj MLA Ravinder Singh Negi, Director of Education and Sports Nitin Jindal, teachers and parents were present on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Gupta said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has placed women-led development at the heart of the vision for a Viksit Bharat and has described education as the most effective means of women's empowerment.

DRUG CRACKDOWN DRIVE

Agencies Boost Anti-Drug Coordination

BHOPAL

The Second Quarter State-Level Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) Meetings of 2026 for Madhya Pradesh and Assam focused on strengthening inter-agency coordination, intelligence sharing and financial investigations to intensify the nationwide crackdown against drug trafficking. According to an official statement issued on Friday, the meetings were held in Bhopal and Guwahati, bringing together central and state enforcement agencies to re-

view ongoing operations and formulate strategies for dismantling narcotics syndicates under the vision of a Drug-Free India. The Madhya Pradesh meeting, jointly chaired by the Deputy Director General (Western Region) of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Additional Director General of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF), witnessed participation from agencies including the NIA, Customs, Income Tax Department, Central Bureau of Narcotics, Railway Protection Force, State Excise, Food and

Drug Administration and the State Prosecution Department. Officials reviewed significant drug seizure cases, discussed emerging trafficking trends and finalised plans to implement the Vision Document on Narcotics Control. The meeting also emphasised monitoring 50 identified NDPS cases for early disposal, expediting PIT-NDPS proposals, strengthening financial investigations and conducting intelligence-led joint operations. In Guwahati, the Assam JCC meeting was chaired by

NCB Deputy Director General (NER) R. Sudhakar, with participation from agencies including the ANTF, Enforcement Directorate, DRI, Assam Rifles, BSF, ITBP, Customs and district police officials. The deliberations centred on intelligence-led enforcement, enhanced financial investigations, tackling emerging trafficking patterns and dismantling the financial networks supporting drug cartels through a whole-of-government approach, reaffirming the commitment of all participating agencies to curb narcotics trafficking effectively.

QUICK READ

V-P Condoloes Loss of Lives in Bhiwandi Building Collapse

New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu and Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan on Friday expressed grief over the loss of lives in the building collapse in Maharashtra's Bhiwandi and expressed their condolences to the bereaved families. President Murmu took to her official social media platform X and said, The news of the loss of lives in the building collapse in Maharashtra's Bhiwandi is deeply saddening. I express my condolences to the bereaved families. I wish a speedy recovery to those injured in this accident. Vice-President Radhakrishnan also expressed grief over the tragedy and said, Deeply saddened by the loss of lives due to the collapse of a building in Thane area of Bhiwandi in Maharashtra.

# Surat Braces for Heavy Rain

Surat declared a holiday for educational institutions, industries and markets as authorities intensified emergency preparedness following an IMD red alert

**SURAT**

Surat authorities on Friday declared a holiday for schools, colleges, diamond processing units, factories and textile markets as the city prepared for heavy rainfall and strong winds forecast by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The precautionary measure follows the issuance of a Red Alert after a low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal moved towards the region.

Surat Municipal Commissioner M. Nagarajan said the civic administration is continuously monitoring the weather situation through senior officials while taking proactive measures to minimise risks. Evacuation of residents from vulnerable low-lying areas has already begun to ensure public safety.

The administration has also



advised residents living in Kim and nearby areas, along with upstream river locations such as Valanja, Kathor and Gothan, to remain alert as intense rainfall could trigger waterlogging and flooding.

Appealing to citizens to stay indoors during adverse weather conditions, Nagarajan urged people to shift valuables to safer locations and ensure that families residing in flood-prone areas take all necessary precautions. He said the safety of students,

workers and residents remained the administration's top priority.

To strengthen emergency response, teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) have been deployed across vulnerable locations. The Surat District Collector has also requested the State Government to keep an Army team on standby if the weather situation worsens.

Meanwhile, District Development

- IMD issues Red Alert for Surat.
- Holiday declared for schools, colleges, industries and markets.
- Evacuation underway in low-lying areas.
- NDRF and SDRF teams deployed.
- Army assistance sought as precaution.
- Citizens advised to avoid rumours and follow official advisories.

Officer Devendra Prakash Meena said the entire district administration has been placed on full alert and urged citizens not to believe rumours circulating on social media. He advised residents to rely only on official updates issued by the district administration.

# PM Approves Floating Solar Mission

**NEW DELHI**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Friday approved the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY), a Rs 5,070-crore initiative aimed at accelerating floating solar power generation across the country.

The scheme envisions the development of 5,000 MW of Floating Solar Photovoltaic (PV) projects along with co-located Energy Storage Systems having a minimum storage capacity of two hours, equivalent to 10,000 MWh. The projects will be sanctioned between FY 2026-27 and FY 2030-31, while financial assistance will continue until FY 2032-33.

The approval follows an assessment by the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), which estimated India's floating solar potential at around 102.18 GWp across reservoirs and other suitable inland water bodies.

To encourage project development, the Centre will provide financial assistance of Rs 1 crore per MW for eligible floating solar projects after successful commissioning. An additional grant of up to Rs 50 lakh per project will be available for feasibility

The Union Cabinet approved a Rs 5,070-crore scheme to boost floating solar capacity, strengthen energy storage and expand clean energy generation

studies, including bathymetry, hydrography, environmental assessments and other preparatory activities.

The scheme will benefit all states and Union Territories by increasing India's floating solar capacity from the current 700 MW to 5,700 MW. Besides reducing dependence on scarce land resources, the projects will utilise existing reservoirs and industrial ponds while enhancing grid stability through integrated energy storage systems.

According to the government, the initiative is expected to reduce nearly 10 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually and generate around 16,000–17,000 full-time equivalent jobs. It will also promote domestic manufacturing of floating platforms, solar modules, energy storage systems and related equipment, supporting the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

# Urban Ministry Gets Two Wings

**NEW DELHI**

Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs and Power Manohar Lal on Friday announced that the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs will now function through two separate departments to strengthen institutional capacity and improve urban governance across the country.

Chairing the Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting on Urban Planning, the minister said the restructuring has created the Department of Capital Development (DCD), or Rajdhani Vikas Vibhag, and the Department of Urban Development (DUD), or Shahari Vikas Vibhag. The move is aimed at enhancing administrative efficiency and enabling greater focus on the diverse and

evolving needs of India's rapidly expanding urban population.

Manohar Lal said the ministry's urban planning initiatives are guided by the objective of creating liveable, resilient and citizen-centric cities. He stressed that effective urban planning, strong governance, water security and continuous capacity building are essential to meeting the aspirations of a rapidly urbanising nation.

The minister said the government is adopting a holistic approach by integrating planning, infrastructure, governance and service delivery to improve citizens' quality of life while building environmentally sustainable, economically vibrant and technologically enabled cities.

During the meeting, mem-

bers of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee shared suggestions on various aspects of urban planning and governance. The minister welcomed the recommendations and assured that appropriate follow-up action would be taken to further strengthen the ministry's urban development initiatives.

Secretary, Department of Capital Development, D. Thara, presented the ministry's roadmap for sustainable urban development. Meanwhile, Member of Parliament Tokhan Sahu reaffirmed the government's commitment to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, stating that the ministry is working towards planned, sustainable and future-ready urban growth across the country.

# PM to unveil ₹17,900 crore projects in Andhra

**VISAKHAPATNAM**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate to the nation various development projects worth over ₹17,900 crore during his visit to Andhra Pradesh on Saturday.

He will lay foundation stones and inaugurate multiple projects at the inauguration of Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram in Vizianagaram district.

The Prime Minister will lay the foundation for the ASIP Semiconductor Project at Visakhapatnam, being developed with an investment of over ₹460 crore. The facility is being developed by ASIP Technologies Pvt Ltd in partnership with APACT, Republic of Korea.

According to an official release, it is Andhra Pradesh's first semiconductor manufacturing facility approved under the India Semiconductor Mission. The facility will manufacture around 96 million semiconductor chips annually

and create high-skilled employment opportunities, while also fostering a robust ancillary ecosystem to support semiconductor manufacturing.

The Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone for the Transmission System for Integration of Kurnool-IV Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) – Phase-I (4.5 GW), being implemented by POWERGRID through a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), with an investment of about ₹5,550 crore.

He will also inaugurate the Transmission System for Kurnool Wind Energy Zone/Solar Energy Zone (Andhra Pradesh) – Part A & Part B, implemented at a cost of around ₹3,550 crore, and the Transmission Scheme for Solar Energy Zone in Ananthapuram (2,500 MW) and Kurnool (1,000 MW), implemented by POWERGRID at a cost of over ₹820 crore.

These transmission projects will enable the evacuation of power generated.

# 305 Mobile Food Testing Labs Deployed Across States/UTs: FSSAI

**NEW DELHI**

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has deployed 305 mobile food testing laboratories, known as 'Food Safety on Wheels', across States and Union Territories in country to strengthen food safety surveillance, testing and public awareness, the government informed Parliament on Friday.

The initiative is part of the Strengthening of Food Testing System in the Country (SoFTeL) scheme, under which FSSAI has also upgraded 47 State Food Testing Laboratories with advanced analytical equipment and established 34 specialised microbiology laboratories to detect chemical, heavy metal and biological contaminants.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, which is mandated to set science-based standards for food articles and regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import, said the implementation and enforcement of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 is a shared responsibility between the Centre and the states.

The SoFTeL scheme in the country including provision of MFTL is an initiative implemented by the FSSAI to upgrade state food laboratories, set up microbiology facilities and deploys mobile food testing vans, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Prataprao Jadhav said

in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. Under this scheme, 47 State Food Testing Laboratories have been structurally upgraded with advanced analytical equipment and 34 specialised microbiology laboratories have been established to detect chemical, heavy metal and biological contaminants.

MFTL or FSW provides the widest outreach for food testing, training and awareness programme, especially in the villages, towns and remote areas.

Currently, 305 FSWs are deployed across 35 States/UTs, he added.

To strengthen food testing infrastructure, FSSAI has notified 259 National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)-accredited laboratories for the analysis of food samples, along with 24 Referral Food Laboratories for testing appeal samples.

The regulator has also introduced several tools to help detect food adulteration.

**BANGALORE CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION**  
Office of the Executive Engineer (Building Maintenance & Transport), Ground Floor, Annex-2 Building, BCCC Head Office N.R. Square Bangalore-560 002

No.EE/B.M&T/TEND/04/2026-27

Date: 31.07.2026

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) (Two Cover System) (Short Term Tender Notification) Through GOK KPP Portal)**

The Executive Engineer, (Building Maintenance & Transport), invites tenders on behalf of the Hon'ble Commissioner, BCCC, Bengaluru from eligible Tenderers for the construction of works detailed in the table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for works given in the table through e-procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka (viz https://KPPPKarnataka.gov.in). The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. 2.Tender documents may be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal of the Government of Karnataka Date: **01.08.2026**. 3. Other details can be seen in the tender document.

| Sl. No.                                                           | Name of the Work/Approx. Amount put to tender (In Rs) (Excluding GST)/EMD amount in Rs.                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Period of Completion : 4 Months (including Monsoon period)</b> |                                                                                                                                              |
| 1                                                                 | Painting to Grills and Other allied works @ GBA HO Premises Approximate Value of work : <b>Rs. 10,04,779/-</b> , EMD : <b>Rs. 25,200/-</b> . |

**Calendar of events :** 1) Availability of Tender Document : **01.08.2026 onwards**. 2) Last Date for uploading the Filled Proposals: **14.08.2026 17:30 hrs**. 3) Opening of Proposals: **17.08.2026 at 17:30 hrs**.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer, Building Maintenance&Transport  
Bengaluru Central City Corporation**

**CHAMUNDESHWARI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)  
Corporate Office, CESC, Mysuru-570017, Web Site: [www.cescmysore.org](http://www.cescmysore.org).  
E-mail ID: [gm@cescmysore.org](mailto:gm@cescmysore.org)

No.CESC/GM(IT&MIS)/DGM(Proj-1)/AGM(Proj-4)/2026-27/13053

Date: 29.07.2026

**Tender Notification (KPP PORTAL ONLY)**

CESC, Mysore invites Tender from eligible bidders for the following:

| Works details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Enquiry No                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Appointment of a Project Management Agency (PMA) for supervision, monitoring, quality and quantity assurance, quality inspection of materials, verification of joint inventory, monitoring of work progress, pre & post-implementation analysis of the Underground Cable Project works in N R Mohalla and V V Mohalla O&M Division of Mysuru City. | CESC/GM (IT&MIS) / 2026-27/12 |

The works & tender details can be obtained through KPP portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> on or after Date: **05.08.2026**. For clarification regarding KPP portal please contact help desk **+91-8046010000/ 8068948777** or e-mail address [support@eprochelpdesk.com](mailto:support@eprochelpdesk.com).

**[For Electricity related complaints Call: 1912]**

DIPR/MYSORE/524/SSC/2026-27

Sd/-General Manager, IT & MIS, CESC, Mysuru.

# Without Ethanol Blending, Petrol Price Could Have Hit Rs 125 Per Litre: Govt

**NEW DELHI**

Petrol prices in Delhi would have risen to around Rs 125 per litre during the recent West Asian crisis without ethanol blending, the government said on Friday, claiming the programme helped consumers save nearly Rs 30 per litre by cushioning the impact of the global crude oil price surge.

According to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, when the Indian crude basket climbed to around \$135 per barrel during the crisis, petrol without ethanol blending was projected to retail at about Rs 125 per litre in the national capital.

However, consumers paid Rs 94.77 per litre as 20 per cent of every litre comprised domestically produced ethanol procured at stable, pre-agreed prices.

**KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY & DRAINAGE BOARD**  
**KALABURAGI ZONE, KALABURAGI**  
Office of the Chief Engineer, KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone, "Jalbhavan", Rajapur, Kusnoor Road, Kalaburagi – 585105. Tel : 08472-220817, Fax : 08472-260818, E-mail ID : [kwcbeklb14@gmail.com](mailto:kwcbeklb14@gmail.com)

No. KWB/CE/(K)/TEC/Aland NGR/2026-27/442

Date: 30-07-2026

**-: NOTICE INVITING TENDER – 4th CALL :-**

1) Detail of Work: "Construction of 4.00 MLD capacity WTP at Hebli Road in Aland town under Nagarotha (phase-4) (Lumpsum-No Variation). (Work Indent No : **KUWSDB/2025-26/WS /WORK\_INDENT524**), 2) Amount of Estimate: **Rs. 384.52 Lakhs (Excluding GST)**, 3) Eligibility of Contractor: Eligible Contractors, 4) Details of Tender application amount and EMD amount: Rs. 6,80,000/-, 5) Period of Completion: **12 Months (Twelve)**, 6) Date and Time for commencement of downloading of tender documents from the e-procurement portal : **31-07-2026 after 13:00 Hours**, 7) Date & Time of Pre-Bid Meeting: **14-08-2026 at 11:30 Hours**, 8) Last Date and Time for receipt of Tenders: **31-08-2026 up to 17:30 Hours**, 9) Date and Time for Opening of Tender : **02-09-2026 after 11:00 Hours**, 10) Addl. information: Office of the Chief Engineer, KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone, "Jalbhavan", Rajapur, Kusnoor Road, Kalaburagi, Telephone : 08472-220817, E-mail ID : [kwcbeklb14@gmail.com](mailto:kwcbeklb14@gmail.com), 11) Address of E-portal: **[www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in)**

**Sd/- Chief Engineer  
KUWS & D Board, Kalaburagi Zone, Kalaburagi**

DIPR/Kalaburagi/382/KSMC&A/2026-27

**ಚಾಮುಂಡೇಶ್ವರಿ ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಸರಬರಾಜು ಕಾರ್ಪೊರೇಷನ್**  
ಕೆಂಗಳೂರು ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-560082  
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಅ.ಗ್ರಾ.ಪಂ/39/2026-27  
ದಿನಾಂಕ:29.07.2026

**ಇ-ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ**

ಆಡಳಿತ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಅಗರ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 2026-27 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ವರ್ಗ-1/15ನೇ ಹಣಕಾಸು ಯೋಜನೆ/ವಿವಿಧ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ವಿವಿಧ ಸಾಮಗ್ರಿ ಖರೀದಿ/ಸೇವೆ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಇ-ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಪ್ಲಾನ್ ಮಾಡಿದ ವಿವರ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತಿದೆ. (1) Procurement of Electrical Items. (2) Procurement of PVC, CPVC, HDPE Pipes and Electro fusion Fittings for Water Supply Works. (3) Procurement of Cleaning Materials. (4) Annual Pump and Motor Maintenance Work. (5) Procurement and Installation of Highmast Light. (6) Annual Solar street light service and purchase. (7) Supply, Registration, Branding and Delivery of Electric Three Wheeler Solid Waste Collection Vehicles Auto Tipper with Twin Bin System. (8) Annual Solar Maintenance And Purchase. (9) Annual RO Plant Maintenance, Supply and Service. (10) Supplying of Loaders, Drivers, Helpers and Auto tippers on Outsource Basis for Solid Waste Management for Agara, Siddanapalya,Agara Colony and Doddipalya Villages under Agara GP. (11) Supplying of Loaders, Drivers, Helpers and Auto tippers on Outsource Basis for Solid Waste Management for Timmegowdanapalya, Basappanapalya, Swamiji Nagara, Kuvempunagara, Kaveri nagara, Chowdeshwari nagara Villages under Agara GP. (12) Supplying of Loaders, Drivers, Helpers and Autotippers on Outsource Basis for Solid Waste Management for Hosapalya, Anepalya, Hosapalya colony, Kammayanapalya and Kambegowdanapalya under Agara GP. (13) Supplying of Loaders, Drivers, Helpers and Auto tippers on Outsource Basis for Solid Waste Management for Tataguni, Saluhoddi, Lakshimpura, B.M Kawal, Vaderahalli, Byrasandra and Banjarapalya Villages under Agara GP

(1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಿಂಗ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಿಂದ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ದಿನಾಂಕ: **12.08.2026 ರಿಂದ ಸಂಜೆ 16.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ** ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದು. ಕೆಲಸದ ಹೆಸರು/ಪೂರೈಕೆದಾರರ ಅರ್ಹತೆ/ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಿಯಮಗಳು /ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರೋಸೈಂಗ್/EMD ಫೀ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ [www.KPPPKarnataka.gov.in](http://www.KPPPKarnataka.gov.in) ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

**ಸಹಿ/- ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ  
ಅಗರ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್**      **ವಾಸಂಜೆ/ವಾಪ್ರ/1924/ಆರಡಿ ಸಾಯ/2026-27**      **ಸಹಿ/ ಆಡಳಿತ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ  
ಅಗರ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್**



QUICK READ

Balochistan mine blast death toll reaches 34

**Quetta**

The death toll from a methane gas explosion at a coal mine in Pakistan's Balochistan province has risen to 34, officials said on Friday, as rescue operations continued to locate miners still trapped beneath the debris. The explosion occurred at a mine in the Sorange area after methane gas reportedly accumulated deep underground. A major section of the mine collapsed following the blast. Officials said 41 miners were inside when the incident occurred. Rescue teams from the mines department, emergency services and district administration are continuing efforts to recover the remaining workers. Authorities said methane gas remains a major cause of fatal coal mine accidents in Balochistan.

Southport killer charged over prison attacks

**London**

Axel Rudakubana, the teenager serving a life sentence for murdering three young girls at a Taylor Swift-themed dance event in Southport in 2024, has been charged with multiple assaults on prison staff, police said on Friday. Rudakubana, now 19, faces charges of attempted grievous bodily harm over an incident in May 2025, assaulting emergency workers and possessing an offensive weapon in prison. He is scheduled to appear at Westminster Magistrates' Court on September 11. He was jailed for a minimum of 52 years after admitting the murders of three girls and injuring 10 others during the knife attack.

Nepal coordinates with Pakistan for Broad Peak rescue

KATHMANDU

Nepal has stepped up coordination with Pakistan to support search and rescue operations after an avalanche struck Broad Peak in the Karakoram range, leaving several international climbers, including Nepali mountaineers, missing.

Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it was deeply concerned by reports that climbers from different countries had lost contact following the avalanche on the 8,047-metre mountain. The ministry urged all concerned authorities and stakeholders to take immediate measures and coordinate closely to accelerate the search and rescue mission.

The missing group reportedly includes prominent Nepali mountaineer Nirmal Purja, along with other Nepali climbers. Pakistani authori-



ties, the Alpine Club of Pakistan and rescue teams have launched a major operation in the remote high-altitude region. Army aviation helicopters and ground teams have also been deployed, although adverse weather and difficult terrain have hampered rescue efforts.

Broad Peak, located near K2 in Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region, is the world's 12th-highest mountain and is considered one of the most challenging peaks for climbers. The avalanche reportedly occurred at an altitude of around 6,600 metres while the expedition was attempting to move towards

BRAZIL DAMS SECURED

El Nino threatens Brazil hydropower

SAO PAULO

Hydropower operators in southern Brazil are preparing for heavier rainfall and possible flooding as scientists warn that a severe El Niño weather pattern could affect the region in the coming months.

Brazilian units of China Three Gorges (CTG) and French energy company Engie said they are strengthening safety and emergency measures to manage large volumes of water that may need to be released from reservoirs. Preparations include testing spillways, improving

flood protection at power facilities and coordinating with communities living downstream from dams.

Brazil depends on hydropower for around two-thirds of its electricity generation, making changes in rainfall patterns a major concern for energy security. While hydropower provides flexible and relatively clean electricity, prolonged droughts and extreme rainfall can disrupt operations and place pressure on the national power system.

Rainfall across hydroelectric basins in southern Brazil reached 256 per cent of the

long-term average in July, according to data from grid operator ONS. Reservoir levels rose to 88 per cent of capacity, recovering from critically low levels of around 30 per cent recorded in April after months of unfavourable weather.

Meteorologists said the recent heavy rainfall was not directly caused by El Niño, but the climate phenomenon is expected to begin influencing southern Brazil in the coming weeks. El Niño typically warms Pacific Ocean surface temperatures and can bring intense rainfall.

the summit. Pakistani rescue teams have located four bodies, while efforts are continuing to trace the remaining missing climbers. Officials have cautioned that severe weather, heavy snow and the mountain's rugged terrain are making the operation extremely difficult.

Nepal has assured Pakistan of its full cooperation and is maintaining contact with relevant authorities, expedition organisers and the families of the affected climbers. The incident has caused deep concern within Nepal's mountaineering community, given the involvement of several experienced Nepali climbers.

Authorities said the search operation would continue as weather conditions permit, with rescuers working to locate survivors and bring those affected to safety.

THIMPHU

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri called on Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck on Friday and reviewed progress in bilateral development cooperation during his official visit to the Himalayan nation.

During the audience, Misri shared details of the progress made under India-Bhutan development initiatives and discussed cooperation across various sectors.

Misri is visiting Bhutan at the invitation of his Bhutanese counterpart, Pema Lektup Dorji, to co-chair the fifth India-Bhutan Development Cooperation Talks, also known as Plan Talks, under Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan for 2024-29.

The Foreign Secretary also

called on Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and Foreign Affairs and External Trade Minister Lyonpo DN Chungyel.

The two sides reviewed cooperation in development partnership, energy, trade and investment, connectivity, people-to-people exchanges and regional issues of mutual interest.

During the Plan Talks, officials assessed the implementation of India's support package of INR/Nu. 100 billion, or ₹10,000 crore, for Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan. The assistance includes Project Tied Assistance, High Impact Community Development Projects, the Economic Stimulus Programme and programme grants.

India approved 12 new Project Tied Assistance proj-



ects worth INR/Nu. 3,320 million, covering infrastructure, healthcare, agriculture, urban facilities and disaster management. With these additions, 82 projects worth INR/Nu. 68,600 million have been approved under the current plan.

Misri and Dorji also virtually inaugurated the Thimphu Ecological Park and Olakha Park. India handed over 45 electric vehicles to Bhutan under an e-mobility initiative.

Bhutan-India plan talks

- India supports Bhutan's thirteenth plan.
- Officials approved twelve new infrastructure projects.
- Eighty-two total projects now approved.
- Leaders virtually inaugurated two parks.
- India handed over electric vehicles.

The two sides also exchanged agreements for a ₹4,000-crore concessional line of credit for energy projects and cooperation between AIIMS, New Delhi, and Bhutan's Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Science. The next Plan Talks will be held in New Delhi.

Iran claims strike on US base

TEHRAN

Iran's army said it had carried out a drone strike against US military facilities at an air base in Kuwait in retaliation for what Tehran described as an American attack on Qeshm Island.

According to Iranian state-linked reports, the operation targeted strategic US military infrastructure at the Ahmad Al-Jaber Air Base in Kuwait. Iranian officials said the attack was launched in response to US strikes on several locations in Iran, including Qeshm Island.

Iranian military sources claimed that suicide drones were used in the operation and that key facilities linked to US military activities were targeted. However, independent confirmation of the extent of the damage or any casualties was not immediately available.

The reported strike came amid escalating tensions between Tehran and Washington following a series of mil-

Kuwait base struck

Unverified Iranian drone strikes on US military facilities in Kuwait have heightened regional escalation concerns. With strategic American assets hosted locally, authorities closely monitor developments as officials assess potential responses to the unfolding crisis.

itary exchanges across the region. Iranian authorities said the action was part of their response to attacks that they alleged had caused civilian casualties and damage inside Iran.

Reports indicated that US strikes had hit multiple Iranian locations, including areas connected with military and drone infrastructure. Tehran warned that the United States would face consequences for the attacks and said it re-

served the right to respond to what it described as aggression.

The incident has raised concerns about a wider regional escalation, particularly because Kuwait hosts major US military facilities and plays an important role in regional security operations. Any confirmed attack on a US-operated base could further increase tensions and trigger additional military or diplomatic responses.

Iran's announcement had not been independently verified, and there was no immediate detailed response from US or Kuwaiti authorities regarding the reported strike. The situation remained fluid, with officials monitoring developments and assessing the impact of the latest escalation.

The exchange underscores the growing risk that the conflict could spread further across the Middle East, drawing additional countries and military installations into the confrontation.

Meloni threatens Schengen suspension over Ceuta crisis

ROME

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has warned that Italy could adopt "extraordinary measures," including suspending Schengen arrangements with Spain, following a surge in irregular migration to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta.

In a statement posted on X, Meloni said the scenes emerging from Ceuta highlighted the security risks posed by uncontrolled illegal immigration along Europe's borders. She said she had discussed the situation with Italian Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi and that the government would not remain passive.

Meloni said reiterated her government's commitment to combating human trafficking, strengthening border controls and ensuring effective repatriation of irregular migrants.

Italian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani also supported the possibility of restricting Schengen arrangements with Spain. He criticised the Spanish government's decision to grant Spanish and European citizenship to more than 500,000 irregular migrants, arguing that the move could encourage human trafficking and pose risks to national security.

The comments followed reports that hundreds of migrants travelled from Moroc-



co to Ceuta on Thursday, with many attempting to reach Tarajal beach by swimming or using inflatable devices.

Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares strongly criticised Tajani's remarks, describing them as inappropriate for the foreign minister of a partner and friendly European country. Albares said Spain expected European solidarity rather than partisan rhetoric and announced that he had summoned Italy's ambassador.

Albares also said the developments in Ceuta were linked to a court ruling and were unrelated to the claims made by Tajani regarding citizenship policy.

Reports said at least nine people died while attempting to reach Ceuta. The region's president urged the Spanish government to declare a national emergency and assume greater control, saying local authorities were overwhelmed by the sharp increase in irregular crossings.

WEST URGED TO BACK INDIA AS CHINA COUNTERWEIGHT

NEW DELHI

Western nations must significantly increase investment in India if they want a credible strategic and industrial counterbalance to China, according to a report by an Australia-based Institute.

The report argues that while Western governments have regarded India as vital to the global order over the past two decades, they have failed to match that commitment with capital invest-

ment. Instead, decades of investment in China have strengthened a strategic competitor.

The report says India is not yet an industrial alternative to China but remains the only country with the scale to become one.

It notes that current "China Plus One" strategies are insufficient because companies continue to favour China due to its superior infrastructure and manufacturing ecosystem.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, ANUPAMA M alias C RACHANA D/o MUNIYAPPA V, W/o C SWATHANTRA BABU, R/o Sri Yoginarayana EPS Society, 4th Cross, 1st Main, Guruva Reddy Layout, A Narayanapura, Doorvaninagar, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560016, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as C RACHANA.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, RUHINA alias RUHINA A K alias RUHINA KHAN alias RUHINA ABDUL KHUDUS D/o late SALEEM PASHA, W/o MUBARAK KHAN, R/o No.16, 2nd Main, 4th Cross, Aarath Nagar, Padarayanapura, Bangalore South, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560026, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RUHINAABDUL KHUDUS.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, SHRINIVASAMURTHY ITAGI alias SHRINIVASAMURTHY alias SHRINIVASA MURTHY alias SHRINIVASAMURTHY B ITAGI S/o BANDACHARYA ITAGI, R/o Rajatagiri, 1st Main, 4th Cross, Lakamanahalli, Dharwad Vidyagiri, Hubli, Dharwad, Karnataka - 580004, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHREENIVAS BANDACHARYA ITAGI.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, LATHA L S alias LATHA N. RAO D/o LINGAPPA C, W/o K.Y. NINGOJI RAO, R/o 200, 3rd D Cross, 2nd Block, 3rd Stage, Near Ambekar Stadium, Basaveshwara Nagara, Bangalore North, Bengalore, Karnataka-560079, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as LATHA NINGOJI RAO KOLEKAR.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, hitherto known as SHRIDEVI SHAMSUNDAR KULKARNI D/o late SHESHACHAR BURLI, W/o late SHAMSUNDAR KULKARNI, R/o No 1215, 11th Main Nagpura, Near Bachpan School, West Of Chord Road, 2nd Stage, Mahalakshimpuram Layout, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka- 560086, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHRIDEVI BURLI.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

It is for general information that I, J. VISHALINI alias J. NIRMALA, D/o late P JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN, Ex. W/o Y. A. SUBRAMANYA, R/o 1854, 10th Main 33rd Cross, Banashankari II Stage, Bangalore South, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560070, declare that I got divorce from my husband vide Court Decree No. M.C.No. 1980/2003 dt. 16.08.2005, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as NIRMALA JAYAPRAKASH.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, MUBEENA SULTHANA D/O Sikandar residing at, 1st Cross, FLORE MILL NAZARABAD CIRCEL Tumkur TOWN-572102 TUMAKURU Karnataka, have changed my name from MUBEENA SULTANA to MUBEENA SULTHANA W/o SAYED HASSAIN, vide affidavit dated 30.07.2026 before Shafiq Ahmed, Advocate & Notary, Tumkur.

**IN THE COURT OF THE HONOURABLE PRINCIPAL CIVIL JUDGE & JMFC AT BHADRAVATHI**  
S.No.520 / 2024.  
Plaintiff : Canara Bank V/s  
Defendant : Nagaraja Rao Smt. Nagaraja Rao S/o Venkatoji Rao, Aged about 60 Years, Agriculturists, Arachatalu Village, Bhadravathi Taluk.  
**NOTICE**  
Whereas the Plaintiff has filed the above case against you seeking recovery suit claim of Rs. 3,50,442/- with cost and future interest @ 10.20% +2 Penal interest being the Agricultural loan. You are directed to appear before the Principal Civil Judge & JMFC Court at Bhadravathi, Shimoga District, on 03-09-2026 to attend the above case at 11. A.M. and also to answer the case. If you failed to appear before this Court on that day either in person or through your Counsel, you will be placed ex parte in the above case, and the case will be disposed off in accordance with law.  
**By Order of the Court**  
Sheristadar, Prl. Civil Judge, Bhadravathi  
Advocate: B.S. Mahesh Kumar, Dt: 21-07-2026

**NAME CHANGE**

I, ABDUL KHADER RAWOOF, resident of No. 22, Flat No.002, Ground Floor, Ficus Infra, 1st Cross, RBI Colony, Jayanagar 3rd Block East, Bengaluru-560011, have changed my name to ABDUL KHADIR RAWOOF, Vide affidavit dated: 31.07.2025 before notary R. SULAKSHANA, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, CHI NA KARL MARX S/o Chi Na Ramu, aged about 30 years, residing at No. 17/1, 5th Main, 4th Block, MLA Layout, Dollars Colony, Sangaynagar, RMV Extension 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560094, I state that my names mentioned in Aadhaar Card No: 7488 8041 8555- CHI NA KARL MARX, Driving License No: KA01 2014000690- CHI NA KARL MARX & Secondary School Examination Roll No: 010139132035- KARL MARX. Therefore I declare that my correct name is CHI NA KARL MARX and shall be used for all my further documents and records. Vide affidavit dated: 31.07.2026, Sworn before Advocate & Notary Public: ONKARAPPA N. R, at Bangalore-560021.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, JABEENA BANU AZAM KHAN, W/o. Aslam Ahmed, Resident of No.485, 5th Cross, Rama Tent Road, Venkateshpuram, Bengaluru-560045, have changed my name to JABEENA BANU, Vide Affidavit Dated: 24.07.2026 before Notary CHANDRASHEKAR M., Bengaluru.

**IN THE COURT OF THE HONOURABLE PRINCIPAL CIVIL JUDGE & JMFC AT BHADRAVATHI**  
S.No.590 / 2024.  
Plaintiff : Canara Bank V/s  
Defendant : Anitha & Others  
**Summons / Notice to the Defendant No.1**  
S.No.520 / 2024.  
Defendant No.1. Smt. Anitha.K D/o Kumar, Aged about 38 Years, District. No.2. Sri.Kumar Since dead by his LRS.  
2. (a) Smt. Gangamma W/o Late Kumar Aged about 40 years, 2. (b) Sri. Ravi Kumar S/o Late Kumar, Aged About 30 Years, All are Agriculturists, All R/o Door No.7 / 165, Ward No.7, 1st Cross, Paper Town, Bhadravathi.  
**NOTICE**  
Whereas the Plaintiff has filed the above case against 1st & 2nd of you seeking recovery suit claim of Rs.2,34,885.02/- with cost and future interest @9.95% +2 Penal interest being the Agricultural loan. It is learnt, that 2nd defendant is no more and defendant No.2 (a) & (b) are the only legal heirs to the deceased 2d defendant i.e. deceased Sri.Kumar, Hence Defendant No.1 and 2 (a) & (b), You all are directed to appear before the Principal Civil Judge & JMFC Court at Bhadravathi, Shimoga District, on 05-09-2026 to attend the above case at 11. A.M. and also to answer the case. If you failed to appear before this Court on that day either in person or through your Counsel, you will be placed ex parte in the above case, and the case will be disposed off in accordance with law.  
**By Order of the Court**  
Sheristadar, Prl. Civil Judge, Bhadravathi  
Advocate: B.S. Mahesh Kumar, Dt: 21-07-2026



# Modi Hails India’s Medal Winners

PM Narendra Modi congratulated Lovepreet Singh and Seema Kaliramna after their medal-winning performances at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow

## NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday congratulated Indian weightlifter Lovepreet Singh and discus thrower Seema Kaliramna for securing silver and bronze medals respectively at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, applauding their determination and commitment to excellence.

Lovepreet delivered an outstanding performance in the men’s +110kg weightlifting event, finishing with a combined lift of 388kg. The Indian lifter narrowly missed the gold medal by just one kilogram, with New Zealand’s David Liti claiming the title after lifting 389kg. Despite the close finish, Lovepreet etched his name in the record books by setting a new Commonwealth Games record in the snatch event.

Taking to X, Prime Minister Modi praised Lovepreet’s remarkable achievement, highlighting his dedication and wishing him greater success in future competitions.



markable achievement, highlighting his dedication and wishing him greater success in future competitions.

In athletics, Seema Kaliramna earned a bronze medal in the women’s discus throw with a best effort of 58.65m. Battling challenging conditions, she managed only two valid throws out of six attempts. After opening with a



foul, Seema recorded throws of 57.32m and 58.65m before ending the competition with three consecutive fouls. Her second-round effort proved enough to secure a place on the podium.

The Prime Minister also lauded Seema’s performance, stating that her achievement had made the nation proud and inspired young athletes

## PM Modi on X

Exceptional performance by Lovepreet Singh... His dedication and determination are truly admirable.

Congratulations to Seema for securing a Bronze... Her efforts have made India proud and motivated the youth of our nation.

across the country.

The two podium finishes further strengthened India’s campaign at the Commonwealth Games. With Lovepreet’s record-breaking display and Seema’s resilient performance under difficult conditions, India’s medal tally rose to 17, comprising three gold, 10 silver and four bronze medals.

## PALMER WORLD CUP SNUB

# PALMER EYES STRONG CHELSEA COMEBACK

## SYDNEY

Chelsea midfielder Cole Palmer has revealed that being left out of England’s FIFA World Cup 2026 squad was a major disappointment but believes the setback has strengthened his determination to perform at the highest level this season.

Palmer was among the surprise omissions from Thomas Tuchel’s England squad despite his impressive contribution during England’s run to the UEFA Euro 2024 final. The 24-year-old admitted that Chelsea’s inconsistent Premier League campaign last season played a part in his exclusion from the national team.

Reflecting on the disappointment, Palmer said missing out has motivated him to work harder and prove his worth. He added that setbacks



are part of a footballer’s journey and should be used as fuel for improvement rather than discouragement.

Although disappointed to miss England’s World Cup campaign, Palmer said the extended summer break gave him valuable time to recover physically and mentally. After enjoying seven weeks away from football, he believes he is refreshed and fully prepared for the new season. Chelsea will begin the campaign under new head coach

**“If someone tells you you’re essentially not good enough to get in the squad, then you’re going to think, ‘all right’, and try and work even harder.”**

– Cole Palmer, Chelsea midfielder

Xabi Alonso following a disappointing 10th-place finish in the Premier League last season. Palmer praised Alonso and his coaching staff, describing their arrival as a positive change that has brought fresh ideas and renewed enthusiasm within the squad.

The midfielder also expressed delight at Chelsea’s signing of Morgan Rogers from Aston Villa in a British-record transfer. Having grown up together in Manchester City’s academy and represented England at youth level, Palmer said he is excited to reunite with one of his closest friends at Stamford Bridge.

# Indian Forwards Eye WC Success

## NEW DELHI

As the Indian men’s hockey team prepares for the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026, forwards Mandeep Singh, Abhishek and Shilanand Lakra have highlighted the importance of teamwork, chemistry and disciplined preparation in their bid to lead India to success.

India will begin their campaign in Pool D against Wales on August 15 before facing England and arch-rivals Pakistan in the tournament, jointly hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands from August 15 to 30.

Veteran striker Mandeep Singh, who will be playing in his fourth Hockey World Cup, said his role has evolved from learning alongside senior players to mentoring the next generation. He noted that he regularly shares his experience with younger teammates, helping them deal with pressure and make better decisions in crucial moments.

Mandeep also revealed that India’s forwards have been

## Indian Forwards Stress Teamwork

■ **Mandeep Singh:** A good striker is never just focused on scoring goals. Hockey is a team game.

■ **Shilanand Lakra:** Mandeep always motivates me and guides me. Those conversations help me keep learning.

■ **Abhishek:** Consistency starts without the ball. Off-the-ball movement and pressing are extremely important.

working extensively on improving movement inside the attacking circle, creating better connections and ensuring every attack results in a meaningful outcome, whether through a goal, a shot on target or a penalty corner.

Making his World Cup debut, Shilanand Lakra credited senior players, particularly Mandeep, for guiding him



**India’s forward line has stressed teamwork, consistency and preparation ahead of the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 in Europe.**

through the demands of international hockey. He added that modern forwards are expected to contribute both in attack and defence, making pressing and tackling equally important. Meanwhile, prolific striker Abhishek emphasised that consistency starts with hard work off the ball.

# Alzarri Joseph Rebukes Sammy Over Remarks

## ST JOHN’S

West Indies fast bowler Alzarri Joseph has strongly defended his decision to miss the ongoing Test series against Pakistan, accusing head coach Daren Sammy of creating a misleading narrative by publicly stating that he had declined selection.

The controversy began after Cricket West Indies (CWI) announced the squad for the two-match Test series, citing Joseph’s absence due to personal reasons. However, a day later, Sammy revealed that the pacer had been selected but chose not to be part of the squad, prompting widespread speculation about his commitment to Test cricket.

Breaking his silence, Joseph explained that his decision was based entirely on managing his fitness after recovering from a recurrent lower-back stress fracture that kept him out of international cricket for nearly a year. He said he had discussed his con-

dition with both Sammy and Cricket West Indies before deciding that his body was not ready for the physical demands of Test cricket.

Joseph expressed disappointment with Sammy’s comments, saying the coach was fully aware of the circumstances but still chose to make a statement that lacked context. He argued that the remarks fuelled unnecessary criticism and created an inaccurate public perception of his decision.

The fast bowler pointed out that he had recently completed five consecutive One-Day Internationals against New Zealand and felt it would be unwise to immediately transition into a demanding Test series. He stressed that protecting his long-term fitness was the priority after suffering a second stress fracture.

Joseph maintained that there was clear communication with the team management throughout the process and insisted his absence had



## Joseph Clears Air on Test Absence

• Joseph rejects Sammy’s declined selection claim.

• Says decision was based on injury recovery.

• Recovering from recurrent lower-back stress fracture.

• Recently played five ODIs after year-long layoff.

• Calls coach’s remarks controversial, without context.

nothing to do with a lack of commitment, but everything to do with ensuring he returns to Test cricket only when fully fit.

# Former Italy captain & AC Milan legend Franco Baresi dies at 66

## MILAN

Former Italy captain and AC Milan legend Franco Baresi, widely regarded as one of the greatest defenders in football history, has died at the age of 66 after battling illness, the Serie A club announced on Friday.

A seven-time Ballon d’Or nominee, finishing runner-up in 1989 to Marco van Basten, the former AC Milan and Italian national team defender is ranked 33rd in the IFFHS’s list of the best footballers of the 20th century. He has also been inducted into the Italian Football Hall of Fame since 2013.

Baresi represented Italy 81 times. He was part of the Azzurri squad that won the 1982 FIFA World Cup in Spain, although he did not feature during the tournament. Twelve years later, he captained Italy to the 1994 FIFA World Cup final in the United States, producing a memorable performance in the title clash against Brazil despite recovering from a knee injury suffered earlier in the competition.

With the Azzurri, he participated in three World Cups (1982, 1990, and 1994) and two European Championships (1980 and 1988), making 81 appearances and scoring one goal.

Italian football has lost one of its legends, Italian Football Federation President Giovanni Malago said. An extraordinary champion who wore only two jerseys throughout his career: AC Milan and the Azzurri. A romantic choice, one that earned him a place in the hearts of fans and millions of Italians. We will remember him as he deserves during the national team’s upcoming matches, the team for which he always demonstrated exceptional dedication, becoming one of its most glorious symbols, he added.

A legend of AC Milan, the team he played for for twenty seasons, winning six Scudetti, three European Cups, two Intercontinental Cups, two UEFA Super Cups, and four Italian Super Cups.



# FIFA defends private investment plan amid backlash

## NEW DELHI

FIFA defended its proposal to allow private investors to acquire ownership interests in the World Cup and other competitions, saying nobody is selling football and claimed the consultation process had been disrupted by incorrect media reports.

The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), which represents 55 member associations and organizes the continent’s leading club competitions, has announced that its 55 members will not participate in FIFA competitions till the proposal to allow private investors to acquire ownership interests in the World Cup and other competitions remains in place.

Moreover, Concacaf also convened a meeting of the presidents of its 41 Member Associations, together with its President, Council members, and its FIFA Council members, and rejected proposal.

We respect the feedback and concern aired in public and reaffirm our commitment to an open and democratic consultation, FIFA said in a statement on Friday. Our planned consultation process was disrupted by incorrect media reports.

We will proceed with this consultation process to ensure that each MA has the ability to express its vote based on facts. Nobody is selling football. This is not something FIFA would ever entertain, it added.

# ‘Haven’t come across Fleming, but heard good things about him’: Robinson

## LONDON

Fast bowler Ollie Robinson said he has ‘heard good things’ about incoming head coach Stephen Fleming and is looking forward to an exciting new era for England’s Test side following a turbulent time that saw skipper Ben Stokes retire from international cricket and Brendon McCullum get sacked from his coaching role.

The England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) confirmed on Thursday that Fleming, the former New Zealand captain who recently left as five-time champions Chennai Super Kings (CSK) head coach, would take the Test coach role after parting ways with McCullum in the wake of England’s 2-1 series defeat to New Zealand.

It’s always a novelty getting someone new in. I haven’t come across Stephen Fleming but I’ve heard good things. So that will be interesting to see how he wants to play – another Kiwi. We’ll see how we go. It’s exciting.

Whenever you get a change, it’s always exciting just to see how it’s going to be, how the group’s going to go. It’s about winning games of cricket at the end of the day. I think we maybe went away from that too much but playing with Baz and Ben was so fun and enjoyable. It’s a shame that’s finished but I’m excited someone new is coming in, Robinson was quoted as saying by The i Paper.

Robinson, who is aiming to return for England’s upcoming Test series against Pakistan starting on August 19, admitted that the sudden departures of Stokes left the dressing room stunned.



# Delighted to begin new DPL season, tournament has grown: DDCA President

## NEW DELHI

Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) President Rohan Jaitley said the Delhi Premier League (DPL) has grown tremendously over the years, adding that cricket fans in the capital can look forward to another highly competitive and exciting edition starting Friday at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

The third season of the tournament will kick off with Central Delhi Kings taking on Purani Dilli 6 in the men’s competition on Friday evening. It will be preceded by a star-studded opening ceremony featuring live performances by singers Sunanda Sharma and Sukhbir Singh.

We are delighted to begin another season of the Delhi Premier League. The tournament has grown tremendously over the last editions, and the support from players, franchises and fans has been incredible.

We are confident this season will be even more exciting, with high-quality cricket, close contests and a wonderful atmosphere at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. We look forward to seeing fans come out in large numbers and enjoy the tournament, Jaitley said in a statement on Friday.

Ahead of the opening clash, Central Delhi Kings skipper Yash Dhull, who captained India to 2022 U19



World Cup title, said his team has undergone thorough preparations and are eager to hit the ground running. The team has trained really well over the last few weeks, and everyone is excited for the new season.

We have a balanced squad with a good mix of experienced and young players. Our focus is on playing fearless cricket, staying consistent and giving our best in every match, he said.

Echoing similar sentiments, Purani Dilli 6 captain Anuj Rawat stated that his side is geared up to play optimistic cricket. The excitement around the Delhi Premier League is growing every year, and we are looking forward to getting our campaign underway.

QUICK READ

Global smartphone revenue hits record \$109 billion

**CH NES**, New Delhi  
Global smartphone revenue rose 7 per cent year-on-year to a record \$109 billion in the second quarter of 2026, driven by higher device prices and strong demand for premium smartphones, a Counterpoint Research report said. Average selling prices increased 17 per cent to a record \$400 as manufacturers shifted focus from shipment volumes to higher-value devices amid rising memory and component costs. Apple recorded the strongest growth, with revenue rising 22 per cent and its global revenue share reaching a record 49 per cent. Samsung ranked second with a 16 per cent share. Xiaomi, OPPO and vivo reported revenue declines amid weaker shipments.

Mumbai property registrations rise over 8%

**CH NES**, New Delhi  
Mumbai is projected to record 13,617 property registrations in July 2026, an 8.3 per cent year-on-year increase and the city's strongest July performance in more than 14 years, according to Knight Frank India. The Maharashtra govt is expected to collect Rs 1,223 crore in stamp duty, up 8.9 percent from a year earlier. Registrations rose 2 per cent month-on-month, while revenue collections increased 13 per cent. The strong performance reflects sustained home buyer demand and growing interest in higher-value homes.

# Social security coverage reaches 101 crore

The minister stressed that industrialisation drives national development by creating jobs

NEW DELHI

India's social protection systems now cover around 101 crore people, accounting for more than 68 per cent of the country's population, the government said on Friday, citing recognition of the achievement by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Union Labour and Employment Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya said a balanced development model was neces-



Highlighted the contribution of self-help groups and cooperative models, particularly women-led initiatives, in expanding livelihood opportunities, strengthening the economy and promoting women's empowerment.

—Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Labour and Employment Minister

sary to strengthen worker welfare and social security while ensuring ease of doing business for employers.

Addressing the fourth Global Industrial Relations Summit in

New Delhi, organised by the All India Organisation of Employers in association with FICCI, Mandaviya said harmonious industrial relations require continuous coordination

## Elon Musk calls Tesla report fake

NEW YORK

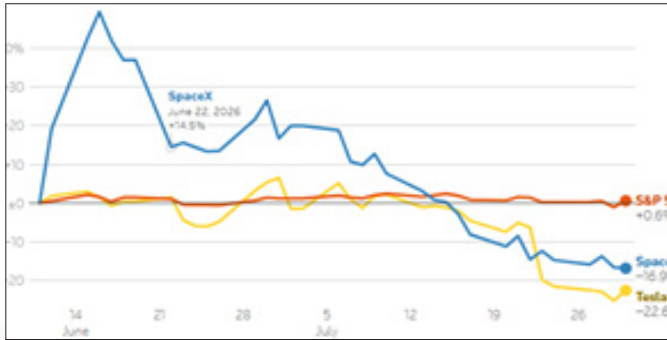
Tesla Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk has dismissed as "fake news" a report that the electric-vehicle maker was considering separating or selling its China business ahead of a possible merger with his space company, SpaceX.

The report said Tesla advisers had discussed several options for its China operations, including a spin-off, sale or possible closure. It also suggested that company executives were examining ways to separate Tesla's China business from its operations elsewhere amid growing geopolitical and regulatory concerns.

Responding on his social media platform X, Musk strongly denied the report, saying the issue had never been discussed and describing the claim as "absurdly fake news."

Speculation over a possible merger between Tesla and SpaceX has increased as the two companies expand into overlapping areas involving artificial intelligence, robotics, energy, autonomous technology and advanced manufac-

## Percent change since SpaceX went public in June 2026



turing. However, any combination of Tesla and SpaceX could face significant regulatory and geopolitical challenges, particularly in China. SpaceX is a major US defence contractor involved in national-security and satellite programmes, while Tesla operates wholly owned manufacturing facilities in China.

Tesla's Shanghai Gigafactory is the company's largest and most productive manufacturing facility globally. The plant has

an annual production capacity of more than 950,000 vehicles and serves as a major export hub for Europe, Canada and the Asia-Pacific region.

China is Tesla's second-largest market after the United States, although the company faces strong competition from domestic electric-vehicle manufacturers, particularly BYD.

Reports said Tesla executives had previously explored ways to create greater operational separation between its US and China businesses to reduce risks arising from possible geopolitical tensions.

## India forex reserves rise \$6.118 billion

MUMBAI

India's foreign exchange reserves increased by \$6.118 billion to \$682.235 billion during the week ended July 24, extending the country's recent upward trend, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday.

The latest increase followed a gain of \$1.08 billion in the previous reporting week, when the country's forex reserves rose to \$676.237 billion.

Foreign currency assets, the largest component of India's foreign exchange reserves, increased by \$4.873 billion to \$555.929 billion during the week under review. Expressed in US dollar terms, foreign currency assets also reflect the impact of movements in major non-US currencies, including the euro, pound sterling and Japanese yen. Gold reserves rose by \$1.308 billion to \$103.058



billion, contributing significantly to the overall increase in the reserve position. However, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), an international reserve asset created by the International Monetary Fund, declined by \$53 million to \$18.617 billion.

The RBI's weekly statistical supplement showed that India's foreign exchange reserves continued to strengthen after recovering from declines recorded earlier this year amid heightened global economic and geopolitical uncertainty.

India's forex reserves had reached an all-time high of \$728.494 billion during the week ended February 27. How-

ever, rising tensions in the Middle East subsequently placed pressure on the rupee and prompted the RBI to intervene in the foreign exchange market through dollar sales. These interventions led to a moderation in the country's reserve position over the following weeks.

The central bank has consistently maintained that it monitors developments in the foreign exchange market and intervenes only to curb excessive volatility and ensure orderly market conditions. The RBI has said it does not target any specific exchange-rate level. A strong foreign exchange reserve position improves India's ability to meet external payment obligations, finance imports and protect the economy against global financial shocks and geopolitical uncertainties. It also provides confidence to investors and supports overall macroeconomic stability.

## Supply constraints hit Apple premarket shares

NEW YORK

Apple shares fell 7.3 per cent in premarket trading on Friday after the technology giant warned that supply constraints could slow growth, shifting investor attention towards iPhone demand and the possibility of higher prices.

If the decline continues during regular trading, Apple could lose about \$361.6 billion in market value. The company's outlook highlighted growing pressure across the technology industry as strong demand linked to artificial intelligence tightens supplies of advanced chips and memory, raises costs

and extends supply-chain bottlenecks. Apple said shortages in advanced chipmaking capacity were limiting the availability of iPhones, Mac computers and some iPad models. Chief Executive Tim Cook said the weaker outlook was driven by supply constraints rather than declining consumer demand.

## Phillips 66 expands share repurchase programme

NEW YORK

US refiner Phillips 66 said on Friday that its board of directors had approved a \$10 billion increase in the company's share repurchase programme, reinforcing its commitment to long-term shareholder returns.

The company said the additional authorisation was approved as the remaining capacity under its existing share buyback programme was approaching its limit. The expanded programme will provide Phillips 66 with greater flexibility to repurchase shares over time, subject to market conditions and the company's capital-allocation priorities.

US refiners have benefited this year from stronger fuel margins after the Iran war raised concerns about possible disruptions to gasoline and diesel supplies from the Middle East. The conflict tightened expectations around global fuel availability and contributed to improved refining economics.

Higher refining margins have strengthened the financial position of major US refining companies, allowing them to increase shareholder returns while continuing to invest in operations and reduce debt.

Phillips 66 Chief Executive

Officer Mark Lashier said the increased share repurchase authorisation supported the company's strategy of creating sustainable, long-term value for shareholders.

"The increased share repurchase authorisation supports our commitment to long-term shareholder value," Lashier said, adding that the company would continue to maintain a secure, competitive and growing dividend.

He said Phillips 66 would also focus on disciplined capital investment and continued debt reduction as part of its broader financial strategy.

Share repurchases reduce the number of a company's outstanding shares and can increase earnings per share, while also returning excess capital to investors. However, the pace and scale of buybacks may depend on market conditions, cash generation, investment requirements and other financial considerations.

The latest decision highlights Phillips 66's confidence in its financial strength and ability to balance shareholder returns with investments in its refining and energy businesses. The company did not provide an immediate timeline for completing the additional \$10 billion share repurchase authorisation.

financial commitments in India by reducing the time required for cross-border transfers.

The project was implemented through cooperation among the Maldives Monetary Authority, the Reserve Bank of India, NPCI International Payments Limited, participating banks and other stakeholders. The launch follows efforts by both countries to expand digital-payment integration and improve the efficiency of cross-border financial services. Officials said the payment corridor would be expanded in phases.

Maldivian residents with family members, students or other fi-

### UPI expands into Maldives

India's UPI launch in the Maldives broadens the international reach of its digital ecosystem, high lighting strengthening bilateral cooperation in financial technology, digital infrastructure, and broader economic development between the two nations.

Maldivian residents with family members, students or other fi-

## Cabinet clears ₹5,070 crore floating solar scheme

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Friday approved the ₹5,070 crore Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY) to develop 5,000 MW of floating solar photovoltaic capacity across the country.

The scheme aims to promote the use of water bodies such as reservoirs, dams and lakes for renewable-energy generation while reducing pressure on land resources.

Under the scheme, floating solar projects will be developed with co-located energy storage facilities providing a minimum of two hours of storage capacity. The planned storage capacity is expected to total 10,000 MWh, helping address the intermittent nature of solar generation and supporting electricity supply during periods of low sunlight or high



### New scheme for floating solar projects

- Floating solar initiatives developed with co-located energy storage facilities.
- Minimum storage capacity of two hours provided for stability.
- Total planned storage expected to reach 10,000 MWh.
- Project sanctions scheduled between financial years 2026-27 and 2030-31.
- Financial assistance continued for implementation until 2032-33.

demand.

The projects are expected to be sanctioned between the financial years 2026-27 and 2030-31. Financial assistance under the scheme will continue to be released until 2032-33, allowing sufficient time for project implementation and completion.

## Coinbase shares fall after quarterly loss

NEW YORK

Shares of cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase fell 5.6 per cent in premarket trading on Friday after the company reported its third consecutive quarterly loss, although analysts said its expanding business mix could provide long-term support.

The decline came amid renewed weakness in cryptocurrency markets. Bitcoin has lost more than 27 per cent of its value so far in 2026, while Coinbase shares have fallen nearly 28 per cent during the same period.

Higher-than-expected US inflation data has reduced expectations of an early interest-rate cut by the Federal Reserve.

The prospect of higher borrowing costs for a longer period has weighed on risk-sensitive assets, including cryptocurrencies. Investors have also withdrawn funds from spot cryptocurrency exchange-traded funds, adding pressure to the market.

Analysts said difficult trading conditions and limited visibility on the recovery of cryptocurrency volumes contributed to the company's quarterly performance. However, they noted that Coinbase continues to strengthen its position despite the broader market downturn.

The company recorded its third consecutive quarter of record cryptocurrency trading market share, reaching

also being considered. Michiko Miyamoto, Director of the ILO's Decent Work Technical Support Team for South Asia and Country Office for India, said ILO estimates showed that India had crossed one billion people covered by at least one social-protection benefit.

She said the expansion of social security coverage would play an important role in supporting India's future economic growth and inclusive development.

The government said the initiative would significantly expand India's floating solar capacity and strengthen the country's clean-energy infrastructure. Floating solar installations can also help reduce water evaporation and may improve panel efficiency because of the cooling effect of water.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the scheme would utilise the solar potential of water bodies and target a major increase in floating solar generation over the next five years. Eligible projects will receive central financial assistance after successful commissioning.

The PM Surya Sarovar Yojana is expected to support India's renewable-energy targets, improve energy security and encourage the wider adoption of innovative solar technologies. The programme could also generate employment and investment opportunities in project development, manufacturing, installation, energy storage and related services.



10.3 percent, according to analyst David Bartosiak of Zacks Investment Research.

He said Coinbase was continuing to gain market share even in a weaker trading environment and that its business mix was improving. Coinbase has been diversifying beyond its traditional dependence on spot Bitcoin trading. The company is expanding into stablecoins, derivatives and other financial products to reduce its exposure to sharp swings in cryptocurrency trading activity.

In May, Coinbase and prediction-markets platform Kalshi announced plans to introduce perpetual cryptocurrency futures to US investors through regulated domestic exchanges.

Analysts at William Blair said they were encouraged by Coinbase's diversification strategy and expected investors to support derivatives-led market-share gains. The firm maintained a positive view on the company, arguing that its stronger fundamentals and broader revenue base could help it benefit from a future recovery in cryptocurrency markets.

## Leela palaces Q1 profit falls 71%

MUMBAI

Leela Palaces Hotels & Resorts reported a 71.46 per cent sequential decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 49 crore for the quarter ended June 30, compared with Rs 171.7 crore in the preceding quarter.

However, profit surged 444 per cent year-on-year from Rs 9 crore. Revenue from opera-

tions rose 28 per cent annually to Rs 352 crore, while adjusted EBITDA increased 41.6 per cent to Rs 143 crore.

The EBITDA margin expanded to 40.6 per cent from 36.7 per cent a year earlier.

The board also approved the acquisition of Schloss Tadoba Private Limited for Rs 120 crore. Shares gained 3.82 per cent.

# Preeti Eyes Gold After Final Berth

PREETI PAWAR STORMED INTO COMMONWEALTH GAMES 54KG FINAL, ASSURING INDIA A MEDAL, EYES GOLD.

## GLASGOW

Indian boxer Preeti Pawar has assured the nation that she will give her best to win the gold medal after storming into the women's 54 kg final at the Commonwealth Games. The young pugilist secured her place in the title clash with a commanding 5-0 victory over Zambia's Catherine Mwape in the semifinal on Friday.

Preeti will now face Canada's Scarlet Delgado in the gold medal bout after becoming the first Indian boxer to enter a final at the ongoing Games. The semifinal showcased her tactical brilliance as she dominated the contest with sharp jabs, accurate left-hand punches and effective movement inside the ring.

After an evenly contested opening phase, Preeti took complete control of the bout, forcing Mwape into a standing eight-count before landing a series of combinations that resulted in two more standing counts. She continued to outmanoeuvre her opponent with clean body shots and quick footwork to seal a unanimous victory.

Speaking after the win, Preeti revealed the physical and mental challenges of cutting weight before important bouts. She admitted that the process is difficult because boxers cannot eat properly, but said it serves as motivation, reminding

them that they are just one step away from achieving their goal.

The Indian boxer has already guaranteed herself at least a silver medal but remains focused on winning gold. She also thanked the Indian Army, Boxing Federation of India, Sports Authority of India and JSW Sports for their constant support. Preeti, who became the first woman athlete to be directly inducted into the Indian Army as a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO), said she hopes to make both the nation and the armed forces proud with a gold medal-winning performance.

## CHAMPIONSHIP QUEST

- Defeated Zambia's Catherine Mwape 5-0 in semifinal.
- To face Canada's Scarlett Delgado in the final.
- Weight-cutting remains the toughest part of preparation.
- Assured India of at least a silver medal.
- Thanked Indian Army, BFI, SAI and JSW Sports for their support.



# Key Leaves Door Open for Stokes

## LONDON

England men's cricket team Managing Director Rob Key has refused to rule out a sensational international comeback for former Test captain Ben Stokes, saying the all-rounder could still return for next summer's home Ashes series against Australia.

Stokes, 35, retired from international cricket in June after stepping down as Test captain following England's 2-1 series defeat to New Zealand. His decision came shortly after he was dropped for the second Test for breaching the team's midnight curfew after England's opening win at Lord's.

Despite the circumstances surrounding his retirement, Key dismissed suggestions of any rift between Stokes and the England management. He said a return to international cricket would be a remarkable story and maintained that anything remains possible with the former skipper.

Key also defended England's decision to reappoint Joe Root as Test captain after Stephen Fleming took over as the team's red-ball coach. He explained that the appointment was



England managing director Rob Key believes Ben Stokes could still return from international retirement for next summer's Ashes series.

made after detailed discussions with Fleming, who believed Root was the best candidate for the role.

According to Key, Root will now have the opportunity to captain England without the distractions that affected his previous tenure. He praised Root's leadership qualities and outstanding batting performances during his first stint as captain.

Explaining why Harry Brook was overlooked despite serving as Test vice-captain and white-ball captain, Key said the selectors felt it was not the right time for the youngster to take charge of the Test side. He added that Brook remains a key part of England's future leadership plans and has already made significant progress in limited-overs cricket.

# IGPL, Asian Tour Strengthen Partnership



## NEW DELHI

The Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) and the Asian Tour have reaffirmed their commitment to expanding their successful partnership, aiming to create greater playing opportunities and stronger development pathways for professional golfers in India and across Asia.

The collaboration gained significant momentum earlier this season in Morocco, where the two organisations co-sanctioned back-to-back

professional tournaments at the Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort. The USD 160,000 IGPL Morocco Rising Stars 2026, held from May 28 to 31 on the Asian Development Tour (ADT), was followed by the USD 500,000 IGPL Bharath Classic on the Asian Tour from June 4 to 7.

More than 40 golfers from the IGPL Tour earned places in the Bharath Classic field, marking the league's flagship event's first edition outside India. The initiative provided Indian professionals with valuable international exposure while strengthening competitive links between the two tours.

With the season entering its

second half, IGPL and the Asian Tour will continue to collaborate on tournament scheduling, player development programmes and competitive opportunities. The partnership aligns with IGPL's vision of creating a structured pathway for Indian golfers to compete regularly on the international stage.

The AM Green IGPL has rapidly emerged as one of the region's most ambitious professional golf leagues, featuring 10 franchises and a calendar of 15 tournaments. Its growing international footprint, with events already hosted in Mauritius, South Africa, Congo and Morocco, has significantly

Working together with IGPL is important to us, and we look forward to continuing our association into the future.

...Cho Minn Thant Asian Tour Commissioner & CEO

We have a strong collaboration with the Asian Tour, and I'm sure we'll have an even greater partnership going ahead.

...Uttam Singh Mundy, IGPL CEO

expanded opportunities for Indian golfers to gain overseas experience while competing alongside international professionals.

# AFC Backs UEFA over FIFA Plan

## KUALA LUMPUR

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has joined UEFA and CONCACAF in opposing FIFA's proposed FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE), warning that the commercial restructuring plan lacks the broad consensus needed to move ahead and calling for a review of FIFA's governance and decision-making processes.

In a strongly worded statement issued on Friday, the AFC said it was observing developments surrounding the proposal with deep concern and expressed solidarity with UEFA and CONCACAF, both of which have already voiced strong reservations over the plan.

The FFE proposal seeks to establish a commercial subsidiary that would manage FIFA's key commercial rights, including broadcasting, sponsorship, ticketing and licens-

ing. Under the plan, FIFA intends to raise up to USD 4.2 billion by selling minority stakes to private investors while retaining full control over football governance and competitions.

However, the AFC believes the proposal has created unprecedented divisions within world football. The continental body noted that discussions surrounding a possible boycott of the FIFA World Cup have highlighted the seriousness of the situation, stressing that football should never have reached such a stage.

While FIFA has maintained that the initiative would generate greater revenue to increase development funding for its 211 member associations, the

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- AFC joins UEFA and CONCACAF in opposition.
- FIFA aims to raise USD 4.2 billion through FFE.
- Concerns raised over governance and private investment.
- AFC says proposal lacks broad global support.

“The AFC stands in solidarity with UEFA and CONCACAF in expressing serious concerns over FIFA's proposal.”

...Confederation

AFC argued that the opposition from two major confederations makes it difficult for the proposal to secure the widespread backing required for implementation.

The latest statement marks a significant escalation in resistance to FIFA's commercial restructuring plans, placing additional pressure on the world governing body to revisit its proposal and engage in broader consultations with stakeholders.

# India's first heptathlete to win Asiad gold medal announces retirement

## NEW DELHI

Swapna Barman, India's first heptathlete to win a gold medal at the Asian Games, announced her retirement from athletics on Friday, citing the run of injuries.

The 29-year-old Arjuna awardee won the historic gold at the Jakarta 2018 Asian Games. Competing with a jaw injury, she became the first Indian to win an Asian Games heptathlon gold.

This is one of the most difficult decisions of my life. Athletics has been more than just a sport for me-it has been my identity, my passion, my dream, and a journey filled with countless sacrifices, struggles, tears, and unforgettable memories, she wrote in an lengthy Instagram post.

Over the years, I have faced many injuries, including a slipped disc and knee injuries. I tried to fight through the pain and keep going, but now



my body is no longer supporting me the way it once did, Barman noted in her retirement message.

Injuries and setbacks followed in the years after, but Barman kept fighting back and secured silver medals at the 2019 and 2023 Asian Championships. She also bagged a pentathlon silver at the 2023 Asian Indoor Championships.

Swapna Barman narrowly missed out on a podium at the Hangzhou 2023 Asian Games, finishing fourth - just four

points short of compatriot Nandini Agasara, who claimed bronze. This is one of the most difficult decisions of my life. Athletics has been more than just a sport for me - it has been my identity, my passion, my dream.

Walking away from something you have loved your entire life is never easy. My heart still wants to compete, to jump, and to chase my dreams, but I have to accept that this chapter of my life has come to an end. I am forever grateful to everyone who stood by me throughout this incredible journey, she wrote.

Swapna Barman first announced herself as a force in Indian athletics in 2017 when she claimed the heptathlon gold at the Asian Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar. Her last competitive outing was at the 2025 National Open Athletics Championships in Bengaluru, where she secured third place.

# Hockey India chief Dilip Tirkey says Executive Board not consulted

## NEW DELHI

Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey on Friday wrote emails to senior office-bearers and Executive Board members, questioning the decision to change the national team's traditional blue jersey to saffron for the upcoming FIH Hockey World Cup and stated it has been implemented without being placed before the Executive Board for discussion and without my prior knowledge.

In an email addressed to the Hockey India Executive Board, a screenshot of which is taking rounds on social media, Tirkey wrote, I wish to bring to your attention the recent change in the colour of the Indian national team's jersey. This decision appears to have been taken and implemented without being placed before the Executive Board for discussion and without my prior knowledge.

Tirkey stated that his objection was not to the new saffron colour but to the way in which the decision was made.

My concern is not with the choice of saffron itself. However, a decision of this significance, involving the identity and representation of our national team, should ideally have been discussed with the elected leadership and the Executive Board before implementation, he wrote.

The emails also indicated that the controversy around the decision and also referred to the political debate triggered by the move. Tirkey said, The matter has since attracted considerable media attention and, unfortunately, political interpretation in certain quarters. With the World Cup approaching, I have publicly clarified that the change was purely a sporting decision so that the focus remains on the team and its preparations.

Former Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who has been instrumental in making Odisha the sponsor of Indian hockey, also criticised the change in the team's jersey colour to saffron, alleging that it was an attempt to politicise a national sporting symbol.



# Sharing dressing rooms builds future stars: Gaur

## LUCKNOW

Gaur Gorakhpur Lions owner Vishesh Gaur believes that sharing a dressing room with seasoned international and IPL cricketers gives young players a big boost as it gives them the ideal environment to learn, build confidence, and grow. Sharing the dressing room with players who have represented India or played in the IPL is a huge source of inspiration for youngsters. They get the chance to closely observe how experienced professionals prepare, train and handle pressure. It also gives them the confidence that they can achieve the same dream, Gaur said.

Gaur also revealed that wicketkeeper-batter Aryan Juyal will captain the Gorakhpur franchise, with Shivam Sharma serving as his deputy and former pacer Ankit Rajpoot coming on board as head coach.

We are pretty happy with the squad. We managed to get most of the players we wanted and have built a balanced

team and are satisfied with the combination. Aryan Juyal will lead the team this season, while Shivam Sharma will be the vice-captain. Ankit Rajpoot has joined us as the head coach, and we are confident in the leadership group we have assembled.

The Lions made a big splash at the player auction by shelling out Rs 21 lakh to secure opening batter Chaudhary. Explaining the big-ticket acquisition, Gaur said, We wanted to strengthen our opening batting.

That was one area we needed to fill after the retentions and Shivam Chaudhary was our top choice. He is a quality opening batter, an experienced leader and someone who can provide stability at the top of the order.

Commending the UPCA leadership for taking the league to Lucknow and Kanpur this year, Gaur acknowledged the efforts of BCCI Vice-President Rajeev Shukla and UPT20 League Governing Council Chairman Dr. Sanjay Kapoor.