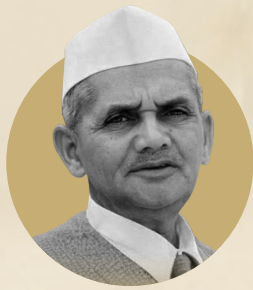


Celebrating the 157th
Birth Anniversary of
Mahatma Gandhi



DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS



Celebrating the 122nd
Birth Anniversary of
Lal Bahadur Shastri

MY LIFE IS MY MESSAGE

Heartfelt wishes to all the
people of the state on the
occasion of Gandhi Jayanti

“It is my firm conviction that all
good action is bound to bear fruit
in the end”

_____ *M.K. Gandhi*

On the birth anniversaries of Father of
the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and former
Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, whose
lives exemplified the values of **truth,**
non-violence, simplicity, service and
patriotism, we pay our respectful
tributes to these great souls.

A life devoted to truth.
A legacy that helped shape a nation.



"To protect and respect our vibrant culture and tradition,"
is a Fundamental Duty of every citizen.
This is affirmed by our Constitution.



Quick Read



Toll operators seek transparent rates

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Travel Operators Association (KSTOA) has welcomed the proposed removal of toll booths on the Electronic City Flyover, Attibele stretch and Bengaluru-Nelamangala Highway, while seeking fair rates and transparency under seamless electronic toll collection. KSTOA president K Radhakrishna Holla said the proposed Multi-Lane Free Flow system using ANPR cameras and FASTag could reduce queues, travel time and fuel consumption. However, he said toll charges would continue and called for revised rates and clear exemptions. The association sought reduced toll rates on roads where private concession agreements have expired. It also favoured distance-based tolling through GNSS and digital receipts showing road section, entry and exit points and distance travelled.

Rain disrupts traffic across Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Heavy rain that lashed Bengaluru disrupted traffic across several key corridors, with flooded roads, underpasses and uprooted trees slowing peak-hour movement. Traffic police reported slow movement from Rainbow Hospital towards Karthik Nagar, Yelahanka BSF towards the airport and Mahadevapura towards Lowry Junction. Flooding was reported at Kannuru junction towards Bagalur Road, K Channasandra-Bileshivale and Varthur-Varthur Kodi. Panathur and Sahakarnagar railway underpasses were also inundated, while fallen trees blocked roads near Kodigehalli, S M Road and Kaggadasapura. Commuters reported journeys taking several hours. A portion of Bharathi Theatre's roof near Jalahalli Cross also collapsed, injuring three people.



Vijayendra hits back at Hariprasad over banner row

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

BJP state president B.Y. Vijayendra has rejected KPCC president B.K. Hariprasad's allegation that BJP workers removed Congress banners and flags in Shikaripura. Vijayendra said the BJP had no need to engage in what he described as "petty politics" of tearing down banners. He alleged that Hariprasad himself was getting party workers to remove banners and then seeking publicity through the media. He also criticised the State government over its handling of the drought situation and alleged that farmers had not received adequate relief.

Parameshwara seeks urgent drought relief

Karnataka seeks faster Central intervention as widespread crop losses deepen farmer distress across drought-hit taluks.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Revenue Minister G. Parameshwara has written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, seeking urgent relief and revision of drought assistance norms.

The State has declared 177 taluks drought-affected in two phases, while ground-truthing is underway in another 40.

The number could exceed 220 by the end of the monsoon. Across the 177 taluks, crop losses have been reported over 47.09 lakh hectares, with the economic loss estimated at ₹46,324.5 crore.

The State has sought ₹7,142.64 crore under NDRF norms, including



Our farmers must receive timely and adequate support. The relief provided should reflect the actual losses they have suffered.

— G. Parameshwara Deputy CM

₹4,998.60 crore as input subsidy and ₹2,144.04 crore

for fodder and drinking water.

Parameshwara urged revision of SDRF/NDRF norms, particularly input subsidy, saying existing assistance does not reflect current cultivation costs.

He also sought expediting the Central drought assessment and early release of relief.

Drought relief plea

Drought-affected taluks 177 Possible total 220+ Crop-loss area 47.09 lakh ha Estimated economic loss ₹46,324.5 cr NDRF assistance sought ₹7,142.64 cr Drought impact

Karnataka's Kharif 2026 drought has affected agricultural and horticultural crops across large areas. In the newly declared 76 taluks, crop damage covers 26.08 lakh hectares of agricultural crops and 1.49 lakh hectares of horticultural crops. Major affected crops include tur, maize, cotton, sugarcane, soybean and green gram. Onion, arecanut and red chilli are among the affected horticultural crops. Total crop losses across 177 taluks are estimated at ₹46,324.5 crore.

Narayana Gowda opposes Urdu Habba at Vidhana Soudha



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) president T.A. Narayana Gowda has opposed the State Government's plan to organise an 'Urdu Habba' on the grand steps of Vidhana Soudha on November 9. The event was announced by Health and Minority Welfare Minister U.T. Khader as part of Urdu Day celebrations.

Khader said the programme aims to showcase Urdu language, literature, culture, heritage and art forms to people from different communities. The proposed event is expected to include a book fair, food festival, cultural programmes, awards and a mushaira.

Gowda, however, criticised the decision and urged Chief

We are not against any language, including Urdu. There are plenty of venues in Bengaluru to conduct an Urdu festival. There is no need for Vidhana Soudha.

— T.A. Narayana Gowda, KRV president

Minister D.K. Shivakumar to withdraw the proposal. He said there were several venues in Bengaluru where an Urdu festival could be organised and questioned the need to hold it at Vidhana Soudha.

The proposal has also drawn opposition from BJP MLA S. Suresh Kumar, who questioned whether Kannada language, literature and culture had received similar prominence at Vidhana Soudha.

Gowda said the KRV was not opposed to Urdu as a language but objected to the proposed venue and government-sponsored format.

Bommaai seeks meeting on Varada-Bedti River linking project

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Amid opposition to the proposed Varada-Bedti River linking project, MP Basavaraj Bommai has urged Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to convene a meeting of elected representatives and activists to discuss the project.

In a letter to Shivakumar and Water Resources Minister N. Cheluvarayasu, Bommai sought expediting the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and its submission to the Central Government.

The request comes ahead of a protest planned at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on October 10 by the Bedti-Aghanashini Valley Conservation Committee against river-linking proposals involving Uttara Kannada district.

Bommaai has sought a meeting involving all ministers, MLAs, MLCs and other prominent representatives from Haveri district, besides activists, to hold detailed discussions on the project.

Describing the Bedti-Varada linking proposal as an important issue, Bommai said Karnataka was facing a severe drought and that people could face increasing shortages of drinking water and fodder for livestock in the coming days.

He said farmers dependent on rainfall had suffered significant losses and pointed out that drought had been a recurring phenomenon in the Kittur and Kalyana Karnataka regions. According to him, the areas had experienced drought in 17 of the past 30



years. Bommai said the present situation warranted both immediate measures and long-term solutions, and identified the river-linking project as one such measure.

He claimed the proposal involved lifting water without constructing a large reservoir and could be implemented without causing environmental damage. He also said it would utilise water flowing into the sea from Uttara Kannada during the monsoon.

Water allocation

Bommaai maintained that the project would not create water shortages in Uttara Kannada district. He urged the government to utilise around 18 TMC of water for drinking and irrigation in Gadag, Haveri, Koppal and Raichur districts.

He also sought a specific provision in the DPR for a separate water-storage arrangement to meet Haveri district's requirements.

The proposed project has, however, triggered opposition from groups concerned about the ecological and water implications for Uttara Kannada.



BDA marks 100th Open House Meeting, strengthens citizen grievance redressal

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) marked its 100th Open House Meeting, highlighting its efforts to make grievance redressal more transparent, accountable and citizen-centric.

The meeting was chaired by BDA Chairman N A Haris in the presence of BDA Commissioner P Manivannan at the BDA headquarters in Kumara Park.

The Open House initiative was launched on July 3, 2025, to provide citizens with a direct platform to raise grievances before BDA officials. As of October 1, 7,410 grievances had been registered through the system, of which 4,759 were resolved.

The BDA's citizen-centric governance efforts have also received recognition through the Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) National Award for Excellence in Citizen-Centric Urban Governance.

Building on the Open House mechanism, the BDA has introduced 'BDA GUARANTEE', a centralised public grievance redressal system. It

enables citizens to register complaints through the BDA grievance portal, Unified Tapal System, email, WhatsApp and official social media platforms.

Every grievance is digitised, categorised and assigned a unique Grievance Identification Number (GID), allowing citizens to track its progress.

The system has recorded 69,686 queries through inbound calls and 3,630 queries through WhatsApp as of October 1.

Open House meetings are also live-streamed on the BDA's official YouTube channel. The system provides indicative timelines of seven days for urgent grievances, 30 days for general grievances and 100 days for Open House grievances.

"The 100th Open House Meeting marks a significant milestone in BDA's journey towards citizen-centric governance. BDA GUARANTEE ensures that every grievance is heard, tracked and pursued with transparency, accountability and time-bound action," Haris said.

Anna Seva app enables home-based ration card e-KYC



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Food Department has launched the 'Anna Seva' app on a pilot basis to make ration card e-KYC easier and reduce the need for beneficiaries to visit fair price shops. Food Minister Rizwan Arshad launched the application at Broadway in Shivajinagar, Bengaluru.

The app is currently available in Bengaluru, Bengaluru Rural, Udupi, Haveri, Karwar, Ballari, Bidar and Koppal. The department plans to extend the facility to all districts after assessing the pilot and addressing technical issues.

Under the app, beneficiaries have to enter their ration card number and complete verification. They can then select the e-KYC option and use the face-recognition facility to complete the process.

The move comes amid difficulties faced by beneficiaries at fair price shops, including long queues and server-related technical problems.

Food Minister Rizwan Ar-

Ration card beneficiaries in eight Karnataka districts can now complete mandatory e-KYC from home using a new mobile application.

How to complete e-KYC

- 1 Open the Anna Seva app and enter the ration card number.
- 2 Select the e-KYC option after the details are verified.
- 3 Complete the process using the face-recognition facility.

shad said the department wanted to ensure that beneficiaries, particularly poorer sections, did not have to leave their work and wait at fair price shops to complete e-KYC.

"People should not face inconvenience. We have launched the Anna Seva app in eight districts so that e-KYC can be completed from home," Arshad said.

He said officials from other districts had also been given access to the system and the department would study technical issues before expanding the facility statewide.

The minister said around 4.5 crore people were beneficiaries of the department's services. He added that the application could subsequently be used to provide access to other schemes and services of the Food Department.

Rain deficit: Khandre seeks groundwater data from 5,927 panchayats

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

With rainfall deficiency raising concerns over drinking water availability in rural Karnataka, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Eshwar B. Khandre has directed officials to undertake a comprehensive assessment of groundwater levels across 5,927 gram panchayats.

At a meeting with senior officials at Vikas Soudha, Khandre said the number of villages facing drinking water shortages was increasing and the situation could worsen during summer. He directed officials to assess the likely requirements until the next monsoon and prepare contingency plans well in advance.

Officials have been asked to compile details of villages currently dependent on borewells for drinking water and assess how many borewells could go dry during summer. The exercise should also identify alternative water sources available in such areas and determine measures required to maintain regular supply.

The department has also been asked to assess the availability of surface water and prepare plans for hiring private borewells, wherever necessary. Officials should calcu-



late the number of tankers that may be required to transport water to villages facing shortages.

Khandre further directed officials to identify nearby water sources for vulnerable areas where neither groundwater nor surface water is available. Plans should be prepared immediately to ensure that water from such sources can be transported to affected villages when required.

Khandre also called for awareness campaigns encouraging rural residents, industries, schools, colleges and other institutions to use water judiciously.

He said the rainfall deficit had resulted in drinking water concerns in several parts of the State and stressed the need for early planning to prevent shortages from becoming more severe during the summer months.

KPSC JOB SCAM

ED report reveals alleged KPSC job-for-cash network

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The ED investigation has alleged a cash-for-jobs network in KPSC's veterinary officer recruitment, involving leaked papers and blank cheques.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), which has registered an ECIR under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), has intensified its probe into the alleged KPSC veterinary officer recruitment scam. Former KPSC Controller of Examinations and senior IAS officer Jnanendra Kumar and his associate Basavaraj Kannale have been taken into custody, according to the report cited in the source.

The ED alleges that candidates were initially asked to pay ₹70 lakh to ₹80 lakh for government jobs, with deals eventually settled at ₹30 lakh to ₹40 lakh. Investigators re-



portedly found that 70-80% of the amount was collected in cash, while signed blank cheques were taken from candidates and their family members as security for the balance.

Hundreds of signed blank cheques were reportedly recovered from premises linked to Kannale during searches.

According to the ED's allegations, candidates who paid money were taken to private resorts and luxury hotels a

day before the examination. Leaked question papers and answers were allegedly provided to them, allowing them to memorise the answers overnight. Mock examinations were also reportedly conducted before candidates were taken to examination centres.

The recruitment involved 400 veterinary officer posts, for which around 1,400 candidates had applied. As many as 329 candidates were even-

KPSC scam probe	
POSTS	400
APPLIED	Around 1,400
SELECTED	329
DEMAND	₹70-80 lakh, settled at ₹30-40 lakh
IN CASH	70-80%
SECURITY	Signed blank cheques

tually selected. The ED is examining allegations that a substantial number of selections were secured through illegal payments.

Investigators are also examining financial transactions allegedly routed through Souharda cooperative bank accounts in Bidar. Bank statements and recovered cheques are being scrutinised by the ED and CID.

FLYDUBAI HORROR

INDIA PLANS BIG SECURITY UPGRADE

The review could cover existing standard operating procedures related to aviation security, including psychometric assessments conducted by airlines and deployment of air marshals on sensitive routes.

NEW DELHI

India is examining the Flydubai incident from a security perspective, with aviation security measures likely to undergo a comprehensive review following the alleged mid-air attack on Indian pilot Smit Machchhar by his Omani co-pilot.

Civil Aviation Secretary Sameer Sinha said the government was examining the developments arising from the incident and assessing the matter from a security perspective.

"India is examining the matter. The security perspective is being looked into," Sinha said during a briefing.

He added that the Ministry of Civil Aviation was working on the developments arising from the Flydubai incident. "If any advisory is needed, the higher authority will be apprised about it," the Civil Aviation Secretary said.

According to official sources, aviation security in India is likely to undergo an intensive review in the wake of the incident, in which the co-pilot allegedly attacked the pilot-in-command while the aircraft was in flight.

The review could include existing standard operating procedures related to aviation security, including psychometric assessments conducted by airlines and the deployment of Sky Marshals on sensitive routes, sources said.

The roles and preparedness of various agencies involved in aviation security could also be examined as part of the exercise.

These include airlines as well as security agencies such as the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and National Security Guard (NSG), which has specialised capabilities for responding to hijack situations. The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) could also review existing protocols within their respective domains.

Officials are expected to examine whether any changes or additional safeguards are required to prevent similar incidents involving threats from within the cockpit.

The development comes after the Flydubai incident triggered a security scare on Wednesday, after the co-pilot allegedly attacked the pilot-in-command, leaving him critically injured while the aircraft was airborne. The Omani co-pilot allegedly attempted to crash the Tel Aviv-bound flight, carrying over 170 passengers.

The incident has prompted authorities to examine whether existing aviation security protocols adequately address the possibility of an attack involving a member of the cockpit crew.

India steps in after Flydubai cockpit attack

India has ordered an intensive aviation security review focusing on cockpit protocols and crew assessments following the mid-air attack on Indian pilot Smit Machchhar aboard a Flydubai flight.

Key aspects of the review

Crew evaluations

Re-examining standard operating procedures for psychological and psychometric testing of flight deck crew.

Sky marshals

Reviewing deployment numbers and threat perception protocols on sensitive flight routes.

Multi-agency probe

Coordinating international background checks and investigations with agencies in Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Agency roles

Evaluating preparedness and coordination frameworks between the DGCA and the BCAS.

'Indomitable bravery': Gujarat to confer 'Vishisht Gujarat Garima Award' on hero pilot

NEW DELHI

The Gujarat government on Thursday announced that they will award Indian pilot Smit Machchhar with the 'Vishisht Gujarat Garima Award' for fighting his copilot who allegedly planned to crash the flydubai plane that was flying from Dubai to Tel Aviv.

Captain Smit Machchhar was stabbed by his Omani co-pilot while fighting him in the cockpit, but fought back and was severely injured. The plane made an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia with all the passengers safe.

"The courage of Captain Smit Machchhar, the pilot of the flight headed to Israel, is being saluted by the entire world today. Despite being drenched in blood due to the attack, he displayed indomitable bravery to save the lives of 174 passengers—a feat that is profoundly inspiring and commendable," said Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel on X. "This valiant son of Gujarat has illuminated the name of Gujarat and the nation across the globe through his heroism. The Gujarati spirit flowing in his veins fills us all with immense pride. To honor his extraordinary act of bravery and humanity, the Government of Gujarat will bestow upon Captain Smit Machchhar the 'Vishisht Gujarat Garima Award'."

Further praying for his swift recovery, the CM said, "The empathy and prayers of the nation's citizens are with Captain Smit Machchhar." Machchhar has been hailed for his courage after being stabbed by his Omani co-pilot during the Dubai-Tel Aviv flight, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump among those praising his actions.

This valiant son of Gujarat has illuminated the name of Gujarat and the nation across the globe through his heroism.

- Bhupendra Patel, Gujarat CM

'No respite': K'taka may declare 91% of taluks as drought-hit: DyCM

BENGALURU

Karnataka has estimated an economic loss of Rs 46,324 crore due to rainfall deficit, Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara has said, adding that 91% of the state may be declared drought-affected.

Karnataka has 240 taluks and the government has already declared 177 taluks as drought-affected, he said, adding that the tally may touch 220 taluks, which is 91% of the state.

"Cumulatively, in the 177 drought-affected taluks, crop loss has been reported over approximately 47.09 lakh hectares, with the estimated economic loss amounting to Rs 46,324.5 crore, based on the cost of cultivation," Parameshwara stated in his letters to Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Parameshwara, who also holds the Revenue portfolio, said that ground-truthing was underway in 40 more taluks. "In view of the continuing assessment, it is anticipated that more than 220 taluks may ultimately be declared as drought-affected by the end of the South-West Monsoon 2026 season," he wrote.

Major agricultural crops affected are tur, maize, cotton, sugarcane, soybean and green gram. Among horticultural crops, onion, arecanut and red chilli are affected, he said.

"Based on the ongoing assessment, it is likely that the overall crop loss during Kharif 2026 may exceed 55 lakh hectares," Parameshwara stated. "The extensive crop loss has caused severe distress among the farming community and has significantly affected agricultural livelihoods across the state."

In his petition to Shah, Parameshwara reiterated the need to revise norms of assistance under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

An inter-ministerial central team is slated to visit Karnataka on October 3 for field visits.

More on page 2

Ground assessment

Three Inter-Ministerial Central Teams are scheduled to arrive in Karnataka to conduct an on-the-ground study of the worsening conditions across multiple regions, including north Karnataka and the Mysuru division.

'Won't budge till I can protect people'

SIR row: CM stages sit-in at CEO's office over deletion of voters

BENGALURU

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, along with several state Cabinet ministers, staged a protest outside the office of Chief Electoral Officer V Anbukumar on Thursday, demanding an FIR over the alleged fraudulent deletion of voters during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

Shivakumar and the ministers sat on the steps outside the CEO's office, insisting that the Election Commission take action against those who allegedly submitted fraudulent Form 7 applications seeking deletion of voters.

The CM said he would not leave the EC office until he was satisfied with the action taken by the authorities. "I will wait till I get justice. I will wait and wait."

"As far as Karnataka is concerned, after the new SIR, a special SIR has been started. On behalf of the Government of Karnataka, we cooperated with the Election Commission... A big conspiracy is going on in Karnataka... In more than 70% of the booths, we have identified that various BJP leaders have been taking Form 7 without any identification. Pre-printed forms have been supplied, and they are being given to BJP party leaders," he added.

He also questioned how details relating to voters could have been accessed and allegedly used for filing deletion applications. "How can they have confidential details?" he asked, alleging that an attempt was being made to delete around 10,000 votes in each of Karnataka's 224 Assembly constituencies.

Shivakumar said he wanted the Election Commission to file a complaint leading to an FIR against those who had allegedly submitted fraudulent Form 7 applications. "I can't leave and go without being satisfied by the action taken by the Election Commission," he said.

DISPUTE AT A GLANCE

Allegation: Chief Minister Shivakumar accused the opposition BJP and JD(S) of a large-scale conspiracy ("vote chori" or vote theft) to illegally delete 45 to 60 lakh genuine voters from the electoral roll. He alleged that these efforts targeted minority, Dalit, and Backward Class communities.

Evidence produced: The CM presented physical Form 7 applications (used to object to a voter's inclusion) that were pre-printed with voter specifics. He claimed BJP workers had been fraudulently submitting these in bulk during the Election Commission's ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process.

Current action: The protest follows massive civil demonstrations and a continuous standoff over the voter list integrity in Karnataka. State police have already filed at least three FIRs (two in Belagavi and one in Bhalki) related to fraudulent Form 7 submissions.

...seeks probe into pre-printed Form 7s

BENGALURU

Amid growing complaints over the bulk submission of pre-printed Form 7 applications to delete voters from electoral rolls, CM DK Shivakumar Thursday submitted a memorandum to the Chief Electoral Officer, demanding a comprehensive probe into the matter.

At a press meet before submitting the memorandum, he said, "It is the duty of the Election Commission of India to file an FIR immediately in connection with the bulk submission of Form 7s," he said, calling on the election authority to trace who printed and distributed the documents. "I have information that BJP leaders in Delhi and Karnataka are printing these forms and distributing them to their party cadre," the CM said.

He added that three separate FIRs were registered on Wednesday and Thursday across Mysuru, Belagavi, and Bidar, while demanding that the EC initiate criminal proceedings against individuals who submitted Form 7s in bulk.

In his letter, the CM has demanded:

1. A constituency-wise and booth-wise investigation into unusually large numbers of Form 7 filings, particularly during September 22-24, including 6,259 in Mudigere, around 3,000 in Belagavi North, 2,285 in Bhalki, 1,373 in Babalshwar and 1,200 in Narasimha Raja.

2. Verification of reports that voters from minority communities, SCs, STs and OBCs have been disproportionately targeted, along with scrutiny of pre-printed voter names and EPIC numbers and how such electoral data was accessed.

3. Investigation into individuals filing unusually large numbers of objections, their relationship with the voters concerned, applications returned by BLOs, and allegations of political coordination or facilitation, including statements publicly made regarding bulk filing through associates.

Odisha CEO seeks VRS amid SIR row

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Electoral Officer RS Gopalan on Thursday sought voluntary retirement (VRS) from government service, nearly 21 months before his scheduled superannuation, as per reports.

Gopalan, a 2001-batch IAS officer, has been serving as Odisha's CEO since July 2024 and also holds the additional charge of Secretary in the Excise Department.

He was due to superannuate in June 2028.

Gopalan reportedly said his decision to seek VRS was unrelated to the controversy surrounding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state.

"I wanted to take VRS for personal reasons. I would like to focus on personal matters. I will concentrate on my family and stay put in Bhubaneswar till my son's school education is completed," he said.

Asked whether his decision was linked to opposition demands for his resignation over the SIR exercise, he said, "Let them be happy if they want. I have completed 25 years in government service on September 2 and therefore decided to take VRS."

RSS remarks case: HC directs Priyank to approach sessions court

BENGALURU:

The High Court on Thursday directed Home Minister Priyank Kharge and Congress leader Mohammed Haris Nalapad to approach the sessions court with revision petitions against a criminal defamation complaint filed by an RSS volunteer.

Justice Anant Ramanath Hegde passed the order while hearing petitions filed by the Congress leaders seeking to quash the complaint. The court granted them liberty to approach the sessions court without examining the merits of the case.

The complaint was filed by Tejas A, who alleged that Kharge and Nalapad had made public statements attributing unlawful, antisocial and objectionable activities to the RSS and its members in a negative manner.

Gebremariam takes charge as Air India CEO

NEW DELHI:

Tewolde Gebremariam formally assumed charge as the CEO and MD of Air India on Thursday. Gebremariam, whose appointment was announced on August 5, received security clearance this week. An Ethiopian, Gebremariam is taking over at a time when the airline is working on its ambitious expansion plans amid multiple external headwinds. He is the second foreign CEO and MD to head loss-making Air India.

8 students drown at Diveagar beach

Mumbai:

Eight students on a picnic drowned at a beach in Maharashtra's Raigad district on Thursday, police said, adding all the bodies have been recovered.

The Class XI and XII students were part of a group from Winners Academy, a private coaching institute in Alandi, Pune district, police said, as per reports. A police official said a group of 48 people, comprising 25 boys, 17 girls and six teachers, had gone for a picnic at the beach in Raigad.

The eight students who died ventured into the sea and were swept away after misjudging the depth of the water and the current, he added. Search and rescue teams rushed to the spot after receiving an alert and recovered the bodies, he said.

MONEY MATTERS

Electoral reforms essential for real social change: Siddu

'Rising campaign costs and social divisions are shutting out deserving candidates from electoral politics'.

Why electoral reform?

Siddaramaiah said money, caste and liquor have gained greater influence in elections, making political entry difficult for honest, poor and socially committed people. He called for government-funded election expenses, equal opportunities for candidates and wider public discussion. He also stressed that voters must develop greater democratic awareness and reject the practice of accepting money. According to him, electoral reform is necessary for political, social and economic change.

Siddaramaiah recounts his political journeys

1983: Siddaramaiah's first Assembly election

Rs 63,000: Approximate campaign expenditure he recalled

1980: Lok Sabha election contested from Lok Dal

Rs 1 lakh: Amount sent by Chaudhary Charan Singh

3 committees: Dinesh Goswami, NN Vohra and Indrajit Gupta

Proposal: Government-funded election expenditure

him Rs 10,000, while villagers contributed Rs 200 or Rs 500 during his campaign. He said he completed the election with around Rs 63,000 as an independent candidate.

He recalled that when he contested the Lok Sabha election from Lok Dal in 1980, Chaudhary Charan Singh had sent him Rs 1 lakh. After the money was exhausted, there was not even enough to offer tea to people, he said.

Quick Read



Environmentalists flag poor enforcement of PoP idol ban

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Environmentalists have raised concerns over the immersion of Plaster of Paris (PoP) Ganesha idols and accumulation of festival waste at Bengaluru's immersion ponds. Activists alleged that authorities had failed to effectively enforce the long-standing ban on PoP idols and single-use plastic despite repeated awareness campaigns. Environmentalist Dr Shanti Tummala questioned how large numbers of PoP idols reached immersion ponds if the ban was being implemented, and called for stricter enforcement. Shobha Bhat of Usiru Foundation urged residents to choose eco-friendly idols and avoid plastic. Activists also called for greater accountability among officials and citizens to prevent festival waste from polluting lakes and other water bodies.

Groups seek El Niño safeguards in Karnataka

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Trade union and environmental groups have urged Karnataka to prepare urgently for heat and water stress amid warnings of a strong El Niño. The All India Central Council for Trade Unions (AICTU), Bangalore Environment Forum (BEF) and Fridays For Future Karnataka (FFF-K) said higher temperatures and disrupted rainfall could worsen existing drought and Bengaluru's water crisis. The groups warned that outdoor workers and the urban poor face the greatest risks, particularly sanitation, construction and agricultural workers, ASHA and Anganwadi workers, street vendors, gig workers, fisherpeople and nomadic communities. They called for shaded workplaces, cooling facilities and regular access to drinking water, saying climate-related risks disproportionately affect marginalised communities and women.

Civil society report flags voter deletions in Karnataka SIR

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A civil society report has raised concerns over voter deletions and alleged discrepancies in Karnataka's electoral rolls following the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).The report, prepared by the Anti-SIR Alliance and Citizens' Vote Protection Committee, is based on electoral-roll data, a survey of Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and ground verification across 100 polling booths in 25 districts. According to the report, Karnataka's electorate declined from 5,52,49,719 voters in 2025 to 4,44,53,380 in the draft roll, a reduction of about 19.5%, or nearly 1.08 crore voters.The report said 65,45,679 voters were classified as "Shifted", 16,39,864 as "Dead", 15,17,042 as "Absent", 7,09,870 as "Duplicate" and 3,83,884 under "Others". The organisations said the "Shifted" category required particular scrutiny, as migrant workers and people changing rented accommodation could face difficulties in retaining their registration.

Yatindra invites Shivakumar, Parameshwara to Mysuru Dasara

Preparations for the State's flagship cultural festival gained momentum with senior leaders receiving formal invitations to join this year's celebrations.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Urban Development and Mysuru District In-charge Minister Dr Yatindra Siddaramaiah invited Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to inaugurate the world-famous Mysuru Dasara festival.



Yatindra Siddaramaiah met Shivakumar at the Chief Minister's residence in Bengaluru along with a delegation from



CM D.K. Shivakumar receives the Mysuru Dasara invitation

the Mysuru district administration. During the meeting, the Minister discussed preparations for this year's Dasara, arrangements for various programmes and other preliminary measures being undertaken for the festival.

The delegation briefed the Chief Minister on the prepa-

rations being made by the district administration to ensure that the State festival is celebrated in a meaningful and grand manner.

Later, Yatindra Siddaramaiah met Deputy Chief Minister Dr G. Parameshwara at his residence and formally invited him to the inaugura-

tion ceremony. The Minister personally handed over the Dasara invitation and briefed the Deputy Chief Minister on the festival arrangements.

The discussions covered preparations, cultural programmes and infrastructure facilities being put in place for the celebrations.



Deputy CM Dr G. Parameshwara receives the invitation

Accepting the invitation, Dr G. Parameshwara said Mysuru Dasara showcased Karnataka's rich cultural heritage at the global level. He said he would participate in the celebrations and conveyed his best wishes for the successful conduct of the festival.

Mysuru Deputy Commissioner Laxmikant Reddy, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Yukesh Kumar, Mysuru City Police Commissioner Seema Latkar and several senior officials of the district administration were present during the meetings.

Minister Yatindra Siddaramaiah invites Governor to Mysuru Dasara



Urban Development and Mysuru District In-charge Minister Dr Yatindra Siddaramaiah on Thursday invited

Governor Thawarchand Gehlot to the inauguration of the Mysuru Dasara festival. Yatindra Siddaramaiah met the Governor at Lok Bhavan in Bengaluru along with a delegation of senior officials. Following Mysuru's traditional customs, he honoured the Governor by adorning him with a Mysuru turban and presenting a bouquet before

handing over the formal Dasara invitation. The Governor warmly accepted the invitation and conveyed his best wishes for the successful conduct of the State festival. Mysuru Deputy Commissioner Laxmikant Reddy, ZP CEO Yukesh Kumar and City Police Commissioner Seema Latkar were present.

Wooday P. Krishna selected for Mahatma Gandhi Seva Award

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Renowned social worker Wooday P. Krishna has been selected for the prestigious Mahatma Gandhi Seva Award-Karnataka 2026 for his contribution to social service and commitment to Gandhian ideals.

The award is presented annually by the Karnataka Government's Department of Information and Public Relations to mark Gandhi Jayanti and honour distinguished individuals or organisations that follow and promote the principles and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi.

A selection committee headed by retired High Court judge T.G. Shivashankar Gowda met on September 23 to consider the nominations

received for the award.

The committee examined the eligibility, achievements and service records of six organisations and 24 individuals who had been considered for the honour. Following a detailed assessment of the nominations, the committee unanimously selected Wooday P. Krishna as the recipient of the 2026 award.

The committee submitted its report and recommendation to the State Government. The government accepted the recommendation and announced Wooday P. Krishna as the recipient of the presti-



Dr Mysore Nagamani Srinath selected for Sangeetha Vidwan Award

Senior Carnatic vocalist Dr Mysore Nagamani Srinath has been selected for the prestigious Sangeetha Vidwan Award, presented annually by the Department of Kannada and Culture during Mysuru Dasara. Minister Shivraj Thangadgi said the selection was made by a committee headed by Pandit Faiyaz Khan. Dr Nagamani Srinath has served as Head of the Music Department and professor at the University of Mysore. She has composed more than 100 classical works and trained hundreds of students through the Sunada Cultural Centre. Her honours include the Karnataka Rajyotsava Award, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and Karnataka Kalashree Award.



gious award.

The award is part of the State Government's annual Gandhi Jayanti observances

aimed at recognising individuals and organisations whose work reflects Gandhian values and contributes to society.

NALAPAD'S REMARKS DRAW JD(S) LEADER'S IRE

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru JD(S) president H.M. Ramesh Gowda has criticised Mohammed Nalapad over his remarks against JD(S) youth leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy, including his statement that Nikhil would not be allowed to hold meetings anywhere in Karnataka.

Speaking to reporters at the JD(S) central office at JP Bhavan on Thursday, Gowda

said Nalapad should not assume that he could assault people and get away with it.

Gowda alleged that Nalapad had been involved in attacks on several people in recent days and claimed that CCTV footage and other records were available. He urged Bengaluru police to examine CCTV footage from the past five to six months and take appropriate action based on evidence.

He also questioned why cases had not been registered against Nalapad over the alleged incidents and urged the police department and Bengaluru Police Commissioner to verify his alleged criminal history, including whether he had ever been listed as a rowdy-sheeter.

Gowda said Nalapad should stop making derogatory re-



marks about JD(S) leaders and challenged him to prevent a public meeting.

He further alleged that Nalapad was emboldened by the Congress government and warned that his alleged conduct could lead to an untoward incident if not checked.

DRUG COST DISPARITY

FDA finds hospitals charging up to 52 times drug cost

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka's drug regulator has uncovered wide gaps between procurement costs and patient billing for high-cost medicines and hospital consumables.

Inspections conducted by the Food Safety and Drug Administration (FDA) found that pharmaceutical companies were supplying medicines to hospitals at heavily discounted institutional rates, while patients were being charged at or near the printed Maximum Retail Price (MRP). The resulting markups ranged from 10 times to more than 52 times the actual procurement

cost. The findings emerged from a special verification drive conducted on September 25 and 26 at wholesale premises, hospitals and other establish-



ments in Bengaluru and various districts.

The inspections covered 189 high-cost drugs and more than 768 consumable items. The department identified 253

drugs with extreme pricing anomalies and plans to submit the findings to the Central Government.

Health and Family Welfare Minister has written to the Union Health Minister seeking national measures to address exorbitant patient billing. Karnataka has sought mandatory disclosure of both landing cost and MRP on patient bills.

The State has also sought expansion of price control under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO), regulation of trade margins on essential high-value medicines and consumables, and measures to ensure institutional discounts

are passed on to patients.

At present, scheduled drugs under the DPCO are subject to ceiling prices, while non-scheduled drugs have no specific cap on retailer mar-

Affordability of essential and life-saving healthcare is a matter of serious public importance."

— Commissioner, Food Safety and Drug Administration

gins. Medical devices and consumables also have limited price regulation.

The FDA said the verification exercise would continue in phases, with the next round focusing on anti-retroviral medicines, newer-generation and critical antibiotics, medical devices and hospital consumables.

Reprinted 'Indian Journalism' book to hit shelves soon

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Academy has reprinted 'Bharatiya Patrikodyama' (Indian Journalism), authored by Dr Nadig Krishnamurthy, a noted journalism teacher, writ-



er and researcher. The reprinted copies were released and 25 copies were handed over to University of Mysore Vice-Chancellor Prof Lokanath in accordance with an agreement.

Academy president Ayesha Khanam handed over the copies to the Vice-Chancellor. Academy members Dr S. Mamatha and Rashmi and secretary Mahesh were present.

The book documents the

history, development and major milestones of Indian journalism. It is expected to serve as a useful reference for journalists, journalism students, researchers and readers interested in the evolution of the

A significant Kannada reference work tracing the evolution of journalism in India is set to return to readers following its reprint by the Karnataka Media Academy.

profession.

Dr Nadig Krishnamurthy also has a significant association with the Karnataka Media Academy. A journalism teacher and researcher, he served as the Academy's first president during 1982-83.

The Academy said the reprinted edition would soon be made available for sale at its office in Bengaluru.

BWSSB plans 1 MLD STP near Tavarekere Park

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has invited tenders to establish a decentralised sewage



treatment plant (STP) with a capacity of 1 million litres per day (MLD) near Tavarekere Park.

A significant quantity of sewage currently flows through the stormwater drain near the park, resulting in foul odour, fly nuisance and unhygienic conditions, according to the BWSSB.

The proposed STP will intercept sewage entering the drain and treat it, providing a

long-term solution to the concerns raised by local residents and park users.

At present, potable water is being used to maintain the park. Once the STP becomes operational, treated wastewater will be used for gardening and landscaping, reducing the use of potable water for non-potable purposes.

BWSSB said excess treated water would be utilised for construction activities, landscaping, road and premises washing and other suitable non-potable requirements in surrounding areas.

The project follows demands from residents and park users concerned about sewage flowing through the drain. The decentralised treatment facility is intended to address wastewater locally while creating a source of treated water for various non-potable uses.

Mobile phone, three SIM cards seized from Parappana Agrahara Jail

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A mobile phone and three SIM cards were recovered from Parappana Agrahara Central Jail, prompting a fresh probe into prohibited devices and security lapses.

The recovery followed a complaint by jail officer Kotresh, based on which police registered a case at Parap-



pana Agrahara police station. Investigators are examining how the devices entered the prison and who possessed or used them.

The latest seizure comes amid repeated recoveries of mobile phones, SIM cards, chargers and other prohibited materials from the Bengaluru prison. Authorities are also examining whether inmates, visitors or prison personnel were involved in bringing unauthorised communication devices into the facility.

The jail has multi-layered security arrangements, including CCTV surveillance, security personnel and signal-jamming systems. Despite these measures, mobile phones and SIM cards have continued to be recovered during surprise inspections.

In January, authorities reported the seizure of 142 mobile phones and 109 SIM cards from the prison between November and January. Another report said 127 mobile phones had been seized during nearly two months, with 25 FIRs registered over alleged unauthorised phone

use.

In March, police registered a case against five undertrial prisoners allegedly found using mobile phones inside the prison. Three prison staff members were also suspended over alleged dereliction of duty in connection with the incident.

The issue received renewed attention in August when the Central Crime Branch searched the barrack of former MP Prajwal Revanna and undertrial prisoner Prathap Rai. An Android mobile phone, charger, notebook and pen drive were reportedly recovered. The search led to a wider investigation into the alleged supply and use of prohibited phones inside the prison.

Subsequent investigations resulted in arrests in cases involving alleged smuggling and unauthorised use of mobile phones. Police have also examined the possible role of prison personnel and intermediaries in supplying devices to inmates.

In September, police reportedly arrested nine people, including three prison warders, in three cases concerning the alleged possession, supply and use of prohibited mobile phones inside Bengaluru Central Prison.

The latest recovery has prompted investigators to examine whether it is an isolated incident or connected to a wider supply network. Police are also looking into the source of the devices, their intended users and possible involvement of prison staff.

Authorities are expected to strengthen checks and accountability measures based on the findings of the investigation.

CH Observer

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From open drainage hazards outside schools to neglected garbage heaps right outside hospitals, civic apathy is putting urban residents at risk. In neighborhoods like Cunningham Crescent Road and Padmanabha Nagar, broken infrastructure and unmanaged waste have transformed daily walks into hazardous commutes. Frustrated citizens are now issuing urgent appeals to municipal authorities, demanding immediate intervention to clear public spaces and restore basic safety and sanitation before tragedy strikes.

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Residents of Cunningham Crescent Road have urged authorities to cover an open drainage path located almost next to the Bosch Guest House and opposite a small school. Locals warn that the unprotected hazard poses a severe injury risk to pedestrians, particularly during rain or in low-light conditions.



Residents of Padmanabha Nagar have urged authorities to clear a persistent garbage spot on CJ Venkatesh Das Road near NU Hospital and the garbage spot sits right on the wall of a local park. Located in a residential area, the unhygienic dumping site has overwhelmed the neighborhood with a foul stench, prompting calls for immediate cleanup.



Residents of Padmanabhanagar have expressed shock over an emerging garbage spot directly opposite NU Hospital on CJ Venkatesh Das Road. Locals report that authorities left behind a pile of felled tree branches and leaves that has progressively turned into a neglected dump site. Producing massive amounts of irritating dust and situated right outside a healthcare facility, residents are urgently demanding immediate clearance from municipal authorities.

Strict point system planned for traffic violations

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka government is preparing to roll out a strict point-based licensing system to tackle

To make the system seamless, the state plans to integrate the Transport Department's Sarathi database directly with the Bengaluru Traffic Police e-Challan



rising traffic violations and chronic congestion across Bengaluru. During a high-level review meeting held at Vikasa Soudha, Home Minister Priyank Kharge and Transport Minister Byrathi Suresh discussed major legal changes aimed at making local roads safer for everyone. Under the newly proposed framework, drivers will accumulate penalty points every time they break traffic rules. If a motorist crosses a specific limit of accumulated points, authorities will move to suspend or cancel their driving license. Officials believe this direct consequence will force reckless drivers to respect road safety regulations.

This digital bridge will allow traffic officers on duty to check a driver's license instantly, view past offenses on the spot, and log new penalties straight into their digital record. Furthermore, the state is considering higher cash fines for common offenses that choke city traffic, such as illegal footpath parking, driving on the wrong side of one-way streets, jumping signals, and dangerous two-wheeler riding. Repeat offenders whose licenses get suspended may also be required to complete mandatory road-safety training programs before getting back behind the wheel. Officials hope these firm steps will bring much-needed discipline to urban transit.

BSCC disposes of 20,000 tons of waste

Bengaluru South City Corporation cleared nearly 21,000 metric tonnes of waste during its two-month sanitation drive.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Under the overarching guidance of Greater Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, the Bengaluru South City Corporation has made sweeping strides in urban sanitation through the intensive implementation of the 'Waste-Free Freedom Campaign'. Corporation Commissioner K.N. Ramesh



announced that a massive sanitation drive executed over the past two months successfully cleared and disposed of 20,980.84 metric tonnes of accumulated waste from across the municipal zone. The large-scale operation, conducted continuously from August 1 to September 30,



targeted chronic garbage "black spots" and overflowing waste piles along major roadways and public spaces. Utilizing a dedicated fleet of tipper trucks completing 885 dedicated trips, municipal work crews transported the collected refuse to designated processing and disposal sites located at Vittasandra and Kallubalu near Anekal.

The clean-up campaign also prioritized swift responsiveness to citizen grievances logged through municipal digital channels. Officials reported that a total of 1,601

complaints and requests for garbage clearance were officially registered during the two-month period. Demon-



strating inter-departmental coordination, Assistant Engineers (AEs) submitted 928 requests and local Marshals

filed 339 reports, all of which were met with prompt field actions by sanitation staff to restore hygiene standards in affected neighborhoods.

Members of the public should not litter indiscriminately but must segregate wet and dry waste and hand it over only to the Corporation's vehicles."

— K.N. Ramesh, Corporation Commissioner

Commissioner Ramesh expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts of residents and civic personnel while issuing a stern appeal for sustained community co-operation. He emphasized that reducing waste accumulation along public corridors to near-zero levels requires a permanent shift in civic habits. Residents were strongly urged to refrain from indiscriminate littering, strictly segregate wet and dry waste at the source, and hand refuse exclusively over to authorized municipal collection vehicles.

Highlights of the cleanliness drive

Massive Operations

Workers completed 885 trips using tipper trucks to clear accumulated garbage, disposing of the collected waste at designated facilities in Vittasandra and Kallubalu near Anekal.

Public & Official Response

The corporation registered and resolved 1,601 waste clearance requests through its online portal, backed by the proactive coordination of Assistant Engineers and field marshals.

Reduction of Black Spots

Corporation efforts have successfully brought the accumulation of waste along major roads and public spaces down to near-zero levels.

The Commissioner underscored that maintaining Bengaluru South as a model, garbage-free zone depends heavily on active public participation alongside rigorous municipal enforcement. Civic authorities plan to continue ground monitoring and rapid-response protocols to prevent cleared black spots from reemerging.

BNCC reviews flood preparedness amid heavy rains

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In response to the intense, continuous downpours battering the metropolis, the Bengaluru North City Corporation convened a high-level emergency review meeting late into the evening. Chaired by Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar, the session brought together key civic administrators and engineering heads to evaluate the city-wide impact of the heavy precipitation, assess vulnerable waterlogging points, and formulate immediate, comprehensive remedial strategies to safeguard residential neighborhoods and critical transport corridors.

Officials must remain accessible at all times during emergencies, any laxity in responding to public complaints or senior directives will invite strict disciplinary action."

— Pommala Sunil Kumar BNCC Commissioner

The administrative review focused heavily on correlating historical vulnerability data with real-time ground reports. Prior to the monsoon escalation, civic authorities had compiled an exhaustive inventory of chronic waterlogging points, flood-prone low-lying zones, and vital vehicular underpasses across the northern municipal jurisdiction. During the meeting, Commissioner Kumar rigorously cross-examined zonal engineers regarding the performance of these specific sites during the day's heavy rainfall, meticulously tracking which locations experienced inundation and auditing the

response times of rapid-deployment clearing crews.

A critical point of discussion during the review centered on jurisdictional friction between municipal bodies and national infrastructure agencies. Highlighting the recurring inundation at the Vidyashilp Underpass, the Commissioner expressed deep frustration over systemic administrative delays. Because the critical underpass falls directly under the purview of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), the Corporation's Engineering Department has repeatedly dispatched formal correspondence seeking structural interventions and permanent drain-

age upgrades. Despite these repeated appeals, required restorative works remain unexecuted.

In response, Commissioner Kumar issued strict directives to senior engineering teams to bypass bureaucratic red tape, establish active inter-agency coordination with NHAI counterparts, and fast-track a viable engineering solution to permanently eliminate the recurring flood bottleneck.

To ensure seamless disaster response and public safety, the Commissioner mandated the uninterrupted, round-the-clock activation of the municipal emergency control room. Officials and technical staff

Bengaluru North City Corporation held an emergency review meeting to tackle heavy monsoon waterlogging, demanding swift action on chronic flood bottlenecks.

have been placed on strict rotating shifts to monitor weather alerts, log citizen grievances, and dispatch mobile pumping units to distress locations without delay.

Underscoring a zero-tolerance policy for administrative negligence, Commissioner Kumar warned that severe departmental disciplinary action would be initiated against any personnel found absent, unresponsive, or derelict in their duties at the control room. Furthermore, all deployed engineers, zonal officers, and administrative staff were instructed to maintain constant communication availability, ensuring immediate responsiveness to calls from distressed citizens, senior municipal leadership, and state ministerial offices.

The high-stakes coordination meeting was attended by a distinguished delegation of senior civic leadership, including Additional Commissioner (Development) R. Latha, Additional Commissioner (Revenue – In-charge) Pallavi, Joint Commissioner Mohammed Naeem Momin, Chief Engineers Dr. Raghavendra Prasad and Yamuna, alongside a full roster of superintending and executive engineers responsible for regional infrastructure maintenance.

Bengaluru EV bus adoption surges significantly

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Amid a continuous rise in overall traffic and vehicular density across the Silicon Valley of India, recent transport data highlights a major milestone in urban sustainability:



electric vehicle (EV) registrations in Bengaluru are surging at an unprecedented pace. Out of 76,508 new vehicles registered in the city during August alone, an impressive 13,389 units were electric, accounting for roughly 17.5% of all new vehicle acquisitions.

Transport Department statistics indicate that approximately 2,500 new vehicles hit Bengaluru's roads daily, with electric variants contributing about 500 units to that daily total. The city currently boasts

a cumulative total of over 4.9 lakh electric vehicles out of Karnataka's statewide total of 8.9 lakh EVs, establishing the capital as the undisputed epicenter for electric mobility in the region.

A breakdown of the city's growing green fleet reveals extensive adoption across commercial and personal segments. Bengaluru is currently home to approximately 3.8 lakh electric two-wheelers, 46,596 electric cars, 9,922 electric cabs, 6,855 passenger auto-rickshaws, 9,876 goods delivery autos, and 2,009 electric buses operated by public transit networks. Notably, electric models accounted for 71% of the 9,453 two-wheelers registered in the capital last month.

Analysts attribute this 32-fold growth in EV adoption over the past five years to rising environmental consciousness, expanding charging infrastructure, and a collective push to curb urban air pollution. With roughly one out of every two electric vehicles registered in Karnataka belonging to Bengaluru, municipal authorities and environmental experts anticipate a measurable long-term improvement in urban air quality as petrol and diesel fleets gradually give way to zero-emission alternatives.

EVs in Bengaluru

17.5% of the 76,508 new vehicles registered in August were electric	4.9 lakh electric vehicles in the city, of 8.9 lakh in Karnataka
71% of the 9,453 two-wheelers registered last month were electric	2,009 electric buses run by public transit networks

BENGALURU DRAINAGE FIXES

'Permanent solutions implemented for waterlogging areas'

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Under the strategic direction of Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar, the municipal administration has successfully executed a series of major engineering and infrastructural interventions to resolve chronic waterlogging and flood-related disruptions across various zones. Addressing problem areas that have plagued residents for



over a decade, the Corporation has rolled out sustainable, long-term drainage solutions.

For nearly 15 years, the stretch near Manyata Tech

Park, Veerannapalya, and surrounding areas along the Hebbal Outer Ring Road and Veerannapalya Service Road experienced severe water

keeping Karianna Palya and the Outer Ring Road completely free of flooding.

In Ramanashree California Layout (Puttenahalli-Attur



stagnation spanning up to a kilometre during heavy downpours. To resolve this, municipal authorities cleared canal encroachments and constructed a 1.6-kilometre-long artificial channel connecting the Veerannapalya Service Road directly to the main Hebbal storm water channel. The intervention proved highly effective during the heavy precipitation of September 30,

area), historical waterlogging caused by unmanaged rainwater and sewage flow from Ananthapura village was successfully resolved. By securing landowner cooperation, the Corporation laid a 145-metre-long, 600 mm diameter NP3 RCC pipe to divert sewage and constructed a 60-metre-long storm water drain under the National Disaster Mitigation Fund

(NDMF) to route catchment runoff smoothly into Puttenahalli Lake.

Similarly, in HBR Layout 5th Block, a persistent 10-year bottleneck near the BESCOM office—caused by an interfering HN Valley MS pipeline along 18th Main



Road—was permanently remedied by constructing a new RCC culvert and drain aligned with the road gradient. Regular silt and vegetation clearing is also underway across Sarvagnanagar drains to maintain optimal flow capacities.

To safeguard vulnerable residential pockets such as

Tata Nagar, Dynasty Layout, and Defence Layout—which suffered extensive flooding during the 2024 monsoons—the Corporation has constructed robust RCC retaining walls along storm water drains utilizing NDMF and World Bank financial assistance. Furthermore, recognizing the unique topography of the low-lying Dynasty Layout, engineers have installed dual ground-level water sumps equipped with automated sensor pumps to rapidly discharge roadway accumulation and prevent residential inundation.

City-wide, these comprehensive engineering upgrades encompass lake connectivity projects, drain rejuvenation, unlined canal hardening with RCC retaining walls, and the replacement of narrow bridges with wider, hydraulically optimized structures funded through municipal allocations, NDMF grants, and World Bank backing.

Quick Read

Restrictive orders imposed around examination centres

CH NEWS, GADAG

Restrictive orders have been imposed within a 200-metre radius of 30 examination centres in Gadag district for the Village Administrative Officers recruitment examination on October 4, 2026. The Karnataka Examinations Authority will conduct Paper-1 from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and Paper-2 from 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. The orders will remain in force from 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. to prevent malpractice and maintain peace. Entry of unauthorised persons and groups of five or more people is prohibited. Xerox shops, bookstalls and photocopy centres will remain closed, while loudspeakers are banned. Mobile phones, electronic devices, bags, loose sheets and other prohibited items cannot be carried into examination centres. Media personnel can film only when candidates arrive or leave. They cannot enter examination rooms. Candidates must follow the dress code and all instructions issued by the Karnataka Examinations Authority.

KSOU invites applications for various courses

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Karnataka State Open University (KSOU) has invited applications from eligible students for admission to various undergraduate, postgraduate, PG Diploma, Diploma and Certificate courses for the 2026-27 academic year July cycle. Admissions are open for courses including B.A., B. Com., B.C.A., B.B.A., B.Sc., B.S.W., B.Lib.Sc., M.A., M. Com., M.B.A., M.Sc., M.S.W., M.C.A. and M.Lib. Sc. Students can apply through the KSOU Mandya Regional Centre. The admission process began on June 22, and the deadline has been extended to October 13. Applications can be submitted online through www.ksoumysore.ac.in. For further information, students can contact 9916894579, 99341555676, 9902958732, 9740984640, 9742636676, 8095557722, 9449934339 or the office landline 08232-200862.

BESCOM warns against climbing buildings during procession

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

BESCOM has warned the public against climbing onto buildings and shops along the route of the Hindu Maha Ganapathi immersion procession scheduled for October 3. The procession will begin at Challakere Gate and pass through B.D. Road, Gandhi Circle, Holalkere Road, Gayatri Circle, Sharadamma Kalyana Mantapa and Kanaka Circle before reaching Chandravalli. BESCOM said power lines run along the procession route, creating a risk of accidents if people climb onto rooftops and come into contact with live wires. The Assistant Executive Engineer of the BESCOM City Sub-division urged house and shop owners to prevent people from climbing onto buildings. Owners may be held responsible if an electrical accident occurs.

Inquiry into 99% electoral roll notices completed: DC

Ramya said objections would be examined, Form-7 notices issued, and FIRs registered against those submitting false information to remove names

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Deputy Commissioner S. Ramya said 99 per cent of inquiries into notices issued over discrepancies in the electoral rolls have been completed as part of the special summary revision. Speaking at a press conference, she said 68,750 notices were generated across the district's six Assembly constituencies and served to the concerned voters. The Election Commission appointed 102 Additional Electoral Registration Officers to conduct the inquiries. Of these, inquiries into 66,689 notices have been completed. Ramya said only voters who have permanently relocated or died are being identified as ineligible after verification. So far, 626 voters have been disqualified. A total of 39,691 forms have been received, including 16,656 Form-6, nine Form-6A, 2,638



Form-7 and 20,387 Form-8 applications. She said objections from Booth Level Agents and the public would be examined and appropriate action taken. For Form-7 inquiries, notices will be issued to both the applicant and the person whose name is proposed for removal. She warned that an FIR would be registered against anyone providing false information through Form-7 to remove a name from the elec-

68,750	66,689	39,691	626
notices generated	inquiries completed	forms received	voters disqualified

toral roll. Regarding the South-East Graduates' Constituency election, Ramya said October 6 is the last date for filing nominations, while scrutiny will be held on October 7. Voting will take place on October 23. The district previously had 22 polling stations. Another 33 have been established, taking the total to 55. Of 2,418 applications for new voter registration, 2,391 were accepted and 27 rejected.

'Eligible voters will not be dropped'

Deputy Commissioner S. Ramya said eligible voters' names would not be removed from electoral rolls during the Special Summary Revision (SSR). At a meeting with representatives of recognised political parties, she warned that those who maliciously submit Form-7 with false information to remove voters' names could face an FIR and legal action. Ramya said applications for objections and corrections would undergo verification, with notices issued to applicants and persons whose names are proposed for deletion. Officials will check supporting documents before taking action. Additional Deputy Commissioner B.T. Kumaraswamy said Form-7 applications were being carefully examined. Party representatives also raised concerns over alleged attempts to target eligible voters.

There are 41,358 voters in the district, including 24,031 men and 17,327 women. Counting will be held on October 27, and the election process will conclude by October 31. Additional Deputy Commissioner B.T. Kumaraswamy, Sub-Divisional Officer Dr. K.J. Kantharaj and Election Tahsildar Fathima Baby were present.



Community Health Officers continue indefinite protest in Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Community Health Officers (CHOs) from across Karnataka have continued their indefinite protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru, demanding action on various issues related to their service conditions, job security and future prospects. Under the National Health Mission, health sub-centres across the state were upgraded to Health and Wellness Centres, where CHOs were appointed to provide services. The protesters alleged that the government has not taken appropriate action on several of their demands despite repeated representations. More than 2,500 CHOs from different districts participated in a foot march from Siddaganga Mutt in Tumakuru to Nelamangala on September 28. They began a sit-in protest at Freedom Park on September 29. Their demands include withdrawing the mandatory B.Sc. Nursing qualification for PHCO (ANM) and HIO posts, providing job permanency and service security, introducing inter-district transfer facilities, revising the Terms of Reference (TOR), and increasing salaries and honorariums.

The protesters also demanded that CHOs be used exclusively for community health services and that the ongoing relocation process be postponed. A total of 276 CHOs are serving in Dakshina Kannada district, including 46 in Puttur taluk. Yashodhara, District Secretary of the All Karnataka State Community Health NHM Contract Employees Association, said CHOs from the district are also participating in the protest. The association has urged the government to take immediate action on the demands and announce a clear decision.

At a Glance

- **Protest:** CHOs continue sit-in at Freedom Park.
- **Scale:** Over 2,500 CHOs joined foot march.
- **Key demand:** Job permanency and service security.
- **Qualification:** B.Sc. Nursing requirement withdrawal sought.
- **Pay:** Salary and honorarium revision demanded.
- **Dakshina Kannada:** 276 CHOs currently serving districtwide.

HONORING SENIOR WISDOM 'Senior citizens are treasures, treat them with respect'

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Senior citizens are not a burden on families or society but a priceless treasure of experience, knowledge and values, said Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar.



He was speaking after inaugurating World Senior Citizens Day-2026 at Gandhi Bhavan. The programme was

also urged those facing neglect to seek legal remedies and not lose hope. Respect for elders, he said, should not be limited to one day. Combining the experience of senior citizens with the energy of youth can help build a society based on val-

ensure that senior citizens live with respect, security and dignity. He advised senior citizens to take care of their health and make use of government facilities such as pensions, health-care services and legal aid. He

also urged those facing neglect to seek legal remedies and not lose hope. Respect for elders, he said, should not be limited to one day. Combining the experience of senior citizens with the energy of youth can help build a society based on val-

Democratic values must be taught to students

Students should be educated about democracy and its values to help them become responsible citizens, said Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar. He was speaking at a district-level selection committee meeting on the Youth Parliament programme. He said the programme should provide students with practical knowledge of parliamentary democracy, rather than being only a competition. Dr. Kumar stressed the need to teach students about constitutional rights and duties, democratic principles and public participation from school level. He said activities such as discussions, speeches, essays and Youth Parliament programmes can help students understand Parliament, elections and democratic institutions. The meeting discussed the programme's objectives, student participation and selection process. Srinivas, Deputy Director of Social Welfare, and Basavaraju, DDPI, were present.

Students key to stronger democracy: MLA

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Students have an important role in creating awareness about democracy and strengthening democratic values, said Mandya MLA P. Ravikumar.

He was speaking after inaugurating the International Day of Democracy celebration and Taluk-level Youth Parliament programme at the Vishwagangotri Syndicate Hall of Mandya University. The event was organised jointly by the Taluk Administration, Taluk Panchayat and the Departments of Social Welfare, School Education and Literacy, Higher Education, and Law, Justice and Human Rights. Ravikumar said education should not be limited to obtaining degrees but should help shape responsible citizens. Students should understand constitutional values, democratic ideals, laws, rights and duties. He said the youth have an important role in shaping the future of the country. He said the media is an important pillar of democracy and students should critically examine information presented through television and other media platforms and understand the facts. Ravikumar said elected representatives have a responsibility to understand people's needs and work for development in areas such as roads, drinking water, education and healthcare. He said citizens should consider the performance and contribution of

representatives while choosing them. He added that democracy is not limited to voting during elections. Citizens who understand the Constitution, laws, rights and duties can contribute to strengthening democra-



cy. Students should develop social responsibility and concern for the country's development. Speaking on the occasion, District Advocates' Association President T.S. Satyanand said the Youth Parliament programme aims to create awareness among young people about democracy and the Constitution. He said students should understand social issues, inequalities and challenges facing democracy and develop a questioning attitude and sense of responsibility. The programme can help develop leadership qualities, social responsibility, constitutional values and democratic awareness among youth. Block Education Officer Mahadeva and Assistant Director of Mandya Taluk Social Welfare Department Bhimaraya Vaddara were present.

Lakshith Gowda wins gold medal in karate

CH NEWS, RAMANAGARA

Lakshith T. Gowda, a third-grade student, has won a gold medal in the Kata category at a tri-nation karate competition held recently in Mumbai. Lakshith is the son of T. Thimmegowda, a lawyer and General Secretary of the Negilayogi Social Service Trust, Ramanagara District Branch. The competition featured participants from India, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Balancing his studies with regular karate training, Lakshith has shown strong interest in sports from a young age. His achievement has brought recognition to his school and district. Through regular practice, physical fitness and hard work, Lakshith has made a mark in karate while continu-

ing his education. The gold medal has encouraged him to aim for greater achievements at the state, national and international levels. Teachers, family members, relatives, friends, sports en-



thusiasts and school staff congratulated Lakshith on his achievement. They wished him success in advanced karate training and hoped he would continue participating in competitions and winning medals in the future.

NAME CHANGE

I, **YASHAWANTHA**, aged 38 years, S/o. Jagannatha, Residing at Bijapura Colony, Harinahalli Post, Hanagodur Hobali, Hunsur Taluk, Mysore District -571105, Karnataka, have changed my name from **YESHAWANTHA** to **YASHAWANTHA**, vide affidavit dated: 01.10.2026 before notary H. DINESH, Hunsur.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, G. BHARATHI, BHARATHI G & GOPALAN BHARATHI (old name), a resident of No 1241, 13th Cross, near 36 B Last Bus Stop, Giri Nagar, 2nd Phase, Bengaluru 560085, Karnataka, INDIA, have changed my name to BHARATHI GOPALA RAO (NEW Name) vide affidavit dated 30-09-2026, sworn advocate and notary Mohammed Hussain K.

NAME CHANGE

I, **USHA D ALSO KNOWN AS USHA V.** W/o. M Dilip Kumar, Resident of No. 2, 36th Cross, 26th Main, Near SSMRV PU Collage, 9th Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru -560069, Karnataka, have changed my name to **USHA D JAIN**, vide affidavit dated: 01.10.2026 before notary G. DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MANOHARA B V S/o VENKATAREDDY, R/o 115, 11th Cross, 1st Main Road, Sanjeevininagar, Sahakaranagar, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560092, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MANOHAR REDDY B V.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SUTHAGAR P** alias **P SUTHAGAR** S/o **PITCHEY**, R/o B-105, Devin Indira Paradise Apartment, R K Hegde Nagar Main Road, Near Noor Nagar Bus Stop, Chokkanahalli, Yelahanka, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560064, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as **SUTHAGAR PITCHEY**.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SUTHAGAR P S/o PITCHEY R/o B-105, Devin Indira Paradise Apartment, R K Hegde Nagar Main Road, Near Noor Nagar Bus Stop, Chokkanahalli, Yelahanka, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560064, have changed the name of my minor daughter S. SAYANTHIGA alias S SAYANTHIGA aged 13 years and she shall hereafter be known as SAYANTHIGA SUTHAGAR.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **ZULEKHA BANU MOHAMMED** (old name), a resident of No.38, Sidde Gowda lane, Susheela Road, Doddavalli Bangalore - 560004, Karnataka, INDIA, have changed my name to **ZULEKHA BANU ENAYATHULLA** (NEW Name) vide affidavit dated 30-09-2026, sworn advocate and notary Mohammed Hussain K.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SHAIKH SHAISTA MOHAMMAD SAJID** (old name), a resident of No.35/1 9TH CROSS DHARMANNA GARDEN, DINNUR, R T NAGAR POST BANGALORE NORTH BANGALORE, 560032, Karnataka, INDIA, have changed my name to **SHAISTA SAJID SHAIKH** (NEW Name) vide affidavit dated 30-09-2026, sworn advocate and notary Mohammed Hussain K.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, R. JHANANI alias JANANI alias JANANI R alias S JANANI alias JANANI RAMASAMY D/o RAMASAMY, W/o SUTHAGAR P, R/o B-105, Devin Indira Paradise Apartment, R K Hegde Nagar Main Road, Near Noor Nagar Bus Stop, Chokkanahalli, Yelahanka, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560064, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JANANI SUTHAGAR.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SUTHAGAR P S/o PITCHEY R/o B-105, Devin Indira Paradise Apartment, R K Hegde Nagar Main Road, Near Noor Nagar Bus Stop, Chokkanahalli, Yelahanka, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560064, have changed the name of my minor son SAI RITWIK S alias SAI RITWIK S aged 10 years and he shall hereafter be known as SAI RITWIK SUTHAGAR.

Quick Read

Betageri Park cleanup begins after public complaint

CH NEWS, BETAGERI

Ganesh Singh Byali, president of the Betageri Railway Struggle Committee, had urged the Gadag-Betageri City Municipal Council to address the foul smell from Kittur Chennamma Park on P.B. Road. The smell was causing concern as it posed a health risk to people visiting the park. Responding to the complaint, municipal workers cleaned the area near the library and gymnasium, reducing the foul odor. Byali thanked the City Municipal Council for taking action. However, on behalf of the committee, he also requested that the interior areas of the park be cleaned to ensure better hygiene and a healthier environment for the public.

Munishwar Churi is felicitated after retirement

CH NEWS, HAVERI

Udachappa Malagi, State President of the Karnataka State Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, and Minorities Welfare Committee, congratulated Munishwar H. Churi on his retirement at a felicitation ceremony held at the Government Employees' Bhavan. Churi served as a Probation Officer under the Probation of Offenders Act in the Department of Women and Child Development. Malagi praised his integrity, responsive service, proactive thinking, and cooperative attitude. He wished Churi good health and a long retired life. Churi thanked everyone for their support and expressed gratitude for the honor. His wife, Smt. Manjula Churi, was also felicitated during the programme.

Helmets distributed in Changalera to mark MLA birthday

CH NEWS, BIDAR

A helmet distribution programme was organised near the Changalera temple to mark the birthday of Bidar South MLA Dr. Shailendra Beldale. The programme was organised by his fan club as part of a socially conscious birthday celebration. Dr. Shailendra Beldale inaugurated the programme and distributed helmets to vehicle riders. Speaking on the occasion, he stressed the importance of wearing helmets for the safety of two-wheeler riders. Awareness was created among riders about the need to wear helmets while travelling and follow traffic rules. Riders were also urged to give priority to their own safety and the safety of others while commuting. The programme highlighted road safety awareness and encouraged two-wheeler riders to make helmet use a regular part of their travel.

1,500 notebooks reach students at Addagal School

CH NEWS, SRINIVASPUR

As many as 1,500 notebooks were distributed to students of Addagal Government Primary School in Rayalpadu Hobli of Srinivaspur taluk as part of an initiative by the Kolar District Geleyara Balaga. The initiative aimed to encourage students in their studies and support their education by providing essential learning materials. Organisers said no child studying in a government school should fall behind due to a lack of basic facilities or educational resources. They called for collective efforts from society to support the education-



Hadapada demands stronger support for Savita community

Hadapada said COVID-19 devastated barbers' livelihoods, forcing many into migrant daily-wage work, while criticizing limited Corporation loans and benefits

AT A GLANCE

Demand

Revise loan guidelines for wider access.

Target

At least 25 beneficiaries per taluk.

Statistic

Over 90% reportedly lack assets.

COVID impact

Barbers lost livelihoods and migrated.

Relief sought

Loan waivers and free barber shops.

Warning

Statewide protests possible over unmet demands.

Gadag preserves Gandhi's memory through sacred memorials

MALINGARAYA PUJAR, CH NEWS

Mahatma Gandhi's messages of truth, non-violence and freedom continue to inspire people across the world. In Gadag district, his memory has a special connection through the Gandhi Gudi, sacred ashes and several memorials linked to his visits and the freedom struggle. Gandhiji visited the twin cities of Gadag-Betageri in 1921 and 1934. During his visits, he addressed people and urged them to actively participate in the freedom movement. Several leaders from the district, including Hanumantasa Bakale, Samuel Malekar, Chandasaab Bodlekhan, Narayanappa Bagade, Fakirappa Bharadwad, Sankappa Cholina and Mirajkar, joined the struggle.

After Gandhiji was assassinated in 1948, his sacred ashes were taken across the country for public viewing. Freedom fighters from Gadag, including Hanumantasa Bakale and Veerappan of Basarigida, brought a small portion of the ashes to Gadag. A memorial was later built at Hospet Chowk, now Vidyaranya Road, in Gadag-Betageri.

The place is now known as Gandhi Gudi, where worship rituals are performed daily. People remember the Mahatma by offering prasadam and naivedya. Special prayer meetings and patriotic cultural programmes are also organised there during Independence Day and Gandhi Jayanti.

Gandhiji also visited Jakkali village in Ron taluk on March 3, 1934. Inspired by his principles, villagers installed his statue at the government school in 1970 and built a Gandhi Temple.

Another important memorial stands at the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University in Nagavi. A beautiful replica of Gujarat's Sabarmati Ashram was built there and inaugurated in 2020 to mark the centenary of Gandhiji's visit to Karnataka on November 11, 1920. These places show how Gandhi's ideals continue to remain part of Gadag's history. The memorials also preserve the district's connection with the freedom struggle and remain important destinations for tourists and history enthusiasts.

Krishna H. Hadapada

District President, Gadag District Savita Samaj

do not have their own land, houses or shops for their work. Hadapada said the COVID-19 pandemic severely affected the livelihoods of many barbers, forcing some to leave their hometowns and work as daily-wage labourers in other shops. He questioned the Corporation's system of providing loans and benefits to only one or two people from each taluk.

He demanded that the existing quota be cancelled and the guidelines revised so that at least 25 poor Savita community members in every taluk can receive loans and financial assistance.

Hadapada also urged the government to completely waive outstanding loans taken by barbers from the Devaraj Urs Corporation who suffered losses during the pandemic. He further demanded free construction of "Kshoura Kutiras" or barber shops to help affected workers rebuild their livelihoods.

He said future Corporation meetings should be held in backward areas of North Karnataka and Kalyana Karnataka to improve awareness and strengthen the community at the grassroots level.

Hadapada also challenged Corporation Chairman Dr. M.S. Muthuraj to fight for the community's demands. He said that if the demands were not accepted, the chairman should resign and join the struggle.

He warned that protests and sit-ins could be organized across Karnataka to press for social justice and better support for poor community members.

Mahila Congress slams BJP leader Govind Karjol

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Mahila Congress district president Jyothi M. Gondabal has launched a scathing attack on Bharatiya Janata Party Member of Parliament Govind Karjol, describing his recent remarks regarding Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar as groundless and born out of political desperation.

Issuing a formal press statement, Gondabal dismissed claims about the Chief Election Commissioner's background, stating that Gyanesh Kumar belongs to the Baniya-Vaishya community rather than the Dalit community. She maintained that caste remains entirely immaterial when constitutional principles are compromised. Gondabal asserted that even if the official were from a marginalized group, the Congress party would still resist actions that undermine democratic fairness. She accused the election authority of deploying questionable tactics to weaken the voting strength and fundamental rights of Dalits and Muslims in violation of constitutional mandates.

The Mahila Congress chief further criticized the ruling party for repeatedly exploiting marginalized communities as a political shield. She argued that Karjol possesses no genuine empathy for Dalit welfare or social justice, alleging that the BJP leader is motivated solely by personal ambition and political power. Emphasizing her party's ideology, Gondabal reaffirmed that Congress remains committed to defending constitutional values and ensuring independent bodies like the Election Commission function without partisan bias.

Judge condemns sending elderly to old homes

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Principal District and Sessions Judge and District Legal Services Authority Chairman G.D. Mahavarkar said elders are a valuable source of experience and should not be neglected by younger generations.

He was speaking after inaugurating World Senior Citizens' Day at the Zilla Panchayat Hall. The programme was jointly organised by the District Legal Services Authority, Advocates' Association, district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Women and Child Development Department, Department for the Empowerment of Differently-Abled and Senior Citizens, Karnataka State Government Retired Employees' Association and voluntary organisations.

Mahavarkar said young people, influenced by technology and Western culture, should not forget the country's heritage and elders. He said the experience and guidance of senior citizens can help younger people choose the right path.

He expressed concern over the growing practice in cities of sending elderly parents to old-age homes. He said children and society should provide senior citizens with love, compassion and respect, especially as they grow older.

Mahavarkar said the government has introduced various schemes for senior citizens and added that the District Legal Services Authority would provide free legal aid to those facing legal difficulties.

Sub-Divisional Officer and Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Board chairperson K.J. Kantharaj described senior citizens as a university of experience. He said rural families often care for elders with affection, while some urban families keep elderly parents away despite having higher education and good positions.

Kantharaj said senior citizens can benefit from government facilities such as pensions, bus passes and medical treatment.

Senior Advocate D.K. Sheela spoke on the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007.

Highlights

- Elders provide essential wisdom and life guidance
- Youth are neglecting heritage and elder care
- Urban old-age home trends cause distress
- Government schemes ensure senior citizen welfare
- District Legal Services offer free legal aid
- Rural areas excel in elder family care

Koppal to celebrate Gandhi birth anniversary

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

The 157th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi will be celebrated on October 2 at 10 a.m. at the District Administration Building auditorium in Koppal. The programme is being organised jointly by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat and various government departments, including Information and Public Relations, School Education, Pre-University Education, Social Welfare, Backward Classes Welfare, Minority Welfare, and Kannada and Culture. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Suresh B. Itnal will inaugurate the event. Zilla Panchayat CEO Varnit Negi and Superintendent of Police Sahil Bagla will attend as chief guests. Senior litterateur Ravitej Abbigeri will deliver a special lecture. Bhajans, a harmony prayer and prize distribution for the Bapuji Essay Competition winners are also planned.

ಪುರಸಭೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ

ಸಂತೆ ಬೀದಿ ವೃತ್ತ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಅಂಚೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಉತ್ತರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-560090, ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 080-28395098

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ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಪುಕಾಟ/ಕಾ.ಸಂ.ರೇ.ಪ್ರ/06/2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 01.10.2026

ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಆದ್ಯಾದೇಶ 1999-2000 ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಆಕ್ಟ 2000 ರ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ಸ್ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ 2026-27ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪುರಸಭಾ ಅನುದಾನ ಹಾಗೂ ಎಸ್.ಎಫ್.ಸಿ ಅನುದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಚಿಂಡರ್‌ಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸ್ಟಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಚಿಂಡರನ್ನು ದ್ವಿ-ಲಕೋಟಿ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಡಿ ಅರ್ಹ ದರ್ಜೆಯ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಸರಬರಾಜುದಾರರಿಂದ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಚಿಂಡರನ್ನು ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

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(ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕೋಶ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು)
ಇ-ಮೇಲ್: ka.bengaluru.urban.dudc@gmail.com ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 080-22211372/352

ಸಂ: ಕಂದಾಯ ಭವನ/ಸಿ.ಆರ್/09/2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 29-09-2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕಂದಾಯ ಭವನ ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ ಮಾನವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಪಡೆಯಲು ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯಿಂದ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಕುರಿತು ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಸೇವಾ ಚಿಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕ್ರ. ಸಂ.	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ವಿವರ	ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿ ಮೊತ್ತ	ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ	ಅವಧಿ
1	ಕಂದಾಯ ಭವನ ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ 8 ಮಂದಿ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛತಾ ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಯ ಸೇವೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛತಾ ಸಾಮಗ್ರಿಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡಲು ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯಿಂದ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಕುರಿತು ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಸೇವಾ ಚಿಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. TENDER No: DMA/2026-27/SE8584.	ರೂ.25,61,291/-	ರೂ.51,225/-	1 ವರ್ಷ
2	ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ನಗರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗೆ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಸಹಾಯಕರು 18 Nos (Technical Assistance) ಹಾಗೂ ಮಲ್ಟಿ ಟಾಸ್ಕ್‌ ಸ್ಟಾಫ್ 1 No (MTS) ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಯನ್ನು ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯಿಂದ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಕುರಿತು ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಸೇವಾ ಚಿಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. TENDER No: DMA/2026-27/SE8603.	ರೂ.88,45,200/-	ರೂ.1,68,480/-	18 ತಿಂಗಳು
3	Supply of 7 Nos Data Entry Operators and 1 No Technical Programmer on out source basic to Election Branch of Deputy Commissioner Office, Bangalore Urban District. Tender No: DMA/2026-27/SE8606.	ರೂ.28,97,446/-	ರೂ.58,000/-	1 ವರ್ಷ

(1) ಪ್ರಿ-ಬಿಡಿಂಗ್ ಮೀಟಿಂಗ್ ಸಭೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 05.10.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆ. (2) ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 07.10.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.00ಗಂಟೆ ವರೆಗೆ. (3) ಚಿಂಡರ್‌ನ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 08.10.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆ. (4) ಚಿಂಡರ್‌ನ ಅರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 09.10.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆ. (5) ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.
ಸಹಿ/- ಯೋಜನಾ ನಿರ್ವಹಕರು,
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕೋಶ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ನಗರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ.
ವಾಸಾಸಂ/ವಾ.ಪ್ರ/3002/ಎಸ್‌ಎಂ‌ಎಲ್/26-27

KARNATAKA MUST PUT ITS FINANCES BACK ON A SUSTAINABLE PATH

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM

Fiscal prudence today is not austerity for its own sake; it is protection of the State's capacity to spend on development tomorrow.



The reported warning from Karnataka's Finance Department that the State's finances are under severe pressure should not be dismissed as merely another bureaucratic note. It raises a larger question about how long the State can continue expanding expenditure and borrowing without creating a structural burden for future governments and taxpayers.

The numbers deserve serious attention. Karnataka's total outstanding liabilities are estimated at ₹8,24,389 crore by the end of 2026-27, according to the Union Finance Ministry's response based on the State Budget. The 2026-27 Budget provides for ₹1.32 lakh crore of borrowings, while the State's outstanding liabilities are estimated at about 24.94 per cent of GSDP, very close to the 25 per cent level under the State's fiscal framework.

The immediate concern is not borrowing by itself. Borrowing for productive capital expenditure can create assets and support future economic growth. The danger arises when borrowing increasingly finances recurring expenditure that does not generate corresponding assets or revenue.

Karnataka's 2026-27 Budget estimates a revenue deficit of ₹22,957 crore. In other words, the State's regular revenues are insufficient to meet its revenue expenditure. At the same time, revenue expenditure is budgeted at ₹3.38 lakh crore. Committed expenditure on salaries, pensions and interest alone is estimated at ₹1.85 lakh crore, or about 59 per cent of estimated revenue receipts. Interest payments alone are projected at ₹53,332 crore.

The five guarantee schemes add another major recurring commitment. Their estimated expenditure in 2026-27 is ₹51,286 crore. The CAG has previously observed that the expansion of guarantee expenditure increased revenue expenditure and the revenue deficit and, in 2023-24, coincided with reduced infrastructure spending.

Guarantees to State public-sector enterprises constitute another layer of risk. As of March 31, 2025, Karnataka's outstanding government guarantees stood at ₹45,888.72 crore. These are contingent liabilities: they may not immediately appear as ordinary government debt, but the State can ultimately be called upon to honour them if the guaranteed entities cannot meet their obligations. The CAG records that ₹14,772.93 crore of guarantees were issued during 2024-25.

This is why government guarantees cannot be treated as cost-free instruments. They can facilitate borrowing by public enterprises, but they also transfer financial risk to the State exchequer. A systematic review of every existing guarantee, its purpose, the financial condition of the beneficiary entity and the possibility of recovery is therefore essential.

₹8,24,389 crore in total outstanding liabilities by the end of 2026-27: about 24.94 per cent of GSDP, very close to the 25 per cent level under the State's fiscal framework

There is also the problem of unfinished commitments. The Finance Department's reported September 17 note put the balance cost of ongoing projects at more than ₹2 lakh crore, with pending bills in four major departments – Public Works, Water Resources, Minor Irrigation and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj – amounting to ₹36,136 crore. The same report said Karnataka's borrowing space was virtually exhausted for the announcements already made in the 2026-27 Budget.

The phrase "non-plan expenditure" is no longer used in the modern budget classification, but the underlying concern remains valid: Karnataka needs much tighter control over recurring and committed expenditure.

The experience of other highly indebted States offers a cautionary backdrop. Punjab's outstanding liabilities are estimated at 45.1 per cent of GSDP for 2026-27. Kerala's outstanding government guarantees alone were estimated at ₹73,344 crore as of March 2025, while Telangana has had one of the country's highest state-guarantee ratios. These examples show how high debt, guarantees and recurring expenditure can progressively narrow a government's fiscal choices.

Karnataka still has considerable economic strength and revenue-raising capacity. That makes fiscal correction possible, provided expenditure is prioritised. New projects should be sanctioned only after identifying funding sources. Existing projects should be ranked according to economic and social returns, while low-priority schemes and administrative expenditure should undergo periodic review.

The government also needs a transparent medium-term debt strategy, an annual ceiling on guarantees, stronger financial discipline among public-sector enterprises and greater scrutiny of schemes that create permanent recurring liabilities. Revenue mobilisation, better tax compliance and monetisation of under-used public assets should accompany expenditure control.

The objective should not be indiscriminate cuts. Karnataka needs investment in infrastructure, irrigation, education, health and employment-generating sectors. But fiscal space is itself a public resource. Once it is consumed by debt servicing and recurring commitments, governments have fewer resources available for development.

The Finance Department's warning, therefore, should become an opportunity for a serious fiscal reset. Karnataka need not wait until debt servicing, guarantees and committed expenditure leave little room for policy choices. Fiscal prudence today is not austerity for its own sake; it is protection of the State's capacity to spend on development tomorrow.

RETHINKING AI IN WARFARE

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence and autonomous weapon systems into modern combat poses an unprecedented challenge to global governance. While military powers rush to adopt algorithmic decision-making to secure tactical advantages, the international community continues to stall on establishing enforceable safeguards. Surrendering life-and-death choices to automated systems drastically lowers the threshold for military escalation while undermining foundational international humanitarian laws. As battlefield technologies outpace existing treaties, nations must urgently prioritize binding agreements at the United Nations to regulate killer robots and autonomous weapons. Blind technological competition in warfare risks creating a world where automated conflict escapes human oversight entirely. Global security requires immediate, collective diplomatic intervention before military algorithms permanently dictate the future of human conflict.

WHAT WE TEST, WHAT WE FORGET

DR. THEJAS GIGY THOMAS

Every year, millions of students walk out of examination halls with marks that will shape their futures and knowledge that will fade within months. This is not a failure of the students. It is the predictable output of a system that rewards memory over understanding and rankings over learning.

Consider what the typical classroom asks of a child. Sit still, absorb the syllabus, reproduce it on paper. The child who asks "why" is a distraction, and the one who can recite last year's answer key is a success. We then express surprise when graduates struggle to solve problems that no textbook anticipated. The surprise is itself revealing, for it suggests we never expected the system to produce thinkers in the first place.

The damage is not only intellectual. Exam pressure has turned adolescence into a long audition, with anxiety, sleepless nights and coach-



ing-centre schedules that leave no room for curiosity, play or rest. A system that treats one set of results as a verdict on a young person's worth is not measuring education. It is manufacturing fear. And fear, as any honest teacher will admit, is the enemy of the very curiosity that learning depends upon. Inequality compounds the problem. Children in well-funded schools get laboratories, libraries and trained teachers. Others sit in overcrowded rooms with outdated books and too few staff. Private tuition has quietly become a second, parallel school system, available to those who can

pay. Education is meant to be the great leveller, yet too often it hardens the divisions a child is born into. When a family's income decides the quality of a child's schooling, merit becomes a convenient fiction, a story the fortunate tell about themselves.

Then there is the teacher, the most important and most neglected part of the whole enterprise. Teachers are asked to complete syllabi, manage paperwork, handle large classes and raise results, while being poorly paid, rarely trained after their first year and seldom respected. We demand inspiration from people we refuse to support, and then



In global politics, power is determined not merely by military strength or economic size, but also by how a major power chooses to exercise its influence. Under President Donald Trump, the United States has increasingly used tariffs and economic sanctions as instruments of foreign policy. The latest legislation targeting countries that continue to purchase Russian oil and gas is another indication of this approach. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the measure on September 16, 2026, by a 262–159 vote. The legislation authorizes the President to impose tariffs of up to 100 percent on major buyers of Russian energy; it does not, by itself, automatically impose a 100 percent tariff on India.

For India, the issue is significant because Russia remains an important source of crude oil. According to S&P Global data, India imported around 1.6 million barrels per day of Russian crude in August 2026, making it the largest importer among the major Russian crude buyers listed in the data.

Any decision by Washington to exercise the new authority could therefore affect Indian exports to the American market and could also create pressure on India's energy costs. New Delhi has made clear that it will protect its trade and economic interests while safeguarding energy security.

The larger question, however, goes beyond this particular legislation: Are tariffs still primarily instruments of trade policy, or are they increasingly becoming tools for compelling other countries to align their foreign-policy choices with Washington? The distinction matters because the consequences extend well beyond bilateral trade. India and the United States have substantial economic ties. America remains an important destination for Indian exports, while American companies and consumers also benefit from access to Indian goods and services. Consequently, very high additional tariffs would not affect India alone. They could also influence American importers, consum-

AMERICA'S TARIFF GAMBIT: WHY INDIA NEED NOT BE INTIMIDATED

ers and businesses connected to bilateral supply chains. The economic relationship creates interdependence, meaning that tariff escalation can generate costs on both sides.

India therefore faces a two-fold challenge. The first is to preserve the competitiveness of its exports in the American market. The second is to maintain energy security. A sudden reduction in Russian crude imports could force Indian refiners to seek alternative supplies, potentially at higher prices, particularly when global energy markets are already exposed to geopolitical disruptions. Indian refiners have also indicated that replacing Russian crude rapidly could be difficult because of the scale involved and the availability of alternative supplies.

At the same time, Washington has its own calculation to make. Excessive tariffs on major energy-importing countries could have consequences for global oil flows, prices and the economic interests of American businesses. The legislation therefore includes scope for presidential discretion and waivers where national interests are involved.

This is where India's policy of strategic autonomy assumes greater importance. India has neither sought to sever its relations with Russia nor subordinated its economic interests to the priorities of any single power. Its approach has been to maintain relationships with multiple major powers while diversifying energy supplies and protecting national interests. India's engagement with the BRICS framework provides

mechanisms for more efficient cross-border payments, including greater use of BRICS members' local currencies for trade settlements and investment.

It is important, however, not to exaggerate what this means. BRICS is not currently replacing the U.S. dollar

In a multipolar world, national resilience does not come from withdrawing from global relationships; it comes from having enough relationships, markets and strategic options to remain free to choose.

— Lalit Gargg

with a common currency. The New Delhi Declaration does not propose a single BRICS currency. Instead, it supports practical efforts to facilitate cross-border payments and expand the use of local currencies while respecting national priorities. The dollar remains deeply embedded in global trade and finance. Yet if countries gradually expand bilateral settlements in their own currencies and develop alternative payment mechanisms, the international financial system could become more diversified over time. India-Russia economic relations offer a practical example. The development of alternative payment arrangements demonstrates that countries can adapt their financial mechanisms when conventional channels are affected by sanctions or geopolitical restrictions. This does not



an important illustration of this approach. At the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi on September 12–13, 2026, member countries adopted the 140-point New Delhi Declaration. The declaration emphasized economic cooperation and explored practical

mean that the dollar will suddenly lose its global importance. Rather, it indicates that countries are seeking additional options to reduce vulnerability to external financial pressure.

BRICS should therefore not automatically be interpreted

blame them when the demand goes unmet. No curriculum reform can succeed if the people delivering it are exhausted and unsupported. Countries with strong schools tend to share one trait: they treat teaching as a profession worth competing for, not a fall-back for those with no other option.

Nor can we ignore the widening gap between school and the world beyond it. Employers complain that graduates lack communication skills, adaptability and the ability to work with others. Students complain that what they learned has little bearing on the work available to them. Both are right, and both are describing the same failure. In an era when information is a search away, the scarce skills are judgment, creativity and the willingness to keep learning. A system built to test what a machine can retrieve instantly is training students for a world that no longer exists.

The remedies are not mysterious. Assessment that

"The question is no longer whether the system is failing its students. It is how long we intend to pretend otherwise."

DR. THEJAS GIGY THOMAS

probes understanding rather than recall, investment in teachers as professionals, public schools good enough that families choose them willingly, and a culture that values effort over rank have all been proposed, repeatedly, by commission after commission. What has been missing is not ideas but resolve. Reform threatens the comfortable arithmetic of marks and merit lists, and it asks parents, institutions and politicians to accept that results may look messier before they improve. That is a cost few are willing to name aloud, and so the recommendations gather dust while another cohort passes through.

A nation's future is written in its classrooms. If we keep asking children only to memorise, we should not be surprised when they cannot imagine.

competitiveness, diversifying energy supplies and developing technological capabilities can reduce vulnerability to external shocks.

The world of 2026 is substantially more complex than the unipolar environment that followed the Cold War. China's economic weight, India's expanding market, Russia's energy resources, West Asia's strategic importance and the growing voice of the Global South are contributing to a more dispersed global power structure. The BRICS summit in New Delhi reflected this changing environment, with practical cooperation on economic, financial and developmental issues rather than an immediate attempt to create an alternative global monetary system.

For the United States, too, the present moment carries an important strategic lesson. American economic strength, technological leadership, the international role of the dollar and its network of alliances remain significant. But the long-term effectiveness of these strengths depends partly on whether they are used to build confidence and partnerships or primarily as instruments of pressure.

India, meanwhile, need not view every American move as a threat, nor should it underestimate the economic consequences of a major tariff escalation. The sensible course is to remain calm, negotiate firmly, diversify intelligently and protect national interests without closing the doors of cooperation. The emerging global order is not necessarily moving toward a world without American influence. It is moving toward a world in which more countries are seeking multiple options rather than dependence on a single power. That distinction is crucial. For India, the challenge is therefore larger than a possible American tariff. It is about strengthening its position in a rapidly transforming global economy. If India can combine energy security, export diversification, technological capability, domestic manufacturing and constructive multilateral engagement, its ability to withstand external economic pressure will grow substantially. America may possess powerful instruments of pressure, but India possesses an equally important strategic asset – the ability to create choices.

LETTERS TO EDITOR

CONFRONTING THE CLIMATE OVERSHOOT

With global temperatures breaching critical thresholds, the discourse surrounding the climate crisis must shift from rhetoric to immediate structural accountability. UN reports clearly warn that exceeding, warming will trigger irreversible environmental tipping points, disproportionately impacting vulnerable developing nations that contributed the least to emissions. Despite recurring international summits, global commitments remain fragmented, favoring short-term political convenience over necessary decarbonization targets. Transitioning away from fossil fuels, expanding renewable energy infrastructure, and funding global adaptation strategies are no longer distant goals; they are urgent moral imperatives. World leaders must move past token pledges and enforce binding climate action plans. Failing to address climate overshoot today leaves future generations to inherit an unpredictable, ecologically depleted world.

— Naveen

REFORMING GLOBAL CRISIS DIPLOMACY

The persistent gridlock within the United Nations Security Council during ongoing global conflicts highlights a profound structural defect in modern diplomacy. Veto powers repeatedly prevent decisive humanitarian interventions, reducing the international body to a platform for political posturing rather than crisis resolution. As civilian casualties mount in regional conflicts and mass displacement strains international borders, the current framework reveals its growing obsolescence. Effective global governance requires a reformed multilateral model – one that limits veto abuse in human rights emergencies and grants equitable representation to emerging global economies. Without structural reforms, multilateralism risks complete irrelevance, leaving international stability subject to unilateral power plays. World leaders must rebuild diplomatic institutions to safeguard universal human rights effectively.

— Suman

VAPING IS NOT SAFE, IT IS A TRAP



They sell it as cool. A sleek pen-like device, flavours like mango, mint, and bubblegum, smoke rings for Instagram reels, and the big lie, “It’s safer than cigarettes.” In Bangalore, in colleges, in tuition centres, you see it everywhere. Youngsters aged 16 to 25 believe vaping is harmless fun. It is not. Vaping is a new addiction wearing old nicotine in a fashionable jacket, and its side effects are far more dangerous than we are told.

First, let us clear the myth. A vape is not water vapour. It is an aerosol containing nicotine, propylene glycol, vegetable glycerin, heavy metals like nickel and lead from the heating coil, and dozens of chemicals like diacetyl that give it flavour. When you heat that liquid at high temperature and inhale it deep into your lungs, you are not exhaling water; you are exhaling poison.

The immediate side effects are visible in clinics today. Doctors call it “vaper’s cough”, persistent dry cough, throat pain, nausea, and headache. Many young users complain of mouth sores and bad breath. Because vapes deliver very high nicotine concentration – one JUUL pod has nicotine equal to 20 cigarettes – addiction is faster and stronger. You start with “I will try once at a party” and within weeks you cannot study, sleep, or travel without it. Anxiety, irritability, lack of

focus, and mood swings become normal.

The long-term damage is scarier. In 2019, the US reported EVALI, E-cigarette or Vaping Associated Lung Injury, where thousands of healthy young people landed in ICUs with lungs filled with inflammation. In India, pulmonologists at AIIMS and Manipal hospitals are now seeing similar cases – popcorn lung, a condition where flavouring chemical diacetyl scars the smallest airways permanently, making breathing hard for life. Vaping also damages blood vessels, raises blood pressure, and increases risk of heart attack, just like smoking.

The worst impact is on the brain. The adolescent brain develops till age 25. Nicotine changes that development. It rewires the brain for addiction, reduces attention span, harms memory, and makes the young person more vulnerable to future addiction to alcohol and drugs. Studies show students who vape have lower academic performance and higher rates of depression and anxiety. It does not relieve

Vaping in numbers	
20	CIGARETTES' NICOTINE IN ONE JUUL POD
25	AGE TILL WHICH THE BRAIN DEVELOPS
50	YEARS IT TOOK TO UNDERSTAND AND CONTROL SMOKING

stress, as marketed; it creates stress, so you vape more to feel normal.

Then there is the social trap. Vaping is banned in India since 2019 under the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, but it is still sold illegally online and in small shops near colleges. Because it has no strong smell like cigarettes, parents and teachers don’t catch it easily. The flavours target children, the design hides in pencil boxes, and the price – Rs. 500 to 1500 – is pocket-money affordable.

We must act before this becomes another tobacco epidemic. First, enforce the ban strictly. Selling vapes online should be treated as selling drugs. Second, schools and colleges must run honest awareness programmes, not just moral lectures. Show students the X-rays of EVALI lungs, let doctors talk, not just principals. Third, parents must talk. If your child has sudden irritability, increased thirst, nosebleeds, or sweet chemical smell in room, ask calmly, don’t shout. Fourth, if you are addicted, seek help. Nicotine de-addiction clinics in every government hospital can help without judgment.

Cigarette smoking took us 50 years to understand and control. We don’t have 50 more years for vaping. Cool is not what goes into your lungs, cool is what you keep out of it.

— ANNA B.

YOUR COOL AC IS QUIETLY MAKING YOU SICK

In Bangalore, it is 28 degrees outside, but inside the office it is 18 degrees. We wear a sweater in summer, just to sit in AC. From bedroom to car, from Metro to mall, we have made our life a series of cold boxes. We thought AC was comfort and progress. But doctors are now warning that constant cold comfort is slowly making us sick.

First, your body was not made to live in 18 degrees all day. Our body is designed for natural heat and cold. When you stay for 8 to 10 hours in AC, your body’s natural temperature regulation weakens. You start feeling tired, you get frequent headaches, and you catch cold easily when you step out. That is why office workers who sit in AC all day often complain of “AC fever” – low-grade cold, sore throat, and body pain every Monday.

Second, AC air is dry air. An air conditioner removes moisture from the room to cool it. A normal room should have 40-60% humidity. An AC room often drops to 20-25%. What does dry air do? It dries your skin, makes it itchy and dull. It dries your eyes – that burning sensation after long hours on laptop in AC is not just screen, it is dry air. It dries your nose and throat, making your natural defence weak. That is why people in AC get nose bleeds and respiratory infections more.

Third, the biggest danger – what is inside your AC. If you do not clean your AC filter for 3 months, it becomes a home for dust, fungus, and bacteria. When you switch it on, you are spraying those germs all over your closed room. Doctors at NIMHANS

and Manipal call this “Sick Building Syndrome.” Symptoms – continuous sneezing, cough, allergy, asthma attacks. In dirty ACs, a bacteria called Legionella can grow, which can cause serious lung infection. When did you last clean your car AC filter? Most of us never have.

Fourth, AC makes you weak and fat. In a cool room, your body burns fewer calories. You also move less – why get up when it is cool? Studies show people working in heavily air-conditioned of-

ices gain more weight. Also, sudden change from 18 degree AC to 38 degree outside heat puts stress on heart and blood pressure. For elderly people and those with heart issues, this sudden change can be risky.

Fifth, it kills nature around you. An AC throws hot air outside. One AC can increase the outside temperature by 1-2 degrees. A city like Bangalore with lakhs of ACs is heating itself. ACs also use HFC gases which are 1000 times more dangerous than CO2 for global warming. And they use huge electricity – 1.5 ton AC uses as much power as 20 fans. Your electricity bill is not just cost, it is carbon.

We are not saying throw away your AC. In 40-degree heat in Delhi or Nagpur, AC is a need. But use it wisely. Keep AC at 24-26 degrees, not 18. Every 1 degree higher saves 6% electricity and is better for body. Clean filter every 15 days. Professional service every 6 months. Take a 10-minute break from AC every 2 hours – step out, drink water, stretch. Keep a small bowl of water or plant



in AC room to maintain humidity. At night, use timer 2 hours after sleep, switch to fan. Your body will thank you. In Bangalore weather, use AC only when needed. Our city still allows fans for 8 months.

Our ancestors built houses with cross-ventilation, high ceilings, and mud pots for cool water. We closed those windows and switched on ACs. Comfort is good, but constant cold comfort is not health. The coolest people are not those who live in AC all day, but those who know when to switch it off.

— SUNIL S.

ONE MEAL TOGETHER CAN KEEP FAMILY TOGETHER

In Bangalore today, a family of four lives in the same 1000 sq ft house, but in four different worlds. The father is on a late office call, the mother is watching serials while replying on WhatsApp, one child is gaming with earphones on, another is scroll-

and talked. What happened in the field, in school, in the market – everything was discussed. Today, psychologists call this “unstructured family time” and say it is the most powerful tool for mental health.

For children, one shared meal a day is more effective than any tuition or counselling. Studies from Harvard and Columbia University show children who eat 5 times a week with family have better grades, better vocabulary, less anxiety, and 40% lower chance of getting into smoking, drinking, or drugs. Why? Because at the table, a child is seen. A father notices when his son is quiet. A mother notices when her daughter is not eating well. A small “why are you low today?” at the table can prevent a big depression tomorrow. No CCTV can monitor your child’s heart as well as a shared meal can.

For husband and wife, the dinner table is where marriage is maintained. In the rush of EMIs, office targets, and relatives, couples stop talking as friends. They only talk about bills and chores. A 20-minute meal without TV or phones forces you to look



The one-meal rule

- ✓ **One meal a day together:** breakfast or dinner
- ✓ **No phones on the table,** no TV news
- ✓ **Keep 30 minutes;** no scolding children about marks
- ✓ **Talk about good things:** one happy and one hard moment of the day
- ✓ **On Sundays, cook together**

we are busy. Swiggy brings food anytime, work-from-home has no end time, and phones have made us eat with Instagram instead of our family. We eat faster, alone, and while standing.

The fix is not difficult. Make one rule at home: at least one meal – breakfast or dinner – we will eat together, no phones on the table. It need not be fancy. Even curd rice together is enough. Keep 30 minutes. No TV news, no scolding children about marks at the table. Talk about good things, share one happy and one hard moment of the day. Let the children serve. Let the father clean the plates sometimes.

On Sundays, cook together. The taste will not matter, the togetherness will.

We build big houses, buy big dining tables with six chairs, and then eat alone with our phones. A house where people don’t eat together may have a family, but it does not feel like a family. One meal a day – that is all it takes to remember we belong to each other.

— A. JAIKUMAR

MALE AND FEMALE FRIENDSHIP IS PURELY POSSIBLE

We have heard it since childhood, “A boy and a girl can never be just friends.” Films made it a dialogue, parents made it a warning, and society made it a suspicion. If a girl and a boy walk together in a Bangalore college, people assume they are dating. If they have lunch daily, colleagues gossip. We have sexualised a very simple and beautiful human bond – friendship. It is time we grew up and accepted that male and female friendship is not only possible, it is necessary.

Look at real life. In every school, office, bus, and apartment, boys and girls work together. A male nurse and a female doctor can save a life together in a hospital. A male and female student can crack a startup idea in college. They are not lovers; they are partners. Friendship between genders is not about romance, it is about perspective.

What does a male-female friendship give that same-gender friendship sometimes cannot? Balance. Men often grow up learning to hide emotions, “boys don’t cry.” A female friend often gives him a safe space to speak without being judged as weak. She teaches him emotional language. Similarly, women are often taught to be too cautious, too polite. A male friend often pushes her to take a risk, to negotiate salary, to travel solo, to be louder. He becomes her support system when society tries to silence her. They complete each other not as partners, but as mirrors.

Science backs this. Psychologists say cross-gender friendships increase empathy. A boy who has a close female friend from childhood respects women more as an adult, not as sisters or mothers, but as equal humans. He listens better, interrupts less, and understands consent better. A girl who has male friends feels safer around men, because she knows not every man is a threat; some can be just friends who respect boundaries.

Then why do we doubt it? Three reasons. First, our movies. 90% of our films show every male-female friendship ending in love. We have rarely shown it staying as friendship. Second, possessiveness. Many boyfriends and girlfriends feel insecure if their partner has a



close friend of opposite gender. That is not love, that is control. Third, our families never taught us. In many homes, boys were not allowed to talk to girls after puberty. So curiosity became attraction, and attraction became the only narrative.

The problem is not friendship, it is our mindset. Of course, sometimes feelings can develop – that can happen in any friendship. But mature adults handle it with honesty. They talk, they set boundaries, they step back if needed. That one risk does not mean we should ban the entire friendship. By that logic, we should ban all friendships, because any two people can develop feelings.

For young India, this friendship is important. We are working in mixed offices, studying in mixed colleges, building a mixed society. If we cannot be friends across genders, how will we work as a team? How will we build a respectful country?

So what should we do? Parents should stop telling daughters, “Don’t be too close to boys,” and start telling sons, “Learn to be a good friend to girls without expectations.” Schools should encourage mixed group projects, not separate boys and girls during dance practice. Couples should trust, not control. If your partner has a male or female best friend, don’t be insecure – be happy that they have someone who understands them differently.

A boy and a girl can be friends. They can laugh at 2 am, share tiffin, cry after a breakup with someone else, travel on the same bike and feel nothing sexual – just comfort. Not every story needs to end in marriage. Some stories are beautiful because they stay as friendship.

— KOKILA. S

DRINK WARM WATER EVERY MORNING, TRANSFORM HEALTH

We all do the same thing after waking up. We check our phone. Before our eyes have fully opened, our thumb is already on Instagram, on WhatsApp, on news. Our brain starts racing, but our body is still sleeping. Our stomach is empty, our mouth is dry, our system is full of toxins collected overnight. And the first thing we should give it is not tea, not coffee, not cold water from the fridge – it is a glass of warm water.

This is not a new trend. Your grandmother in Karnataka did this every day. She would wake up at 5 am, boil water in a copper vessel, and drink it before brushing. Ayurveda calls it Ushapan. For 5000 years, Ayurveda has said that warm water in the morning is the simplest medicine. Now modern science is saying the same.

What happens when you drink warm water on an empty stomach?

First, it cleans you from inside. At night, while you sleep, your body repairs itself. All the waste from that repair gets collected in your stomach and intestines. Warm water acts like a morning shower for your stomach. It flushes out toxins, moves the leftover food, and prepares your gut for the day. People who drink warm water daily rarely suffer from chronic constipation. Your stomach starts working on time.

Second, it fires up your metabolism. Cold water makes your body work harder – it has to first heat the water to body temperature. Warm water does the opposite. It gently increases your body temperature and blood circulation. This small increase wakes up your metabolism. If you are trying to lose weight in Bangalore’s sedentary IT job, this is the cheapest fat burner. Studies show drinking warm water can increase metabolic

rate by up to 30% for a short time. Add a few drops of lemon or a spoon of honey, and it helps break down fat faster.

Third, it protects your throat, nose, and lungs. Bangalore mornings are getting dusty. Many of us wake up with a blocked nose or mild sore throat. Warm water dissolves mucus and clears your nasal tract. It soothes your throat wall, which is dry after 7 hours of breathing through mouth at night. During Covid, doctors recommended warm water because viruses and bacteria survive less in warm, hydrated throats.

Fourth, it is a natural painkiller and stress-buster. Warm water relaxes your blood vessels, improves blood flow, and relaxes abdominal muscles. That is why it helps with period cramps, headache, and stomach pain. It also calms your nervous system. Instead of starting the day with a jolt of caffeine, you start with warmth. Your mind feels calm, not anxious.

Fifth, it makes your skin glow. No expensive face wash can do what internal hydration does. When your gut is clean and your blood circulation is good, your skin shows it. People who shift from cold water to warm water for 21 days often see less acne, less dryness, and better glow. Because you are not just washing face, you are washing blood.

How to do it right? This is important. Don’t drink boiling water. Lukewarm is enough – like tea without the tea. Around 40-50 degrees. Drink 1 to 2 glasses, slowly, sitting down. Don’t gulp. Don’t eat anything for 20-30 minutes after. Keep the water in copper or steel, not plastic. If you want benefits, add jeera soaked overnight, or tulsi leaves, or just lemon for taste. But even plain warm water works wonders.

We spend thousands on detox juices, green tea, protein powders. But the best detox is already in your kitchen tap, just heated. It costs zero rupees, takes two minutes, and needs no prescription.

Tomorrow morning, don’t reach for your phone first. Reach for that warm glass. Your body waited 8 hours for you. Give it warmth before you give it work.

— UMMI JAAN



Quick Read

SC stays execution in 2008 Ahmedabad blasts case

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the execution of the death penalty awarded to Indian Mujahideen operative Ahmed Bawa alias Abbu Abubakar Barelvi in the 2008 Ahmedabad serial bomb blasts case. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath, A.G. Masih and Sandeep Mehta issued notice to the Gujarat government and sought records from the trial court. The blasts on July 26, 2008, involved 21 explosions across Ahmedabad within 70 minutes, killing 56 people and injuring more than 200. Explosions were also reported at hospitals treating victims. The Gujarat High Court had in July upheld the death sentences of 38 Indian Mujahideen operatives, citing the scale of the conspiracy and casualties. It also upheld life sentences for 11 others. The Supreme Court's order came on Bawa's plea challenging the high court verdict.

Two ascetics found dead, accused held

SHAHJAHANPUR
Two ascetics were allegedly murdered and their bodies burnt at a religious site in Sutha village under Khudaganj police station limits in Uttar Pradesh's Shahjahanpur district on Thursday, police said. The incident was reported around 7 am, following which local police, senior officers and a forensic team reached the spot. The bodies were recovered in a burnt condition and sent for post-mortem examination. Police have taken the main accused, identified as Sumit, into custody for questioning. A complaint was filed by Shiv Kumar, caretaker of the religious site. According to police, Sumit had recently been released on bail and had been staying with the ascetics. Preliminary information suggests that a dispute over the premises may have led to the incident. Villagers told police that Sumit had allegedly asked the ascetics to leave, saying he wanted to reside there and exercise control over the site. Police said forensic evidence has been collected and the exact circumstances surrounding the deaths are under investigation. The post-mortem examination is expected to establish the cause and timing of death. Further details are awaited.

Kerala HC allows termination of 30-week pregnancy

KOCHI
The Kerala High Court has allowed medical termination of the 30-week pregnancy of a 15-year-old rape survivor, directing the state government to arrange the procedure. Justice Harisankar V Menon passed the order on a plea by the girl's mother after a court-appointed medical board recommended termination. The board said continuing the pregnancy could significantly affect the survivor's mental health. It noted that the baby had more than a 95 per cent chance of survival if there were no major complications. The court directed the state to provide neonatal care if the baby survives and preserve tissue and blood samples if it does not.

Gujarat offers 50% tax cut for scrapped vehicles

GUJARAT WILL OFFER UP TO 50% MOTOR VEHICLE TAX CONCESSION TO OWNERS SCRAPPING ELIGIBLE OLD VEHICLES AND PURCHASING NEW ONES.

GANDHINAGAR

The Gujarat government has announced a motor vehicle tax concession of up to 50 per cent for owners who scrap eligible old vehicles and purchase new ones, aiming to encourage vehicle scrapping and promote newer vehicles. Under the new provision, vehicle owners can use the Certificate of Deposit (COD) received after authorised scrapping of an eligible vehicle while registering a new vehicle. The scheme covers transport and non-transport



vehicles manufactured under Bharat Stage-I (BS-I) and earlier emission standards. It also includes medium and heavy goods vehicles and medium and heavy passenger vehicles manufactured under BS-II standards. According to the state government, the measure is intended to make the financial transition from scrapping older vehicles to purchasing new ones easier. The benefit could particularly assist owners of older commercial vehicles by reducing the tax payable on replacement vehicles. The government said CODs

Initiative at a glance

50% concession: Up to 50% off motor vehicle tax.

Old vehicles: Covers BS-I and earlier, plus select BS-II heavy vehicles.

Who benefits: Owners replacing eligible old vehicles, especially commercial operators.

Deadline: CODs valid until March 31, 2027.

Purpose: Encourages vehicle scrapping and newer, cleaner vehicles.

issued up to March 31, 2027, will be considered for the concession. Vehicle owners must therefore complete the authorised scrapping process and obtain the COD within the stipulated period. The existing method of

calculating motor vehicle tax will remain unchanged. The government has also clarified that the same scrapped vehicle cannot be used to claim the concession more than once if the benefit has already been availed.

Rajnath launches new integrated defence finance system

NEW DELHI

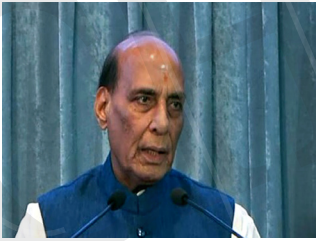
Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday launched the integration of the Indian Army Financial Information System (IAFIS) with the SAKSHAM platform as the Defence Accounts Department marked its 279th Annual Day in New Delhi. Addressing the event at Dr DS Kothari Auditorium, DRDO Bhawan, Singh said the department should adopt best practices in quality auditing and strengthen its digital systems. He urged the DAD to undertake a dedicated drive to keep its digital data clean and well maintained. He said the department had already made progress in cleaning SPARSH data and should now move towards automating grievance redressal. Singh also called for a shift from an annual review of the balance budget to an "Any Time Review of Balance

Budget". He said financial systems should provide real-time information on the department's financial position rather than requiring officials to wait for quarterly reports.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched IAFIS integration with SAKSHAM, urging stronger digital systems and improved auditing practices in defence accounts.

Highlighting the department's performance, Singh said expenditure booking under the defence budget for 2025-26 had reached nearly 100 per cent. He credited the achievement to the joint efforts of the DAD and the three services. He also urged the department to remain at the forefront of new technologies,

including artificial intelligence for detecting fraud. The Defence Minister said financial management also plays a role in supporting the objectives of the domestic defence industry and Make in



India. The DAD, which traces its origins to the appointment of the Military Pay Master in 1747, provides services including internal audit, accounting, financial advice and defence pension management. "After the CAG, the DAD is today the country's second-largest auditor. However, there is a need to adopt the best practices in the field of quality audit," Singh said.

NEW DELHI

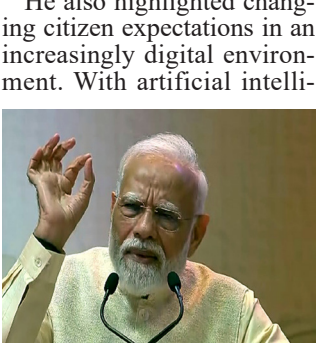
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday urged the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to continuously reform its examination and recruitment processes, stressing that examinations are directly linked to the future of young aspirants and should follow the principle of "time certainty". He was speaking at the UPSC's centenary celebrations at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

Modi said delays of even a few months could create difficulties for candidates and called for examination bodies to keep pace with the country's changing needs. He also said recruitment examinations should assess not only candidates' knowledge but also their motivation to enter public service.

The Prime Minister said the next 20 to 25 years would be

Modi urges UPSC to follow 'time certainty' in exams

important for India and its institutions as the country works towards becoming a developed nation. He identified "Nation First" and "Citizen First" as two benchmarks for selections and called for civil servants who can combine empathy, innovation and effective implementation. He also highlighted changing citizen expectations in an increasingly digital environment. With artificial intelli-



gence capable of processing large volumes of information quickly and governments having access to real-time data, he said public services would

need to respond with greater speed. Modi urged the UPSC and State Public Service Commissions to strengthen their

An examination should not be considered just an event. It is related to the future of our youth.

PM Narendra Modi

capabilities through continuous training and technology. The UPSC, established on October 1, 1926, is completing 100 years. Its two-day centenary programme, titled 'Manthan', brings together public functionaries and experts to discuss civil services, public administration, technology and institutional reforms. The celebrations also include the release of a commemorative coin and postage stamp marking the Commission's centenary.

Rahul Gandhi visits Balaghat tribal families

NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi is visiting Madhya Pradesh's Balaghat on Thursday to meet tribal families who have lost children amid reported concerns over illness, malnutrition and access to healthcare. Gandhi said his visit was intended to stand with affected families as questions continue over the circumstances sur-

rounding the deaths. In a post on X ahead of the visit, Gandhi said, "I am coming to Balaghat today. To meet those tribal families who have lost their innocent children due to illness and the neglect of the BJP government."



project, alleging that villages were being submerged without adequate rehabilitation or compensation. He referred to concerns raised by tribal students in Indore over schools, colleges, hostels, food facilities, examination irregularities and reservation rights. The visit comes amid a political dispute over reported deaths of more than 30 tribal children in Balaghat's tribal-dominated areas. A reported Centre-led investigation identified multiple health conditions, including measles, malaria, co-infections, respiratory distress, dehydration, malnutrition, anaemia and shock, rather than one disease or pathogen. The Madhya Pradesh High Court has sought documents and a response from the state government in a petition concerning the deaths.

I am coming to Balaghat today. By spending time with them, I want to tell them that they are not alone in this grief—I am with them.

Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition

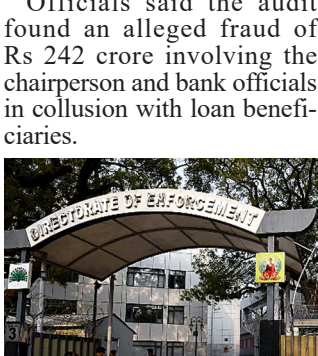
rounding the deaths. In a post on X ahead of the visit, Gandhi said, "I am coming to Balaghat today. To meet those tribal families who have lost their innocent children due to illness and the neglect of the BJP government."

ED searches nine locations in Rs 242-crore bank case

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday conducted searches at nine locations in Maharashtra's Yavatmal district as part of its investigation into an alleged Rs 242-crore money laundering case involving Babaji Date Mahila Sahakari Bank and its borrowers. The searches were carried out by the ED's Mumbai zone in coordination with security forces. The investigation is based on multiple FIRs registered by Avdhutwadi Police Station against officials and employees of the cooperative bank and its borrowers. Babaji Date Mahila Sahakari Bank, Yavatmal, was registered under Section 9(1) of the Maharashtra Cooperative Societies Act, 1960. The Reserve Bank of India cancelled the bank's licence in 2022. Following complaints alleging fraud and misuse of depositors' money, the Maharashtra government ordered a special audit. According to findings cited by officials, the bank's chairperson, CEO, directors and other officials allegedly acted in collusion with borrowers,

valuers and auditors to disburse loans without adequate collateral or proper assessment of repayment capacity. Officials said the audit found an alleged fraud of Rs 242 crore involving the chairperson and bank officials in collusion with loan beneficiaries.



Yavatmal bank case	
9	LOCATIONS SEARCHED
₹242 cr	ALLEGED FRAUD
2022	RBI CANCELLED THE LICENCE

According to the agency's findings, funds obtained through loans were allegedly diverted for personal use, withdrawn in cash, used for evergreening of loans and transferred to accounts of bank officials as alleged kickbacks. The searches are part of the ongoing investigation.

TN Left parties intensify protests over voter deletions

CHENNAI

Left parties intensified protests across Tamil Nadu on Thursday, demanding the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar



over alleged deletion of 13 crore voters during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The claims are made by the protesting parties and have been disputed by the Election Commission. CPI(M) State Secretary P Shanmugam, who led a demonstration near Washermanpet, alleged that the SIR process was being used to systematically remove targeted voters. He demanded Kumar's immediate removal, while accusing the Election Commission of failing to protect voting rights. CPI(M) Politburo member Vasuki, speaking at a protest

The Left's four demands

1 Removal of the CEC

2 Stopping the SIR process

3 Restoring deleted names

4 Reconstituting the Election Commission's selection committee

in Nungambakkam, listed four demands: removal of the CEC, stopping the SIR process, restoring deleted names and reconstituting the Election Commission's selection committee. She said the Left was seeking support from non-INDIA bloc parties, including the Aam Aadmi Party. CPI State Secretary Veerapandian, addressing protesters in K K Nagar, also demanded accountability from the Union government and the CEC. CPI(ML) District Secretary N James alleged that the CEC had acted unilaterally and ignored internal objections. The Election Commission has maintained that electoral-roll changes follow legal procedures, while announcing reviews of aspects of its voter-roll processes.

SQUASH PLAYERS REWARD

Vijay announces Rs 30 lakh for Asian Games squash winners

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Thursday announced a cash incentive of Rs 30 lakh each for squash players Joshna Chinappa and Shameena Riyaz after their contribution to India's bronze medal-winning women's team at the 20th Asian Games in Japan. Anahat Singh, Tanvi Khanna, Joshna and Shameena were part of the Indian squad that secured bronze in the women's squash team event. Congratulating the players, Vijay said the achievement had further enhanced Tamil

Nadu's standing in international sports and praised the athletes for their performance. In a post on X, the Chief Minister extended his congratulations and best wishes to the Indian team and specifically acknowledged Joshna and Shameena, who are from Chennai. He said their success reflected perseverance, talent and self-confidence, while describing them as role models for aspiring sportspersons in the state. The state government's cash incentive is part of its policy of rewarding athletes from Tamil Nadu who win



medals at national and international competitions. Joshna and Shameena were recognised by the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu following their

medal-winning performance at the Asian Games. Vijay said the players' achievement would inspire young men and women seeking success in sport. "Their success will serve as an excellent inspiration for young men and women striving to achieve greatness. My best wishes for them to secure many more such laurels in the future and elevate the pride of Tamil Nadu and India on the global stage," he said. The award also recognises their contribution to the national team's medal-winning campaign at the continental event.

Infant found abandoned in Vikarabad fields

VIKARABAD

A one-year-old girl was rescued after being allegedly abandoned in agricultural fields in Nawabpet mandal of Telangana's Vikarabad district on Thursday, police said. Local residents found the ailing infant alone in the farmland and alerted the police. A police team reached the spot and rescued the child before handing her over to officials from the Child Welfare Department. The officials subsequently shifted the girl to a hospital for medical treatment after police found that her health was not well. Police are also investigating the circumstances surrounding

the infant's abandonment and are seeking information that could help establish how and when she was left in the fields. The Child Welfare Department is currently overseeing the child's care while authorities work to locate her family. Officials have not yet disclosed further details about the infant's medical condition or how long she may have remained in the agricultural fields before being found. The incident has prompted an investigation by local authorities, with police continuing efforts to identify the child's parents and determine the circumstances that led to her being left alone.

Quick Read

Gujarat offers up to 50% motor vehicle tax concession

GANDHINAGAR
The Gujarat government has announced up to 50 per cent concession in Motor Vehicle Tax for owners who scrap eligible old vehicles and purchase new ones, with the benefit linked to the Certificate of Deposit (COD) issued following authorised scrapping. The concession will be available at the time of registration of a new vehicle against a COD issued for the scrapping of an eligible old vehicle. The benefit will apply to CODs issued up to March 31, 2027, according to a recent notification issued by the Ports and Transport Department. The provision covers transport and non-transport vehicles manufactured under Bharat Stage-I (BS-I) and earlier mass emission standards.

B'desh ready-made garment exports to US continue to decline

DHAKA
Bangladesh's exports of ready-made garments (RMGs) to the US have declined almost 7.55 per cent (year-on-year) in the February-July period, while the neighbouring country continues to buy US goods in the wake of a trade agreement signed earlier this year, according to a new report. "Bangladesh has ramped up purchases of US goods in the wake of a trade agreement signed in February, having signed purchasing agreements worth billions of dollars for Boeing aircraft, liquefied natural gas and grains, but its exports in the other direction have yet to see a substantial boost as it waits for the trade pact to be implemented," the report mentioned.



Viral gazette on Saturday holiday for PSU banks fake: PIB

NEW DELHI
The Press Information Bureau's (PIB) Fact Check unit on Thursday dismissed as fake a purported government gazette notification circulating on social media that claims the Centre has declared every Saturday a public holiday for all public sector banks, including the State Bank of India (SBI). In a post on social media platform X, PIB Fact Check clarified that no such notification has been issued by the Ministry of Finance's Department of Financial Services. The agency said the document being shared online is fake and does not represent any official government order. "A Gazette circulating on social media, purportedly issued by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Financial Services), claims that the Central Government has declared every Saturday a public holiday for all Public Sector Banks, including SBI. The document being circulated is fake," it said. The fact-checking unit urged the public not to rely on unverified documents circulating on social media and advised citizens to verify government-related information through official channels before sharing it further.

Private investment key to tourism growth

India's tourism sector is set for its next growth phase, with private investment, new destinations, better connectivity and technology expected to reshape travel and employment.

NEW DELHI

Greater private-sector investment, development of new destinations and improved visitor experiences will be crucial for sustaining India's

tourism growth, Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said on Thursday. Speaking at the ASSOCHAM National Tourism Conclave 2026, Shekhawat said tourism is emerging as a

Pvt investment, new destinations key for tourism growth

- Private investment identified as crucial for tourism expansion
- New destinations and experiences to drive future growth
- Rising incomes expected to boost travel demand
- Spiritual, wellness, cruise and wildlife tourism see opportunities
- AI and technology to improve visitor experiences
- Government-industry collaboration seen as key to a \$1 trillion tourism economy



major driver of economic growth and employment and can play a larger role in India's journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047. He said rising incomes and expanding connectivity

through highways, airports, railways and other transport networks are expected to significantly increase travel demand across the country. Meeting this demand, he said, will require greater investment in tourism infra-

structure, hospitality, destination management and human resource development.

"The next phase of tourism growth will require us to look beyond increasing tourist numbers and focus on building new destinations, creating new experiences and improving destination management," Shekhawat said.

A joint report by ASSOCHAM and CBRE released at the event highlighted opportunities in spiritual, MICE, wellness, cruise, rural and wildlife tourism.

The report also noted that better connectivity through expressways, rail networks,

ropeways and river-based circuits is opening new tourism markets.

Technology and artificial intelligence also featured prominently in discussions, with industry leaders highlighting their potential to improve travel experiences and destination management.

ASSOCHAM President Nirmal K. Minda said tourism is evolving beyond leisure into a major source of investment, employment and regional development. He stressed stronger government-industry collaboration to support the goal of a \$1 trillion tourism economy.

South Korea exports hit record high

SEOUL

South Korea's exports surged 83.5% year-on-year to a record \$120.9 billion in September, driven largely by a sharp rise in semiconductor shipments, according to data released Thursday by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources.



Exports touch unprecedented monthly level in Sept, powered by record semiconductor shipments and stronger demand across major markets.

Semiconductor exports crossed \$60 billion for the first time, reaching \$60.3 billion after soaring 263% from a year earlier. Higher memory-chip prices and increased shipments amid strong global demand supported the increase.

Imports also rose 26% to \$71.09 billion, resulting in an unprecedented monthly trade surplus of \$49.85 billion.

Petroleum product exports increased 72% to \$7.22 billion, while petrochemical ex-

South Korea is on track to achieve \$1 trillion in annual exports this year."

— Kim Jung-kwan, Industry Minister

ports rose 5.1% to \$3.95 billion. Cosmetics shipments climbed 31.4% to \$1.51 billion, supported by demand from China, the United States and the European Union.

Automobile exports were an exception, declining 5.5% to \$6.05 billion. The fall was attributed partly to fewer working days during the Chuseok holiday and weaker used-car exports.

Exports to China more than doubled, rising 123% to \$26 billion, supported by semiconductor and wireless communications shipments. Shipments to the United States jumped 137% to \$24.33 billion.

Exports to Southeast Asia increased 92.6% to \$21.29 billion, while those to the European Union rose 20.9% to \$8.65 billion.

Industry Minister Kim Jung-kwan said January-September exports crossed \$800 billion for the first time, surpassing the previous annual record of \$709.3 billion.

Key numbers

\$120.9bn Total exports	\$60.3bn Semiconductor exports	\$49.85bn Trade surplus
\$800bn+ January-September exports	\$26bn China exports	\$24.33bn US exports

Mahindra auto sales rise 15%, Hyundai Motor India sales hit record high

NEW DELHI

Auto majors posted robust September sales in India on Thursday as Mahindra & Mahindra and Hyundai Motor India reported double-digit growth driven in part by



strong SUV demand.

Mahindra & Mahindra Limited said total auto sales for September stood at 1,14,874 vehicles, up 15% year-on-year including exports. Domestic utility vehicle (UV) sales rose 14% to 64,092 units, while commercial vehicle domestic sales stood at 30,420, also up 14%.

"Adding to this momentum, we are proud to have crossed the milestone of 1 lakh billing of our Electric Origin SUVs since launch," said Dr Velusamy R, President, Automotive Business, Mahindra & Mahindra Limited.

In the commercial vehicle segment, sales of light commercial vehicles under 2 tonnes stood at 4,044 units in September, up 19%, while 2–3.5 tonne LCVs posted

26,376 units sales, up 13 per cent. Three-wheeler sales, including electric models, rose 26% to 16,343 units.

Year to date sales of light commercial vehicles under 2 tonnes till September rose

30%, while sales of 2–3.5 tonne LCVs rose 18 per cent.

Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) reported its highest-ever monthly total sales since inception at 77,916 units in September, with a robust YoY growth of 10.8%. Monthly domestic sales stood at 57,166 units up 10.9% YoY and exports touched 20,750 units up 10.4% YoY.

"This number surpasses our previous record achieved in July 2026. The well-rounded growth across domestic and exports markets is a testament to the strong appeal of our product portfolio and our commitment to delivering world-class mobility solutions in India and across global markets," said Tarun Garg, MD & CEO - HMIL.

Retail sugar prices down 15%, ex-mill rates fall around 28%

NEW DELHI

Average retail sugar prices have declined 15 per cent from their August peak, while ex-mill sugar prices have fallen by around 28 per cent and remained stable over the past three weeks, the government said on Thursday, announcing tighter stock-holding norms for sugar dealers to ensure adequate availability during the festive season.

The government said average retail sugar prices have declined by 15 per cent from their August peak and are expected to fall further as the benefit of lower ex-mill prices passes through the supply chain.

According to the government, the decline in prices reflects the impact of various measures taken to ensure adequate availability of sugar and facilitate its orderly movement through the market.

To prevent hoarding and ensure smooth supplies, the government has reduced the

stock-holding period for sugar dealers to 15 days and fixed the stock-holding limit at 1,000 quintals. The revised norms will be effective from October 15 to November 30, 2026.

However, considering specific regional market require-



ments, the stock-holding limit has been fixed at 2,000 quintals for Kolkata and its extended metropolitan areas as well as the state of Assam.

The government said Kolkata sources sugar from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka and supplies it to eastern India, including the North-Eastern region. The higher limit for Assam has been provided in view of geographical constraints, transportation logistics and consumer interests in the North-East.

India's growth holding strong, Q3 GDP seen around 7.5%

NEW DELHI

India's economy remains on a strong footing, supported by robust manufacturing activity, exports, investment and credit



growth, a report said on Thursday.

A report by HSBC Global Investment Research pointed to a string of strong economic indicators, including 8 per cent industrial production growth in August, 21 per cent growth in non-oil exports, around 25 per cent growth in public capital expenditure during April-August and 19 per cent credit growth in September.

Around 70 per cent of the indicators in its database showed positive growth in August, up from 52 per cent in the March-July period. In addition, manufacturing has been particularly strong with September's flash PMI indicating a sharp rise in new orders.

Based on current trends, the report has estimated India's GDP growth at around 7.5 per cent in the third quarter.

The resilience has been broad-based despite disruptions from higher energy prices and adverse weather conditions, it said and added that consumption has remained stable helped by fuel tax cuts and a gradual pass-through of higher input costs.

Non-oil exports, especially electronics and engineering goods, have emerged as a key growth driver, the report said, highlighting that goods exports grew 20 per cent year-on-year in volume terms and 26 per cent in value terms in August.

It projects growth to moderate somewhat as the benefits of accommodative monetary policy and GST reductions fade.

It remains broadly optimistic, citing strong export momentum and the potential benefits of trade agreements with the UK and EU, noting that exports to the UK rose sharply after the implementation of the bilateral trade agreement.

Govt denies RDI fund shortage



NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Science and Technology on Thursday rejected a media report claiming that the Technology Development Board (TDB) had closed its call for proposals under the Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme because of a shortage of funds.

The Ministry clarified that there is no shortage of funds for disbursement to eligible technology entities (ETEs). It said the temporary closure was an administrative measure taken to assess the large number of project proposals already received.

According to the Ministry, TDB has paused its ongoing call following a massive influx of proposals.

"The media report claiming the shortage of funds as the reason for closure of the RDI call by TDB is not correct," the Ministry said in its statement, adding that the closure was undertaken purely for administrative reasons.

MTNL approves sale of Powai property to I-T Dept for Rs 891.53 cr



NEW DELHI

State-owned telecom company Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd (MTNL) on Thursday said its board has approved the sale of its property at Powai in Mumbai to the Income Tax Department for Rs 891.53 crore. The property which is located at Plot-C, Technology Street, Powai has a land area of 20,895.60 square metres, MTNL said in a regulatory filing. The sale will be carried out through a government-to-government (G2G) transfer or direct sale, it said.

The transaction is subject to formal acceptance by the Income Tax Department and is based on Presidential Approval and Alternative Mechanism

(AM) approval, according to the telecom firm. The proposed sale is part of MTNL's efforts to monetise non-core assets as the state-owned telecom company continues to face financial challenges.

In addition, Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said in July that MTNL had total liabilities of around Rs 40,008.52 crore in FY26, while its non-core assets were valued at around Rs 50,000 crore. The government has identified asset monetisation as one of the measures to help the company meet its liabilities.

Shares of MTNL on Thursday traded higher, jumping as much as 17 per cent to hit an intraday high of Rs 26.96 on the BSE by 12:40 pm. The stock has touched a 52-week high of Rs 44.71 and a 52-week low of Rs 20.30.

GLOBAL TURMOIL

RBI rate hike outlook faces uncertainty

NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India may raise the policy repo rate by 50–75 basis points in the current cycle amid heightened macroeconomic headwinds and geopolitical uncertainty, according to a report by Bandhan Life Insurance.

The report said any potential rate action would be influenced primarily by domestic factors including inflation, economic growth, liquidity conditions and financial stability, rather than movements by the US Federal Reserve alone.

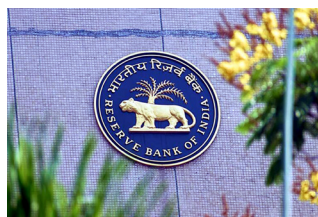
It noted that elevated global uncertainty and relatively firm valuations could make

the Indian equity market increasingly stock-specific. Companies demonstrating stronger earnings visibility and sustainable growth may therefore receive greater investor attention.

The report also highlighted challenges for India's information technology sector. Rapid adoption of artificial intelligence is reshaping corporate technology spending and could redirect budgets away from traditional IT services. This may limit near-term upgrades until at least the second half of financial year 2026-27.

According to the report, investors are likely to differentiate more sharply between

sectors and companies based on growth prospects and earnings resilience as global rates, oil prices, geopolitical developments and AI influence corporate spending.



The US Federal Reserve's rate trajectory, meanwhile, will depend on inflation, labour-market conditions, consumer spending and broader economic growth. The report said the Fed could deliver one

or two additional hikes if inflation accelerates again or labour-market conditions remain unusually tight.

The broader Indian market outlook remains sensitive to crude oil prices, US bond yields and geopolitical tensions. Prolonged elevated oil prices could weigh on domestic demand and pressure India's balance of payments.

The report also warned that continued disruptions in the Middle East could affect sectors such as chemicals and fertilisers. Meanwhile, the rupee is expected to undergo managed and gradual depreciation rather than sustained appreciation in the medium term.



The silver marks another

Quick Read

Pakistani airstrikes kill 9 in Afghanistan

Kabul
Pakistani airstrikes targeting alleged militant hide-outs in Afghanistan killed 9 people, according to the Afghan Taliban. The raids struck three homes in Kunar and Helmand provinces, resulting in the deaths of women and children. Meanwhile, Islamabad claimed the precise military operation successfully eliminated twenty-two terrorists and destroyed hidden weapons caches. The UN reported at least ten civilian casualties, sparking renewed friction between the neighboring nations. Pakistan accuses Kabul of harboring cross-border militants, a charge the Taliban strongly denies. This escalation follows a deadly militant attack in Pakistan last month, further straining relations.

Independent outlet Matsaddash reporters detained in raids

Cairo
Egyptian security forces arrested all 6 journalists from the independent investigative outlet Matsaddash during a series of raids. Plainclothes officers seized electronic devices from their homes following accusations that the digital platform spread false news for the banned Muslim Brotherhood. Matsaddash firmly denied any affiliation with the group, emphasizing its work in correcting misinformation published by partisan media. Human rights advocates note that independent journalism continues to face severe restrictions in Egypt under ongoing crackdowns. Legal representatives are currently providing support for the detained reporters as international press freedom groups condemn the sweeping arrests.

Emergency motions halt Tennessee execution proceedings

Nashville
Tennessee's first attempt to execute a woman in two centuries failed after death row inmate Christa Pike survived a lethal injection. Witnesses reported hearing gasps and snoring after officials administered the chemicals at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution. Pike's lawyers halted proceedings with emergency motions as an ambulance transported her for medical treatment. Governor Bill Lee subsequently suspended all state executions pending a third-party review. Pike was convicted for the 1995 murder of a classmate when she was 18 years old. Human rights advocates previously cited her severe childhood trauma and untreated mental illness.

Alternative scenarios and economic risks

Extending the 2026 budget would freeze defense spending and investments, potentially widening the deficit by at least half a percentage point and spooking financial markets.

Retaliation in Moscow: Hungarian diplomats expelled

Russia expels Hungarian diplomats in a sharp retaliatory move following Budapest's recent pivot toward Western allies.

MOSCOW

Marking a sharp deterioration in bilateral relations between Moscow and Budapest, the Russian Foreign Ministry announced that an unspecified group of Hungarian diplomatic staff must leave the country within 2 weeks. The retaliatory measure comes directly on the heels of a bold decision

Key diplomatic highlights

Reciprocal action
Affected staff from the Hungarian Embassy in Moscow and consulates in St. Petersburg and Kazan have been given two weeks to leave Russia.

Root cause
The move comes in direct retaliation to Budapest's decision last month expelling 10 Russian diplomats over alleged espionage.

Shifting geopolitics
The diplomatic crisis underscores a major policy pivot under Hungary's new government led by Prime Minister Péter Magyar, distancing itself from Moscow.



by Hungary last month to expel ten Russian diplomats accused of engaging in activities incompatible with their official diplomatic status—a standard diplomatic euphemism for espionage.

The escalation underscores a profound geopolitical pivot in Budapest following the

conclusion of former Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's 16-year tenure. Orbán, who lost power in the April elections, had famously maintained cozy, pragmatic ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin despite the outbreak of the war in Ukraine and subsequent European Union sanc-

Budapest acknowledges response

The Hungarian Foreign Ministry acknowledged Moscow's directive, stating that Budapest remains committed to preventing further escalation while aiming to rebuild trust with its primary EU and NATO allies. The initial expulsion by Hungary was framed as a necessary step to protect national security and counter covert intelligence operations. While diplomatic channels remain open, the recent expulsions signal the definitive end of closer ties maintained under the prior administration.

Water scarcity dominates Arizona midterm elections

PHOENIX

Long-term water security has surged to the forefront of Arizona's political landscape, becoming the defining issue in campaigns across the desert state ahead of the November 3 midterm elections. Spurred by severe drought conditions, plummeting reservoir levels, and unprecedented federal reductions in Colorado River allocations, water has eclipsed traditional electoral concerns such as economic affordability, immigration, and foreign conflicts.

The escalating crisis has triggered fierce partisan clashes in the race for governor. Incumbent Democratic Governor Katie Hobbs is



highlighting her administration's efforts to protect the state's share of the river, declaring in campaign ads that "Arizona's water is for Arizonans." Her supporters point to measures restricting excessive groundwater pumping and transitioning agricultural rights toward sustainable urban development.

Conversely, Republican gubernatorial candidate and U.S. Congressman Andy Biggs has sharply criticized Hobbs, accusing her of manufacturing a "panic narrative" that has cost the state jobs and investment. Biggs has campaigned on a \$19 billion infrastructure blueprint aimed at expanding water storage and completing the Yuma desalination plant. Meanwhile, outside political groups have poured into the state with aggressive ad campaigns, intensifying public anxiety over dwindling municipal supplies.

27% federal cut in Arizona's Colorado River water supply	7.6 million population, nearly tripled since 1980	71% of Arizonans doubt current water systems can sustain growth
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US-Iraq withdrawal emboldens regional militias

BAGHDAD

Tensions across the Middle East remain at a boiling point as Iran confirmed it has received an official U.S. response to its latest proposal aimed at reviving the collapsed Gulf ceasefire. The diplomatic maneuvers coincide with a major geopolitical milestone: the complete withdrawal of the final contingent of U.S. military forces from neighboring Iraq after a 23-year presence, marking the conclusion of a deployment that began with the 2003 invasion. The withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraqi bases—orig-

inally negotiated under the Biden administration and finalized under President Donald Trump—sparked widespread celebrations among Tehran and its regional allies. Regional militia leaders hailed the departure as a historic defeat for American military objectives. However, security analysts warn that the vacuum left by departing Western forces could embolden Iran-backed armed groups to further expand their political and institutional influence within Iraq. The ongoing conflict, now entering its eighth month, continues to exact a heavy political and economic toll.

Chinese hackers impersonate ex-US officials

WASHINGTON

Cybersecurity firm Proofpoint revealed that state-sponsored Chinese hackers have been impersonating prominent former U.S. government officials and artificial intelligence experts in a targeted espionage campaign aimed at compromising the email accounts of leading researchers. The recent wave of cyberattacks relied heavily on social engineering. Hackers crafted convincing emails purporting to originate from respected authorities in AI and statecraft, including Lynne Parker, who previously served as the prin-

cipal deputy director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. While Proofpoint noted that the selective campaign targeted fewer than ten individuals across a handful of key organizations, the scope suggests a focused intelligence-gathering mission. Reuters independently identified one of the targeted individuals as Alex Engler, a former White House official who currently heads the Penn Center on Media, Technology, and Democracy. Engler recounted that he received an email purportedly from Parker inviting him to join a new AI policy project.

Bosnia conducts elections amid EU bid, global influence

SARAJEVO

Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina are heading to the polls on Sunday, October 4, 2026, in a critical general election that will test the fragile nation's path toward European Union integration while navigating intense geopolitical friction between global superpowers. Voters will cast ballots for the country's central tripartite presidency, the national parliament, and regional legislative assemblies across its two semi-autonomous entities.

Polling data indicates a fierce race between entrenched ethnic nationalist parties—such as the pro-European Bosniak SDA, the Croat HDZ BiH, and the Serb SNSD led by secessionist figure Milorad Dodik—and multi-ethnic opposition coalitions spearheaded by the Social Democratic Party.

The vote also highlights a broader tug-of-war for regional influence involving the European Union, the United States, and Russia. Brussels is keen to cement



Bosnia and Herzegovina holds a critical general election on October 4, 2026, testing EU integration, economic reforms, and regional geopolitical tensions.

Balkan integration, but tensions have flared over Washington's unilateral diplomatic maneuvers, including the lifting of sanctions on Dodik and a controversial U.S.-backed natural gas pipeline project that bypassed standard EU transparency rules. Furthermore, a diplomatic standoff persists between Washington and Brussels over the vacant post of the international High Representative following the resignation of Christian Schmidt.

Brazil presidential election: Lula and Bolsonaro push hard

SAO PAULO

Brazil's high-stakes presidential campaign is drawing to a close, with voters preparing

the absolute majority required to avoid a runoff.

A second-round vote on October 25 is shaping up as a fierce showdown between



to head to the polls on Sunday in an election that will decide whether Latin America's largest democracy tilts toward a conservative resurgence or continues under leftist leadership. While incumbent President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is projected to lead the first round among a crowded field of 13 candidates, polls indicate he is unlikely to secure

Lula—seeking his fourth non-consecutive term as an icon of the global left—and Senator Flávio Bolsonaro, representing the right-wing Liberal Party.

Despite notable progress in lowering unemployment and reducing inequality, Lula's early lead has evaporated. Most recent tracking surveys show him locked in a statisti-

“Lula acutely understood that he was in danger and used the power of government with a couple of concrete initiatives to try to secure the votes necessary to win.”

—Rodrigo Russo, Control Risks

cal tie with Senator Bolsonaro for a potential runoff, with polls from Atlas showing razor-thin margins of 47.6% for Lula against 47.7% for Bolsonaro.

Overshadowing policy debates in the final stretch is a sweeping political corruption scandal centered around the defunct Banco Master. Following the arrest of disgraced former bank head Daniel Vercaro over an alleged multibillion-dollar fraud, investigators have uncovered extensive ties linking high-profile political figures across the spectrum to the financial scandal.

Spanish King to visit disputed enclaves

MADRID

Sources within the Spanish royal household announced that King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia will undertake a high-profile, official visit to the disputed North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla later this month. Scheduled for October 13 and 14, the journey will mark King Felipe's very first visit to the strategic territories during his 12-year reign.

The upcoming royal tour risks further straining diplomatic ties between Madrid and Rabat, arriving just over two months after a massive

humanitarian crisis in late July that saw more than 72,000 migrants surge across the border from Morocco into Ceuta. While King Felipe had largely refrained from public remarks during the initial stages of the border surge, he broke his silence two weeks ago to commend local civil protection units. Domestic political debate across Spain has intensified since the crisis, with opposition parties accusing Rabat of tacit complicity or deliberate inaction, while faulting Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez for pursuing an overly conciliatory approach toward Morocco.

ARTICLE 49.3 SHOWDOWN

France faces 2027 budget battle amid political deadlock

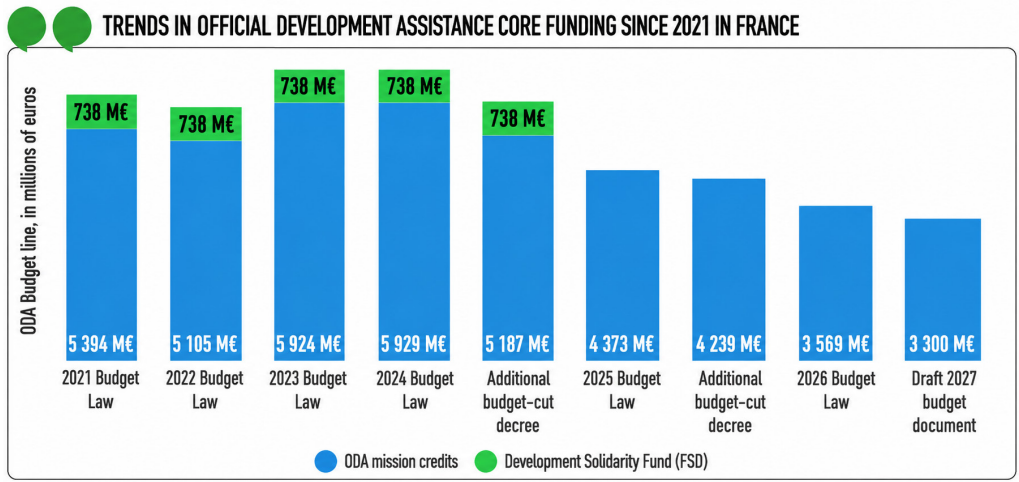
PARIS

The minority government led by French Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu is bracing for an intensely volatile and

politically treacherous fiscal season as opposition parties harden their stance against aggressive deficit-reduction targets. With the critical April–May 2027 presidential elec-

tion looming on the horizon, the upcoming parliamentary battle over state finances threatens not only the survival of the current cabinet but also the broader economic stability of the eurozone's second-largest economy.

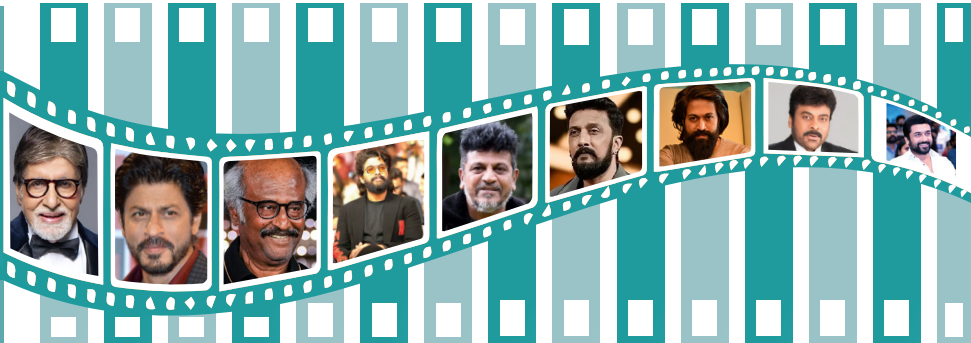
At the heart of the standoff is the government's ambitious fiscal consolidation plan, which aims to carve out a staggering 54 billion euros (approximately \$60.92 billion) in budget savings to rein in mounting public deficits. However, navigating these sweeping expenditure cuts and revenue adjustments



through a deeply fractured, hung parliament—born out of the 2024 snap legislative elections—presents an unprecedented constitutional and political hurdle.

Given the absence of a working absolute majority in the National Assembly, successive minority governments have repeatedly leaned on Article 49.3 of the French Constitution.

Yet, invoking Article 49.3 carries immense political hazards. Opposition parties can immediately retaliate by tabling a motion of no-confidence.





Disha Patani marks decade with Sushant memory

Actress Disha Patani has completed 10 years in Bollywood and marked the milestone by remembering her debut film and co-star Sushant Singh Rajput.

Disha made her Hindi film debut with MS Dhoni: The Untold Story, which released on September 30, 2016. The actress shared a throwback picture with Sushant on her Instagram Stories as she celebrated a decade in the film industry.

Along with the picture, Disha expressed gratitude for the opportunities, characters and people who shaped her journey. She also remembered her character Priyanka Jha, saying the role will always remain close to her heart.

The picture showed Disha and Sushant smiling as they looked at each other. She added the song Kaun Tujhe, sung by Palak Muchhal, from the film, giving the post an emotional touch.

Directed by Neeraj Pandey, MS Dhoni: The Untold Story was a biographical sports drama based on the life of former Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni. Sushant played the lead role, while Disha portrayed Priyanka Jha. The film also featured Kiara Advani and Anupam Kher.

Sushant Singh Rajput died on June 14, 2020, in Mumbai. His death was investigated by multiple agencies and was officially treated as a case of suicide.

Meanwhile, Disha is preparing for her Hollywood debut with the upcoming supernatural action-thriller The Portal of Force. Her 10-year journey has now entered another chapter as she looks ahead to new roles and opportunities.

Dorothy Telugu release date announced by Rana

Karthik Subbaraj's Tamil film Dorothy, starring Keerthy Suresh, Sanath and Rishikanth, is set to release in Telugu theatres on October 2. Rana Daggubati announced the release in Hyderabad and will present the film in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana under Spirit Media. During the announcement, a reporter asked Rana about keeping the title Dorothy for the Telugu release and what the name meant. Rana explained that Dorothy means "a gift from God" and is the name of a character in the film. He also said the meaning would become clearer after watching the movie. Speaking about keeping the same title across languages, Rana said emotions such as crying, laughter and pain have no language.

Singer Chinmayi Sripaada later defended the reporter after the interaction drew criticism online. She said not everyone had the same access to books or reading during childhood and called for empathy.

Chinmayi also explained that Dorothy is not a Tamil word and responded to discussions about the title. She shared a screenshot explaining the historical phrase "Dorothy".



which was used by gay people to identify each other when homosexuality was illegal. Directed by Karthik Subbaraj, Dorothy was released in Tamil in September after receiving a standing ovation at the Toronto International Film Festival. The film is set in the 1980s and follows two childhood friends whose lives change after a woman enters their lives.

Produced by Guneet Monga Kapoor, Achin Jain and Jyoti Deshpande, the film has also faced homophobia and transphobia because of its queer themes. The Telugu release will now bring the story to audiences in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.



Kanye West Russia concerts cancelled by organisers

Two concerts planned by US rapper Kanye West in Russia have been cancelled, according to the show's organiser, Say Agency. The concerts had been scheduled for October in St Petersburg.

West, who is also known as Ye, was announced to perform in the Russian city in August. However, the venue that was expected to host the concerts later said it had never signed a contract with the organisers.

The concerts remained uncertain after the venue's statement, with organisers not giving clear information about whether the shows would take place. Say Agency announced the cancellation on Telegram on Wednesday and said further information about the project would be shared soon.

West has faced concert cancellations and performance bans in several European countries this year following past antisemitic remarks, including praise for Adolf Hitler and the use of Nazi imagery. In January, West apologised for his remarks and attributed them to an undiagnosed brain injury and untreated bipolar disorder.

Actor Florence Pugh has spoken out about a sexual assault lawsuit involving a former Cornell University student, after claiming Instagram blocked her original post about the case.

The former student, identified as Jane Doe in court documents, filed a lawsuit in New York Supreme Court on September 16. The lawsuit alleges that seven fraternity members sexually assaulted her in 2024 after she was visiting a friend at Cornell's Chi Phi house.

According to the lawsuit, two fraternity members allegedly pressured the woman into snorting what they told her was ketamine while she was drugged. It further alleges that multiple people engaged in sexual acts with her without her consent.

Pugh discussed the case during an appearance on The View. She said she wanted to use her platform to speak about the allegations and described Instagram blocking her original post as "another shock."

"I am a woman and this affects all women," Pugh said, adding that stories involving sexual assault can cause fear, anxiety and anger. She also said she was grateful to have a platform where she could discuss the issue publicly.

Florence Pugh speaks out on Cornell assault case

Shivaleeka cheers husband ahead of Drishyam release



Actress Shivaleeka Oberoi has expressed her pride in filmmaker er-husband Abhishek Pathak ahead of the theatrical release of Drishyam The Conclusion. She shared pictures from the sets and spoke about the hard work behind the upcoming film.

Shivaleeka reflected on the dream, hard work and sleepless nights that went into making the third installment. She also said she was fortunate to witness the journey closely and highlighted the importance of family in the Drishyam story.

"I've seen the dream, the hard work, the sleepless nights and the heart behind it all," Shivaleeka wrote in her social media post. She added that the world would soon see what she had been lucky enough to witness.

Drishyam The Conclusion stars Ajay Devgn and Tabu in lead roles. The cast also includes Prakash Raj, Jaideep Ahlawat, Ishita Dutt, Shriya Saran and Rajat Kapoor.

The Drishyam story follows a family caught in the aftermath of a shocking disappearance. Vijay works to protect his loved ones as the case threatens to uncover

The lawsuit names Winston Lee, Scott Kretzschmar, Scott Norris, Matthew Ingalls, Johnathan Newell, Gillio Lopes and Diego Sarabia. The woman's attorney, Thomas Giuffra, alleged that two of the seven men were expelled, while others faced lesser disciplinary measures. He also said none of the alleged attackers was arrested.

Cornell University said it investigated and adjudicated the allegations according to its policies. The university said it condemns sexual violence and that privacy laws prevent it from sharing specific disciplinary information about individual students. The Chi Phi chapter remained barred from campus.



first look raises love questions

Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal are set to explore the darker side of romance with their upcoming romantic thriller, Tu Hai Meri Kiran. The film's first look has raised a key question about where love ends and obsession begins.

Sonakshi shared the first glimpse on social media with the question, "Where would you draw the line between LOVE and OBSESSION?" She also confirmed that the film will release in cinemas on October 23, 2026.

The poster features Sonakshi and Zaheer and carries the tagline, "She found a connection. He found an obsession." The makers have kept the story details under wraps, but the first look suggests a mix of romance, psychological tension and possessiveness.

Written and directed by Karan Rawal, the film brings the real-life married couple together on screen for the first time after their 2024 marriage. They previously worked together in Double XL.

The title also refers to the iconic song linked with Darr, adding curiosity around the project. Vishal Rana, Sarvesh Goel, Ashwani Kumar, Manoj Darak and Nrupal Patel are among the producers. Echelon Productions, PAM Studios and AND Productions are backing the film, with Saregama also attached.

With its central question surrounding love and obsession, Tu Hai Meri Kiran has created curiosity through its first look. Audiences will have to wait until October 23 to discover how the relationship unfolds.

Actor Harshita Gaur, who played Dimpy Pandit in Mirzapur, has spoken about the show's move to the big screen and Jitendra Kumar replacing Vikrant Massey in Mirzapur The Movie.

Gaur said she did not feel any difference after Jitendra joined the established world of Mirzapur. She said that while stepping into a role already connected with audiences could be difficult, Jitendra seamlessly became part of the journey.

"He seamlessly became a part of this journey to the point where it felt like he was always there," she said.

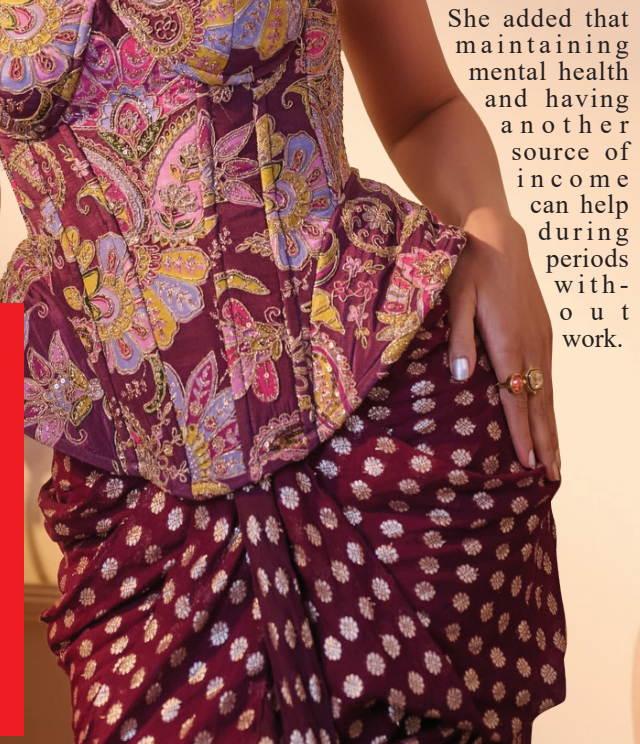
Gaur also spoke about working with Divyendu in Waiting Hai, where she plays his wife. She said she did not think about their earlier Mirzapur characters while working and believed audiences understood that actors were playing different characters.

Discussing her role as Princy, Gaur highlighted the quiet strength of women who manage homes, relationships and families. She said such efforts are often underrated and not valued enough.

Gaur praised Divyendu as a fun co-star and said working with him was a learning experience. She also praised Mirzapur director Gurmmeet Singh for keeping the set light during difficult scenes.

Talking about Ravi Kishan, Gaur admired his child-like enthusiasm and energy. She said his long career had not taken away his excitement to perform.

Gaur also discussed the uncertainty actors face between projects. She called it "non-selection" rather than rejection and said actors must keep working on themselves. She added that maintaining mental health and having another source of income can help during periods without work.



HARSHITA GAUR SAYS JITENDRA FIT MIRZAPUR JOURNEY