



BIG WAVE IS ON THE WAY: TRUMP

Israeli-US planes **pound** Iran and Tehran, and its proxies **hit back**; Hezbollah joins conflict; Kuwait **‘mistakenly’** downs 3 US F-15s; conflict expands to **Lebanon** with Israel warning of prolonged combat; Iran death toll crosses **550**

SHORTS FROM WARZONE

Iranian strikes hit Saudi and Qatar energy sites

US crew bailed out safely after crash-landing, says Kuwait

Lebanon's government decides on an "immediate ban" of Iran-backed Hezbollah's military and security activity, says PM Nawaf Salam.

Israel launches new attacks on 'heart of Tehran'

US fighter planes mistakenly shot down in Kuwait

Iran Revolutionary Guards claim targeting 500 US, Israeli sites

Fourth US service member 'killed in action'

QatarEnergy halts liquefied natural gas production after attacks

Iran expands attacks to regional oil infrastructure
Hezbollah fires on Israel, prompting massive response

Tehran's streets deserted



Smoke and dust rise after an Israeli strike on Beirut's southern suburbs. ▶ PHOTO: X

AMMAN (JORDAN)

The Iran-Israel-US war entered its third day on Monday with widening regional fallout, mounting casualties and fresh attacks on energy infrastructure, diplomatic compounds and civilian areas across the Middle East.

It engulfed more of the Middle East and beyond as Lebanon's militant group Hezbollah responded to the killing of Iran's spiritual leader with its first attack on Israel in more than a year.

More than 200 people were initially reported killed after strikes that eliminated Khamenei. Iran's Red Crescent has now put the death toll inside the country at least 555, with 131 cities coming under attack. They included Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and members of his family. Iran said more than 175 schoolgirls were

killed in a direct hit on a school.

Meanwhile, Iran increased attacks on Kuwait, a key US military ally. The Mediterranean island nation of Cyprus said a drone targeted a British base.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump on Monday said the US military is heavily striking Iran, but warned that a "big wave" of attacks is yet to come. "We're knocking the crap out of them," he said, as per agencies. "I think it's going very well. It's very powerful. We've got the greatest military in the world and we're using it," he added.

Conflict expands to Lebanon
Israel launched new air strikes targeting Tehran and expanded its military campaign to include attacks on Iran-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

Israel said it was attacking sites connected to Lebanon's Shi'ite Muslim armed group

Hezbollah, one of Tehran's principal allies in the Middle East, after Hezbollah acknowledged launching missiles and drones toward Israel in retaliation for the killing Khamenei.

Lebanon's health ministry said Israeli airstrikes in retaliation for the attack by Iran-backed Hezbollah killed at least 31 people and wounded 149, most of them in south Lebanon.

'Epic Fury' hit over 1K targets in Iran in first 24 hrs'

'Operation Epic Fury' struck more than 1,000 targets within its first 24 hours, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine said. He said the operation involved more than 100 aircraft launched from both land and sea. The daylight assault was carried out following a trigger strike by Israeli forces, marking a coordinated and rapid escalation in the broader offensive.

Iran bare opens massive armory, declares 'ready for long war'

TEHRAN

Iran's top security official Ali Larijani on Monday said the Islamic Republic is prepared for its war with the United States and Israel to last for a long period of time after the conflict in West Asia entered its third day and spread across the region and beyond, following the death of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei in a joint US-Israeli strike on a high-security compound in Tehran.

"Iran, unlike the United States, has prepared itself for a long war," said Ali Larijani, the powerful head of Tehran's Supreme National Security Council, in a post on X.

Larijani, who is considered the most powerful figure in Iran following the assassination of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, declared, "We will fiercely defend ourselves and our six-thousand-year-old civilisation regardless of the costs and will make the enemies sorry for their miscalculation."

"We will not negotiate with the US"

Early in the day, he ruled out renewed negotiation with Washington and dismissed reports of backchannel diplomacy while accusing Trump of pushing the region into instability through "delusional actions."

The conflict in West Asia



expanded into a multifront regional war as Iran retaliated, targeting Israel, US allies and military bases in the region. Major cities in the region, including Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Amman, Riyadh and Doha, came under attack from missiles and drones launched by Tehran's security forces.

In retaliation for the joint US-Israeli airstrike, Iran has revealed an underground tunnel storing drones and missiles. On Monday (March 2), the Iranian Revolutionary

Guard Corps (IRGC) released footage through state media showing a long tunnel lined with numerous weapons.

Triangular drones resembling the domestically produced Shahed-136 kamikaze drone are displayed first, while missiles are mounted four per launcher vehicle in standby mode. The tunnel's ceiling bears the Iranian national flag, and a portrait of the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei hangs on the wall.

Iran not an endless war, will finish it soon: US Defense Secy

US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said the US did not initiate the conflict but was determined to bring it to a decisive end through Operation Epic Fury. He stressed that the objective was to eliminate threats with the 'America First' policy. Hegseth said Iran has long-range strike capabilities and added that he would never put a specific time frame on the Iran operation.



Govt monitoring West Asia crisis; 109 Kannadigas stranded in Gulf: CM

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said the state government is closely monitoring the situation in West Asia following the escalation of tensions between US-Israel and Iran, and assured that the safety and well-being of Kannadigas abroad is



the state's highest priority.

He said as per the information, around 100 Kannadigas are currently stranded in the UAE, including Dubai, and nine in Bahrain due to airspace disruptions and flight cancellations. The government teams are in constant touch with authorities and affected individuals to

verify details and extend necessary assistance.

The government has activated the State Emergency Operations Centre and disemmergency operations centres. It's also in continuous coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and Indian embassies and consulates in the conflict-hit regions.

NEW DELHI

Reacting to the escalating US-Iran-Israel conflict, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the situation in West Asia is a "matter of grave concern for us".

Speaking at a joint press meet with Canadian PM Mark Carney, Modi said, "India supports resolution of all conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy." He added, "We will keep working with countries in West Asia to ensure safety of Indians there."

He reiterated India's foreign policy stance and said India has always been an advocate for peace amid global tensions. "India's stance has always been clear on tensions across the world. India has consistently advocated for peace and stability, and when two democracies stand together, the call for peace becomes stronger," the PM said. PM dials Saudi Crown



Centre asks states to keep eye on pro-Iran radical preachers

The Union Home Ministry has asked states to keep an eye on pro-Iran radical preachers giving inflammatory statements that may result in violence in the wake of the Israel-US attack on Iran, officials said. In a letter circulated among states on February 28, the Ministry also asked all states and UTs to keep vigil on social media activities of extremists and global terror group handles. Advising the states to ensure that no law-and-order issues arise, the ministry has asked them to heighten vigilance, as global events might have a domestic ripple effect through rhetorical statements.

Prince, Bahrain King, Israeli PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to the King of Bahrain Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince

and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Mohammed Bin Salman, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday as West Asia plunged deeper into crisis following

the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a joint US-Israeli strike and Tehran's sweeping missile retaliation across the region.

During his conversation with Mohammed bin Salman, who also serves as Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, Modi agreed that the "earliest restoration of regional peace and stability is of utmost importance." He condemned attacks targeting Saudi territory and reiterated India's solidarity.

A similar message was conveyed to Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain, with Modi denouncing strikes on the kingdom and reviewing the safety of the Indian community there. He also spoke with Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, condemning attacks and calling for de-escalation through dialogue and diplomacy.

VICTORY, NO REGIME CHANGE

Military success does not mean regime change in Iran: KP Fabian

DANIEL GEORGE, BENGALURU

Former diplomat KP Fabian has described the recent US and Israeli strikes on Iran — including the assassination of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei — as a significant military success for United States and Israel, but cautioned against equating that with achieving declared political goals such as "regime change."

Speaking to CH from New Delhi on Monday, Fabian underscored that while the operation marks a major battlefield victory, it does not necessarily bring about the deeper political transformation in Iran that US and Israeli leaders often articulate. He pointed out ambiguity around what "regime change" would concretely mean and noted that military action alone may not translate into systemic political shifts within Iran.

Fabian, who served in the Embassy of India, Tehran as

first secretary, emphasized the distinction between tactical military outcomes and strategic political objectives. He implicitly warned against overestimating the impact of precision strikes on long-term geopolitical goals, given Iran's entrenched political structures and the likelihood of complex regional repercussions.

"This is undeniably a dramatic and symbolically powerful operation," Fabian said. "But symbolism in international politics does not automatically translate into structural political change." He added, "Regime change is not an event; it is a process. Removing an individual, even someone at the apex of power, does not dismantle institutions, networks, or ideological foundations overnight." Fabian further cautioned that "external military pressure can sometimes consolidate nationalist senti-

ment rather than fragment authority," stressing that development must be viewed within the broader strategic uncertainties of the Middle East.

The former Indian envoy characterized the operation as a significant military achievement for Washington and Tel Aviv, but raised doubts about whether it would translate into political change within Iran. "This is a major military victory for Israel and the US," he noted. "However, that does not mean they are any closer to what they describe as regime change, especially given the ambiguity surrounding what that term actually entails."

The senior Indian diplomat to Madagascar, Austria, Iran, Sri Lanka, Canada, Finland, Qatar and Italy signed off by saying "this is an important military victory for Israel and the United States, but this doesn't mean that they have got closer to what they call regime change because there's a lot of confusion about that word expression."



Iran gets new acting def min

TEHRAN: Iran's president has appointed Revolutionary Guards general Majid Ebnelreza as acting defence minister after his predecessor was killed in Israeli-US strikes. "By order of President Masoud Pezeshkian, Majid Ebnelreza has been appointed as acting defence minister," said deputy for president.



Saudi Aramco refinery among others shut amid airstrike fears

RIYADH: Amid the ongoing tensions in the West Asia due to strikes by US, Israel and Iran in the region, Saudi Arabia's state oil giant Aramco has shut down its Ras Tanura refinery. As per sources, the decision has been taken as a precautionary measure after it was hit by a drone. "Two drones were intercepted at the facility, with debris causing a limited fire," the Saudi Defence Ministry's spokesperson said. Oil giant Saudi Aramco's 550,000 barrels per day (bpd) Ras Tanura refinery is part of an energy



complex on the kingdom's Gulf coast. It also serves as a critical export terminal for Saudi crude oil, which was shut as a safety measure. In Iraqi Kurdistan, companies including DNO, Gulf Keystone Petroleum, Dana Gas and HKN Energy have stopped output at their respective fields as a precaution, with no damage reported.

China calls for ceasefire

BEIJING: China called for a ceasefire and diplomatic talks to end the Middle East conflict. Israel and the US have been conducting strikes on Iran and Lebanon, with the conflict extending to regional neighbours. "The most urgent task is an immediate cessation of military operations".



QUICK READ

Auto Driver
Brutally Attacked
with Beer Bottle

Kundapura

A contract auto-rickshaw driver operating near the Koteswar fish market suffered a severe attack on the night of February 28. The incident took place around 10 pm close to a bar in Koteswar. Chandra N. Beejadi, who drives an auto for hire, was allegedly assaulted by Bharat Kumbri, Satish Kumbri, and Sachin Kumbri. According to the complaint lodged by Chandra, the trio used a beer bottle to inflict grave injuries on him. Kundapura police have recorded the case based on the victim's statement.

Unauthorized Transfers
Drain 99,950 from Bank
Account in Cyber Fraud

Udupi

Brahmavar police have registered a case of online cheating after a senior citizen discovered unauthorized withdrawals from his bank account. The victim, B. Ashok (64), hails from Chantar village. Between the night of February 23 and the morning hours of February 24, unknown culprits carried out successive transfers amounting to ₹99,950 without his knowledge or consent. According to the complaint filed by Ashok, the money was moved out in instalments during that overnight period, leaving him unaware until he later checked his account. Brahmavar police station has formally recorded the offence and initiated an investigation into the cyber fraud.

Wild Elephant Rampage
Destroys Cattle Shed,
Injures Cow and Calf

Dandeli

Early Monday morning, residents of Alur village in Dandeli taluk awoke to chaos when a wild elephant charged into a cattle shed belonging to Pundalik Jadhav. The animal completely demolished the shed, leaving the cow and its calf inside seriously wounded from the attack. The same farmland, currently under cultivation by farmer Vishnu Danappa Watlekar, also suffered damage as the elephant trampled into the standing sugarcane crop. Over the past several days, wild elephants have been causing increasing trouble across areas surrounding Dandeli, forcing villagers to live in constant anxiety. Local people are now strongly demanding that Forest Department officials visit the spot without delay to assess the destruction and ensure prompt compensation reaches the affected farmer.

Car Crashes
into Electric
Pole

Dandeli

A vehicle accident unfolded near Haregali village in Dandeli taluk on Monday, March 2, when the driver of a KA-32 MA 3087 registered Innova lost control of the car. The vehicle collided forcefully with an electric pole, snapping it and causing the pole to collapse. The front portion of the Innova suffered heavy damage from the impact. Occupants of the car, who hail from the Kalaburagi region and were visiting the area as tourists, sustained only minor injuries, according to initial information.

Kaiga Nuclear Units 5 & 6 Foundation Work
Kicks Off; Set for Power Generation by 2030

Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission Dr. Ajit Kumar Mohanty initiated the foundation slab concreting for Kaiga's fifth and sixth units on Sunday, highlighting India's push toward self-reliant nuclear technology and ambitious clean energy targets by 2047.

KARWAR

Construction has advanced significantly at the Kaiga Atomic Power Station with the launch of foundation concreting for units 5 and 6 on Sunday. These two units, fully based on indigenous technology, come with an estimated expenditure of ₹21,000 crore.

Dr. Ajit Kumar Mohanty, Secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy and Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, formally started the work and addressed the gathering. He explained that India targets 100 GW of



nuclear power production by 2047, with atomic energy expected to contribute 53% of that total. Units 5 and 6 at Kaiga represent a critical milestone in this journey.

Plans call for electricity generation from these units

within the next 60 months, or roughly five years. Modern technological features have been incorporated into their design. Dr. Mohanty recalled India's nuclear milestones, including the 1974 Pokhran test conducted un-

der the name "Smiling Buddha" and another set of tests in 1998.

The country operates heavy water reactors at various locations. India has extended assistance in nuclear power to nations such as Ar-

gentina and several in Africa. Development continues on small modular reactors, where India stands as one of the few nations pursuing this apart from Russia. Efforts are underway to utilize nuclear gas for multiple applications.

India is also advancing fast breeder reactor technology independently of Russia, alongside initiatives to generate power using thorium. NPCIL Chairman Bhuvana Chandra Pathak stated that units 5 and 6 are targeted for completion of construction and commencement of power production around 2030.

The event saw attendance from Kaiga site director B. Vinod Kumar, project director for units 5 and 6 Kulkarni, scientist Mohan Ram, and technical staff from the Kaiga plant units. Currently, the station generates 2,280 MW.

The Kaiga Atomic Power Generation Centre began operations in Karwar taluk in 1999. At present, four units each of 220 MW capacity produce electricity, yielding a combined 2,280 MW. Against rising power demand, approval came in 2025 to install units 5 and 6, each with 700 MW capacity.

Woman Impersonates Ex-Lover,
Cheats Man of ₹1.80 Lakh

KUNDAPURA

Police in Amasebailu station have registered a cheating case against Divya (28), a resident of Hosangadi village in Hosanagar taluk. The accused is alleged to have tricked Ravindra (29), also from Hosangadi village, by chatting with him on WhatsApp and Instagram under false pretences and extracting money.

Three years ago, a student named Anusha from the same taluk had stayed at Divya's

house in Hosangadi village while pursuing her studies due to a close family connection. During that period, Anusha developed a friendship with Ravindra that later turned romantic. When her parents learned of the relationship, they filed a complaint at Shivamogga Women's Police Station, leading to a resolution.

At the time, Anusha had been using a particular mobile number, which Divya later continued to use. On

April 24, 2025, Divya, pretending to be Anusha, sent Ravindra a birthday greeting message. Believing it came from his former love Anusha, Ravindra began chatting enthusiastically.

Divya then started sending him various scanners under Anusha's name and managed to convince him to transfer a total of ₹1,80,200. Once Ravindra realised he had been deceived, he approached Amasebailu police station and lodged a formal complaint.

Fisherman Dies After Falling
Inside Boat Amid Strong Winds

UDUPI

An incident claimed the life of local fisherman Jagannath Kharvi (43) from Gangolli after he fell inside the boat during rough sea conditions.

On the morning of February 27, Jagannath set out for fishing along with other fishermen in a traditional wooden boat named Shri Ganamani Prasad from Dakuhitlu in Gangolli. While they were engaged in fishing about five nautical miles into the Arabian Sea, strong winds struck, causing him to lose footing and fall

abruptly inside the vessel. He soon complained of severe chest pain.

Fellow crew members brought the boat back to Gangolli harbour and rushed him by ambulance to the government hospital in Kundapura for emergency care. Despite medical efforts, he did not respond to treatment and passed away on March 1.

Following a complaint lodged by his son Rajesh Kharvi, police at Gangolli station have registered a case in connection with the death.

BJP Chief Claims
Govt Betrayed
AHINDA Groups
Through Unfilled
Job Vacancies

CHIKKAMGALURU

BJP's Karnataka unit head B.Y. Vijayendra lambasted the state administration for rising to authority by invoking AHINDA but now inflicting harm on those same backward classes, minorities, and Dalit groups.

He charged that the failure to recruit for open positions amounts to outright treachery against AHINDA populations. Vijayendra made these remarks while addressing media personnel following his visit to Rambhappuri Peetha in Balehonur town under Narasimharajapura taluk on Sunday.

"Authorities need to face consequences for the mounting fury among young people in the state. Around 2.80 lakh government jobs remain unfilled statewide. Young individuals staged a demonstration in Dharwad calling for these vacancies to be addressed, yet the administration resorted to baton attacks on the participants to quash the agitation," he stated.

"Government policies have left agricultural communities deeply disheartened. Young citizens no longer trust the regime. Should the leadership continue disregarding pleas from the youth and farming sectors, widespread revolts are bound to erupt throughout Karnataka," he asserted.

Cyber fraudsters convinced a Shirva resident that a valuable overseas gift parcel awaited customs clearance, extracting ₹13,99,700 over several days through fake demands for fees, ultimately leaving her with no delivery and a police complaint at Shirva station.

Shirva Woman Loses ₹13.99 Lakh in
Elaborate Foreign Gift Courier Scam

UDUPI

A sophisticated online cheating case has surfaced in Shirva after a local woman transferred a total of ₹13,99,700 believing she would receive a lucrative foreign gift consignment. The complainant, Vidya, holds an account with Canara Bank.

About a month earlier, she had begun communicating via mobile with an individual identifying himself as "Miller

Gerard," who claimed to be based abroad. On February 22, he informed her that a gift courier in his name had been dispatched and shared a photo of it via WhatsApp.

An unknown woman then telephoned Vidya, stating that the parcel from overseas required ₹49,700 to be cleared from the airport. Following these instructions, Vidya transferred the amount to an IDBI Bank account in Delhi.

Subsequently, the fraudsters

claimed the courier contained 30,000 pounds in foreign currency, which was illegal to import, and demanded urgent additional payments to resolve the issue. They collected ₹1,89,000 on this pretext. Using various excuses such as money exchange charges and documentation fees, the culprits pressed her to send further sums to multiple accounts in stages.

Between February 23 and 27, the total amount swindled

reached ₹13,99,700. The scammers persuaded Vidya by assuring her that the 30,000 pounds equated to roughly ₹37 lakh in Indian currency.

When no parcel ever arrived, she realised the deception and approached Shirva police station to lodge a complaint. Based on her report, a case has been registered at Shirva police station, and officers are continuing their investigation.

Woman in Coma After
Falling from Moving Bike

KARKALA

A serious road mishap has left a woman from Ajekaru village in critical condition after she tumbled from a moving motorcycle. The injured person is Poomima Poojary (40), a resident of Madag area near Ajekaru in Marne village, Karkala taluk. She works as a kitchen helper at a private school in Anekere, Karkala.

On Saturday morning, Poomima was travelling as a pillion rider with an acquaintance named Raju Shetty on his bike to reach her workplace. While passing the Karkala bypass stretch, she suddenly fell off the vehicle and sustained grave injuries.

According to police sources,

the fall caused major trauma to her head, face, and back. She was admitted to the intensive care unit of a hospital in Udupi, where she remains in a comatose state. No information about the accident has been formally reported to the police station so far.

Even her husband has not received details on who exactly shifted her to the hospital. He learned of the incident only after Raju Shetty telephoned a woman neighbour of theirs, informing her that Poomima had fallen, got badly hurt, and was hospitalised.

Officers from Karkala City police station are currently collecting information about the occurrence to ascertain the full circumstances.

CRUEL CATTLE TRANSPORT
BUSTED; TWO COWS RESCUED

KARKALA

City police acted swiftly to stop an act of animal cruelty after spotting a suspicious vehicle during night rounds. While on duty under ERSS-112, officers patrolling the Neere Bailoor area were returning toward Karkala when they noticed a Tata Intra goods van parked dubiously by the roadside in front of Harjiedu Shri Devi Kripa Hall in Kukandur village. Upon inspection, the police found two cows inside the vehicle, restrained harshly with ropes in a manner causing clear distress. Strong suspicion arose that the animals were being illegally transported to a slaughterhouse. Based on a complaint lodged by Head Constable Lokesh of Karkala City police station, an official case has been registered at the same station. The investigation is ongoing.

SDPI Urges Siddaramaiah to Prioritise Udupi's
Long-Standing Needs in State Budget

UDUPI

Riyaz Kadambu, the State Secretary of Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) appealed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to make the 2026-27 state budget responsive to the unique developmental requirements of Udupi district.

Speaking to the media on Monday, he noted that successive governments had shown little commitment to fulfilling local aspirations or generating employment for residents.

Kadambu specifically pressed for the establishment of a government medical college in Udupi to strengthen healthcare education and services. He also advocated for the creation of an agricultural research centre tailored to the district's farming needs.

At present, he said, the MCH hospital in Udupi lacks



sufficient staff, which limits its ability to serve patients effectively; he urged immediate recruitment to improve care delivery.

Revival of the fisheries sector was another priority he highlighted, calling for targeted grant allocations to support fishermen and related activities. Rural connectivity came up as a pressing concern, with

Kadambu pointing out that inadequate KSRTC bus services on village routes leave many women and schoolchildren without reliable public transport.

He criticised the slow progress on the new district government hospital building in Ajjarakad, demanding expedited fund releases from the state to complete construc-

tion. Similarly, he sought upgrades for taluk-level government hospitals across the district.

Kadambu drew attention to the large number of graduates produced annually in Udupi, many of whom migrate to Bengaluru or Gulf countries due to limited local opportunities. To reverse this trend, he proposed the development of an IT hub in the district and requested initial funding in the upcoming budget to lay the groundwork.

Finally, he recalled the severe damage caused by heavy rainfall over the past two years, affecting areas such as Byndoor, Kundapura, Hebri, and Karkala. Rural roads, in particular, remain in poor condition after the monsoons, and he insisted that the budget include dedicated grants for restoration work.

B'loru Tourist Found Dead in Resort Room; Suspected Heart Attack

UDUPI

An incident unfolded at a resort in Padukere, Malpe, where a woman tourist from Bengaluru died, apparently due to a heart attack or other health complication. The deceased has been identified as Lency Mary,

wife of L. Jackson from Bengaluru.

She had travelled from Bengaluru on February 26 along with nine other companions and checked into the resort in Padukere. The group spent February 27 exploring Malpe beach and returned to retire for the

night.

On the morning of February 28 at around 8:30 am, when fellow travellers attempted to wake Lency Mary, she did not respond. They immediately rushed her to Manipal hospital, where medical staff examined her

and declared her brought dead.

Doctors suspect the cause could be a heart attack, some underlying illness, or another medical reason. Malpe police station has registered a case in connection with the death and is conducting further inquiries.

QUICK READ

Minority Students' Fee Reimbursement Deadline Extended to March 15

Mangaluru
The Department of Minority Welfare has extended the deadline for online applications under the post-matric fee reimbursement scheme for 2025-26 to March 15. Students from Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh and Parsi communities can apply through the State Scholarship Portal (SSP). District-level minority information centres have issued contact numbers for assistance.

DK Administration Issues Helplines for Residents in Gulf Conflict Zones

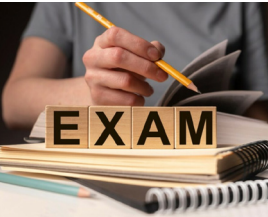
Mangaluru
Amid escalating conflict in parts of West Asia, the Dakshina Kannada district administration has urged residents stranded in affected countries to contact Indian embassy helplines or the district disaster management control room (0824-2442590). Emergency contact numbers for Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, Iraq, Kuwait and Palestine have been released. The State Emergency Operations Centre numbers 080-22340676 and 080-22253707 are also active.

Minister K. Venkatesh to Visit Dakshina Kannada on March 3

Mangaluru
Animal Husbandry and Sericulture Minister K. Venkatesh will visit Dakshina Kannada district on March 3. He is scheduled to arrive at Mangaluru airport at 7.55 a.m., visit the veterinary college and livestock breeding centre at Koila in Kadaba taluk, and return to Bengaluru in the evening.

Applications Invited for Karnataka One Centres in DK

Mangaluru
The district administration has invited online applications to establish Karnataka One franchise centres in urban local bodies across Dakshina Kannada. Centres are proposed in Bantwal, Moodbidri, Ullal, Vitla, Puttur, Someshwara and nine locations within Mangaluru City Corporation limits. Applications must be submitted through the official portal, officials said.



II PUC Exams: Over 5,800 Students Appear for Papers in DK

Mangaluru
In the II PUC examinations held on Monday in Dakshina Kannada district, 112 students appeared for the Geography paper, while nine were absent. For Statistics, 5,500 students wrote the examination and 19 were absent. All 215 registered candidates attended the Psychology examination, officials said.

“Namo Niwas” Handed Over in Mangaluru South Constituency Under MLA’s Leadership

A newly built house named “Namo Niwas” near Saripalla and Saraswati Friends Club in Mangaluru South was formally handed over to Manoj couple in a ceremony led by RSS functionaries and MLA D. Vedavyasa Kamath, symbolising service, culture, and nationalistic activities in the RSS centenary spirit.

MANGALURU

The formal handover of “Namo Niwas,” a house constructed near Saripalla and Saraswati Friends Club under Mangaluru South Assembly constituency, took place in the presence of several dignitaries.

The house was built under the guidance of MLA D. Vedavyasa Kamath with generous support from various donors. RSS Karnataka Prant Sah Karyavah Prakash P.S. handed over the symbolic key to the Manoj couple.

He explained that the construction forms part of the Sangh’s centenary-year service initiatives. Prakash praised the impeccable quality of the building, achieved through Kamath’s special attention and collective help. He expressed hope that the



residence would serve as a permanent centre for ongoing service, cultural, and national thought-based activities in the coming years. RSS Vibhag Karyavah

Harikrishna, while addressing the gathering, described the Kamath family as one that extends full cooperation to society. He noted that this marks the eighth such house constructed under the MLA’s leadership, setting a clear example of how a Sangh swayamsevak-turned-public representative should balance development with dedicated public service.

He congratulated Kamath and stressed that every house holds immense importance for the Sangh, especially as safe havens during emergencies.

MLA D. Vedavyasa Kamath recalled that the original structure had fully col-

lapsed due to a natural calamity in 2018-19. At that time, government relief was limited to ₹1.20 lakh. He credited former Chief Minister Yediyurappa for raising the compensation amount to ₹5 lakh—an historic decision benefiting the poor. He criticised the present Congress government for reducing it back to ₹1.20 lakh, calling the move unfortunate.

He wished that the lamp of service lit by senior Sangh members in this “Namo Niwas”—built with government aid and donor contributions—would burn eternally as an ever-glowing flame.

Cheque Bounce Fugitive Arrested After Five Years on the Run in Belthangady

BELTHANGADY

Belthangady police have successfully tracked down and arrested a long-absconding accused in a cheque bounce case after he remained out of reach for about five years. The individual is Subhash (37), son of T.P. Prabhakaran, a resident of Thoththadi village in Belthangady taluk. Under the guidance of Belthangady Sub-Divisional Police Officer Rohini C.K. and Circle Inspector Ravi B.S., a team from Dharmasthala police station led by Sub-Inspector Samarth, along with staff members Vrushab and Charan Raj, located and arrested him at Sunka Dakatte in Bengaluru on February 27. He was presented before the Puttur Magistrate on February 28. Following his production in court, Subhash paid the full cheque bounce amount to the concerned bank, leading to the resolution and closure of the case.

Block Cong Chief Urges MLA to Resume Bus Services

PUTTUR

Puttur Block Congress President Krishna Prasad Alva submitted a formal request to MLA Ashok Rai, asking for the swift resumption of traffic and bus services on the Puttur-Parladka-Panaje route that has remained closed due to ongoing bridge construction at Chelyadka.

During a meeting at the MLA’s office on Monday, Alva explained that the bridge project has been underway for the past several months, leading to a complete halt in road traffic. He noted that a signif-

icant portion of the work is now finished and no major obstacles remain for vehicles to pass safely.

Reinstating private and other bus services on this stretch would greatly help students and residents of the area, Alva emphasised in his appeal. He added that school and college examinations are set to begin soon, making it essential to restart bus connectivity at the earliest.

Responding to the plea, MLA Ashok Rai instructed the Public Works Department engineers to complete the remaining minor tasks near the



bridge within the week so that traffic can resume without further delay.

The MLA assured that once vehicle movement restarts on this road, it will continue un-

interrupted and remain free from flooding even during the monsoon season. The meeting was attended by party leaders Siyan Darbe and Santhray Valathadka.

U.T. Khader Directs Strict Action Against Social Media Threat to Ullal Mosque Bomb Blast

MANGALURU

Karnataka Legislative Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader has called for stringent action against a miscreant who spread fear by posting a bomb blast threat targeting Ullal Masjid on social media platforms.

In a discussion with the City Police Commissioner, Speaker Khader highlighted

that residents of all faiths in Ullal have long maintained peaceful and harmonious coexistence.

He expressed concern over such inflammatory posts designed to disrupt communal amity and urged the police department to remain vigilant and act decisively to

prevent any attempts to disturb the prevailing brotherhood in the region.



Alva’s Autonomous College Launches Inter-College Tech Fest ‘Techotsav’

MANGALURU

The Computer Science Department at Alva’s (Autonomous) College in Moodbidri kicked off its inter-college technical extravaganza titled ‘Techotsav’ on Monday at the Shrimati Mohini Appaji Vedike Sabha Bhavana.

Delivering the keynote address as chief guest, Dikshit Rai, Founder and CEO of Codecraft Technologies Private Limited, described the fest not merely as a celebration of technology but as a vital platform to nurture creativity and invention.

He underlined that such technical events hold tremendous value in student life by bridging the gap between campus and the outside world. Rai expressed delight at seeing enthusiastic participation from more than 20 colleges, noting that these gatherings help students discover new concepts, broaden their knowledge, and exchange experiences.

Rai urged everyone to make the most of the opportunity. He advised paying close attention to fundamental principles before adopting any tech-



nology, emphasising that a strong grasp of core programming languages remains essential.

Rai cautioned against depending solely on artificial intelligence tools for every task, instead encouraging the development of personal understanding and skills. “Building a mindset geared toward solving problems independently,” he said, leads to deeper learning and growth. Presiding over the pro-

Over 20 colleges participated in the inaugural event of ‘Techotsav’, an inter-collegiate tech competition organised by the Computer Science Department of Alva’s (Autonomous) College, where industry leaders stressed the importance of innovation, core programming skills, and problem-solving over blind reliance on AI tools.

gramme, college Principal Dr. Kurian highlighted the need for students to seek proper guidance before making key decisions in life and to maintain firm confidence in their basic abilities. Such an approach, he noted, paves the way for positive transformations in one’s journey.

Among those present were Harshad, Founder and CEO of Purplebyte Labs; Computer Science Department Head Ramesh; student coordinators Rashmi and Nishith Kumar; along with faculty members and a large number of students.

Dust and Neglect: Puttur’s Main Road Turns into a Health Hazard

PUTTUR

What should be a busy commercial lifeline of Puttur has turned into a stretch of dust, discomfort and mounting health concerns. Residents and traders allege that unchecked transportation of loose soil through the town’s main road has left the entire central township coated in a thick layer of dust, with no visible enforcement action from the police or municipal authorities.

From early morning, heavily loaded trucks rumble past, spilling fine soil along the road. With every passing vehicle, dense clouds of dust rise and linger in the air, sharply reducing traffic visibility and increasing the risk of accidents for motorists, two-wheeler riders and pedestrians. By afternoon, shopfronts, signboards and merchandise are blanketed in a pale film, giving the heart of



the town a dull, dusty look.

The situation is particularly distressing at bus stops. Commuters — including elderly people, schoolchildren and daily wage workers — find it difficult to sit on dust-covered benches or even stand without inhaling particles stirred up

by passing vehicles. Many residents complain of persistent coughing, throat irritation and breathing discomfort. Medical practitioners caution that prolonged exposure to airborne dust can trigger chest infections, worsen asthma and lead to other respiratory complications.

Small and medium traders say the dust has begun to affect business as customers avoid the stretch to escape the pollution. They are demanding strict regulation of soil transport, mandatory covering of truckloads and regular water sprinkling to control dust.

Citizens have urged the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police to conduct a spot inspection, stating that only a ground-level visit will reveal the severity of the problem. Until corrective steps are taken, they warn, Puttur’s central artery will continue to choke — both literally and economically.

KSRTC Pays ₹10 Lakh Compensation to Family of Bus Accident Victim

MANGALURU

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has disbursed ₹10 lakh as compensation to the family of a passenger who died in a bus accident last year.

The fatal accident occurred on August 15, 2025, when a Mangaluru-I depot bus operating on the Aminagad-Mangaluru route rammed into the rear of a truck near Hittinabail in Yellapur.

Hanamappa Yallappa Hosur (48), a native of Hiremaggi in Hungund taluk of Bagalkot district, succumbed to injuries in the crash.

As per corporation rules, compensation was released from the accident relief fund. The cheque was handed over to the deceased’s wife, Kamalavva, by the senior divisional controller of KSRTC’s Mangaluru division in the presence of transport officials.

Man Attempts Suicide by Jumping from Bridge; Fishermen Rescue Him



MANGALURU

into the river.

A desperate suicide attempt unfolded at the Netravati bridge in Ullal on Sunday when a man jumped from the bridge into the river at the precise location where the protective barrier had been broken in a vehicle accident just days earlier.

The individual, an adult from Pumpwell-Naguri, climbed over the damaged section and plunged into the water below. Fishermen who were actively engaged in fishing nearby noticed the incident and immediately dived

They managed to bring him onto their boat and provided first aid before transporting him to a hospital for further treatment. The rescue was carried out by fishermen Jamal, Idinabba, and Maiyyadi, with assistance from Hanif and Ullal police station Sub-Inspector.

Locals and the fishermen expressed suspicion that the man chose this exact spot because the crash-damaged barrier had not yet been repaired by the concerned authorities, leaving an open vulnerability at a known suicide hotspot.

QUICK READ

**Iran–Israel War:
22 Flights
Disrupted at KIA****BENGALURU**

As tensions escalate in the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel, operations at Kempegowda International Airport have been hit, with 22 flights cancelled due to widespread airspace closures. Airport authorities confirmed that 10 departing and 12 arriving international flights were cancelled on Monday following the shutdown of airspace in Iran, Israel and several Arab nations. Services to Abu Dhabi, Jeddah, Doha, Dubai and Bahrain were among those affected. Major carriers including Air India, Emirates, IndiGo and Qatar Airways suspended operations on impacted routes. Airlines are assisting passengers with re-booking and refunds. Airport authorities have urged travellers to confirm flight status before heading to the airport.

**641 Stolen Mobile
Phones Worth ₹1.6 Cr
Recovered Using CEIR****BENGALURU**

In a major recovery drive, the East Division Police have retrieved 641 stolen mobile phones worth ₹1.6 crore since January 2026 using the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) software. The special operation was conducted across multiple police stations, enabling officers to trace and recover devices reported missing or stolen in various cases. The recovered phones were handed back to their rightful owners by City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh during the monthly public grievance meeting in Indiranagar. The initiative was carried out under the supervision of B Ramesh, Joint Commissioner of Police, East Division, who commended the coordinated efforts of the officers and staff involved.

Coordination With MEA to Protect Kannadigas; Helplines Launched

Large number of stranded passengers seek assistance amid airspace closures

BENGALURU

With air travel severely disrupted due to the ongoing conflict in parts of the Middle East, the Karnataka government has stepped up coordination with the Centre to ensure the safety of Kannadigas stranded abroad.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) and the Karnataka Resident Commissioner's Office in New Delhi are in constant touch with the Rapid Response Cell of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to monitor the situation and provide timely assistance.

A large number of passengers from Karnataka are reported to be stranded in war-affected Middle Eastern nations, particularly the UAE, following widespread air-



space closures. Several countries have issued NOTAMs, leading to suspension of international flight operations. As per the advisory from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, airspace over Iran, Israel, Lebanon and parts of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, UAE and Qatar remains closed till March 2.

Acting on the directions of the Chief Minister and the

Revenue Minister, the SEOC and all District Emergency Operation Centres (DEOCs) have been fully activated and are functioning round the clock. Officials are continuously updating guidelines issued by the MEA and Indian embassies in the affected countries.

The Karnataka Bhavan in Delhi has also been activated by the Resident Commissioner to streamline coordination.

Embassy- and consulate-wise helpline numbers, along with official advisories, have been circulated to all district headquarters and widely shared through official social media platforms.

Requests received at the State and District Emergency Centres are being consolidated and forwarded to the Resident Commissioner's Office and the MEA for necessary action. Kannadigas residing in the affected countries have been urged to follow local government advisories strictly, contact Indian embassies through designated helplines, and register on official portals such as 'Sarathi Sahayata'.

The Minister assured that the State government will extend full cooperation to facilitate coordination and ensure the safety and well-being of its citizens abroad.

Pet Shop Violations Raise Activists' Hackles

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A collective of animal rights activists has submitted a detailed report to Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao, alleging widespread violations by pet shops across the city and calling for urgent enforcement action.

The report documents cramped cages, soiled enclosures and inadequate space that restrict animals' movement. In several aviaries, birds were reportedly unable to spread their wings or fly. Activists also flagged poor temperature control, lack of ventilation and absence of

isolation areas for sick animals, warning that such conditions reflect cruelty and neglect while posing serious health risks.

According to Laavanya Koushik of the Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations (FIAPO), nearly 90 per cent of pet shops in the city lack mandatory registration certificates, citing RTI findings. Many outlets allegedly operate from paved areas or makeshift structures, exposing animals to heat, pollution, noise and odour. Several shops were found to lack basic facilities such as electricity, water supply and power backup.



The activists further alleged that animals protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 were being displayed for sale in violation of statutory provisions and the Pet Shop Rules. Such practices, they said, raise conservation concerns and undermine efforts to protect endangered species.

Hygiene standards were also found wanting, with food and water containers often soiled with excreta and reused without proper cleaning. The absence of smoke detectors and firefighting equipment in many makeshift outlets adds to safety concerns.

The report highlights violations of Rule 7(2)(i) of the Pet Shop Rules, which mandates that animals housed together must belong to the same species and age group. Mixing different species or age groups can trigger stress, aggression and injury.

Kumar Pushkar, PCCF (Wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden of Karnataka, stated that all dealers must register and declare their stock to the Forest Department. He warned that strict action would be taken against violators, including booking wildlife cases and seizing protected and exotic species where necessary.

MACT Can Hear Personal Accident Cover Claims, Rules HC

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The High Court has held that a Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) is not divested of jurisdiction to examine claims relating to personal accident (PA) cover under a motor insurance policy. Justice K. Manmadha Rao made the observation while dismissing an appeal filed by The New India Assurance Company challenging an order of the MACT in Belagavi. The insurer had questioned the tribunal's refusal to reject a claim petition at the preliminary stage. The case stemmed from an accident on April 8, 2023, in which Umar Farooque, a tailor from Belagavi, sustained serious injuries after his motorcycle allegedly skidded off the road. He filed a claim petition stating that he had purchased a package motor insurance policy that included a personal accident cover of Rs 15 lakh for the owner-driver upon payment of an additional premium. The insurance company sought dismissal of the claim under Section 166 of the Motor Vehicles Act, arguing that the provision permits adjudication only of third-party claims before the tribunal.

Sharp Rise in Low-Value Plastic Collection in GBA, Says Karigowda

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has witnessed a significant surge in the collection of low-value plastic waste, with nearly 520 metric tonnes being gathered daily, according to Karigowda, Chief Executive Officer of Bangalore Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML).

Addressing a media conference on Monday, Karigowda said Bengaluru generates an average of 6,000 metric tonnes of solid waste every day. Of this, around 520 metric tonnes comprise low-value plastic, converted into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF). The civic body has now set an ambitious target of increasing RDF collection to 1,000 metric tonnes per day.

He attributed the progress to sustained Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns that have strengthened waste segregation at source. Improved segregation has directly contributed to enhanced recovery of low-value plastic, significantly reducing the volume of waste sent to landfills.

Prior to October 2025, low-value plastic collection stood at barely 10 per cent. However, following intensified awareness drives and stricter enforcement measures introduced since October 2025, the collection rate has reportedly increased nearly 50-fold. Between October 9, 2025 and February 26, 2026, a total of 19,470 metric tonnes of RDF has been



520 metric tonnes collected daily; EPR credits boost financial sustainability.

collected.

The processed RDF is transported to cement factories for co-processing under formal tender agreements. From December 15, 2025 to February 26, 2026, about 18,625 metric tonnes of RDF waste was supplied to Dalmia Cements for disposal.

Under the co-processing mechanism, cement companies issue Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) credits to BSWML. These credits generate financial returns for the organisation, strengthening its economic position and supporting long-term sustainable waste management initiatives.

Citizens facing garbage-related issues within GBA limits can register complaints through the Sahay 2.0 software, the GBA helpline number 1533, or the WhatsApp chatbot number 94481 97197. Complaints are monitored at the Integrated Command Control Centre and promptly forwarded to concerned officials for swift resolution.

FIR Against Retd Official for Issuing 10K Certificates Without Inspection

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The HSR Layout Police have registered an FIR against a retired Senior Motor Vehicle Inspector for allegedly issuing more than 10,000 vehicle fitness certificates without conducting mandatory physical inspections, resulting in substantial loss to the Transport Department.

The case is based on a complaint filed on February 28, 2026, by the Regional Transport Officer (RTO) of Peenya Layout against Nisar Ahmed, who retired on January 31, 2026, after nearly eight years of service. According to the complaint, between August 1,

2025, and January 31, 2026, the officer allegedly issued Form 38(A) fitness certificates to about 10,210 out-of-State vehicles without physically inspecting them, in violation of provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. The illegal issuance reportedly bypassed mandatory inspection norms and procedural safeguards.

The irregularities came to light after advocate N. Nataraj Sharma, President of the Federation of Karnataka State Private Transport Association, submitted a complaint to the Transport Commissioner. A detailed inquiry was subsequently ordered by the Joint Transport Commissioner.

Iran Conflict: Hundreds Join Solidarity March in City

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Hundreds of Shia Muslims gathered in Richmond Town for a condolence meeting and solidarity march following the reported killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a US-Israeli strike.

The march was organised by Anjuman E Imamia and Idara E Faizul Islam. Protesters assembled in front of Masjid-e-Askari and Masjid-E-Imam Al Qayem in Anepalya, holding photographs of Khamenei and raising slogans condemning



the United States and Israel. Elderly men and women, youth, and children participated in large numbers.

The gathering later moved in a procession to the Shia cemetery in Richmond Town, where prayers were

offered and tributes paid.

Shantinagar MLA N. A. Haris attended the event, along with Aga Sultan, Chairman of the Central Relief Committee, Karnataka.

Shazia Hussain, one of the participants, said the community was deeply distressed. "Khamenei being martyred was not right. There is danger for Muslims everywhere. What is happening in Palestine is also painful. Everyone here has gathered with a heavy heart," she said.

Alizay Fatima described

the atmosphere as emotional and spiritual. "For many of us, he was not just a political leader but a symbol of resistance and guidance. His passing has shaken millions," she said, adding that many Shia Muslims looked to him for religious direction. She criticised the reported strikes on Iran and called for accountability.

Another protester, Nu-zath Hussain, said the loss transcended borders. "For over 30 years, he was a guide for millions. Killing a leader cannot erase his message," she said.

City Pilgrims Stranded in KSA as Costs Mount

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Around 50 pilgrims from Bengaluru visiting Medina are stranded in Saudi Arabia after escalating tensions in the Middle-East led to widespread flight disruptions. The group was scheduled to return at 2am on March 2, but cancellations have left them stuck with dwindling funds and limited support.

The pilgrims had travelled from Bengaluru on February 15 and have been staying at Al Shams Hostel in Medina. They reportedly learned about the disruption around 7.30pm local time on Saturday. Since then, families say they have



been scrambling to secure extended accommodation while managing rising expenses. Women, toddlers, and elderly members are part of the group, making the situation more challenging.

Mohammed Inayath, 32, a content creator from RT

Nagar, appealed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah through a post on X in the early hours of Sunday. "We're trying to extend our stay for one more day, but finding rooms with heavy luggage and children is difficult. Rooms cost around Rs 2,000 per person per day with food, which many of us cannot afford. The travel agent has withdrawn support, and the Indian Embassy directed us back to the agent," he said.

Abdul Mannan, 48, a sign-board maker from Gandhinagar, said the trip had already exhausted family savings. "We spent nearly Rs 80,000 per person for this visit.

Age Cut-Off Rule Sparks Admission Crisis; 2.3 Lakh Children Affected

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Thousands of parents and children staged a protest at the Bengaluru Press Club after strict age eligibility norms introduced by the Education Department reportedly blocked Class 1 admissions for nearly 2.3 lakh students across Karnataka.

Under the existing rule, a child must complete six years of age by June 1 to qualify for Class 1 admission. Children born on June 2 and later are deemed ineligible, even if they have successfully completed UKG. Parents argue that the rigid cut-off has

forced many students to repeat UKG, disrupting their academic progress.

Holding placards and raising slogans, protesters demanded a 90-day relaxation in the age limit. They said repeating UKG not only causes financial strain but also affects children's confidence and cognitive development.

According to parents, nearly 2.3 lakh children born in June and July are directly impacted. Families claim they have already invested heavily in school fees, uniforms, books and transport, making it burdensome to repeat an entire academic year.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A fake bomb threat sent via email to the Regional Passport Office in Koramangala created panic among staff and visitors on Monday, continuing a recent spate of hoax threats across the city.

According to police, an email written in Tamil was sent to the official mailbox of the passport office, warning that explosives placed inside the premises would detonate shortly. The message reportedly referenced the death sentence of Ajmal Kasab and carried a threatening tone.



Acting swiftly, personnel from the Koramangala Police Station, along with the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad and dog squad, rushed to the

BOMB THREAT SCARE

Fake Bomb Threat to Passport Office Sparks Tension

search was carried out.

After an extensive inspection of the premises, officials confirmed that no explosives or suspicious materials were found. Police declared the email to be a hoax, bringing relief to anxious members of the public and office staff. Security checks continued for some time, and entry into the building was regulated before normal passport services resumed.

Cybercrime police have launched an investigation to trace the origin of the email and determine the motive behind the threat. Authorities are examining digital foot-

prints and technical details to identify those responsible.

The incident follows a series of similar hoax threats in Karnataka. On February 16, courts including the Dharwad High Court Bench and district courts in Mangaluru, Davanagere, Haveri, Kodagu, Mandya and Uttara Kannada received bomb threat emails. After detailed inspections, police confirmed that those threats were also false alarms. Officials have urged the public not to panic over unverified messages and assured that strict action will be taken against those misusing digital platforms to spread fear.

QUICK READ



District hospital offers free child heart checkups

CHITRADURGA
The District Hospital, in collaboration with S.S. Narayan Health Hospital, will offer free heart checkups for children every Wednesday at the Mother and Child Hospital within the District Hospital campus. The sessions, led by renowned pediatric cardiologist Dr. Anil Kumar G.S., will run from 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM. Parents are advised to bring children showing repeated infections, bluish lips or skin, breathing difficulties, irregular heartbeat, or persistent cough. District Surgeon Dr. S.P. Ravindra urged the public to take advantage of this service and seek timely medical attention for such symptoms.

Special buses arranged for Nayakanahatti Jatra

CHITRADURGA
Special buses will operate for the grand chariot festival of Tipperudraswamy at Nayakanahatti on March 6. The services will run from March 5 to 7 from Chitradurga, Chalakere, Hosadurga, Hiriyur and Pavagad units of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation. Buses from Chitradurga will travel via Belagatta, Halkal and Challakere, while other routes will pass through Narlagunte and Sanikere as scheduled. The Chitradurga Divisional Controller urged devotees and passengers to make use of the special arrangements made for the convenience of festival visitors.

Sri Yogi Narayana Yathindra Jayanti celebration

CHIKKABALLAPURA
The Jayanti of Sri Yogi Narayana Yathindra, also known as Kaivara Taitaiah, will be celebrated on March 3 at 11 AM in the 2nd-floor auditorium of the District Collector's Office. The event is jointly organized by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, and the Kannada and Culture Department. Assistant Director D.M. Ravikumar urged the public, community leaders, and office bearers to attend and participate actively to make the celebration a success. Officials said the program will honor the spiritual legacy of Yogi Narayana Yathindra and encourage community engagement in cultural and religious traditions.

COMMUNITY RALLIES TO SAVE HISTORIC KALKUNIKE SCHOOL

HUNSUR

Former MLA S.P. Manjunath expressed strong support for the ongoing struggle to save the 89-year-old Kalkunike Government School, stating that the institution should not be demolished. Speaking at the protest site, he said, "The road was measured during my term and only reaches the school compound. There is no reason to attack the school. It is approaching a century of service and must be preserved." The School Development Committee and the Save School Struggle Committee organized the dharna, joined by senior students, villagers, and community leaders. Protestors

Minister Khandre visits young woman hospital patient

The minister directed BRIMS Hospital to ensure timely staff salaries, emphasizing employee support and maintaining high morale

BIDAR

Forest, Biology and Environment Minister and Bidar District In-charge Ishwar Khandre visited a hospital on Monday to check on a young woman undergoing treatment after a suicide attempt. The woman reportedly attempted suicide following harassment by some male hospital staff. During the visit, Minister Khandre instructed the District Superintendent of Police to carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into the incident. He emphasized that strict legal action must be taken against those found



guilty and warned that negligence regarding the safety and dignity of female staff would not be tolerated. The minister also directed the hospital director to ensure timely payment of salaries to all BRIMS Hospital staff,

during the visit. The hospital administration assured that necessary care and support are being provided to the patient. Authorities also promised a transparent investigation to address the allegations and prevent such incidents in the future. The minister's visit underlined the government's commitment to protecting women in workplaces and ensuring accountability. The case has sparked concern in Bidar, with local residents and staff urging swift action to maintain safety and trust within healthcare institutions.

Freedom fighter Kulageri remembered in Kalaburagi



KALABURAGI

Freedom fighter Channabasappa Kulageri not only resisted the Razakars during the Hyderabad liberation struggle but also stood firmly against corruption and injustice, said author Dr. Shivarajan Satyampete. He was speaking at a lecture on "Hyderabad State Liberation Fighter Channabasappa Kulageri" organized at H.K.E. Society's Women's Polytechnic College in collaboration with the Women's Science and Commerce College on Monday. Dr. Satyampete explained that during the rule of Mir Osman Ali Khan, Kulageri actively opposed the oppressive policies of the Razakars. He said Kulageri launched strong movements against injustice and earned recognition as a brave leader, often compared to revolutionary spirit in Karnataka. Apart from fighting autocratic forces, he also raised his voice against nepotism, fraud and black money dealings. The speaker highlighted Kulageri's contribution to education and cooperative movements. He noted that Kulageri played an important advisory role in strengthening institutions founded by educationist Mahadevappa Rampure and supported the establishment of women's educational facilities. Chief guest Amarnath Patil Kulageri recalled his involvement in guiding educational development, including support for women's colleges and hostels.

Vaidya ordered appointing Malpi Hospital specialist, surveying closed schools, ensuring safety, achieving 100% SSLC results

Minister Vaidya ensures medicine, student safety

KARWAR

Fisheries, Ports and Inland Waterways Minister and District In-charge Minister Mankala S. Vaidya instructed the Health Department to ensure there is no shortage of medicines in any government medical center across the district. Speaking at the quarterly KDP meeting at the Zilla Panchayat Hall on Monday, he said patients should not be given vouchers to buy medicines outside hospitals. Any shortages should be immediately addressed by purchasing drugs through the Health Protection Committee and distributing them free of cost. He also directed officials to appoint a specialist doctor at the Malpi Specialty Hospital in Karwar. Minister Vaidya emphasized that all government schools closed due to low student numbers should be surveyed and handed over to local Gram Panchayats. School safety, including removal of dangerous trees and electric wires, must be en-



sured, while teachers and officers work to achieve 100 percent results in this year's SSLC exams. On transport, he asked that new buses be deployed efficiently, the Karwar-Bengaluru route resumed, and dilapidated buses repaired. He also instructed HESCOM to ensure transformers and poles are ready within 24 hours and replace dangerous wires before the rainy season. Tourism and public safety were addressed, with directives to install warning signs and deploy home guards at waterfalls. Road work, especially on the Haveri-Sirsi route, should be completed urgently to prevent inconvenience and dust for residents and school children. Drinking

water, livestock fodder, and proper hostel facilities for students were emphasized, along with the timely implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission projects. The meeting also reviewed rain gauge repairs, auto permits, crop insurance payments, disaster prevention works, and encroached land surveys. Attendees included Deputy Commissioner K. Lakshmi Priya, Zilla Panchayat CEO Dr. Dileesh Shashi, Superintendent of Police Deepan M.N., and officials from various departments. Separately, Chairman of the Karnataka State Food Commission Dr. H Krishna and members will tour Uttara Kannada from March 2-4 to inspect departments and interact with the public.

Foundation laid for new Ambedkar girls' school building

KARWAR

Karnataka State Marketing Communication and Advertisement Limited Chairman and MLA Satish Krishna Sail laid the foundation stone for the new building of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Girls' Residential School Complex in Bada Hobli, Karwar taluk, at Pantalbagh, Arava Asnoti on February 27. Speaking on the occasion, Sail emphasized that the new building will provide talented students from rural areas with access to quality education along with essential amenities. He said the project aims to empower girls from economically weaker backgrounds and support their overall development. The event was attended by several officials, including Deputy Director of Social Welfare Y.K. Umesh, Field Education Officer Umesh N. Naik, Karwar Taluk Guarantee Scheme Implementation Au-



thority Chairman Rajendra Rane, and Assistant Executive Engineer Chandrashekar B from the Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Association, Bengaluru. Also present were Asnoti Gram Panchayat Development Officer Praveen Gavas, SKS Karkala Infrastructure Project Pvt. Ltd. Managing Director Sujaykumar Shetty, teaching and non-teaching staff, and lo-

cal villagers. In-charge Principal Parameshwari D. Gowda welcomed the gathering. Mathematics teacher Shwetha Gowda delivered a speech, and Hema S. Gaonkar proposed the vote of thanks. The foundation stone ceremony marks the beginning of a project aimed at nurturing education and development for girls in Karwar.



Job seekers demand immediate recruitment notification

RAICHUR

Hundreds of unemployed youth staged a dharna at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Circle on Monday, demanding that the state government immediately issue recruitment notifications for thousands of vacant posts. The protest was organized by the Job Seekers' Struggle Committee. Demonstrators said that out of 2,84,881 vacant posts in the state, at least 56,432 posts already approved by the cabinet should be notified without delay. They also called for scrapping the KPS Magnet scheme, alleging that it is affecting teacher posts. Protesters highlighted that more than 5,000 primary and high school teacher posts, including art, music and physical education teachers, remain vacant in the district. They urged the government to release an annual recruitment calendar to ensure regular filling of posts. The agitators further demanded action to fill 9.79 lakh vacant positions in 78 central departments. They

Protesters said over 5,000 teacher posts, including art, music, and PE, are vacant and urged regular recruitment schedules

sought the repeal of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, claiming it restricts government hiring. They also opposed certain administrative reform recommendations and called for greater transparency in recruitment exams. The group insisted that examination irregularities must be stopped and high application fees should be waived. They demanded free transport for candidates attending exams and suitable unemployment allowance for eligible youth. Protesters also called for implementing reforms to prevent irregularities in KPSC and ending contractual appointments in favor of permanent jobs. State Coordinator Channabasava Janekal, District President Hanumantha Kurdi and several job seekers participated in the protest.

US, Israel strike Iran, leader's ally condemns

SINDHANUR

Strong words of protest came on Monday from CPI (ML) Liberation District Secretary Nagaraj Poojar over the recent joint military action by the United States and Israel against Iran. Poojar described the offensive as a serious violation of international peace and a threat to world stability. In a press statement, he said the attacks were "diaboli-cal" and should be halted at once. He urged the Indian government to press the United Nations to push for peace and uphold global agreements that protect nations' sovereignty. Poojar called the strikes an act of "international hooliganism" and said civilian lives in Iran were put at risk. He criticised the United States for acting against a sovereign nation, saying this goes against the UN Charter's principles,

which stress respect for countries' independence. The CPI (ML) leader also spoke about past international attacks, including on Iraq and Venezuela, saying they were based on "false accusations." He accused the US of provoking other conflicts, including tensions involving Palestine-Gaza and Russia-Ukraine, and said this approach harms global peace. Poojar claimed that the real aim of powerful states is to take control of natural resources and disrupt democratic systems in other countries. He warned that without unity among countries that support social justice, democratic values would be in danger. His comments reflect growing concerns around the world as the US and Israel's military actions in Iran have intensified, drawing criticism from many who call for diplomatic solutions instead of war.



Udupi launches helpline for stranded passengers abroad

UDUPI

In view of the ongoing unrest in several Middle East countries, the Udupi district administration has issued a helpline to assist residents stranded abroad. Air routes to 11 countries, including Iran, Israel, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia, remain closed till March 2, leaving many passengers from Karnataka, including the UAE (Dubai), unable to re-

turn. Following directives from the Hon'ble Chief Minister and Revenue Minister, the State and District Emergency Operation Centres are functioning 24x7. Authorities are monitoring updates from the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Embassy to coordinate timely assistance. Residents of Udupi district or their relatives seeking help can contact the District Emergency Operation Center.

AWARENESS BUILDS UNITY

Swamiji warns of Lingayat identity crisis

BASAVAKALYANA

A strong message on unity and identity was delivered at a religious gathering in Basavakalyana, where Nijagunanand Swamiji said the future of the Lingayat faith depends on social awareness within the community. Speaking at the concluding ceremony of Kalyana Nadige, Haralaya Jyoti Padayatra and Sharan Sansat Samavesha held at Basava Dharma Peetha, the seer stated that all Lingayats belong to the



Shudra community and must remember their roots. Nijagunanand Swamiji of Bailur Nishkala Mantap said that

Basavanna brought people together under the Lingayat faith to promote equality and social justice.

He stressed that the religion would grow only if followers accept this shared identity and stand united, including Dalit communities who, he said, have upheld many of Basavanna's principles. He warned that losing this awareness could weaken the foundation of the faith. The Swamiji also criticized what he described as a Vedic mindset within sections of the community, saying it distances people from the original teachings of equality and devotion. He urged followers to

understand and respect the contributions of historical Sharanas. Kalyana Karnataka Pratishthan President Basava Kumar Patil called for the development of Beejnalli village associated with Haralaya and demanded better facilities for devotees. Several seers, scholars and community leaders attended the event. Retired Judge S.S. Nagarane presided over the program, which concluded with messages of unity and spiritual commitment.

QUICK READ

Guddapura Danamma Devi festival begins on Mar 3

Gadag

The Guddapura Sri Danamma Devi Purana Prambotsava will begin on March 3 at 7 PM in the Kalasapura temple, as part of the 16th annual Jatra Mahotsava of Sri Ishwara Basavanna Devara. The event will be graced by Venerable Fakreshwara Shivacharya Mahaswamy of Omkareshwara Hiremath and Venerable Abhinava Kottureshwara Mahaswamy of Harlapur Sri Kottureshwara Math. Sharadarao Huilagol will preside, while Krishnagouda Patil will inaugurate. Sermons by Shivalingaiah Shasti Hire Math Siddapura and Sangadigari will continue nightly until March 15. Chief guests include Sadashivayya Madari Math, B.R. Devareddy, and Kiran Bandage. The festival promises spiritual guidance and community celebration.

Application deadline extended for minority schools

Chikkaballapur

The Minority Welfare Department has extended the application period for admission to Class 6 in 2026-27 at Morarji Desai Residential Schools in Peresandra, Alipur, Bagepalli, and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Residential School (CBSE) Mastenahalli until March 7. Seats are allocated with 75% for minority students (Muslim, Christian, Jain, Sikh, Parsi, Buddhist) and 25% for Backward Castes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes, based on entrance exam marks and roster rules. Applications can be submitted online via Seva Sindhu Portal or free of cost at the District Minorities Officer's Office. Officials provided multiple contact numbers for guidance and assistance.

Chikkaballapur district launches helpline for citizens abroad

CHIKKABALLAPUR

The district administration of Chikkaballapur has launched a helpline to assist residents stranded in the war-affected Middle East countries. The initiative aims to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens during the ongoing conflict. District officials have urged

District Honors Sri Renukacharya's Life Teachings

District Collector G. Prabhu honored Sri Renukacharya and 39 leaders, urging society to uphold their values and ideals

CHIKKABALLAPURA

The district administration celebrated the birth anniversary of Sri Renukacharya on Monday, highlighting his teachings and contributions to society. The event was organized jointly by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, and Kannada and Culture Department at the District Collector's Office Hall. District Collector G. Prabhu paid floral tributes to the portrait of Sri Renukacharya and spoke about the importance of

honoring great achievers. He said that celebrating the birth anniversaries of 39 reformers and social leaders helps pass their ideals to future generations. "These leaders condemned social evils and worked to build a better society. By observing their birth anniversaries, we remind society to follow their values," he said. Sri Renukacharya, a revered Sharana and Guru of the Veerashaiva tradition, taught the philosophy of personal experience of God



through the wearing of the Ishtalinga. He dedicated his life to making Shaiva principles a part of daily life and spreading the message of equality among all castes. His life and work have been documented in several Kannada books, reflecting his role in social and religious transfor-

mation. Community leader Sunil Kumar highlighted that Renukacharya was born in Kollipaki village, Telangana, and studied Shaiva philosophy deeply under sages. He spread the Lingayat tradition widely and promoted the idea that God should be realized within oneself, not in external idols. His influence reached even Sri Lanka, where his ashram and the Shivalingas installed by Bhisma can still be seen. The program also honored students and senior communi-

ty leaders. Present were Ravikumar, Assistant Director of the Kannada and Culture Department, community leaders Mahesh Basavapura, Rajendra Prasad, Bharathi, Siddanna, Parashiva Murthy, Dr. Sundar Raj, Jayanna, Jagadamba, Renukadevi, and officers and staff from various departments. The celebration reinforced the timeless teachings of Sri Renukacharya, encouraging citizens to live by his principles and carry forward his legacy.

Sudhakar orders fast-track clearance for development works

CHITRADURGA

Planning and Statistics Minister and District In-charge Minister D. Sudhakar directed officials to immediately secure technical approvals and call tenders for projects cleared under Karnataka Mining Environment Restoration Corporation Limited (KMERC) and the Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Project. He was chairing the quarterly KDP meeting at the Zilla Panchayat Hall on Monday. Expressing displeasure over delays, the minister even contacted the Chief Engineer in Bengaluru during the meeting, questioning why files were pending for months. He instructed that all approved works in Chitradurga district must begin promptly and finish within deadlines. With summer expected to be harsh, Sudhakar stressed adequate drinking water supply. District officials reported that 233 villages across 72 gram panchayats may face shortages, requiring nearly 3,375 tanker trips and 241 new borewells. District Collector T. Venkatesh said contingency plans are ready, including rental use of 23



The minister, displeased with delays, contacted Bengaluru's Chief Engineer, questioned pending files, and directed all approved Chitradurga district works to start promptly and meet deadlines

private borewells. Challakere MLA T. Raghunurthy urged officials to repair and hand over all RO water units to gram panchayats. Chitradurga MLA K.C. Virendra Pappy sought immediate repair of a non-functional unit in Annehal Jampayanahatti village. On education, the minister

asked officials to aim for a top-10 state ranking in SSLC results. Last year, the district stood 23rd, but progress has lifted it to 12th in preliminary assessments. Exams begin March 18 across 84 centers with CCTV monitoring. Discussions also covered maternal and child hospital proposals, housing scheme software issues affecting SC/ST reservations, and lake silt use for farmers. Officials clarified that silt removal is allowed for agriculture with proper permission, ensuring lake conservation norms are followed. The meeting concluded with directions to prepare action plans for Anganwadis and health centers by March 30.

CHIKKABALLAPURA

World Hearing Day will be observed on March 3 to spread awareness about deafness and hearing loss, said District Health Officer Dr. Mahesh Kumar. The World Health Organization marks this day every year to highlight the importance of ear and hearing health. Deafness can occur when a person cannot hear properly. Some children are born with congenital deafness, which means they have hearing loss from birth. Many parents are unaware of this condition, as attention is often focused on raising their children. Detecting hearing problems early is crucial, as modern medical technology offers effective



treatments, including surgical options, to improve hearing in children. Dr. Mahesh Kumar explained that some children may be completely deaf while others have partial hearing loss. Early diagnosis by a doctor allows parents to provide timely treatment, ensuring better development and communication skills for the child. The main aim of World

Hearing Day is to encourage early screening, prevention, and treatment of hearing loss. People are advised to protect their ears from loud noises, get regular hearing checks, and consult a doctor immediately if they experience infections or hearing difficulties. Health officials emphasized that awareness campaigns and timely medical intervention can prevent many cases of permanent hearing loss. For guidance or further information, individuals can visit the nearest health center or call the free helpline 104. World Hearing Day reminds everyone that caring for hearing health from the start of life is essential to a person's overall well-being and development.

CHITRADURGA

In a heartwarming initiative, motorized three-wheelers were distributed to specially-abled beneficiaries on Monday at the Zilla Panchayat premises in Chitradurga city. The vehicles were handed over by Planning and Statistics Minister and District In-charge Minister D. Sudhakar. The distribution was carried out under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund in coordination with the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Labour Department, Transport Department, Department for the Empowerment of the Disabled and Senior Citizens, and the Davangere Factories and Boilers Department. Labour Officer Anil B. Bagati said that the initiative

Labour Officer Anil Bagati said six motorized tricycles were distributed to support mobility for persons with disabilities

aims to improve mobility and independence for persons with disabilities. He explained that several companies joined hands to support the cause. Prakash Sponge Iron and Power Pvt. Ltd. donated three motorized tricycles. Meanwhile, Moreshwar Agro Feeds Pvt. Ltd., Arvind Limited, and Sneha Farms Pvt. Ltd. contributed one vehicle each. In total, six motorized three-wheelers were distributed to selected beneficiaries. Speaking at the event, Minister D. Sudhakar said such efforts reflect the govern-

ment's commitment to inclusive development. He added that mobility support can help beneficiaries lead more confident and self-reliant lives. Several dignitaries were present at the program, including Challakere MLA and State Small Industries Development Corporation President T. Raghunurthy, Chitradurga MLA K.C. Virendra Pappy, District Collector T. Venkatesh, GP CEO Dr. S. Akash, and District Superintendent of Police Ranjith Kumar Bandaru. Officials from various departments, including the District Handicapped Welfare Office and the Child Labour Project Society, also attended. The event highlighted the power of public-private partnership in bringing meaningful change to the lives of the specially-abled.

Taluk rural sports festival brings joyful energy

MANCHANABALE

The taluk-level rural sports festival was held successfully at the BGS playground in Manchanabale village, drawing about 200 participants, including men, women, and athletes from the region. The event featured games like the three-legged race, sack race, bomb-in-seat for men, musical chairs, ball-in-bucket, and bomb-in-seat for women. Vishnupriya, founder of the local educational institution, expressed concern over young people falling prey to harmful habits in recent times. She said events like this help them engage in healthy activities and stay focused.



The village-born international sportsperson Manchanabale Srinivas, who has brought recognition to the taluk, said sports provide mental relief and enthusiasm for both men and women. He emphasized that participation in such games strengthens community spirit and personal well-being. Srinivas also highlighted India's paradoxical position: while

the country ranks first in population, it lags in global sports rankings. "We have stadiums and trainers, but not enough youth utilizing them," he noted. He cited inspiring examples like Mary Kom, born in Manipur, P.T. Usha from Kerala, hockey legend Dhyan Chand from Uttar Pradesh, and javelin star Neeraj Chopra from Haryana, urging local youth to follow their ideals

and excel in sports. The program also honored local achievers, including Y.L. Ramachandra Reddy, R. Choudappa, M.C. Nagaraju, and Rajanna, recognizing their contributions to the taluk's sports and social life. The event was supported by B.G.S. School Principal Gangadhar, physical education teachers Channakrishnappa, Narasimha Murthy, Kalavathi, G.V. Rajanna, and Pramila, district president of the Women's Sanjeevini Gram Panchayat Union. The festival successfully combined competition, celebration, and inspiration, leaving participants energized and motivated for future sporting endeavors.

TUMAKURU

The service of nurses is the best service in the world, said Mrs. Kannika Parameshwari, Trustee of Sri Siddhartha Educational Institution. She was speaking after inaugurating the convocation ceremony of Sri Siddhartha Nursing College held at Dr. H.M. Gangadarayya Memorial Hall of Sri Siddhartha Medical College in Agalakote on the outskirts of the city. She said nurses must update their knowledge daily and stay



aware of changes in the medical field. According to her, the role of a nurse is very important in a patient's recovery. When nurses show kindness and human values, their service becomes truly meaningful. She also advised nurses to learn four languages

so they can communicate better with patients and build trust. Chief guest Punita Singh, Co-Vice President of Corporate Nursing at HCG Enterprises Limited, said nursing is the most selfless and pure profession. She noted that nurses need patience,

knowledge and creativity. While doctors treat diseases, nurses heal both the body and the mind with their caring touch. During the programme, first-year students took the nursing oath by receiving the ceremonial lamp, and final-year students were honoured with awards. Several dignitaries, including principals, medical superintendents, faculty members and students, attended the event and appreciated the dedication of the graduating nurses.

IN THE COURT OF THE 1st Addl. CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA Crl.Misc.No.1040/2025 Petitioner: Sri.Ashoka S/o Late Ashwathappa Aged about 45 years, R1at Kodihalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk V/s Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death, The Tahsildar Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura. PUBLIC NOTICE Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the mother of petitioner by name LATE RATHNAMMA W/O LATE ASHWATHAPPA who died on 29.04.2008 at Kodihalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District. In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 07.04.2026 In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order. Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 02.03.2026 By Order of the Court Chief Ministerial Officer, 1st Addl. Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura Advocate: R.D.Prakash, Near Matthyasa Darshini Hotel, Court Road, Vinayakanagara, Doddaballapura Town.	IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA Crl.misc. No. 723/2025 BETWEEN: 1. Sri.Ramakrishana.K. S/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 70 years. 2. Smt.Hanumakka, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 79 years. 3. Smt.Kempanamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 77 years. 4. Smt.Rathnamma, W/o Late Lingamma, aged about 72 years. 5. Smt.Parvathamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 73 years. All are R/at, No.361, Hanabe Village, Doddabalevangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District ...Petitioners AND: The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura, Doddaballapura Taluk...Respondent PUBLIC NOTICE Whereas the petitioners have filed the above petition under section 13(3) and 14 of Registration of Birth and Death act 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the mother of petitioner by name late Smt.Ramakka S/o Late Siddappa who died on date 16-06-2007 at Hanabe Village, Doddaballapur Taluk, Bangalore Rural district. In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever is interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 25-03-2026 in default this matter will be heard and disposed of an ex-parte order. Given under by hand and seal of the court on the 28-02-2026 By order of the Court, Chief Ministerial Officer, Pri Civil Judge & JMFC, Doddaballapura. N. BASAVARAJU, Advocate. BSS LAW CHAMBER, Near Civil Court Complex, Doddaballapura.	IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA Crl.misc. No. 725/2025 BETWEEN: 1. Sri.Ramakrishana.K. S/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 70 years. 2. Smt.Hanumakka, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 79 years. 3. Smt.Kempanamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 77 years. 4. Smt.Rathnamma, W/o Late Lingamma, aged about 72 years. 5. Smt.Parvathamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 73 years. All are R/at, No.361, Hanabe Village, Doddabalevangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District ...Petitioners AND: The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura, Doddaballapura Taluk...Respondent PUBLIC NOTICE Whereas the petitioners have filed the above petition under section 13(3) and 14 of Registration of Birth and Death act 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the Uncle of petitioner by name late Siddappa S/o Late Siddappa who died on date 26-07-2008 at Hanabe Village, Doddaballapur Taluk, Bangalore Rural district. In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever is interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 25-03-2026 in default this matter will be heard and disposed of an ex-parte order. Given under by hand and seal of the court on the 28-02-2026 By order of the Court, Chief Ministerial Officer, Pri Civil Judge & JMFC, Doddaballapura. N. BASAVARAJU, Advocate. BSS LAW CHAMBER, Near Civil Court Complex, Doddaballapura.
IN THE COURT OF HON'ble 2nd ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE, AT DODDABALLAPURA. C.Mis.No.158/2025 Petitioner : Smt.D.R.Veena S/o Late Rameshkumar, Aged about 30 years, R1at No. 553, 11th Cross, kumadrayappa College Road, Doddaballapura V/s Respondent : The CMC, Doddaballapura Town. NOTICE THROUGH PUBLICATION Whereas the above named petitioner has filed the petition in order to seek death certificate of her mother namely Chandricka W/o late Late Ramesh Kumar who died on 07.11.2023. Any person or persons having any objections regarding the issuance of death certificate of his mother can file the necessary objections before the Hon'ble Court. The above petition is posted on for your objections it is hereby called upon the general public is there any objections nor claims in respect of issuance of death certificate of Petitioner mother they can appear before the aforesaid said 03.04.2026 at 11 a.m. before the Hon'ble court, on the same day if the general public has not come up with any objections the court will decided the petition in your absence. Given under my hand the seal of this court on this 02.03.2026 Hon'ble 2nd Additional Civil Judge Court at Doddaballapura. By order of the Hon'ble Court, Chief Ministerial Officer, 2nd Addl. Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura Sri.Suresh Kumar,N., Advocate, Prakruthi Law Associates, Near Puritaspatre, Opps. Court Complex, Doddaballapura.	IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA Crl.misc. No. 728/2025 BETWEEN: 1. Sri.Ramakrishana.K. S/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 70 years. 2. Smt.Hanumakka, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 79 years. 3. Smt.Kempanamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 77 years. 4. Smt.Rathnamma, W/o Late Lingamma, aged about 72 years. 5. Smt.Parvathamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 73 years. All are R/at, No.361, Hanabe Village, Doddabalevangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District ...Petitioners AND: The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura, Doddaballapura Taluk...Respondent PUBLIC NOTICE Whereas the petitioners have filed the above petition under section 13(3) and 14 of Registration of Birth and Death act 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the Grandmother of petitioner by name late Smt. Ammayamma W/o Late. Siddappa who died on date 08-09-1978 at Hanabe Village, Doddaballapur Taluk, Bangalore Rural district. In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever is interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 25-03-2026 in default this matter will be heard and disposed of an ex-parte order. Given under by hand and seal of the court on the 28-02-2026 By order of the Court, Chief Ministerial Officer, Pri Civil Judge & JMFC, Doddaballapura. N. BASAVARAJU, Advocate. BSS LAW CHAMBER, Near Civil Court Complex, Doddaballapura.	IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA Crl.misc. No. 724/2025 BETWEEN: 1. Sri.Ramakrishana.K. S/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 70 years. 2. Smt.Hanumakka, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 79 years. 3. Smt.Kempanamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 77 years. 4. Smt.Rathnamma, W/o Late Lingamma, aged about 72 years. 5. Smt.Parvathamma, D/o Late Kenchappa, aged about 73 years. All are R/at, No.361, Hanabe Village, Doddabalevangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District ...Petitioners AND: The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura, Doddaballapura Taluk...Respondent PUBLIC NOTICE Whereas the petitioners have filed the above petition under section 13(3) and 14 of Registration of Birth and Death act 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the sister in law of petitioner by name late Smt. Kempanamma W/o Late. Mallamma who died on date 05-11-1974 at Hanabe Village, Doddaballapur Taluk, Bangalore Rural district. In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever is interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 25-03-2026 in default this matter will be heard and disposed of an ex-parte order. Given under by hand and seal of the court on the 28-02-2026 By order of the Court, Chief Ministerial Officer, Pri Civil Judge & JMFC, Doddaballapura. N. BASAVARAJU, Advocate. BSS LAW CHAMBER, Near Civil Court Complex, Doddaballapura.

MANGALURU

QUICK READ

DMK begins seat-sharing talks with VCK ahead of TN polls

Chennai

With the announcement of the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections expected shortly, alliance negotiations have gathered pace across the political spectrum. The ruling DMK on Monday commenced formal seat-sharing discussions with its key ally, the Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK), at the DMK's headquarters in Chennai. The meeting was attended by senior leaders from both parties. VCK President Thol. Thirumavalavan and General Secretary Ravikumar represented the party in the discussions, while top DMK functionaries led the talks on behalf of the ruling alliance.

ED summons Partha, Arpita in Bengal SSC recruitment scam

Kolkata

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned former state Education Minister Partha Chatterjee and his close aide Arpita Mukherjee in the teachers' recruitment corruption case, sources in the central agency said on Monday. It is learnt that the two will be called for questioning after the state Assembly elections. Partha Chatterjee was arrested in July 2022 in the West Bengal School Service Commission teachers' recruitment corruption case. His close aide, Arpita Mukherjee, was also arrested. However, both secured bail and continue to be out of jail.

RTI filed on Bengal ex-minister Chatterjee's performance as MLA

Kolkata

An application had been filed under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005, to get details of the performance of former West Bengal Education Minister and ex-Trinamool Congress secretary general as the party legislator from Behala (Paschim) Assembly constituency in South 24 Parganas district during the last five years. Chatterjee had been a four-time legislator from that constituency since 2006. The last time he was elected from that constituency was in 2021. But almost his entire term as the party legislator was spent behind bars after his arrest in July 2022 in connection with the multi-crore cash-for-school job case.

NMC Warns Medical Colleges Over Admissions

NEW DELHI

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has warned that medical colleges admitting "fake patients" to meet inspection norms risk immediate rejection of applications for new postgraduate courses or additional seats.

In a recent order, the NMC said some institutions admit patients who do not require treatment merely to show adequate bed occupancy and clinical material during assessments. It termed the practice a serious violation that would invite strict penalties. The Commission clarified that such institutions could be barred from starting new courses or increasing intake in existing ones.



Advance CAPF deployment in Bengal ahead of polls

Detailing about the same, the said 480 CAPF companies to be deployed in two phases before the poll schedule announcement

KOLKATA

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has released details of the advance deployment of 480 companies of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) across West Bengal ahead of the announcement of polling dates for the forthcoming Assembly elections.

The deployment will take place in two phases as part of preparatory measures to ensure a peaceful and orderly electoral process. Out of the total 480 companies, 240 companies were deployed on March 1, while the remaining 240 companies are scheduled for deployment on March 10. The highest number of companies 58 has been allocated to North 24 Parganas district. Murshidabad will receive 35 companies, followed by South



24 Parganas with 33, Kolkata with 30, and East Midnapore with 28 companies.

Notably, North 24 Parganas, Murshidabad, and South 24 Parganas are districts bordering Bangladesh, with Murshidabad also being minority-dominated. East Midnapore, allotted 28 companies, is the native district of Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari. Hooghly district will see deployment of 27 companies, while East Burdwan and Nadia have been allotted 25 and 22 companies, respectively. Howrah and Birbhum will receive 21 companies each. Purulia and West Midnapore have been allocated 20 companies each. Further allocations include 19 companies for North Dina-

jjpur, 18 for Malda, 17 for West Burdwan, 16 for Darjeeling, and 15 for Cooch Behar. Bankura will have 13 companies, while Jhargram is set to receive 11. South Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri will get 10 companies each. The lowest deployments are in Alipurdur, with seven companies, and Kalimpong, with just four companies. According to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs' guidelines, each CAPF company comprises a minimum of 72 personnel. The forces deployed include personnel from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), covering all five CAPFs under central command.

Min reviews Jhotwara works ahead of monsoon

JAIPUR

Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore on Monday held a comprehensive review meeting with officials from the Municipal Corporation, the Jaipur Development Authority (JDA), and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to assess the progress of ongoing development works in the Jhotwara Assembly constituency ahead of the approaching monsoon season.

During the meeting, the Minister stressed that all projects must now move forward in a coordinated and time-bound manner, strictly according to established priorities. He underlined the need for permanent solutions to long-standing civic issues that have repeatedly affected residents of Jhotwara, especially during heavy rainfall.

Rathore directed officials to accord top priority to road construction and repair works before the onset of the monsoon. He emphasized that damaged and potholed roads



must be repaired urgently to ensure smooth vehicular movement and public safety. Over the past several seasons, heavy rains in the region have led to severe waterlogging, traffic congestion, and large-scale deterioration of road surfaces, causing inconvenience to daily commuters.

Special emphasis was laid on expediting ongoing underpass projects and easing congestion on sector roads, where rising vehicular movement has compounded traffic challenges.

The Minister called for immediate corrective measures to streamline traffic flow and prevent bottlenecks that frequently bring movement to a

standstill during peak hours and rainy days.

Addressing the recurring problem of waterlogging and repeated road damage, Rathore instructed officials to strengthen drainage and sewerage systems before undertaking fresh road construction in vulnerable areas. He made it clear that roads damaged due to inadequate drainage should not be rebuilt unless a permanent drainage mechanism is first put in place.

Calling for stronger inter-departmental coordination, Rathore urged departments to work in tandem and deliver visible, on-ground results within stipulated timelines. Reiterating his commitment to the development of Jhotwara, he conveyed a clear message that all priority works must be completed efficiently and within the prescribed timeframe to provide lasting relief to residents, who have repeatedly raised concerns over potholes and the heightened risk of accidents during the monsoon season.

Odisha issues heat preparedness guidelines for edu institutions

BHUBANESWAR

As part of its summer season preparedness measures, the Odisha Higher Education Department has issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Heat Wave Management for all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the state, informed the department in an official statement on Monday.

According to the statement, the directive has been issued to ensure preparedness and precautionary measures to mitigate heatwave conditions and safeguard the health and well-being of students, faculty and staff.

The department, through the SOP, has advised colleges and universities to conduct or

reschedule classes, internal assessments and examinations during morning hours, as far as practicable, to avoid exposure of students to peak heat conditions.

Outdoor academic, sports and co-curricular activities have been restricted during peak afternoon hours. Where unavoidable, such activities must be conducted with adequate safeguards and preferably during relatively cooler periods of the day, directs the department.

Additionally, all institutions have been directed to ensure the uninterrupted availability of safe and potable drinking water at multiple points within campuses.

Adequate stocks of Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS)

must be maintained and made readily accessible in classrooms, hostels, common areas and examination centres.

The SOP also mandates inspection and repair of tubewells, hand pumps and drinking water facilities to prevent disruption in water supply during the summer months.

Colleges and universities have been further instructed to keep basic first aid facilities ready to address heat-related discomfort, dehydration, dizziness and other medical exigencies.

The statement mentioned that responsible personnel must be identified to provide immediate assistance in such situations.

MIDDLE EAST TENSION

TELANGANA SETS UP 24X7 CONTROL ROOM

HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has established a 24x7 control room at Telangana Bhavan in New Delhi to assist its citizens residing in the Middle East in view of the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict.

The move comes amid escalating tensions and concerns over the safety of Indian nationals in the affected region.

Acting on the directions of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the state government is closely monitoring the evolving situation. According to an

official release, senior officials at Telangana Bhavan are in continuous contact with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, as well as concerned Indian embassies in the region to assess ground realities and coordinate necessary measures.

In view of multiple enquiries received from Telangana citizens residing in the affected countries including those who may be stranded and from their family members back home, the government decided to operationalise a round-the-clock control room. The facil-



ity will function 24x7 to facilitate coordination, provide verified information, and extend assistance in case of distress, travel disruptions, or

Kerala CM slams T'gana govt over demolition drive in Khammam

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday launched a sharp attack on the Congress, alleging that its government in Telangana had unleashed a bulldozer raj by demolishing hundreds of houses and rendering thousands homeless.

In a strongly worded statement, Vijayan described the demolition drive in Velugumatla village of Khammam district as deeply alarming and accused the Congress of pursuing what he termed a crude politics of displacement.

According to the Chief Minister, nearly 700 houses were demolished under heavy police presence in Velugumatla. He said the houses had been constructed on Bhoodan land allotted to landless families during the historic movement spearheaded by Vinoba Bhave. Vijayan alleged that the evictions were carried out without prior notice and claimed that close to 3,000 people, many of whom possessed valid identity documents, were forced out of their homes in the early hours of February 25.

He further charged that the Telangana government had disregarded the humanitarian spirit of the Bhoodan movement by branding even those with valid 'pattayams' as fake title holders and proceeding with demolitions. Drawing parallels with similar eviction drives in Yelahanka, Vijayan said victims there continue to struggle for survival and rehabilitation.

Questioning the Congress'



He accused the Congress of pursuing what he termed a crude "politics of displacement"

ideological stance, Vijayan asked how a party that claims progressive credentials could implement what he described as inhuman measures. He asserted that the Congress leadership in Kerala must clarify its position on the developments in Telangana and other states where such eviction drives have been reported.

Contrasting Telangana's actions with Kerala's approach, Vijayan said his government had set new benchmarks in post-disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation by providing homes and land titles to affected families. He also accused the Congress of failing to fulfil its promise in Kerala to construct houses for victims of the Mundakkai-Chooralmala disaster in Wayanad.

The remarks mark an escalation in political sparring between the CPI(M)-led Left government in Kerala and the Congress, with housing rights and rehabilitation policies emerging as a fresh flashpoint in the ongoing rivalry.

CM Mohan Yadav extends Holi greetings

BHOVAL

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Monday extended greetings to the people of the state on the occasion of Holi, urging citizens to celebrate the festival with enthusiasm while ensuring safety, maintaining law and order,

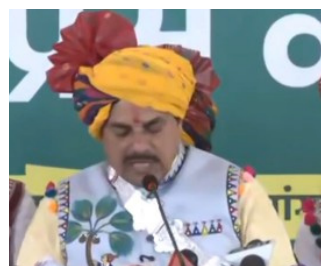
and keeping the ongoing school examinations in mind.

Holi will be celebrated with joy and enthusiasm, but at the same time, school exams are also going on in the state. It concerns the future of our children. Therefore, we must keep all these aspects in mind while celebrating the festival, the Chief Minister said during an interaction with media persons in Barwani.

School exams, including those for Classes 10 and 12, are scheduled to conclude on March 6.

The Chief Minister later participated in the traditional Bhagoria festival, which marks the beginning of the festival of Holi in tribal communities in Jabua, Alirajpur, Khargone, Barwani, and Dhar districts. The festival marks the onset of the spring season and attracts tourists from India and abroad. A week-long festival will conclude today.

Late on Sunday night, Chief Minister Yadav chaired a meeting with senior police officials, including DGP Kailash Makwana and ADG



Intelligence A. Sai Manohar, and reviewed the law and order situation and preparations for the Holi festival. All Range IGs, DIGs, Police Commissioners, and Superintendents of Police joined the video conference and apprised the Chief Minister of the arrangements made in their respective jurisdictions.

The Chief Minister directed officers to remain on high alert during the festival and keep a close watch on every untoward incident. He instructed all police officers to maintain strict vigil over law and order in their areas and to ensure that no laxity is shown in maintaining peace and public safety.

Yadav also stated that he will conduct surprise inspections of police stations in the coming days. Police stations will be graded based on their functioning and public feedback. He instructed that all actions taken for law and order must be fully transparent. Considering the ongoing school exams, he instructed officials to monitor all examination centres and hostels.

QUICK READ

Russia prefers diplomatic end to Ukraine war: Kremlin

Moscow

The Kremlin said on Monday that it remains in Russia's own interests to continue peace negotiations with Ukraine, emphasizing that Moscow still prefers a diplomatic settlement to end the fighting. The statement comes amid signs that recent rounds of dialogue have stalled over unresolved territorial disputes in eastern Ukraine. Talks between Moscow and Kyiv have appeared increasingly deadlocked in recent weeks, largely due to Russia's insistence that Ukraine cede the remaining portions of the Donbas region not currently under Russian control.

UN Human Rights chief lauds India's democratic traditions

Geneva

Volker Turk, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, has praised the vibrancy of civil society in India, highlighting that it continues to play a key role in upholding the country's democratic traditions and the rights of minorities. At the same time, while presenting his global update to the ongoing 61st session of the UN Human Rights Council last week, Turk slammed Pakistan and China for the worrisome human rights situation that exists in the countries. The UN Human Rights chief was in New Delhi last month on his first India visit during the AI Impact Summit.

Kuwait confirms several US military aircraft crashed, all crew safe

Kuwait City

Kuwait on Monday confirmed that several US military aircraft crashed earlier in the day, adding that all the crew members were safe. Earlier, Iran claimed that a US F-15 fighter jet had crashed in Kuwait, with videos circulating on social media purportedly showing an American pilot ejecting seconds before the aircraft went down. The Ministry's spokesperson stated that the relevant authorities immediately initiated search and rescue procedures, whereby the crews were evacuated and transferred to the hospital to check on their health status and provide the necessary medical care, noting that their condition is stable.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

9	1		6		5	
	2		3		5	1
3		7		2		8
	6		5		1	9
7		2	6	8		3
	8			2	7	1
1		5	2			9
	3			5	6	8
6		8	7			4

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

6	5	1	9	3	8	2	7	4
3	9	7	2	5	4	9	6	1
8	2	4	7	1	6	3	5	9
5	6	9	3	8	1	4	9	7
7	4	3	6	2	5	1	9	8
2	1	8	6	7	9	5	3	6
1	8	6	5	9	2	7	4	3
4	7	2	1	6	3	9	8	5
9	3	5	8	4	7	6	1	2

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

US-Israeli war widens across Middle East

Missile exchanges, regional strikes and market turmoil signal deepening conflict with no immediate resolution in sight

TEHRAN

The U.S.-Israeli air war against Iran expanded dramatically on Monday, spreading instability across the Middle East and raising fears of a prolonged regional conflict.

As Israeli forces responded to strikes from Hezbollah in Lebanon, Tehran retaliated by firing missiles and drones toward Israel, several Gulf states, and a British air base in Cyprus. The intensifying exchanges signaled a dangerous widening of hostilities with no immediate diplomatic breakthrough in sight. Dramatic video footage circulating early Monday showed a US warplane plunging from the sky over Kuwait, with a parachute visible as at least one individual ejected. Kuwait's defence ministry later confirmed that multiple American aircraft had crashed but stated that all crew members were safe. The incidents underscored the mounting risks facing military personnel as the air campaign escalates.

The weekend bombardment marked a turning point in the crisis, reportedly resulting in the death of Iran's supreme leader and drawing neighboring countries deeper into the conflict. Shipping traffic



through the Gulf, a vital artery for global energy supplies was disrupted, adding to uncertainty in already volatile markets.

When trading opened Monday, energy prices surged sharply, stoking concerns that the fragile global economic recovery could face renewed setbacks. Analysts warned that sustained instability in the region could push oil prices higher and intensify inflationary pressures worldwide.

In what observers describe

as one of the boldest U.S. foreign policy gambles in decades, President Donald Trump launched the joint campaign alongside Israel against a long-standing adversary accused of destabilizing the region for generations. Trump reiterated calls for Iranians to rise up against their leadership and indicated the military campaign could continue for weeks.

Inside Iran, scenes of uncertainty unfolded as residents

crowded highways attempting to flee major cities amid ongoing bombardment. Public sentiment ranged from deep apprehension to expressions of defiance and even cautious optimism among those hoping for political change. With missile exchanges continuing and regional actors drawn into the confrontation, the conflict shows few signs of abating, leaving the Middle East and the world bracing for further escalation.

Merz walks tightrope ahead of Trump meeting

BERLIN

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz faces a delicate diplomatic balancing act on Tuesday as he travels to Washington for talks with US President Donald Trump.

The meeting comes days after a joint US-Israeli operation that killed Ali Khamenei, dramatically escalating tensions across the Middle East.

Merz will be the first European leader to meet Trump since the launch of the military campaign against Iran. The operation has disrupted one of the world's most critical oil shipping routes and sent shockwaves through global aviation networks, with airlines rerouting flights and



energy markets reacting sharply to the uncertainty. The developments have complicated an already sensitive transatlantic relationship, placing Berlin in a challenging position between strategic alignment and legal caution.

Speaking Merz refrained from openly criticizing the strikes but stopped short of endorsing them outright. He acknowledged the complexities involved, noting that de-

cades of diplomatic efforts had failed to deter Iran from pursuing nuclear capabilities or addressing concerns over domestic repression. We recognise the dilemma, Merz said, signaling understanding of Washington's strategic concerns while maintaining a measured tone. So we're not going to be lecturing our partners on their military strikes against Iran.

At the same time, the German leader emphasized that questions remain regarding the legal justification and broader implications of the operation. Critics of Trump have argued that the campaign lacked sufficient explanation and may not meet the standards of international law.

US military aircraft crash in Kuwait amid escalating conflict

KUWAIT

Several U.S. military aircraft crashed in Kuwait early Monday, but all crew members survived and were reported to be in stable condition, according to Kuwait's Ministry of Defence. The incidents occurred as the widening conflict across the Middle East entered a more volatile phase, with retaliatory strikes extending to Gulf states.

In a statement carried by the state news agency, the Kuwaiti Defence Ministry confirmed that the crews were safely evacuated from the crash sites and transferred to hospital. Officials said the emergency response



was conducted in coordination with U.S. forces stationed in the country. No fatalities were reported, though authorities did not immediately disclose the number of aircraft involved

or the cause of the crashes.

Separately, smoke was seen rising from the vicinity of the U.S. Embassy compound in Kuwait City. Fire trucks and ambulances were dispatched to the area, according to a

DRONE STRIKE HITS BRITISH AIR BASE IN CYPRUS

AKROTIRI

A drone strike hit a British air base in Cyprus overnight, causing limited damage but no casualties, Cypriot and British officials said on Monday.

The attack marked a significant escalation in the widening conflict surrounding Iran, effectively drawing a European Union member state directly into the unfolding regional crisis.

The strike targeted the runway at the Royal Air Force base of Akrotiri, Britain's key military installation on the eastern Mediterranean island. According to officials, the attack occurred shortly after midnight and involved a Shahed-type unmanned aerial vehicle. Nikos Christodoulides stated that the drone crashed into military facilities at 12:03 a.m., resulting in minor structural damage. Emergency protocols were immediately activated, but authorities confirmed there were no injuries or fatalities.

The incident is the first direct attack on the Akrotiri base since a rocket strike by Libyan militants in 1986. The development has unsettled the island nation, known both as a strategic military outpost and a major tourism and business hub hosting thousands of foreign companies. Security across Cyprus was heightened following the strike, with additional patrols and surveillance measures implemented around sensitive sites.

In recent weeks, Britain



had repositioned additional air assets to Akrotiri amid rising tensions and in anticipation of potential U.S. military action against Iran. At the time, British officials had emphasized that the bases would not be used for offensive operations. However, on Sunday, Prime Minister Keir Starmer acknowledged that Britain had agreed to a U.S. request to use its bases for defensive strikes targeting Iranian missile depots or launchers.

British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper clarified that the United States had not specifically requested access to the Akrotiri air base itself. Nonetheless, the overnight strike has raised concerns about Cyprus becoming increasingly entangled in the broader confrontation.

The attack underscores the expanding geographical scope of hostilities, as military infrastructure beyond the immediate Middle East theater becomes vulnerable. With tensions escalating and diplomatic efforts appearing limited, regional and European leaders now face mounting pressure to prevent further spillover into additional territories.

DOOR TO DIPLOMACY

In US strikes on Iran, NK sees nuclear vindication

SEOUL

US and Israeli military strikes on Iran, including the killing of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, are likely to reinforce the nuclear ambitions of Kim Jong Un, experts and former officials say, even as attention turns to whether Pyongyang might resume negotiations with Donald Trump over its nuclear arsenal.

The strikes, dramatic in scope and consequence, have sent shockwaves far beyond the Middle East, prompting reassessments of nuclear deterrence dynamics in East Asia.

Talks to curb North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles have been stalled for years, despite historic summits between Kim and Trump in 2018 and 2019. Although the door to diplomacy has never fully closed, Pyongyang's leadership has shunned recent overtures, focusing instead on expanding its arsenal amid heavy international



sanctions.

The recent attacks on Iran — a non-nuclear state decimated at the top of its leadership hierarchy — may deepen Kim's belief that nuclear weapons are indispensable for survival and sovereignty. South Korean experts note that the U.S. operation could strengthen the narrative in Pyongyang that nuclear deterrence prevents attacks from

external powers, just as it has for decades.

If the United States withdraws its policy of confrontation with North Korea by respecting our country's current status ... there is no reason why we cannot get along well with the US, North Korean state media cited Kim as saying in recent commentary, suggesting conditional openness to diplomacy while in-

sisting that Pyongyang's nuclear status be acknowledged.

Analysts argue that such rhetoric reflects both a hardening of resolve and a strategic posture aimed at leveraging past rapport between Kim and Trump should formal talks resume.

Nevertheless, the strikes have also triggered official condemnation from Pyongyang, which denounced the

U.S. and Israel for illegal aggression and hegemonic behavior. North Korea's foreign ministry statement echoed deep unease about the reach of US military power and underscored solidarity with Iran's resistance to external intervention.

Experts are divided on whether the latest events will push Kim toward renewed negotiations or push him further into isolation — potentially accelerating nuclear development. Some analysts believe the demonstration of U.S. force could make Pyongyang more cautious, hoping to avoid direct confrontation, while others view it as validation of North Korea's nuclear posture as a deterrent. Either way, the conflict in the Middle East is already shaping strategic calculations in East Asia, reinforcing the enduring role of nuclear weapons in Pyongyang's defense doctrine and complicating future diplomatic engagements.



Iran Casts Doubt over World Cup Matches in United States

Federation chief cites security fears after escalating US-Israel strikes

TEHRAN

The head of Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran has raised serious doubts over Iran’s participation in matches scheduled in the United States at the upcoming FIFA World Cup, citing security concerns amid escalating conflict in the region.

Mehdi Taj, president of the Iranian soccer federation, said the surprise bombardment of Iran by the U.S. and Israel has cast a shadow over the national team’s preparations. “What is certain is that after this attack, we cannot be expected to look forward to the World Cup with hope,” Taj told sports portal Varzesh3 as hostilities intensified.

The strikes, which followed



the reported killing of Ali Khamenei, have heightened tensions across the Middle East and raised uncertainty about Iran’s international sporting commitments.

Iran have been drawn in Group G and are scheduled to play two of their first-round matches on U.S. soil — against New Zealand national

football team in Inglewood, California, on June 15 and Belgium national football team on June 21. Their final group-stage fixture is set for Seattle against Egypt national football team on June 26.

The 2026 World Cup, hosted jointly by the FIFA, will be staged across the United States, Canada and Mexico

from June 11 to July 19. However, Taj indicated that current geopolitical tensions could complicate Iran’s travel and participation.

Iranian fans had previously faced restrictions under earlier U.S. travel bans, adding another layer of uncertainty to the situation.

FIFA did not immediately respond to requests for comment regarding contingency plans or potential adjustments should Iran be unable to play matches in the United States. With less than four months to go before kickoff, the evolving security situation threatens to overshadow preparations for the expanded 48-team tournament.



Tyler Reddick Wins Third Straight, Makes History at COTA

AUSTIN

Tyler Reddick etched his name into NASCAR history, becoming the first driver in Cup Series history to win the opening three races of a season with a commanding victory at the Circuit of the Americas (COTA).

Reddick held off a relentless challenge from Shane van Gisbergen over the final 20 laps of the road course race to secure his third consecutive triumph of 2026. Driving for 23XI Racing, the team co-owned by basketball legend Michael Jordan, Reddick had already claimed victories at the Daytona 500 and Atlanta before converting his pole position into another landmark win in Austin.

“It’s one race, but it was so important,” Reddick said after taking the checkered flag. “It’s so fitting to get three in a row and make history.”

Jordan was trackside, celebrating with the pit crew as Reddick crossed the finish line. The win further cemented the momentum of 23XI Racing, which recently secured its long-term future in NASCAR following a federal antitrust lawsuit settlement in December.

Van Gisbergen, who dominated road courses last season, pushed hard but could not find a way past Reddick in the closing laps. The New Zealander, who had won five of six road races in 2025, finished second after briefly threatening to overtake in the final stage.

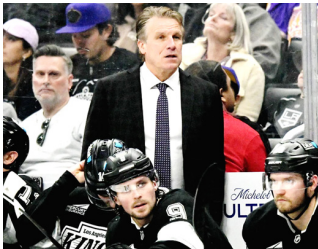
Reddick’s 11th career Cup victory was also his second at COTA, marking the first time he has multiple wins at a single track. Despite the pressure, he remained composed as van Gisbergen hovered on his bumper before fading in the closing laps.

Los Angeles Kings Fire Jim Hiller, Name D.J. Smith Interim Coach

EL SEGUNDO

The Los Angeles Kings have dismissed head coach Jim Hiller amid a midseason slide, appointing D.J. Smith as interim coach in a bid to revive their fading playoff hopes.

General manager Ken Holland made the decision Sunday after the Kings lost five of their last six games, including a humiliating 8-1 defeat to the Edmonton Oilers — the same franchise that eliminated Los Angeles from the past four postseasons. The loss left



the Kings outside the Western Conference playoff picture.

“We’ve underperformed,” Holland said at the team’s training complex. “I’m hoping the move will jolt the team and provide a different

message.”

Hiller, in his second full season behind the bench, compiled a 93-58-24 record and guided the Kings to consecutive playoff appearances. However, Los Angeles failed to advance past the first round in either campaign and has not won a postseason series since 2014.

Smith, formerly head coach of the Ottawa Senators, takes over with the Kings sitting at 24-21-14 and trailing Seattle by three points for the final wild-card spot. Player devel-

opment coach Matt Greene has joined Smith’s staff as an assistant. “I intend on getting the team into the playoffs,” Smith said. “We’ve got good players. We’ve just got to get our confidence back.”

The Kings have struggled offensively all season, ranking near the bottom of the NHL in goals per game. Injuries have compounded their issues, with Kevin Fiala sidelined after breaking his leg at the Olympics and Andrei Kuzmenko also out following knee surgery.

Timber Header Secures Crucial Derby Win for Arsenal

LONDON

Arsenal F.C. tightened their grip on the Premier League title race with a tense 2-1 victory over London rivals Chelsea F.C., courtesy of a decisive second-half header from Jurrien Timber.

In a pulsating north London clash, Timber rose highest in the 66th minute to nod home from a pinpoint corner delivered by Declan Rice, ensuring Arsenal claimed three vital points and opened up a five-point lead at the top of the table.

Mikel Arteta’s side now sit on 64 points from 29 matches, ahead of second-placed Manchester City F.C., who have a game in hand on 59. With the title race entering its decisive stretch, Arsenal demonstrated both their set-piece strength and resilience under pressure.

The Gunners had earlier taken the lead in the 21st minute when defender William Saliba bundled home



Dutch defender strikes late as Gunners extend lead in title race

from a well-rehearsed corner routine. Arsenal’s prowess from dead-ball situations has been a hallmark of their campaign, and it once again paid dividends.

However, the hosts were pegged back just before half-time when Piero Hincapie inadvertently turned the ball into his own net, giving Chelsea a lifeline. The equaliser shifted momentum and set up a nervy second half, with the visitors growing in confidence.

Timber’s towering header

restored Arsenal’s advantage, but the closing stages were far from comfortable. Chelsea’s hopes suffered a blow when Pedro Neto was shown a second yellow card, reducing Liam Rosenior’s side to 10 men and halting their six-match unbeaten league run.

Despite late pressure, Arsenal held firm to secure a crucial derby triumph. As the season edges towards its climax, Arteta’s men continue to show the grit and composure required to sustain a genuine title challenge.

Gunners restore five-point lead; Sesko inspires United resurgence at Old Trafford

Arsenal Edge Chelsea, United Climb to Third in EPL

home after Gabriel Magalhaes nodded Eberechi Eze’s delivery back across goal.

Chelsea responded from a corner of their own when Pedro Hincapie inadvertently diverted Reece James’ cross into his net. However, Timber restored Arsenal’s lead just after the hour mark, heading into an empty net after Robert Sanchez misjudged Declan Rice’s delivery — Arsenal’s 16th goal from a corner this season, equalling a Premier League record. Chelsea’s woes deepened when Pedro Neto received two quick bookings, leaving the visitors with 10 men. A late equaliser was ruled out for offside,

and defeat leaves them three points adrift of the top five. Arsenal, chasing a first league title in 22 years, continue to keep pressure on second-placed Manchester City F.C..

At Old Trafford, Benjamin Sesko rewarded manager Michael Carrick with a decisive goal in United’s 2-1 comeback victory. Palace had stunned the hosts early through Maxence Lacroix, but a red card for the French defender shifted momentum.

Bruno Fernandes converted the resulting penalty before curling in a cross that Sesko powered home, marking his seventh goal in eight games.



LONDON

Arsenal F.C. restored their five-point cushion at the summit of the Premier League with a hard-fought 2-1 win over 10-man Chelsea F.C., while Manchester United F.C. surged to third place after defeating Crystal Palace F.C.

Defenders William Saliba and Jurrien Timber were on target as Arsenal once again showcased their dominance from set-pieces. Saliba opened the scoring midway through the first half, forcing the ball

being moved to a safer location.

Sindhu was scheduled to face Thailand’s Supanida Katethong in the opening round. However, with Dubai airport remaining shut and no clarity on flight resumption, her withdrawal now appears inevitable.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) said it is maintaining “real-time oversight” of the situation and is prepared to review the competition schedule should players face delayed arrivals.

While Sindhu’s campaign hangs in the balance, some Indian shuttlers have managed to reach Birmingham through alternate routes via Singapore and Africa. However, the taxing travel could impact their readiness.

Lakshya Sen, a former semifinalist and runner-up here, has arrived without issues but faces a daunting opener against world No. 1 Shi Yu Qi of China. Rising youngster Ayush Shetty will take on Indonesia’s Alwi Farhan.

In women’s singles, Malvika Bansod meets Tokyo Olympics champion Chen Yufei, while Unnati Hooda, forced to reroute via Africa, clashes with Thailand’s Pornpawee Chochuwong.



Messi, Segovia Rally Inter Miami CF to 4-2 Victory Over Orlando City

ORLANDO

Defending champions Inter Miami produced a stirring second-half comeback to defeat Orlando City 4-2, powered by a Lionel Messi brace and a superb all-round display from Telasco Segovia.

Trailing 2-0 at halftime at Inter & Co Stadium, Miami appeared headed for another frustrating outing on the road. But the reigning MLS MVP Messi ignited the turnaround with two clinical goals, while defender Segovia contributed a goal and two assists in a

dominant second-half performance.

Orlando seized early control when Marco Pašalić finished from Iván Angulo’s pass in the 18th minute, marking his fourth consecutive goal against Miami. Just six minutes later, defender Griffin Dorsey set up Martin Ojeda to double the advantage, giving the hosts a commanding 2-0 lead heading into the break.

Miami responded swiftly after halftime. Mateo Silvetti scored his first career MLS goal in the 49th minute, combining with Segovia and Fac-

undo Mura to cut the deficit to 2-1. The momentum shifted decisively in the 57th minute when Messi calmly slotted home after receiving a precise pass from Segovia to level the contest at 2-2.

Segovia then put Miami ahead in the 85th minute with a composed unassisted finish, completing a remarkable turnaround. Messi sealed the victory in stoppage time, bending a free kick into the bottom corner for his second of the night and 52nd regular-season goal in just 55 MLS appearances.

ISL: Chennaiyin FC, Odisha FC Play Out 1-1 Draw

BHUBANESWAR

Centre-backs Elsinho and Carlos Delgado found the net from set-pieces as Chennaiyin FC and Odisha FC settled for a 1-1 draw in their Indian Super League encounter at the Kalinga Stadium.

Both sides relied on unlikely scorers — their defensive mainstays — to produce moments of quality in an otherwise tightly contested affair. The stalemate meant Chennaiyin opened its account for the season on its third attempt, while Odisha registered its second successive draw.

Chennaiyin had a slice of fortune midway through the first half when Laldinliana Renthlei, the last defender, brought down Rahim Ali during a swift Odisha counterattack in the 26th minute.



The referee opted against a red card, possibly judging that the foul occurred near the halfway line, allowing the visitors to retain all 11 men.

The deadlock was finally broken in stoppage time of the first half. Farukh Choudhary delivered a teasing corner that was met by a towering header from Brazilian defender Elsinho, who rose above the Odisha defence to score his maiden goal in Indian football. The strike was significant for Chennaiyin,

marking the club’s first goal of the ISL season and the first by an outfield player under head coach Clifford Miranda.

Odisha returned after the break with greater urgency and intensity. Their persistence paid off in the 68th minute when Spanish defender Carlos Delgado mirrored Elsinho’s effort. Meeting a precise free-kick delivery from Puitea, Delgado outjumped his marker Pritam Kotal to nod home the equaliser.

Nico Echavarria Wins Cognizant Classic as Shane Lowry Falts Late

PALM BEACH GARDENS

Nico Echavarria delivered a flawless weekend performance to capture the Cognizant Classic at PGA National, capitalizing on a stunning late collapse by Shane Lowry to seal a two-shot victory.

Echavarria carded a five-under 66 in the final round to finish at 17-under 267, claiming his PGA Tour title and first on American soil. Remarkably, the Colombian did not make a single bogey over the final holes, showcasing composure and precision when it mattered most.

“It was a blessing today,” Echavarria said. “To win out here, sometimes you need good breaks. I’m happy with how it went.”

Lowry appeared poised to end his long wait for a win at PGA National, where he has now posted five consecutive top-11 finishes. The Irishman held a three-shot lead with three holes to play but unraveled dramatically with back-to-back double bogeys at the par-4 16th and par-3 17th, both triggered by wayward tee shots into the water. “I had the tournament in my hands and I threw it away,” Lowry admitted.



final round to finish at 17-under 267, claiming his PGA Tour title and first on American soil. Remarkably, the Colombian did not make a single bogey over the final holes, showcasing composure and precision when it mattered most.



EPFO RETAINS 8.25% INTEREST RATE FOR 2025-26

Central Board approves unchanged EPF return, benefiting over seven crore subscribers nationwide

NEW DELHI

The The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on Monday approved an interest rate of 8.25% on Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) deposits for the financial year 2025-26, retaining the same rate for the second consecutive year.

The decision was taken at the 239th meeting of the Central Board of Trustees (CBT) held in the national capital, according to an official statement.

The meeting was chaired by Union Labour and Employment Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and attended by Minister of State Shobha Karandlaje, Labour and Employment Secretary Vandana Gurnani,



and EPFO Chief Ramesh Krishnamurthi. Following the CBT's approval, the proposed interest rate will now be forwarded to the Ministry of Finance for final clearance. Once ratified, the interest will be credited to the accounts of more than seven crore EPFO subscribers across the country. Interest on EPF deposits is

calculated on a monthly running balance basis but credited to subscribers' accounts at the end of the financial year. However, accounts that remain inactive for 36 months are treated as dormant and do not earn further interest.

Despite ongoing global economic uncertainties, the EPFO has maintained finan-

cial discipline, ensuring stable and competitive returns without putting undue pressure on its interest account. Officials said the move strengthens retirement security for crores of salaried employees and reflects the organisation's commitment to prudent financial management.

The decision to maintain the 8.25 per cent rate signals continuity and stability for millions of workers who rely on EPF savings as a primary retirement corpus. By delivering sustainable and attractive returns compared to other similar investment avenues, the EPFO aims to safeguard contributors' funds while reinforcing confidence in India's social security framework.

QUICK READ

Swiggy shares hit record low, slide 5% amid heavy selling pressure

Mumbai

Shares of Swiggy, the food and grocery delivery platform, fell sharply on Monday and touched a new all-time low on the stock market. During intra-day trade, the stock slipped 5 per cent on the BSE to hit Rs 285.85, breaking its earlier low of Rs 297 recorded on May 13, 2025. The fall came amid heavy trading volumes. With this decline, Swiggy's share price has dropped around 26 per cent so far in the calendar year 2026. In comparison, the benchmark BSE Sensex has fallen about 6 per cent during the same period.

Engage in industry assignments, internships to build practical competence, students told

BELAGAVI

A guest lecture on 'What it takes to be an HR professional' was organised for 3rd Semester HR Specialisation students here recently.

Shravani Kulkarni, Business-HR Talent Acquisition, Aequs Limited, Belagavi-Lead, delivered an insightful session. She highlighted key qualities expected of aspiring HRs namely integrity, business acumen, empathy, analytical thinking, and strong communication skills. Breaking the common myth, she emphasized that HR is not just about people relations—but equally about loving numbers and data.

She stressed the importance of understanding compliance, metrics, analytics, and finan-



cial implications in HR decisions.

Students were encouraged to proactively engage in industry assignments and internships to build practical competence. She also advised developing adaptability and continuous learning to stay relevant in the evolving HR landscape.

The session was highly interactive and inspiring, providing students with a clear roadmap for becoming future-ready HR professionals.

Dr Shailaja Hiremath, Associate Professor-HR organised the session. Dr Arif Shaikh welcomed the guest speaker and encouraged students to learn practical aspects.



Saini unveils ₹2.23L cr Haryana budget

CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Monday presented a Rs 2.23 lakh crore budget for the financial year 2026-27, marking a 10.28 per cent increase over the revised estimate of Rs 2.02 lakh crore for 2025-26.

The budget places strong emphasis on strengthening the rural economy, boosting capital investment, and accelerating infrastructure development across the state.

Presenting his second budget as Finance Minister, Saini projected the fiscal deficit at Rs 40,293.17 crore, which accounts for 2.65 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The revenue deficit is estimated at 0.87 per cent of GSDP, while the effective revenue deficit stands at 0.41 per cent. Capital expenditure is projected at 1.86 per cent of GSDP, with effective capital expenditure estimated at 2.32 per cent.

A major announcement in the budget was the creation of a third power distribution company, Haryana Agri DISCOM, dedicated exclusively to meeting the electricity needs of the farming community. The move aims to streamline agricultural power supply and support farmers with more efficient services.

Donning a Sikh turban during his budget speech delivered in Hindi, the Chief Minister underlined the im-

portance of enhancing capital investment to drive long-term infrastructure growth. Capital expenditure has been proposed at Rs 28,205 crore, constituting 12.6 per cent of the total budget. Effective capital expenditure stands at Rs 35,216 crore, or 15.7 per cent of the total outlay. This marks an increase from Rs 27,650 crore allocated in 2025-26, which accounted for 13.6 per cent of the budget.

Saini also highlighted Haryana's expanding contribution to India's economic growth and set an ambitious target of transforming the state into a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2047. He noted that 98 per cent of the total budget was successfully utilised in the previous financial year—a first in the state's history.

Emphasising improved financial health, the Chief Minister stated that Haryana now boasts the highest per capita income among major states. At current prices, per capita income has risen sharply from Rs 1,47,382 in 2014-15 to Rs 3,24,958 in 2023-24 (provisional estimate). It further increased to Rs 3,58,171 in 2024-25 (quick estimate), compared to the national average of Rs 2,19,575. For 2025-26 (advance estimate), Haryana's per capita income is projected to reach Rs 3,95,618, reflecting sustained economic momentum.

NITI Aayog hosts workshop on natural farming

NEW DELHI

Government think tank NITI Aayog on Monday organised a two-day national workshop on natural farming under its State Support Mission (SSM), bringing together farmers, policymakers, scientists, agri-startups and civil society representatives from across the country to deliberate on advancing sustainable agricultural practices.

A major highlight of the workshop was the launch of comprehensive training manuals on natural farming in both Hindi and English. These manuals aim to provide practical, region-specific guidance to farmers, extension officers and grassroots-level workers, enabling them to adopt natural farming techniques more effectively. The initiative is expected to strengthen capacity-building efforts and support the transition away from chemical-intensive agriculture.

The workshop featured a virtual address by Acharya Devvrat, who underscored the

urgent need to shift towards sustainable, farmer-centric agricultural systems. Emphasising long-term benefits, he said natural farming practices can significantly improve soil health, reduce dependence on costly chemical inputs and enhance farmers' incomes over time.

Several leading agricultural and research institutions contributed to the discussions, adding scientific depth and credibility to the deliberations. Among them were Junagadh Agricultural University, Dr. Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, and Gujarat Natural Farming Science University. Their participation focused on research validation, best practices and region-specific adaptations of natural farming models.

Farmers, agricultural officers and scientists from Krishi Vigyan Kendras across Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha took part in the event, reflecting widespread national inter-

Carney lauds Modi, strengthens India-Canada ties

NEW DELHI

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on Monday praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for steering India toward becoming the fastest growing economy in the world over the past decade.

Addressing a joint press conference after bilateral talks in New Delhi, Carney highlighted India's remarkable economic transformation and rising global stature under Modi's leadership.

In the last decade, under your leadership Prime Minister, India has become the fastest growing economy in the world. Per capita incomes in this country have risen at a pace never seen in history, seldom in human history, Carney said. He added that Canada shares India's ambition and sense of purpose in addressing global challenges, emphasising that collaboration among nations is essential in the current era. Referring to the theme of India's G20 Presidency in 2023 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' Carney said the message resonated deeply with the global community. He noted that the challenges facing humanity, including climate change, economic instability and security threats, cannot be addressed by any one nation alone.

The meeting between the two leaders was held at Hyderabad House, where they reviewed the full spectrum of bilateral cooperation. Discussions covered trade and investment, defence and security, education and cultural exchanges, clean energy and critical minerals, artificial intelligence and supercomputing, as well as mobility and people-to-people ties.

Following the talks, several Memo-



India-Canada sign \$2.6 bn uranium deal

India and Canada signed a \$2.6-billion uranium supply agreement during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney at Hyderabad House. The deal ensures long-term fuel for India's civil nuclear programme and boosts cooperation in clean energy, small modular reactors and advanced nuclear technologies. Both nations also decided to accelerate negotiations on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), aiming to conclude it by 2026 and raise bilateral trade to \$50 billion by 2030. Several MoUs on critical minerals, renewable energy and cultural exchange were exchanged by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand. The critical minerals partnership seeks resilient supply chains. Modi said the visit adds new momentum to ties based on shared democratic values, diversity and commitment to global well-being. The leaders emphasised stronger investment flows, technology collaboration and people-to-people links to deepen the strategic partnership in coming years together.



randa of Understanding (MoUs) were exchanged in key sectors including civil nuclear cooperation, energy, critical minerals, education and skill development, science and technology, and culture. These agreements are ex-

pected to further deepen institutional collaboration and economic engagement between the two nations.

Carney also announced renewed defence and security cooperation, including a new defence partnership, maritime collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region, enhanced professional military exchanges, and practical coordination on shared security interests.

'India's self-reliance drive gives big push to exports too'

NEW DELHI

India's experience demonstrates that import substitution and export strength can move together when approached strategically.

Across sectors, from mobile phones and medicines to automobiles and defence, the push is to build in India not only for domestic needs, but for global markets as well, according to an official fact-sheet issued on Monday. As local capacity expands and imports reliance falls, many industries also gain the scale to export more, strengthening the external sector.

Despite the global economic uncertainties, India's cumulative exports reached \$720.76 billion in April-January 2025-26, which represents a 6.15 per cent year-on-year growth. The high growth was driven by the government's focus on sector-specific incentives, investments, and reforms in scaling domestic manufacturing capabilities. Over the past decade, bold reforms and visionary policies like 'Make in India' initiative

and 'Production-Linked Initiatives' have transformed the country into a global manufacturing hub, the official statement said. A direct outcome of the import substitution efforts is clearly visible in the striking performance of India's electronics manufacturing. With a target of building a \$500 billion domestic electronics ecosystem by 2030-31, India is now firmly on track to become a global leader in electronic design, manufacturing and exports.

Electronics production in India rose from Rs 1.9 lakh crore in 2014-15 to Rs 11.3 lakh crore in 2024-25, nearly a six-fold increase. The country has attracted over \$4 billion in FDI in electronics manufacturing since 2020-21, reflecting rising global investor confidence. The electronics manufacturing sector has generated around 25 lakh jobs in India over the last 10 years.

India is now the world's second-largest mobile phone manufacturer, with more than 300 manufacturing units operating today compared to just two units in 2014.



est in transitioning toward eco-friendly cultivation methods.

Officials from key central ministries and government bodies also shared perspectives on certification frameworks, improving market linkages, ensuring financial assistance and fostering better institutional coordination to support farmers embracing natural farming.

The workshop witnessed strong participation from agri-startups, farmer producer organisations, civil society groups and experienced practitioners, highlighting the expanding ecosystem supporting natural farming in India. The deliberations reinforced the commitment to building a resilient, sustainable agricultural future aligned with environmental conservation and farmer welfare.

AI INFRA PUSH

India's AI superpower dream lands \$200 billion

NEW DELHI

Over \$200 billion in AI-related investments are expected across infrastructure, foundation models, hardware and applications, as the 'India AI Impact Summit 2026' concluded with the adoption of forward-looking commitments and strategic partnerships that advance a shared global vision for responsible, inclusive and development-oriented artificial intelligence, an official statement said on Monday.

While Adani Group announced plans to invest \$100 billion by 2035, Reliance In-

dustries pledged \$110 billion over seven years towards AI-focused infrastructure.

Tata Group announced a partnership with OpenAI to scale AI-ready data centres. General Catalyst announced a \$5 billion investment commitment over five years, while Lightspeed Venture Partners announced \$10 billion in investments.

Sundar Pichai, CEO of Alphabet and Google, announced investments including new India-US subsea cable routes and a \$15 billion AI hub in Visakhapatnam. Google will train 20 million civil servants, support 11 million



students, and expand AI research collaborations, said the statement.

A key announcement at the Summit was the expansion of India's sovereign compute ca-

capacity. In addition to more than 38,000 GPUs already provisioned under the IndiaAI Mission, an additional 20,000 GPUs will be added in the coming weeks, further strengthening national AI infrastructure.

Notably, the Summit witnessed extensive participation, with approximately 6 lakh attendees in person and over 9 lakh cumulative views through live virtual streaming. Delegations from more than 100 countries and 20 international organisations participated in the proceedings.

During the Summit, India achieved a Guinness World

Record for the Most pledges received for an AI responsibility campaign in 24 hours, with over 2.5 lakh validated pledges reaffirming public commitment towards responsible AI adoption.

Moreover, the 'India AI Impact Summit Declaration' was endorsed by 92 countries and international organisations. The Declaration acknowledges the work undertaken by seven thematic working groups during the Summit. The 'AI Impact Expo' emerged as one of the largest AI exhibitions globally, with over 850 exhibitors across 10 thematic pavilions.



Unbeaten Proteas Can Conquer Any T20 Side: Simons

Former coach backs confident South Africa ahead of semifinal clash

KOLKATA

South Africa head into the semifinals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup brimming with belief, and former coach Eric Simons insists the unbeaten Proteas are capable of beating any team in the competition.

The Proteas, who have not dropped a game so far, will take on New Zealand national cricket team in the last-four clash in Kolkata, having already defeated them by seven wickets during the group stage. Simons, who coached South Africa during the 2023 ODI World Cup, said reaching the semifinals was expected of a side of this calibre. "It is obviously good to have reached the semifinals in a tough competition. But with the strength of this squad, not making it would have been regarded as a failure," Simons said.

He reserved special praise for skipper Aiden Markram, highlighting both his leadership and batting form. "He has led from the front with the bat and has been strategically smart. It is clear he trusts his bowlers," Simons noted.



According to Simons, consistency in selection and clarity in roles have been central to South Africa's unbeaten run. He cited key contributions from senior players, including David Miller, whose match-winning knock against India he described as one of the finest he has witnessed. Bowlers such as Lungi Ngidi and spinner Keshav Maharaj have also played pivotal roles in restricting opposition totals.

Reflecting on the dramatic

double Super Over win against Afghanistan, Simons called it the standout match of the tournament for sheer drama.

While he acknowledged that India might start as marginal favourites if they reach the final, Simons was unequivocal about his country's chances. "Any team can beat any team in T20 cricket. But absolutely, South Africa can beat any team and would go into any semifinal as favourites," he asserted.

With momentum and belief on their side, the Proteas appear primed for a serious title push.

Guru Gambhir Beams as Sanju Mirrors His 2011 Masterclass

Samson's unbeaten 97 powers India into T20 World Cup semis

KOLKATA

Fifteen years after crafting a defining 97 in the 2011 ODI World Cup final at the Wankhede Stadium, Gautam Gambhir found himself reliving history — this time as head coach — as Sanju Samson produced a near-identical match-winning knock to steer India into the semifinals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

Back in 2011, Gambhir's 97 anchored India's successful chase against Sri Lanka national cricket team in the ODI World Cup final. On Sunday at the Eden Gardens, Samson struck an unbeaten 97 to guide the Men in Blue past a formidable West Indies national cricket team total of 195 in a high-pressure knock-out clash.

The Kerala wicket-keeper-batter, under scrutiny after a lean patch, rose to the occasion with poise and authority. Chasing a stiff target set by Shai Hope and Co., Samson paced his innings expertly, finding boundaries without resorting to brute force. India reached the target with four balls to

spare and five wickets in hand. Gambhir was effusive in his praise. "Sanju is a world-class player.

He always knew the talent he possesses. It was about backing him, and when the team needed him most, he showed his true potential," the coach said after the match.

He emphasised that Samson's knock was built on classical strokeplay rather than reckless acceleration. Gambhir also revealed that a short break after a tough series against New Zealand national cricket team had helped ease pressure on the batter.

A confidence-boosting outing against Zimbabwe national cricket team further set the stage for Sunday's heroics.

Gambhir credited bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya for controlling the middle overs against dangerous hitters like Shimron Hetmyer and Rovman Powell, calling Bumrah a "banker" in crunch situations.

India now travel to the Wankhede Stadium to face England national cricket team in the semifinal on March 5 — a venue steeped in Gambhir's own World Cup legacy. As coach, he will hope Samson's brilliance marks the beginning of another historic chapter.



Gavaskar Hails Samson's Redemption Knock in T20 WC

MUMBAI



Batting great Sunil Gavaskar believes the entire cricketing fraternity will rejoice after Sanju Samson finally delivered on the big stage with a match-winning 97 not out against the West Indies national cricket team in the Super 8 of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

Samson's composed yet authoritative knock powered India to a five-wicket win in a must-win clash, sealing a semifinal date with England national cricket team at the Wankhede Stadium on March 5.

Gavaskar said the innings lifted a massive burden off Samson's shoulders. "This knock of 97 not out takes the weight off not just Sanju's shoulders, but off everyone who knows what a fine player he is. He

has had ups and downs, and because he is such a nice guy, everybody wants him to succeed," Gavaskar remarked.

The former India captain described the effort as a dream performance in a knockout encounter. Though Samson fell three runs short of a century, Gavaskar felt another hundred was just around the corner. "It was not an easy target, but this team did not give up," he added.

Gavaskar also highlighted India's smart strike rotation during the chase, noting that minimizing dot balls is key in T20 cricket. "If you score off 80 to 85 balls in a 120-ball innings, you give yourself a real chance. India did that perfectly," he explained.

Expert Abhishek Nayar termed Samson's knock "measured, controlled and aggressive," praising his resilience after fluctuating batting positions and limited opportunities.

Meanwhile, Gavaskar called Jasprit Bumrah a "cheat code," citing his twin strikes — including Shimron Hetmyer — as the turning point that dismantled the West Indies' momentum. With confidence soaring, India now march into the semifinals with renewed belief.



Dhoni joins camp as five-time champions eye strong comeback

CSK Begin IPL 2026 Preparations in Earnest

CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings commenced their pre-season camp ahead of the 19th edition of the Indian Premier League, with former skipper MS Dhoni headlining the early arrivals at the franchise's High Performance Centre in Navalur.

The five-time champions have begun training under assistant coach Rajiv Kumar and assistant bowling coach S. Sriram, with head coach Stephen Fleming and bowling

coach Eric Simons expected to join the squad by March 16. The initial batch comprises Indian players, while overseas recruits are slated to arrive later this month.

Captain Ruturaj Gaikwad, along with Dhoni, reached the city. Among the others who have checked in are Ayush Mhatre, Urvil Patel, Mukesh Choudhary and Prashant Veer, as the Men in Yellow look to rebuild after two disappointing campaigns.

Since lifting their fifth title in 2023 under Dhoni's leader-

ship, Super Kings have struggled to replicate that success. They narrowly missed a play-off berth in 2024 and endured a particularly forgettable 2025 season, finishing at the bottom of the table with just four wins.

In a bold move ahead of last year's auction, CSK reshaped their core by signing wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson from Rajasthan Royals. In exchange, seasoned all-rounders Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran were traded to the Royals — a move that

signalled a strategic reset.

With speculation mounting that IPL 2026 could be Dhoni's final season as a player, the campaign carries added emotional weight. The franchise icon, who has been synonymous with CSK's golden era, continues to draw immense support from fans.

For Chennai, the upcoming season is more than just a quest for silverware — it is an opportunity to restore pride and possibly script a fitting farewell for one of the league's greatest leaders.

Gukesh Blunders Again as Abdusattorov Strikes at Prague

PRAGUE

Reigning world champion D Gukesh endured another painful setback, blundering from a position of strength to hand Nodirbek Abdusattorov a crucial victory in the Masters section of the Prague International Chess Festival. For the fifth consecutive day, fortunes refused to favour the Indian prodigy. Just a month ago, Gukesh had suffered a similar fate against Abdusattorov at the Tata Steel Chess Tournament. The defeat, however, proved even more agonising as Gukesh had outplayed his opponent for much of the middlegame and appeared poised for a breakthrough win.

Playing with the black pieces, Gukesh unveiled a fresh strategy, launching an early assault on the white king and steadily building pressure. Engines suggested he was closing in on his first victory in the Masters section this year. But as the first time control approached, the ticking clock seemed to take its toll. A late miscalculation reversed the momentum entirely.

Abdusattorov nearly returned the favour in the tense endgame, but Gukesh faltered again at a critical juncture, allowing the Uzbek star to push his passed pawn to promotion and seal the point.

Elsewhere, Dutch Grandmaster Jorden van Foreest continued his red-hot form, registering his fourth win in five rounds to climb to World No. 11 in live ratings. American Hans Niemann was his latest victim, undone by a single decisive error.

Defending champion Aravindh Chithambaram slumped to his third defeat, losing to Spain's David Navara and Iran's Parham Maghsoodloo also scored important victories.

With four points, Van Foreest leads the standings, followed closely by Abdusattorov and Navara. Gukesh, Aravindh and Niemann languish at the bottom on 1.5 points each.

In the Challengers section, Divyadeshmukh notched her first win, defeating compatriot Surya Shekhar Ganguly to move to an even score.



NEW DELHI

Afghanistan national cricket team will begin their upcoming tour of India with a one-off Test in New Chandigarh, followed by a three-match ODI series, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced on Monday.

According to BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, the standalone Test will be held from June 6 to 10 at the PCA Stadium in Mullanpur, New Chandigarh. However, the fixture will not



form part of India's World Test Championship cycle.

"The Afghanistan team will play one Test match followed by a three-match One-Day International series," Saikia said in an official release, confirming the dates and venues.

With India's focus gradually shifting towards the 2027 ODI World Cup, the limited-overs leg of the series is seen as crucial preparation. The three ODIs will begin on June 14 in Dharamshala, followed by matches in Lucknow on June 17 and Chennai on June 20. All games are scheduled to start at 1:30 PM IST.

The Test match offers Afghanistan another opportunity to gain experience in the longest format against a top-tier side. Since receiving Test status in 2017, Afghanistan have

shown steady progress, though consistency remains a challenge against established cricketing nations.

For India, the red-ball encounter provides a chance to test bench strength outside the WTC commitments, while the ODI series will likely serve as an early platform to shape combinations for the 50-over World Cup in 2027.

The IDFC First Bank Afghanistan Tour of India schedule is as follows:

Test: New Chandigarh, June 6-10

1st ODI: Dharamshala, June 14

2nd ODI: Lucknow, June 17

3rd ODI: Chennai, June 20

The announcement adds another significant bilateral series to India's packed international calendar for 2026.

Amir Faces Backlash after India Enter Semis, Flags 'Controversial' Dismissal

NEW DELHI

Former Pakistan pacer Mohammad Amir has found himself at the centre of social media backlash after his prediction that India would fail to reach the semifinals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup was proven wrong.

India sealed their spot in the last four with a crucial victory over the West Indies national cricket team in the Super 8 stage, prompting fans to revisit Amir's earlier remarks. The former left-arm fast bowler had stated that the India national cricket team would not make the semifinals — a claim that quickly went viral after the result.

However, Amir shifted focus to a contentious moment during the match, suggesting that a key decision could have altered the outcome. In the 12th over of the West Indies innings, Shimron Hetmyer attempted an aggressive stroke off Jasprit Bumrah but was caught behind by Sanju Samson. On-field umpire Chris Gaffaney raised his finger after a confident appeal, and although Hetmyer reviewed the decision, replays indicated a faint edge.

Speaking on a Pakistani television show, Amir maintained that the dismissal was debatable.

