



## Ram Temple gets top commander as CEO

From leading the Indian Air Force's Western Air Command during Op Sindoor to being the first CEO of Ram Temple, Air Marshal (Retd.) Mishra prepares for a completely different role after over 38 years of service.

The appointment came amid a raging controversy over the alleged embezzlement of temple donations that led to the arrest of eight people.

### AYODHYA

The Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust on Wednesday named Air Marshal (retd.) Jeetendra Mishra, who played a key role in commanding air operations during Operation Sindoor, as its first chief executive officer (CEO), from a shortlist of three candidates picked from 5,585 applications by a high-powered committee.

The decision was taken unanimously during a Trust meeting in Ayodhya. The decorated former Indian Air Force commander retired in April 2026 and will now oversee the temple Trust's expanding administrative responsibilities.

He was among the senior military commanders recognised for leadership during Operation Sindoor. President Droupadi Murmu conferred the Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal on him in recognition of his distinguished service during the operation. The medal is awarded for the highest order of distinguished service during war, conflict or hostilities. It remains one of India's rarest military decorations.

Mishra's appointment brings to the Trust a senior leader with extensive experience in



### WHO IS JEETENDRA MISHRA?

#### A fighter pilot with nearly 4 decades of service

Mishra was commissioned into the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force on December 6, 1986, as part of the 138 Course. Over a career of more than 38 years, he accumulated over 3,000 hours of flying experience on various aircraft. His professional education and training included the National Defence Academy, Air Force Test Pilots School, the Air Command and Staff College in the United States and the Royal College of Defence Studies in the United Kingdom. He also qualified as a Fighter Combat Leader and experimental test pilot.

#### Role in Kargil War and test flying

Mishra's operational record includes the Kargil War, when he served as a Squadron Leader and was involved in the operationalisation of laser-guided bombs on Mirage 2000 aircraft during Operation Safed Sagar.

operational planning, coordination, logistics and managing large formations.

Mishra has roots in Uttar Pradesh. He originally belongs to Bhopatpura in Deoria dis-

trict, around three hours by road from Ayodhya. He comes from a middle-class family and his father was a lecturer.

He served in the Indian Air Force for nearly 40 years be-

fore retiring on April 30, 2026 as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, West Air Command. Earlier, he served as the Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations).

### CEO selection process at a glance

- 5,585:** Total applications received for the CEO post
- 1,580:** Applications found eligible and suitable after scrutiny
- 108:** Applicants shortlisted for online interactive session
- 16:** Finalists called for face-to-face interactions in Ayodhya
- 3:** Candidates recommended by search committee for CEO post.
- 75 pages:** Length of the committee's final report
- Selected retired Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra as CEO.

The appointments came amid a raging controversy over the alleged embezzlement of temple donations that led to the arrest of eight people and the resignation of Champat Rai as general secretary in June.

The CEO will serve as the highest executive authority responsible for the officers, functionaries, employees, and staff of the organization.

#### 3 new trustees

Besides, the Trust named Mahesh Bhagchandka from Delhi, former additional advocate general Madan Mohan Pandey from Ayodhya and Nirmala Yadav from Shikohabad as new trustees.



## ‘Not charity’: Nepal wants India, China, US to pay up for floods

PM Balendra 'Balen' Shah may raise the issue at the UN General Assembly.

### KATHMANDU

Nepal is seeking "climate-related compensation" from the US, India, and China -- which the Himalayan nation named as the major greenhouse emitters -- for deadly flash floods in the Bhotkoshi River that swept away villages across at least three districts in the country a week ago.

Launching a diplomatic pitch to seek international monetary assistance, Nepal Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal asserted that post-disaster aid should be treated as a matter of "moral liability," "not charity."

He pointed out that despite contributing "virtually negligible" greenhouse gas emissions, Nepal is bearing the disproportionate consequences of global warming, including rapid glacier melt and extreme mountain disasters.

"We are paying the ultimate price for a global crisis we did not create. The rapid melting of glaciers and these catastrophic mountain tsunamis are direct consequences of global climate change," he added.

### Nepal floods: Death toll rises to 1,127, over 4,800 still missing

**Kathmandu:** The death toll from the devastating flash floods that struck Nepal last week has climbed to 1,127, with search and rescue teams continuing to look for 4,858 people still missing, police said on Wednesday. The latest toll includes 348 bodies recovered from Chitwan, 217 from Nawalparasi East, 190 from Nawalparasi West and 155 from Nuwakot. Another 66 bodies were recovered in Gorkha, 59 in Dhading, 45 in Rasuwa and 38 in Tanahu. Of the 1,127 bodies recovered so far, postmortem and legal identification procedures have been completed for 1,113. Authorities have handed over 95 bodies to their families. To help locate missing relatives, the Nepal Police has uploaded details of 911 unidentified bodies on its website for identification.

## FIR against RaGa: Cong hits Bengaluru streets

### BENGALURU

Karnataka Congress on Wednesday staged a protest at Freedom Park here, condemning the FIR registered against Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi over his remarks on an alleged purification ritual held at the venue in Uttarakhand where AICC chief Mallikarjun Kharge addressed a rally.

The protest, held under the leadership of KPCC chief B K Hariprasad, was attended by Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, senior Congress leader and former CM Siddaramaiah, along with other leaders and party office-bearers.

Addressing the gathering, Hariprasad said that Gandhi questioned the alleged "purification" ritual carried out at the venue where Kharge had addressed a public meeting.

"The act of purification was an insult to Kharge and the Dalit community. Gandhi raised the issue and demanded action under the SC/ST Act, but an FIR was filed against him instead. We will not remain silent over this. We have a tradition of fighting through

### Rahul Gandhi has right to raise voice for Dalits: DKS

Chief Minister Shivakumar defended Rahul Gandhi over the FIR registered against him for his remarks on the alleged "purification" ritual after Mallikarjun Kharge's Haldwani rally, saying that as Leader of the Opposition, he has every right to raise his voice for Dalits. "This is a great democratic country...Rahul Gandhi has been pressurising that what has been done wrong has to be rectified through an FIR. Since he is raising his voice for the Dalits of this country, and the BJP is filing an FIR against him...as the LoP, he has every right to speak and every right to raise his voice, stand by all sections of society..."

truth and non-violence," he said. Gandhi had been targeted with an FIR in an attempt to silence his voice, he added.

## 'Sita's character greater than Rama's' DKS bats for women's leadership

'Women are creators, and those of you who have built enterprises by overcoming challenges are also role models'.

### BENGALURU

Hailing women for their strength and sacrifices, Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said that Sita's character in the Ramayana was greater than Rama's. Shivakumar also urged women entrepreneurs to take up leadership roles in the state's growth.

He was speaking after inaugurating the fifth edition of 'Together We Grow – International Women Entrepreneurship Day', organised by Ubuntu Consortium of Women Entrepreneurs Association here.

He urged women entrepreneurs to take a leadership role in the state's development. He said, "Women are creators. They should lead all the way to Parliament. The government will extend full support."

**Women leadership needed from GPs to Parliament** Shivakumar said women's leadership is essential at every level, from gram panchayats to



Parliament. He said the state government is committed to empowering women.

He said, "When women's creativity, ability and determination get access to capital, technology and markets, there is no limit to what they can create. It is the government's responsibility to create an environment where their potential can grow."

#### Sonia Gandhi, women from Mahabharata as examples

He described women as the "eyes" of the family in Indian culture. He praised women entrepreneurs for overcoming financial challenges while running their businesses and assured them of the government's full support.

Citing Congress leader Sonia Gandhi as an example, he

### K'taka govt has no women ministers!

The Karnataka government has 33 ministers, including the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister. However, not a single woman is part of the state Cabinet. On August 3, 2026, DK Shivakumar inducted 20 new ministers, but no woman was included in the Cabinet expansion either.

said she faced the loss of her mother-in-law, former PM Indira Gandhi, and her husband, former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Despite these setbacks, she stepped forward and led the party.

### K'taka to launch Praja Seva Abhiyana on Sept 5

**HOSAPETE:** The Karnataka government's ambitious Praja Seva Abhiyana will be officially launched at Kudligi in Vijayanagara district on September 5.

Minister KS Basavanthappa said Chief Minister DK Shivakumar will inaugurate the state-level event, which will be attended by several Cabinet ministers and elected representatives from the district. Addressing a preparatory meeting in Kudligi, he said Praja Seva was aimed at taking the government and administrative machinery to people's doorsteps to provide services and address their grievances. "This is not merely a publicity exercise. It is an innovative system through which the government and administration reach the people's doorstep and respond to their problems.

## UN chief to join Modi-Putin-Xi in Delhi this month

### NEW DELHI

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will take part in the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi later this month. India, which holds the BRICS chair this year, will host the summit at Bharat Mandapam on September 12 and 13.

Guterres' participation was indicated by his spokesman, Stephane Dujarric, at a press briefing on Tuesday. He said, "... we have yet to officially announce that the secretary-general will participate in the BRICS meeting in New Delhi in about 10 days' time." He was replying to a question on possible meetings between Guterres and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Russian President

Vladimir Putin during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Kyrgyzstan on August 31 and September 1.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the BRICS summit will bring together leaders of BRICS member and partner countries, along with outreach invitees. The theme of India's BRICS chairship is 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'.

The MEA said more than 350 meetings and high-level engagements have been held in over 25 cities across India to strengthen the BRICS strategic partnership across three pillars: political and security, economic and financial, and cultural and people-to-people

exchanges. It said these engagements, along with business-to-business and people-to-people initiatives, have contributed to advancing BRICS cooperation through practical and development-oriented outcomes.

India, a founding member of BRICS, previously held the chairship in 2012, 2016 and 2021. It assumed its fourth BRICS chairship on January 1, 2026. BRICS is also celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

Guterres, whose second five-year term as UN chief ends in December 2026, had visited India in February to attend the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi. The event was the first global AI summit to be hosted in the Global South.



| SUMMIT DETAILS |                                                                        |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dates          | September 12-13, 2026.                                                 |
| Location       | Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.                                            |
| Theme          | 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability.' |

### ATTENDEES AND CONTEXT

**Leaders:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Chinese President Xi Jinping are slated to gather under one roof following recent engagements at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Bishkek.

**UN participation:** UN chief António Guterres is expected to participate, continuing diplomatic talks following his recent discussions on regional conflicts and global governance.

**Milestone:** The 2026 event marks both the 20th anniversary of the BRICS grouping and India's fourth chairship of the bloc.

### Bus crash in Egypt's South Sinai kills 21

**SOUTH SINAI:** A bus crash in Egypt's South Sinai governorate has killed 21 people and hurt 20 others, the government sources said.

The incident happened on Wednesday morning on the road from Dahab to Nuweiba on the eastern coast of the Sinai Peninsula, an area with resorts along the Red Sea popular with tourists. A number of Jordanians were on the bus and initial information indicated several were killed and injured, Jordan's foreign ministry said. Deadly road accidents are common in Egypt. Last year, nearly 6,000 people died in road accidents across the country, according to Egypt's state statistics agency. Last month, 18 people were killed and 30 injured in a road accident in the northeastern governorate of Ismailia.

Quick Read



Metro's old trains get a midlife makeover

**CH NEWS,** Bengaluru  
BMRL is set to overhaul Namma Metro trains inducted during the first phase, with some having completed 15 years of service and travelled nearly 10 lakh km. Each train will undergo around 15 days of phased inspection and maintenance, including cleaning, minor repairs and replacement of worn components. Braking systems, engines and other critical parts will be checked to improve reliability and passenger safety. The exercise will be staggered to avoid disruption to daily services. The induction of 21 new trains on the Yellow Line by September 2027, along with the transfer of 17 trains to the Purple Line, will provide additional operational flexibility. Namma Metro currently carries around 10 lakh passengers daily, making fleet reliability crucial, particularly during peak hours.

Siddaramaiah condemns FIR against Rahul Gandhi, calls for protests

Siddaramaiah accused BJP of targeting Rahul Gandhi, recalling his earlier legal troubles and subsequent court relief

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Former Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday condemned the FIR against Rahul Gandhi, calling it gross injustice and an attack on constitutional values. Speaking at a protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru against the FIR registered by Uttarakhand Police against the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Siddaramaiah said Rahul Gandhi had committed no wrongdoing and had merely questioned the “purification” of a venue where Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had delivered a speech. Siddaramaiah said the act of “purifying” the place after Kharge’s speech was unconstitutional and amounted to an affront to the Constitution, which prohibits untouchability. He alleged that registering a case against Rahul Gandhi over questioning the incident was an insult to both Kharge and the Lok Sabha Opposition leader. He questioned why Rahul Gandhi should face a case when he had only raised objections to the alleged incident.



| Siddaramaiah's key points                                   |                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| ■ <b>Issue:</b> FIR against Rahul Gandhi                    | ■ <b>Constitutional concern:</b> Untouchability |
| ■ <b>Venue:</b> Freedom Park, Bengaluru                     | ■ <b>Congress demand:</b> Opposition to the FIR |
| ■ <b>Main allegation:</b> Political action to silence Rahul | ■ <b>Call:</b> Statewide protests               |
|                                                             | ■ <b>Support:</b> Rahul Gandhi                  |

Siddaramaiah said a case should instead be registered against those practising untouchability, alleging that the action against Rahul was politically motivated. The former chief minister accused the BJP and the Centre of attempting to silence Rahul Gandhi. He recalled the earlier legal action against Rahul Gandhi, including the cancellation of his Lok Sabha membership, and said the courts had subsequently pro-

vided relief. Siddaramaiah said Rahul Gandhi stood for the Constitution and opposed untouchability, while accusing the BJP of acting against constitutional principles. He described the FIR as a “grave offence” that could not be tolerated. Calling for protests across Karnataka, Siddaramaiah said the BJP was unfit to remain in power and assured Rahul Gandhi of the Congress party’s support in his political fight.

“Rahul Gandhi has committed no wrongdoing. This is gross injustice and cannot be tolerated.”  
- Siddaramaiah, Former CM

Siddaramaiah backs Rahul

Siddaramaiah said Rahul Gandhi had only questioned the alleged purification of a venue where Mallikarjun Kharge had spoken. Calling the practice unconstitutional, he said the Constitution prohibits its untouchability. The former chief minister accused the BJP-led government of politically targeting Rahul and attempting to silence him. He urged Congress workers to organise statewide protests and said the party would stand firmly with Rahul Gandhi and strengthen his fight.

Woman booked after twin daughters found dead in Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 40-year-old woman has been booked for allegedly causing the deaths of her four-month-old twin daughters at their home in Vajarahalli, south Bengaluru. The children had been born through IVF treatment in May. According to a complaint filed by the children’s father, Ramalingappa, 50, he and his wife Umadevi had undergone IVF treatment after remaining childless for years. The couple’s twin daughters were born on May 5, 2026. The incident occurred at their residence in B.C.C.H.S. Layout. Ramalingappa reportedly returned home and found a room locked from inside. On opening it, he allegedly found Umadevi attempting to take her own life. The two infants were found unresponsive in the same room. Umadevi was rescued and shifted to a hospital for treatment. Police said preliminary findings suggested that the children had been drowned. Talaghattapura

police registered a murder case under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita based on the father’s complaint. Police suspect that Umadevi drowned the children before attempting suicide, but the exact circumstances and motive are still being investigated. The complaint stated that her behaviour reportedly changed about one-and-a-half months after childbirth. She allegedly became disinterested in caring for the infants and repeatedly suggested sending them to an ashram. Family members subsequently sought psychiatric treatment for her at NIM-HANS and another facility in Raghuvanahalli. They were reportedly told that her behaviour could be associated with postpartum depression and hormonal changes after childbirth. Police are examining her medical history, treatment, the circumstances inside the room and other evidence to establish the sequence of events. Further details are expected as the investigation progresses.

Karnataka seeks CWC technical clearance for Mekedatu project

CH NEWS, BENGALURU/NEW DELHI



“We have urged the CWC to facilitate timely examination and extend the technical cooperation required to take the project forward.”  
- N Cheluvarayasu, Water Resources Minister

scrutiny. The meeting assumes significance following a recent site inspection by CWC Member Yogesh Paitankar. Karnataka officials briefed the Commission on ground conditions at the proposed project site and discussed technical aspects emerging from the inspection. The minister stressed Mekedatu’s importance in meeting

Bengaluru’s long-term drinking water needs amid rising demand, rainfall variability and periods of water stress. The proposed reservoir is also expected to support drinking water requirements in neighbouring districts and facilitate hydropower generation. Karnataka maintained that enhanced water storage and regulation could strengthen water management during rainfall-deficit years while enabling regulated downstream releases in accordance with applicable requirements. The state government reiterated its commitment to advancing the project and requested the CWC to complete its ongoing technical examination at the earliest, following established procedures. The delegation included Additional Chief Secretary Gaurav Gupta, Water Resources Department Secretary Krishnamurthy Kulkarni and other officials.

Karnataka clears ₹315 crore hotel projects

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



“Karnataka has immense tourism potential, and expanding quality accommodation and hospitality infrastructure is one of our key priorities.”  
- K.J. George, Energy and Tourism Minister

der the Karnataka Tourism Policy 2024–29. These include 35 premium and 43 budget hotels. Once implemented, the 78 projects are expected to attract investments of ₹1,080.97 crore, add 3,424 rooms and generate 3,707 jobs across Karnataka. The government said the projects would improve the availability of quality accommodation at tourism destinations while boosting private investment, local employment

and tourism-led economic activity. George said Karnataka had immense tourism potential and that expanding quality accommodation and hospitality infrastructure remained a key priority. He said the new Tourism Policy was designed to encourage private investment, create employment and strengthen local economies across different parts of the State. Tourism Department Secretary Dr Ram Prasath Manohar

| Hotel investment boost                 |
|----------------------------------------|
| ■ Approved projects: 18                |
| ■ Investment: ₹314.93 crore            |
| ■ Subsidy: ₹47.23 crore                |
| ■ New rooms: 655                       |
| ■ Jobs: 1,542                          |
| ■ In-principle projects: 78            |
| ■ Expected investment: ₹1,080.97 crore |
| ■ Expected rooms: 3,424                |
| ■ Expected jobs: 3,707                 |

said the projects were intended not merely to increase room capacity but also provide tourists with better accommodation across different price segments. He said the department would facilitate timely implementation of the approved projects.

31 Bangladeshi nationals shifted to Malda for deportation

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru police have shifted 31 Bangladeshi nationals, who were found staying illegally in the city, to West Bengal as part of the process to deport them to Bangladesh. The foreign nationals were detained during special drives conducted across 10 police stations under the Electronic City Division in August. According to Electronic City DCP M Narayana, the 31 detainees were escorted by a 20-member police team from Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal (SMVT) in Bengaluru on Monday. The group reached Malda Railway Station early

Wednesday morning and was handed over to the local police. They were subsequently lodged at the Karma Tirtha Holding Centre, where the authorities will complete the legal formalities required for their deportation, police said. The latest action follows a major crackdown by the Electronic City sub-division police last month. During simultaneous raids at 29 locations, police detained 1,909 people suspected of staying illegally in the country. The operation, conducted under Narayana’s leadership, involved 23 special teams and 295 police personnel. The teams began searches around 4 am to identify and verify the

nationality and documents of suspected illegal immigrants. Following document verification, 15 people were confirmed as Bangladeshi nationals. Police said they were allegedly in possession of fake Aadhaar cards showing West Bengal and Assam as their places of origin. The documents of the remaining 1,894 suspects are still being verified. Police are scrutinising their visas, passports and other nationality-related documents as part of the process. According to the police, the 15 confirmed Bangladeshi nationals were from Bagerhat district in Khulna division of Bangladesh and are suspected to have illegally crossed into India.

RTO warns against illegal vehicle modifications

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Vehicle owners cannot freely alter their vehicles beyond manufacturer-approved specifications, RTO officials have warned, saying unauthorised modifications can invite legal action. Officials said modifications affecting safety, visibility, identification details or registered specifications require prior permission from the registering authority. Removable decals, stickers and wraps are generally allowed if they do not compromise safety or alter registered details. However, changes in vehicle colour must be reported to the RTO through the prescribed process. Officials also cautioned against tinted glass, stickers or markings resembling government and emergency-service vehicles, and fancy registration plates that obscure identification details. Use of symbols or designations such as ‘Police’, ‘Army’, ‘Press’, ‘MLA’ or ‘Judge’ on private vehicles is also prohibited. RTO officials said enforcement action, including vehicle impounding where permitted, could follow violations.

One year of GBA, but civic woes remain

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



The restructuring was intended to decentralise civic administration and improve coordination. However, residents say poor roads, drainage, waste management, traffic issues, property-tax reassessment and e-khata problems persist. Rajajinagar MLA S Suresh Kumar said the restructuring had not brought administration sufficiently closer to citizens.

He pointed out that five corporation commissioners had replaced eight zonal joint commissioners without adequate additional powers. Staff shortages, including ward engineers, health inspectors and pourakarmikas, remain a concern, he said. He also alleged weak coordination among agencies such as BESCOM, BWSSB, BMTC, BDA and Metro, besides inadequate review meetings. The absence of elected representatives is another major concern. BBMP corporators’ term ended in October 2020, leaving Bengaluru without an elected civic council.

Cauvery handicrafts in Bengaluru gets digital push

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



The existing e-commerce portal was developed in 2012. The new platform will offer a more customer-friendly digital marketplace, featuring a wider range of handicrafts and improved buying options. A key feature will be the

‘Customize Product’ facility, allowing customers to submit requirements related to size, design, colour, material, engraving, personalisation, quantity and packaging. The facility will also cater to corporate gifting and special-event require-

ments. The portal will bring several traditional crafts under one digital platform, including sandalwood and rosewood products, Bidriware, Channapatta lacquerware, Kinhal toys, Mysore traditional paintings, Ganjifa art, metal crafts, hand-

loom and textile products. The upgraded portal is expected to function as a digital extension of Cauvery Handicrafts Emporium, connecting Karnataka’s artisans and their craftsmanship with a wider customer base. Government Secretary, MSME, Mines & Textiles Department, Rohini Sindhuri said the initiative would help take Karnataka’s handicrafts to a larger market while creating new opportunities for artisans. KSHDCL Managing Director H R Rajappa said the new portal would make Cauvery products more accessible to buyers in India and abroad.

| Digital makeover                          |
|-------------------------------------------|
| ■ Current online sales: ₹70 lakh annually |
| ■ Target: ₹5 crore annually               |
| ■ Target period: 3 years                  |
| ■ Portal launch: Upcoming Ganesh festival |
| ■ Existing portal: Launched in 2012       |
| ■ Key feature: Customise Product          |
| ■ Market: India and overseas              |

Quick Read

Scholarship, online application deadline extended to September 30

**CH NEWS, VIJAYAPURA**  
The Department of Backward Classes Welfare has extended the deadline for eligible students from Backward Classes and Category-1 nomadic and semi-nomadic communities pursuing post-matric courses during the academic year 2026-27 to September 30. Applications can be submitted under the following schemes: Post-Matric Scholarship, Eligibility Scholarship for Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities Fee Reimbursement Scheme, Vidyasiri – Food and Accommodation Assistance Scheme. Eligible students can apply online through the State Scholarship Portal: SSP Karnataka – Post-Matric Scholarship Portal. For details of the schemes and government orders, students can visit: Department of Backward Classes Welfare, Karnataka. Department Helpline: 8050770004, Email: bcwdhelpline@gmail.com, State Scholarship Portal Helpline: 1902, Portal Helpdesk Email: postmatrichelp@karnataka.gov.in. The District Officer of the Department of Backward Classes Welfare has urged all eligible students to make use of the extended deadline and submit their applications online before September 30.

KPSC recruitment scam, CID conducts raid at Laxmi Souharda Cooperative Bank

**CH NEWS, BIDAR**  
As part of the investigation into the alleged KPSC Veterinary Officer recruitment scam, a team of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) officials conducted a raid at Laxmi Souharda Cooperative Bank in Lecturer Colony, Bhalki town, on Wednesday morning. The operation is reportedly linked to the investigation of Basavaraj Kannale, who has been arrested in connection with the case. According to sources, the CID officials arrived at the bank in the early hours and began examining various bank records, financial transactions and other information relevant to the investigation. The sudden arrival of the CID team created curiosity among people in the area. Officials are reportedly scrutinising the bank's records as part of efforts to trace financial transactions and other possible links related to the recruitment case. It is not yet known whether the investigators have recovered any significant documents or information from the bank. The CID operation was continuing, and further details are expected after the completion of the search and verification process.

# Tender invited for survey of Alamatti–Yadgir Railway line

Once the Alamatti–Yadgir railway line is constructed, it will fulfil the long-pending dream of the people and open up new opportunities for regional development

CH NEWS, YADGIR

MP G Kumar Naik has welcomed the invitation of tenders for the survey of the proposed Alamatti–Yadgir railway line, describing it as a significant development for the region. Speaking at the unveiling of the statues of the late Raja Venkatappa Naik and Basavantraya Sahukar at Geddalamari village in Hunasagi taluk, he said the railway line was a long-standing demand of the people, he said. He also praised the people of rural areas for their warmth and said such programmes were a reflection of their unity. MLA Raja Venugopal Naik, who presided over the programme, said his father, Raja Venkatappa Naik, was a person who gave greater importance to action than words. He said he would never forget



the love and trust shown by the people of Geddalamari and the constituency towards his father. Kodakal Durgadundeshwar Mutt seer Shivakumar Swamiji said rain-fed cotton and tur crops had suffered extensive damage in the Hunasagi and Surpur areas. He urged the MLA to meet the Chief Minister and Revenue Minister at the earliest and press for the inclusion of Hunasagi and Surpur taluks in the drought-hit list. He also

urged the government to provide necessary assistance and relief to the affected farmers. Former Zilla Panchayat president Rajashekhargouda Patil Vazzal delivered the introductory address. Gulbal Ramalingeshwar Mutt seer Marihucheshwar Swamiji and Balshettihalli Siddalinga Swamiji were present. Raja Santosh Naik, Raja Kumar Naik, Raja Vasudeva Naik, senior leaders Vittal Yadav, Yankoba Yadav, Naganna Sahu Dan-

I will continue to serve the people by strengthening relationships that transcend politics and following in his footsteps, MLA Raja Venugopal Naik said. He also called upon people to follow the ideals of Basavantraya Sahukar and give priority to the development of villages.

din, Gyanachand Jain, Gopaladas Ladwa, Mallanna Sahu Mudhol, Chandrashekhara Dandin, Ningraj Bachimatti, Siddu Mugadal, Basavaraj Bali, Naresh Jain, Eshwappa Shrigiri, Prabhugouda Harnal, Marilingappa Karnal, Doddadasai Devaragounal, Chandrashekhara Haveri, Gundappa Solapur and Bhimangouda Yamanur were among those present. The programme followed the unveiling of the statues of Raja Venkatappa Naik and Basavantraya Sahukar.

## “Water flows in Bhima river, but not to farmers’ fields”

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

The canal, which was expected to provide a lifeline to farmers in this drought-prone region, has allegedly become a source of distress due to poor maintenance. Farmers from the tail-end areas of Shivur and Kudiganur claim that adequate water is not reaching their lands despite the availability of water in the river.

With rainfall remaining below normal this year, farmers are already struggling to protect their crops. Several fields are reportedly nearing the stage of crop failure due to inadequate rainfall. Against this backdrop, the inability to utilise available river water for irrigation has raised serious questions over the functioning and maintenance of the canal system. According to local farmers, several stretches of the Allagi (B) canal are overgrown with thorny bushes, weeds and other veg-

Farmers have urged the authorities to conduct a spot inspection before certifying such works. Apart from clearing the thorny bushes and weeds, the authorities need to inspect canal gates, water-control mechanisms and other technical infrastructure to ensure that they are functioning properly.

etation. The growth is reportedly obstructing the smooth flow of water. Farmers have questioned whether the concerned department has been carrying out canal cleaning and maintenance works regularly.

The fact that water reportedly reaches the initial stretches of the canal but fails to reach the tail-end areas of Shivur and Kudiganur has also raised questions about the canal's capacity, wa-

ter-distribution mechanism and technical functioning. Farmers have demanded a technical inspection of the entire canal system to ascertain the reasons for the failure of water to reach the tail-end areas. They have also sought details of the funds released for canal cleaning and maintenance during the past few years and the expenditure incurred on such works.

If funds have been released, the authorities should disclose details of the works undertaken and the amount spent, farmers said.

They have also demanded verification of whether the cleaning works were actually carried out on the ground or merely shown in official records.

Questions have also been raised regarding payments made to contractors, the quality of maintenance works and whether the works were properly completed.

## Temple locks broken, silver idol & gold angalsutra stolen

KALABURAGI

Miscreants allegedly broke open the locks of temples and stole a silver idol and gold mangalsutras at Jainapur Tanda village in Jewargi taluk.

The thefts were reported at the Dyaavamma Devi temple in Jainapur village and the Jagadamba and Sant Sevalal Maharaj temples in the tanda. The thieves allegedly stole an approximately 10-gram gold mangalsutra from the neck of the Dyaavamma Devi idol. They also reportedly stole a silver idol of Sant Sevalal Maharaj, valued at around Rs 1.50 lakh, and a gold mangalsutra worth around Rs 1.50 lakh. The burglars reportedly broke open the main door of the Sant Sevalal Maharaj temple and entered the premises. They stole the silver idol weighing around 750 grams from the sanctum sanctorum and fled.

# Bhima water reaches Balluragi lake, raising hopes among farmers

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

The initiative was launched by Alur MLA and Karnataka State Planning Board Vice-Chairman BR Patil and Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC) Chairman Arun Kumar M Patil, who performed bagina and inaugurated the release of water into Balluragi Lake.

Speaking on the occasion, BR Patil said the government had taken up the lake-filling project to provide drinking water and support agricultural activities in Aland and Afzalpur taluks, which have been suffering from recurrent drought.

He said the project was sanctioned in 2018 by the then Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, with an initial allocation of Rs 118 crore. However, delays in execution led to an increase in the project cost, which has now reached around Rs 450 crore. The project aims to fill a total of 36 lakes, he added.

KKRTC Chairman Arun Kumar Patil said, bringing Bhima River water to the lakes had been a long-standing demand of farmers in the region. The arrival of water in Balluragi Lake is a moment of joy for farmers. The availability of stored water will boost agricultural activities and help improve the economic condition of farming families, he said. He added that the government and elect-

BR Patil said, officials working on the Surat-Chennai National Highway had assured that repairs to the Amarjara reservoir pipeline damaged near Badadad during highway construction would be completed by September 10. Pipeline jointing work has already commenced, he said.

ed representatives were making continuous efforts to address the water shortage in drought-prone Afzalpur. The remaining lakes would also be filled in phases to strengthen irrigation facilities in the constituency, he said.

The inflow of Bhima River water into the lakes is also expected to improve groundwater levels and provide a long-term solution to drinking water problems in rural areas.

Meanwhile, Farmers expressed happiness as water began flowing into Balluragi Lake and thanked the elected representatives for the initiative. Kalaburagi Agricultural Produce Market Committee President Manjunath Anjutagi, Taluk Youth Congress President Anaveerayya Mathapati, Suresh Gadagayya Mathapati, Shrimant Patil, Sharanabasappa Patil, officials from the Irrigation and Minor Irrigation departments, local leaders, villagers and farmers were present.

## Yadgir bandh on September 7 for drought declaration

CH NEWS, YADGIR

The All Organisations' Struggle Committee has called for a Yadgir district headquarters bandh on September 7, alleging that the State government and district administration have failed to declare all five remaining taluks of the district as drought-affected.

Addressing a press conference at the District Press Bhavan, committee President Mallikarjun M Jallappanore said the government had declared several districts as drought-affected but had failed to fully recognise the severe drought situation in backward Yadgir district.

He said only Shahapur taluk had been declared drought-affected, while Yadgir, Gurmatkal, Wadgera, Surpur and Hunasagi taluks had been excluded.

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He said only Shahapur taluk had been declared drought-affected, while Yadgir, Gurmatkal, Wadgera, Surpur and Hunasagi taluks had

been excluded. He termed the decision condemnable and demanded that all the remaining taluks be included in the drought-affected list. Farmers are facing severe hardship due to inadequate rainfall and crop failure. The groundwater level has declined, creating a drinking water crisis. People and livestock are also facing serious difficulties, Jallappanore said. He added that the lack of employment opportunities had forced farmers and agricultural labourers to migrate to metropolitan cities such as Bengaluru and Mumbai in search of livelihoods. Social activist Umesh K Munnal alleged that the district administration and legislators had failed to effectively bring the actual drought situation in the district to the State government's attention. He urged

the government to respond to the plight of farmers and declare the remaining taluks drought-affected. Marappa Nayak Magadampur, State president of the Valmiki Nayaka Samaj for North Karnataka, appealed to traders, the Agricultural Market Traders' Association, farmers' organisations, Kannada organisations, Dalit organisations, progressive groups and various community organisations to extend their full support to the September 7 bandh. Advocate Devendrappa Yaragol, Khasimsab Gaddesugur, Basugouda M. Chatnalli, Doddaiyaya Nayak Haliger, Kashappa Heganagere, Bhimu Pujari, Ravi Patel Joladadagi, Ashok Aikur, Polappa Narayanor and several others were present at the press conference.

# Road blockade in Yadrami over encroachment of land

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

Women staged a road blockade at Dr BR Ambedkar Circle in Yadrami town, demanding the immediate removal of an alleged encroachment on land reserved for a public women's toilet behind the police station. The protesters demanded that the encroachment be cleared and a compound wall be constructed around the site. The land in Ward 3 was reportedly allotted by the Gram Panchayat in 2017 for a public women's toilet, as residents of Wards 2, 3, 4 and 5 face a shortage of space to construct toilets at their homes. The pro-



testers alleged that some individuals had created fake documents to encroach upon the land reserved for the toilet. Despite submitting representations to the Town Panchayat Chief Officer for the past two

years, no action had been taken, they alleged. The protesters said they had locked the Town Panchayat office and staged a protest a month ago. They had also warned the authorities a week earlier that they would

lock the office again if the issue was not resolved. However, as no action was taken, they intensified their protest.

They insisted that the agitation would continue until the Deputy Commissioner visited the spot and resolved the issue. As no official arrived at the protest site, the protesters became angry and attempted to shut down shops in the area. PSI Chidanand Savadi and police personnel intervened and pacified them. Later, Tahsildar Yallappa Subedar visited the protest site and received the memorandum. He assured the protesters that the encroachment would be removed by

Tuesday evening and that adequate security would be provided to protect the land reserved for the public women's toilet. Following the assurance, the protesters withdrew their agitation. Ibrahimsab Ustad, Chandrashekhara Puranik, Maldar Rao Kulkarni, Basavaraj Pawar, Vishwanath G. Patil, Sahebgoada Desai, Bhagyamma Chila, Bhoramma Goudi Bandeppagol, Sharifa Chincholi, Davalbi Bhagwan, Nagamma, Jaina Chaudhary, Channamma, Basalingamma, Yallamma, Saira Chaudhary, Siddamma, Madeamma, Annamma and Gangadhar Karakihalli participated in the protest.

Quick Read

Music teacher  
Manjunath Kammar  
chosen for award

**HAVERI**  
Havanur Foundation has selected music teacher Manjunath S. Kammar for this year's Gyan Jyothi Best Teacher Award on Teachers' Day. He teaches music at a children's residential primary and high school in Haveri. Known for dedicated music service, he has also worked to identify and encourage talented students. The foundation said his efforts have helped children develop interest and confidence in music. He will be honoured on Friday evening at Pragma Education Institute in Ijari-lakamapur at 5pm. Havanur Foundation chairman Virupaksha Havanur said the award recognises his valuable contribution.

Birthday celebration  
at BSNL office draws  
public criticism

**Vijayapura**  
The alleged use of a government office for a private birthday celebration has triggered criticism among members of the public in Indi town of Vijayapura district. The birthday of BSNL Junior Engineer Sunil Mdarkhandi was reportedly celebrated on the premises of the BSNL office in Indi. According to information available, Sunil Mdarkhandi (JE), Sanjeev Talavar (Clerk), and Vijay-laxmi Jambagi (Regular Mazdoor/RM) were present during the celebration. The incident has raised questions about the use of government office premises for a personal function during working hours. Government offices are meant primarily for official duties and public service, and the use of such premises for private events has drawn objections. Members of the public have urged senior BSNL officials to conduct an inquiry into the incident and take appropriate action if any rules or service regulations were violated.

Study Abroad 2026  
opens global  
education doors

**GADAG**  
Students seeking higher education abroad will get access to global opportunities through the Study Abroad-2026 programme, organised by the Karnataka Vocational Training and Skill Development Corporation under the Department of Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood. The programme will be held on September 6 at Gayatri Vihara Palace Ground in Bengaluru. More than 75 global universities, including over 10 foreign universities, are expected to participate. The event will offer guidance on university admissions, student visas, financial planning, applications, health insurance and language skills. Students can also receive one-on-one counselling, eligibility assessments and spot scholarship guidance. Scholarships of up to 50 percent will be available to eligible students. The programme is open to students interested in undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, diploma, vocational and other courses at universities abroad. Students can register through the Study Abroad website or by scanning the QR code. For more information, they may contact the District Skill Development Officers Office in Gadag or call 8618650935, 9481856181, 9481008754, 8722762768, 9686352815 or 9008234012.

Collector G. Prabhu orders  
fast drought relief for farmers

Prabhu said 7,000 farmers insured crops, with ₹25–30 crore compensation expected, urging officials to avoid delays and assist affected families promptly

**CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPURA**

District Collector G. Prabhu has directed officials to speed up drought relief payments to farmers and ensure drinking water is available without interruption. He issued the instructions during a department-wise disaster management review meeting at Sir M. Visvesvaraya Hall on Wednesday. Under the crop insurance scheme, around Rs.90 crore and another Rs.60 crore under NDRF are expected to reach affected farmers. Officials said Rs.58 crore has already been approved for insured crops, while compensation worth Rs.26 crore for other crops is under process. The Collector asked agriculture officials to coordinate with insurance companies and ensure payments reach farmers

quickly. Prabhu said nearly 7,000 farmers have insured agricultural and horticultural crops, and compensation of about Rs.25 crore to Rs.30 crore may be available this year. He asked officials to avoid delays and provide immediate assistance to affected families. The Collector warned that drinking water problems could increase, as 40 villages and 10 wards currently depend on private borewells. Officials were told to arrange tankers, repair failed borewells or drill new ones whenever required. Any failed borewell must be reported immediately with photographs and supporting documents. He also ordered action against illegal pumpsets drawing water from H.N. Valley canals, lakes and other water bodies. Surprise inspections should be conducted and illegal pumpsets confiscated. Farmers with irrigation facilities were encouraged to grow fodder, with fodder seeds supplied through Chimul. With all eight taluks declared severely drought-prone, Prabhu directed officials to implement government schemes effectively and hold regular task force meetings.



tions should be conducted and illegal pumpsets confiscated. Farmers with irrigation facilities were encouraged to grow fodder, with fodder seeds supplied through Chimul. With all eight taluks declared severely drought-prone, Prabhu directed officials to implement government schemes effectively and hold regular task force meetings.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ₹58 crore crop insurance compensation already approved
- ₹26 crore compensation for other crops under process
- Nearly 7,000 farmers have insured their crops
- Forty villages depend on private borewells currently
- Tankers ordered for villages facing water shortages
- Illegal pumpsets to face surprise inspections and confiscation

ings. He urged authorities to work with local representatives to provide lasting solutions to water shortages and support farmers during the crisis.

Gadag CEO promises regular  
meeting for employees

**GADAG**

Newly appointed Gadag Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Mukul Jain has promised to hold regular grievance meetings for employees working under the VB-G RAM G project. Members of the VB-G RAM G Yojana Employees Welfare Association met Jain on Wednesday and honoured him on his arrival as the new CEO. During the meeting, association district president and state vice president Suresh Balikai requested that a grievance meeting be organised every three months to address employees' concerns. Responding positively, Jain said all project employees would be invited to a meeting where they could openly share their problems and grievances. He assured the



association that officials would listen to employee concerns regularly and take suitable steps to resolve difficulties faced during project implementation. State representative Kiran-kumar and office-bearers from Naragunda, Ron, Mundargi, Gadag, Shirahatti and Lakshmishwar attended the meeting. District office-bear-

ers Pakkeeresh Nittali, Arun Singri, Harish Sobarada, Lingaraja Mudigaudara, Mallikarjuna Sarvi, Veerabhad-rappa Sajjana, Lingaraja Arishinada, Manjunath Talwar and Ajay Abbigeri were also present. The assurance raised hopes among employees for faster resolution of workplace issues.

‘Horticulture can  
ensure farmer  
income during  
drought’

**KOPPAL**

Farmers can maintain a steady income even during drought by growing a mix of horticultural and vegetable crops, retired horticulturist Vamana Murthy said. He was speaking as a resource person at a Kisan concert organised at Gedageri village in Yalaburga taluk on August 31. The programme was organised by the District Agricultural Training Centre, Gangavati, and the Agriculture Department under the Atma scheme. Murthy said farmers could cultivate crops such as mango, guava, papaya and coconut along with vegetables. Diversified farming, he said, can provide income at different times of the year and offer some earnings even when weather conditions are difficult. Agriculture Officer Gavisiddaiah Hiremath explained the current shortage of rainfall and drought conditions. He advised farmers to conserve available water by constructing farm ponds or agricultural wells and provide protective irrigation to save standing crops. He also answered farmers' questions about pigeon pea, maize and groundnut cultivation.

Koppal creates 37  
new polling booths  
districtwide

**KOPPAL**

Koppal district has created 37 new polling booths to make voting easier for people in areas with more than 1,200 voters, Deputy Collector Sidrameshwara said on Wednesday. He was speaking at a meeting with representatives of recognized and registered political parties at the District Collector's office. The new booths were created under the Special Comprehensive Revision of Electoral Rolls 2026. Of the 37 booths, 14 are in Kushtagi, 11 in Kanakagiri, five in Gangavati, three in Yalaburga and four in Koppal. The district now has 1,352 polling booths compared with 1,315 earlier. Officials have already appointed booth level officers for the new booths, while political parties have been asked to appoint booth level agents. The draft roll contains 10,41,388 voters, including 5,19,142 men, 5,22,189 women and 57 third gender voters. The draft list has been made available at election offices and polling stations. Notices have been issued to 14,401 voters whose earlier revision details were missing or did not match database records. Officials said affected voters can submit required documents during verification. Special campaigns will be held on September 19 and



| AT A GLANCE                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| • District polling booths increased from 1,315 to 1,352         |
| • New booths target areas exceeding 1,200 voters                |
| • Draft electoral roll records 10.41 lakh voters                |
| • Notices issued to 14,401 voters over discrepancies            |
| • Special voter registration campaign scheduled September 19-20 |
| • Claims and objections accepted until September 23, 2026       |

20, while claims and objections can be filed until September 23. Forms 6, 7 and 8 can also be submitted online through ECINET or the Election Commission voter portal. Officials urged eligible citizens to check their names, submit corrections and complete registration within the deadline. The administration said the exercise aims to improve access to polling facilities and ensure that every eligible voter can participate in the democratic process smoothly.

‘VB-G RAM G Helps  
Villagers Find Jobs Locally’

**CHITRADURGA**

Vikasita Bharat-Guarantee for Rojgar and Ajeevika Mission, known as VB-G RAM G, can help rural people find employment in their villages instead of migrating to cities, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Dr. S. Akash said. Speaking during Akashvani's Jnan Vahini live phone-in programme on Wednesday, Dr. Akash explained the scheme and its benefits to the public. He said the programme supports both individual and community works and helps rural families gain economic strength through local employment. Under the scheme, men and women workers receive equal wages of Rs 382 per working day, he said. A Job Card Mela has also been organised for rural residents

who do not have job cards. Eligible people can obtain new cards and submit their demand for employment. Dr. Akash said awareness about the scheme is being created through door-to-door pamphlets, awareness yatras and Swachh Vahini vehicles. Workers facing problems at worksites can contact the Prajaseva Gram Phone toll-free helpline at 1800 425 1978. Programme Monitoring Units are functioning at district and taluk levels to supervise implementation. During the phone-in programme, Dr. Akash answered questions from the public and provided solutions. Zilla Panchayat Deputy Secretary M. Babu, ADPC Mohan Kumar, IEC Coordinator Rabin-drath, MIS Coordinator Sahana and Akashvani officials Sivaprakash and D. Kavya were present.

Sudhakar seeks Centre's help as  
pomegranate prices fall

**CHIKKABALLAPURA**

Chikkaballapura MP Dr. K. Sudhakar has urged the Union government to intervene urgently as pomegranate prices have fallen sharply, causing losses for growers. He wrote to Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, seeking steps to protect farmers and improve market conditions. Around 2,500 hectares of pomegranate are cultivated in Chikkaballapura district, supporting thousands of farming

families. Sudhakar said the current season has produced good quality and quantity, but farmers are receiving much lower prices. Last year, pomegranates sold for around Rs.180 per kilogram, while prices now range between Rs.100 and Rs.120. Lower-quality fruits are selling for around Rs.60. The MP said rising costs of fertilisers, irrigation, labour and plantation maintenance have increased pressure on farmers. Since pomegranates are highly perishable, growers

cannot store the crop for long while waiting for better prices. This leaves them with little choice but to sell quickly at low rates, increasing the risk of distress sales. Sudhakar asked the Centre to conduct a quick assessment of the district's pomegranate market and consider a Market Intervention Scheme or another suitable support system. He also sought stronger links between farmers and major domestic markets, processing units and better marketing channels.

LAND RIGHTS SECURED

Hanagal families receive home ownership rights under scheme

**CH NEWS, HANAGAL**

MLA and Karnataka Housing Board president Srinivasa Mane said more than 13,000 families in Hanagal taluk have been assured permanent housing rights as promised during the 2023 Assembly election. He was speaking while distributing ownership certificates to 149 beneficiaries at Gururayapatna village under the land guarantee programme. Mane said land values in

the area have increased significantly, with one acre now costing around Rs.12 lakh to Rs.15 lakh, while individual plots are valued at nearly Rs.25 lakh to Rs.30 lakh. He said beneficiaries had received ownership of valuable land and could now build homes without fear of losing their rights. He also highlighted the state government's five guarantee schemes, saying families were receiving financial support of around Rs.4,000 to Rs.5,000 each month through



various programmes. Mane claimed that few other state governments provide such

large-scale assistance and said the state had continued welfare and development pro-

grammes despite difficulties. Tehsildar Vitthal Chowgala said Hanagal had issued the highest number of permanent house ownership certificates in the state under the land guarantee programme. He said many families had lived for 50 to 60 years on government or private land without proper documents and were unable to access government benefits. The new certificates would help them secure housing, bank loans and other facilities. District Guarantee Imple-

mentation Committee president Hanumanthappa Maragadi, Taluk president Veerappa Bailawala, Karnataka Milk Producers Cooperative Federation director Chandrappa Jalagara, Block Congress president Basanagowda Patil and several other leaders and beneficiaries attended the programme. The distribution was seen as an important step towards giving long-term security to families who had lived without formal ownership documents.

Quick Read

Hostel applications open for minority students

CHITRADURGA Applications are invited from eligible students for fresh admission to Post Matric Boys and Girls Hostels under the Minority Welfare Department for 2026-27. The last date to apply is September 30. Students from Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh and Parsi communities can apply. Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Class students pursuing professional degree or postgraduate courses are also eligible. Applications must be submitted online through the State Student Hostel Software portal. Students seeking details can contact nearby Taluk Extension Officers, hostels, or District and Taluk Minority Information Centres. Officials urged eligible students to apply before the deadline.

Chitradurga farmers to get scientific sheep training

CHITRADURGA The Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department will conduct scientific sheep and goat breeding training on September 7 and 8. The programme will be held from 10am to 5pm at the Animal Hospital premises in Chitradurga. Farmers attending the training must bring an Aadhaar card photocopy and two passport-size photographs. Participants from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities should also carry their caste certificates. No financial incentive will be provided for attending the programme. Interested farmers must register in advance by sending their names and mobile numbers through WhatsApp.

COLLECTOR BANS POP GANESHA IDOLS, DJ USE DURING FESTIVAL

KARWAR

With the Gauri-Ganesha festival approaching, Uttara Kannada Deputy Commissioner K. LakshmiPriya has directed officials to prevent environmental and noise pollution during celebrations. She said the sale and installation of Ganesha idols made from Plaster of Paris would not be permitted, while DJ systems would be completely banned during processions and other festival events. Chairing a meeting at the Collectorate on Wednesday, LakshmiPriya urged residents to use only clay idols painted with chemical-free colours. She said idols should be immersed only at locations identified by local bodies or in temporary artificial immersion pits, preventing pollution of rivers, lakes and other water bodies. The Collector said loudspeakers would not be permitted between 10 pm and 6 am. However,

she made it clear that DJ systems would not be allowed at any venue, including during Ganesha immersion processions. The Pollution Control Board and police were instructed to take action against those violating the rules. Public installations will require prior permission from local bodies and the police. Organisers were told to install CCTV cameras, appoint volunteers, maintain cleanliness and provide drinking water during public programmes. LakshmiPriya also directed authorities to issue necessary permissions through a single-window system. Hescom and Fire Department officials must inspect pandals and ensure safety arrangements. Officials were asked to spread awareness about proper idol disposal and discourage POP idols. The Collector appealed to people to celebrate the festival responsibly while protecting water resources and maintaining a clean

DEVANAHALLI SEVA DRIVE

Public service drive to hear grievances

DEVANAHALLI

The first Praja Seva Andolana meeting in Devanahalli taluk will be held on September 5 at Annapurneshwari Kalyana Mandap in Vijayapura town. District In-charge Minister will chair the meeting, where residents can directly submit complaints and seek solutions to various public service issues. District Collector Dr. K.N. Anuradha announced the programme during a preparatory meeting at the Taluk Panchayat Hall. She said the government had introduced the initiative to make administration more accessible. Meetings will be held every Saturday at taluk level under the District In-charge Minister, while similar programmes

will be organised at hobli level under local MLAs. Local officials, including Panchayat Development Officers, have been instructed to distribute the Chief Minister's message and grievance forms at residents' doorsteps. People can fill out the forms with details of their complaints and submit them at designated counters. The concerned departments will examine the applications and provide solutions wherever possible. Applicants will receive acknowledgements for their submissions. The programme will cover issues involving pensions, Sandhya Suraksha, widow assistance and other welfare schemes. Residents can also raise revenue matters, guarantee scheme

HIGHLIGHTS

> POP Ganesha idols sale and installation prohibited

> DJ systems completely banned during festival celebrations

> Clay idols with chemical-free colours encouraged

> Idol immersion restricted to approved designated locations

> Loudspeakers prohibited between 10 pm and 6am

> Public pandals require prior official permission and safety checks

environment. District Superintendent of Police M.N. Deepan, Additional SP Ranu Gupta, Deputy Collector Sajid Mulla and officials from several departments attended the meeting virtually and in person. benefits, ration cards, roads, drinking water, government schools, Anganwadi centres, police services and irrigation facilities. Eligible beneficiaries may also receive certificates and government order letters at the meeting. Collector Anuradha urged residents to use the opportunity to meet ministers and officials directly and seek timely solutions. She directed departments to establish counters, receive applications and provide necessary basic services during the programme. Zilla Panchayat CEO Dr. Vasanthi Amar, Assistant Commissioner Manjunath, CPO Ramakrishna, Devanahalli EO Muniraju and other district-level officials attended the preparatory meeting.

Collector orders precautions against drinking water shortage

The Collector ordered swift completion of water projects and monitoring of drought, water levels, groundwater, crops, drinking water, and livestock fodder

MANDYA

District Collector directed officials to take advance measures to prevent drinking water shortages in K.R. Pet taluk. A review meeting was held at Chikkonahalli Farm Sabha Bhavan in the presence of the local MLA and Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer to discuss drought management, drinking water supply, housing sites and development issues. Officials were told to give top priority to drinking water and assess availability and demand in every village. Problem areas must be identified early, while damaged borewells, pumpsets and pipelines should be repaired without delay. Alternative water sources should also be identified, and preparations must be made to supply water through tankers during emergencies.



The Collector instructed officials to review the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission and multi-village drinking water projects. Incomplete works should be completed quickly, with continuous access to clean drinking water ensured for residents. Authorities were also asked to monitor drought conditions, water levels in lakes and dams, groundwater availability, crop conditions, and supplies of drinking water and fodder for livestock. The meeting also discussed

providing land to eligible homeless and landless families. Officials were asked to identify available government land in each village and ensure basic facilities such as roads, drinking water and electricity in new settlements. Agriculture, animal husbandry, MGNREGA works, water conservation, electricity and other public issues were also reviewed. Officials from different departments were directed to work together and resolve complaints quickly at the local level. K.R. Pet taluk

AT A GLANCE

• Officials told to assess village water demand

• Damaged borewells, pumpsets and pipelines need repairs

• Alternative sources identified for emergency tanker supplies

• Jal Jeevan Mission projects ordered completed quickly

• Authorities to monitor lakes, dams and groundwater

• Officials told to resolve public complaints promptly

officials, including the Tehsildar, Taluk Panchayat Executive Officer and representatives of various departments, attended the meeting. The Collector stressed that early action would help prevent shortages and protect people during difficult conditions.

Tipper fire erupts on Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway

KOLAR

A moving tipper caught fire on the Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway near D.K. Halli Plantation in Bangarpet taluk, Kolar district. The vehicle was travelling from Bengaluru towards V. Kota when flames suddenly emerged from the engine. A short circuit in the engine is suspected to have caused the fire. Driver Santosh noticed the flames, immediately stopped the tipper and safely escaped from the vehicle. The tipper was completely destroyed in the fire. It belongs to Suresh, a resident of Nangali.

Gadag market promotes eco-friendly Ganesh festival celebrations



CH NEWS, MALINGARAYA PUJAR

Ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi, Gadag is seeing rising excitement in its markets, along with concern over idols made from Plaster of Paris. The Vivekananda Sabha Bhavan at the APMC premises is offering a cleaner choice through its clay idol market. Running for a decade, the market has become part of festival preparations, while promoting celebrations that are kinder to water bodies and nature. The market will open on September 7 and remain open until September 14, bringing more than 20 organized shops together under one roof. Devotees can walk through the same premises, compare designs and select idols without travelling from street to street in dust and traffic. About 6,000 to 8,000 clay idols are expected this year, ranging from small home idols to larger models reaching about 10 feet high. The idols are made from pure clay and finished with natural, water-soluble colours. Organizers say the market does not allow Plaster of Paris idols, reflecting a strong focus on protecting lakes, wells and other water sources. Traders have also agreed to watch for prohibited idols and prevent them from en-

The initiative supports Gadag's traditional artisans by providing market access, boosting festival-season incomes, helping families, and preserving clay idol-making skills amid cheaper PoP competition

tering the venue. The effort gives the market a clear environmental identity and sets an example for responsible celebrations. The initiative is also helping local artisans who have struggled with cheaper PoP idols brought from outside the district. By providing a dedicated place to sell their work, the market gives traditional clay idol makers better access to customers during festival season. It has supported families around Gadag and helped preserve their craft skills. For them, the festival brings income and hope. Local makers say such support matters. Organizers now want residents and Ganesh mandals to choose clay idols and help make Gadag a cleaner, greener district. Muthanna Burudi, general secretary of the District Idol Manufacturing Association, said protecting local idol makers is everyone's responsibility. He also called for action if PoP idols are being brought into the district from elsewhere.

UNIVERSITY OF MYSORE  
UNIVERSITY CAREER HUB  
Behind Jayalakshmi Vilas Palace,  
Manasagangothri, Mysuru -05  
NO: MGM/Career Hub/493/2026-27    Date: 29.08.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through e-procurement portal only)

The coordinator, the University Career Hub, University of Mysore Mysuru invites tender from eligible bidders for Effective implementation of English, Employability and Entrepreneurship certificate program at University of Mysore Mysuru through e-procurement(EEE) Certificate Program for Rs.50.00 lakhs at University of Mysore, Mysuru through e-procurement Portal as per KTPP Act of Government of Karnataka. Tender indent No: UOMV2026-27/SE0041 and the last date for submission is 15th September 2026  
For further clarification bidders may view at website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> and may contact No: 9886639536.

Sd/- Co-ordinator

DIPR/DDMYS/641/KSMCA/405/2026-27

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION  
Office of theExecutive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division,  
2nd Main,T.R. Mill Road, Chamarajpet, Bengaluru-560 018.  
Contact No: 9480688278/9481033253 e-mail:[bbmcpmp@gmail.com](mailto:bbmcpmp@gmail.com)  
No: EE/CRP/KPPP/TEND/12/2026-27    Date: 01.09.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION(IFT)

(Single Cover System)(Through GoK KPP Portal only)

Tender for the following works on item rate basis are invited as per Standard Bid Documents KW-1 & 2, by the Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division, Zone-2, BCCC from registered contractors of BCCC/KPWD/Electrical/CPWD/Railways/MES/National Highway or any state Govt. Organization.

| Sl. No. | Name of the work                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | Providing Mobile Tankers for Immersion of Ganesha Idols in Wards under Padarayanapura & JJR Nagar Sub Division. <b>Approx. Value of works: Rs.7.00 Lakhs. EMD: Rs.17,500/-.</b> Cost of Tender Form: As per KPP portal. <b>Period of Completion</b> : 3 days. |
| 2       | Providing Mobile Tankers for Immersion of Ganesha Idols in Wards under Chamarajpet & Azad Nagar Sub Division. <b>Approx. Value of works: Rs.10.50 Lakhs. EMD: Rs.26,250/-.</b> Cost of Tender Form: As per KPP portal. <b>Period of Completion</b> : 3 days.  |

Calendar of Events:

(1) Tender documents may be downloaded from KPP Portal of GOK <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> (2) Last date for uploading the filled Proposals: **10.09.2026 upto 11.30 a.m.** (3) Date of Opening of Financial Proposals: **11.09.2026 after 12.00 p.m.**

Further details can be had from the office of the above during office hours on all working days or visit KPP Portal website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division  
Bengaluru Central City Corporation

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Chickpet Division, 8th Main,  
2nd Block, Jayanagar, Kanakanapalya Bengaluru-560011  
No.:EE/CKP/E-PROC/05/2026-27    Date:01.09.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

(Through KPP Portal Only)    (Single Cover System)

The Executive Engineer, Chickpet Division invites tenders from eligible contractors registered in KPWD / CPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Govt. Organization for the works detailed in the table below.

| Sl.No. | Name of the work                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 32, Silver Jubilee Park, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 2187.50/-</b> Category: <b>CAT-II(A).</b> |
| 2.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 33, Dharmarayaswamy Temple, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD: <b>Rs. 4375/-</b> Category: <b>Others.</b>     |
| 3.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 34, D.V. Gundappa Ward, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD: <b>Rs. 4375/-</b> Category: <b>Others.</b>         |
| 4.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 35, Hombegowdanagara, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 2187.50/-</b> Category: <b>SC</b>            |
| 5.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 36, Someshwaranagara, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 4375/-</b> Category: <b>Others.</b>          |
| 6.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 37, BHEL Ward, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 4375/-</b> Category: <b>Others.</b>                 |
| 7.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 38, Kanakanapalya, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 2187.50/-</b> Category: <b>SC</b>               |
| 8.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 39, Venkatarreddy Nagara, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 4375/-</b> Category: <b>Others.</b>      |
| 9.     | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 40, Ashoka Pillar, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 4375/-</b> Category: <b>Others.</b>             |
| 10.    | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 41, V V Puram, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 4375/-</b> Category: <b>Others.</b>                 |
| 11.    | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 42 Sunkenahalli, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD : <b>Rs. 2187.50/-</b> Category: <b>CAT-II(A).</b>         |
| 12.    | Providing Mobile Immersion Tanks in Ward No. 43 Devaraj Urs Ward, Chickpet Constituency. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 1.75 Lakhs.</b> EMD: <b>Rs. 2187.50/-</b> Category: <b>ST.</b>             |

1) Tender documents can be downloaded from KPP portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> 2) Last Date for uploading the filled tender documents: **09.09.2026 upto 04:00 P.M.** 3) Opening of the tenders: **10.09.2026 at 4:30 P.M.** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.  
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Chickpet Division, BCCC.



Quick Read

Government denies claims of fake GDP growth numbers

**CH NEWS, NEW DELHI**  
The government has strongly rejected claims that last year's economic output was lowered intentionally to make current figures look brighter. Officials explained that recent adjustments stem from shifting the calculation baseline to a newer year rather than any manipulation. Critics previously argued that without these updates, growth would crawl at just over two percent. However, authorities clarified that comparing old numbers directly with updated metrics is incorrect. Experts maintain that standard statistical upgrades and better data sources naturally alter previous figures to accurately reflect modern economic realities.

Smart growth in a fast market: India's digital retail explosion

**NEW DELHI**  
India's e-commerce landscape is on the brink of an unprecedented transformation, with market valuations projected to nearly triple from \$125 billion in 2024 to an astounding \$345 billion by 2030. A comprehensive new industry study titled Smart Growth in a Fast Market - compiled by research consultancy Infisum with backing from public policy think-tank Empower India, details the multi-faceted dynamics steering this expansion. According to the findings, the sector is expected to compound at a robust annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18.4 per cent over the next four years. This exponential trajectory is heavily underpinned by surging disposable incomes, deeper mobile and internet penetration across the country's hinterlands, and an accel-

Quick commerce is permanent infrastructure, not a trend. It will drive 45 to 50 percent of incremental e-retail growth.

- Dr. Badri Narayanan Gopalakrishnan, Fellow at NITI Aayog

erating shift toward digital-first consumer habits. By the turn of the decade, online retail is anticipated to command between 10 and 12 per cent of India's total retail spending, directly contributing roughly 2.5 per cent to the nation's gross domestic product. Furthermore, the total pool of active online shoppers is projected to scale up dramatically to between 420 and 440 million users, further cementing India's standing as one of the most dynamic digital commerce arenas globally. A standout catalyst within this broader growth story is the meteoric rise of quick commerce. The report estimates that the ultra-fast delivery seg-

ment alone will skyrocket to a valuation of \$65 billion to \$70 billion by 2030, driving an impressive 45 to 50 per cent of all incremental e-retail growth over the upcoming five-year window. To sustain this hyper-localized demand, foundational logistics infrastructure must expand concurrently. Consequently, the national network of dark stores micro-fulfillment centers positioned strategically within urban neighborhoods is forecast to nearly triple, growing from 2,525 facilities in 2025 to approximately 7,500 units by 2030. This physical and operational scaling coincides with an internal strategic pivot among top-tier industry players. Having initially prioritized aggressive customer acquisition and geographic expansion, firms are now recalibrating their business models to focus intensely on sustainable unit economics, long-term capital efficiency, and optimized supply-chain resilience.



As government debt and deficits go up, central banks may have no option but to expand balance sheets. Be ready for a roller coaster ride in interest rate markets!

- Uday Kotak, Veteran banker

ty, central banks face mounting pressure to intervene. Such intervention often materializes through quantitative easing or balance-sheet expansion - essentially creating new liquidity to absorb government debt.

Global bond market movements

- **Japanese Yield Surges:** Japan's 10-year government bond yield crossed 3 per cent for the first time since 1996, while the 5-year and 2-year yields hit multi-decade highs.
- **US Treasury Pressures:** Yields on 10-year United States govt bonds climbed closer to the 4.8 per cent threshold.
- **Shifting Capital Dynamics:** Rising domestic returns in Japan threaten to alter long-standing global investment flows, as institutional capital traditionally exported abroad may stay domestic.

This monetization dynamic historically degrades purchasing power, reignites consumer price inflation, and forces short-term yields upward as policy institutions attempt to anchor runaway price expectations.

The breach of the 3 per cent ceiling by Japanese government bonds (JGBs) carries systemic implications for global capital flows. For decades, Japan functioned as the world's primary engine of low-cost

capital, utilizing ultra-loose monetary policy and near-zero interest rates to fund higher-yielding overseas assets. Domestic institutional investors routinely recycled Japanese savings into US Treasuries, European sovereign debt, and global equities. However, as local yields scale multi-decade highs, the incentive to repatriate capital grows increasingly compelling. Higher domestic returns reduce the relative attractiveness of for-

eign debt, initiating a gradual unwinding of traditional cross-border carry trades and exerting upward pressure on yields worldwide.

Concurrently, US Treasury yields near 4.8 per cent reflect a recalibration of term premia and persistent inflation anxieties. Geopolitical friction, particularly ongoing instability and energy supply shocks originating from the Middle East, has kept crude oil prices elevated, complicating central

bank efforts to achieve a soft landing. These intersecting pressures mean that fixed-income investors can no longer rely on the low-volatility regimes that characterized the post-Global Financial Crisis decade. Instead, structural fiscal expansion and shifting central bank reaction functions are converging to ensure that sovereign debt markets remain exposed to sharp repricing events and persistent turbulence.

Small cities power India home loan boom: Reports

NEW DELHI

India's housing finance sector is undergoing a profound structural transformation, with Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities rapidly emerging as the primary engines of future credit expansion. According to a comprehensive new industry report published by advisory firm SGA PR, smaller urban centers now account for an astonishing 64 per cent of total home-loan volumes nationwide. This massive shift is underpinned by an unprecedented surge in digital lending adoption, which has radically dismantled traditional geographic barriers to formal capital.

The report highlights that digital processing has become the cornerstone of modern mortgage origination, with 92 per cent of all housing-finance applications handled digitally. This represents a dramatic leap from 2020, when only 60 per cent of applications utilized digital workflows. Furthermore, nearly 42 per cent of all housing finance institutions now report that the vast major-

| Housing finance sector trajectory |                            |                                     |                                            |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Parameter / Metric                | Historical Baseline (2020) | Current Status (2026 Projections)   | Future Outlook (2030)                      |
| Digital Loan Processing           | 60% of total applications  | 92% of applications digitized       | Universal AI-driven underwriting           |
| Tier-2 & Tier-3 Share             | Metros dominated volume    | 64% of total home-loan volumes      | Continued expansion via affordable housing |
| Digital Sourcing Share            | Low adoption               | ~42% majority inquiries via digital | Projected to cross 70%                     |

ity of their initial customer inquiries originate through online channels rather than traditional branch networks.

Market momentum in the hinterlands has been explosive, highlighted by an 81 per cent year-on-year growth in loan volumes across smaller cities. This boom is propelled by a convergence of macro-economic tailwinds, including rising disposable incomes, aggressive infrastructure development, rapid urbanization, and localized employment creation. Additionally, widening affordability gaps in major metropolitan areas have priced

many middle-class families out of Tier 1 real estate, forcing a natural migration of housing demand toward secondary and tertiary cities where property values remain more accessible.

Despite these technological strides, housing finance retains unique operational complexities that set it apart from unsecured retail lending. Physical verification, rigorous field operations, and manual underwriting checks continue to play a critical role due to the high-value, long-term nature of mortgage contracts. Industry experts emphasize that

while technology streamlines the front-end, long-term success relies heavily on hybrid models.

Looking ahead, industry analysts project that digital sourcing will cross the 70 per cent threshold by 2030, driven by Account Aggregator-led underwriting and artificial intelligence-driven risk assessment models. As data-driven credit evaluation becomes standard practice, the intersection of robust digital platforms and grassroots advisory support will ultimately define the next decade of India's housing finance evolution.

Sridhar Vembu decodes PM's Forex strategy

NEW DELHI

Zoho Chief Scientist and Co-founder Sridhar Vembu has offered a detailed economic rationale behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent appeal for citizens to curb non-essential foreign travel, destination weddings, and gold purchases. Addressing public queries about why such frugality is encouraged while India's GDP growth remains robust at 7.8 per cent, Vembu explained that rapid domestic expansion inherently escalates a nation's demand for vital foreign imports.

According to Vembu, accelerating economic momentum places a heavier burden on national resources because faster growth demands greater consumption of foreign energy supplies and advanced technol-

ogy inputs. Even as Indian exports rise, critical industrial processes continue to rely on imported components ranging from precision machinery and raw materials to advanced software, CPUs, and GPUs. Consequently, substantial capital outflows occur when citizens spend on overseas holidays, foreign ceremonies, or non-productive asset accumulation like imported gold. Drawing historical parallels, Vembu noted that East Asian economic powerhouses such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and later China navigated a remarkably similar path during their industrialization phases. These nations combined high-speed GDP growth with rigorous, deliberate foreign-exchange conservation to build domestic self-reliance over decades.



EPFO opens one time Amnesty window for PF Trusts

NEW DELHI

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has rolled out a crucial compliance window, giving eligible Provident Fund (PF) Trusts until December 28, 2026, to utilize a one-time Amnesty scheme for the formal regularisation of their exemption status. Introduced under the newly notified Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) Scheme 2026, this transitional framework addresses a long-standing administrative gap affecting numerous corporate and institutional private trusts across India.

The six-month amnesty initiative is specifically designed for establishments that have operated private provident fund trusts recognized under the Income Tax Act, 1961, but have functioned without a formal exemption notification or

order from the appropriate government authority under Section 17 of the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (EPF&MP) Act, 1952, or Section 143 of the Code on Social Security (CoSS), 2020.

Under this transitional scheme, qualifying establishments are granted retrospective exemption and trust recognition stretching from the original date of the trust's inception up to the designated cut-off date.

To facilitate smooth integration and clear historical friction, the framework offers wide-ranging statutory waivers from strict parameters outlined under the Code on Social Security, 2020. These exemptions include the complete waiver of minimum employee headcount

prerequisites, mandated minimum corpus size restrictions, and the standard three-year prior compliance stipulation.

Furthermore, pending legal assessments regarding historical dues, damages, and penalty interests are set to be withdrawn and declared abated, provided that member accounts consistently maintained contributions and distributed interest yields at par with or superior to statutory EPFO rates. Past finalized orders facing administrative challenges can also be treated as void ab-initio under specific structural conditions, giving employers a clean slate.

Following successful retrospective regularisation, organizations are granted the operational flexibility to choose their future compliance path.



ICICI Bank raises \$17.88 billion via RBI swap

NEW DELHI

ICICI Bank has successfully mobilized approximately \$17.88 billion through foreign currency non-resident deposits under the Reserve Bank of India's special dollar-rupee swap facility. The private sector lender shared the figures in an official regulatory exchange filing, outlining how the massive capital inflow was deployed across its global network.

According to the disclosures, loans extended by the bank's international branches and oversea subsidiaries against these specific deposits amounted to roughly \$9 billion. Additionally, the bank issued standby letters of credit worth \$3.63 billion to other financial institutions against loans backed by these deposits. Alongside the swap facility, ICICI Bank also issued an aggregate \$3.55 billion in US dollar-denominated bonds over the



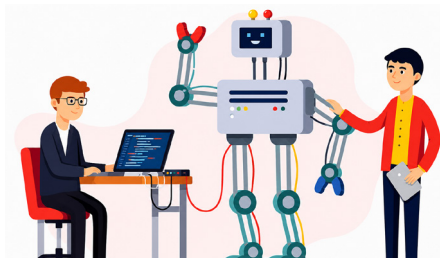
months of July and August 2026. These disclosures arrived immediately after the closure of the RBI's special USD-INR forex swap window for FCNR(B) deposits on August 31. Originally launched on June 8 to bolster foreign exchange reserves and stabilize mounting pressures on the rupee, the window for FCNR(B) deposits was shut a month ahead of its initial September 30 target due to an overwhelming public response. Data from the central bank indicated that authorized dealer banks collectively reeled in \$72.848 billion in total forex inflows under the scheme as of August 21.

TECH PAY DIVERGENCE

AI job salaries surge while legacy tech pay stagnates

NEW DELHI

India's professional compensation landscape is undergoing a dramatic structural divergence, driven by an unprecedented demand for niche technical capabilities. A comprehensive new industry study released on Wednesday by the employment platform foundit reveals that salaries for artificial intelligence and machine learning positions across India have compounded by an impressive 23 per cent between 2024 and 2026. This exponential growth starkly contrasts with stagnation and outright pay contrac-



Experience on its own no longer commands the strongest raises - what matters is whether a skill fills a capability gap the business needs.

-Tarun Sinha, CEO of foundit

tions in traditional information technology and legacy hardware roles, exposing a widening economic divide in the modern white-collar job market. The empirical data compiled in the foundit report underscores a profound shift in corporate

spending priorities. Artificial intelligence roles claimed the highest year-on-year salary growth in the preceding cycle at 12 per cent, closely followed by high-value engineering domains such as Computer and Network Security and Semiconductors, which both regis-

| Geographic pay disparities for AI senior roles |                                    |                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Major tech hub                                 | Senior AI salary range (15+ Years) | Market context                                                 |
| Bengaluru                                      | ₹61.70 – ₹91.25 LPA                | Highest-paying market, driven by product firms and GCC density |
| N C R & Mumbai                                 | Comparable mid-tier bands          | Roughly 10–15 per cent lower than Bengaluru                    |
| Hyderabad                                      | Emerging competitive tier          | Backed by rapid expansion of global capability centers         |
| Chennai                                        | Lower comparative band             | Up to 40 per cent lower than Bengaluru at senior tiers         |

tered stable 9 per cent annual compensation increases. By contrast, traditional employment sectors such as computer hardware and e-commerce experienced notable pay corrections, while core IT services stagnated, recording marginal salary declines over the past 24 months.

Compensation structures within the artificial intelligence sector vary extensively based on professional seniority, technical specialization, and geographic clustering. Entry-level AI practitioners possessing between zero and three years of practical experience command starting

remuneration packages ranging from Rs 8.87 lakh to Rs 15.41 lakh per annum (LPA). For seasoned professionals with over fifteen years of deep domain experience, compensation scales dramatically, reaching between Rs 70.99 LPA and Rs 89.24 LPA. Furthermore, specialized technical sub-sectors push absolute earnings even higher; cybersecurity roles boast an extraordinary maximum earning ceiling of Rs 97.81 LPA at the senior level, marking the highest tracked remuneration package across any technical category in the domestic market.



- PRADIVYA NAMBIAR

## LIONEL MESSI: A LEGEND OF HIS OWN



There are great footballers. There are icons. There are champions. But Lionel Messi is a legend of his own. His name is attached to millions of hearts, perhaps billions around the world. His influence has gone far beyond the colours of the shirt he wore. People followed Barcelona because of him. They followed Argentina because of him. They followed every chapter of his career because, wherever Messi played, there was always a reason to watch.

That is the greatness of Lionel Messi. For more than two decades, he has given football something very few players ever can: pure joy. Watching Messi play was a delight in itself. There was always anticipation when the ball reached his feet. A simple touch could become a moment of brilliance. A pass, a dribble, a goal or even the way he moved through a defence could remind us why football is called the beautiful game. His greatness was not only in what he won, but in how he played. Messi made difficult things look effortless.

He played with intelligence, imagination and a calmness that made him different from everyone else. He did not need to force greatness. It seemed to come naturally to him. And then there was Argentina. For years, Messi carried the hopes of a nation. The World Cup became the one achievement people believed his extraordinary career still needed.

When he finally lifted the trophy in Qatar in 2022, it felt like the completion of a story that millions had followed for years. That image of Messi with the World Cup will remain one of football's most memorable sights. Not simply because Argentina became world champions, but because Messi had finally reached the summit with the country he had carried in his heart for so long. His career has crossed generations, clubs and continents. He has won almost everything there is to win and, more importantly, he has left an impression that statistics cannot measure. Now comes the farewell. What will people miss most? Perhaps it will be the feeling of watching him.

The sense that, at any moment, Messi could produce something nobody else could. The World Cup will continue to have its stars, but his presence brought a different kind of energy a sense of occasion that made millions stop and watch. Football will move on. It always does. But Messi has already left something that cannot be replaced.

## UNCHECKED URBAN SPRAWL DESTROYS NATIVE WILDLIFE HABITATS

- SHARON FAUSTINA J.

As concrete jungles expand relentlessly across the globe, the boundaries between human civilization and the natural world are blurring with destructive speed. Unchecked urban sprawl is steadily consuming forests, wetlands, and meadows to make way for high-rise developments, sprawling suburbs, and vast highway networks. This rapid conversion of land does not merely shrink natural landscapes; it fundamentally fractures ecosystems, trapping native species in ever-dwindling pockets of wilderness. The uncontrolled growth of modern cities has quickly become one of the most pressing threats to regional biodiversity.

At the core of this habitat loss is the process of landscape fragmentation. As roads, power lines, and residential complexes bisect forests and natural valleys, contiguous habitats are carved into isolated patches. For wide-ranging mammals, predatory birds, and migratory species, these artificial boundaries create insurmountable barriers.

Animals searching for food, mates, or seasonal shelter are forced to navigate dangerous urban hazards, leading to high rates of roadkill, human-wildlife conflict, and stress-induced population declines. Cut off from neighboring groups, small animal populations face genetic bottlenecks and elevated risks of local extinction.

Beyond physical displacement, urban expansion drastically alters environmental conditions within remaining natural fragments. The replacement of natural soil and vegetation with asphalt and concrete creates urban heat island effects, elevating local temperatures and drying out nearby micro-habitats. Artificial light pollution disorients nocturnal creatures, disrupting breeding calls and hunting behaviors, while urban noise pollution interferes with avian communication. Furthermore, invasive species, domestic pets, and urban runoff carrying toxic pollutants easily penetrate these fragmented natural areas, further degrading the fragile ecological balance.

The loss of native wildlife habitats carries serious long-term consequences for human communities as well. Natural ecosystems provide crucial services, including storm-water absorption, natural air purification, local climate regulation, and carbon storage. When wetlands are paved over and forests are cleared for housing developments, cities become significantly more vulnerable to flash flooding, extreme heatwaves, and air pollution. Stripping regional landscapes of their native flora and fauna diminishes urban resilience, leaving human populations increasingly exposed to environmental hazards.

# TIPPING POINT APPROACHING FOR EARTH'S VITAL RAINFOREST

The Amazon Basin, long revered as the planet's green lung, stands on the edge of an irreversible ecological precipice. Across thousands of miles of tropical canopy, the delicate balances that have sustained global climate systems for millennia are fracturing under the unrelenting weight of human expansion. What began as localized land clearing has multiplied into a systemic crisis, threatening to push the world's largest rainforest past a critical tipping point into a vast, degraded savanna.

At the core of this tragedy is the continuous destruction and fragmentation of pristine natural habitats. Vast swathes of dense primary forest are routinely cleared for cattle ranching, industrial soy agriculture, illegal logging, and wildcat gold mining. Each highway carved through the canopy acts as a catalyst for secondary destruction, splintering once-continuous wilderness into isolated ecological islands.

For species reliant on uninterrupted forest territories from the elusive jaguar and giant river otter to thousands of endemic bird and insect species this fragmentation reduces genetic diversity, shrinks breeding grounds, and pushes entire populations toward quiet extinction.

Beyond the immediate loss of wildlife, the destruction of the Amazon compromises one of the Earth's most vital carbon sinks. The billions of trees populating the basin absorb massive amounts of carbon dioxide annually, acting as a global air-cleaning system. However, as deforested zones are cleared using slash-and-burn practices, centuries of stored carbon are released back into the atmosphere in toxic plumes of smoke. The forest transitions from a vital climate stabilizer into a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, accelerating the very global warming that threatens its survival.

Furthermore, the loss of forest cover destabilizes the

hydrological cycles that feed rainfall across South America and influence weather patterns worldwide. Through transpiration, the Amazon

ing a vicious feedback loop. Trees that survive direct deforestation often die of hydraulic failure, unable to endure prolonged dry spells.

unities who have served as the forest's most effective stewards for generations. International funding mechanisms must compensate rain-



generates massive "flying rivers" invisible plumes of atmospheric moisture that transport water across continents. As tree cover vanishes, this natural engine slows down, triggering severe local droughts, increasing forest fire susceptibility, and creat-

Preserving this irreplaceable ecosystem requires an immediate shift toward strict, cross-border conservation policies. Enforcing zero-tolerance mandates against illegal logging and land grabbing is an essential step, alongside empowering Indigenous com-

forest nations for keeping natural reserves intact, aligning economic survival with ecological stewardship. The collapse of the Amazon is not merely a regional crisis; it is a global imperative that will determine the climate future of our shared world.

- PRASHANT MUNDU

# RIISING SEAS IMPERIL GLOBAL COASTAL CITIES

The world's oceans are mounting a silent, relentless invasion of human civilization. Driven by warming ocean temperatures and the unprecedented melting of polar ice sheets, rising sea levels are transitioning from long-term environmental projections into an active, destructive reality. Millions of people living in low-lying coastal regions, low-lying river deltas, and island nations face an existential challenge that threatens to redraw the political and human geography of the planet.

At the core of this accelerating crisis is the thermal expansion of warming seawater and the rapid degradation of Earth's great polar reservoirs. Satellite records reveal that ice loss from Greenland and Antarctica has reached alarming rates, pouring hundreds of billions of tons of meltwater into the global ocean annually. What once manifested as incremental water level changes now

amplifies daily high tides and magnifies the destruction wrought by violent storm surges. Coastal lowlands that previously experienced severe flooding once a century now face routine, destructive inundations during seasonal high



tides.

The consequences for coastal communities are profound and multifaceted. Infrastructure built to withstand historical sea levels is failing under the weight of saltwater intrusion. Underground freshwater aquifers the primary

source of drinking water for millions of coastal residents are being contaminated by encroaching ocean water, threatening agricultural productivity and municipal public health. Critical transport links, power grids, port facil-

ities, and residential neighborhoods are increasingly exposed to structural corrosion and frequent operational shutdowns, inflicting severe long-term economic damage. Beyond immediate physical destruction lies the human cost of forced displacement. When

low-lying coastal areas become permanently uninhabitable, populations are uprooted, creating waves of climate refugees. Small island developing states face total submersion, threatening to erase sovereign nations from the map and displace entire cultural heritages. In heavily populated delta regions across Asia, Africa, and the Americas, agricultural collapse and land loss force millions to migrate into already overcrowded inland cities, placing immense strain on urban social systems.

Addressing this existential threat requires regional governments and international bodies to shift from reactive disaster response to aggressive, preventive adaptation. First, municipalities must rapidly modernize sea defenses. Building hard defenses such as surge barriers and reinforced seawalls can protect high-density urban centers, while restoring natural coastal buffers such as mangroves, salt

marshes, and barrier reefs provides flexible, cost-effective defense against wave energy and shoreline erosion.

Second, urban planning and zoning frameworks must undergo a radical overhaul. Regional authorities must ban new construction in high-risk flood zones and implement managed retreat policies, systematically relocating critical infrastructure and residential communities to higher ground. Retrofitting existing urban spaces with elevated roadways, permeable surfaces, and advanced storm drainage systems can bolster immediate resilience.

The rising tide is not a crisis of the distant future; it is a present reality demanding decisive structural reform. Protecting coastal populations requires massive investment, bold policy shifts, and an enduring global commitment to stabilizing global temperatures. Failure to adapt will surrender our world's great coastal heritage to the rising sea.

- MOHAMMED JUNAID

# TOXIC AGRICULTURAL RUNOFF POISONS VITAL GLOBAL RIVERS

Freshwater rivers are the lifelines of global ecosystems, supplying drinking water, supporting diverse aquatic species, and nourishing agricultural lands. Yet across the globe, a quiet chemical crisis is destroying these vital arteries. Every year, massive quantities of toxic agricultural runoff enter major river systems, turning healthy waterways into degraded, oxygen-starved channels. Driven by high-intensity farming reliant on synthetic chemical inputs, industrial agricultural pollution has become one of the most severe threats to global freshwater security.

At the heart of this environmental degradation is the excessive application of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides,

and industrial manure. Modern farming practices frequently apply nitrogen and phosphorus in quantities far exceeding what crops can absorb. When seasonal rains sweep across agricultural fields, these unabsorbed chemicals wash into nearby streams, tributaries, and rivers. This steady influx of nutrients triggers an artificial process known as eutrophication, causing massive algal blooms that choke river ecosystems and block sunlight essential for aquatic plant survival.

The ecological consequences of eutrophication are catastrophic. As dense algal mats die and decompose, bacteria consume vast amounts of dissolved oxygen in the water. This rapid oxygen depletion

creates expansive "dead zones" hypoxic areas where fish, crustaceans, and other aquatic life cannot survive. Species unable to flee the affected zones suffocate, leading to mass die-offs that collapse local aquatic food webs. Over time, these toxic plumes flow downstream into estuaries and coastal ocean waters, expanding the footprint of ecological destruction into marine environments.

Beyond the devastation of aquatic life, contaminated rivers pose severe risks to human communities. Synthetic nitrate runoff leaches into municipal water supplies, creating serious public health hazards such as blue baby syndrome in infants and elevated cancer risks over long-term exposure. Rural and in-

digenous communities that rely directly on river water for drinking, cooking, and local fishing bear the brunt of this contamination. Furthermore, treating heavily polluted river water for municipal consumption requires complex, expensive purification infrastructure, driving up utility costs for local residents.

Addressing this widespread chemical crisis requires a fundamental shift toward sustainable agricultural practices and strict environmental governance. Farmers must transition away from heavy synthetic fertilizer dependence by adopting precision agriculture techniques that optimize nutrient application rates and timing. Implementing regenerative farming practices such as planting off-season cover

crops, reducing soil tillage, and practicing crop rotation significantly improves soil health and naturally retains nutrients within the fields.

Additionally, establishing natural riparian buffer zones along riverbanks is a crucial defensive strategy. Restoring native trees, shrubs, and wetland vegetation between agricultural fields and waterways creates natural bio-filters that capture, absorb, and neutralize chemical runoff before it reaches the river. Governments must enforce strict regulatory limits on agricultural discharge, incentivize eco-friendly farming methods, and hold commercial agribusinesses accountable for environmental degradation.

- GIRISH NAIR

## LETTERS TO EDITOR

### Urgent Action Needed on Potholes

I am writing to express my deep concern over the rapidly deteriorating condition of city roads, particularly following the recent rains. The sheer volume of dangerous potholes on major stretches has transformed daily commutes into a hazardous ordeal for motorists and pedestrians alike. Beyond causing severe traffic delays, these road hazards have damaged countless vehicles and, worse, led to preventable accidents. Patchwork fixes during monsoon season are no longer sufficient. Municipal authorities must implement durable, long-term resurfacing rather than temporary remedies. We urge the civic body to prioritize public safety and repair these critical arteries immediately.

- A. Jaikumar

### Tackling Food Waste in Cities

Every day, hundreds of tons of edible food are discarded from households, restaurants, and event venues across our city, while thousands in nearby communities face food insecurity. This stark imbalance is both an environmental and moral crisis. Rotting food waste in landfills emits massive amounts of methane, accelerating urban climate risks. Local municipal leaders and community groups should collaborate to establish efficient donation networks and municipal composting initiatives. By mandating surplus food rescue programs for businesses, our city can feed the hungry and drastically reduce landfill burdens. Small policy changes today will yield a sustainable future tomorrow.

- Mary Vanaja R.

### Upgrade Public Bus Networks

Our city's rapid expansion is placing an unbearable strain on private transport infrastructure, leading to endless gridlock and rising emission levels. The most effective solution lies in vastly improving public transit. Increasing the frequency of city buses, introducing dedicated lanes, and modernizing fleet vehicles would make public transit a viable, appealing option for daily commuters. Lowering fares for students and seniors could further boost ridership. Investing in clean, efficient transit reduces carbon footprints while improving urban mobility. Civic leaders must prioritize mass transit funding to create a cleaner, more accessible city for all.

- Stephen Joshua J.



Quick Read

Teacher arrested for abusing minor in Kannur

**KANNUR**

A teacher in Kerala's Kannur has been arrested after a minor student accused him of repeated sexual abuse over two years. The student alleged that the abuse began at age 11 and continued until 13, with threats allegedly made to prevent disclosure. The accused, identified as Muhammad Basheer of Muthuvalloor in Malappuram, was booked under the POCSO Act and other relevant sections. Kannur police arrested him following the complaint. A court remanded Basheer to Kannur Central Jail for 14 days.

Four children die after Shivpuri waterfall visit

**SHIVPURI**

Four children from the same family died within 10 days after visiting a waterfall near Gora Tila in Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh, on August 16. Three victims were minors. The children reportedly developed fever, stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhoea before their conditions worsened rapidly. The victims were identified as Tahir, 14, Ayaz, 19, Taruf, 9, and Tasif, 11. Their deaths occurred between August 21 and 31. Relatives suspect contaminated waterfall water may have caused the illness. The health department has launched an investigation, collected samples from family members and examined medical records.

Kerala CPI(M) post-poll meetings raise questions

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

Kerala CPI(M)'s post-election explanatory meetings in its stronghold Kannur have raised questions about whether the party is prepared to make corrective changes after its electoral setback.

The meetings followed months of internal reviews that had called for serious corrective measures from the leadership.

The party suffered major defeats in Taliparamba and Payyannur, constituencies where the CPI(M) had traditionally enjoyed strong support. The losses were seen as particularly significant because the party had rarely faced defeat in these seats. The results were therefore closely watched for signs of change within the organisation.

However, former chief minister and Opposition leader Pinarayi Vijayan reportedly launched sharp attacks on rebel MLAs T K Govindan and V Kunhikrishnan, who defeated CPI(M) candidates in the two constituencies.

Vijayan described Govindan as an opportunist and

Maharashtra congress seeks more time for SIR claims

**MUMBAI**

Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee has asked the State Chief Electoral Officer to extend the deadline for filing claims and objections under the ongoing Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. The party has sought an extension from September 30 to November 30, saying the current period is inadequate.

Congress General Secretary Sandesh Kondvilkar submitted a representation to Chief Electoral Officer S Chockalingam, raising con-



‘BUILD A SECOND BENGALURU’

Shivakumar said NITI Aayog's suggestion to develop a “second Bengaluru” would be incorporated into a comprehensive plan.

**BENGALURU**

NITI Aayog vice-chairperson Ashok Kumar Lahiri on Wednesday asked Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar to "seriously consider" building a second Bengaluru in Karnataka.

Lahiri met Shivakumar, Home Minister Priyank Kharge, Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh and others for a presentation on Viksit Karnataka @2047.

NITI Aayog commends Karnataka's trajectory

"I am proud of Karnataka's development. To reduce pressure on Bengaluru, there is a need to seriously consider building a second Bengaluru in Karnataka," Lahiri said, according to a statement from the chief minister's office.

"Karnataka has all the potential to grow rapidly. Only if states grow can the country grow and develop. Since Kar-

TVK Government Lacks Touch Reality: Dhinakaran

**MADURAI**

AMMK general secretary T T V Dhinakaran on Wednesday criticised the TVK government in Tamil Nadu, comparing its administration to a cinema disconnected from real life. Speaking at a press conference in Madurai, he questioned the experience and abilities of the newly elected ministers and MLAs and alleged that the government was struggling to handle basic responsibilities. Dhinakaran claimed that TVK won 108 seats by attracting young voters through Instagram reels and cinematic appeal, while many of its candidates were

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nataka has a large dryland area, a plan should be made to grow more produce in dryland areas," Lahiri added.

Shivakumar said NITI Aayog's suggestion to develop a “second Bengaluru” would be incorporated into a comprehensive plan. Shivakumar urged NITI Aayog to ensure Karnataka receives its due share of Central funds, including grants announced in earlier Union Budgets. He sought special consideration for Karnataka, citing its lead in GDP, per-capita income,

TVK Government Lacks Touch Reality: Dhinakaran

relatively unknown. He also questioned the knowledge of some elected representatives, alleging that a few had difficulty with basic Tamil and mathematics. He cited examples of members reportedly confusing millilitres with millimetres and misreading numbers. Targeting Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, Dhinakaran alleged that he remained largely silent in the Assembly for 100 days and had difficul-

SC LIMITS BCI CHIEF'S TENURE, ORDERS OVERSIGHT

**NEW DELHI**

Supreme Court on Wednesday described Bar Council of India (BCI) Chairperson Manan Kumar Mishra's present position as “pro tem” and said he could continue only until a newly constituted BCI elects its office-bearers. The court also directed that policy decisions of the council must involve the Attorney General and Solicitor General.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, along with Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana, said its concern was the institutional functioning of the BCI rather than the conduct of any individual. The court said the existing arrangement could

EXPERTS CHECK SAFETY OF 130-YEAR-OLD MULLAPERIYAR DAM

**KUMILY**

A five-member independent expert panel on Tuesday inspected the 130-year-old Mullaperiyar dam in Kerala to assess its structural safety and overall condition. The panel, headed by former NHPC CMD Balraj Joshi, visited the

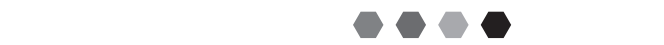
MAHARASHTRA SIR CLAIM

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**Meeting details**

- **Proposal:** NITI Aayog suggested creating a second major economic hub to reduce congestion in Bengaluru.
- **State response:** Chief Minister Shivakumar stated that the recommendation would be added to a comprehensive development plan.
- **Central funds:** DKS requested fair central fund allocations and special consideration for Karnataka's high economic performance.
- **Economic growth:** Officials reported that Karnataka's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) reached Rs 32.81 lakh crore in 2025–26, marking an 8.1% growth rate.

Chloroquine tablets leave 52 villagers ill, girl dies

**ANDHRA PRADESH**

A seven-year-old girl died and 52 villagers fell ill after taking chloroquine tablets distributed to prevent malaria in Gollaguppa village of Andhra Pradesh's Polavaram district. Health officials had given the tablets to 71 people as a precaution. Soon after taking them, several villagers developed vomiting, dizziness and abdominal pain. Twenty-nine patients were admitted to a hospital in Bhadrachalam, Telangana, while 24 were treated at a local health centre. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu ordered a high-level medical investigation.

SC LIMITS BCI CHIEF'S TENURE, ORDERS OVERSIGHT

handle day-to-day matters, but important policy decisions required participation from permanent ex officio members.

The bench was hearing petitions challenging Mishra's prolonged tenure and seeking his removal. The pleas also questioned notifications extending the terms of the chairman and vice-chairman until 2030. Petitioners argued that Mishra's five-year term, from April 17, 2025, to April 16, 2030, was inconsistent with BCI Rules that provide for a two-year tenure.

The court observed that the provision under the Advocates Act used to continue office-bearers during a transitional period was meant to

EXPERTS CHECK SAFETY OF 130-YEAR-OLD MULLAPERIYAR DAM

prevent an administrative vacuum and should not be used to avoid elections.

With State Bar Council elections completed, the court said the new councils should proceed with forming the BCI.

The Supreme Court directed the newly constituted State Bar Councils to complete co-option and elect their chairpersons, vice-chairpersons, other office-bearers and BCI representatives within three weeks of notification. The matter will be heard again on September 23.

The court also considered concerns over a BCI-linked trust and questions about permanent trusteeship of its assets.

MAHARASHTRA SIR CLAIM

Mohit Jain elected as ABC chairman 2026-27

**MUMBAI,**

Mohit Jain, Chief Operating Officer (Publishing) and Board Member of Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. (BCCL), has been unanimously elected Chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for 2026-27.

Jain's election marks BCCL's return to the chairmanship of ABC after 43 years. With more than two decades of experience in the print media industry, he has held senior leadership positions spanning publishing, business operations and industry affairs.

At BCCL, Jain has played a



BJP promises PNG connections, 24-hour power in Rajasthan

**JAIPUR**

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday released its Urban Development Sankalp Patra for Rajasthan's upcoming civic body elections, promising faster urban development, better drinking water supply, PNG connections for seven lakh households and 24-hour domestic electricity in cities.

The document was released at the BJP state headquarters in Jaipur in the presence of Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, state president Madan Rathore and other senior leaders. The party said wards would be treated as the basic units of urban development, with special measures planned for areas facing water shortages.

Chief Minister Sharma said the party had deliberately called the document a Sankalp Patra instead of an election manifesto. He described it as a five-year commitment focused on completing promised work and improving urban services.

The BJP also announced that separate Sankalp Patras would be prepared for individual municipal corporations, municipalities and other urban local bodies. These

documents will include plans based on local needs and priorities.

Rathore said the party had the confidence of the people and would fulfil its commitments. He highlighted the government's performance over the past two years and said voters would compare its work with previous administrations.

The BJP had formed a 13-member committee on August 2 to prepare the document. According to the party, the committee completed the exercise within 30 days after consultations on urban development. The party will now release separate local-level documents before the civic elections, outlining commitments tailored to individual urban areas across Rajasthan.

Ahmedabad customs seize 1.93 kg hydroponic marijuana

**AHMEDABAD**

Ahmedabad Customs officials seized 1.928 kg of hydroponic marijuana from two passengers who arrived from Bangkok at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport on Wednesday.

The passengers, a 50-year-old husband and wife from Vadodara, were arrested following the seizure.

The Air Intelligence Unit intercepted the couple after passenger profiling and X-ray scanning of their baggage.

Officers found specially created cavities inside their trolley bags during a detailed examination.

Five vacuum-packed transparent packets containing a green substance were found inside each bag. Preliminary tests indicated that the substance was hydroponic marijuana, officials said.

The 10 packets together weighed 1,928 grams.

The contraband was seized under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

Both passengers were ar-

EXPERTS CHECK SAFETY OF 130-YEAR-OLD MULLAPERIYAR DAM

rested, and further investigation is underway to determine the source and intended destination of the drugs.

The seizure came a day after Ahmedabad Customs seized 6.073 kg of hydroponic marijuana from a Myanmar-origin passenger arriving from Ho Chi Minh City. In that case, officers detected a concealed cavity in a trolley bag following passenger profiling, X-ray scanning and assistance from a sniffer dog. The latest seizure marks the second major hydroponic marijuana interception at Ahmedabad airport in two days. Customs officials are continuing their investigation into both cases and the possible network involved in transporting the contraband.

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| INSIGHTS                                       |
|------------------------------------------------|
| 7 lakhs: Households promised PNG connections   |
| 24 hours: Proposed daily domestic power supply |
| 5 years: Commitment period outlined by BJP     |
| 13 members: Election manifesto committee       |

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Quick Read

**Woman, twins die after ambulance delay**

**MANDLA**

A 28-year-old woman and her unborn twins died in Madhya Pradesh's Mandla district after her family allegedly failed to get a Janani Ambulance during labour. Rukmani Nareti of Salaiya village went into labour around 4 pm on Tuesday. Her husband, Pritam Nareti, claimed he called the 108 Janani Ambulance service but was told no vehicle was available. The family arranged alternative transport, but Rukmani was later declared dead at the Government Community Health Centre in Bijadandi. A medical officer said she had sickle cell disease and that both babies had died before reaching the hospital. Officials are examining the incident.

**Delhi police bust inter-state arms racket, two held**

**New delhi**

Delhi Police's Special Cell has busted an alleged inter-state illegal arms smuggling racket and arrested two young men, officials said on Wednesday. The accused were identified as 20-year-old Honey Nihal alias Pandat from Ghaziabad and 19-year-old Jatin Bhati alias Prince from Delhi. Police recovered six country-made pistols, 10 live cartridges and a car during the operation. Honey was allegedly intercepted at Dhaula Kuan after police received information about an arms delivery from Madhya Pradesh. During questioning, he reportedly named Jatin, who was later arrested in Ghaziabad. Police are investigating the weapons' source, intended recipients and other members of the alleged network.

**Orange alert in 3 Uttarakhand districts, 12 dead**

**Uttarakhand**

An Orange Alert has been issued for Dehradun, Nainital and Bageshwar as Uttarakhand faces heavy to very heavy rainfall, thunderstorms and lightning. The State Emergency Operations Centre and SDRF said 12 people died in rain-related incidents on Tuesday. Authorities have directed district administrations to remain alert and prepared for emergencies. Several areas received extremely heavy rain over the past 24 hours, with Nainital city recording 217 mm, followed by Bhimtal at 161 mm and Mukteshwar at 140 mm. A Yellow Alert remains in place for other districts, where isolated heavy rainfall is expected. Officials are closely monitoring the situation.

# Tamil Nadu bans smartphones at 52 major temples

Tamil Nadu has restricted smartphones at 52 major temples from September 1, requiring devotees to deposit camera phones for ₹5 amid concerns over reels and photography.

CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government has introduced a smartphone restriction at 52 major temples across the state from September 1, following concerns over devotees taking photographs, recording videos, selfies and reels inside temple premises.

Under the new system, devotees carrying smartphones must deposit them at designated counters near temple entrances and pay ₹5 per phone. They receive a token or receipt to collect the device later. Phones without cameras



are allowed inside the temples. The Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department said the restriction aims to maintain a peaceful and spiritual atmosphere and reduce inconvenience to other

devotees. The measure follows earlier directions from the Madras High Court.

The ₹5 charge is not intended to generate revenue, officials said. It will help cover expenses for staff, storage lockers and other facilities required to operate the phone-deposit system.

The system has been introduced at several major temples, including the Devarajaswamy-Athi Varadar Temple in Kanchipuram and Arunachaleswarar Temple in Tiruvannamalai. At some locations, staff are recording details such as the devotee's

photograph, phone model and number. Temple employees have raised concerns about the responsibility of safely storing large numbers of expensive smartphones, particularly during busy festivals. Some devotees also initially objected to the restriction.

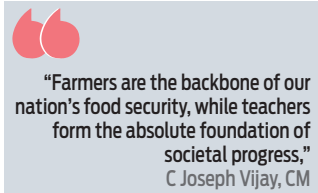
Temple authorities are explaining the rules to visitors and asking them to follow the new system. The government expects the measure to help preserve the calm atmosphere of the temples while allowing basic mobile phones without cameras to remain permitted inside.

## TN Govt to drop cases against peaceful protesters

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Wednesday announced in the Assembly that police cases against farmers and teachers who held peaceful protests for their rights would be withdrawn. The decision was taken on humanitarian grounds and to strengthen democratic values.

Vijay said cases against farmers protesting the Parandur airport project and the expansion of the SIPCOT industrial park in Tiruvannamalai would be dropped. The Parandur airport project was recently scrapped by the Tamil Nadu government.



The Chief Minister said several farmers had faced cases while opposing projects that they believed could affect their agricultural land, water sources and livelihoods. Some farmers protesting the SIPCOT project had also been booked under the Goondas Act. Cases against teachers who had protested peacefully for their demands would also be withdrawn. Vijay said peaceful protest was a basic

democratic right and that citizens should not face legal difficulties simply for raising genuine concerns.

"Farmers are the backbone of our nation's food security, while teachers form the absolute foundation of societal progress," Vijay said. He added that pending cases had caused mental stress to both groups. The Chief Minister said withdrawing the cases would help improve trust between the government and people. He maintained that the move reflected the government's commitment to humanitarian values, democratic rights and respect for peaceful public protest

## Piyush Goyal slams opposition over India's growth

NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday criticised the Opposition for questioning India's economic growth figures, saying the country continues to be the world's fastest-growing major economy.

Speaking at the 66th Annual Session of the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India, Goyal said India had remained strong despite global economic challenges. He described the country as "one oasis in the desert" and said the latest growth figure reflected the economy's performance.

## Manipur house seeks NRC update before census

IMPHAL

The Manipur Assembly on Wednesday passed a resolution urging the Centre to update the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state before conducting the census. The move marks the third such resolution passed by the Assembly since 2022.

Speaker Th Satyabrata Singh said the House had reaffirmed its earlier resolutions passed in August 2022 and March 2024. The latest resolution again urged the Centre to complete the NRC update before the census, saying it was important for the interests of both Manipur and the country.

The demand for updating the NRC has been linked to concerns among the Meitei and Naga communities about possible changes in the state's

population pattern. They have raised concerns over the alleged entry of illegal immigrants from neighbouring Myanmar, who are believed to have ethnic links with the Kuki community.

The Centre had already deferred the census exercise in Manipur on Monday. The Assembly's latest resolution comes amid continuing political and social concerns over population changes and the identification of residents in the violence-affected state.

However, a Kuki-Zo organisation criticised the Centre's decision to defer the census, alleging that the community's views were not properly considered.

The issue is likely to remain a subject of debate as the Centre considers the next steps on the census and NRC in Manipur.

# PUNJAB CHALLENGES DA ORDER IN SUPREME COURT

NEW DELHI

The Punjab government has approached the Supreme Court against a Punjab and Haryana High Court order on Dearness Allowance (DA), arguing that state employees in several categories already receive higher overall pay than their Central government counterparts.

In its plea, Punjab said DA should not be increased simply by matching the percentage given to Central government employees.

Instead, the state argued that the total salary package and actual take-

home pay should be considered while deciding whether employees have equal benefits.

The government has challenged the High Court's August 3 judgment concerning DA and dearness relief.

Punjab said it was willing to increase DA if required to ensure actual pay parity between comparable state and Central government employees.

The state has also asked the Supreme Court to cancel the High



# No education system can rise above teacher quality: Meghalaya CM

SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Wednesday said that the quality of teachers is the most important factor in transforming the education system, stressing that infrastructure and government schemes can succeed only with committed educators.

Addressing the state-level Teachers' Day celebration at Tura, Sangma recognised teachers working in remote and single-teacher schools and said their contributions often go unnoticed.

"No education system can rise above the quality of its teachers, however much money we spend on buildings, however many schemes we launch," Sangma said.

Sangma recalled the government's efforts since 2018 to improve school infrastructure. An initial assessment had estimated a requirement of Rs 3,000 crore. He said the government began the process gradually through Mission Education.

According to the Chief Minister, infrastructure in more than 2,000 government elementary schools has been upgraded, while the number of Higher Secondary Schools increased from 427 to 545. He said education received the largest share of his Chief Minister's Special Development Fund, with around Rs 150-180 crore of the Rs

| AT A GLANCE                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| 2,000+ government elementary schools upgraded |
| 427 → 545 Higher Secondary Schools            |
| 97.2% SSLC pass rate                          |
| 448 → 525.7 Performance Grading Index score   |

300-400 crore spent over the last eight financial years going to the sector.

Sangma also highlighted improvements in learning outcomes. Meghalaya moved from Akanshi-3 to Akanshi-1 in the Performance Grading Index in one year, with its score rising from 448 to 525.7 points. The state recorded a 97.2 per cent SSLC pass percentage and an 86.6 per cent HSSLC pass percentage this year. The Class X-to-XI transition rate also increased to 82.1 per cent.

The Meghalaya School Performance Grading Index covers all 11,443 schools across 12 districts.

Urging teachers to remain focused on their responsibilities, Sangma said, "The purpose of every teacher is to shape the lives of youth, and while shaping youth, you shape the future of the country."

He also urged officials and teachers to focus on solutions and ensure that every decision is guided by its impact on students.

## Himachal gets 98,719 applications for constable posts

SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Wednesday said the state government has received 98,719 applications for the recruitment of 1,088 male and female police constable posts. He also ruled out any further extension of the application deadline.

The Chief Minister shared the figures during the ongoing monsoon session of the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly while responding to requests for more time to apply. The Himachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (HPPSC) had issued the recruitment advertisement on July 10, 2026, with August 6 set as the original deadline.

## Chennai corporation opens mental health centre for staff

CHENNAI

The Greater Chennai Corporation has opened a new mental health and wellness centre at the Ripon Buildings complex to provide counselling and emotional support to its employees.

Corporation Commissioner G.S. Sameeran inaugurated the Mind Mandira Wellness

Centre at the Revenue Department building on Wednesday. The centre is part of a mental health initiative launched jointly by the Greater Chennai Corporation, CREDAI Chennai Foundation and Dhriti Foundation.

The programme aims to help employees understand and manage workplace stress, improve emotional strength

and seek professional help when needed. Officials said the centre will provide a safe space where staff can discuss personal and work-related concerns without hesitation.

Employees can register directly at the centre or contact the Mind Mandira helpline at +91 80314 51918 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Psychologists and

trained counsellors will provide in-person consultations on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The initiative was formally launched on August 10 and is intended to create a healthier and more supportive workplace. The Corporation also plans awareness programmes and individual counselling sessions to reduce the stigma around mental health.

## TN unveils Rs 4,800 crore desalination plant plan

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Wednesday announced a major package of urban development projects, including a Rs 4,800 crore seawater desalination plant, improved water supply, sewerage networks, roads, parks and digital transport services. The largest project is a 400-million-litres-per-day desalination plant at Minjur. The facility is expected to meet drinking water needs in north Chennai, Avadi, Ponneri and Minjur. A separate Rs 500 crore scheme will provide round-the-clock water supply to households in Avadi Corporation.

The government will spend Rs 1,000 crore to improve water facilities in Madurai and Cuddalore corporations, nine municipalities and 20 town panchayats. Another Rs 300 crore will be used to renovate 33 ageing combined water-supply schemes, while Chennai's Kilpauk water treatment plant will be expanded at a cost of Rs 410 crore.

Madurai's 40-year-old un-

derground sewerage network will be modernised in its first phase at Rs 2,400 crore. New underground drainage projects worth Rs 960 crore will also be taken up in Nagercoil and parts of Kundrathur and Nandivaram-Guduvancheri.

The government has allocated Rs 1,850 crore for road construction and repairs in urban local bodies, along with Rs 275 crore for safer school access and improved road junctions. It will also plant one crore saplings and create 250 parks statewide at a cost of Rs 305 crore.

Waste-to-energy plants will be established in Tirunelveli and Salem, while heritage and tourism projects will be taken up in Chidambaram, Cuddalore and Kanyakumari. From September 15, successful driving test candidates will receive digital licences on the same day. Vijay also announced the withdrawal of cases registered between May 2021 and April 2026 against farmers and teachers who took part in peaceful protests, including agitations linked to the Parandur airport and Tiruvannamalai SIPCOT projects.

# Kerala plans India's first electric truck corridor

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala is preparing to develop the 622-km National Highway 66 stretch from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram as India's first electric truck corridor, aiming to make freight transport cleaner and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

The proposed project will include a network of charging stations along the highway.

A study by the Kerala State Electricity Board Limited and the International Council on Clean Transportation estimates



that an initial charging network of 12.5 MW will be required, with an investment of about Rs 19 crore.

The plan is not limited to installing chargers. It also aims to strengthen the electricity network so that it can handle growing demand as more heavy trucks

shift to battery-powered vehicles. Officials said the project could become a model for electrifying freight transport while preparing the power system for future needs. The proposed corridor will cover the entire NH 66 stretch between Kasaragod and Thiruvanan-

| IN FOCUS                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------|
| ■ 622 km — NH 66 stretch                            |
| ■ Kasaragod–Thiruvananthapuram — proposed route     |
| ■ 12.5 MW — initial charging capacity needed        |
| ■ ₹19 crore — estimated initial investment          |
| ■ 3.5–55 tonnes — truck weight range for incentives |
| ■ India's first — proposed electric truck corridor  |

thapuram.

The study was presented at the India Clean Transport Summit 2026 in Delhi, highlighting the need for coordinated planning between transport and electricity infrastructure.

Under the proposed scheme, incentives will depend on the gross vehicle weight of electric trucks, covering vehicles from 3.5 tonnes to 55 tonnes.

The initiative is expected to support the wider use of electric trucks and help Kerala move towards cleaner and more efficient freight transportation.

Quick Read

Far right AfD eyes historic state win in Germany

NAUMBURG

Germany's far-right Alternative for Germany party is leading opinion polls ahead of Sunday's state election in Saxony-Anhalt. The anti-immigrant party advocates ending sanctions against Moscow, halting support for Ukraine, and restoring cheap Russian energy supplies. Analysts note that deep historical ties from the former communist era shape local attitudes, as many eastern Germans do not view Russia as a natural enemy. Meanwhile, Chancellor Friedrich Merz's government warns that an AfD victory would favor Vladimir Putin. Economists highlight that lingering wealth gaps and economic anxieties continue to drive voter support toward the nationalist party.

Arctic tensions rise as Denmark fortifies Greenland

KANGERLUSSUAQ

Denmark has sent its first military conscripts to Greenland to strengthen regional security amid rising geopolitical tensions. The deployment follows persistent US demands to acquire the semi-autonomous island, a proposal firmly rejected by Copenhagen and local leaders. Participating in the Arctic Endurance exercise, these young soldiers are training to survive and operate in extreme weather conditions. The mission also aligns with a broader NATO initiative to bolster northern defenses. Meanwhile, Russia and China have criticized the increased military presence, warning that heightened alliance activities in the resource-rich Arctic could escalate regional confrontation.

Orbital arms race accelerates amid rising space tensions

WASHINGTON

The United States and China are rapidly advancing military space operations, developing hunter satellites, spaceplanes, and orbital weapons as conflict increasingly extends beyond Earth. Defense analysts warn that satellites are now viewed as active combat platforms vulnerable to jamming, lasers, and capture. Recently, a secretive Chinese spaceplane deployed a small satellite for close maneuvers, mirroring American unmanned shuttle programs. Meanwhile, the US and Britain recently conducted a joint orbital operation near a Chinese spacecraft to signal allied deterrence. Officials stress that dominating space is vital for national security and modern military success worldwide.

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India, Bangladesh discuss legislative & local cooperation

DHAKA

India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Dinesh Trivedi, held a series of high-level diplomatic meetings in Dhaka, conferring with top legislative leaders to expand parliamentary cooperation and foster deeper connections between the two neighboring democracies.

Trivedi met separately with Bangladesh's Speaker of the National Parliament, Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, and Deputy Speaker Kayser Kamal at the parliament complex. During the discussions, the High Commissioner emphasized



Violence in Eastern DR Congo complicates Ebola response

Intensifying armed conflict in the DRC fuels mass displacement and severely threatens critical efforts to contain a surging Ebola epidemic.

UNITED NATIONS

Intensifying armed conflict across the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is triggering massive new waves of civilian displacement while severely obstructing medical teams trying to contain an escalating Ebola epidemic. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned that persistent hostilities, targeted community attacks, and widespread population movements are actively breaking down critical disease surveillance networks and halting public health interventions in the most vulnerable regions.

Public health data compiled by national authorities indicates that the epidemic has reached staggering proportions, with confirmed infections surpassing 6,100 cases and fatalities approaching 2,950. Humanitarian agencies stress that the chaotic movement of displaced families fleeing violence serves as an ideal vector for viral transmission, complicating contact tracing and threatening to spark cross-border contagion throughout the Great Lakes region.

The security situation in Ituri province has deteriorated sharply. Local civil society networks reported that armed



Conflict and displacement impacts

- **Casualties in Ituri:** Local civil society sources reported that armed attacks in Mambasa territory (Ituri province) left at least 37 civilians dead and over 35 abducted, adding to a mounting death toll that saw at least 86 civilians killed across the territory over the prior month.
- **Mass Flight in South Kivu:** Clashes in Walungu territory forced the displacement of at least 15,000 people. The majority have sought refuge with host families, generating an urgent demand for emergency food, safe shelter, and basic healthcare.
- **Multi-Pronged Crisis:** Ongoing fighting involving state forces and non-state armed groups across North Kivu and neighboring provinces continues to uproot communities already vulnerable to systemic hunger and weak infrastructure.

groups launched brutal raids in the Mambasa territory, resulting in the tragic deaths of at least 37 civilians and the abduction of over 35 others on a single Saturday. These atrocities follow an equally violent August that saw at least 86 civilians killed in systematic attacks across the

same territory.

Meanwhile, in neighboring South Kivu province, humanitarian partners' documented fresh military clashes across the Walungu territory that have forcibly displaced a minimum of 15,000 individuals since August 23. The vast majority of these displaced fam-

We cannot respond incrementally to an epidemic which is now growing exponentially. What we need now is political will, access, and resources.  
- Tom Fletcher, UN Secretary

ilies have sought precarious shelter with already overstretched host families, triggering urgent humanitarian needs for emergency food rations, clean drinking water, temporary shelter materials, and primary healthcare services. Similar patterns of forced displacement are also rippling through volatile pockets of North Kivu province, compounding an already catastrophic humanitarian landscape.

Despite facing immense security risks and logistical bottlenecks, United Nations agencies and international humanitarian partners remain active on the ground, coordinating closely with national health ministries.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has scaled up preventative operations, conducting nearly 23 million health screenings across the DRC and neighboring countries. These screening checkpoints play a vital role in monitoring population movements, identifying potential infection vectors, and mitigating the risk of international transmission.

Rijiju explores expanded partnerships at Belgrade summit

BELGRADE

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, leading the Indian delegation at the High-Level Commemorative Meeting marking the 65th anniversary of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Belgrade, leveraged the multilateral platform to conduct an intensive series of high-level bilateral engagements. The summit, convened under the theme "The Legacy of Non-Alignment: Lessons for Today's World", brought together leaders from across the globe to reflect on historical principles of sovereignty, peaceful coexistence, and strategic autonomy, while allowing New Delhi to reinforce its diplomatic footprint across diverse geopolitical regions.

A cornerstone of Rijiju's diplomatic outreach involved deepening ties with West Asian leadership. He held comprehensive discussions with Saudi Arabia's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Waleed A. M. Elkhereiji. The dialogue focused on steering the multifaceted India-Saudi Arabia partnership toward expanded domains of strategic convergence, economic interdependence, and regional stability, building upon mutual high-level visits and shared developmental aspirations.

In his engagements with host-nation dignitaries of the Republic of Serbia, Rijiju emphasized the enduring civil-



Had a warm and meaningful interaction reaffirming our growing partnership.  
- Kiren Rijiju, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister

izational and contemporary bonds uniting New Delhi and Belgrade. Following an audience with Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić—wherein both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to bilateral trust rooted in mutual respect—Rijiju conferred with the President (Speaker) of the Serbian National Assembly, Ana Brnabić.

Their talks spotlighted the pivotal role of parliamentary diplomacy, legislative exchanges, and people-to-people connectivity in bridging geographic distances and fostering profound societal understanding.

Additionally, Rijiju met with Serbia's Minister of Internal and Foreign Trade, Jagoda Lazarevic, to map out actionable frameworks for scaling up bilateral trade volumes, encouraging cross-border investments, and unlocking new avenues for mutual economic growth.

Diplomatic engagements

- **Saudi Arabia:** Met Deputy Foreign Minister Waleed A. M. Elkhereiji to deepen the long-standing partnership and expand mutual cooperation.
- **Serbia (National Assembly):** Sat down with Speaker Ana Brnabic to celebrate enduring friendships and boost parliamentary exchanges.
- **Serbia (Trade):** Connected with Minister Jagoda Lazarevic to unlock exciting new paths for bilateral trade and economic growth.
- **Angola:** Held fruitful talks with Foreign Minister Tete Antonio to scale up partnership benefits for both nations.

Expanding India's outreach to the African continent, Rijiju sat down with Angola's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tete Antonio. The conversation explored robust pathways to diversify bilateral cooperation, particularly focusing on energy security, trade facilitation, and South-South developmental solidarity, ensuring that the historic framework of non-alignment continues to deliver tangible economic dividends for developing nations in an increasingly multipolar and complex global order.

BRIDGING DHAKA AND INDIA

broader trajectory of bilateral diplomacy.

He stressed that both nations must pragmatically navigate contemporary geopolitical and domestic challenges without remaining tethered to historical grievances.

"We have to appreciate Bangladesh's democratic challenges, and Bangladesh also has to appreciate India's challenges.

Keeping these challenges in mind, we have to move forward," Trivedi told reporters, noting that remaining fixated on the past risks stalling mutual development.

‘Productive discussions’ anchor India-Kiribati era

SOUTH TARAWA

India and Kiribati are taking major steps to strengthen their friendship and work closely together. High Commissioner Suneet Mehta recently traveled to South Tarawa for a series of important meetings with top local leaders to explore new ways to help each other grow.

During his visit, Mehta sat down with Tearinaki Tanielu, the Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration. Both officials talked about their long-lasting ties and discussed exciting opportunities to build a stronger partnership across multiple sectors.

The High Commissioner also met with several key government ministers to discuss shared goals and mutual priorities. His schedule included talks with Harry Tekaiti, the Minister for Culture and Internal Affairs, To-kaibure Rabaua, who handles environment and agriculture, and Mikarite Temari, the minister overseeing the Line and Phoenix Islands. Discussions also involved Taoaba Kaiea, Chairman of the Leadership Commission. These conversations focused heavily on creating a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future for communities in both nations.

Economic development and digital growth were ma-

India and Kiribati deepen diplomatic and developmental ties through high-level meetings focused on health and infrastructure growth.

major topics during a separate meeting with Koin Uriam Kiritione, the Secretary for Finance. The leaders explored ways to boost financial cooperation, improve local infrastructure, and expand professional training programs.

Beyond diplomatic talks, Mehta saw firsthand how Indian support is directly helping local citizens. He toured the new Dialysis Centre in Kiribati, a vital medical facility being built with funding assistance from India. This project highlights India's ongoing commitment to improving healthcare access and delivering better medical services for families in Kiribati.

Earlier in June, Mehta also connected with Uering Iteraera, the acting official for foreign affairs, to discuss expanding their development partnership and cooperating closely in global forums.

These continued meetings show India's dedication to supporting Pacific island nations through genuine friendship, targeted aid, and shared respect.

IRGC claims strikes on US Military installations

TEHRAN

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) announced that it executed a series of military strikes targeting United States installations across Kuwait, Jordan, and Iraq. According to state-affiliated media reports, the operations were launched in direct retaliation for a deadly American airstrike that hit a residential wedding celebration in the coastal Iranian district of Sirik. In its official statement, the IRGC claimed its forces successfully targeted the living quarters and command post of the American commander at

the Ali Al-Salem air base in Kuwait, asserting the strike proved Tehran maintains comprehensive intelligence on regional US military movements. Additionally, the Iranian military reported executing a ballistic missile barrage against Camp Titon, a base housing US Marines along the Gulf of Aqaba in Jordan. The IRGC stated that this retaliatory action inflicted heavy personnel casualties and destroyed multiple facilities and stationed helicopters. Operations in northern Iraq also struck American military assets. The IRGC Ground Forces targeted a US facility in Erbil,

reportedly destroying a surveillance balloon control system, equipment warehouses, and a maintenance center, while setting adjacent fuel storage tanks ablaze and causing further American casualties. The escalatory strikes follow sharp condemnations from Iranian diplomatic officials regarding the alleged US attack in Sirik. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei reported that more than 50 innocent civilians, including women and children, were killed or wounded when a residential home hosting a wedding in Kuhestak, Sirik, was struck.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **ALTAF ABDUL HAMEED**, S/o Late AMEER JAN, aged about 67 years, residing at #2657, Chikkapete, Doddaballapur Town, Bengaluru Rural District-561203, hereby declare that my father's name has been wrongly mentioned as "TABDUL GHANI @ AMEER JAN" in my Passport. His correct and actual name is "AMEER JAN". Hence, I request the concerned authorities to rectify the same in my Passport and other records. vide affidavit dated 02.09.2026 Sworn before Advocate and Notary Chandrashekhar, Doddaballapura

NAME CHANGE

I, **UMME HANI A**, D/o Afsar Pasha, resident of Flat No 203, Harsha Apartments, Biryani Galli Road, Old Gurupana Palya, BTM 1st Stage, Bengaluru-560029, have changed my name to **UMME HANI**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 02.09.2026 before notary R.BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT: DEVANAHALLI CrI.Misc.No. 582/2026

Between: Sri. Venkataswamy and Others ..Petitioners

And: The Tahsilidhar, Devanahalli ..Respondent

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, the undersigned advocate on behalf of my client Sri. Venkataswamy & others residing at Devanahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, have filed the above petition for the death certificate of one Girijamma C/o Venkataswamy was died on 25-05-2021 at Devanahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, if any 3rd parties who have objections may dispute regarding the same can appear before the Hon'ble 2nd Additional Civil Judge and J.M.F.C at Devanahalli and the date hearing on 28-10-2026 at 11.00 AM in CrI. Misc. 582/2026 at Devanahalli.

By the order of Hon'ble Court  
Chief Administrative Officer, Civil Judge & JMFC Court, Devanahalli

Advocate for Petitioner  
Address for Service: Sri.Narasimhamurthy,K Advocate, Office at :#58, J.M. Arcade, 1st Floor, Subble Road, Devanahalli Town, Bengaluru Rural District.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE SUBORDINATE JUDGE, HARUR O.S. No. 485/2021

K. Neelamegam, S/o. K. Kathirivel, D.No 47A/90, Athora Street, Kaveri amman Koll Street, Harur Post & Taluk, Dharmapuri District - 636 903. .... Plaintiff

Vs.

K. Kumar, S/o. K. Kuppusamy, D.No #1003, 3<sup>rd</sup> Stage, BEML Layout, Bangalore South, Bangalore – 560 098. .... 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant

NOTICE

The above case is filed by the plaintiff against the defendants. In this the Defendants D-1 K. Kumar is evading to receive the summons from this Hon'ble Court. As per the order of this Hon'ble Court the above case is posted of 23.09.2026 for appearance of the above defendant D-1. It is informed that you should appear before this Hon'ble Subordinate Judge Court at Harur on 23.09.2026 personally or through your counsel at above 10.00 AM if you are fail to appear on the date of hearing before the Court note this Hon'ble Court will pass ex-party order against you

/by order of the court/  
**R. Ramajayam, M.A., B.L.,**  
Counsel for Plaintiff

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SADASHIV (old name), a resident of NO 50, OLD NO 415/D, 14TH CROSS, GROUND FLOOR, ILYAS NAGAR, BENGALURU, 560078, Karnataka, INDIA, have changed my name to MOHAMMED SADAQATH (NEW Name) vide affidavit dated 31-08-2026, sworn advocate and notary Mohammed Hussain K.

CHANGE OF NAME

It is for general information that I, SYED MOHAMMED YAHYA, S/o SYED NASSERUDEEN, R/o Villa No. 74, SRR Exurbia, Opp. Essar Petrol Bunk, Kavala Hosahalli, Anekal, Bengaluru, Karnataka-562106, declare that the name of mine and my mother have been wrongly written as MOHAMMAD YAHYA SHAIKH and JANNATUL FIRDAUSE in my 10th class educational document. The actual name of mine and my mother is SYED MOHAMMED YAHYA and JANNATUL SAMIULLA SHAIKH, which may be amended accordingly.

CHCLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad contact: 080-41209042

# Verstappen signs Red Bull contract extension until 2030

Max Verstappen locks in his Formula One future with a massive Red Bull extension through the 2030 season.



**MILTON KEYNES**

Max Verstappen has officially signed a massive contract extension with Red Bull, tying him to the team through the 2030 season. The announcement ends months of paddock speculation regarding the four-time world champion's future and brings much-needed stability to the Milton Keynes squad.

Former Red Bull advisor Helmut Marko believes the timing of the extension is a crucial factor for the team's future, as every ambitious engineer in the paddock naturally wants the opportunity to work with the best

tension could not have been better. Speaking to Krone Zeitung, Marko noted that locking in the 71-time grand prix winner sends the right signal and brings vital calm to the organization. Verstappen's previous deal ran until 2028 but included performance-related exit clauses that fueled heavy links to Mercedes and McLaren throughout 2025 and early 2026.

Despite outside interest and informal talks with rival bosses, the 28-year-old driver ultimately decided to stay put. Marko emphasized that Verstappen serves as the face and leading figure of the entire operation. His presence acts as a crucial factor for the team's future, as every ambitious engineer in the paddock naturally wants the opportunity to work with the best

# Charles Leclerc praises Ferrari's 2026 upgrade strategy

Charles Leclerc has praised Ferrari for taking an aggressive and innovative approach to car development this season. As the team prepares for its home race at the Italian Grand Prix, Leclerc highlighted the relentless effort behind their ongoing upgrades in the Formula One championship battle. Ferrari currently sits 87 points behind Mercedes in the constructors' standings. Teammate Lewis Hamilton is locked in a tight battle for second





in the drivers' championship, trailing leader Kimi Antonelli. Unlike rivals who have slowed down their development pace, Ferrari has consistently pushed new parts onto the SF-26 car at almost every major round, including Miami, Barcelona, Austria, Britain, Hungary, and the Netherlands.

Leclerc pointed out that the team's design and production offices have done an incredible job working flat out to deliver

parts early. This constant stream of updates makes a massive difference in the early stages of a new regulation cycle, where every single upgrade yields significant performance gains. Innovations like the clever rear-wing designs and unique tail-pipe winglets show that engineers are finding creative ways to extract extra speed.

The Monegasque driver noted that power unit performance remains a primary area where Ferrari still needs to catch up to competitors like Mercedes and Red Bull. However, the team's development program is entirely clear and structured. Unlike previous years, the correlation between wind-tunnel data and actual track performance has been remarkably accurate, avoiding any nasty surprises.

## Celebrating a legend: Ferrari's tribute to Schumacher

Ferrari is turning heads this weekend with a special tribute to racing legend Michael Schumacher. Marking 30 years since he joined the team, the iconic Italian squad unveiled a unique look for their cars at the Italian Grand Prix.

Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton will race vehicles featuring a design inspired by Schumacher's 1996 car. The striking style includes a bold red body, white wings, and the famous driver's personal logo. Fans can also view three of his historical race cars up close, while past teammate Rubens Barrichello and Sebastian Vettel will drive the 2002 champion car around the track.

This emotional celebration comes as Ferrari fights for the championship title. With rival Kimi Antonelli facing penalties at the back of the grid, Ferrari hopes to use this home-court advantage and crowd energy to secure a massive victory this weekend.

# Alpine reserve driver Aron to drive in Monza F1

Alpine reserve driver Paul Aron is gearing up for another exciting opportunity in Formula One. The Estonian driver will get behind the wheel once again during the opening practice session at this weekend's Italian Grand Prix.



Aron will pilot the A526 during Friday morning's track running at Monza, stepping in to take the seat of Pierre Gasly for the session. This appearance marks another milestone in his busy development year, having already logged practice outings earlier in the season in Barcelona, Austria, and Hungary.

The young driver faces a demanding schedule once the Friday session concludes. He will immediately fly back to the team's headquarters at Enstone to spend the evening working on the simulator. This crucial late-night effort aims to help engineers fine-tune the car's setup ahead of Saturday's qualifying and race sessions.

Aron expressed excitement about returning to the cockpit so quickly after his positive outing in Budapest. He hopes to use his prior simulator experience with the team's latest upgrade package to provide valuable

# Unfinished business: Gary O'Neil's premier league return

Gary O'Neil is back in the Premier League and eager to make his mark. The Ipswich Town manager opened up about his return to top-flight football, stating that he has unfinished business. After guiding clubs like Bournemouth and Wolves to safety in the past, he is ready to lead Ipswich through their newest challenge.



Ipswich earned a spot back in the Premier League following a single season in the Championship. The club conducted a thorough search before choosing O'Neil as their twentieth manager in ninety years of professional history.

Grateful for the opportunity, O'Neil explained that he took time away to sharpen his managerial skills, including a stint managing Strasbourg in France.

He believes these experiences have made him a much better coach. O'Neil acknowledges the massive task ahead. Keeping a newly promoted side in the top division requires hard work, quality, and a united front. He plans to bring the calm, collective mindset that previously worked wonders for him at Bournemouth, where the players, staff, and fans stayed together through thick and thin. He also pointed to recent examples like Leeds United and Sunderland to prove that staying up is entirely possible.

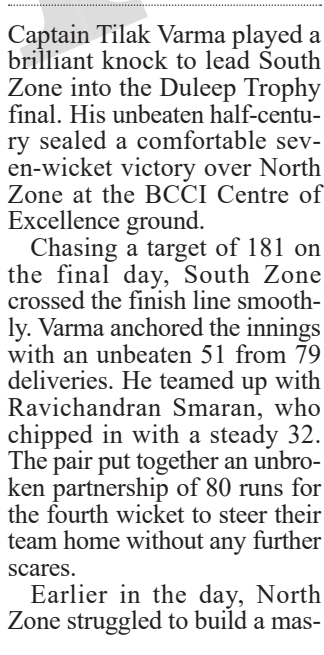
Tactically, the 43-year-old manager intends to keep things flexible rather than sticking to a rigid system.

He plans to adapt to each opponent, pick the right moments to attack, and steal points from bigger clubs while taking care of business against direct rivals.

With clear plans shared with the board and a strong desire to build something special, O'Neil wants his squad to embrace the fight. He believes that playing in the Premier League is a true privilege and is fully prepared to guide Ipswich Town toward a successful and enduring future in the top flight.

# TILAK VARMA'S 51 PUTS SOUTH ZONE IN DULEEP FINAL

Captain Tilak Varma played a brilliant knock to lead South Zone into the Duleep Trophy final. His unbeaten half-century sealed a comfortable seven-wicket victory over North Zone at the BCCI Centre of Excellence ground.



Chasing a target of 181 on the final day, South Zone crossed the finish line smoothly. Varma anchored the innings with an unbeaten 51 from 79 deliveries. He teamed up with Ravichandran Asmaran, who chipped in with a steady 32. The pair put together an unbroken partnership of 80 runs for the fourth wicket to steer their team home without any further scares.

Earlier in the day, North Zone struggled to build a massive lead. Pacer MD Nidheesh ran through their lower order with sharp bowling, claiming the final three wickets to finish with impressive figures of five for 56. North Zone was eventually bowled out for 286, setting up a manageable target for the chasing side.

South Zone started their chase aggressively through opener Ricky Bhui, who scored a brisk 42. However, left-arm spinner Abid Mushtaq caused a brief scare by picking up a few quick wickets, leaving the batting side wobbling at 102 for three. Varma stayed calm under pressure, absorbing the spin threat and pacing his innings perfectly on a flattening pitch.

This win sets up a high-stakes final against East Zone, led by Ishan Kishan. The championship clash will begin

# Kusal Mendis to lead SL-ENG in white-ball tour

Sri Lanka Cricket has officially announced its squads for the upcoming white-ball tour of England. Wicketkeeper-batter Kusal Mendis will captain the team in both the T20I and ODI series. Meanwhile, explosive batter Charith Asalanka has been named vice-captain for all matches, which begin on September 15.



The touring party features a strong mix of youth and experience. Pathum Nissanka anchors the top order, supported by batters like Kamil Mishara, Kamindu Mendis, Janith Liyanage, and Pavan Rathnayake. Experienced all-rounders Dasun Shanaka, Wanindu Hasaranga, and Dunith Wellalage add great balance, giving the team multiple options with both bat and ball in tricky English conditions.

Shanaka makes a notable return to the ODI squad as Sri Lanka continues building toward the 2027 ODI World Cup. The bowling unit for the 50-over games includes spin stars Maheesh Theekshana and Sachindu Colombage, alongside pacers Dushmantha Chameera, Eshan Malinga, Asitha Fernando, and Dilshan Madushanka.

For the T20I leg, players like Lahiru Udara and Sharindu Rathnayake join the setup. Fast bowlers Nuwan Thushara and Binura Fernando bring extra pace and firepower to the bowling attack.

Sri Lanka is chasing history on this trip, aiming to secure their first bilateral series victory on English soil in twelve years.

The adventure begins with the opening T20I in Southampton on September 15. Subsequent games take place in Cardiff and Manchester before the teams' transition to the three-match ODI series, which concludes at The Oval on September 27. The squad departs for England on September 5.

# Jaime Faria books US Open clash with Alcaraz

Jaime Faria is ready to step onto the big stage and chase a dream. The young tennis player from Portugal is stepping into the spotlight at the US Open. He is preparing for a massive second-round showdown against defending champion Carlos Alcaraz at Arthur Ashe Stadium.



Faria punched his ticket to this high-profile match after surviving a grueling five-set battle against American Jenson Brooksby. He jumped out to a strong start by winning the first two sets, but Brooksby fought back hard with a loud home crowd cheering him on. Instead of crumbling under the pressure, Faria held his nerve to close out the win. It was a sweet moment of redemption for the 23-year-old, who previously suffered a tough five-set loss to Frances Tiafoe at Roland Garros after leading by two sets.

That hard-fought victory was more than just a trip to the next round. It marked his first main-draw win at the hard-court major and made him only the

# Dewald Brevis reaches career best 4th in T20I rankings

England fast bowlers Ollie Robinson and Josh Tongue have made massive strides in the latest ICC Men's Test Bowling Rankings. Their stellar performances have helped England secure a commanding two-nil series lead over Pakistan in the World Test Championship.



Robinson earned back-to-back Player of the Match awards, including an eight-wicket haul at Lord's. This brilliant display pushed him up six places to 50th in the rankings, putting him just one spot shy of his career-best 4th place. Meanwhile, teammate Josh Tongue climbed four spots to reach a career-best 13th position after claiming five wickets in the match.

Despite Pakistan trailing in the series, some of their players still managed notable gains. Seam bowler Mohammad Abbas jumped ten spots to joint-15th following a nine-wicket match haul. In the batting department, Saud Shakeel moved up 15 places to 18th after scoring a gutsy 97.

The latest rankings update also highlights standout performances from the Test match between India and Sri Lanka in Colombo. Sri Lanka's Sonal Dinusha surged to a career-best 25th position after hitting twin centuries, while teammate Pasindu Sooriyabandara leaped an incredible 170 places to 74th. India also saw success, with Devdutt Padikkal and Dhruv Jurel hitting brilliant centuries to reach new career-high rankings.

In the shortest format, South Africa's Dewald Brevis climbed to a career-best fourth place in the T20I batting rankings following strong displays in the ongoing tri-series in Windhoek. Players across multiple nations continue to elevate their standing as international cricket enters an exciting phase.