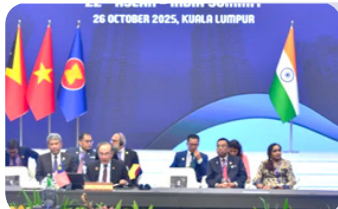


India, US jointly
smash global
racketeering
ring

P9

India-ASEAN
bilateral trade
touches \$128
billion in FY26

P11

P12

Djokovic survives
marathon to set up
Wimbledon
semi-final against Sinner

BEYOND BENGALURU: GOVT'S GROWTH ROADMAP

Karnataka state eyes balanced growth through infrastructure, investment and talent beyond Bengaluru, says Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar

BENGALURU

Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar on Wednesday unveiled the government's "Beyond Bengaluru" vision, announcing plans to create more growth centres across Karnataka by extending Bengaluru-like infrastructure and business opportunities to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

Addressing Global Capability Centre (GCC) leaders at the Target India programme in Manyata Tech Park, Shivakumar said the government would encourage industries to expand beyond Bengaluru by offering lower land costs and double Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in emerging cities.

He said Karnataka remains a preferred investment destination due to its skilled workforce, quality education and research ecosystem. "You are our partners in Karnataka's progress. If you grow stronger, the state becomes stronger. Together, we are Team Karnataka," he said.

The Chief Minister also



AI University on the cards

The Chief Minister said the government is exploring the establishment of an Artificial Intelligence University to position Bengaluru as a global hub for AI research, innovation and advanced technology, while promoting similar opportunities across Karnataka's Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

highlighted the government's ₹1.5 lakh crore investment in Bengaluru's infrastructure, including Metro expansion from 350 km to 500 km, a 40-km tunnel road, 44 km of double-decker corridors, 133 km of flyovers and the 123-km

Bengaluru Business Corridor.

He said Karnataka has 257 engineering colleges producing nearly 1.5 lakh engineers every year, giving investors access to a large talent pool. The government is also considering establishing an AI

You are partners and ambassadors of Karnataka. Together, Team Karnataka will build the state's future.
—D.K. Shivakumar, Chief Minister

- ₹1.5 lakh crore: Planned Bengaluru infrastructure investment
- 500 km: Target Metro network by next year
- 257: Engineering colleges in Karnataka
- 1.5 lakh: Engineers graduating annually
- 200+ GCC leaders: Participated in Target India meeting

University to strengthen research and innovation.

After the meeting, Shivakumar said more than 200 GCC representatives shared suggestions on mobility, innovation and expanding investments into other parts of Karnataka.

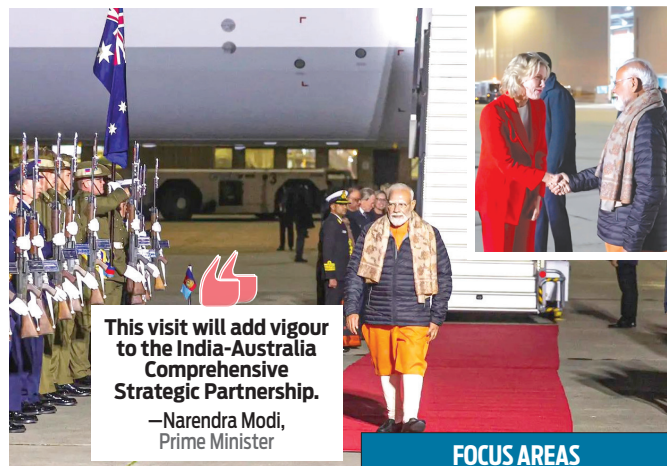
MELBOURNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Melbourne on Wednesday on the second leg of his three-nation tour, saying his visit would inject fresh momentum into the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Modi was accorded a ceremonial welcome upon arrival and is scheduled to hold wide-ranging talks with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during his three-day visit. The leaders are expected to discuss strengthening cooperation in defence and security, trade and investment, education, mobility, and people-to-people ties.

In a post on X, Modi said he looked forward to his discussions with Albanese and meeting the Indian diaspora, describing the community as an important pillar of bilateral relations. He also said the visit would help deepen cooperation in emerging and critical technologies, sports, and sports science.

The Prime Minister arrived in Australia after concluding his visit to Indonesia. Australian High Commissioner to India Philip Green welcomed



This visit will add vigour to the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
—Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

- Duration: Three-day visit
- Host city: Melbourne
- Key agenda: Defence, trade, education, technology
- Diaspora: Interaction with Indian community
- Previous stop: Indonesia

FOCUS AREAS

- Defence and security cooperation
- Trade and investment
- Education and mobility
- Emerging and critical technologies
- Sports and sports science
- Arts, culture and diaspora engagement

Modi's visit, saying Melbourne was "buzzing" with excitement. He highlighted the growing trade relationship, opportunities to expand the free trade agreement, and stronger collaboration in arts

and culture.

The visit is expected to reinforce the robust partnership between the two countries while opening new avenues for economic, technological and cultural cooperation.

Election Commission alone oversees SIR exercise; government merely provides staff, says Deputy CM

STATE HAS NO ROLE IN SIR PROCESS, SAYS PARAMESHWARA

TUMAKURU

Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara on Wednesday clarified that the Karnataka government has no role in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, asserting that the exercise is being conducted entirely under the supervision of the Election Commission of India.

He said the state government had only provided personnel as requested by the Election Commission and had not issued any directions regarding the revision process. "The SIR exercise is being carried out according to the Commission's guidelines. If rules are violated anywhere, it is for the Election Commission to investigate and take action," he said.

Parameshwara explained that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) are responsible for distributing enumeration forms through door-to-door visits and collecting the completed forms from voters. If BLOs are found distributing forms from a fixed location



instead of visiting households, it would amount to a procedural lapse, he added.

Responding to allegations raised by the BJP, the Deputy Chief Minister said any complaints regarding irregularities should be addressed by the Election Commission. He also urged BJP leaders to examine how similar SIR exercises had been conducted in other states before criticising the Karnataka government.

On reports that SIR forms were being filled inside mosques in Tumakuru, he reiterated that the matter fell within the Election Commission's jurisdiction.

Parameshwara also said elections to gram panchayats and zilla panchayats would be conducted at an appropriate time, echoing Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar's recent assurance.

The state government has no role in the SIR process. We have only provided staff as requested by the Election Commission.
G. Parameshwara, Deputy Chief Minister

- SIR: Conducted under Election Commission guidelines
- State's role: Only provides staff requested by EC
- BLO duty: Door-to-door distribution and collection of forms
- Action on lapses: Election Commission to investigate

Local body polls

Parameshwara said elections to gram panchayats and zilla panchayats would be held at an appropriate time. He also reiterated that the Hemavathi Link Canal project would continue, with ₹900 crore already sanctioned for its implementation.

Vijayendra slams Cong over demand for PM's resignation in Ram temple case

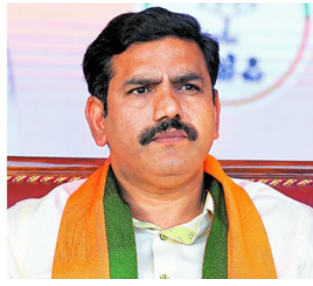
BENGALURU

Karnataka BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra on Wednesday accused the Congress of practising "habitual hypocrisy" after the party demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resignation over the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Reacting to a resolution passed by the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC), Vijayendra termed the demand "political drama" and questioned why senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi continued to hold key positions despite being named in the National Herald case.

He asserted that the Congress was attempting to divert attention from corruption allegations involving the MUDA and Valmiki cases in Karnataka. Vijayendra also praised Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for ordering an investigation into the alleged Ram temple donation theft, saying it reflected a government with "nothing to hide."

The Congress, however, has sought a CBI probe into the alleged embezzlement of tem-



8 accused: Arrested by Uttar Pradesh SIT.

Congress demand: CBI probe and resignations of Modi, Shah, Adityanath.

BJP response: Terms demand "political drama."

Issue: Alleged embezzlement of Ram temple donations.

ple donations and demanded the resignations of Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, holding them morally accountable.

The controversy follows the arrest of eight persons by the Uttar Pradesh Special Investigation Team (SIT) in connection with the alleged misappropriation of cash offerings at the Ayodhya temple.

Waive farm loans up to ₹50,000: Ashoka urges govt

BENGALURU

Opposition leader R Ashoka has urged the state government to immediately announce a loan waiver of up to ₹50,000 for farmers affected by drought and floods, along with emergency relief measures.

In a letter to Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Ashoka said several districts were battling severe drought, while North Karnataka and Malnad regions faced flood threats due to heavy rains. He said lakhs of farmers, agricultural workers and rural families were struggling and needed urgent assistance.

Referring to the Chief Min-



ister's statement on examining farm loan waivers, Ashoka said farmers could not wait for further reviews and demanded immediate action.

He criticised the KPCC resolution seeking ₹10,000 crore drought relief from the Centre, calling it politically motivated. Ashoka alleged that the state government was trying to hide administrative failures instead of focusing on relief work.

16 feared trapped as waste mound collapses building in Pune

PUNE

At least 16 people are feared trapped after a massive mound of legacy waste collapsed onto a three-storey building during heavy rain in Pune's Pimpri Chinchwad on Wednesday. The incident occurred at Moshi, where the building housed the administrative office of a private company engaged by the

civic body to process waste. According to Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation Commissioner Vijay Suryawanshi, the waste mound apparently became unstable due to incessant rainfall before crashing onto the structure. All 16 employees believed to be inside the building are feared trapped. Authorities are monitoring the situation closely.

Key accused killed in Baruipur rape-murder case encounter

KOLKATA

A prime accused in the rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl in West Bengal's Baruipur was killed in a police encounter early on Wednesday, days after the crime triggered protests and violence in the area.

Prabhas Mondal was taken to Suryapur by a Baruipur Police team around midnight for crime scene reconstruction when, police said, he allegedly snatched a policeman's weapon, fired at the team and tried to escape. In retaliatory firing, Mondal sustained injuries and was declared dead at Baruipur Hospital.

Baruipur SP Palash Chandra Dhali said Mondal had

been seen with the victim earlier and his statement helped police arrest other accused. Investigators alleged that the girl was abducted, sexually assaulted and later thrown into the pond.

Violence erupted after the body was recovered, with mobs attacking police personnel, damaging vehicles and blocking roads and railway tracks. One person was lynched during the unrest.

Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari met the victim's family and assured strict action. The accused have been booked under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

ANKARA

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday declared the interim ceasefire agreement with Iran effectively "over" after Tehran launched fresh attacks on American military bases in the Gulf, dealing a major setback to efforts aimed at securing a lasting peace.

Speaking ahead of the NATO summit in Ankara, Trump dismissed hopes of reviving the truce and launched a blistering attack on Iran's leadership.

Iran said it had targeted US military installations in Bahrain and Kuwait in retaliation for recent American strikes on Iranian targets following at-



It's over. I don't want to deal with them. They're scum. They're sick people. They're led by sick people. As far as I'm concerned, it's just a waste of time dealing with them.
—Donald Trump, US President

tacks on commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz.

The renewed exchange of hostilities

pushed global oil prices to a two-week high, raising fresh concerns over energy supplies and regional stability. The interim cease-

- Feb. 28: US-Israeli strikes on Iran begin conflict.
- Last month: Interim ceasefire framework agreed.
- July 8: Iran attacks US bases in Bahrain and Kuwait
- Impact: Oil prices climb to two-week high.

fire framework, reached last month after weeks of fighting, was intended to pave the way for broader negotiations. However, Wednesday's developments have cast serious doubt over any immediate prospects of diplomacy.

The conflict began on February 28 with joint US-Israeli

Ceasefire under strain

The latest escalation marks one of the biggest setbacks to diplomatic efforts in recent weeks. Analysts fear the collapse of the ceasefire could trigger a wider regional conflict, disrupt global energy markets and complicate negotiations involving the United States, Iran and their regional allies.

airstrikes on Iranian targets and has since triggered repeated military exchanges across the region.

“Unchecked capitalism and politics are destroying nature”

MYSURU

Retired Bengaluru University professor Prof. Basavaraj Kalgudi said that capitalists, who claim to represent the pinnacle of modern development, and political forces are systematically destroying nature in the name of progress.

Speaking at the 53rd Kannada Reorientation Camp, sponsored by the UGC and organised in association with the Institute of Kuvempu Studies at the Malaviya Mission Centre in the Manasagangotri campus here on Wednesday, he said the history of capitalism is long and complex. The indigenous communities of America were displaced and marginalised by capitalists who destroyed their traditional way of life and severed humanity's bond with nature. The political forces which embraced the ideology of modern development, along with capitalist interests, have continued to sacrifice nature in the name of progress. In 2023, the construction of a dam led to the large-scale displacement of an indigenous tribal community.

Prof Kalgudi said the Kannada world encompasses immense diversity, and Kannada literature and intellectual traditions have absorbed and



reflected this richness in many ways. However, more discussions are needed on what Kannada literature has adopted over time and the impact it has had on society. The historical exchanges between Kannada and other South Indian languages was need of the hour. Understanding the influence of traditions ranging from the Alvars and Nayanmars to the Sharanas could inspire a vision of harmony and coexistence among people.

Speaking on the occasion, University of Mysore Vice-Chancellor Prof. N.K. Lokanath said everyone should cherish their land, water and language. Kannada has a glorious history and recalled that Rashtrakavi Kuve-

mpu, though born into an ordinary family, developed a profound understanding and love for the language. It was this deep affection for Kannada, he said, that inspired Kuvempu to compose Karnataka's State Anthem. The growth of the Kannada language has always depended on teachers. Eminent literary figures such as B.M. Srikanthiah (B.M. Sri), Kuvempu and D.R. Bendre were all teachers who played a pivotal role in enriching Kannada. Teachers, therefore, have the responsibility to preserve and promote the language by creating greater awareness among college students about its importance.

Prof. Nanjappa Hanganur, Director of the Institute of

The Kannada M.A. programme started at the University of Mysore will complete 100 years on July 27. Its first student was Rashtrakavi Kuvempu. At the same time, the Institute of Kuvempu Studies is completing 60 years. The institute is the heart of the Manasagangotri campus. Following the Vice-Chancellor's directions, we are preparing to celebrate both the centenary of the Kannada Department and the diamond jubilee of the Institute of Kuvempu Studies.

—Prof. Nanjappa Hanganur, Director, Institute of Kuvempu Studies

Kuvempu Studies, said the University's Kannada Studies Centre has served as the mother institution for several Kannada study centres across the State. However, there has been decline in number of students opting for Kannada as an elective subject due to which some colleges are facing the prospect of closure due to low enrolment. Kannada teachers to actively encourage more students to study the language to ensure its continued growth.

Malaviya Mission Teachers' Training Centre Director Prof. Jyothi H.P., camp coordinator Prof. S.D. Shashikala, and others were present.



MLA GTD launches ₹5-cr road project for industrial growth in Mysuru

MYSURU

Chamundeshwari Assembly MLA G.T. Devegowda on Wednesday launched the construction of a 2.5-km road from Automotive Axles, via Rane Madras, to the Mysore Export Centre on the ring road in the Hebbal Industrial Area in Mysuru.

The project, being executed at a cost of ₹5 crore, is aimed at strengthening infrastructure in the Belawadi Industrial Area.

Speaking on the occasion, Devegowda said that the construction of a quality road in the industrial area would not only improve transportation but also accelerate industrial growth, attract fresh investments, generate employment and contribute to the region's overall economic development.

He said industrial areas with robust infrastructure attract new industries and investors, creating both direct and indirect employment opportunities. Improved connectivity with ports, airports, railway stations and national highways would also facilitate exports and provide a major boost to industrial activity.

Stating that an efficient transport network is vital for industrial areas, the MLA said the road is being taken up in response to a long-pending demand of industrialists. Once completed, it will enable faster movement of raw materials and finished products, reduce transportation costs, fuel consumption and vehicle maintenance expenses. It will also eliminate delays in the supply and distribution of goods, making man-

ufacturing operations more efficient.

Devegowda further said that better roads would help workers and employees commute safely and reach their workplaces on time. Besides this, ancillary commercial activities such as small-scale industries, hotels, warehouses and logistics services are expected to grow, while the value of industrial land and commercial properties in the area will also appreciate.

Among those present on the occasion were Mysuru Industries Association General Secretary Sureshkumar Jain, Hootagalli City Municipal Council Commissioner Narasimhamurthy, KIADB Development Officer Madesh, Scheduled Tribe Industries Association President Manjunath and others.



MLA GTD wants women to become self-reliant and contribute to economy

MYSURU

Women should aspire to become self-reliant through productive work. Instead of remaining confined within the four walls of their homes, they should earn through their own efforts and live on par with men, thereby contributing to the country's economy, opined Chamundeshwari Assembly MLA G.T. Devegowda.

Speaking after distributing sewing machines to women beneficiaries from the Chamundeshwari Assembly constituency under the D. Devaraj Urs Backward Classes Development Corporation here on Wednesday, he said there was a time when women were considered the weaker sex, but today they have emerged as strong individuals who not only manage their families but also contribute significantly to society. Both men and women should engage in productive work to support their families. The youth must not resort to

undesirable paths when there are ample opportunities for employment and livelihood.

Recalling an inspiring example, Devegowda said a man who worked in a bank abandoned his wife due to his bad habits.

Without losing hope, the woman took up tailoring, educated her children, ensured they completed engineering, and single-handedly got them married. Today, her children are earning salaries of around ₹3 lakh per month.

Sharing another incident, he said that only recently a young girl approached him with the ambition of becoming an IAS officer. When he asked why she wanted to pursue IAS, she replied that it was her dream. Since she was unable to pay the admission fee of ₹1.5 lakh to secure a seat at NIE College, he personally paid the fee and helped her gain admission. The girls must be educated so they can stand on their own feet and lead a life of dignity and self-respect. Women

should establish their own cottage industries and eventually create employment opportunities for others. They should also make proper use of the welfare schemes offered by the government, he added.

Pointing out the growing opportunities in the garment sector, the MLA said women could stitch garments from their homes, with companies collecting the finished products directly, enabling them to earn an income without leaving their homes.

He also urged people in rural areas to ensure that they do not lose their voting rights during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. They should fill in and submit the forms provided by Booth Level Officers (BLOs), he said.

On the occasion, sewing machines were distributed to 53 beneficiaries. District Manager of the D. Devaraj Urs Backward Classes Development Corporation Tejas and other officials were present.

New power connection without OC: Deadline extended till Aug 15

MYSURU

The State Government has extended the deadline till August 15 for obtaining permanent electricity connections without submitting an Occupancy Certificate (OC) for residential buildings constructed on sites measuring up to 2,400 sq. ft. with a permissible deviation of 20 per cent.

Earlier, a one-time exemption from submitting the Occupancy Certificate had been granted only for applications for permanent electricity connections that had already been filed on or before May 31, 2026. The deadline was subsequently extended by 15 days through an order issued on June 22, 2026. The Government has now issued a fresh order extending the benefit till August 15.

According to a press release issued by the Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (CESC), the concession is applicable only to residential buildings constructed on sites measuring up to 2,400 sq. ft., with a maximum deviation of 20 per cent, comprising G+3 floors or stilt parking plus four floors. CESC has appealed to eligible consumers to make use of this extended opportunity.



Raise awareness on child labour eradication in children's gram sabhas: ADC

MYSURU

Additional Deputy Commissioner R. Aishwarya stressed that the eradication of child labour must begin at the grassroots level and called for creating awareness about the issue during Children's Gram Sabha meetings.

Chairing the District-Level Executive and Task Force Committee meeting of the District Child Labour Project Society at the Deputy Commissioner's Office on Wednesday, she directed officials to conduct at least 15

inspections or raids every month to identify child labourers and submit regular reports. Between April and June 2026, Labour Department officials conducted 434 inspections, during which 14 adolescent labourers were identified. Cases were registered against 12 employers, and a total fine of ₹20,000 was imposed.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner said that children rescued during inspections or raids should be produced before the Child Welfare Committee. Based on their eligibility, they should

be admitted to hostels run by the Social Welfare Department, Backward Classes Welfare Department, or other government institutions. Along with providing protection, ensuring their rehabilitation is equally important, she added.

Assistant Labour Commissioner Lalitha Bai, Labour Officer Chetan, Child Welfare Committee Chairman Ravichandra, Assistant Director of the Department of Information and Public Relations Nirmala S.H., and other officials were present at the meeting.

DONORS' SUPPORT MUST TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF GOVT SCHOOLS

MYSURU

Former corporator of Mysuru City Corporation Jagadish said that the support and generosity of philanthropists would be the first step towards transforming the condition of government schools.

Speaking after distributing free track suits to students of the Hosa Ittigegoodu Government Higher Primary School at Vidyanayapuram in Mysuru on Wednesday, under an initiative by Apoorva Sneha Balaga and the KMPK Trust, he said that children with a thirst for knowledge excel academically and emerge as talented individuals even in the absence of basic facilities. However, they should be encouraged by providing minimum amenities and learning materials that complement their education.

He said the younger generation, which is actively contributing to society, should come forward to generously support the education of underprivileged children studying in government schools and develop a culture of donating for educational causes.

Jagadish further said that the government should give greater attention to bringing about a comprehensive transformation of government schools by formulating effective schemes. The cooperation of donors is essential to create a better learning environment in schools.

Entrepreneur Jairam, social workers Doora Rajanna, Sandesh and Jatti Prasad, teacher Sandhya Rani, assistant teacher Tasira Beg, and others were present on the occasion.



Krishnaraja Assembly MLA T.S. Srivatsa launches ₹65 Lakh UGD Works

MYSURU

MLA T.S. Srivatsa on Wednesday inaugurated underground drainage (UGD)

works worth around ₹65 lakh in Devaraj Urs Colony, Hosur and Nachanahalli Palya, coming under Ward No. 62 of the KR Assembly constituency,



by performing the traditional groundbreaking ceremony.

Former Mysuru City Corporation member Smt. Shantamma Vadivelu, Ward President M. Raghavendra, BJP leaders M. Vadivelu, Chandranna, Pradeep Kumar, Kishore Mahadev, Nagaraju, Navindra, Naveen Kumar, local residents Siddaraju, Mahadev, Manjunath, Rangaswamy, M. Jagadish and Shankar, Booth Presidents Rudresh, Javeed and Nasir Khan, along with several others, were present on the occasion.

New MCC Chief faces an uphill task as Mysuru awaits visible change

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM
MYSURU

The appointment of M.K. Savitha as the new Commissioner of the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) comes at a crucial juncture when the city's residents are expecting not just routine administration but decisive governance.

Having assumed charge on Wednesday after serving as Registrar of the University of Mysore, Savitha steps into one of the most demanding civic assignments in Karnataka.

Mysuru, celebrated for its heritage, cleanliness and cultural identity, is also grappling with a growing list of urban challenges. The new Commissioner will have little time for a settling-in period as pressing civic issues demand immediate attention.

Foremost among the concerns is the city's deteriorating road infrastructure. Pothole-ridden roads, incomplete underground utility works and poorly maintained footpaths have become a source of frustration for motorists and pedestrians alike. Ensuring better coordination among various government agencies ex-



ecuting infrastructure projects will be one of her biggest administrative tasks.

Solid waste management continues to remain a sensitive issue. While Mysuru has earned accolades in the past for cleanliness, maintaining that reputation has become increasingly difficult with expanding city limits and rising waste generation. Strengthening door-to-door collection, scientific disposal and public participation will be essential to restore the city's benchmark status.

Monsoon preparedness is

another immediate priority. Waterlogging in low-lying areas, clogged stormwater drains and overflowing sewage lines have become recurring problems. Preventive measures rather than reactive firefighting will determine the administration's effectiveness during the rainy season.

Traffic congestion is steadily eroding Mysuru's reputation as a relaxed city. Rapid urban expansion, increasing vehicle population and encroachments on roads demand coordinated planning with the traffic police and urban development agencies. Improving parking facilities, streamlining junctions and ensuring pedestrian safety will require sustained attention.

Property tax collection, revenue mobilisation and financial discipline within the Corporation remain equally critical. A stronger financial base is indispensable for delivering quality civic services and undertaking long-pending development works.

With the world-famous Dasara festival only months away, preparations for the grand event will also occupy centre stage. From sanitation

and road repairs to street lighting, beautification and public convenience, the Corporation's performance during Dasara is closely watched by citizens and visitors alike.

Environmental conservation presents another significant challenge. Protecting lakes, preserving green spaces, preventing illegal dumping of construction debris and promoting sustainable urban practices will be vital for Mysuru's long-term future.

Savitha's experience in academic administration may bring a consultative and systematic approach to civic governance. However, municipal administration demands quick decisions, field presence and effective coordination with elected representatives, government departments and citizens.

For the people of Mysuru, expectations are clear. They seek cleaner neighbourhoods, smoother roads, efficient civic services and a responsive administration. The new Commissioner inherits both formidable challenges and a valuable opportunity—to translate Mysuru's aspirations into visible, measurable change.

Minister Yathindra inspects Mysuru SWM facility



MYSURU

Urban Development Minister Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah visited the Vidyanarayana Solid Waste Management Facility under the jurisdiction of the Mysuru City Corporation and conducted a comprehensive inspection of the systems for waste collection, processing, scientific disposal and the overall functioning of the plant.

During the inspection on Tuesday, the Minister reviewed the operational efficiency of the facility and obtained detailed information from officials regarding waste segregation, scientific disposal mechanisms, environmental protection measures being implemented and the infra-

structure available at the unit.

Stating that scientific management of solid waste is crucial for maintaining cleanliness in urban areas, Dr Yathindra instructed the concerned officials to ensure that there is no negligence in waste management and to further strengthen the existing system for greater efficiency. The officials were directed to accord

priority to all necessary measures for promoting environmentally friendly and sustainable solid waste management practices.

Deputy Commissioner G. Lakshmikanth Reddy, Mysuru City Corporation Commissioner Shaikh Tanveer Asif, and senior officials of the Mysuru City Corporation were present during the inspection.

SATYA TAKES OVER THE REINS OF ROTARY MYSORE METRO

MYSURU

Satyaendra Kashyap, Managing Partner of Mavana Agarbathies, Mysore, was installed as the President of Rotary Mysore Metro by Ramakrishna PK, the Immediate Past District Governor of R.I. Dist 3181.

At a function held here, Ravindra Babu, a pharmacist and partner of Ravi Medicals, took charge as the honorary secretary of the club.

Office Bearers are: Ganesh President Elect, Mohan Gurumurthy Vice President, Ravindra Babu R, Honorary Secretary, Badrinarayan, Joint Secretary, D Srinivasan Treasurer, Srinivas MN, Sgt At



Arms. Ganesh V Club Editor, Board of Directors are : Umesh K, Club Service, Channa Keshava, Vocational service, Jeevaraj, International service, Sanjay Kumar, Youth service, Sujith Kumar Director Community service.

Sitting Left to Right : Mohan G, Ravindra Babu, Rajendra Hubli, Ramaki, Satya and Gopal

Stand L-R : Umesh, Badri, Gangesh, Ganesh, Channa, Srinivasan, Jeevaraj, MN Sreenivas, Sanjay & Sujith.

Peace walk in Mysuru on August 20 to highlight tibet's human rights cause

MYSURU

A peace walk will be organised in Mysuru on August 20 to commemorate the 49th day after the passing of Tibetan martyr Pawo Lobsang Rangtsen and to draw attention to issues concerning human rights, religious freedom and environmental protection in Tibet.

Addressing a news conference here on Wednesday, the organisers said more than 250 participants are expected to take part in the march, which will begin from the North Gate of the Mysore Palace, near the Kote Anjaneyaswamy Temple. The event will honour Pawo Lobsang Rangtsen and over 170 Tibetans who have self-immolated over the years, describing their actions as appeals for freedom, dignity and the preservation of Tibetan identity.

Ahead of the programme, organisers issued an appeal to the United Nations, democratic governments, human rights organisations and civil society, urging greater international attention to the situation in Tibet. They expressed concern over policies they say threaten Tibetan language, culture, religion and identity, including China's Ethnic Unity Law and the expansion of boarding schools for Tibetan children.

The organisers also called for information on the whereabouts of the 11th Panchen Lama, who has not been seen in public since 1995, and sought the release of Tibetan political prisoners detained for peacefully expressing their beliefs.

Environmental protection also featured prominently in the appeal. The organisers stressed the ecological importance of the Tibetan Plateau, often referred to as Asia's "Water Tower", and urged an end to projects they believe could damage its fragile ecosystem and affect the billions of people who depend on rivers originating in Tibet.



Describing the march as a peaceful demonstration, the organisers said it is intended to promote compassion, justice and non-violence rather than hostility. They appealed to the international community to support the protection of human rights, religious freedom and cultural identity in Tibet.

The organisers also urged the Government of India to adopt a more proactive approach towards the Tibetan cause, stating that the issue has implications not only for humanitarian concerns but also for regional peace, environmental sustainability, India's long-term security interests and the centuries-old cultural relationship between India and Tibet.

The peace walk will conclude with a public appeal for global solidarity with the Tibetan people and a renewed call for dialogue, justice and environmental conservation.

New chief for MCC appointed...

M.K.Savitha took charge as the new commissioner of Mysuru City Corporation in Mysuru on Wednesday. The charge was handed over by the outgoing commissioner Shaikh Tanveer Asif. Before the new posting, Savitha was working as the registrar (administration), University of Mysuru, Mysuru.



RIVERS ROAR ACROSS CAUVERY BASIN

KRS RECEIVES OVER 7,500 CUSECS, KABINI CLOCKS 13,000 CUSECS

MYSURU

The southwest monsoon has begun painting the Cauvery basin in shades of optimism, with major reservoirs across southern Karnataka witnessing encouraging inflows.

Fresh spells of rain in the catchment areas have rejuvenated rivers and reservoirs, raising hopes among farmers, drinking water managers and irrigation authorities.

The Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) reservoir, the lifeline of the Old Mysuru region, is steadily inching towards healthier storage levels. Against its full reservoir level of 124.80 feet, the dam recorded a water level of 83.64 feet on Wednesday. The reservoir received an inflow of 7,531 cusecs, while 790 cusecs of water was released downstream to meet drinking water and other essential requirements.

The Kabini Reservoir



emerged as the biggest contributor to the Cauvery system. With a current water level of 2,261.64 MSL against its full reservoir level of 2,284 MSL, Kabini received a robust 13,000 cusecs of inflow. Authorities released 500 cusecs, indicating a comfortable flow while continuing to conserve water for the months ahead.

The Harangi Reservoir, another key source supporting irrigation in Kodagu and Mysuru regions, also reflected

the positive impact of the monsoon. The reservoir stood at 2,838.68 MSL against its full level of 2,859 MSL, receiving 2,090 cusecs of inflow. A controlled discharge of 180 cusecs was maintained.

Meanwhile, the Hemavathi (Gorur) reservoir recorded a water level of 2,361.70 MSL against the full level of 2,380 MSL. It received 246 cusecs of inflow, with no water being released. Similarly, the Taraka Reservoir stood at 2,408.31

MSL against its full level of 2,425 MSL, receiving 192 cusecs without any discharge.

Water Resources Department officials say the consistent rainfall in the Western Ghats and upper catchment areas is expected to improve storage further in the coming days if the monsoon maintains its current intensity.

For thousands of farmers across the Cauvery command area, these rising reservoir levels bring renewed confidence ahead of the crucial agricultural season. Improved storage also augurs well for drinking water supply to Mysuru, Bengaluru and several towns dependent on the Cauvery river system.

With the monsoon gradually strengthening its grip, Karnataka's reservoirs are beginning to echo a familiar message of hope—promising relief to agriculture, ensuring water security and signalling a brighter season ahead.

Mysuru cops Crack 30 cases in a week Arrested 35 accused; recovered property worth ₹1.55 Cr



MYSURU

Demonstrating swift action in crime detection, the Mysuru District Police have cracked 30 criminal cases and arrested 35 accused within just one week.

Taking a serious view of the increasing incidents of chain-snatching, theft and robbery across the district, Superintendent of Police Mallikarjun Baladandi had constituted special teams under the leadership of Inspectors in every taluk to detect pending cases. The dedicated teams tracked down the accused involved in various crimes registered across the district and arrested 35 persons within a week.

Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, SP Mallikarjun Baladandi said that cash, gold ornaments and vehicles worth ₹1.55 crore have been recovered from the arrested accused.

He said that in view of the rise in crime cases in Mysuru district, special teams were formed to expedite investigations. As a result, police officers and personnel worked tirelessly and succeeded in detecting 30 cases within a week.

Appreciating the efforts of the officers and staff who played a key role in solving the cases, the SP announced that they would be honoured with commendation certificates and cash rewards. He also distributed appreciation certificates to the officers on the spot.

Additional Superintendents of Police C. Mallik and L. Nagesh were present.

CASES DETECTED	
In a robbery case under Nanjangud Rural Police Station, seven accused were arrested and cash and vehicles worth ₹49.50 lakh were recovered.	
In eight house burglary cases under Jayapura Police Station, one accused was arrested and 498 grams of gold ornaments worth ₹65.20 lakh were recovered.	
In three house burglary cases under Bylakuppe Police Station, three accused were arrested and cash and gold ornaments worth ₹15.56 lakh were seized.	
In three house burglary cases under Hunsur Rural Police Station, seven accused were arrested and gold ornaments worth ₹1.55 lakh were recovered.	
In one house burglary case under Hunsur Town Police Station, two accused were arrested and ₹5,000 in cash was recovered.	
Under K.R. Nagar Police Station, three accused were arrested in six motorcycle theft cases, and six stolen motorcycles worth ₹3.30 lakh were recovered.	
At Mysuru South Police Station, two accused were arrested in nine motorcycle theft cases, leading to the recovery of nine motorcycles worth ₹3.90 lakh. In another theft case, four accused were arrested and ₹40,000 in cash was recovered.	
At Saligrama Police Station, one accused was arrested in a theft case and 6.95 grams of gold ornaments were recovered.	
At Varuna Police Station, one accused was arrested in a theft case and gold ornaments worth ₹2.70 lakh were seized.	
At Hunsur Town Police Station, one accused was arrested in a motorcycle theft case and a stolen motorcycle worth ₹30,000 was recovered.	
At Bettadapura Police Station, two accused were arrested in a theft case and a vehicle along with cash worth ₹3.45 lakh was recovered.	
In an animal theft case registered at Hunsur Town Police Station, one accused was arrested and a stolen goat worth ₹25,000 was recovered.	
In a house theft committed by a domestic worker under Nanjangud Town Police Station, one accused was arrested and household articles along with cash worth ₹2 lakh were recovered.	

QUICK READ

Life term for wife, lover in husband's murder

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A city court has sentenced a woman and her lover to life imprisonment for murdering her husband after drugging and suffocating him in a premeditated crime committed in 2017. The 67th CCH Court convicted Kalpana and her boyfriend Javed Pasha for the murder of Satish. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on each convict, with a one-year simple imprisonment in default of payment. According to the prosecution, the duo mixed sleeping pills into Satish's food before suffocating and assaulting him to death.

Professional tax services go online from July 1

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The Commercial Taxes Department has launched an upgraded online system for professional tax services, effective July 1, to provide faster and more efficient services to taxpayers across Karnataka. Commissioner of Commercial Taxes Vipul Ban sal said all notices, summons, orders and other official communications will now be issued through the department's Professional Tax portal. Registered professional tax payers can also submit replies, clarifications, objections and other responses online through the portal, eliminating the need for physical visits in many cases.

IIM Bangalore to launch first overseas campus in Indonesia

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIM-B) will establish its first overseas campus in Indonesia, marking a significant milestone in the institute's global expansion and India's growing educational engagement with Southeast Asia. Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement during his visit to Jakarta, IIM-B said the proposed IIMB (Singhasari) campus would be launched in two phases. The first phase will focus on short-duration executive education programmes for senior executives and professionals, while the second phase will introduce full-fledged degree programmes.



Two-phase expansion will begin with executive education, strengthening India-ASEAN academic and leadership ties.

According to the institute, the executive courses will cover core management disciplines alongside emerging areas such as artificial intelligence, digital transformation, global supply chains, climate and sustainability, and health-care management. The Indonesia campus will

Three cab drivers arrested after violent road-rage attack on Mysuru highway

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Three Bengaluru-based cab drivers have been arrested for allegedly assaulting a 37-year-old motorist with a metal rod following a road-rage incident on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway near Maddur in Mandya district. Police identified the arrested men as Santosh Kumar (36), Arun Kumar (28) and D. Abhishek (27), all residents of AGS Layout in Bengaluru. Efforts are on to trace two other suspects believed to have participated in the attack. According to police, the victim, M. Sagar Kumar of Attiguppe near Vijayanagar, was returning to Bengaluru with his wife, mother-in-law and grandnephew after attending his nephew's naming ceremony in Mysuru on the night of July 5. The incident reportedly began near the Gananguru toll plaza close to the Pandavapura junction, where the accused's vehicle allegedly grazed Sagar's car. A heated argument

followed but was later settled, and both parties resumed their journey towards Bengaluru. However, Sagar alleged that the accused continued following his vehicle. Around 10 pm, on the Maddur flyover, two cars intercepted his vehicle and blocked its path. "They damaged my vehicle and abused me. When I tried to resist, one of them hit me on the head with a jack rod," Sagar said in his complaint. The women travelling with him pleaded with the attackers to stop the assault before the group allegedly threatened the family and fled the scene. Sagar was admitted to the Maddur Government Hospital for treatment before lodging a police complaint the same night. Investigators examined footage from the victim's dashboard camera, which helped reconstruct the sequence of events. Police also relied on the registration numbers of the accused's vehicles mentioned in the complaint to trace the suspects.

Massive plantation drive hits hurdle as saplings wither across BDA sites

Delayed monsoon and maintenance gaps threaten survival of thousands of newly planted saplings statewide.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Barely two weeks after the Bangalore Development Authority's (BDA) mega plantation drive on June 27, concerns have emerged over the survival of thousands of saplings, with many already showing signs of withering at several plantation sites across the city.

A visit to plantation sites at Byalakere, Medi Aghara and Guni Aghara in Dr Shivaram Karanth Layout revealed numerous saplings either dried up or in poor condition. At Medi Aghara, workers were seen watering plants using tankers, while hundreds of saplings remained unplanted along a stormwater drain near one of the plantation sites, raising questions over planning and

Karnataka sees sharp fall in zero-enrolment schools

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka has recorded a significant decline in the number of zero-enrolment schools, with institutions reporting no students dropping from 270 last year to 104 in 2025-26, marking a 61 per cent reduction. The latest figures, released under the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) 2025-26, mirror a similar national trend of improving enrolment patterns. The number of teachers posted in these zero-enrolment schools has also reduced sharply, from 308 to just 66. Across the country, the number of such schools has fallen by around 29 per cent, while



single-teacher schools have declined by nearly 3 per cent during the same period. Education department officials, however, cautioned that the figures include both government and private institutions and should be interpreted accordingly. Karnataka's government schools reduced from 48,844 to 48,527 during the year, while the number of unaided private schools increased by 246 to 19,351. Aided schools declined by

207, taking the total number of schools in the state down by 281 to 74,578. Overall student enrolment also fell by more than 66,000, a trend experts attribute largely to declining birth rates. Despite this, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the higher secondary level improved from 61 to 64, indicating better retention of students beyond secondary education. At the primary level, the GER dipped marginally from 105 to 103, while enrolment indicators for Classes VI to X remained stable. The report also highlights steady improvements in digital infrastructure across schools. The number of schools equipped with com-

Capgemini blames daycare operator, files complaint over alleged abuse of toddlers

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

More than a week after allegations of abuse at a daycare centre operating on its Bengaluru campus surfaced, IT major Capgemini has lodged a formal complaint with the HAL police, accusing the third-party service provider and its employees of serious offences involving the physical and mental abuse of children. In its complaint, the company has named Little Scholars, which managed the daycare facility, alleging that its partners, directors, promoters and staff subjected toddlers to harassment, torture, physical assault and emotional abuse while entrusted with their care. Capgemini has sought criminal action against those responsible under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. Police said the company's complaint would be incorporated into the FIR already registered in the case and form part of the ongoing investigation.

Another NGO partner, Say-Trees, said it had planted more than 3.3 lakh native saplings across Dr Shivaram Karanth Layout and Banashankari 6th Stage. According to the organisation, all major plantation sites have fixed irrigation pipelines supported by dedicated borewells, while smaller locations are being watered through tankers. More than 10 gardeners have been deployed for maintenance over the next three years. BDA Deputy Conservator of Forests G.S. Charan acknowl-

HC denies bail to doctor accused of murdering wife with overdose

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has rejected the bail petition of gastro-surgeon Dr Mahendra Reddy, who is accused of murdering his wife, Dr Kruthika Reddy, by administering a fatal overdose of the anaesthetic drug Propofol. The case surfaced in October last year, nearly six months after Dr Kruthika's death in April 2025, following a forensic examination that detected traces of an overdose of anaesthesia in her organs. Based on the findings, police arrested Dr Reddy, who has remained in judicial custody at the Bengaluru Central Prison since then. His earlier bail applications before lower courts had also been rejected. On July 3, the investigating team filed an additional chargesheet before the trial court, placing fresh evidence gathered during the investigation. Special Public Prosecutor P. Prasanna Kumar submitted that investigators had collected substantial material indicating that the victim was allegedly administered 20 ml of Propofol through an intravenous (IV) line, leading to her death. A crucial piece of evidence cited by the prosecution was the accused's internet activity shortly before his arrest. According to the prosecution, eight days before he was taken

into custody, Dr Reddy searched for and saved an article titled "Postmortem Propofol Levels: A Case of Residual Detection Long After Administration" on his mobile phone. The search history was recovered by the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) during examination of the device. The prosecution argued that, being an experienced surgeon, Dr Reddy was aware that Propofol has a short half-life of

HC refuses to quash land-grab probe against former MLA, ex-official

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

officials warranted a full-fledged probe, particularly when they relate to the alleged misuse of public property. "Land grabbing by ordinary citizens is a serious illegality. Land grabbing by those clothed with political power strikes at something far deeper—it erodes public faith in governance itself. When custodians of public trust become beneficiaries of alleged public wrongs, this court cannot permit investigation to be throttled at its inception," the judge observed. The court further noted that halting the investigation

Power outage in Hennur Road areas today

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM) has announced a scheduled power outage in several localities connected to the Hennur Road Electrical Substation today due to emergency maintenance work. Power supply will remain disrupted from 11 am to 4 pm in affected areas. Localities likely to experience outages include Hennur Bande, Samudrika Enclave, Grace Garden, Christ Jayanti College, K. Narayanpur, Bilishivale, Kothanur, Byrathi Cross, Byrathi Village, Horamavu, Geddalahalli, Doddagubbi Cross, Kuvempu Layout, Cauvery Layout, Manjunath Nagar, Agar Village and surround ding layouts. BESCOM has advised residents and commercial establishments to plan their activities accordingly and expressed regret for the inconvenience caused.

QUICK READ

Fly Bus crew attacked on Mysuru expressway

Mandya

KSRTC Fly Bus driver and conductor were allegedly attacked by a group of men on the Bengaluru Mysuru Expressway service road near Mandya. Police said the incident happened around 2.30 am after the bus dropped passengers and was returning. The accused reportedly blocked the bus, abused the staff and assaulted them following an argument. A video of the incident has circulated on social media. Mandya Rural Police registered a case and started an investigation.

Madhu Bangarappa opposes teachers' deployment for SIR work

Bangarappa recalled opposing the use of teachers for surveys, stating they should focus on teaching responsibilities

CH NEWS,SHIVAMOGGA

Congress MLA Madhu Bangarappa has strongly opposed the deployment of government and aided school teachers for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, stating that teachers should focus on teaching duties rather than non-academic assignments.

Bangarappa said assigning teachers to SIR-related work would negatively impact lakhs of students and may lead to a decline in the quality of education in government schools. He stressed that classrooms should remain the



primary workplace for teachers.

Recalling his tenure as Education Minister, Bangarappa said he had earlier opposed using teachers for social, edu-

cational, and economic surveys conducted by the State Backward Classes Commission. He had maintained that teachers should not be burdened with additional responsibilities unrelated to teaching.

He pointed out that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) involved in the SIR process are already facing significant pressure and difficulties. According to him, assigning similar responsibilities to teachers would make it impossible for them to conduct regular classes effectively.

"If teachers are engaged in SIR activities for one or one-

and-a-half months, students will suffer due to loss of classroom instruction. The responsibility for this loss must be addressed," he said, urging the Election Commission to immediately stop involving teachers in the SIR exercise.

Bangarappa also stated that the Education Department's directive asking teachers involved in SIR work to continue regular teaching duties was a necessary step to protect students' academic interests.

He highlighted that ensuring quality education for children should remain the top priority of the Education

Department. He said teachers must be allowed to dedicate their time and energy to academic activities.

The former minister recalled that during his term, he introduced the Karnataka State Civil Services (Regulation of Transfer of Teachers) (Amendment) Bill with the objective of preventing teachers from being assigned non-teaching duties.

Bangarappa concluded that strict measures should be taken to ensure that teachers are not turned into survey personnel and that their primary responsibility of educating students is protected.

FIR filed against Sahyadri cooperative society over cheque allegations

CH NEWS,SHIVAMOGGA

Police have registered an FIR against the Sahyadri Multipurpose Arecanut Growers Marketing Cooperative Society in Thirthahalli, its president H.N. Vijay Dev, and directors following a complaint alleging misuse of a signed blank cheque and creation of false documents.

The complaint was filed by Nagesh Rao R., who serves as the president of Padmavathi High School. According to his complaint, he was acquainted with cooperative society president H.N. Vijay Dev, who allegedly approached him on the pretext of providing financial assistance.

Nagesh Rao alleged that he was called to the cooperative society office on June 20, 2012, where he was informed that a loan of Rs 20 lakh would be provided. He claimed that he was asked to sign blank documents and a blank cheque as security.

According to the complaint, documents were allegedly prepared showing that Rs 20 lakh had been given as a loan, while only Rs 17 lakh was actually provided. Nagesh Rao stated that he repaid Rs 10 lakh on August 5, 2014.

He further claimed that, as requested by Vijay Dev, he became a member of a Rs 10 lakh chit fund scheme conducted by the organisation and paid Rs 25,000 every month for 40 months, amounting to another Rs 10 lakh. He stated that he has documents supporting these payments. However, he alleged that the society did not return the blank documents and signed cheque taken as security. Later, he claimed that the cheque was filled with an amount of Rs 47,70,849 and presented to the bank on November 21, 2018. After the cheque was dishonoured, a case was reportedly filed against him in the Shivamogga JMFC court under case number 297/2019.

SIR drive gains momentum with voter participation: Anuradha

DEVANAHALLI

The Special Voters List Revision SIR process is progressing in Bengaluru Rural district with 87.44% enumeration forms distributed so far. District Collector Dr K.N. Anuradha said the exercise requires cooperation from every voter and officials are working to complete the process quickly. Officials said the district has 9,12,913 voters and 91.33% mapping has been completed with the 2002 electoral roll. Enumeration forms have been given to voters through booth level officers during house visits and 100% distribution is expected soon. Authorities said BLOs will continue visiting homes until the deadline and voters should provide accurate details for verification. The mapping progress in Doddaballapur Devanahalli Hoskote and Nelamangala constituencies is being monitored regu-



larly to ensure correct records and transparent revision of the electoral list across the district with public support and active participation. Officials explained that information of migrant workers and other voters is also being collected through mapping efforts. Nodal officers have been appointed to monitor the SIR work and ensure BLOs complete door to door visits properly. The administration warned that action would be taken against officials who fail to conduct field visits as

required. CEO Dr Vasanthi Amar said awareness programmes including sweep activities have been organised across the district. Help centres have been established and students and citizens are being informed about the importance of the revision process and voter participation through various campaigns and public outreach activities regularly. She said banners posters and leaflets are being used to spread awareness while special support is provided to senior citizens dis-

District officials said 91.33% voter mapping is complete, with BLOs distributing forms, verifying details, and ensuring transparent electoral roll revision

abled persons and weaker sections to complete forms without difficulty. Officials have trained staff to upload forms and verify details properly. District authorities said the SIR process is designed to be transparent and inclusive with participation from voters political groups and election teams. They appealed to citizens to cooperate with booth level officers and complete required procedures on time. The administration expressed confidence that the ongoing efforts will create an accurate voter list and protect democratic rights of all eligible citizens in Bengaluru Rural district through successful implementation.

National Lok Adalat promotes faster justice through settlement

SHIDLAGHATTA

Senior Civil Judge of the JMFC Court Mohammad Roshan Shah said the National Lok Adalat aims to ensure speedy disposal of court cases and provide timely justice to people. He was speaking at a preliminary meeting held at the Bar Association auditorium to discuss preparations for the Lok Adalat scheduled to be conducted on July 11.

Addressing advocates and officials, the judge said settling minor disputes through mutual agreement would reduce the burden on courts and allow judges to focus on other important cases. He explained that fewer pending cases would help deliver justice more quickly. He also said that compromise reached through Lok Adalats benefits both individuals and society by encouraging peaceful settlements instead

of lengthy legal battles.

Mohammad Roshan Shah said decisions made in Lok Adalats carry the same legal value as court judgments. Unlike regular court verdicts, these settlements cannot be appealed because they are accepted by both parties through mutual consent. He added that experienced advocates guide participants without pressure, helping them save time, legal expenses, court fees and repeated visits. Such settlements also help maintain good relationships between the parties involved.

Bar Association President A. Narayanaswamy said the National Lok Adalat will be held at the JMFC Court on July 11 as per the directions of the State Legal Services Authority. He said property disputes, cheque bounce cases, electricity-related matters and pre-litigation cases can be settled during the event.

Police solve mysterious Javanahalli woman murder case

MANDYA

Police have solved the mysterious murder of a young woman whose burnt body was found near Javanahalli Hill in Malavalli taluk on June 24. District Superintendent of Police Dr. V.J. Shobharani said the investigation revealed that the victim, Nalini, was allegedly murdered by Rajashekar, who later died by suicide along with his mother by jumping into a lake in Tamil Nadu on June 28.

The investigation began after local residents alerted Belakawadi police about the charred body. Officers recovered two rings, keys, a watch and an ear clip from the scene. A special team examined CCTV footage from a nearby toll plaza and noticed an Etios car passing through the area. The footage showed a woman asleep in the front seat. Vehicle records led police to Rajashekar, who initially

ly claimed he had sold the car, raising further suspicion.

Further questioning and evidence revealed that Nalini, who worked at a beauty parlour in Bengaluru, knew Rajashekar and they were reportedly in a relationship. Police said disagreements over marriage had created tension between them in recent weeks. Investigators believe Nalini met Rajashekar on June 22 after he asked her to come to Attibele. According to the investigation, she was later taken to Upparahalli and allegedly killed before her body was set on fire.

Police said Rajashekar later gave different explanations to friends and Nalini's acquaintances before the investigation closed in on him. By then, he and his mother had died by suicide. Officials said the evidence collected helped solve the challenging case despite the condition of the body.

Speed radar cameras reduce traffic violations across Udupi

UDUPI

The installation of advanced speed radar cameras on national highways in Udupi district has resulted in a significant decline in traffic rule violations, according to officials. The automated surveillance system introduced through a public-private partnership has helped improve road discipline and reduce dangerous driving practices.

Six strategically important locations across the district have been equipped with automatic number plate recognition speed radar cameras. These include Uchila under Padubidri Police Station limits, Dandatheertha under Kapu Police Station, Tekkatte under Kota Police Station, Trasi under Gangolli Police Station, Naikanakatte under Byndoor Police Station, and Dupadakatte under Karkala Rural Police Station limits.

The cameras automatically detect various traffic violations and record details of vehicles. Based on the viola-

tions captured, e-challan notices are generated automatically and sent to the registered owners of the vehicles.

The project was launched in May, and since then, around 2,700 e-challans have been issued in the district. Compared to the month of May, traffic violations in major categories have reduced significantly, with a decline ranging between 40% and 70%.

Data from the traffic department shows a major improvement in road safety behaviour. Cases of speeding involving two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and light motor vehicles reduced from 40,175 in the first week after installation to 14,364 in the recent week.

Similarly, violations related to not wearing seat belts declined from 15,575 cases initially to 6,561 cases. Helmetless riding cases also witnessed a sharp drop, decreasing from 12,440 cases in the first week to 5,070 cases recently.

Wrong-side driving viola-

tions reduced from 4,050 cases to 2,441 cases, while triple riding on two-wheelers dropped from 3,174 cases to 1,036 cases. Overspeeding cases involving heavy vehicles also declined from 3,170 cases to 997 cases.

Officials stated that continuous monitoring through automated technology has encouraged motorists to follow traffic rules more responsibly. The system is expected to further strengthen road safety measures and reduce accidents caused by traffic violations in the district.



FARMERS DEMAND CANCELLATION OF EVICTION ORDERS, LAND RIGHTS

KOPPA

Members of the Sringeri constituency farmers' association and Hasiru Sene staged a protest in front of the taluk office, demanding the cancellation of land eviction orders and the issuance of rights documents for lands under cultivation.

The protesters submitted a memorandum to Tahsildar Likhitha Mohan, urging the administration to provide legal recognition to farmers who have been cultivating the lands for several years.

The farmers alleged that a five-gunta piece of land under the Bhandigadi Gram Panchayat limits, which had been cultivated for nearly 45 years, was suddenly cleared by the Tahsildar on July 2. They said that when they questioned the official, they were informed that the action was taken based on instructions from higher authorities.

The protesters claimed that the issue had earlier been resolved in the presence of farmer leaders from the region. They expressed dissatisfaction over what they described as repeated harassment of a poor farmer despite previous settlements.

They argued that there are provisions to issue land

rights documents under various schemes, including Forms 50, 53, 57, 94C, and 94CC, as well as under revenue villages and sub-villages. The protesters alleged that officials removed the encroachment without conducting proper field verification.

Sringeri constituency Youth Congress president Durgacharan Kunchur said that if officials were committed to their duties, they should first remove large-scale encroachments by wealthy individuals instead of targeting poor farmers. He warned that the Congress party would not tolerate injustice against economically weaker sections.

Advocate Sudheer Kumar Muroli stated that a joint survey was already underway to identify forest and revenue lands and process land grants. He questioned the decision to remove cultivated lands during this ongoing survey process.

The protest was attended by Block Congress president Kukkudige Ravindra, District Youth Congress president Shreejith Dandinamakki, Shrivakar Shetty, Deepak Kuduregundi, Prashanth, Mohammed Tayyib, Vijayanand, Srinivas Karangi, and several other supporters.

LAND SCAM EXPOSURE

Mandya land investigation receives strong public backing

MANDYA

The Lokayukta investigation into alleged illegal occupation and sale of government land in Srirangapatna and Nagamangala taluks has received support from farmers and local residents. Karnataka State Farmers Association leader Mohankumar, also known as Kirangooru Papu, welcomed the action and said a detailed inquiry would help expose those involved in the alleged land scam.

According to him, the in-



vestigation was launched under the directions of Upalokayukta Justice Veerappa, with supervision from the trial authority and Mandya District Lokayukta Superintendent of Police Suresh Babu. He claimed that hundreds of acres of government land had been illegally transferred and sold over the years. He alleged that land meant for poor families had instead reached wealthy individuals, real estate developers and people with political influence.

Mohankumar also called

for stronger action against corruption in government offices. He said farmers and ordinary citizens often face delays in getting official work completed and alleged that irregularities had occurred in matters related to government land and property records. He urged the government to provide more powers to the Lokayukta so that corruption can be investigated effectively and public confidence in government institutions can be strengthened.

He further demanded an

inquiry into the officials who handled earlier land-related cases, including former Tahsildars, surveyors, revenue inspectors, Shirastedars and sub-divisional officers. He also alleged that government properties, municipal sites and land along the banks of the River Kaveri in Srirangapatna had been illegally occupied. He appealed for a comprehensive investigation to identify those responsible and ensure that government land is protected for public welfare and lawful use in the future.

QUICK READ

Farmers advised to follow drought management methods

Gadag
Agriculture officials have advised farmers in Gadag district to take precautionary steps as rainfall remains 22.3 percent below normal from June 1 to July 7. Due to low moisture, crops like maize, cotton, sunflower and groundnut are facing slow growth. So far, 2,39,280 hectares have been sown, while remaining areas are pending. Farmers have been advised to use alternative crops, intercropping methods, seed treatment and water conservation techniques if rainfall shortage continues. Officials also suggested foliar sprays and drip irrigation where possible. Farmers can contact Agriculture Contact Centres for further guidance and support.

KSOU opens admissions for various courses

Chikkaballapura
Karnataka State Open University, Mysuru Regional Centre, Chikkaballapura has started admissions for undergraduate, postgraduate, certificate and diploma courses. Courses include BA, BCom, BBA, BCA, BLISc, MA, MCom, MBA, MCA, MLISc, BSW and MSW programmes. Eligible candidates can apply online by paying the required admission fee. Officials said both physical education and regular open university courses are equally valid as per UGC norms. Interested students can contact the KSOU Regional Centre at Government First Grade College premises, MG Road, Chikkaballapura for more details. The university encouraged students to use this opportunity for higher education.

Three tier Panchayat System becomes global model: DCM Parameshwara

Dr. Parameshwara said India's three-tier Panchayat system promotes Gram Swaraj, empowering people to manage local issues and governance

TUMAKURU

Deputy Chief Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara said Karnataka's three-tier Panchayat Raj system has become a model for the world due to its focus on decentralised administration and people's participation. He was speaking while inaugurating a three-day training workshop for newly appointed village panchayat administrators, Panchayat Development Officers and secretaries at the Zilla Panchayat office on Wednesday.

Dr. Parameshwara said no other country has a similar



three-level local administration system consisting of Gram Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat. He said the system was created under the idea of Gram

Swaraj, where people should have the power to manage local issues and participate in governance.

He explained that Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Gram

Swaraj was based on self-governance, and after independence, the government included decentralisation of power in the Constitution. As a result, India, especially Karnataka, has developed a strong Panchayat system. He said the system initially faced criticism over corruption and misuse of power, but over time its positive impact has helped citizens receive the benefits of democracy at the local level. The Deputy Chief Minister said technology should be used effectively to make administration easier and reduce the workload of officials. He ad-

vised newly appointed officers to understand village-level problems and work honestly to provide quick and fair solutions to the public. He stressed that transparent administration and responsible functioning are important for the success of Panchayat Raj institutions.

State Special Representative in New Delhi T.B. Jayachandra said training programmes are essential for officials to ensure transparent and efficient administration. He urged officers to complete public works within the given time and avoid corruption while serving people.

Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer B.V. Ashvija said the workshop was organised to improve the knowledge and skills of new administrators and secretaries through guidance from experienced resource persons. The training focuses on good governance and effective implementation of development programmes at the village level. BMTC Vice President Niket Raj M., District Collector Shub Kalyan, District Superintendent of Police K.V. Ashok, officials from various departments and other dignitaries were present during the programme.

Palm leaf manuscripts preserve rich literary heritage: Andagi

KALABURAGI

Shivraja Andagi, Honorary Secretary of the Fa. Gu. Halakatti District Kannada Sahitya Parishad, said ancient palm leaf manuscripts are valuable treasures that preserve the knowledge and wisdom of literary ancestors. He urged students to respect Kannada language and work towards protecting its cultural heritage.

Speaking after inaugurating a Vachana recitation competition organized by the Shiv Basava Cultural Institute at Gundagurthi Government High School, Andagi said Kannada literature has survived because of the efforts of scholars and writers who dedicated their lives to preserving it. He explained that palm leaf writings are not just old documents but sources of knowledge and inspiration.

He said his 17 years of research helped bring recognition to more than 250 Vachanakaras and publish over 22,000 Vachanas. He encouraged students to read and understand the works

of great literary figures and continue promoting Kannada language, culture and traditions.

The competition was organized as part of the birth anniversary celebration of Fa. Gu. Halakatti. Chief guest Vinod Kumar inaugurated the event by offering prayers to Halakatti's portrait. Cultural institute members and guests, including Maibubasaba Gasti, Sanganna Choragasti and Vishwanath Thotnalli, participated in the program.

Headmaster Malappa Pujari presided over the event. Students Bhima Shankara, Pragma, Tanu, Soumya, Aditya, Prakruthi, Suramadevi, Chamundi and Lakshmi Kanth received prizes in different categories. Around 35 students participated in the competition and were awarded certificates. Teachers, staff members and students attended the program, which highlighted the importance of preserving Kannada literature and encouraging young minds to connect with the language's rich history.

Mandya Plans Early Sugarcane Crushing Amid Rain Concerns

MANDYA

The district administration has decided to begin sugarcane crushing operations early in all sugar factories of Mandya district from this week to support farmers facing challenges due to changing monsoon conditions. The decision was announced during a meeting held to discuss farmers' issues including rainfall, water availability, crop insurance and sugarcane-related concerns.

District Collector said there is no shortage of seeds and fertilizers required for the monsoon season in the district. Around 30,000 metric tonnes of fertilizer stock is available, and necessary steps have been taken to ensure farmers receive agricultural inputs on time. Officials from different departments participated in the meeting along with farmer organisation leaders who shared their concerns and suggestions.

The Collector instructed of-

Mysugar boiler ready for crushing season

The Mysugar factory boiler ignition ceremony was held on Wednesday, preparing for sugarcane crushing from July 15. District Commissioner Dr. Kumar and Mysugar President C. D. Gangadhar launched the process with officials. The factory management said crushing will begin on July 15, with a daily capacity of 5,000 tonnes. Farmers have supplied sugarcane and the unit aims to complete operations by November. Chairman Gangadhar assured farmers about timely payments and support. The revival of Mysugar is expected to benefit growers and strengthen the sugar sector in Mandya district.

Collector directed immediate sugarcane crushing, noting ₹10.30 crore government incentive released, and urged mills to withdraw court case and clear pending dues

served mainly for drinking purposes.

Farmers were also encouraged to register under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana to receive protection against crop losses. Around 11,000 farmers have already registered, and officials will work to increase participation. Authorities were instructed to provide farmers with seven hours of power supply during morning and evening hours, giving priority to morning supply. Officials from agriculture, horticulture, irrigation, electricity departments and representatives of farmer organisations attended the meeting and discussed measures to address agricultural challenges in the district.

officials to start sugarcane crushing in all sugar factories immediately. The government has already released ₹10.30 crore towards the state's share of the ₹50 per tonne incentive for sugarcane growers. As a case related to the mills' share is pending in court, sugar factories have been requested to withdraw the case and release their pending contribution in the interest of farmers.

Officials were also directed to prepare an alternative crop plan at taluk and hobli levels after reviewing rainfall conditions. Since sowing is possi-

ble until the first week of August, farmers will be given awareness about suitable alternative crops. The Agriculture Department has been asked to maintain adequate availability of quality seeds and fertilizers.

The Collector appealed to farmers to cooperate with the sixth phase drinking water project considering future water requirements. Due to low water storage in the Krishnarajasagara Dam, irrigation water cannot currently be provided for agricultural crops. Available water is being re-

Kolar Deputy Commissioner Ravi reviewed arrangements, directing departments to coordinate for the programme led by Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar

Malur welfare event to benefit 40,150 people

KOLAR

Preparations are underway for a major welfare distribution programme to be held in Malur on July 18, where more than 40,150 beneficiaries are expected to receive government benefits and certificates. Development projects worth over ₹565 crore will also be inaugurated and launched during the event.

Kolar Deputy Commissioner Dr. M. R. Ravi reviewed the arrangements at a meeting held at the Deputy Commissioner's office on Wednesday in the presence of Malur MLA K. Y. Nanje Gowda. He instructed officials from all departments to work together and ensure the successful conduct of the programme, which will be

presided over by Karnataka Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar.

Officials informed that 61 completed development projects worth ₹310.69 crore will be inaugurated, while foundation stones will be laid for 32 new projects costing ₹255.68 crore. Around 21,525 beneficiaries will receive welfare assistance, certificates and benefits worth ₹7.23 crore from different government departments during the programme.

Under the Ashraya Housing Scheme, the Urban Development Department will distribute title deeds to 1,000 beneficiaries. The Public Works Department will inaugurate 20 road projects covering 79 kilometres at a cost of ₹79 crore and

begin five new projects worth ₹3 crore. The Panchayat Raj Engineering Department will dedicate 72 rural road works, while Jal Jeevan Mission projects will provide drinking water facilities to 129 villages. The Health Department will inaugurate a new hospital building built at a cost of ₹17.5 crore. The Energy Department will launch development works worth ₹22 crore, including the 9.7 MW Lakkur power substation. The School Education Department will dedicate 25 new classrooms constructed under the Viveka Scheme. Officials have made detailed arrangements for transportation, parking, sanitation, food supply and security. Around 300 KSRTC buses will be used to bring beneficiaries from ru-

ral areas. Department-wise officers have been appointed to coordinate participation, including beneficiaries from agriculture, social welfare and other departments.

The Labour Department will distribute tool kits to 215 beneficiaries, while support will be provided to 25 beneficiaries under the Fisheries Housing Scheme. Women beneficiaries under the Gruha Lakshmi Scheme are also expected to attend the programme. Dr. Ravi directed officials to ensure proper arrangements at the venue, VIP movement areas and helipad facilities without any shortcomings. MLA K. Y. Nanje Gowda said the event will help citizens directly receive the benefits of government schemes and development projects.

ELECTRICAL SHORT CIRCUIT TRIGGERS FIRE AT HASSAN BAR

HASSAN

A fire broke out at Supriya Bar and Restaurant behind the city bus stand on Kasturba Road on Wednesday morning due to an electrical short circuit, creating panic among people in the area. Fire and emergency service personnel rushed to the spot immediately and worked for more than an hour to control the fire and heavy smoke.

Fire Brigade Chief Ningaraju said the fire started after a short circuit in underground electrical cables caused damage to the junction box and meter board. He explained that dense smoke inside the underground area made rescue operations difficult, as visibility was extremely low. Firefighters entered the area using artificial breathing equipment after ensuring that



the power supply was completely disconnected. The team initially used carbon dioxide and dry chemical powder equipment before spraying water from outside to bring the situation under control. An additional fire engine was called due to the intensity of the fire. Ningaraju said placing electrical equipment such as junction boxes and meter boards inside small underground rooms creates dif-

ficulties during emergencies. He advised that such areas should have proper ventilation, smoke exhaust systems and emergency exits. Officials said there was no major damage to the main building, though some electrical equipment may have been damaged. The fire department confirmed that the smoke was cleared and the situation was completely safe after the successful operation.

FREE TRAVEL SUPPORT

7,845 students receive free bus passes in Chikkaballapura

CHIKKABALLAPURA

A total of 7,845 students in Chikkaballapura district have received free bus passes under the state government's guarantee schemes to support education and reduce the financial burden on families. District Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority Chairman Yaluvali N. Ramesh said the initiative is helping students continue their studies without facing travel difficulties.

He was speaking after launching the distribution



programme organised by the District Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority in

association with the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation at the KSRTC bus

stand in Chikkaballapura on Wednesday. He said the five guarantee schemes introduced by the state government have brought positive changes in education, women empowerment and social security sectors.

Ramesh said schemes such as Shakti, Gruha Lakshmi, Anna Bhagya, Gruha Jyothi and Yuva Nidhi are supporting lakhs of families across the state. Along with these programmes, the government has introduced free bus passes for male students to encourage education and help

reduce travel expenses. He said the facility will benefit students from rural areas who depend on public transport to reach schools and colleges.

He explained that the Shakti scheme, which provides free bus travel for women in government buses, has helped women access education, employment, healthcare and self-employment opportunities. Similarly, free bus passes for students will make travel easier and encourage them to continue their education without fi-

nancial pressure.

The authority chairman said free bus passes have already been provided to 7,845 students in the district and around 7,000 more students are expected to receive the benefit soon. The administration has set a target of distributing free bus passes to more than 13,000 students in the district. Eligible students were requested to submit the required documents and make use of the scheme.

He said the main aim of the guarantee schemes is to reduce living expenses, im-

prove family financial stability and encourage education and employment. Providing free transport facilities to students from remote villages will help prevent them from missing educational opportunities due to travel costs. Vice Chairman S.N. Subbareddy, members K.N. Jayaram, Nirmala Gangadhar, Madhusudhan, Muninarayanappa, Venugopal, Rangaraju, H.M. Muniyappa, KSRTC officials, department representatives, students and the public were present at the programme.

QUICK READ

Congress criticizes Hindu members in Waqf board

MUMBAI Congress leader Hussain Dalwai strongly condemned Madhya Pradesh's decision to appoint non-Muslim members to its reconstituted Waqf Board, calling it an attempt to marginalize Muslims. The state recently became the first to implement the new Waqf Amendment Act, naming Manoj Malpani and Animesh Bhargava to the ten-member board. Dalwai questioned if the government would similarly appoint Muslims to Hindu religious bodies like the Ram Temple Trust. While welcoming the Uniform Civil Code if it ensures true gender equality, Dalwai emphasized that controversial reforms require comprehensive public debates rather than targeted actions.

Abhishek Banerjee skips voice sample test in court

KOLKATA Trinamool Congress General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee skipped his scheduled appearance at the Bidhannagar Court. He was ordered to provide voice samples for an ongoing Criminal Investigation Department probe. The investigation involves an alleged hate speech case connected to the recent West Bengal Assembly elections. This marks another instance of the high-profile politician avoiding the court-mandated procedure. Legal authorities and the state CID are currently reviewing the situation to determine the next legal steps regarding his repeated absences from this crucial investigation.

Congress demands opposition lead Badrinath temple probe

DEHRADUN The Congress party has condemned the Uttarakhand government's investigation into alleged donation thefts at the highly revered Badrinath Temple. State Congress President Ganesh Godiyal labeled the official inquiry a cover-up, demanding an all-party committee led by an opposition leader instead. He expressed zero faith in the current panel, fearing a destruction of evidence. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami strongly vowed strict punishment, equating temple theft to a sin as severe as cow slaughter. He assured the public that a high-level police probe is actively underway to catch those guilty.

Bengal encounter sparks fierce political debate

KOLKATA The recent police encounter of an accused rapist has triggered fierce political arguments across West Bengal. Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra strongly condemned the killing, comparing the state to Uttar Pradesh and calling it jungle law. Conversely, rebel leader Siuli Saha defended the police, arguing they acted legally after being attacked.

Congress leaders honor legacy of legend YSR

Top Congress leaders paid tribute to former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy on his birth anniversary

NEW DELHI

Top Congress leaders paid heartfelt tributes to the former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, popularly known as YSR, on his birth anniversary. They highly praised his lifelong dedication to uplifting marginalized communities.

Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi described YSR as a true statesman whose unwavering commitment transformed countless lives. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge also lauded

the visionary leader, highlighting his deep devotion to farmers, the poor, and the party. Born in 1949, YSR originally trained as a medical doctor, running a charitable hospital before entering politics in 1978. Remarkably, he remained completely undefeated throughout his 25-year political career, winning eight consecutive state and parliamentary elections. YSR served twice as the state Congress chief and acted as a powerful Opposition Leader. His historic public march



helped him secure the Chief Minister's seat in 2004. He later won a second consecutive term in 2009. Despite facing corruption allegations from rivals, his immense welfare work ensures his en-

during legacy across the nation.

Milestones of a visionary leader:

- Historic March: Led a grueling 1,400-km foot journey across backward regions to connect with citizens in 2003.
- Landslide Victory: Guided the Congress party to a massive 185-seat win during the 2004 assembly elections.
- Public Champion: Fought passionately for struggling farmers, weavers, and youth while opposing power hikes.

Fadnavis defends Mumbai-Pune expressway after landslide

MUMBAI Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis launched a defense of the ₹7,000-crore Mumbai-Pune "Missing Link" expressway project, strongly firing back at opposition allegations of corruption following a recent landslide. Adopting a defiant stance against aggressive social media trolling, Fadnavis declared himself completely "abuse-proof" while hailing the mega project as a global engineering marvel.

The political storm erupted after torrential monsoon rains triggered a major landslide on the newly inaugurated transit route, halting traffic for roughly 18 hours. Seizing the opportunity, opposition leaders immediately attacked the Mahayuti government, alleging substandard construction work and systemic structural failure.

Replying to a heated legislative assembly debate, Fadnavis openly accused his critics of fabricating political lies. He revealed that the previous alliance government had actually tried to kill the vital infrastructure project by permanently closing the file. Fadnavis firmly

rejected claims that public money had been wasted, clarifying that the relentless downpour simply caused mountain debris to crash onto an external decorative arch. He emphasized that the main tunnel structure suffered absolutely no cracks, and its integrated electronic safety systems functioned flawlessly to clear the path within hours.

The Chief Minister proudly reminded the House that the historic route features India's tallest cable-stayed bridge and the widest twin tunnels in the world, successfully bypassing a highly dangerous ghat section. Invoking the legacy of past engineering challenges like the Konkan Railway, he argued that major progress requires political courage to overcome natural risks.

Turning to the wider monsoon crisis gripping the state, Fadnavis briefed lawmakers on extensive emergency relief operations. He noted that regions like Vasai-Virar faced a staggering 772 mm of rain, temporarily knocking out local power grids. The state has already deployed immediate financial aid and free food.

Former Baramulla DDC Chairperson Safina Baig officially joined the National Conference, boosting the party's presence in North Kashmir

Former DDC Chief Safina Baig joins NC

SRINAGAR

In a major political development, Safina Baig, the former Baramulla District Development Council Chairperson, officially joined the National Conference (NC). The high-profile event took place at the party headquarters, significantly boosting the NC's strength in North Kashmir.

Safina, accompanied by numerous supporters, was warmly welcomed by top leadership, including NC President Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. This strategic move strengthens the ruling party's hold on Baramulla district, where it previously secured six out of seven assembly seats during the 2024 elections. Safina is the wife of Muzaffar Hussain Baig, a prominent co-founder of the rival Peoples Democratic Party

Amit Shah promises Center's support for Wayanad

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke with Kerala Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan over the phone regarding the tragic Wayanad mudslide. Shah promised the Central government's complete support for all ongoing rescue, relief, and rehabilitation operations, while calling for a high-level investigation.

The conversation followed a devastating accident where three workers lost their lives and five others remain missing. Nine injured individuals are currently receiving medical treatment at a local hospital, with two reported to be in critical condition. The disaster

occurred after a massive mound of excavated mud collapsed due to heavy rainfall, trapping several laborers underneath tonnes of heavy debris.

During their call, the Home Minister received a detailed update from the Chief Minister about the ground situation and the immediate steps taken by local authorities. Shah expressed his satisfaction with Kerala's rapid emergency response and reiterated that federal agencies stand ready to assist.

He also emphasized the urgent need for a thorough probe to identify the exact causes and prevent future tragedies.



(PDP).

While Muzaffar Baig has stayed away from active politics recently, he remains an incredibly influential figure across Kashmir's political and legal circles. His past friction with PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti after 2019 triggered rumors of him shifting sides, though other regional parties denied his fresh entry into the NC

marks a massive realignment of power, altering the political landscape of the valley ahead of future challenges.

The influential Muzaffar Baig legacy:

- Top Statesman: Served as Deputy Chief Minister and won multiple critical state and parliamentary elections.
- Legal Expert: Educated at Harvard Law School; served as Advocate General and received the Padma Bhushan.
- Political Shift: Distanced from PDP after post-2019 disagreements with leader Mehbooba Mufti.

Mysuru City Corporation, Mysuru

Office of the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, V V W W Campus, K.R.S Main Road, Yadavagiri, Mysuru-570020.

TN No: MCC/EE-ELE/TN-08/71/2026-27 Date: 02.07.2026

Tender Notification-08

Through Karnataka Public-Procurement Portal Only

Tenders are invited through Karnataka Public-Procurement Portal for the works under General Fund: 2026-27 grant as required from Executive Engineer (Electrical) of the Mysuru City Corporation. Details are as follows:

Sl. No	Description	Total Works	Date of Publishing on KPP-Portal	Last Date for Submission of Bids	Technical/Financial Bid opening Date
1	Tender Works (KW-1)	04	06.07.2026	13.07.2026	14.07.2026
2	Re-Tender Works (KW-1)	05			
3	EOI Work	01			
4	Goods Tenders Works	06	Refer KPPP Portal		

Note: Any further changes/notifications will be published only through Karnataka Public-Procurement portal only and will not release any paper notification.

DIPR/MYSORE/420/Shirdi Sai/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Electrical), Mysuru City Corporation, Mysuru.

ಪುರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಗುಂಡ್ಲುಪೇಟೆ

ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ-571111

ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08229-222226, ಸಹಾಯವಾಣಿ: 08229-223377

E-mail: itstaff_ulb_gundlupet@yahoo.com. Website: www.gundlupettown.mrc.gov.in

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಪು.ಗು/ಕ.ಉ/ಯು.ಸಿ.ಎಸ್/ಡಿ.ಪಿ.ಆರ್/ಪ.ಆರ್/02/2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 08-07-2026

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಲು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತ್ತೀಚಿನ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಂತೆ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿ/ಕನ್ಸಲ್ಟಿಂಗ್‌ಗಳಿಂದ ಗುಂಡ್ಲುಪೇಟೆ ಪುರಸಭೆ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ನಮೂದಿಸಿದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮದ ಪ್ರಕಾರದ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರುಗಳನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಆಸಕ್ತಿವುಳ್ಳ ಅರ್ಹ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿ/ಕನ್ಸಲ್ಟಿಂಗ್‌ಗಳವರು ಪೂರೈಸಬೇಕಾದ ಅವಧಿ ಮತ್ತು ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜನ್ನು ಕಛೇರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಸರವಣಿ.ಎಸ್., ಮುಖ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಪುರಸಭೆ, ಗುಂಡ್ಲುಪೇಟೆ, ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08229-222226, 08229-223377

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ವಿವರ	ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ. ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ಇಎಂಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)
1	ಗುಂಡ್ಲುಪೇಟೆ ಪಟ್ಟಣದ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಧುನಿಕ ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ 01 ಮಾಡಲು ಮತ್ತು ಕೆ.ಇ.ಬಿ ಪಕ್ಕದ ರಸ್ತೆ ಫುಡ್ ಜೋನ್ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ವಿಸ್ತೃತ ಯೋಜನಾ (ಡಿ.ಪಿ.ಆರ್) ವರದಿ ತಯಾರಿಸಿ ನೀಡುವುದು.	400.00	10,000/-

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜು ಪಡೆಯಲು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಫಾರಂ ಶುಲ್ಕ ರೂ. 500/- +ಜಿ.ಎಸ್.ಟಿ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜಿಗೆ ಕೋರಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ಹಾಗೂ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜನ್ನು ವಿತರಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23.07.2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5.00ರ ವರೆಗೆ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 24.07.2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00ರವರೆಗೆ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 24.07.2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ರವರೆಗೆ

ಸಹಿ/- ಮುಖ್ಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಪುರಸಭೆ ಗುಂಡ್ಲುಪೇಟೆ

ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಪುರಸಭೆ ಗುಂಡ್ಲುಪೇಟೆ

ಸಂ/ವಾಸಾಸಂ/ಚಾ.ನಗರ/227/2026-27

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Bengaluru Division, 2nd Floor, PWD Annexure Building, K.R. Circle, Bengaluru-01. Phone: 080-22133370

No. 14/2026-27 Date: 07.07.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Item-rate tenders, for the work in PWD, **No.1 South & Doddaballapura** Sub Division under this office noted below, are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka in accordance with Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement rules 2000 and as per Standard Tender Documents for procurement of works from the contractors registered in K.P.W.D. as per KPPP.

Tender Notification are Published for **03 Works (Bridge/Road) (Rs. 100.00 Lakhs to Rs. 350.00 Lakhs)**. Details of the tender works can be obtained from the above Office during office hours on working days. **EMD & Tender processing fees are mentioned in KPP portal.**

(1) Tenders must be submitted online through KPP portal on or before **4.00 PM on Dated: 22.07.2026**. (2) The opening of tenders through KPP portal on **Dated: 23.07.2026 at 4.30 PM** or further date and time will be Intimated.

For more details contact this office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer. DIPR/DD-C.P/1536/KSMCA/2026-27

Government of Karnataka

Office of the Assistant Conservator of Forests, Ayanur Sub Forest Division, Shivamogga

No.: ACF/Tender/CR-21/2026-27 Date: 06.07.2026

Short-Term e-Tender Notice

(Through e-Procurement Portal) Call-02

Short-Term Tenders Call-02 are invited through e-procurement portal as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 2000 from interested Forest contractors registered in Forest Department as Forest contractors for the year 2026-27 and having experience of growing saplings of various sizes, plantation advance works and having experience of carrying out similar works as put to tender in the Forest Department for implementation of "Formation of Monsoon Plantation " in the limits of Ayanur Zone of Shivamogga Regional Forest Division including Change of places of work implementation, Changes in Types mentioned in e-procurement portal and various Head of Account based on expected Grant for the year 2026-27. Last date for submission of Tenders is fixed as: 14.07.2026 up to 4.00 PM. For further information this office can be contacted during office hours and details of the Tender can be obtained through the official website <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests, Ayanur Sub Division, Shivamogga

DIPR/smg/ksmca/26-273607/489

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹೊಸಕೋಟೆ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಹೊಸಕೋಟೆ- 562114

ಸಹಾಯವಾಣಿ : 27931759, ದೂರವಾಣಿ : 27931221.

Email: itstaff_ulb_hosakote@yahoo.com Web Site: www.hosakotecity.mrc.gov.in

ನಂ.ನಗರಸಭಾ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕಾರ್ಯ/ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು/09/2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 08.07.2026

"ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ" (ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಕೆ.ಟಿ.ಪಿ.ಸಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ಹೊಸಕೋಟೆ ನಗರಸಭೆ ಹೊಸಕೋಟೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಇವರಿಂದ 2026-27ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಸಿ.ಎಂ.ಎ.ಡಿ.ಸಿ ಅನುದಾನದಡಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ 02 ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಡ್ವಿ-ಲೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಡಿ ಅರ್ಹ ದರ್ಜೆಯ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೆರೆಂಬಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ	ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ವಿವರಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ವಿವರ
01	DMA/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT60524	50.00	ಇತರೆ
02	DMA/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT60527	75.00	ಇತರೆ
03	DMA/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT60533	75.00	ಇತರೆ
04	DMA/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT6535	50.00	ಇತರೆ

1) ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ **22.07.2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5:30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ **24.07.2026** ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ **11.30** ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

2) ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#portal/portal-home> ನಿಂದ ಹೊಸಕೋಟೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗೊಳಿಸುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/- ಹೊಸಕೋಟೆ ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹೊಸಕೋಟೆ

ವಾಸಾಸಂ/ವಾ.ಪು/1537/ಬಿಡಿ ಸಾಂ/2026-27

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, 16th Floor, PU Building, MG Road, Bengaluru-01

No. BCCC/EE/ELE/TEND/03/2026-27 Dated: 08-07-2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) SHORT TERM TENDER

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

Executive Engineer (Ele), BCCC, invites Tenders in accordance with KTPP rules 2000, from eligible contractors registered in Bengaluru Central City Corporation/ KPWD/CPWD/Railways/MES/National Highway or any other equivalent central/state government organizations on behalf of the Commissioner, BCCC for Electrical work as detailed in the table.

Sl.	Name of the Work
Reserved to CAT-II(A)	
1	Annual maintenance and Repairs to Electrical installations of K.R market and its Subway in ward no 45 under BCCC, POW 2026-27. Amount Put to Tender : Rs. 16.95 Lakhs Earnest Money Deposit : Rs. 21,200/- Class of Contract : KCEI/Class II & above
Others	
2	Annual Electrical maintenance to Kallahalli Electrical Crematorium in ward no. 10 under BCCC, POW 2026-27. Amount Put to Tender : Rs. 16.95 Lakhs Earnest Money Deposit : Rs. 42,500/- Class of Contract : KCEI/Class II & above

(1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPP Portal (<https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>) from **09-07-2026 by 16.30 hrs (2)** Bids must be submitted online through the KPP Portal on or before **17-07-2026 by 15:00 hrs. (3)** Date of opening of tenders **18-07-2026 at 16:00 Hrs.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Ele.) Bengaluru Central City Corporation

QUICK READ

Catastrophic storms to test China's urban resilience: Reports

SHANGHAI

Scientists warn that extreme weather fueled by El Niño will severely test China's resilience this year. Following devastating floods in southern Guangxi that killed six people and trapped thousands, the nation now braces for Super Typhoon Bavi. Packing winds over 180 mph, this massive storm threatens heavily populated provinces. Experts state that climate change is triggering more frequent, intense cyclones, leaving communities no time to recover. With July typhoon forecasts exceeding historical averages, the risk of catastrophic flooding, landslides, and widespread crop damage remains dangerously high across China's vulnerable coasts.

Qatari LNG Tanker awaits ocean salvage

LONDON

The Qatari LNG tanker Al Rekayyat sits stationary near the Strait of Hormuz following a projectile strike. A fire erupted in the engine room, raising explosion risks, though the vessel's massive liquefied natural gas tanks remain unbreached. Emergency teams successfully evacuated all crew members, and salvage operations will begin once responders extinguish the flames. This dangerous incident marks the first time a Qatari gas ship has been targeted since regional conflict erupted in February. Qatar has formally blamed Iran for the attack, sparking intense diplomatic fury and summoning the deputy Iranian ambassador in protest.

UK lawmakers seek accountability for PoK violations

LONDON

Several British parliamentarians have raised grave concerns over an escalating human rights crisis in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The region has been gripped by severe unrest, leaving dozens of innocent civilians dead or injured following a brutal crackdown by Pakistani security forces. The territory currently remains under a strict, forced lockdown, a heavy curfew, and a complete communications blackout. Speaking directly in the British Parliament, Conservative MP Bob Blackman stated that Pakistani forces opened fire on peaceful demonstrators who were standing up for basic human rights, food security, and regional safety. Blackman revealed that more than 30 people were killed and over 200 injured during the state-led violence, including several British nationals. He strongly questioned the UK government on whether it had officially summoned Pakistan's High Commissioner to protest the unacceptable actions and protect innocent bystanders. Another UK lawmaker, Imran Hussain, voiced serious anxieties during the parliamentary debate. He highlighted a complete breakdown in dialogue between authorities and local grassroots organizations, alongside arbitrary arrests and a rising death toll. Hussain labeled recent reports regarding restrictions on the movement of essential medical supplies and food into PoK as deeply alarming. He noted that groups like the Joint Awami Action Committee had spent months trying to peacefully negotiate economic and civic governance issues.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE
ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE, HOSUR
IA.No: 06/2024

IN
OS.No. 166/2022

Venappa@Venugopal vs Petitioner/Plaintiff

Yellappa and others Respondents/Defendants

Suganya D/o Late Anjinappa, W/o Lakshmanan Hindu, Aged about 41 years, D.No:755, A Cross 4th Main, Jayanagar 3rd Block, Bangalore East-560011.

NOTICE

Respondent No.3/PP:3

Please take notice that the above Petitioner has filed the above suit for Partition of suit schedule of property. The above case is posted to 24.07.2026 for your are hereby directed to appear before this appearance. You Respondent No.3 Honourable Court on 24.07.2026 at 10.00 AM either in person or through pleader and state your objections if any. Failing which, this Honourable Court will be pleased to pass an ex parte order against you.

23.06.2026
HOSUR

/By the order of Court/
SD/-
M. PRAVEEN KUMAR
B.Sc., LL.B., ADVOCATE, HOSUR

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Smt. Chaithra G.R.C/o K Ashoka of Goravanahalli Village, Maddur Taluk, Mandya District is an absolute owner of the Residential Property bearing Janjer No.601, Property No.449, measuring 30 X 45 feet situated at Goravanahalli Village, Maddur Taluk, Mandya District. Said owner has lost Original sale deed Document No. MDR 1-05774-2011-12, CD No.MDRD69, Dated 12-10-2011 and Original Hakkupath-rain respect of the Property Janjer No. 601, Property No.449 at Goravanahalli, Pertaining to said property. Now my client is filed the complaint before the consent police station in this connection endorsement issued on 0707-2026. Therefore, anybody has any sort of claims, demands, rights or any objection etc., in whatsoever manner, intimates me within 7 days from the date of Publication of this notice to be undersigned. If received the objections after said period, will not be entertained. Hence this notice. By M.Guruprasad, Advocate, No.2, M.Lingaiah Building, V.V.Road, Mandya 571401. Mob:9242221603

India, US jointly smash global racketeering ring

India cooperated with global law enforcement to dismantle an international crime network, resulting in 37 racketeering charges.



WASHINGTON

Indian authorities have actively cooperated with the United States and global law enforcement to smash a massive international crime network. The major breakthrough resulted in sweeping racketeering charges against three dangerous organized crime groups operating across multiple continents. The successful collaboration was highlighted after US officials announced charges against 37 suspects linked to syndicates accused of murder,

kidnapping, extortion, and large-scale drug trafficking across North America and Europe. A total of 24 suspects have already been arrested under a multinational crackdown named "Operation Hard Ball." Royal Canadian Mounted Police Deputy Commissioner Lisa Moreland confirmed that the Indian government assisted investigators during the complex, years-long probe. She emphasized that Canadian police worked shoulder-to-shoulder with the FBI and global partners, calling India's coop-

eration a model for what international law enforcement strives to achieve. The investigation successfully unmasked three notorious criminal syndicates allegedly led by Lawrence Bishnoi, Jaggu Bhagwanpuria, and Ravinder Singh Dhandha. Prosecutors revealed a shocking operational method, both Bishnoi and Bhagwanpuria allegedly directed their violent global empires right from their Indian jail cells using smuggled mobile phones. Their associates then carried out dead-

ly assignments on the streets of the US, Canada, and Europe. Police leaders noted that modern technology has made organized crime completely borderless, making international teamwork absolutely essential. No single country can fight these sophisticated syndicates alone. The massive operation brought together the FBI, the Canadian Mounties, the Los Angeles Police Department, and law enforcement agencies from Spain and several other nations.

US indictment details Bishnoi's global prison syndicate

WASHINGTON

United States prosecutors have revealed that jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi masterminded a massive international criminal empire straight from an Indian prison cell. Using smuggled mobile phones and internet-based messaging apps, Bishnoi allegedly coordinated a wave of targeted murders, extortion schemes, and drug trafficking operations spanning multiple countries. The explosive allegations were detailed in a federal racketeering indictment unsealed as part of "Operation Hard Ball." This coordinated global crackdown by Western law enforcement targeted three major organized crime networks operating across North America, Europe, and Australia. According to the indictment, Bishnoi started his criminal path in the early 2010s while attending university in Punjab. Styling himself as a popular campus student



leader, he eventually traded university politics for a life of crime, transforming his loyal student followers into a lethal syndicate. Despite being arrested by Indian police in 2015, Bishnoi never lost control of his gang. Instead, he used smuggled smartphones and internet calling devices behind bars to direct high-profile assassinations, extortions, and human smuggling operations around the world. To maintain his grip on power and keep drawing fresh recruits, prosecutors state that Bishnoi carefully cultivated a public image as a religious patriot and nationalist through social media and media interviews. The gang specifically preyed on poor, vulnerable

US federal prosecutors revealed that jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi masterminded a global criminal empire from an Indian prison cell using smuggled mobile phones.

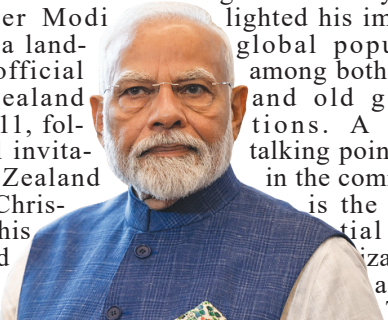
minors from disadvantaged areas in India, promising them quick cash, power, and protection. Loyal recruits were later shipped off to the United States and Canada using fraudulent student or foreign worker visas. The indictment further notes that Bishnoi kept his gang decentralized so lower-level members knew very little about each other. This protected the wider network from being compromised if someone got arrested. Members were also terrorized into submission with chilling threats of violence against themselves or their families back in India if they ever tried to exit the syndicate or talk to the

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will make a historic two-day official visit to New Zealand starting July 10.

Diaspora celebrates Modi's landmark New Zealand trip

AUCKLAND

Members of the Indian diaspora in New Zealand are buzzing with immense excitement ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming historic visit. Community members say they have been waiting for this momentous occasion for decades, viewing it as a golden opportunity to heavily boost bilateral relations and unlock new opportunities for both nations. Prime Minister Modi will embark on a landmark two-day official visit to New Zealand from July 10 to 11, following a special invitation from New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon. This highly anticipated trip marks the first time an In-



dian Prime Minister has set foot in New Zealand in forty years. During the high-level visit, both leaders are expected to review the entire spectrum of their bilateral ties, focusing closely on the major progress achieved over the last two years in crucial areas like trade, commerce, and defense. Local Indian residents and international students have expressed tremendous enthusiasm about welcoming Modi. Many highlighted his immense global popularity among both young and old generations. A major talking point within the community is the potential finalization of a Free Trade

Agreement, which many believe will instantly boost the economies of both countries and resolve long-standing trade issues. Students living in New Zealand are also optimistic that the historic diplomatic meeting will yield positive welfare outcomes for them. Others noted that the visit would show India's strong leadership to the wider Pacific region while creating multiple fresh avenues for business and cultural exchange. With a large, vibrant Indian community already well-established in New Zealand, the diaspora believes this visit serves as a massive milestone that will cement deeper friendships between the two democracies. The entire community is united in their joy, eagerly counting down the hours until his arrival.

61 deaths in Bangladesh prison spark alarm

DHAKA

Bangladesh's Awami League has raised major concerns over the tragic deaths of 61 inmates within the country's prisons during the first half of 2026. The political party stated that this alarming trend bears a striking and dangerous resemblance to the high prison death tolls recorded under previous regimes. The figures were made public after the Dhaka-based human rights group, Ain o Salish Kendra, documented the fatalities spanning from January to June this year. According to their investigation, the victims included 24 convicted inmates and 37 under-trial prisoners who had not yet been found guilty of any crime. The capital division of

Dhaka recorded the highest number of casualties, accounting for 36 of the total cases. Condemning the incident, the Awami League emphasized that the state bears full constitutional responsibility for the safety and well-being of every single citizen placed in jail custody. They argued that when individuals lose their lives before their legal trials can even conclude, it heavily undermines the rule of law and damages public faith in the entire justice system. The party further noted that even for convicted prisoners, a jail sentence does not give the government the right to deprive them of life. Serious questions are now being raised regarding whether

these sudden deaths were caused by physical violence, systemic abuse, or severe medical negligence by prison authorities. Critics have strongly accused the current administration of failing to provide transparent, satisfactory explanations for the fatalities. They argue that the ongoing crisis reflects a deep and worrying lack of accountability within the state's correctional facilities. The political opposition is now urging immediate oversight and sweeping institutional reforms to guarantee human rights protection, ensuring that an arrest does not turn into a death sentence for citizens waiting for their day in court.

PAKISTAN LAUNCHES SEARCH FOR MISSING BOEING FREIGHTER

KARACHI

Pakistani rescue teams are scouring the Arabian Sea following the terrifying disappearance of a Boeing cargo plane. The converted freighter, carrying five crew members, completely lost touch with air traffic controllers during its final approach toward the coastal city of Karachi. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed emergency teams to drastically accelerate their sea-based search and rescue operations. While authorities have not made an official declaration regarding the status of the crew, Prime Minister Sharif has already extended his heartfelt condolences to their anxious fami-

lies. K2 Airways, the private carrier operating the flight, confirmed that the missing team includes two pilots, two flight engineers, and one operational support staffer. The initial flight records paint a chaotic picture of the aircraft's final moments. According to tracking data provided by Flightradar24, the 27-year-old aircraft suddenly reported a severe navigation system problem. Local air traffic controllers immediately tried to guide the pilots, but radar systems quickly showed the plane executing highly unusual and sharp altitude swings. It plunged thousands of feet before abruptly climbing, only to enter a final, catastrophic dive from 36,550 feet.

26 killed in Sri Lanka's Negombo jail riot

COLOMBO

Devastated families across Sri Lanka are mourning the loss of 26 people killed during a horrific two-day prison riot. The violent out-

break, which erupted in the coastal town of Negombo, has been declared the nation's worst correctional facility crisis in years, claiming the lives of seven prison officials and 19 inmates.

Grieving relatives gathered in tears at Welikada Prison as the bodies of the slain officers, draped in the national flag, were brought to Colombo. Among the victims was 41-year-old

Sergeant S.D.S Abeywardana, a former Navy veteran. He belonged to an elite anti-corruption unit deployed to restore order when clashes escalated. Officers were brutally attacked with

bricks and clubs by rioting inmates attempting a mass jailbreak. The bodies of the 19 deceased prisoners have also been released to their families following postmortems.

THE BHUTANESE REFUGEE FRAUD

Ex-Ministers convicted in fake Bhutanese refugee scam

KATHMANDU

A lower court in Nepal has convicted the country's former Deputy Prime Minister, Top Bahadur Rayamajhi, and former Home Minister, Bal Krishna Khand. Alongside them, 14 other individuals were found guilty in a massive fake Bhutanese refugee scam that shook the nation's political establishment three years ago. The Kathmandu District Court ruled that the group actively conspired to smuggle ordinary Nepali citizens into the United States by falsely passing them off as displaced Bhutanese refugees. Although the official international resettlement program for



genuine Bhutanese refugees completely concluded back in 2016, the criminal network successfully deceived hundreds of hopeful citizens. They collected enormous sums of money from their victims by promising them access to non-existent refugee quotas for a

new life in America. Kathmandu District Court Judge Tej Bahadur Khadka found the defendants guilty of multiple serious offenses, including forgery, fraud, organized crime, and crimes against the state. The long list of convicted individuals fea-

tures senior political figures, middlemen, and high-ranking bureaucrats, such as former Home Secretary Tek Narayan Pandey. The court's detailed order labeled the scheme as a major offense against the state. The judge noted that the high-profile individuals responsible had severely undermined the dignity of Nepali citizens while deeply damaging Nepal's international reputation. The court emphasized that the operation was clearly an organized crime because it required a highly coordinated, multi-layered network of politicians, government employees, and middlemen to execute the fraud.

World Cup quarter-finals set for blockbuster clashes

NEW YORK

The race for the 2026 FIFA World Cup has narrowed to eight contenders, setting the stage for a series of blockbuster quarter-final clashes across the United States as football's elite battle for a place in the last four.

Reigning champions Argentina, tournament favourites France, European champions Spain and England headline a star-studded quarter-final lineup, while Morocco, Belgium, Norway and Switzerland seek to upset the established order and

keep their title dreams alive.

France enter their clash against Morocco in Boston as one of the tournament's standout teams. Didier Deschamps' side have combined defensive solidity with attacking flair, powered by stars Kylian Mbappe, Ousmane Dembele, Michael Olise and Bradley Barcola. Morocco, however, arrive unbeaten after eliminating the Netherlands on penalties and thrashing co-hosts Canada 3-0. The Atlas Lions will also be motivated by memories of their semi-final defeat to France at the 2022 World Cup.

Spain, meanwhile, continue to impress with remarkable defensive discipline. The European champions became the first team to register six consecutive clean sheets at a World Cup after edging Portugal in the previous round. While teenage sensation Lamine Yamal has shown flashes of brilliance, striker Mikel Oyarzabal has emerged as Spain's leading scorer. Belgium, inspired by veterans Kevin De Bruyne and Romelu Lukaku, will hope to extend what could be the final World Cup campaign for the nation's celebrated Golden Generation.

England face arguably their

toughest challenge yet against Erling Haaland's Norway in Miami. Harry Kane and Jude Bellingham have spearheaded England's attack, but Haaland has been in sensational form, scoring seven goals and finding the net in each of Norway's last 14 competitive matches.

Defending champions Argentina take on Switzerland after surviving dramatic encounters against Cape Verde and Egypt. Lionel Messi once again inspired remarkable comebacks, underlining his enduring influence as Argentina pursue a fourth world title. Switzerland, quarter-finalists for the first time since 1954, have built their campaign on defensive organisation and resilience.

With global stars, historic rivalries and contrasting styles on display, the quarter-finals promise four compelling contests that could shape the legacy of the 2026 World Cup. Every match now carries enormous significance as the road to football's ultimate prize enters its decisive phase.



EU lawmakers seek FIFA probe over Infantino role

BRUSSELS

Dozens of European lawmakers have called for an investigation into FIFA president Gianni Infantino over the controversial decision to allow United States striker Folarin Balogun to play despite receiving a red card earlier in the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The lawmakers are seeking support within the European Parliament and have urged national football associations across the European Union to press FIFA's Ethics Committee to examine whether political influence played a role in overturning Balogun's suspension.

Balogun was sent off during the United States' World Cup victory over Bosnia and Herzegovina on July 1. Under normal tournament regulations, the dismissal would have ruled him out of the next match. However, FIFA lifted the suspension ahead of Monday's clash after US President Donald Trump reportedly intervened with Infantino on behalf of the striker.

FIFA has maintained that the decision was taken independently by its disciplinary committee and not by the FIFA president.

European Parliament members Barry Andrews, Lara Wolters and Niels Fuglsang criticised the move in a joint statement, describing the decision to alter the application of red-card suspension rules during the tournament as "a disgrace and a perversion of justice."

The lawmakers alleged that

European legislators question FIFA's impartiality after controversial decision involving United States striker Balogun

the incident raised serious concerns about FIFA's independence and adherence to its principles of political neutrality. They are asking the FIFA Ethics Committee to investigate whether pressure from the Trump administration influenced the disciplinary process and to examine what they described as other potential breaches of political neutrality, including FIFA's decision to award Trump the FIFA Peace Prize.

According to the lawmakers, at least 35 members of the European Parliament have already signed the letter supporting the demand for an inquiry.

"The beauty of sport is that it is based on impartial and transparent rules. When political pressure determines who gets to play, that sense of fairness disappears," the legislators said.

The controversy has reignited debate over governance and transparency within world football's governing body at a time when the World Cup has entered its decisive knockout stages. While FIFA continues to insist that its judicial bodies operate independently, the lawmakers argue that only a formal ethics investigation can restore confidence in the organisation's decision-making process and ensure that sporting regulations are applied fairly and consistently, regardless of external political influence.

Captain leads remarkable late revival as defending champions overturn two-goal deficit against determined Egypt

Messi Magic Keeps Argentina Alive

ATLANTA

Lionel Messi once again proved why he remains football's greatest difference-maker, inspiring Argentina to a sensational late comeback as the defending champions recovered from two goals down to defeat Egypt 3-2 and book their place in the FIFA World Cup quarter-finals.

For nearly 75 minutes, Argentina looked destined for an early exit. Their usually reliable captain endured an unusually subdued afternoon, misplacing passes and even seeing a penalty saved—his second spot-kick failure of the tournament. Egypt, meanwhile, executed their counter-attacking plan to perfection and fully deserved their two-goal advantage.

Led by the experienced Mohamed Salah, with support from Mostafa Ziko and the lively Haissem Hassan, the Pharaohs repeatedly exposed Argentina's defence. They might even have extended their lead further had a marginal VAR decision not ruled out another goal.

As the second hydration break approached, the momentum was firmly with Egypt. With Cristiano Ronaldo al-

ready eliminated from the tournament a day earlier, the prospect of Messi joining his long-time rival on the sidelines appeared increasingly likely.

Instead, the 39-year-old orchestrated one of the most dramatic turnarounds of the World Cup.

The comeback began in the 77th minute when Messi floated a pinpoint cross into the penalty area for Cristian Romero to head home, breathing fresh life into Argentina's campaign. The goal transformed both the team and the atmosphere inside the stadium.

With Argentina throwing numbers forward, Messi continued to dictate proceedings. After setting up Lautaro Martinez with another dangerous delivery, the veteran forward seized his own opportunity moments later. Gonzalo Montiel's pass found Messi inside the box, and the captain calmly fired home his eighth goal of the tournament to level the scores. The victory preserved Argentina's bid for a fourth World Cup title and highlighted the enduring influence of Messi, whose leadership once again inspired his teammates when defeat seemed inevitable.



SWITZERLAND REACH FIRST WORLD CUP QUARTERS SINCE 1954

Ruben Vargas seals dramatic shootout victory as resilient Swiss script historic WC milestone

VANCOUVER

Switzerland reached the FIFA World Cup quarter-finals for the first time in 72 years after Ruben Vargas converted the winning penalty in a tense 4-3 shootout victory over Colombia following a goalless draw in their Round of 16 clash.

The hard-fought triumph at BC Place sent the Swiss into the last eight for the first time since they hosted the tournament in 1954. They will now face defending champions Argentina in Kansas City on Saturday after Lionel Messi's side completed a dramatic comeback victory over Egypt earlier in the day.

In a closely contested encounter, Switzerland relied on their disciplined defensive structure to frustrate an attack-minded Colombian side backed by a partisan crowd of 52,497, most of whom were dressed in yellow.

Neither team managed to break the deadlock through regulation or extra time despite creating several chances. Colombia came closest during extra time when Jhon Lucumi's powerful header struck the crossbar, while Switzerland also threatened through Fabian Reider and Dan Ndoye but failed to find the breakthrough.

The match was ultimately decided from the penalty spot, where Switzerland held their nerve. Colombia's hopes faded after defender Davinson Sanchez struck the crossbar and goalkeeper Gregor Kobel brilliantly denied Cucho Hernandez. Vargas, who had entered late after recovering from a minor fitness concern, calmly slotted home the decisive penalty to spark jubilant celebrations.

Kobel, one of Switzerland's standout performers, praised his teammates for overcoming adversity after injuries ruled out key players, including promising midfielder Johan Manzambi.

"They had the crowd behind them, so it was a tough game. We stayed mentally strong, and that's what made the difference," the goalkeeper said.

Switzerland coach Murat Yakin described the achievement as a proud moment for his country and welcomed the opportunity to face Argentina in the quarter-finals.

For Colombia, the defeat ended an impressive World Cup campaign that marked their return to the tournament after missing the 2022 edition. Midfielder John Arias admitted the loss was heartbreaking, saying the team had dreamed of going much further after receiving overwhelming support from fans.

Switzerland's resilience, defensive discipline and composure under pressure have carried them into the last eight, where they now face the formidable challenge of stopping Lionel Messi and the reigning world champions in one of the tournament's most anticipated quarter-final clashes.

GOTTERUP EMERGES AS GOLF'S NEW GLOBAL CONTENDER

NORTH BERWICK

Chris Gotterup's journey from an overlooked college golfer to one of the world's top-ranked players is a story of perseverance, adaptability and steady self-belief, with the American now emerging as one of golf's brightest young stars ahead of this week's Scottish Open.

Just a year ago, Gotterup arrived in Scotland ranked No. 158 in the world with only one PGA Tour victory to his name. Today, he returns as world No. 7 and one of the game's most consistent performers, having collected four PGA Tour titles over the past 12 months.

His breakthrough began with an emotional Scottish Open triumph last year, where he outplayed home favourite Rory McIlroy in front of a partisan crowd.

Since then, victories at the Sony Open, WM Phoenix Open and John Deere Classic have established the 26-year-old as one of the most dangerous players on tour.

Remarkably, Gotterup became the first golfer in at least 50 years to win three tournaments in a single season with final rounds of 64 or better, including a spectacular closing 62 at the John Deere Classic.

Despite his rapid ascent, the New Jersey native insists little has changed in his approach.

"I've just kept my head down and continued working hard with my coaches, family and girlfriend. We try to keep things simple," Gotterup said.

His path to success was far from conventional. Preferring to compete close to



home during his junior years, Gotterup initially attended Rutgers University before transferring to Oklahoma, seeking stronger competition and more varied playing conditions after the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted college golf.

The move proved transformative. He swept the prestigious Ben Hogan, Haskins and Jack Nicklaus Awards as the nation's top collegiate golfer before turning professional.

His recent victories have demonstrated remarkable

versatility, coming on vastly different courses—from the windswept Scottish coastline and breezy layouts in Hawaii to the desert conditions of Arizona and the tree-lined fairways of Illinois.

Now preparing for another Scottish Open featuring world No. 1 Scottie Scheffler, Rory McIlroy, Jon Rahm and Patrick Reed, Gotterup enters with heightened expectations.

Last year's victory also earned him his maiden Open Championship appearance, where he finished an impressive third at Royal Portrush.

Having proven his ability to succeed in diverse conditions around the world, Gotterup believes his best golf still lies ahead.

"I know what I'm capable of," he said. "Once you get a taste of success, you want more."

Egypt coach alleges FIFA bias after Argentina exit



ATLANTA

Egypt head coach Hossam Hassan has launched a scathing attack on FIFA and the match officials following his side's dramatic 3-2 defeat to Argentina in the FIFA World Cup Round of 16, alleging that the defending champions benefited from biased refereeing during their remarkable late comeback.

Egypt appeared on course for one of the biggest upsets of the tournament after taking a 2-0 lead through Yasser Ibrahim's first-half header and Mostafa Ziko's well-crafted strike in the 67th minute. The North Africans had earlier seen another Ziko goal ruled out following a VAR review for a foul in the build-up.

However, Argentina staged an extraordinary turnaround in the closing stages. Cristian Romero sparked the comeback in the 79th minute before Lionel Messi equalised five minutes later. Deep into stoppage time, Enzo Fernandez completed the revival with the winning goal to send the reigning champions into the quarter-finals.

The decisive goal sparked furious protests from the Egyptian bench, with players

and coaching staff claiming Mohamed Salah had been fouled in the build-up. They argued the incident should have received the same scrutiny as the earlier disallowed Egyptian goal.

An emotional Hassan claimed Argentina had "received support at every level" and suggested external influences had shaped the outcome. "We looked better than the reigning champions, but the result was influenced by external factors off the pitch," Hassan told reporters.

The Egypt coach went further by alleging that FIFA wanted Lionel Messi and Argentina to remain in the competition, accusing football's governing body of denying his team a fair contest.

Hassan also criticised the referee's decisions throughout the match, revealing he had received a yellow card after confronting the official and making an anti-racism gesture during the heated exchanges.

"I told the referee that what was happening wasn't fair. It was an undeserved victory for Argentina," he said, adding that the controversial defeat had left him so disillusioned he no longer wished to watch the World Cup.

QUICK READ

India's credit card market triples over past decade

New Delhi

India's credit card market has expanded more than threefold over the past decade, with younger consumers and residents of semi-urban and rural areas driving growth, according to a TransUnion CIBIL report. Credit card penetration stood at 25 percent of credit-active consumers as of March 2026, indicating significant growth potential. Cardholders increased from 1.4 crore in 2016 to 5.2 crore in 2026, while active cards reached 10.7 crore and outstanding balances climbed to Rs 3.1 lakh crore. The report also found many first-time cardholders already held multiple credit products, reflecting a deeper, more diversified, and increasingly formal consumer credit ecosystem across India.

Gold, silver slip amid rising middle east tensions

Mumbai

Gold and silver prices declined on Wednesday as heightened Middle East tensions weighed on commodity markets following fresh US military strikes on Iran. On the MCX, gold futures fell to around Rs 1,45,000 per 10 grams, while silver dropped to about Rs 2,29,400 per kg in early trade. International prices also weakened, with COMEX gold and silver trading lower. Analysts said both metals remain under pressure after falling below key technical levels, with rising open interest indicating fresh short positions. Meanwhile, crude oil prices surged over three percent as concerns over supply disruptions boosted global energy markets.

Govt launches Handloom Hackathon for 'Weaving Innovation'

New Delhi

The government has launched Handloom Hackathon 2026, "Weaving Innovation", to promote technology, design, entrepreneurship and sustainable solutions for India's handloom sector. Organised by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, the initiative will conclude with a grand finale on August 1 at IIT Delhi's Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer. Students, weavers, artisans, startups, researchers and professionals can participate by submitting innovative ideas across design, sustainability, digital technologies, market access and supply chain improvement. The hackathon aims to identify scalable solutions, encourage collaboration and support the modernisation.

BIOFUEL SUPPLY RESILIENCE

Diversified feedstocks boost India's ethanol supply resilience

NEW DELHI

A diversified mix of grain feedstocks is strengthening India's ethanol supply resilience and supporting the country's biofuel expansion programme, the All India Distillers' Association (AIDA) said. The association highlighted that multiple raw materials are helping ensure stability in ethanol production and reduce dependence on any single feedstock. According to AIDA data, grain-based feedstocks have emerged as a major contributor to India's ethanol supplies

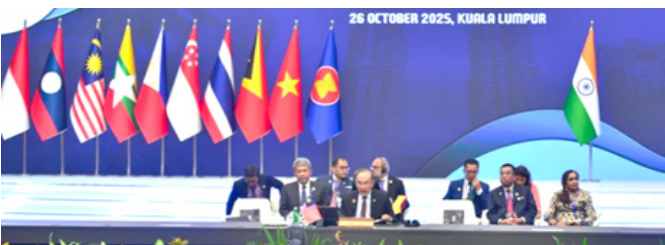


India-ASEAN bilateral trade touches \$128 billion in FY26

India-ASEAN trade reaches \$128 billion, boosting economic partnership through AITIGA review talks

NEW DELHI

Bilateral trade between India and the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) reached \$128 billion during 2025–26, highlighting the growing economic partnership and expanding opportunities for trade and investment cooperation, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said on Wednesday. ASEAN continues to remain one of India's key trading partners, accounting for around 11 percent of India's total global trade, according to an official statement. To further strengthen economic ties, India is hosting the 13th ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement Joint Committee Meeting and re-



lated discussions from July 6 to 10. The meetings are focused on reviewing progress under the AITIGA Review and improving the framework governing trade in goods between India and ASEAN nations. The Joint Committee meeting provided strategic guidance to various sub-committees and called for faster completion of pending chapters under the

AITIGA Review. The committees have been assigned time-bound targets and encouraged to work closely towards achieving meaningful outcomes within agreed timelines. The ministry said three of the eight sub-committees under the AITIGA Joint Committee are currently holding discussions alongside the main meeting. These include the Sub-Committee on Cus-

toms Procedures and Trade Facilitation, the Sub-Committee on National Treatment and Market Access, and the Sub-Committee on Rules of Origin. The ongoing negotiations aim to enhance cooperation, improve market access, strengthen trade facilitation measures, and build greater understanding between India and ASEAN member countries. The 13th AITIGA Joint Committee meeting is being co-chaired by Nitin Kumar Yadav and Mastura Ahmad Mustafa. The discussions are expected to play an important role in shaping the future direction of India-ASEAN trade relations and promoting deeper economic integration.

EPFO completes CITES database migration, enabling faster claims, automated services, and seamless access for millions of provident fund members nationwide.

EPFO completes CITES project to modernise member services

NEW DELHI

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has completed the migration of its entire member records database to a new centralised national database under the Centralised IT Enabled Services (CITES) Project, aimed at modernising service delivery through automation and rule-based processing. The initiative is expected to improve operational efficiency, enhance transparency, and provide faster, citizen-centric services to millions of EPFO members. Under the new system, service requests will no longer remain linked to a specific regional office and can be processed from any authorised location across India. The CITES Project introduces several features, including faster annual interest credit, easier access to account information, quicker claim

settlements, automatic provident fund transfers after job changes, and simplified pension-related services. For the financial year 2025-26, EPFO's annual interest rate of 8.25 percent will be automatically processed for around 34 crore member accounts involving an estimated amount of over Rs 1.44 lakh crore. After verification by field authorities, members will be able to view the interest credit in their passbooks by July 15. Earlier, such credits often took several months after the interest rate announcement. The new unified digital interface will allow members to access their membership details, provident fund balances, claim status, pensionable service records, and benefits through a single platform. Previously, member information was spread across multiple systems. EPFO said automated

pre-validation of claims will identify errors and missing information before processing, reducing rejection rates and improving first-time approval chances. The auto-settlement limit for fully KYC-linked advance claims has also been increased from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh. The centralised payment system will enable faster electronic settlements directly into members' bank accounts on the day of approval. Members changing jobs will also benefit from automatic transfer of Aadhaar-linked Universal Account Number (UAN) accounts without submitting separate transfer applications. Pensioners under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) will now be able to access services from any PF office and submit life certificates more conveniently through the centralised system.

Digital economy drives India's future growth and inclusion: Ahluwalia

NEW DELHI

India's digital economy has emerged as a key pillar of the country's future economic and social advancement, experts said at a conclave on digital payments held in the national capital. They highlighted the need to balance innovation with trust, resilience, consumer protection, and inclusive growth to sustain the momentum of digital transformation.

The Digital Payments conclave was organised by Chintan Research Foundation in partnership with Ikigai Law and Koan Advisory Group. The event brought together policymakers, regulators, industry leaders, legal experts, technologists, and researchers to discuss the future of India's digital payments ecosystem and the policy framework required for its expansion.

In his inaugural address, Sanjeev Ahluwalia said Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and digital payments have played a transformative role in expanding financial inclusion and improving economic efficiency. Deepak Mishra said digitalisation cannot simply be adopted from elsewhere but must be built on strong human capital, institutional trust, and sustained investment. He added that current users of artificial intelligence (AI) could become future in-

India's digital economy emerges as a growth pillar, with experts stressing innovation, trust, cybersecurity, and inclusive digital payments for sustainable economic and social progress

novators if they engage with emerging technologies responsibly. Rajat Kathuria highlighted that India's digital public infrastructure, built on trust, can boost productivity through research, data infrastructure, and high-value digital services. However, he stressed the importance of protecting identity, consent, and accessibility. Experts also discussed the next phase of digital payments. National Payments Corporation of India former COO Balakrishnan Mahadevan said the future of Unified Payments Interface should focus on resilience, redundancy, and AI-based fraud detection. Participants also called for stronger cybersecurity measures, improved consumer awareness, and coordinated efforts to tackle digital fraud. They said these steps will help build a secure, inclusive, and globally competitive digital payments ecosystem aligned with India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

AI creating new roles, say most Indian C-suite leaders

NEW DELHI

As artificial intelligence (AI) transforms workplaces, 84 per cent of Indian C-suite leaders say the technology is creating new roles within their organisations. The report found that the optimism is strongest among Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs), with 94 per cent saying AI is generating new job opportunities, underlining the technology's growing influence across business functions. AI is also becoming central to corporate decision-making, with 84 per cent of Indian C-suite leaders saying insights generated by AI tools now play a significant role in their decision-making processes. However, the rapid pace of AI adoption is creating new challenges. Nearly four in five senior executives said they are under pressure to implement AI faster than they can effectively measure its business impact.

The pressure is particularly high among CMOs, with 82 per cent reporting the challenge, followed closely by Chief Technology Officers (CTOs) at 81 per cent. The report also highlighted that 39 per cent of senior executives consider making quick decisions amid constant uncertainty as one of their biggest leadership challenges. This concern is most pronounced among CMOs (46 per cent) and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), where 43 per cent identified

it as a major issue. Kumaresh Pattabiraman said India's C-suite leaders are entering a more demanding phase, with AI shortening the relevance of traditional business strategies. He noted that leaders must make faster decisions, adapt to constant change, and remain open to new evidence despite the absence of clear roadmaps. The report also found that Millennials now account for 55 per cent of India's C-suite, making them the largest generational group among senior executives. Meanwhile, 51 per cent of respondents admitted they lack clear visibility into the future skills and roles their organisations will require, with the concern highest among CMOs at 58 per cent. Despite these challenges, nearly nine in 10 Indian C-suite leaders identified innovation as the most important outcome expected from AI investments, reflecting strong confidence in the technology's long-term business potential.

- AI creating new roles across organisations
- AI creating new roles across organisations
- Most leaders rely on AI insights
- Executives face pressure accelerating AI adoption
- Innovation tops expected AI investment outcomes
- Millennials dominate India's C-suite leadership

Airbus Airplane Deliveries Jump 15 %

TOULOUSE

Airbus is picking up speed. The European aviation giant announced that it delivered 351 airplanes during the first half of 2026. This represents a solid 15% increase compared to the 306 jets handed over during the same period last year. In June alone, the company successfully delivered 89 aircraft. Industry experts believe these numbers put Airbus in a good position to meet its official goal of 870 total deliveries by the end of the year. There is even growing confidence within the company that it might reach an informal target of 900, though its formal guidance remains unchanged for now.

The progress comes despite ongoing challenges. Earlier this year, the manufacturer faced significant supply chain issues and engine shortages that slowed down production, particularly during the first quarter. These hurdles allowed its American rival, Boeing, to briefly take the lead in delivery numbers earlier in the year. However, with engine availability now improving, Airbus is gaining momentum. Historically, the pace of aircraft deliveries tends to increase during the second half of the year, providing further optimism for the planemaker. In addition to its delivery success, the group reported strong sales activity.

Samson's omission sparks debate over India's selection policy

CHENNAI

Sanju Samson's omission from India's T20I squad for the upcoming Zimbabwe tour has reignited questions over the national selectors' approach, with the wicketkeeper-batter's exclusion coming less than two days after he lost his place in the playing XI during the ongoing series against England.

The 31-year-old, who was replaced by teenage opener Vaibhav Sooryavanshi for the second T20I, has also been left out of the three-match Zimbabwe series beginning July 23. In his place, the selectors have picked fellow wicketkeeper-opener Prabhsimran Singh.

What has added to the confusion is the absence of any official clarification from the

selection committee. The BCCI announcement neither stated that Samson had been rested nor that he had been dropped, leaving room for speculation about his future in India's T20 plans.

The omission comes despite Samson's remarkable contribution to India's triumphant 2026 T20 World Cup campaign, where he was named Player of the Tournament after producing three match-winning knocks, including decisive performances in the semifinal and final. His recent run of scores reads 97 not out, 89, 89, followed by 5, 0 and 1.

While Samson remains part of India's squad for the Asian Games in Japan, where cricket will also be played in the T20 format, experts have questioned the logic behind resting a player who features in only one international format.

Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin also criticised the move, suggest-

ing the decision could create uncertainty within the dressing room. Ashwin argued that frequent changes despite strong performances could affect player confidence and send an unsettling message to the rest of the squad.

Samson's international career has been marked by repeated comebacks after being sidelined.

Since becoming an opener in 2024, he has alternated between starring performances and unexpected exclusions as India reshuffled combinations involving Abhishek Sharma, Shubman Gill and Ishan Kishan.

The selectors appear keen to accelerate India's transition by backing young talents such as Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Prabhsimran Singh. However, Samson's latest omission has once again highlighted concerns over consistency, transparency and long-term planning, leaving more questions than answers about India's T20 selection strategy.

Laxman set to coach India on Zimbabwe tour

NEW DELHI

Former India batter V.V.S. Laxman is set to take charge of the Indian men's team for the upcoming Zimbabwe tour and the Asian Games campaign as the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) prepares to manage a demanding international schedule with split squads.

According to reports, Laxman, who heads the BCCI's Centre of Excellence, will replace regular head coach Gautam Gambhir for the two assignments while Gambhir remains with the senior side for the home white-ball series against the West Indies.

India will tour Zimbabwe later this month for a three-match T20I series in Harare on July 23, 25 and 27. The Asian Games men's cricket competition will then be held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, from September 24 to October 3.

The Asian Games schedule overlaps with the West Indies' tour of India, which features three One-Day Internationals and five T20 Internationals between September 27 and October 17. As a result, the BCCI is expected to field separate squads and coaching



groups for the two simultaneous assignments.

Laxman is no stranger to the role, having previously guided India on multiple occasions when the senior coaching staff was unavailable due to scheduling conflicts or other commitments. His experience with emerging players through the Centre of Excellence also makes him a natural choice to oversee a squad likely to feature several young and fringe

cricketers.

The split schedule could also require different captains for the parallel campaigns. Shreyas Iyer currently leads India's T20I side, while Shubman Gill captains the ODI and Test teams. The selectors are expected to finalise the leadership arrangements closer to the tours.

The Zimbabwe series is likely to provide opportunities for promising youngsters and players on the fringes of the national team to stake their claim ahead of a busy international season. Similarly, the Asian Games will offer another platform for India's next generation to gain valuable international exposure.

With international cricket becoming increasingly crowded, the BCCI has frequently relied on parallel squads and stand-in coaching staff in recent years. Laxman's anticipated appointment reflects the board's continued confidence in his ability to guide India's emerging talent while ensuring continuity in the team's long-term development.

Former India batter expected to oversee split squads amid packed international cricket calendar this year

Kumble blasts India's batting collapse after England thrashing

NEW DELHI

Former India captain Anil Kumble has termed India's 125-run defeat to England in the third T20I at Trent Bridge an "abject surrender", questioning the team's tactics, selection policy and inability to adapt under pressure.

Kumble said a world champion side should not have been bowled out for 76 while chasing 202, praising England pacers Jofra Archer and Josh Tongue for executing their plans perfectly.

He criticised India's batters for adopting an overly aggressive approach instead of showing patience against quality pace bowling. Kumble

also questioned the frequent changes to the playing XI, particularly in the bowling unit, saying captain Shreyas Iyer needs a settled attack.

The former skipper further criticised the decision to promote Harshit Rana ahead of Shivam Dube and expressed surprise over Kuldeep Yadav's exclusion from both the England and Zimbabwe squads.

Former India all-rounder Abhishek Nayar attributed India's struggles to fatigue, unfamiliar conditions and poor confidence, urging the support staff to rebuild belief as England secured an unassailable 2-0 lead in the five-match series.



India capitulate as England seal 125-run win, take 2-0 series lead

NOTTINGHAM

India endured one of their most humiliating batting collapses in T20 Internationals, crashing to a record 125-run defeat against England in the third T20I at Trent Bridge as the hosts surged to an unassailable 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

Chasing a challenging 202, India were bundled out for just 76 in 11.4 overs after England's pace duo of Jofra Archer and Josh Tongue ripped through the top order with hostile spells. Tongue returned outstanding figures of 4/28, while Archer claimed 3/29, leaving India's batting in tatters inside the Powerplay.

The contest was effectively over when India slumped to 52/5 in five overs, with poor shot selection, reckless strokeplay and questionable tactics contributing to the visitors' downfall. It became India's heaviest defeat in

T20Is in terms of runs.

Captain Shreyas Iyer's lean run continued as his side suffered a fifth consecutive winless outing under head coach Gautam Gambhir. The decision to promote Harshit Rana ahead of Shivam Dube during the chase also raised eyebrows.

Teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi briefly entertained with two towering sixes, including one each off Archer and Tongue, before falling for 13 to a sharp bouncer. Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan, Iyer and Axar Patel all perished cheaply as England's fast bowlers exploited the conditions bril-

liantly.

Earlier, opener Phil Salt struck a composed 70 off 44 balls to anchor England to 201/7 despite an impressive opening spell from Arshdeep Singh. Jos Buttler contributed a brisk 36, while Sam Curran provided the late fireworks with an unbeaten 41 off 24 deliveries, helping England collect 89 runs in the final eight overs.

India's pacers Harshit Rana (2/40), Prince Yadav (2/30) and Arshdeep had moments of success, but the spinners struggled to contain England's aggressive middle order, with Axar Patel conceding 49 runs and Varun Chakravarthy going wicketless.

With the opening match washed out by rain, England's emphatic victory gives them an unbeatable 2-0 lead, while India face the daunting task of restoring pride in the remaining two matches.

IOC provisionally lifts Russian Olympic Committee suspension ahead of Los Angeles 2028

LAUSANNE

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has provisionally lifted the suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC), paving the way for Russia's gradual return to the Olympic movement ahead of the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

The decision, announced by the IOC Executive Board, ends a suspension imposed in October 2023 after the ROC recognised regional Olympic councils in the Russian-occupied Ukrainian territories of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. The IOC had ruled that the move violated the Olympic Charter and undermined the territorial integrity of Ukraine's National Olympic Committee.

While the suspension has been lifted, the IOC clarified that no decision has yet been taken on whether Russia will be permitted to compete under its national flag, wear its official colours or have its anthem played at future Olympic Games. "The decision was taken following a thorough analysis by the IOC's Legal Affairs Commission," the governing body said, adding that the ROC no longer includes sports organisations from territories under the jurisdiction of Ukraine's Olympic Committee.

The IOC also stated that the ROC had confirmed it would

neither conduct nor support sporting activities in the disputed territories. However, it emphasised that the situation would continue to be monitored closely and reserved the right to impose fresh measures if necessary.

Russian Sports Minister Mikhail Degtyarev welcomed the development, describing it as a major breakthrough for Russian sport.

"Our country's return to the Olympic family is a green light for international federations to reinstate all our athletes," Degtyarev said.

Russian athletes have com-



peted as neutrals in recent Olympic events, including the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics and the 2026 Milano-Cortina Winter Games, following restrictions imposed after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The IOC's latest move signals a cautious easing of sanctions while maintaining conditions linked to compliance with the Olympic Charter. Individual international sports federations will now determine when and how Russian athletes can return to their competitions.

Djokovic survives marathon to set up Wimbledon semi-final against Sinner

LONDON

Novak Djokovic produced one of the most courageous performances of his illustrious career, battling through injury and exhaustion to defeat Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime in the longest Wimbledon quarter-final on record and book a blockbuster semi-final against defending champion Jannik Sinner.

The seven-time Wimbledon champion prevailed 7-6 (12/10), 3-6, 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (10/4) after an epic five hours and 15 minutes on Centre Court, keeping alive his quest for a record 25th Grand Slam title and an eighth Wimbledon crown. The 39-year-old Serb suffered a left calf injury during the opening set and required lengthy medical treatment. Despite obvious discomfort, Djokovic recovered to edge a gripping first-set tie-break before digging deep to overcome the third-seeded Canadian in sweltering conditions.

"It was with a racquet and a lot of heart," Djokovic said after the match. "These are the moments I still play tennis for."

The victory sends Djokovic into a record-extending 15th Wimbledon semi-final and his 55th Grand Slam last-four appearance. It is also his eighth consecutive Wimbledon semi-final, surpassing Roger Federer's previous record for the longest streak of men's singles semi-final appearances at the All England Club.

Djokovic will now face world No. 1 Jannik Sinner, who advanced comfortably with a straight-sets victory over Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff earlier on Tuesday. While Sinner enjoyed a relatively straightforward passage into the last four, Djokovic endured a physically draining contest that could test his recovery before Friday's showdown. The Serbian great leads Sinner 5-6 in their overall rivalry and has beaten the Italian twice previously at Wimbledon, although Sinner prevailed in last year's semi-final before Djokovic gained revenge at the Australian Open earlier this season.



Afghanistan mourns Shapoor Zadran as former pacer dies at 38

NEW DELHI

Afghanistan cricket was plunged into mourning after former left-arm fast bowler Shapoor Zadran passed away at the age of 38 following a prolonged battle with the rare and life-threatening Hemophagocytic Lymphohistiocytosis (HLH) syndrome, a severe disorder that compromises the body's immune system.

The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) announced the death of the veteran pacer, paying glowing tribute to one of the pioneers who helped lay the foundation for the country's remarkable rise in international cricket.

"With profound grief and deep

sorrow, the Afghanistan Cricket Board mourns the passing of former Afghanistan fast bowler Shapoor Zadran," the board said in a statement, describing him as one of the architects of Afghanistan's cricketing journey.

Standing 6ft 2in tall, Zadran was known for his flowing long hair, aggressive pace bowling and fighting spirit. He represented Afghanistan in 44 One-Day Internationals and 36 T20 Internationals between 2009 and 2020, becoming a key figure during the nation's rapid ascent in world cricket.

The left-arm seamer enjoyed one of the finest moments of his career at the 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup, where he emerged as Afghanistan's leading wicket-taker with 10 wickets. He finished his ODI career with 43 wickets, including best figures of 4/24 against the Netherlands on his debut in August 2009.

In T20 Internationals, Zadran claimed 37 wickets in 36 matches, with career-best figures of 3/40 against Bangladesh in Dehradun in 2018. Across domestic cricket, he also featured in nine First-Class matches, taking 17 wickets, besides claiming 57 wickets in List A cricket and 90 wickets in 83 domestic T20 games.

The ACB hailed Zadran as an inspiration whose courage, determination and passion motivated an entire generation of Afghan cricketers.

Earlier this year, Zadran was shifted to Delhi for specialised treatment, where several Afghanistan teammates, including captain Hashmatullah Shahidi, Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi, visited him in hospital. His passing, just a day before his 39th birthday, marks the end of a memorable chapter in Afghanistan's cricket history.

