

Massive anti-SIR stir rocks Bengaluru's Freedom Park

'Voting rights of legitimate citizens being snatched away; CEC must step down'

BENGALURU

Protesters from various walks of life, including women and students, gathered in large numbers at Freedom Park here on Thursday and the mood dramatically turned electric, with unceasing slogan-shouting, demanding the scrapping of the SIR exercise and Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar's resignation.

Led by actor-activist Prakash Raj, YouTuber Dhruv Rathee and Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke, the protesters also demanded scrapping of the SIR and returning to paper ballots.

According to the organisers, the protest, a people's tribunal for the victims of SIR from across Karnataka, will be followed by a "Chappal protest" in solidarity with women.

"Error 404 - Name Not Found", and "It's done bro, resign sir" and "Don't erase us, hear us," were among the slogans found on posters waved by protesters.

Scrap SIR

Actor-activist Prakash Raj demanded scrapping the SIR exercise, alleging it was not merely about deletion of votes, but an attack on the dignity and rights of citizens.

CEC Gyanesh Kumar is "acting at the behest of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah," he alleged.

Some protesters also raised slogans like "Dictatorship will not be tolerated", "vote theft",

Stir in a nutshell

➤ CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke, YouTuber Dhruv Rathee, and actor-activist Prakash Raj led a protest in Bengaluru on Thursday.

➤ Protesters demanded the immediate resignation of CEC Gyanesh Kumar due to alleged irregularities in the Special Integrated Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

➤ Slogans like "Error 404 - Name Not Found" and "Vote theft" were raised, highlighting concerns over deleted voter names.

➤ A Bengaluru software engineer reported his name was deleted without his knowledge, underscoring the personal impact of the alleged irregularities.

➤ Organisers announced a "Chappal protest" to follow, in solidarity with women affected by the SIR exercise.

"Gyanesh Kumar Gaddi leave your chair." Posters featuring freedom fighters Bhagat Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose also appeared along with other posters like "Grand Theft Democracy."

Dipke alleged that voter deletions under the SIR were aimed at disenfranchising those opposed to the BJP and accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the EC of "undermining" democracy.

Dhruv Rathee alleged that there was "zero transparency and zero accountability from the EC," over the SIR exercise. "I have not come here for regime change," he added.

Tight security arrangements were in place to ensure that no untoward incidents takes place.



INDIA BLOC HOLDS SIT-IN STIR AT RAJ GHAT

New Delhi: The INDIA bloc's protest against the Election Commission continues for a third day in Delhi as Opposition MPs and leaders staged a sit-in protest at Raj Ghat on Thursday evening demanding Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar's resignation. Prior to the sit-in, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, along with other INDIA bloc leaders, paid tribute at Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at Raj Ghat. Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had earlier said the protests would continue until Kumar resigned, asserting that the opposition was fighting to protect the country's electoral system. The opposition protests have witnessed dramatic scenes over the past two days. On Wednesday, MPs were stopped by security personnel during a march, leading to a standoff outside the Shangri-La hotel. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra sat on the road holding a copy of the Constitution, while Rahul resisted attempts by police to detain him. On Tuesday, INDIA bloc MPs had marched from Parliament, following which Gandhi staged an eight-hour sit-in at Akashvani Bhawan. The protest shifted to Jantar Mantar on Wednesday.



42 retired judges back EC, call SIR lawful amid stir

NEW DELHI

A group of 42 retired judges on Thursday defended the Election Commission of India (ECI) against the Opposition's criticism and backed the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls as a lawful exercise.

In an open letter to the "people of India", the former Supreme Court judges and former chief justices and judges of various high courts said they had no brief for any political party but felt compelled to speak as "silence is no longer a neutral choice".

The signatories include former Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi High Court Chief Justice B C Patel, former Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Subhro Kamal Mukherjee and former Supreme Court judges Hemant Gupta and Pankaj Mittal.

The intervention comes amid a sustained campaign by INDIA bloc leaders against CEC Gyanesh Kumar over the SIR exercise. The Opposition has accused the poll panel of manipulating electoral rolls to benefit the BJP and demanded Kumar's resignation. The BJP and the ECI have rejected the allegations.

The former judges said constitutional institutions were facing a "sustained attack", with the ECI at the centre of the campaign. They said the higher judiciary and statutory agencies had also come under attack.

The criticism has gone beyond democratic scrutiny and appeared to be a "calculated campaign" driven by political interests.
Retired judges



GST officers lose arrest powers

The Council raises the prosecution threshold from ₹1 cr to ₹5 cr, meaning cases involving amounts below ₹5 cr will not lead to prosecution.

NEW DELHI

The GST Council on Thursday approved the removal of GST tax officers' powers to arrest individuals under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) law and raised the prosecution threshold fivefold from Rs 1 crore to Rs 5 crore, while leaving tax rates unchanged at its 57th meeting.

The Council also approved reducing the general penalty from Rs 25,000 to Rs 10,000, accelerating tax refunds, simplifying registration for small e-commerce sellers and easing compliance requirements for businesses.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the reforms announced on Thursday would

be implemented from April 1, 2027, the beginning of the next financial year.

The Council also decided that GST rate-related matters would be considered once a year at a meeting dedicated exclusively to tax rates.

It removed the provision for minimum punishment, leaving decisions on fines, imprisonment or both to judicial discretion. Taxpayers who file returns late, make mistakes or delay payments will face tax recovery, interest and proportionate penalties, without additional punitive action for such defaults.

The Council reduced the time limit for acknowledging refund claims from 15 days to 10 days. Claims will be deemed acknowledged if no acknowledgement or deficiency memo is issued within that period.

Under the new system, 90% of eligible refund claims will be sanctioned automatically following risk assessment, with orders issued within three working days instead of seven.

57TH GST COUNCIL MEET OUTCOME

- **Arrest powers:** GST officers' powers to arrest have been revoked.
- **Prosecution threshold:** The threshold for launching prosecution has been raised to Rs 5 crore from Rs 1 crore.
- **Punishment:** The minimum punishment for offences has been removed, with courts to decide whether to impose a fine, imprisonment or both.
- **General penalty:** The general penalty, applicable where no specific penalty is prescribed, has been reduced to Rs 10,000 from Rs 25,000.
- **GST notices:** Common standards will be followed for GST notices and proceedings, with no notices issued for amounts of Rs 10,000 or below; pending notices below the threshold will also be withdrawn.
- **E-commerce sellers:** Small sellers operating through e-commerce platforms will get easier compliance norms.
- **Employee insurance:** Employers will be allowed input tax credit on GST paid for employee insurance cover.
- **Refund claims:** The time limit for acknowledging refund claims has been reduced to 10 days from 15 days.
- **GST rates:** The existing GST rate structure has been retained, with rate changes to be considered once a year.
- **Input tax credit:** A Committee of Officers will examine how to protect genuine buyers who have valid invoices, received the goods and paid their suppliers in full. The committee will submit its study within three months.
- **GST registration:** The Council will consider further automation of GST registration and amendments. Registrations suspended over procedural lapses could be restored automatically once the lapse is corrected, while cancellation of registration after business closure is proposed to be simplified.

DKS claims sting op to trap him

The CM says he was alerted to an alleged plot involving private agents targeting him and colleagues.

NEW DELHI

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Thursday alleged that private agents were deployed as part of a conspiracy to conduct a sting operation against him and his ministerial colleagues.

He said he possessed photographic evidence and details of the alleged conspiracy but would disclose them at an appropriate time. He stopped short of naming anyone, though his remarks were seen as being directed at Union Steel Minister HD Kumaraswamy.

"I have photographic proof and all details about the conspiracy against me by a leader who deployed private agents," he told reporters in New Delhi, where he was attending the GST Council meeting.

He said an attempt was made shortly after he became the CM but failed. After learning about the alleged operation, he said, he alerted ministers and bureaucrats and advised them to remain cau-



Sting Operation claim

• **Claim:** Private agents allegedly deployed against Shivakumar

• **Evidence:** Photographs and other details claimed to be available

• **Attempt:** Allegedly made soon after he became CM

• **Action:** Police alerted; ministers and officials warned

• **Disclosure:** CM says details will be revealed later

tious. "As a responsible person, I will never lie. I have all the details and will reveal them one day. I have already alerted the police."

CM's warning to colleagues Shivakumar said he alerted his ministerial colleagues and bureaucrats after learning about the alleged sting operation. He advised them not to fall into any trap created by private agents. The Chief Minister claimed the alleged operation was attempted soon

Order SIT probe into sting op: HDK

New Delhi: Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H D Kumaraswamy on Thursday dared Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar to order an SIT probe into the latter's claims of an attempted sting operation against him. Speaking to media, the JD(S) leader questioned why the Chief Minister had not revealed the identities of those allegedly involved despite claiming police awareness and possession of photographs and other evidence. "If a sting operation was actually attempted, let there be an investigation. Who were the people involved? Why not place those details before the public?" he asked.

after he assumed office but failed. He said he had informed the police and would reveal the evidence and details of those behind the alleged conspiracy at an appropriate time.

16 Indian seafarers killed in Persian Gulf, Black Sea conflicts: Govt

NEW DELHI: As many as 16 Indian seafarers have been killed in conflicts in the Persian Gulf and Black Sea regions since February 28, the government said on Thursday.

Shipping Secretary Vijay Kumar said 11 Indian seafarers had died in conflicts in West Asia and the Persian Gulf region, while a senior Shipping Ministry official said five others were killed in the

Black Sea.

Kumar said the government had safely repatriated 4,232 Indian seafarers from the Strait of Hormuz area since the conflict began.

Since February 28, 74 vessels of Indian interest have transited through the Strait of Hormuz, including 25 Indian-flagged ships, the official said. The remaining vessels were foreign-flagged.

NANA PATEKAR 1951-2026

Nana: B-Town's 'Krantiveer' no more

Patekar left behind unforgettable performances and iconic dialogues that continue to entertain and inspire audiences.

PUNE

Veteran actor and filmmaker Nana Patekar, who died after suffering a cardiac arrest at his home in Goa on Thursday, was cremated with full state honours later in the day at his farmhouse on the outskirts of Pune.

As per sources, Patekar (75), who was at home with his nephew Prasad Patekar, had been complaining of a headache since last night. The actor was later found unconscious, following which he was rushed to the hospital.

According to the information shared by Manipal Hospital, the doctors tried to revive him for almost 45 minutes after he was brought in, but there was no response. The actor was declared dead at 5:20 am.

Rich legacy

Born as Vishwanath Patekar in Murud-Janjira of Raigad district in Maharashtra, he was known for his intensity and distinct

style of dialogue delivery. He graduated from small roles to become one of the most versatile leading men of his era.

The actor often credited his father for encouraging his talent as a performer.

A recipient of three National Film Awards, he was known for his work in films such as Natsamrat, Wajood, Parinda, Ab Tak Chhappan and Yeshwant, among others.

He made his Bollywood debut in the 1978 film 'Gaman'. During the early 2000s, Patekar received praise for his performances in Shakti: The Power (2002), Ab Tak Chhappan (2004), Apaharan (2005), and Taxi No 9211 (2006). He also received widespread praise for playing the gangster 'Uday Shetty' in the comedy Welcome (2007) and its sequel Welcome Back (2015). The actor also played a supporting role in the comedy thriller 'Housefull 5'.

The 1994 film Krantiveer gave Nana Patekar one of the most memorable roles of his career. He played Pratap Narayan Tilak, an orphan who takes a strong stand against injustice. His powerful performance helped the film become a major success.

He was also a part of the

political thriller Raajneeti (2010) - which earned him his fifth nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Supporting Actor.

In 2016, he won the Filmfare Award for Best Actor for his performance in Marathi film 'Natsamrat'.

Patekar was also a recipient of the Padma Shri - which was awarded to him in 2013 for his contribution to cinema and the arts.

He was also known for playback singing in the films Yeshwant (1997), Wajood (1998), and Aanch (2003).

Nana Patekar was last seen publicly four days ago in Goa's Dona Paula, where he attended and addressed the Samraat Club International installation ceremony.

'Few actors possessed

Awards & recognition

National Film Awards: Best Supporting Actor for Parinda (1989) and Agni Sakshi (1996); Best Actor for Krantiveer (1994).

Filmfare awards: Best Supporting Actor for Parinda (1989); Best Villain for Angaar (1992) and Apaharan (2005); Best Actor for Krantiveer (1994).

Civilian honors: Recipient of the Padma Shri in 2013.

his intensity': PM mourns Nana's death Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences over Nana Patekar's death, saying his passing "leaves a deep void".

"Few actors possessed the intensity, individuality and unmistakable presence that Shri Nana Patekar Ji had. He brought remarkable versatility and creativity to every role and gave us characters that will be remembered for generations. He was also admired for his frank and forth-

right views, never hesitating to express what he believed in," he said on X.



Quick Read



ACF gets three years for disproportionate assets
CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The 79th City Civil and Sessions Court has sentenced Assistant Conservator of Forests M.S. Ravikumar to three years' simple imprisonment for possessing disproportionate assets. The court also imposed a fine of ₹1.38 crore on Ravikumar, who was serving in the Planning Branch at Aranya Bhavan, Malleswaram. The disproportionate assets were valued at ₹1,35,29,714.37, according to the Lokayukta investigation. The Bengaluru Lokayukta police had registered the case in June 2014 under the Prevention of Corruption Act. Following investigation, a charge-sheet was filed before the Lokayukta Special Court. Judge C.M. Pushpalatha pronounced the verdict. In case of default in payment of the fine, Ravikumar will have to undergo an additional one year of simple imprisonment.

BMRL, BMTC add bus stops near two Metro stations
CH NEWS, BENGALURU

BMRL and BMTC have introduced new bus stops near Cubbon Park and Tavarekere Metro stations to improve first- and last-mile connectivity. The facilities came into effect following a joint inspection. At Cubbon Park Metro Station on the Purple Line, new stops have been provided near Entrances B and C. One will serve buses towards Shantinagar via Anil Kumble Circle, while the other will cater to buses towards Lok Bhavan. At Tavarekere Metro Station on the upcoming Pink Line, a new stop will serve buses between Dairy Circle and Bannerghatta, and Jayadeva Hospital and Dairy Circle.



High-end car crashes into Attibele petrol bunk, catches fire
CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A high-end car crashed into a petrol bunk at Attibele in southern Bengaluru late on Wednesday night, triggering a fire and injuring a petrol bunk employee. The car, driven by a man identified as Sanjay, reportedly ploughed into the petrol bunk and first hit an employee, Guddu Kumar, before crashing into the fuel dispensing area. The vehicle caught fire soon after the collision, prompting Fire and Emergency Services personnel to rush to the spot. Firefighters brought the blaze under control before it could spread further within the petrol bunk premises. Sanjay and a woman who was travelling with him managed to escape from the burning vehicle. Kumar suffered injuries to his leg and was shifted to a private hospital for treatment. Police said his condition was stable. Attibele police detained Sanjay for questioning following the incident. Police suspect that he may have been driving under the influence of alcohol. Further investigation is under way to establish the exact circumstances leading to the crash.

Priyank Kharge alleges BJP declaring living voters dead

Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge alleged fraudulent Form 7 applications were being used to target genuine voters.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge on Thursday accused BJP leaders of filing fraudulent Form 7 applications to delete names of living voters.

Kharge alleged that complaints were being filed against sitting BJP MLAs for submitting false Form 7 applications, including claims that living people were dead. He questioned Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over the issue.

“People who are alive are being proclaimed dead by the BJP,” Kharge told reporters, alleging that the issue was part of attempts to remove legitimate voters from electoral rolls.

His remarks came amid a growing political dispute over alleged misuse of Form 7 during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Karnataka.

The Home Minister also said complaints had been lodged against BJP legislators over allegedly false applications. He questioned the Election Commission’s handling of the controversy and sought



Priyank Kharge
Home Minister

accountability from its top officials.

Earlier, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar alleged that more than one lakh voters had been targeted through Form 7 applications. He claimed that computerised forms containing voter details were prepared and distributed to local BJP workers. These allegations have not been independently established and are part of the ongoing political dispute.

The controversy has already led to police cases over alleged fraudulent Form 7 applications. In Bengaluru, an FIR was registered over an alleged attempt to delete 5,698 voters in the Jayanagar constituency. The Karnataka Chief Elec-

Form 7 row

■ Issue: Alleged misuse of Form 7

■ Allegation: Living voters shown as dead

■ Accused: BJP leaders, as alleged by Kharge

■ Jayanagar case: 5,698 voters

■ Action: Police cases registered

■ Authority: Electoral Registration Officers

toral Officer has said Electoral Registration Officers would examine complaints regarding bulk Form 7 applications and take action in accordance with the law.

SC upholds approver status for accused Pradosh in Renukaswamy murder case

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The apex court on Thursday upheld the orders of the Karnataka High Court and the trial court granting approver status to Pradosh, accused No. 14 in the Renukaswamy murder case involving Kannada actor Darshan.

The petition challenging the decision was filed by Darshan’s wife, Vijayalakshmi. During the hearing, the defence argued that prescribed procedures and Supreme Court guidelines had not been properly followed while granting Pradosh approver status.

The Supreme Court, however, found no grounds to interfere and dismissed the petition. The Bench also ob-

served that Pradosh could be questioned during cross-examination before the trial court.

The development comes a day after the Bengaluru trial court completed recording Pradosh’s statement as an approver. His statement will now form part of the evidence in the ongoing proceedings, subject to scrutiny during cross-examination.

The apex court also took note of developments in the trial, including the mother of deceased Renukaswamy turning hostile. The Bench observed that, in the circumstances, the presence of an approver could be necessary in the case.

Pradosh was initially charged as an accused in the



The Supreme Court has dismissed a challenge to Pradosh S. Rao's approver status, allowing his evidence to remain part of the trial.

case before being granted approver status by the trial court. The decision was subsequently challenged before the Karnataka High Court and later the Supreme Court. With the latest order, the

KPSC scam: ED alleges candidates paid huge sums for leaked answers

80	10	₹40-50	₹80 lakh
questions and answers allegedly shared	candidates taken to a villa	lakh allegedly charged per candidate	in signed blank cheques recovered

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), probing alleged irregularities in the recruitment of veterinary officers, has claimed that dismissed former KPSC chairman Shivashankarappa Sahukar and member B.V. Geetha collected advance payments from candidates a day before the examination.

According to the ED, examination controller IAS officer Gnanendra Kumar Gangwar allegedly shared 80 questions along with their correct answers with Shivashankarappa and Geetha on January 7, a day before the examination. The agency said the information was subsequently passed to candidates.

The ED alleged that Geetha negotiated a ₹40 lakh deal with a candidate and received ₹20 lakh as advance. Shivashankarappa allegedly negotiated another deal for ₹20 lakh and collected ₹10 lakh in advance.

The agency further claimed that six candidates who secured high marks in the final recruitment list had made payments. It said the possibil-



The ED has alleged that KPSC officials shared answers with candidates before an exam and collected huge sums in return.

ity of candidates securing appointments through illegal means was being investigated.

The ED also alleged that 10 candidates were taken to a villa on the outskirts of Bengaluru a day before the main examination. They were allegedly provided the correct answers to 80 questions and trained to memorise them.

Candidates were allegedly charged between ₹40 lakh and ₹50 lakh each.

The ED said an earlier search had resulted in the recovery of signed blank cheques worth ₹80 lakh and promissory notes.

The possibility of candidates being appointed through illegal means is being investigated.”

— ED statement

The agency also alleged that confidential 1:3 eligibility-list information was misused. KPSC members allegedly contacted candidates after publication of the list and promised to ensure final selection in return for payments ranging from ₹10 lakh to ₹50 lakh.

K’taka HC asks courts to use ‘parenting time’ in custody cases

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has directed family courts to replace the term “visitation” with “parenting time” in child custody proceedings, saying no parent should be treated as a visitor in a child’s life.

Justice Lalitha Kanneganti issued the direction while hearing a child custody case and observed that the language used by courts can influence how children understand their relationship with both parents.

The court noted that “visitation” is commonly used to describe the time spent by a child with the non-custodial parent. However, the term carries an unintended suggestion that one parent is part of the child’s life while the other merely visits. “A child should not be made to understand the relationship through the word visitation, which is used for someone who arrives and leaves as a guest,” the court observed.

The judge said children often understand their place in a family by observing the conduct of adults and, at times, the language used by courts. Describing such access as



No parent should be treated as a visitor in a child’s life

“parenting time”, she said, recognises that both parents have a continuing relationship with the child.

The court clarified that changing the terminology would not determine custody rights or alter decisions on which parent should have custody. However, where access to a child is granted or restricted, the expression “parenting time” would be more humane and appropriate.

The High Court directed the Registrar General to issue a circular to all family courts and courts dealing with Guardians and Wards Act cases regarding the change.

It also directed that applications relating to child custody should use “parenting time” instead of “visitation”.

Whitefield-Kolar rail project stalled over land acquisition

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The proposed 53-km Whitefield-Kolar rail corridor remains stalled as Karnataka is yet to acquire any land required for the project. The project requires 337 hectares, but not a single hectare has been acquired so far. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw informed Parliament. The delay has kept the proposed direct rail link between Bengaluru and Kolar in limbo even before construction begins.

Currently, rail passengers travelling between Bengaluru and Kolar have to take longer routes via Devanahalli and Srinivasapur or Bangarpet. The proposed line is expected to provide a more direct connection between the two regions.

25 projects sanctioned Vaishnaw said Karnataka has 25 sanctioned railway projects — 15 new lines and 10 doubling projects — covering 2,935 km at an estimated cost of ₹49,272 crore. Of these, 746 km had been commissioned by March 2026, with ₹13,398 crore spent.

Overall, Karnataka’s railway projects require 10,123 hectares, of which 6,134 hect-

Land awaited	
581 ha	BELAGAVI-DHARWAD
488 ha	SHIMOGA-HARIHAR
337 ha	WHITEFIELD-KOLAR
276 ha	SHIMOGA-RANEBENNUR
206 ha	HASSAN-BELUR

ares, or 61%, have been acquired. The remaining 3,989 hectares are yet to be acquired and handed over.

Four others await land Four other projects are also awaiting land acquisition. These include Shimoga-Ranebennur, requiring 276 hectares; Belagavi-Dharwad, 581 hectares; Shimoga-Harihar, 488 hectares; and Hassan-Belur, 206 hectares.

The Centre has allocated a record ₹7,748 crore for railway projects in Karnataka for 2026-27, compared with an average annual allocation of ₹835 crore during 2009-14.

Vaishnaw said timely execution depends on land acquisition, statutory clearances, utility shifting and other local requirements.

Brigade Group marks 40 years, plans ₹40,000 crore investment

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Brigade Group plans to invest around ₹40,000 crore over the next three years, targeting 40 million sq ft of development.

The real estate developer, which completed 40 years of operations, said its development pipeline will span residential, commercial, retail, hospitality and emerging businesses including warehousing across its markets.

Over four decades, Brigade has developed more than 110 million sq ft through 300-plus projects across 10 cities. Its operating leasing portfolio has grown to around 10 million sq ft, with further developments underway.

“Our next phase will be about taking that experience into new markets and new opportunities while remaining grounded in the values that have shaped Brigade,” said M R Jaishankar, Executive Chairman, Brigade Group.

The proposed investments will be funded through internal accruals, project-level financing, strategic partnerships and other avenues, the company said.

The World Trade Centre

platform will remain a key part of its commercial strategy. Brigade has secured licences for three new WTC projects in Devanahalli and Whitefield in Bengaluru, and Coimbatore. Its Orion retail brand will also expand to Chennai and Hyderabad. The company said its planned developments and new businesses could generate around 23,000 direct and indirect gross employment opportunities over three years.

Brigade said it is deploying artificial intelligence, Building Information Modelling, IoT systems, data analytics and construction technology across its operations. It has set a target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2045.

Brigade Foundation will undertake the comprehensive development of Pipeline Road in Yeshwanthpur under the Karnataka government’s “Namma Bengaluru, Namma Koduge” scheme, in association with BBMP.

The Group said its next phase would focus on expanding its established businesses while entering new markets and developing new business verticals.



Quick Read

Online gaming pressure linked to student's death

CH NEWS, CHANNAGIRI

An eighth-grade student, Manoj T.R. (13), died by suicide in Pandomatti, Channagiri taluk, allegedly after pressure from four minor boys over money for the online game 'Free Fire'. According to his parents' complaint, the boys allegedly threatened and harassed Manoj, demanding money to play the game. The family said he had taken around ₹4 lakh from home in installments. A case has been registered against four minors at Channagiri police station. Police said the exact reason behind the boy's death has not yet been established. Villagers urged parents to monitor children's online gaming activities and friendships closely.

3 BJP councillors disqualified over whip violation

CH NEWS, BALLARI

Three BJP councillors of Hagaribommanahalli Municipality have been disqualified by the Vijayanagara Deputy Commissioner's court for allegedly violating the party whip during the municipal president election. The disqualified councillors are Iranna, Malleshwari and Channamma. During the April 30 election, Congress councillor K. Reshma Sikandar won with 13 votes, defeating BJP councillor Banakara Suresh, who secured nine votes. The BJP alleged that the three councillors cross-voted and deliberately remained absent despite party directives. BJP District President Sanjeeva Reddy filed a complaint on May 15. The court exercised its powers under Rule 3 of the Karnataka Local Authorities (Prohibition of Defection) Act, 1987, and ordered their disqualification.

Electrical short circuit destroys 30 acres sugarcane

CH NEWS, CHIKKODI

Around 30 acres of standing sugarcane crops were destroyed in a fire at Kadapura village outskirts in Chikkodi taluk on Thursday. The fire reportedly started after sparks from an electrical short circuit ignited a sugarcane field and quickly spread to nearby fields. Crops belonging to Narayana Kore, Suresh Kore, Netaji Jadhav, Siddappa Karigara and Rama Dhang were damaged. Sugarcane worth lakhs of rupees was reportedly destroyed in the blaze. Farmers have urged officials to provide adequate compensation for their losses.

Koppal to hold preparatory meeting for Valmiki Jayanti

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Sri Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti will be celebrated at the Koppal district headquarters on October 26 as per government directions. Preparations for the annual celebration will be discussed at a special meeting scheduled to be held on October 13. The preparatory meeting will begin at 11 am at the Deputy Commissioner's office hall. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Suresh B. Itnal will preside over the meeting and review the arrangements planned for the Jayanti celebrations.

State BJP chief targets Shivakumar over sting row

B.Y. Vijayendra comments follow growing political tension over leaked sting operations aimed at government ministers.

CH NEWS, BAGALKOTE

Karnataka BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra has hit back at Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar over his warning to ministers about possible sting operations, saying people across the state know who was behind the sting operation in the Ramesh Jarkiholi case. Vijayendra questioned whether Shivakumar would conduct “sting” or “ding” operations against his own party MLAs and alleged that the people would soon see who was using such tactics to protect political positions. Responding to Shivakumar's claim that Congress would return to power in 2028 and that he would become Chief Minister, Vijayendra said he had no objection to CM Shivakumar. However, he advised him to focus on governance instead

The government owes KSRTC ₹6,500 crore and alleged that the corporation is struggling to purchase diesel and pay employees and cleaners properly.

B.Y. Vijayendra BJP president

of sting operations. Vijayendra also referred to statements and differences involving senior Congress leaders, including H.K. Patil, Rayareddy and B.R. Patil, and claimed these indicated internal disagreements within the ruling party. His remarks came amid a wider political dispute over alleged sting operations targeting ministers. The controversy intensified after Shivakumar reportedly cautioned Cabinet colleagues to remain alert against possi-



Vijayendra slams Congress over internal rift

BY Vijayendra cited disputes among senior Karnataka Congress leaders and sting operation claims to allege internal rifts. He also slammed the government over KSRTC's finances and criticized Rahul Gandhi regarding the SIR protest, calling out Opposition tactics.

ble sting operations.

Vijayendra also attacked the State government over the

financial condition of the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation.

Sugarcane farmers unite across state borders for fair price

CH NEWS, CHIKKODI

Sugarcane farmers from Karnataka and Maharashtra have set aside their long-standing border differences and joined hands to demand a fair price for their produce. The growing agitation has put pressure on both the Central and State governments ahead of a crucial meeting scheduled for October 12.

The Centre has called a meeting with farmer representatives on October 12 at 3 pm to discuss the pricing of sugarcane. Union Ministers Pralhad Joshi and Shivraj Singh Chouhan are expected to participate. Karnataka Cooperation Minister Laxman Savadi and Sugar Minister Rudrappa Lamani will represent the State government, according to Savadi.

Farmer leaders, including



Rising protests have pressured both Central and State governments ahead of their key October 12 meeting.

Raitha Sene State President Chunappa Pujari, Shashikant Guruji and Maharashtra activist Raju Shetty, have warned of intensified protests if their demands are not addressed. They described the recent farmers' gathering in Hubballi as only a preview of the larger agitation.

Karnataka and Maharashtra are among India's leading sugarcane-producing states. The Centre's Fair and Re-

Summary

Major Producers: Maharashtra and Karnataka lead sugarcane output.

Higher Returns: Farmers demand additional ₹1,000 above FRP.

Profit Sharing: Growers seek better revenue from ethanol.

Crucial Meeting: October 12 talks determine future protests.

State Comparison: Returns benchmarked against Tamil Nadu prices.

Wider Escalation: Unresolved demands threaten two-state farmer agitation.

munerative Price (FRP) for the 2025-26 season is ₹3,550 per tonne, while farmers are seeking an additional ₹1,000 through the State Advised Price mechanism.

Drought forces Karnataka farmers to sell their livestock

CH NEWS, HUBBALLI

Severe drought conditions across Karnataka have left farmers struggling with crop failures, fodder shortages and inadequate water, forcing many to sell livestock they have raised for years.

The failure of the southwest monsoon has affected agricultural activity across several districts, while prospects for the upcoming rabi crop remain uncertain. With little or no harvest, farmers are also losing the fodder normally obtained from crop residues.

The crisis is particularly visible at the Noolvi cattle market in Kundagol taluk of Dharwad district, where farmers from surrounding areas



are bringing their cattle for sale. Farmers from Kundagol, Navalgund and Annigeri are reportedly among those affected.

Farmers say they are now retaining only one or two animals and selling the rest.

“If we do not have food or

water, we can travel elsewhere to find it. But arranging fodder for livestock has become extremely difficult,” said farmer Hemanagouda.

Farmers have urged the government to establish fodder banks and cattle shelters in drought-affected areas.

PROTESTERS DEMANDING RESIGNATION

Congress protests SIR process in Dharwad

CH NEWS, DHARWAD

Congress leaders and workers staged a protest at the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha Circle in Dharwad on Thursday, alleging irregularities in the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process.

The protesters alleged that the SIR exercise could affect the voting rights of citizens and demanded the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. They raised slogans against the Election Commission and the Central government during the demonstration.

The Congress workers also condemned the deten-

tion of party leader Rahul Gandhi during protests against the SIR exercise in New Delhi. Opposition parties have been demanding action over alleged irregularities in the electoral-roll revision and have called for Gyanesh Kumar's resignation.

Carrying placards and raising slogans such as “Gyanesh Kumar Hatao, Desh Bachao,” the protesters demanded a detailed inquiry into the alleged irregularities in the SIR process.

Congress leaders said electoral-roll revision should be carried out transparently and that eligible voters should not lose their

names from the rolls because of procedural issues.

The party had called for protests across the country on October 8 over its concerns regarding the electoral-roll revision and its demand for the removal of the Chief Election Commissioner.

At a glance

ELECTION PROTEST

Protesters demand Chief Commissioner's removal.

NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN

Demonstrations staged across districts October 8.

SIR INQUIRY

Congress demands full revision process probe.

KEY LEADERS

Dharwad district officials led local rally.

Farmers seek urgent irrigation meeting

CH NEWS, BALLARI

Tungabhadra Farmers' Association State President Darur Purushotham Gowda has urged the government to convene an emergency irrigation meeting in Ballari to ensure adequate water supply to crops under the HLC and LLC canals.

Speaking at a press conference at the Press Club on Thursday, Gowda said the Tungabhadra Reservoir Irrigation Consultative Committee had decided on August 11 that Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana would collectively utilise 9,000 cusecs of water daily from the river and canals.

He alleged that despite a decision not to supply water to industries because of the shortage, large quantities of water were being drawn for industrial purposes.

He urged officials to scientifically manage the estimated 64.5 TMC of water remaining in the reservoir to meet agricultural and drinking-water requirements.

He called for officials to conduct field inspections in the HLC and LLC command

That industries were drawing large quantities of water despite a ban intended to manage shortages.

“Farmers had planted crops based on the decisions taken at the consultative committee meeting and that the standing crops were now at a critical stage.”

DARUR PURUSHOTHAM GOWDA Tungabhadra Farmers' Association State President

areas and assess the condition of standing crops. Officials should also provide farmers with clear information on water requirements and the duration for which supplies can be maintained, he said.

He urged the government to prioritise standing crops in the Tungabhadra command area and take an immediate decision on water releases. Gowda warned that farmers would plan further agitation if their concerns were not addressed.

Uttara Kannada ZP, TP seat reservation announced

CH NEWS, KARWAR

The announcement of category-wise reservations for Zilla Panchayat (ZP) and Taluk Panchayat (TP) member seats in Uttara Kannada district has triggered political calculations ahead of the local body elections.

A total of 53 seats have been allocated for the Uttara Kannada Zilla Panchayat. As many as 27 seats have been reserved for women.

At the Taluk Panchayat level, 118 seats have been allotted across 12 taluks. The reservation includes 13 seats for SC, 12 for ST, 25 for Backward Class-A, three for Backward Class-B and 65 for the general category. Women have been allotted 65



seats.

The reservation announcement is expected to accelerate candidate selection by political parties. Leaders and aspirants will now assess constituencies based on reservation status, local influence, organisational strength and social equations.

With 27 of 53 ZP seats and 65 of 118 TP seats reserved for women, parties will have to identify suitable women candidates in several constituencies.

Some aspirants may have to shift their focus to other constituencies, while new

Seats by category		
	ZP	TP
Scheduled Castes	4	13
Scheduled Tribes	1	12
Backward Class-A	14	25
Backward Class-B	4	3
General	30	65
Total	53	118
Reserved for women	27	65

candidates could enter the race where reservation has created opportunities.

With the coastal, Malenad and Ghat regions having different local political dynamics, parties are expected to begin constituency-level discussions and candidate scouting soon.

Pothole-ridden road troubles Kundgol motorists

CH NEWS, KUNDGOL

The poor condition of the road connecting Yeliwala village to Kempagiri Cross in Kundgol taluk has become a major concern for motorists and local residents. The road is filled with potholes, making travel difficult and unsafe, particularly during the rainy season.

Several stretches of the road are covered with large potholes. During rainfall, water accumulates in the potholes, making it difficult for motorists to identify them and judge the actual condition of the road. Two-wheelers and other vehicles are forced to move slowly and carefully to avoid accidents.

Residents said the condition becomes worse whenever it rains. They complained that motorists have to navigate one pothole after another while travelling between the villages.

Despite the deteriorating condition of the road, authorities have reportedly not taken steps to fill the potholes or carry out necessary repairs. This has caused frustration among residents, who said they may be forced to repair the damaged portions themselves if the authorities fail to act.

Local people have urged Public Works Department (PWD) officials to conduct an immediate inspection of the affected stretches and take necessary measures to repair the road.

They have also demanded that the potholes be filled before the condition worsens and that proper road signs or nameplates be installed between the villages.

Quick Read

Dalit group seeks death penalty in Ashwini case

CH NEWS, RAICHUR

Karnataka Rajya Dalit Sangharsha Samiti taluk convener Kiran Kattemalavadi demanded the death penalty for those accused of raping and murdering 22-year-old Ashwini Chalavadi of Hokrani village in Sirwar taluk. After submitting a memorandum to Taluk Tahsildar Manjunath, Kattemalavadi told the media that Ashwini was allegedly raped and murdered after she went out for open defecation, and her body was later dumped in a well. He urged the government to take strict action against the accused. He also demanded protection for Dalit women and said the administration must respond to atrocities against the community. The organisation announced a 'Chalo Bengaluru' cycle rally from October 16 to 25, from Hokrani to Freedom Park, Bengaluru. It also extended support to a protest planned on October 27 at Freedom Park.

Kaveri Arathi dates revised at KRS Brindavan Gardens

CH NEWS, MANDYA

The dates for the 'Kaveri Arathi' event, organised as part of Srirangapatna Dasara at KRS Brindavan Gardens, have been changed due to unavoidable reasons, Minister for Major and Medium Irrigation and Mandya District In-charge Minister N. Cheluvarayaswamy said. The event, earlier scheduled from October 11 to 16, will now be held from October 16 to 21 at the KRS Brindavan premises. The Minister said there would be no change in the schedule of religious rituals and cultural programmes at the venue. He urged the public, tourists and devotees to note the revised dates and participate in large numbers to make the event successful.

Walk-in interview scheduled in Koppal on Oct 12

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

The District Employment Exchange will conduct a walk-in interview on October 12 from 10 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. at its office on the first floor of the District Administration Building in Koppal. Candidates who have completed PUC or any degree can attend the interview. Unemployed men and women aged 18 to 30 years are eligible to participate and seek employment assistance. Candidates should bring three copies of attested educational qualification certificates, a copy of their Aadhaar card, a bio-data or resume and two passport-sized photographs. The Employment Officer advised interested candidates to contact the District Employment Exchange office for further information.

Akka Cafe opens new doors for rural women

CH NEWS, UTTARA KANNADA

The 'Akka Cafe' scheme, implemented under the Sanjeevini NRLM programme, is helping rural women build self-reliant lives and create sustainable livelihoods through self-help groups. The initiative provides women with opportunities to develop skills in food preparation, sales, customer management and bookkeeping. It also encourages them to run their own enterprises and become job creators. The scheme has received a good response in Uttara Kannada district. Akka Cafes are already operating in Karwar and Murudeshwar. The Shri Siddhi Vinayaka Women's Self-Help Group of Kadwada started an Akka Cafe at the

Karwar Tahsildar's office premises in July 2025. It has generated business of around ₹26 lakh so far. Similarly, the Sri Maha Murudeshwar Self-Help Group started an Akka Cafe in Murudeshwar in October 2025 and has recorded business of around ₹18 lakh. The groups have also participated in SARAS Melas held in different states, expanding their market reach by displaying their products and food items. Plans are underway to establish Akka Cafes in all taluks of the district. Cafes in Honnavar, Kumta, Yellapur and Sirsi have been completed and are ready for inauguration. Proposals have also been submitted to establish Akka Cafes at Karwar Medical College and Pandit Public Hospital in Sirsi.

mitted along with requests to remove their names from the electoral rolls. The issue came to light after eight Vijayapura voters, including women, came forward and said they were alive despite documents showing them as deceased. They displayed copies of the documents and demanded action against those responsible. Earlier, Yatnal had submitted a list of 1,054 voters for deletion. Officials later verified the death certificates connected with eight voters and found that the documents belonged to people with matching names but different personal details and addresses. The matter has led to questions about the electoral-roll revision process and



the source of voter information used in the documents. Representatives of Jagrutha Karnataka have also demanded criminal action and questioned how voter details and colour photographs were obtained. The controversy has emerged during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Karnataka, with complaints

At a glance

- **Accused Entity:** Vijayapura MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal and local booth agents
- **Key Allegation:** Generating bogus death certificates to manipulate electoral rolls during revision
- **Protests & Activism:** Press meets by Mata Kavalu Samiti and Jagrutha Karnataka in Bengaluru
- **Wider Action:** Cockroach Janta Party organizing a People Tribunal and a New Delhi protest

over alleged attempts to remove eligible voters. Police have now registered the FIR, and further legal action will depend on the investigation into the allegations and documents submitted.

Mandya selects 224 students for youth parliament training

CH NEWS, MANDYA

The Department of School Education has taken steps to organise the district-level Youth Parliament programme by selecting 32 students from each of the seven taluks in Mandya district, Deputy Director (Administration) Basavaraju said. He said a total of 224 students would be selected and instructed officials to submit the list of students by October 10. Training and practical sessions will be organised to help students understand parliamentary functioning, procedural rules, debates, question-and-answer sessions and the moving of resolutions. A rehearsal and demonstration of a Youth Parliament session will be held on October 23 at the Zilla Panchayat Hall. The session will help students understand parlia-

mentary proceedings and the roles of the Speaker, ruling party and opposition members. Three topics have been selected for the district-level competition. They are drought management and declaration of drought relief, price rise and unemployment. Basavaraju instructed students to study the topics in detail and present their views through parliamentary-style discussions, covering the background, effects and possible solutions. Deputy Director of the District Social Welfare Department Srinivas said the programme aims to develop democratic values, parliamentary conduct, leadership qualities, presentation skills and debating abilities among students. He said students would also be encouraged to express disagreement constructively and



understand the responsibilities of the opposition. He said seven outstanding students would be selected from the district-level programme and sent to the state-level Youth Parliament. Resource persons with expertise in parliamentary procedures, democracy, leadership and communication skills would also be engaged to train the students. The meeting was attended by Gurulingegowda, Nagara-ju, Dr. Satish H., District Advocates' Association Treasurer Chandrakala and PES Law College Physical Education Director Srinivas.

Four sentenced to life imprisonment for murder

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

A court has sentenced four persons, including a woman and her alleged lover, to life imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 2.39 lakh for the murder of her husband in Chincholi taluk in 2022. The convicted persons are Sunita Gotur, wife of deceased Ramappa Gotur, her alleged lover Mallappa Pujari, and their associates Sabanna Pujari and Basappa Gotur. According to the prosecution, Ramappa and Mallappa were friends and Mallappa frequently visited Ramappa's house. He later allegedly developed an extramarital relationship with Sunita. After Ramappa came to know about the relationship, a reconciliation meeting was reportedly held. The prosecution said, Sunita and Mallappa subsequently decided to eliminate Ramappa, allegedly considering him an obstacle to their relationship. On August 5, 2022, when Ramappa was asleep at his house in Kuddalli village,

Sunita allegedly opened the door and allowed Mallappa, Sabanna and Basappa inside. The three then allegedly murdered Ramappa. Ramappa's children woke up during the incident, and Sunita allegedly confined them in another room. When the accused were allegedly attempting to move the body, one of the children escaped and informed Ramappa's elder brother, following which the crime came to light. A case was registered at Sulepet Police Station. After investigation, CPI KG Jagadish filed the chargesheet before the court. The IV Additional District and Sessions Court, Sedam Bench, presided over by Judge A Sirajuddin, convicted the four accused and sentenced them to life imprisonment. The court also directed that Rs 1 lakh each from the fine amount be paid as compensation to Ramappa's two children. Government Prosecutor Nagaraj Maski argued the case on behalf of the prosecution.

DC directs officials to ensure water and fodder

CH NEWS, GADAG

Deputy Commissioner C.N. Sridhar directed officials to ensure there is no shortage of drinking water and fodder for people and livestock in Gadag district. He stressed coordinated action to tackle the drought situation during the Hinguru season. At a District Disaster Management Authority meeting, Sridhar reviewed drinking water and fodder availability in rural and urban areas. He directed officials to prepare taluk-wise lists of villages facing water scarcity

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, AT DODDABALLAPURA
Cri. Misc. No. 658/2026
Smt. Doddanarasamma W/o Late. Munirappa, Aged about 66 years, R/o Siddanayakanahalli Village, Shivapura Post, Kasaba Hobali Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. ...Petitioner.
AND: The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura. ...Respondent

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby informed to the general public, that the above named petitioner by name Smt. Doddanarasamma has filed this petition to obtain the death certificate of her mother in law by name Late Mariyamma W/o Late. Dasappa @ Mundiasappa who was died on 11.08.1968 at Veerapura Village, Kasaba Hobali, Doddaballapura, if anybody who have any objection to the above petition or having any rights, claims are hereby informed to take notice of this petition and hereby directed to appear before this Court in person or through person or by their Advocate on 12-11-2026 at 11:00 a.m. if failed to appear the above petition will be heard and will be placed ex-parte.
Issued as per the order and seal of this Hon'ble Court, on this day of 07th OCT 2026.
By Order of the Court
Chief Ministerial Officer, Addl. Civil Judge and JMFC Doddaballapura
Advocate for petitioner: Raghavendra.N, Advocate, No.20, P.L.D.Bank Complex, Doddaballapura, Bengaluru Rural District

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, AT DODDABALLAPURA
Cri. Misc. No. 658/2026
Smt. Doddanarasamma W/o Late. Munirappa, Aged about 66 years, R/o Siddanayakanahalli Village, Shivapura Post, Kasaba Hobali Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. ...Petitioner.
AND: The Tahasildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura. ...Respondent

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby informed to the general public, that the above named petitioner by name Smt. Doddanarasamma has filed this petition to obtain the death certificate of her father in law by name Late. Dasappa @ Mundiasappa who was died on 04.08.1965 at Veerapura Village, Kasaba Hobali, Doddaballapura, if anybody who have any objection to the above petition or having any rights, claims are hereby informed to take notice of this petition and hereby directed to appear before this Court in person or through person or by their Advocate on 12-11-2026 at 11:00 a.m. if failed to appear the above petition will be heard and will be placed ex-parte.
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Gadag flyover awaits inauguration amid public anger



CH NEWS, GADAG

The railway flyover near Railway Gate No. 32 on Gangapur Pet Road, which remained stalled for nearly 10 years, has finally been completed following continued public efforts. However, its inauguration has been delayed over minor technical works, social activist Krishna H. Hadapada said.

In a press statement, Hadapada criticised the delay and urged the authorities to open the flyover for public traffic immediately. He also released photographs and videos showing the condition of the upper and lower sections of the flyover. He said elders from the area, the Farmers' Association, Hombalanaka Janata Colony Development Service Association, Railway Struggle Committee and other organisations had continuously demanded speedy completion of the project. Several delegations had also approached former MP C.M. Udasi and current MP and former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai regarding the work. Hadapada said the approach road and iron protective gantry were ready, while only works such as side-light installation and road markings remained. He questioned the delay in opening the bridge despite the road being ready for vehicle movement. He further alleged that the unused flyover had become a place for miscreants. He pointed to discarded liquor

Our immediate demands

- 1 The pending minor technical and road marking works should be completed on a war footing without any delay.
- 2 Without succumbing to any kind of political competition, credit war, or publicity frenzy, the railway flyover should be officially inaugurated immediately and opened to public traffic.
- 3 Liquor bottles and piles of garbage stored in the flyover premises should be immediately removed to maintain hygiene and free from the nuisance of miscreants.

tetra packs, empty bottles and plastic waste found on and below the flyover. He said the situation had turned the area into an illegal drinking spot and garbage dump, creating concern among women and schoolchildren. Hadapada held the concerned authorities responsible for the situation and demanded immediate action. He warned that if the administration continued to delay the inauguration, a protest would be organised in Gadag involving the public, school and college students and farmer organisations. Parashuram Annigeri, Sharanappa Sudi, Raghavendra Ramanagatti, Gangadhar Bagoti, Saddamhusen H. Lakshmeswar and representatives of protesting organisations joined the warning.

Document Lost

I, Rathnamma, wife of Srinivasappa, resident of Beggi, Benjenahalli, Kolar Taluk, hereby state that the original property documents relating to my property situated in the Nyathappa Layout, Arikere, Banerghatta, Bengaluru area have been lost. The documents are as follows: 1)05/09/2013, No. 5105/13-14 - Original Sale Deed executed by Sri M. Bairappa in favour of Smt. Bhagyalakshmi Muralidhar and another. 2)30/04/2014, No. 557/14-15 - Confirmation Deed executed by Smt. Vimalamma and others in favour of Smt. Bhagyalakshmi Muralidhar and another. 3) 21/06/2014, No. 2173/14-15 - Sale Deed executed by Smt. Bhagyalakshmi Muralidhar in favour of Smt. Rathnamma Muralidhar and another. The above original documents have been lost. If anyone finds these documents, they are requested to return them to my address. Yours faithfully, Rathnamma Mobile: 9448193183

CHANGE OF NAME

I, V. Jeyambika alias R Jaya Ambika W/o M G Ravichandran R/o # Flat No.108, Charan Apartment, 6th cross, Dena Bank colony, No.24 Ganganagar, Bangalore 560032, Karnataka have changed my name to R Ambika

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Shreekrishna S/o Deepak Athavale R/o Soolabettu House, VTC: Nalkuru, PO: Balanja, Sub District: Belthangady, District: Dakshina Kannada, State: Karnataka - 574217 have changed my name to Shreekrishna Deepak Athavale

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is hereby notified that my client, Mr. MANJUNATHA R., son of Late Ramegowda, has lost the Original Sale Deed dated 22-06-1960, registered as Document No. 1568, Volume No. 1016 of Book I, at the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Doddaballapura, about 26 years ago. In this regard, he has executed a Declaration dated 17-09-2026. If any person(s), including any Bank, Financial Institution, Private Financier, or Statutory Authority, has found or is in possession of the aforesaid original document pertaining to the schedule property mentioned below, such person(s) is/are hereby required to contact the undersigned at No. 13/2, El-Shedai, 1st Floor, 2nd Cross, Behind Assesi Church, Lingarajapuram, Hennuru Road, Bengaluru - 560043, along with documentary evidence, within 07 (Seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, it shall be deemed that the aforesaid original document has not been found by such person(s), and no claim or objection in respect thereof shall be entertained thereafter.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of immovable agricultural dry land bearing Survey No. 29/3, measuring an extent of 02 Acres 01 Gunta, situated at Udhanahalli Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, Karnataka, and bounded on: East by: Land in Survey No. 35, West by: Land in Survey No. 28, North by: Land in Survey No. 29/2 and South by: Land in Survey No. 28.
Sd/-
Ranjitha HN, Advocate
Mob.: +91 77959 21905
Email: ranjithakote1994@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the general public that Sri. Sahadevaiah S/o Late. Kambayya, Residing at: KHB Colony, Jenukal Nilaya, Bidadi Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Ramanagara District, Karnataka, was appointed as GPA holder under Registered GPA No.43/19-20, dated: 31-08-2019, in respect of property bearing Sy.No. 88/11, measuring 2 Acres, situated at: Sheebanahalli Village, Maluru Hobli, Channappana Taluk, Ramanagara District. The said GPA has now been revoked and terminated, and all authority and powers granted thereunder stand withdrawn. Any transaction, document, representation, commitment or liability purportedly undertaken by Sri. Sahadevaiah without the knowledge, consent or authority of the Principals is not admitted or accepted by the Principals, and all rights to challenge such acts are expressly reserved. Sri. Sahadevaiah has no authority hereafter to act, represent, transact, execute any document, or create any right or liability on behalf of the Principals in respect of the said property. The general public and all concerned are hereby cautioned not to deal with or rely upon the said Sri. Sahadevaiah in respect of the said property. Any transaction or document entered into by him shall be at the concerned person's own risk and consequences. Principals: 1) B.T. Shobha, 2) Sri Kishor, 3. Vinutha H., 4. Vismaye K.S., 5. K.B. Geetha.
Contact Address: Sukeerthi D.A., Advocate, # 960/2, 1st Cross, Lakshimpuram Mysuru-570 004, Mob.: 9901321589

IN THE COURT OF THE FAMILY COURT AT NAMAKKAL, (NAMAKKAL DISTRICT, TAMILNADU-637003)

FCOP No 287/ 2025

Venkatesan S/o Late Sundram, Hindu, aged about 40 years, residing at D.No. 253/c-19, Ambu Nagar-3, Rama Puram Pudur. Namakkal TK, Namakkal District -637001 Tamil Nadu ...Petitioner Vs Shwetha D/o Lakshmanan Rajamma, Hindu age about 33 years, residing at D.No. 4, 1st floor Maruthi Nilaya, Vinayagar Nagar, Water Tank Road, Hesaraghatta, Bangalore-560088, Karnataka state ...Respondent

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT

Notice is hereby given to the Respondent Shwetha D/o Lakshmanan Rajamma, residing at D.No. 4, 1st floor Maruthi Nilaya, Vinayagar Nagar, Water Tank Road, Hesaraghatta, Bangalore -560088, Karnataka state that a Divorce Petition FCOP No. 287/25 has been filed against you by the Petitioner under Section 13 (1) (i-a) (i) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, seeking dissolution of marriage before this Hon'ble Court. Could not served with Court summons. Therefore, by order of this Hon'ble Court, the Respondent is hereby called upon to appear in person or through a duly authorised Advocate before this Hon'ble court on 26.11.2026 at 10.30 A.M., failing which the matter will be heard and decided ex parte in accordance with law.

Date: 08-10-2026
Place: Namakkal, Tamil Nadu

S. PARANEETHARAN
Counsel for Petitioner:
B.Sc.,B.L., Advocate, MS.2993/10
2nd Floor, AVB Complex,
Opp. S.P. Office,Near District Court,
Thiruchengodu Road, Namakkal-3. 9344893636

CHCLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad contact: 080-41209042

Quick Read

Youth Parliament session set for Oct 12

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

A taluk-level Youth Parliament session will be held on October 12 at 10:30 a.m. at the Zilla Panchayat Hall in Chitradurga. The programme is being organised jointly by the Chitradurga Taluk Administration, Department of Social Welfare, Department of Education and Department of Legal Services. According to an official announcement, Deputy Commissioner S. Ramya, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Dr. S. Akash, Assistant Commissioner Dr. K.J. Kantharaj, Social Welfare Department Deputy Director Mallikarjun, School Education Department Deputy Director M.R. Manjunath, Tahsildar B.M. Govindaraj and Taluk Panchayat Executive Officer Y. Ravikumar will attend the programme.

Man dies after electric shock while harvesting areca nuts

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

A 38-year-old man died after suffering an electric shock when the pole used to harvest areca nuts accidentally came into contact with an overhead power line at Dharmasthala. The deceased has been identified as Nazir (38), from Ajikuri in Dharmasthala village. The incident occurred on October 4 when Nazir was harvesting areca nuts from a tree near his house using a pole. During the process, the pole accidentally came into contact with an electric wire passing nearby, causing him to suffer a severe electric shock and sustain serious injuries. He was immediately taken to a local hospital and later shifted to a private hospital in Mangaluru for further treatment. However, he died early Thursday morning, after failing to respond to treatment. A case has been registered at the Dharmasthala police station.

Chitradurga Postal Dak Adalat to be held today

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

The Chitradurga Postal Division will hold a Dak Adalat, or Postal Grievance Redressal Forum, on October 9 at 11 a.m. at the Office of the Superintendent of Post Offices. The office is located near the Filter House in Kamanabavi Layout, Kote Road, Chitradurga. K.R. Usha, Superintendent of Post Offices, Chitradurga Division, has informed postal customers and the public to submit complaints or suggestions regarding postal services by 11 a.m. on October 9. Submissions should be made to the Superintendent of Post Offices, Kote Road, near Filter House, Kamanabavi Layout, Chitradurga-577501, for further action.

Sudhakar chooses silence amid Congress rift

Eshwar accused Sudhakar of targeting marginalized communities, favoring relatives, attacking Congress leaders, and vowed to continue his political battle

CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPURA

The political differences between Chikkaballapura MLA Pradeep Eshwar and Chintamani MLA Dr. M.C. Sudhakar have intensified, with Eshwar continuing his criticism of Sudhakar on social media. Eshwar has accused Sudhakar of targeting Dalits, minorities and backward classes and alleged that party positions were being given to relatives. He also criticised Sudhakar for targeting senior Congress leader K.H. Muniyappa and Raju Gowda, the party's candidate from Sidlaghatta. Eshwar has declared that his battle against Sudhakar will continue. Sudhakar, however, has chosen not to engage in a public exchange. Responding briefly, he said his silence should not be considered



weakness. He said the Congress party had recognised his work and appointed him as a minister. He added that Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and the KPCC President were aware of the situation and would take an appropriate decision. Sudhakar also held a meeting with his supporters in Chikkaballapura and advised them not to make public statements against party leaders. He said such statements could

embarrass the party and its leadership. He asked supporters to raise their concerns through party forums instead of making statements in public. He also said the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC President were already aware of the developments and urged everyone not to act in haste. The dispute has become a visible internal issue within Chikkaballapura Congress,

Highlights

- Public social media verbal duel escalates
- Serious allegations of caste bias raised
- Minister Sudhakar adopts calculated silent stance
- High command intervention awaited by leaders
- Supporters advised against public statements
- Senior party leaders monitoring internal crisis

following days of public exchanges between the two leaders. With Eshwar continuing his public criticism and Sudhakar waiting for the party leadership's response, attention is now on how the Congress leadership will address the differences between the two leaders.

ZP CEO urges workers to stay in villages

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Dr. S. Akash urged rural workers not to migrate to other towns for employment due to drought. He encouraged them to work in their own villages under the 'VB-G RAM G' scheme and achieve financial stability. On Thursday, Dr. Akash inspected lake rejuvenation works being carried out under the scheme in B.G. Kere, Konasagara, Tumkuralahalli, Nagasamudra, Chikkerahalli and Hangal Gram Panchayat limits in Molakalmuru taluk. During the inspection, he



verified workers' online attendance through the NMMS mobile app. He also checked job cards and bank passbooks to confirm whether wages were being credited regularly. Interacting with workers, Dr. Akash said an employment guarantee of 125 days per family was being provided in a financial year. A uni-

125	₹382	6
days of work per family a year	uniform daily wage, men and women	gram panchayats inspected

form daily wage of Rs. 382 had been fixed for both men and women without gender discrimination. He urged people to make full use of individual works available under the scheme. He also directed workers who had not completed e-KYC for their job cards to complete the process immediately. Officials were instructed to provide drinking water and

shade at work sites and ensure timely payment of wages. Molakalmuru Taluk Panchayat EO Hanumanthappa, Taluk Assistant Director (MGNREGA) Ganesh, Zilla Panchayat ADPC Mohan Kumar, Taluk Technical Coordinator Dinesh, IEC Coordinator Devaraj, MIS Coordinator Madhusudan, TAEs, BFTs and Kayaka Mitras were present during the inspection.

Workshops planned to improve Kolar SSLC results

CH NEWS, KOLAR

The Department of School Education and Literacy will organise subject-wise workshops for high school teachers across all six taluks after the Dasara holidays to improve SSLC results, Deputy Director Almas Parveen Taj said. Speaking at a meeting of headmasters at the District Scouts Bhavan, she said the half-yearly examination results were reviewed and measures to improve students' academic performance were discussed. She said subject-wise resource persons had been identified and separate workshops would focus on improving learning quality and SSLC results. Headmasters were instructed to closely monitor students who performed poorly in assessments and take greater responsibility for school records, teacher performance and students' progress. Almas Parveen Taj said quality education and better results were important, and no child should be left behind academically. Teachers should use innovative methods to develop students' interest in learning. She also directed schools to conduct special classes every day from 9 am to 10 am. District Education Officer

Quality education and better results were important, and no child should be left behind academically

Veena urged teachers to mentor students and maintain records of their academic progress. Students who failed examinations should be re-enrolled and given special attention. She said the department would provide learning resource books and other materials. Teachers were also advised to hold meetings with parents and mothers and create supportive learning environments at home. They were asked to visit homes of academically weak or frequently absent students, along with SDMC members where necessary. Subject Inspectors Samiulla, Shashivadhana, Ramkrishnapa, Mohan Babu, Shankarappa and L.N. Manjunath stressed teamwork, effective use of learning resources and regular school visits. Headmasters and SSLC officials attended the meeting and shared measures being taken to improve results. The department said collective efforts by teachers and headmasters would be important in helping students perform better in the SSLC examination.

Estate owner arrested over youth's suspicious death

CH NEWS, UDUPI

The Amasebailu police have cracked the suspicious death case of a 26-year-old youth from Hosangadi, revealing that he died of electrocution from an illegal electric fence. The police have arrested the estate owner for covering up the incident. The deceased has been identified as Kaveena Naik, a resident of Tarki Makki in Hosangadi, who operated a tipper truck for a living. The accused is Shekhar Naik, the owner of the estate in Maatinamatha where the incident occurred. Kaveena had been reported missing, following which his brother Praveen Naik filed a complaint at the Amasebailu police station on October 2. On October 5, Kaveena's highly decomposed body was found lying on its back on a private property in Maatinamatha. The circumstances of his death raised immediate suspicions. The spot where the body was discovered was not on Kaveena's regular route home, and his footwear was missing both from his feet and the surrounding area. Based on his brother's complaint suspecting foul play, the Amasebailu police intensified their investigation. The probe revealed that on

Kaveena sustained a massive electric shock and died on the spot

the evening of October 2, Kaveena had taken a route through Shekhar Naik's estate to deliver money to his relatives who were in need. While walking through the property, he accidentally came into contact with a wire fence that had been illegally electrified. Shekhar Naik had bypassed his domestic electricity meter to run a live current through the estate fence to ward off wild animals. Kaveena sustained a massive electric shock and died on the spot. Upon discovering the body on his property, Shekhar Naik allegedly attempted to destroy the evidence. He cut the two electric wires that were pinned under Kaveena's body, wrapped them around nearby poles, and completely concealed the fact that the death was caused by electrocution. Police investigations confirmed the illegal power connection and the subsequent tampering with the crime scene. Based on the findings of severe negligence causing death and the deliberate concealment of facts, the police arrested Shekhar Naik. Further investigation is underway.

Gomal land dispute sparks outrage among Gojanur villagers

MALINGARAYA PUJAR CH NEWS



A dispute over government Gomal land has begun in the historically significant Gojanur village of Lakshmeshwar taluk, raising concern among farmers and livestock owners. Villagers are worried that government land, which has provided green pasture for cattle, goats and sheep for generations, could now be handed over to a private company. The villagers have alleged that Revenue Department officials are working to sell the land to Mysore Mercantile Company Limited. The land has been an important source of pasture for farmers and livestock from several surrounding villages. According to government records, 207 acres and 21 guntas in Survey No. 214/1 and 33 acres and 1 gunta in Survey No. 215 are recorded as Gomal land. Of this land, 9 acres and 27 guntas have been given to the Backward Welfare Department, 5 acres to the Public Education Department and 4 acres for refugee housing in the public interest. Earlier, 4 acres in Survey No. 214/1 and 16 acres and 31 guntas in Survey No. 215 were leased to the Mysore Mercantile Company. Villagers alleged that neither the Gram Panchayat nor the public was consulted before the lease was granted. As the lease period is now ending, villagers have raised concerns after Revenue Department officials reportedly conducted a site inspection to consider permanently selling the same land to the company. A senior farmer from Gojanur said the Gomal land is used not only by villagers but also by farmers and shepherds from several nearby villages. The farmer said that if the land is given to a private company and fenced, people may

The land transfer process should be immediately abandoned. The District Collector should conduct a site inspection and take a decision in favor of the poor farmers and the mute animals"

— Village resident

Land on record
■ Survey No. 214/1: 207 acres 21 guntas
■ Survey No. 215: 33 acres 1 gunta
■ Leased to the company: 4 acres in 214/1 and 16 acres 31 guntas in 215

lose access to pasture for their livestock. Villagers also alleged that rules and regulations concerning the transfer of government land to private parties have not been followed. They said the process lacks transparency and does not protect public interest. All the villagers of Gojanur have submitted a written petition to the Gadag District Collector. They have demanded that the process of handing over the land to the company be stopped immediately, that the existing lease should not be renewed and that the Gomal land should remain available for farmers and livestock. The issue has now become a major topic of discussion across the taluk. Villagers are waiting for the District Collector's decision on the future of the Gomal land, which they say is important for farmers and livestock.

Bengaluru to get five separate police commissionerates

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Divided into 5 EAST, WEST, NORTH, SOUTH AND CENTRAL

The State Government has accepted a proposal to establish five separate police commissionerates in Bengaluru, MLC Dr K. Govindaraj said. Dr Govindaraj, who is also President of FIBA Asia and the Karnataka Olympic Association, thanked Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister Dr G. Parameshwara and Home Minister Priyank Kharge for approving the proposal. He said he had raised the issue in the Legislative Council when Siddaramaiah was Chief Minister. He had suggested separate police commissionerates to improve law and order, crime control, traffic management and public safety in the rapidly growing city.

Dr Govindaraj had also written to the then Home Minister Dr G. Parameshwara, seeking more police commissioners in Bengaluru, similar to the creation of the Greater Bengaluru Authority covering the BBMP area. The State Cabinet approved the creation of five separate police commissionerates at its meeting on Tuesday. Bengaluru will now be divided into five commissionerates: East, West, North, South and Central. Dr Govindaraj said the restructuring would further strengthen law and order and improve policing across Bengaluru.

MCC Commissioner inspects Jayashree Gate, assures action

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Mangaluru City Corporation (MCC) Commissioner Rahul Rathnam Pandey visited the Jayashree Gate area near Bikanarkatte and reviewed various civic issues faced by local residents. During the visit, local resident Stany Bantwal apprised the commissioner

of the lack of an underground drainage system and other issues arising from the National Highway and civic authorities, which residents said have affected development in the area. The locality has several temples, churches, mosques, schools, colleges, shops and malls, resulting in significant movement of people.

SHIVAMOGGA DASARA SPLENDOR

MLA performs puja for Dasara elephants

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

MLA SN Channabasappa on Thursday, welcomed and performed a puja for the elephant squad at the Sakrebailu Elephant Camp as they prepare for the 'Jamboosavari' procession, a highlight of the Malnad region's cultural 'Shivamogga Dasara Festival'. After offering fruits and performing puja for the elephants including those designated to carry the Ambari



bearing the idol of Goddess Sri Chamundeshwari, the MLA remarked, the elephant squad from the Sakrebailu camp is the main attraction and adds great splendor to the

Shivamogga Dasara Jamboosavari. Prayers have been offered to the Almighty for the festival to be conducted with grandeur, discipline, and without any glitches. On this occasion, the MLA held discussions with officials and mahouts regarding the elephants' health check-ups, the supply of nutritious food, and the rehearsals scheduled to take place in the city. He appealed to the entire citizenry to participate enthusiastically

in this cultural extravaganza and ensure its success. City Corporation Commissioner Mayannagowda, Wildlife Division DCF Prasanna-krishna Pategar, BJP District President Jagadish, Vice-Presidents Gnaneshwar and Nagaraj, City President Mohan Reddy, former City Corporation members, officials from the Corporation and Forest Department, and BJP party workers were present on this occasion.

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ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ

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DIPRI/CP/3106/NR/2026-27

DON'T BURDEN THE AAM AADMI WITH RISING PRICES



COLUMN

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM

The Congress government in Karnataka appears to be slowly inviting the wrath of the common people by repeatedly increasing the prices of essential commodities. The latest proposal to increase the price of milk by ₹8 a litre and curd by ₹4 a litre has added to the growing concern among consumers already struggling with rising household expenses. Since 2023, the price of milk in Karnataka has reportedly gone up by about ₹17 a litre, while curd prices have increased by ₹7 to ₹10. The government and the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) have justified such increases in the name of supporting milk producers and strengthening milk producers' unions. But the question consumers are asking is: Why should the burden of supporting producers be repeatedly transferred to the common man?

The previous Siddaramaiah government had promised better



incentives and support to dairy farmers. Instead of adequately providing such support from the state exchequer, the government appears to have chosen the easier route of raising prices paid by consumers. The issue becomes more significant because of the enormous popularity of the Nandini brand. Nandini has built a strong consumer base not only in Karnataka but also in neighbouring states. Its extensive distribution network and public patronage have made it one of Karnataka's strongest consumer brands. But that advantage cannot be taken for granted. Consumers are price-sensitive. If Nandini products become substantially more expensive than competing brands, consumers – especially those from middle-class and lower-income households – may begin looking for alternatives. Once consumer habits change and people shift permanently to other brands, winning them back could prove difficult.

The KMF and the state government should therefore consider the long-term consequences of repeated price increases. A strong consumer base built over decades can be weakened surprisingly quickly when affordability becomes a problem. The latest milk price proposal also comes at a time when the people of Karnataka are already facing pressure from rising prices of food, vegetables, cooking essentials, transport and household services. For an ordinary family, even a seemingly small increase in the price of milk has a cumulative impact because milk is consumed almost every day. The Congress came to power in Karnataka in 2023 promising five guarantees and several other welfare measures. The guarantees have imposed a substantial financial burden on the state government, with annual expenditure running into tens of thousands of crores of rupees. At the same time, questions are being raised about the availability of funds for infrastructure and development projects. The government cannot allow its fiscal pressures to indirectly become the burden of ordinary consumers. The argument that price increases are necessary to benefit milk producers is understandable. Dairy farmers deserve fair remuneration for their produce, and strengthening the cooperative dairy sector is important. But there are other ways of achieving this objective. The government must examine whether a greater share of the support can come from the state budget, efficiency improvements within the dairy sector and better management of procurement and distribution costs. Indian voters have repeatedly demonstrated that rising prices of essential commodities can quickly turn public sentiment against an incumbent government. Onion prices, for instance, have acquired an almost legendary reputation in Indian electoral politics. Sudden increases in the prices of onions, pulses and other household essentials have, on several occasions, contributed to strong anti-incumbency. The 1998 Delhi Assembly election is often cited as a prominent example of how soaring onion prices contributed to public anger against the ruling government. Similarly, the Congress faced significant anti-incumbency in states such as Punjab and Uttarakhand in 2007, amid concerns over rising prices and the cost of living. Political scientists have long discussed the relationship between inflation and electoral behaviour. For low- and middle-income households, food and other essentials constitute a substantial share of monthly expenditure. Therefore, even a modest increase in prices can be perceived not merely as an economic problem but as a failure of governance. Milk occupies a particularly sensitive position because it affects two enormous constituencies simultaneously: urban consumers and rural dairy farmers. Any decision on milk pricing must therefore balance the interests of both. It may be fortunate for the Karnataka government that no state government has suffered an outright electoral defeat solely because of an increase in milk prices. But that should not encourage complacency. Milk is a daily necessity, and repeated increases can become politically costly when they come on top of a broader rise in the cost of living. The aam aadmi can tolerate occasional price increases when there is a compelling reason and when incomes rise correspondingly. But repeated increases in essential commodities can eventually push household budgets beyond their limits. The Karnataka government should therefore pause and reconsider the proposed milk and curd price hikes. Supporting farmers is the government's responsibility. It should not become the consumer's punishment.

Supporting farmers is the government's responsibility. It should not become the consumer's punishment.

“Protecting the purchasing power of ordinary families is not merely an economic responsibility – it is also sound politics.”

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES: A CALL FOR SCIENTIFIC ACCOUNTABILITY



DR. VIJAY GARG

Private universities have become an important part of the higher-education landscape. They have expanded access to professional courses, introduced new academic programmes, invested in laboratories and infrastructure, and created opportunities for research and innovation. In many places, they have also helped students access emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, data science, renewable energy and advanced engineering. With this expansion, however, comes a greater responsibility. A university is not merely a place that awards degrees. It is an institution entrusted with knowledge, scientific inquiry, young minds and, ultimately, the future of society. Therefore, academic freedom must go hand in hand with academic responsibility, and scientific ambition must be accompanied by accountability.

Science Requires Evidence The foundation of science is evidence. Scientific claims must be testable, research methods should be transparent, data should be handled responsibly, and conclusions should remain open to scrutiny. Universities, whether public or private, have a special obligation to protect these principles. Research cannot be reduced to the number of papers published, conferences attended or projects announced. Quality matters as much as quantity. A healthy research environment encourages researchers to ask difficult questions, report results honestly, acknowledge limitations and accept correction when evidence demands it. Scientific accountability therefore begins with a simple principle: the pursuit of knowledge must remain more important than the pursuit of appearances.

Beyond Buildings and Rankings Modern universities often highlight impressive campuses, sophisticated laboratories, international collaborations and attractive academic programmes. These facilities can certainly contribute to educational quality, but infrastructure alone does not create a strong university. The real strength of an institution is reflected in the quality of teaching, research integrity, faculty expertise, student learning, laboratory practices, academic freedom, ethical standards and the contribution its graduates and researchers make to society. A university may have modern buildings and advanced equipment, but if students are not encouraged to question, investigate and think independently, the infrastructure has limited educational value.

Research Integrity Must Be Central Scientific research carries a profound ethical responsibility. Fabrication of data, manip-

ulation of results, plagiarism, inappropriate authorship and other forms of academic misconduct can damage not only an individual researcher but also the credibility of an entire institution. Private universities should therefore maintain strong systems for research ethics, plagiarism screening, data management, conflict-of-interest disclosure and independent investigation of serious allegations. These systems should not exist merely to satisfy regulations. They should become part of the academic culture. Young researchers learn not only from textbooks but also from the behaviour of their teachers and institutions. If honesty is treated as a principle in laboratories and classrooms, students are more likely to carry that value into their professional lives.

Accountability Does Not Mean Suppressing Academic Freedom There is an important distinction between accountability and control. Scientific accountability does not mean telling researchers what conclusions they must reach. On the contrary, genuine science requires intellectual freedom. Researchers should be able to challenge established ideas, investigate unpopular questions and publish results that do not support an expected hypothesis, subject to legitimate ethical and legal requirements. Accountability means that researchers should be able to explain how their work was conducted, what evidence supports their conclusions and what limitations affect their findings. A university should create an environment in which researchers can say, “This is what the evidence shows,” rather than feeling pressured to say, “This is what the institution wants to show.”

Transparent Use of Research Funds Research requires significant financial resources. Laboratories, equipment, field studies, scholarships and research personnel all require investment. When public or private funds are used for scientific work, transparency becomes essential. Universities should maintain clear procedures for research grants, procurement, project expenditure and reporting. Researchers should also be encouraged to disclose relevant conflicts of interest. Financial accountability and scientific accountability are closely connected. Misuse of resources can undermine research, while poor research practices can waste resources that could otherwise support meaningful discoveries.

Quality of Faculty Matters A university's scientific culture is strongly influenced by its faculty. Recruitment and promotion should therefore place genuine emphasis on subject expertise, teaching ability, research quality, ethical conduct and meaningful academic contributions. Publication counts alone cannot provide a complete picture of a scholar's contribution. Faculty members should be en-

couraged to remain intellectually active, update their knowledge and connect classroom teaching with contemporary developments in their disciplines. At the same time, universities should provide reasonable opportunities for faculty development. Accountability should be accompanied by institutional support.

Students Should Be Partners in Scientific Learning Students should not be treated simply as consumers of education. They are participants in the academic process. Laboratory work, research projects, seminars and classroom discussions should encourage curiosity and independent thinking. Students should learn how to distinguish evidence from opinion, reliable information from misinforma-



tion and scientific uncertainty from unsupported claims. Private universities have an opportunity to develop a generation that does not merely remember scientific facts but understands how scientific knowledge is created and tested. This is particularly important in an era when social media and digital platforms can spread scientific misinformation at extraordinary speed.

Artificial Intelligence Brings New Responsibilities The rapid growth of artificial intelligence has added another dimension to academic accountability. AI tools can assist students and researchers with literature searches, data analysis, coding, language editing and many other tasks. But their use raises questions about authorship, originality, accuracy, privacy, intellectual property and academic integrity. Universities need clear and evolving policies for responsible AI use. Students should understand that using a technological tool does not remove the responsibility for the final work. Researchers must also verify AI-generated information rather than assuming that an automated system is always accurate. In science, an attractive answer is not necessarily a correct answer.

Laboratories Must Be Places of Safety and Learning Scientific accountability also extends to laboratory safety. Proper training, equipment maintenance, waste management, chemical handling, biological safety and emergency procedures are essential

components of responsible scientific education. Students should never be encouraged to compromise safety for the sake of completing an experiment quickly. A culture of safety demonstrates respect for human life, scientific discipline and professional responsibility.

Accreditation and External Review Independent evaluation can strengthen institutional accountability. Accreditation and external academic review can help universities identify weaknesses, improve teaching and research practices and maintain appropriate standards. Such processes are most valuable when they encourage genuine improvement rather than becoming exercises in paperwork. Universities should welcome credible ex-

information that is accurate, understandable and appropriately qualified.

Building a Culture of Questioning Perhaps the greatest responsibility of a university is to create a culture in which questions are welcomed. A student who asks “Why?” is not creating a problem. A researcher who challenges an established assumption is not necessarily creating conflict. Scientific progress often begins with a question that others had not considered. Private universities can make a lasting contribution by encouraging students to observe carefully, question respectfully, test ideas and accept evidence even when evidence challenges their existing beliefs.

Accountability as a Strength Accountability should not be viewed as a burden imposed on universities. It can become a source of institutional strength. A university that maintains transparent research practices, ethical standards, qualified faculty, reliable academic processes and responsible governance earns trust among students, parents, researchers, employers and society. Trust is particularly important in higher education because a university's influence extends far beyond the years a student spends on its campus.

The Road Ahead The future of higher education will depend increasingly on the ability of universities to combine innovation with responsibility. Private universities have enormous potential to contribute to India's scientific and educational development. They can establish advanced research centres, promote entrepreneurship, collaborate internationally, support interdisciplinary research and provide students with opportunities that were previously unavailable.

Growth Must Be Accompanied by Standards Scientific accountability does not oppose innovation; it protects it. It does not weaken academic freedom; it gives freedom a responsible foundation. It does not discourage research; it strengthens public confidence in research. A truly

“The ultimate measure of a university is not simply what it possesses, but what it contributes to knowledge, its students and society.”

— Dr. Vijay Garg

successful private university should therefore aim for more than impressive infrastructure, large enrolment or attractive rankings. Its deeper achievement should be the creation of an academic culture where knowledge is pursued honestly, evidence is respected, questions are encouraged, research is conducted ethically and responsibility remains inseparable from scientific freedom.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Regulations Needed for AI The rapid integration of artificial intelligence into everyday life is transforming healthcare, education, and finance at an unprecedented pace. However, this unchecked growth brings serious ethical risks. Deepfakes, algorithmic biases, automated hiring rejections, and mass privacy violations are no longer speculative warnings; they are daily realities. While innovation drives economic progress, relying solely on corporate self-regulation is insufficient to protect public trust. Governments must establish clear, enforceable statutory guardrails. Regulatory frameworks must demand total transparency in AI training models, mandate bias audits, and hold tech firms accountable for algorithmic harm. Without robust legislative oversight, we risk letting unmonitored software compromise citizen privacy, exacerbate social inequalities, and erode foundational trust in modern democratic processes. — Anna B.

Urgent Action on Traffic Daily commutes in our metro cities have devolved into a hazardous ordeal defined by gridlock, reckless driving, and escalating road rage. Recent traffic incidents highlight systemic failures in urban planning and traffic enforcement. Speeding vehicles routinely ignore pedestrian crossings, while inadequate footpaths force pedestrians into dangerous traffic corridors. Local authorities must intervene immediately. Deploying strict, AI-monitored traffic signals and strictly penalizing lane discipline violations will curb habitual offenders. Moreover, municipalities

must prioritize building dedicated pedestrian walkways and segregated cycling lanes. Smooth traffic flow is not just a convenience; it is a critical public safety requirement. City administrations must act before our streets become entirely unnavigable. — Vidhyashree J.

End Single-Use Plastics Despite statutory bans on single-use plastics, our local drainage systems, rivers, and coastal waters remain clogged with non-biodegradable waste. Microplastics have permeated our food chain, posing severe long-term environmental and public health threats. The continued availability of thin plastic packaging demonstrates a failure of regulatory enforcement at the retail level. Municipal agencies must conduct rigorous, unannounced inspections to eliminate illegal plastic distribution at its source. Concurrently, local governments should subsidize biodegradable packaging alternatives for small businesses and establish accessible recycling drop-off centers across every neighborhood. Combating plastic pollution requires unwavering municipal enforcement paired with community-level participation. We must phase out disposable plastics before the environmental damage becomes completely irreversible. — Deeksha N.

Prioritize Youth Mental Health The escalating crisis of youth mental health requires urgent, systemic intervention. High school and university students are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety,

severe burnout, and depression, driven by academic pressure, intense social media comparison, and career uncertainty. Unfortunately, public schools and higher education institutes remain under-equipped to address this growing problem. Educational authorities must move beyond occasional awareness workshops and integrate certified mental health professionals directly into school faculties. Establishing confidential, stigma-free counseling units within every educational institution should be mandatory. Protecting student mental health is as vital as academic achievement; we cannot allow another generation to suffer in silence without institutional support. — Maria Sylvania K.

Upgrade Public Transit Now Rising urban fuel prices and severe ambient air pollution make a compelling case for shifting urban populations away from private vehicles. However, our municipal public transit networks remain overcrowded, unreliable, and underfunded, driving commuters back to private transport. To lower emissions and reduce urban congestion, municipal authorities must aggressively modernize public transit networks. Expanding electric bus fleets, standardizing arrival schedules, and improving last-mile connectivity are critical steps to make public transport a viable alternative. Investing in clean, efficient public transit improves urban mobility, reduces air pollution, and enhances quality of life for all residents. City planners must treat public transport as a core civic priority. — Maria Rincia P.

Quick Read

Bangladesh grapples with deadliest measles outbreak

NEW DELHI
Bangladesh's measles outbreak has worsened with over 32,000 suspected measles cases and over 250 deaths, mostly among children, reported since mid-March, a new report has said, blaming the interim government's decision to halt vaccine procurement through UNICEF in September 2025. The report from Bangladesh-based The Daily Star criticised the government's decision that switched to an open tender process that was later delayed. Despite warnings that the move could disrupt routine immunisation and trigger an outbreak, the government halted the procurement, after relying on UNICEF for a long time to supply measles-rubella vaccines.

Nearly half of MENAAP's poorest population lives in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD
Nearly half of the poor people in the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAAP) region earning less than \$3 a day live in Pakistan, according to a report. A report citing the World Bank said that poverty in Pakistan increased due to prolonged economic adjustment that weakened real household incomes and employment opportunities. "The World Bank had separated Pakistan from the South Asia region and clubbed it with the Middle East and North Africa region," it said.



Ayush sector boosts women employment

NEW DELHI
The Ayush services sector is emerging as an important source of employment for women in India, with female participation exceeding 50 per cent in several organised segments, according to the government. The Ministry of Ayush said women currently account for 43 per cent of the sector's overall workforce. The findings were highlighted in the Ayush Service Sector Report, prepared by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries and released on Ayurveda Day 2026. Female representation is particularly high in organised wellness and health-care establishments. Women account for more than 60 per cent of the workforce in spas and wellness resorts, while their participation stands at 58 per cent in educational institutes, 57 per cent in day-care centres and 53 per cent in hospitals.



Industry leaders highlight India's telecom growth, talent

NEW DELHI
Telecom industry leaders on Thursday highlighted India's growing role in the global digital and telecommunications ecosystem at the 10th edition of the India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2026 here as the four-day event brought together companies, startups and policymakers.

India sets \$1 trillion export target for FY27

Goyal urges CII to set up FTA utilisation desks across its state councils to help MSMEs make better use of India's free trade agreements.

NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said India has set a target of achieving one trillion dollars in exports during the current fiscal year, after recording exports worth \$863 billion last year. Addressing the curtain raiser of the 31st CII Partnership Summit, Goyal said the latest export performance reflected nearly 16 per cent growth in a year when global trade is expected to expand by only 2.5 to 3 per cent. He said the glob-



al economy remains vulnerable to shocks, with worldwide growth expected to fall below 3 per cent.

He said the trillion-dollar export ambition was not merely a government target, but a collective objective involving

\$863bn exports last year	\$1trillion target for this fiscal	16% export growth, nearly	63mn MSMEs in the push	7%+ growth the RBI expects
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India began building bridges when the world was building walls."
— Piyush Goyal, Commerce and Industry Minister

Indian businesses and citizens. The minister cited the contribution of 63 million MSMEs, large and small industries,

global capability centres and about 250,000 startups. Goyal also referred to the Reserve Bank of India's revised growth projections, saying India is expected to continue growing at more than 7 per cent and remain the fastest-growing large economy. He linked the export target to the broader objective of making India a developed nation by 2047. He also highlighted reforms including the Goods and Services Tax and the integration of regional electricity grids into a national grid through sustained innovation. Referring to Digital India, Goyal said the initiative had helped save more than Rs 5 lakh crore, or over \$55 billion, over the past 12 years.

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INDIA PLANS AI REGULATION PAPER SOON

NEW DELHI

The government will bring out a consultation paper on artificial intelligence regulations within a month, Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Thursday, signalling a move towards a formal regulatory framework focused on AI safety and societal risks. Vaishnaw said the proposed paper would focus primarily on safety related to AI use, while also examining deepfakes, AI-related harms, skilling and the need to ensure that no section of society is left behind as the technology develops. The minister described deepfakes as a serious social nuisance, warning that people can believe manipulated content and consequently be pushed towards false narratives or harmful actions. He said the growing sophistication of such content makes safeguards increasingly important. Vaishnaw stressed that the



India is moving towards an AI regulatory framework, with safety, deepfakes, human impact and industry responsibility emerging as key priorities.

Key focus areas

- AI safety
- Deepfake risks
- Human-first governance
- Skilling and inclusion
- Cybersecurity and user safety
- Industry responsibility

human impact of AI must remain at the centre of the regulatory approach. He said AI cannot be governed through legislation alone and called for a combination of technological safeguards and legal measures. The minister also said industry would have to take primary responsibility for addressing risks linked to AI, including cybersecurity, user harm and deepfakes. He said stakeholders would need to be involved in developing the framework. The government's broader AI governance approach already identifies misinformation, deepfakes, algorithmic

India's credit market AUM surges 18% in June

NEW DELHI

India's credit market continued its growth momentum in Q1 FY27 as total assets under management (AUM) reached Rs 142 lakh crore as of June 2026, an increase of 18 per cent year-on-year, a report showed on Thursday. According to a report by Experian, total loan sourcing value stood at Rs 20 lakh crore in Q1 FY27, jumping 18 per cent YoY. However, it moderated from Q4 FY26. Unsecured sourcing volumes grew 26 per cent YoY in Q1 FY27 and emerged as a significant growth driver. Personal loans and consumer loans contributed significantly to this growth, while credit cards showed some resurgence in the quarter. In addition, secured lending continued to account for majority of the retail portfolio value, according to the report. NBFCs continued to strengthen their presence across consumption-led products, particularly personal loans, consumer durable loans and two-wheeler loans, the report said. While banks maintained a strong presence in larger-ticket secured products like home and auto loans, it added. "India's credit market continues to demonstrate resilience with sustained portfolio growth and good asset quality providing a strong foundation



Net 30+ delinquency

JUNE 2025	JUNE 2026
4.1% a year ago	3% asset quality held

for the next phase of expansion. The momentum in unsecured lending reflects the evolving credit needs of consumers, while the continued strength of secured portfolios points to a balanced market," said Manish Jain, Country Managing Director, Experian India. On product trends, personal loans AUM stood at Rs 16.2 lakh crore, up 14 per cent YoY, with new sourcing up 32 per cent to Rs 3 lakh crore. Credit card AUM was at Rs 3.15 lakh crore, down 0.1 per cent YoY, but new sourcing is showing renewed traction.

'India-EU free trade pact is based on strategic necessity'

NEW DELHI

The India-EU trade deal constitutes the first major bilateral trade agreement between two of the world's largest economic entities and is expected to see a sharp rise in trade between the two sides, according to a new report. At the same time, the trade deal only partially liberalises sensitive sectors like agriculture, excludes government procurement, and leaves many non-tariff barriers in place. In some areas like the automobile sector, tariff reductions will be phased in over a period of 10 years. This apparent gap between political ambition and limited liberalisation should not simply be understood as a shortcoming of the trade deal. Rather, the nature of the agreement illustrates a defining feature of the emerging EU-India relationship, the article by researcher Tobias Scholz states. Unlike many of Europe's traditional partnerships, the EU's approach to India is driven by a strategic partnership that both sides increasingly pursue out of necessity. At a time when major interna-

tional disruptions put Europe's and India's economic models under pressure, both actors recognise a growing need to diversify trade relations, reduce geo-economic risks, and cultivate new partnerships, the article observes. It points that the dramatic change in the geopolitical landscape after Donald Trump took over as US President and the Russia-Ukraine war and China's muscle flexing in the Indo-Pacific region have forced the EU to look at India as a new strategic partner. Until recently, Europe re-

lied on its security partnership with the United States, the Chinese export market, and cheap fossil energy imports from Russia. Within a few years, all three dependencies turned into liabilities. An emerging threat perception toward China provided the initial EU-India momentum. The EU's joint communication on China in 2019 prominently labelled Beijing as a partner, competitor, and rival; the subsequent Indo-Pacific Strategy emphasised the importance of the EU's relations with New Delhi, the article states.

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India backs WTO fisheries pact, seeks fairer Phase 2 rules

NEW DELHI

India's decision to ratify Phase 1 of the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies is a pragmatic step to curb illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing while preserving its policy space on issues that directly affect small-scale and artisanal fishers, an official statement said on Thursday. The statement from the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying said India deposited its Instrument of Acceptance on July 20, 2026, and that the ratified phase targets IUU fishing, overfished stocks and unregulated high-seas fishing. It does not cover the more difficult questions of overcapacity and overfishing, including subsidies for fuel, gear, ice, vessel construction and modernisation. Those issues belong to Phase 2, where India continues to seek fair and differentiated treatment for developing countries, the statement said citing views of Dr. M. Krishnan, former Principal Scientist & Head, ICAR – CIFE and Dr. P. Krishnan, Director, BOBP-IGO. India supports measures aimed at the most harmful fishing practices but insists conservation rules must not reduce the development space of coastal communities that depend on marine fisheries for livelihoods.

For India, the challenge is not whether to support conservation, but how to ensure that conservation does not come at the cost of equity, the statement said, calling the country's position principled and practical. India made clear that its ratification of Phase 1 does not weaken its demand for a longer transition period and more flexible treatment in Phase 2. India also insists that subsidy disciplines should be assessed using a per-fisher benchmark, rather than through comparisons that overlook vast differences in scale, capacity and state support.



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FROM CONSUMER TO CREATOR India targets tech self-reliance

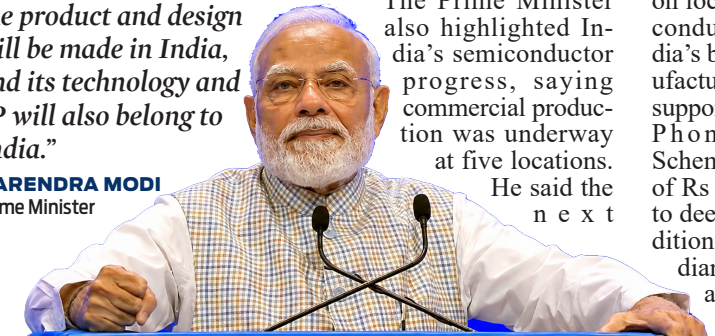
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said India is moving towards a technology ecosystem where products and designs are developed domestically, while the underlying technology and intellectual property are also owned by the country. Addressing the 10th India Mobile Congress at Yashobhoomi in New Delhi, Modi said India had moved beyond

being merely a consumer of technology and was increasingly becoming a creator and innovator. The government said the 2026 edition of IMC is centred on the theme "Scale Without Boundaries." Modi said reforms, domestic manufacturing, technology development and intellectual property creation were driving the transformation of India's telecom sector. He cited the Telecommunications Act and GatiShakti portal as examples

"India is marching towards the goal, where the product and design will be made in India, and its technology and IP will also belong to India."

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister



of efforts to create an enabling environment for the industry. The Prime Minister also highlighted India's semiconductor progress, saying commercial production was underway at five locations. He said the next

phase of the India Semiconductor Mission would focus on localising the entire semiconductor supply chain. India's broader electronics manufacturing push is also being supported through the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme, which has an outlay of Rs 62,500 crore and seeks to deepen domestic value addition while encouraging Indian-owned brands, design and intellectual property.

Modi said the mobile phone had become a vital tool of governance and remained central to the Digital India vision. He noted the rapid expansion of 5G, with the government reporting 5.63 lakh 5G base stations by June 2026 and coverage in 99.9 per cent of districts. He said the telecom sector's next phase would be driven by greater self-reliance, innovation and domestic ownership of technology.

Quick Read

5-year-old girl raped by migrant worker

CHENNAI

A 26-year-old migrant worker from Bihar was arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting a five-year-old girl from Uttar Pradesh in Thiruvottiyur, north Chennai, police said. The accused, identified as Rahul, lived nearby and has been booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. The incident came to light after the girl was taken to hospital with difficulty urinating. Police also detained some migrant workers for allegedly helping Rahul attempt to escape. A senior police officer denied reports that the girl had been gang-raped. PMK chief Dr Anbumani Ramadoss demanded the arrest of everyone involved and sought the maximum punishment under law.

46 girl students fall ill after school dinner

MAYURBHANJ, ODISHA

Forty-six girl students of Mantri SSD Girls High School under Badasahi block in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district fell ill after having dinner and going to sleep on Wednesday night. The incident prompted the district administration to order an inquiry into the cause of the illness. Eight students are undergoing treatment at Mantri Health Centre, while 11 are being treated at Badasahi Group Health Centre. The remaining 27 students are receiving treatment at the school hostel. Officials said there are no major health concerns at present. Mayurbhanj ADM Netrananda Mallick said the district administration was informed about the incident on Thursday and that the district Collector immediately visited the school. Baripada District Collector Hemakanta Say has ordered a detailed investigation to determine why the students fell ill. The incident has raised renewed concerns about food safety and hygiene in residential schools in Mayurbhanj, which has reported several similar cases involving students falling ill after consuming hostel food in recent months.

IndianOil officer killed during petrol pump sealing

HINGOLI

Four people, including a woman, have been arrested in connection with the murder of IndianOil officer Mahesh Shelke in Maharashtra's Hingoli district. Shelke was allegedly stabbed seven times on Tuesday while he and his team were sealing a petrol pump in Ambachondi village. The incident reportedly occurred around 4:30 pm following an argument between Shelke and people associated with the petrol pump. Shelke was taken to a taluka hospital in Vasmat, where he was declared dead. The accused have been identified as Shrawan Wakude, Rahul Dhaje, Umesh Pandvir and Lata Pandvir. Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri condemned the killing and sought swift action from Maharashtra authorities. IndianOil described Shelke as a promising officer and assured support to his family.

Gujarat plans Rs 100-crore marine biotechnology corridor

Gujarat plans a ₹100-crore marine biotechnology corridor in Porbandar, promoting research, startups, sustainable products and employment opportunities along its coastline.

GANDHINAGAR

Gujarat has proposed a Rs 100-crore investment over five years to establish the Marine Biotechnology Research & Innovation Corridor (M-BRIC) at Mocha vil-lage in Porbandar district, with the aim of developing marine resources into high-value products, industries and sustainable livelihood opportunities. The initiative, led by the Gujarat State Biotechnology Mission under the Department of Science and Technology, is planned as an integrated ecosystem linking marine research, field cultivation, technology development, pilot-scale biomanufacturing, entrepreneurship and commercialisation. An MoU is proposed between GSBTM, the Department of Science and Technology and CSIR-CSMCRI.



Gujarat's seaweeds, microalgae, marine microor-ganisms and saline ecosys-tems are expected to support products including biofer-tilisers, biostimulants, nutra-ceuticals, cosmeceuticals, aquafeed, enzymes, biosurfac-tants, pharmaceutical interme-diates and marine-derived biomaterials. Mocha will serve as the pro-posed principal hub, with a dedicated seaweed-processing cluster covering raw-material

reception, washing, extraction, drying, packaging, storage and quality control. The wider net-work may extend across Sau-rashtra and Gujarat's coast-line. Planned facilities include a seaweed brood bank, microalgal biofactories, an integrated seaweed biorefin-ery, research facilities and incubation support for start-ups. The corridor will also focus on technology validation, intellectual property, regula-

Marine biotechnology expansion

- ₹100 crore investment over five years for M-BRIC
- Mocha, Porbandar to become the principal marine biotech hub
- Seaweed and algae to support high-value products and industries
- Research and startups to be connected through an integrated ecosystem
- Coastal employment and training opportunities to be expanded

tory assessment, licensing and industry partnerships. CSIR-CSMCRI is identified as a key scientific partner, while training programmes are proposed for coastal youth, seaweed farmers, fish-ing communities, women-led enterprises and entrepreneurs.

Security tightened for Gyanesh Kumar amid protests

NEW DELHI

Security outside Chief Elec-tion Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's residence has been increased following fresh threat inputs and ongoing pro-tests in the national capital over alleged irregularities in the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Delhi Police officials said. Kumar already has a Z-plus security cover, but additional police personnel have now been deployed outside his re-sidence in view of the latest intelligence inputs. A senior police officer said local dis-trict police had also been di-rected to increase deployment. Security agencies have been asked to coordinate closely to prevent any untoward incident during the protests. The increased security comes as INDIA bloc leaders, led by Leader of the Opposi-tion in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, step up protests against alleged irregularities in the SIR exercise. The Opposition has demanded Kumar's resignation as Chief Election Commissioner over

WHAT IS Z-PLUS COVER?

Z-plus is the second-highest security category in India after Special Protection Group cover for the Prime Minister and immediate family members. Under the Z-plus arrangement, around 50 personnel work in shifts, with enhanced security measures covering the protectee's residence and movements.

its concerns regarding the revision of electoral rolls. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Home Affairs has made 221 companies of the Central Armed Police Forces, comprising around 23,000 personnel, available to the Delhi Police from October 8 to 12. CRPF companies are being brought from Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh. The additional forces will assist Delhi Police in managing protests, securing key government buildings and maintaining law and order in central Delhi.

India and Canada agree to deepen security cooperation

NEW DELHI

India and Canada have agreed to deepen security coopera-tion and coordination against transnational organised crime, terrorism, drug trafficking and the extradition of criminal offenders, marking continued efforts to stabilise bilateral ties after years of tensions. The agreement was reached during a meeting between Na-tional Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Canadian senior diplomatic and international affairs adviser to the Prime Minister David Morrison. Morrison visited India from October 5 to 7, while the secu-rity dialogue was held on Tuesday. According to a joint state-ment issued on Wednesday, India and Canada will strengthen cooperation against violent extremism, human trafficking, drug trafficking, cybercrime and extortion.



They also agreed to explore additional practical coopera-tion, including possible struc-tured dialogues on cybsecur-ity and economic security. Existing institutional mecha-nisms will be strengthened, while new channels will fac-ilitate streamlined communica-tion and timely informa-tion-sharing on matters of mutual concern. Security concerns have been a major source of strain in India-Canada relations since 2023, when former Canadian Prime Minister Jus-tin Trudeau alleged links

between Indian government agents and the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. India rejected the allegation. The two sides said recent engagements have been sus-tained and constructive, guid-ed by mutual trust, respect for each other's concerns and a shared commitment to stron-ger bilateral ties. They also welcomed progress towards a comprehensive economic part-nership agreement and dis-cussed the potential for a sub-stantive bilateral defence rela-tionship.

Tripura CM launches water, AI grievance projects

AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday launched a series of water infrastructure and digital governance initia-tives in Agartala, including the foundation of a 6.81 MLD Surface Water Treatment Plant and a 680 KL Overhead Tank at College Tilla. The projects are aimed at strengthening the clean drinking water supply network across the capital. Saha also flagged off Rapid Response Team vehicles and truck-mounted water tankers to support faster resolution of civic issues and improve services for residents. The Chief Minister launched an AI-based IVR calling system and a dedicated WhatsApp Grievance Redres-sal System. The platforms will allow residents to register complaints, track their resolu-tion status and provide feed-



back through smartphones, with the aim of reducing administrative delays and making public services more accessible. "Good governance means ensuring that basic necessities like clean drinking water reach every household, while also making administration accessible to every citizen. By integrating Artificial Intelligence and digital tools

"Good governance means clean water, accessible administration, and using AI and WhatsApp to ensure transparent, accountable public services."

MANIK SAHA Chief Minister of Tripura

like WhatsApp into public service delivery, we are ensuring transparency, quick accountability, and ease of living for the people of Tripura," Saha said. The event at Rabindra Sa-tabarshiki Bhavan was at-tended by senior state officials, municipal representatives and hundreds of officials and karyakartas. AMC Mayor Di-pak Majumder, secretary Mil-ind Ramteke and Jal Jiwan Mission CEO Mihir Gop were among those present.

Union Minister inaugurates new silkworm seed facility in Jorhat

JORHAT

Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Textiles Pabitra Margherita on Thurs-day inaugurated a newly con-structed Grainage Building and Cold Storage Facility at the Central Silk Board's Silk-worm Seed Production Centre in Rowriah, Jorhat. The facility has been estab-lished under the North-East Region Textile Promotion Scheme to modernise seric-ulture infrastructure and improve the availability of quality silkworm seed in Assam and the wider North-Eastern region. Addressing the gathering, Margherita highlighted the importance of quality silk-worm seed, modern infrastruc-ture, technology and skill development in building a productive and sustainable



sericulture sector. The minister also stressed the need for greater entrepre-neurship and coordination among the Central Silk Board, Assam government, research institutions, farmers, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders. The new facility is expected to strengthen the regional sericulture value chain by improving seed production and creating employment and business opportunities for local suppliers and traders.

30 lakh

Disease-Free Layings (DFLs) of mulberry hybrid seed a year: the upgraded centre's capacity. It can preserve up to one crore DFLs.

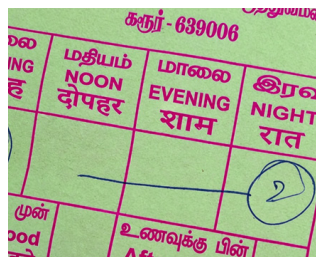
An Interactive Seri-Stake-holder Meet was organised during the programme to dis-cuss important issues con-cerning the development of the sericulture sector.

Hindi medicine packets trigger TN row

CHENNAI

A dispute has erupted in Tamil Nadu over the use of Hindi alongside Tamil and English on medicine packets issued at government hospi-tals in Coimbatore and Karur, with opposition DMK ques-tioning the government while the ruling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) defended the practice. Doctors at the two hospitals distributed packets carrying instructions on medicine use in all three languages. DMK leader TRB Rajaa criticised the government, saying the development signalled imple-mentation of a three-language policy in hospitals. Health Minister KG Arun-raj rejected the criticism, say-ing the packaging had been approved during the previous DMK regime. He said Karur Government Medical College Hospital receives pill covers from the Central Prison,

where instructions such as "Morning / Afternoon / Night" are stamped only in Tamil. Arunraj said shortages of covers from the Central Pris-on in December 2025 led the DMK government to issue an emergency order on Decem-ber 31 for 400,000 covers to be printed by the Erode Dis-trict Printing Industrial Co-operative Society. In Co-imbatore, he said, covers were approved three years earlier, printed by the Chin-thamani Co-operative Society and brought into practice during the DMK administra-tion. The minister said the gov-ernment had only procured covers according to ware-house demand and had not changed the design or lan-guage. He described the DMK criticism as a political move and said use of the covers in Karur and Coimbatore was immediately stopped after the



It seems like the three-language policy is being implemented in Tamil Nadu hospitals. Earlier it was in Karur government hospital. Today, this is in Coimbatore (government hospital)."

— TRB Rajaa, Former Industries Minister

issue came to the govern-ment's attention. BJP state leader Rama Srinivasan also questioned the focus on a Hindi word on prescription covers.

UTTARAKHAND VOTER ROLL REVISION

Uttarakhand electoral rolls see major deletions

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand's electoral rolls recorded 17,05,130 deletions and 4,01,276 additions during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) conducted between January 6, 2025 and October 3, 2026, according to district-wise data released by the State Election Office. The total registered electorate declined from 84,29,459 to 71,58,949 during the revision period. Of the deleted names, 8,26,977 were categorised as

17,05,130 names deleted in the revision	4,01,276 names added	8,26,977 deleted as Absent, Shifted, Dead or Duplicate
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Absent, Shifted, Dead and Duplicate (ASDD). The highest deletions were reported in the plain districts. Dehradun recorded 4,84,598 deletions, followed by Haridwar with 3,31,875 and Udham Singh Nagar with 3,03,620. Chief Electoral Officer BVRC Purushottam met rep-

resentatives of all recognised national political parties and briefed them about a special campaign beginning Thursday. He appealed to political parties to actively cooperate in its implementation. The final electoral roll, published after completion of the SIR, lists 79,60,762 registered voters. The exercise used

July 1, 2026 as the qualifying date and began in Uttara-khand on June 8. The draft roll published on July 14 had 71,33,785 voters. During the claims and objections period from July 14 to August 13, voters could raise objections or seek inclusion before appli-cations were disposed of and the final roll was published.



The final roll includes 37,37,701 male voters, 34,21,036 female voters and 212 third-gender voters. It has 72,656 voters aged 18-19

and 1,22,892 aged above 80. A total of 1,29,872 new voters were added, while 1,04,708 names were deleted under prescribed rules. Uttarakhand currently has 12,543 polling stations. Voters left out of the final roll can submit Form 6 online through the ECI Net app or offline through Booth Level Officers. The Election Commission directed that voters not included in the final roll can continue seeking inclusion through the prescribed process.

Quick Read

Delhi liquor shops to close for two days

NEW DELHI

Liquor shops across Delhi will remain closed on October 9 and 10 as the government ordered a two-day shutdown to maintain public order amid ongoing protests. The Excise Department issued the order following inputs from Delhi Police. The decision comes ahead of protests by opposition parties demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over allegations of “vote theft”. The Cockroach Janta Party has also called for a protest at Jantar Mantar on October 10. More than 20,000 police and paramilitary personnel have been deployed across Delhi ahead of the proposed protest, according to a senior police officer. The officer said no permission had been granted for a protest at Jantar Mantar and appealed to people to avoid participating in any unauthorised gathering.

CBI arrests two school principals in bribery cases

NEW DELHI

The CBI has arrested two school principals in separate bribery cases in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. Shraddha Pathak, principal of Kendriya Vidyalaya-I at Itarsi, and middleman Kirat Singh Sarathe were arrested while allegedly accepting ₹3 lakh. In Odisha, Eklavya Model Residential School principal C Krishna Murthy Naidu was arrested for allegedly demanding ₹20,000 from a person seeking a service extension recommendation. Further investigations are underway.

Shooter arrested in influencer murder case

AHMEDABAD

The Ahmedabad Crime Branch has arrested Parminder Kaka, alias Parminder Prasad, in connection with the October 3 murder of Punjabi social media influencer Mad Sandhu in Amritsar. Police identified Parminder as the alleged shooter in the case. According to Crime Branch officials, Parminder allegedly fired the shots and arranged the motorcycle used in the attack. Further details of his arrest are expected to be released by police. A murder case has been registered under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at Amritsar Cantonment police station. Police are also investigating a possible connection between the killing and the international network of gangster Goldy Dhillon. Investigation into the alleged network and the motive behind the killing is continuing.

Central team assesses Maharashtra drought

THE CENTRAL TEAM WILL ASSESS CROP LOSSES, WATER SHORTAGES AND FODDER NEEDS ACROSS DROUGHT-HIT DISTRICTS BEFORE RECOMMENDING RELIEF ASSISTANCE.

MUMBAI

An 11-member central inter-ministerial group began a four-day tour of Maharashtra on Thursday to assess the drought situation and evaluate the state’s request for financial assistance. The group has been divided into three teams to conduct ground-level inspections across Western Maharashtra, Marathwada and Vidarbha. The teams will visit affected districts and assess crop losses, water shortages and fodder requirements before meeting state government representatives in Mumbai on Sunday. The first team will visit



Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Beed and Jalna. The visit comes a day after Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and sought interim financial assistance of ₹17,500 crore for the drought-hit state. “The group will conduct ground inspections and verify the situation. Its report will be submitted to the NDRF, which will consider the findings along with the state government’s proposal before deciding on assistance,” Fadnavis said after his meeting with Shah.

Maharashtra drought assessment

₹17,500 crore Total interim assistance sought	₹13,000 crore Requested for crop losses
₹4,500 crore Requested for fodder management	265 of 358 Talukas declared drought-hit
32 districts Facing drought conditions, according to the CM	11 members Central inter-ministerial assessment group

The Maharashtra government has sought ₹13,000 crore as interim assistance for crop losses and another ₹4,500 crore for fodder management amid scarcity. The state has declared

drought in 265 of its 358 talukas, accounting for about 74% of the total. Fadnavis said around 80% of Maharashtra was facing drought conditions across 32 districts. The central team’s assessment will be used by the

THREE TEAMS
TEAM 1 Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Beed and Jalna
TEAM 2 Ahilyanagar, Solapur and Pune
TEAM 3 Nagpur and Yavatmal

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) while considering the state’s relief proposal. The four-day assessment is expected to provide the Centre with a ground-level evaluation of the drought situation and the immediate needs of affected farmers and communities.

Uttarakhand builds 39,815 rural homes under PMAY-G

DEHRADUN

As many as 39,815 rural families in Uttarakhand have received pucca houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) since 2022, with Udhham Singh Nagar recording the highest number, according to state government figures. Udhham Singh Nagar accounted for 4,882 houses, followed by Haridwar with 4,493 and Rudraprayag with 4,032. Chamoli recorded 3,900 houses, while Pithoragarh and Pauri accounted for 3,386 and 3,195 houses respectively. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has been seeking additional housing allocations from the Centre under both rural and urban components of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Launched in 2016, PMAY-G aims to provide pucca houses with basic amenities to homeless families and those living in kutcha or damaged houses in rural areas. Eligible beneficiaries receive financial assistance of Rs 1.30 lakh per house through direct benefit transfer into their bank accounts. Under the BB Ramji



The housing scheme has expanded support across Uttarakhand, helping eligible rural families access safer homes and essential household services.

Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, our government is committed to providing a pucca house to every needy family and ensuring PMAY-G benefits reach every eligible family.”

– Pushkar Singh Dhami
Uttarakhand CM

Yojana, beneficiaries are provided 95 days of wage employment for constructing their houses.

Adhikari vows action against conversion, ‘love jihad’

MALDA

West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Thursday said his government would not allow religious conversion, what he described as “love jihad” or “land jihad” during his tenure. He made the remarks while addressing a relief distribution programme in Muslim-majority Malda district. Adhikari referred to alleged incidents of religious conversion in the Kaliachak area and said such incidents should not be repeated. He also mentioned Mothabari, where a case was filed in 2023 alleging the forced conversion of two brothers. “There should not be any more religious conversion anywhere,” Adhikari said, adding that he would not allow such incidents to take place during his tenure. He also said action would be taken against what he termed “love jihad” and “land jihad”. The Chief Minister highlighted the government’s measures to strengthen border security. He said 142.79 acres of land had been transferred to the Border Security Force in May for barbed-wire fencing and the construction of border outposts in several districts, including Malda. On the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Adhikari said appli-



cants would no longer need to approach others for certificates, as the Centre had given the state authority to issue them. He urged eligible people who had not yet applied to do so quickly. He said those who receive certificates would be added to the voters’ list, while eligible Scheduled Caste applicants would also receive caste certificates. Adhikari also called for strict compliance with the West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act, 1950. He said social reforms were necessary in Malda and announced plans to make the district drug-free and curb child marriages. He further said the government would establish a Kisan Development Board to support farmers. Adhikari also appealed for continued public cooperation in implementing the government’s initiatives. The remarks come amid the state government’s focus on border security, citizenship documentation and social issues in districts such as Malda, which shares a border with Bangladesh.

Yogi warns youth against liquor and Samajwadi Party

LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday urged the state’s youth to stay away from liquor and the Samajwadi Party, describing both as dangers that had harmed Uttar Pradesh. He made the remarks while addressing a programme in Lucknow where appointment letters were distributed to 470 sportspersons recruited into the Uttar Pradesh Police under the skilled players’ quota. Adityanath said young people should be cautious of two things — “sharab” (liquor) and “SaPa”, referring to the Samajwadi Party. He alleged that the previous SP government had damaged the state’s image and created an identity crisis for its youth. Taking a dig at the opposition party’s PDA slogan, which stands for “Pichhda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak”, the chief minister said it earlier represented “Pradesh Dubao Alliance”. He also alleged that government jobs under the earlier administration depended on “Saifai or sifarish”, referring to political connections and recommendations. Adityanath contrasted this with his government’s recruitment policies, saying the 470 sportspersons were selected



because of their talent and hard work. He claimed that no political recommendation, financial transaction or syndicate influenced the appointments. He said more than 1,400 skilled sportspersons had been directly appointed to government posts so far, while recruitment of another 555 was underway. He also alleged that before 2017, Uttar Pradesh was associated with mining and recruitment scams, while his government had focused on sports infrastructure and the One District One Product initiative. The chief minister claimed that his government had provided jobs to 10 lakh youths and improved law and order in the state. He urged the newly recruited sportspersons to continue their training and focus on their performance, assuring them that government policies would provide opportunities for their growth.

Kerala to introduce stray dog management protocol

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala will soon introduce a state-wide protocol to manage the stray dog problem, covering euthanasia, adoption, dog shelters and the Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme, Local Self-Government Minister K M Shaji said on Thursday. Shaji said the protocol would provide clear guidelines and define the responsibilities of local bodies in handling stray dogs. The move is aimed at helping local authorities take faster and more coordinated action across the state. The minister said two more government orders need to be issued before the protocol can be finalised. Once the orders are released, the government will formally announce the new guidelines. “Once the orders for these two policies are issued, we will declare it. It will come without much delay,” Shaji said.

He added that directions issued by the Kerala High Court had helped the government clarify the role of local bodies in addressing the stray dog issue. The proposed protocol is expected to provide a common framework for dealing with stray dogs and managing shelters and adoption. The guidelines will also cover the implementation of the Animal Birth Control programme, which seeks to control the stray dog population through sterilisation. The government is expected to clarify the circumstances and procedures related to euthanasia as part of the new framework. The move comes amid continuing concerns over stray dogs and the need for local authorities to respond effectively. The government said the upcoming protocol would help ensure that local bodies have clearer responsibilities and procedures when dealing with the issue.

Probe sought into Kerala’s falling wild elephant numbers

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The sharp decline in Kerala’s wild elephant population and the frequent deaths of elephants have led to demands for a high-level investigation, including a CBI probe or a court-monitored inquiry. The demand was raised during the three-day wildlife week celebration, ‘Vana Spandanam’, held in Thiruvananthapuram from October 5 to 7. Wayanad Prakrithi Samrakshana Samathi president N Babusha said participants were concerned about the deaths of elephants in what he described as suspicious circumstances. According to figures cited during the event, Kerala’s wild elephant population fell from 5,135 in 2005 to 2,386 in 2023. The participants also raised concerns over factors that could affect elephant conser-



The wild elephant population came down by 50 per cent in the last few years. There are strong suspicions of ivory smuggling.”

– N Babusha, Wayanad Prakrithi Samrakshana Samathi

vation, including suspected ivory smuggling, relocation of tuskers and possible effects on breeding. The event also criticised protests in Idukki district over an order issued by the district collector to remove obstructions along elephant corridors.

Centre caps trade margins on anti-cancer drugs

NEW DELHI

The Centre has decided to cap trade margins at 30 per cent of the maximum retail price for all non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs, in a move aimed at reducing the cost of life-saving medicines for patients. The new pricing system is expected to be implemented later this month and will cover 110 drugs, including 35 patented medicines. Government sources said the move is intended to address excessive trade mark-ups and improve affordability while ensuring that essential medicines remain available. The government estimates that the measure could help cancer patients save around ₹2,500 crore annually. “The primary aim of the trade margin rationalisation (TMR) is to prevent misleading malpractices,” government sources said, adding that medicines with higher trade

30%
Trade margin cap on all non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs, as a share of the maximum retail price

margins may be promoted more aggressively because of the greater profits involved. On September 29, the Supreme Court raised concerns over inflated prices of anti-cancer drugs while hearing a case related to medicine pricing. The court discussed the possibility of a uniform 16 per cent trade margin for medicines. The government, however, said the latest decision was not linked to the ongoing Supreme Court case. Officials said the trade margin rationalisation proposal has been under consideration since 2019.

HARYANA SCHOOL SAFETY

Haryana panel orders safety audit of government schools

CHANDIGARH

The Haryana Human Rights Commission has ordered a structural safety audit of all government schools across the state following the death of an 11-year-old student after an entrance gate collapsed at a government primary school in Sonipat. The commission expanded the scope of its suo motu proceedings, which were initially initiated over the child’s

death at the school in Garhi Balinda village in Ganaur, Sonipat district. The incident occurred in August when the brick-and-concrete arch of the school’s main entrance collapsed on the student. In its October 1 order, the commission directed authorities to conduct a comprehensive assessment of government school buildings and identify structures that are dilapidated, unsafe or hazardous.

“The commission, having regard to the serious concerns arising out of the present incident, considers it appropriate to enlarge the scope of the present proceedings so as to examine the safety and structural conditions of Government schools across the State of Haryana,” the order stated. The commission directed the Director General of Secondary Education, Director of Elementary Education and the State Project Director of



Haryana School Shiksha Pariyojna Parishad to undertake the review. The audit will cover more

than school buildings. Authorities have been asked to inspect entrance gates, arches, boundary walls, roofs

What the order asks
■ Assess: every government school building; identify dilapidated, unsafe or hazardous structures
■ Inspect: entrance gates, arches, boundary walls and roofs as well
■ Act: repairs, maintenance, barricading, demolition or reconstruction, depending on the condition of each structure

and other structures that could endanger students and staff. The commission also stressed that identifying unsafe structures and submitting reports would not be

enough. Authorities must take concrete measures, including repairs, maintenance, barricading, demolition or reconstruction, depending on the condition of each structure.

Quick Read

Ukraine's city of Oleshky faces starvation as Russia blocks aid

KYIV
Trapped and facing starvation, residents of the Russian-occupied town of Oleshky in southern Ukraine risk their lives to travel for hours by foot and bicycle along mine-strewn roads to get food and water. The main route out of the town, lying near the front line east of the Dnipro River, heads deeper into Russian-controlled areas. It is littered with burned-out cars and charred by blasts, according to witnesses, relatives, humanitarian groups and verified video footage.

4.1 magnitude quake hits western Nepal amid flood recovery

KATHMANDU
A moderate earthquake of 4.1 magnitude struck western Nepal on Wednesday night, with tremors felt in several neighbouring districts, officials said. According to Nepal's National Earthquake Monitoring and Research Centre, the earthquake occurred at 9:37 pm local time, with its epicentre in Budhiganga Municipality-10 of Bajura district in Sudurpaschim Province, around 750 km west of Kathmandu. The tremor was also felt in Bajhang, Kalikot and Achham districts. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The earthquake comes as Nepal continues to grapple with the aftermath of devastating floods and landslides that struck the country on August 26.



Drones hit Yandex site in first major attack on Russian data hub

MOSCOW
Drones hit a data centre owned by Russia's Yandex, the country's leading AI and technology company said on Thursday, in the first major attack on a Russian data hub since the start of the war with Ukraine. Mutual drone attacks by Russia and Ukraine this year have gradually spread across the economy, from energy facilities and refineries to ports and vessels carrying oil and grain, e-commerce warehouses and, most recently, data centres. Russia has conducted a strike campaign on Ukrainian data centres and telecommunications infrastructure over the past month, including targets in central Kyiv. Yandex said the attack on its Sasovo hub, one of its five large data centres, caused a fire and forced it to suspend operations at the site, which hosts tens of thousands of servers. It said it was restoring affected servers.

The company, often dubbed "Russia's Google", said its core consumer services were not affected, but did not describe the extent of the damage. Ukrainian attacks on Russia have led to fuel shortages and queues at petrol stations, losses for tens of thousands of small businesses involved in e-commerce, and higher inflation as rising fuel costs feed through to consumer prices. There were previously no confirmed major Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian data centres.

Syria weighs military support for Saudi

Syria is considering military support for Saudi Arabia as renewed Houthi attacks raise fears of a wider regional conflict involving more Arab states and foreign-backed forces across the region again.

RIYADH

Syria is weighing military support for Saudi Arabia as Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi group intensifies missile and drone attacks on the kingdom, raising fears that the renewed Yemen war could pull more regional countries into fighting.

A US official and a Syrian defence official said Damascus was considering options ranging from defensive assistance to deployment of troops. Any Syrian involve-



Syria considers help in Yemen war

- Syria weighs defensive and offensive military support for Saudi Arabia.
- Houthi attacks kill three people at Saudi airports.
- Riyadh seeks assistance from Turkey and Pakistan.
- Renewed Yemen fighting threatens wider regional escalation.
- Syria says cooperation would follow official bilateral channels.

ment would mark a significant expansion of the conflict, which has already added another front to a region destabilised by the US-Iran confrontation.

Saudi Arabia has sought assistance from allied countries, including Turkey and Pakistan, with requests focused on

logistical or defensive support. The push has gained urgency after Houthi attacks on infrastructure killed three people at airports this week.

The Houthis said on Thursday they had attacked King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh with a ballistic missile. A series of loud explosions was also heard in the Saudi capital, although their cause could not be independently identified.

Saudi authorities said one person was killed in an attack on Riyadh airport, while two others died in a separate strike on Abha airport earlier this week.

The renewed fighting follows the collapse of a 2022 ceasefire, with the Houthis recently taking positions along parts of Yemen's Red Sea coast, including near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

South Lebanon residents face Israeli presence

WEST ZAWTAR

Residents of southern Lebanon's West Zawtar village say their return home has brought relief and fear, with Israeli troops still positioned nearby and military operations continuing around them.

Sixty-seven-year-old Mariam al-Yaghi says Israeli soldiers are close enough for her to hear their voices at night.

Israeli troops withdrew from West Zawtar in July under a US-backed "pilot zone" plan aimed at gradually reducing Israel's military presence in southern Lebanon in exchange for the disarmament of Hezbollah.

But two months later, residents say the village has failed to become a model for wider withdrawals. No additional pilot zones have been agreed.

A US State Department spokesperson described the pilot-zone process as the only viable path to security for Lebanon and Israel.

For residents, however, the consequences of the conflict remain visible. Yaghi's home



“We hear their voices yelling, the tanks when they move this way and that way. We hear all of that. They’re very close to us, but we’re sitting here and we’re not scared. Never.”

— Mariam al-Yaghi, West Zawtar resident

suffered extensive damage, with shattered windows and a tank shell striking the upper floor. Another shell pierced her water tank, leaving the stored water blood-red.

After months of displacement, residents have returned to damaged homes while Israeli forces remain nearby.

UK-Israel reach Jerusalem Mission compromise

JERUSALEM

Britain and Israel have reached a last-minute agreement allowing Britain's nearly 200-year-old diplomatic mission in Jerusalem to remain open, but on a smaller scale and under a new name.

Under the arrangement announced on Thursday, Britain's Consulate General, established in 1839, will be renamed the "UK Mission, Jerusalem." The compromise comes after Israel ordered Britain to close the consulate following a dispute over British sanctions targeting Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank.

Israel said 20 British diplomats, including the consul general, would leave the mission. Seven diplomats will remain and continue working in a limited capacity.

Britain said some diplomats had been temporarily withdrawn and that it intended to rebuild its presence.

Britain and Israel avoided a wider diplomatic crisis after agreeing to keep Jerusalem's historic British mission open under a new name.

London also said it would refrain from taking reciprocal measures against Israel for now, helping prevent a broader diplomatic confrontation between the two longstanding allies.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said the consulate would formally end its operations, while allowing some British diplomats to continue working from the building. British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband rejected Israel's position that it had the legal authority to close the consulate. He said the mission would continue providing important services and working with Palestinians.

1 killed in Poland's second school attack in 2 days

LESZCZYDOL-NOWINY

A 15-year-old former pupil killed one person and injured two others at a Polish primary school on Thursday, police said, the day after a 19-year-old wounded 10 people including himself at another school.

Authorities said a 37-year-old woman who worked as a caretaker had died in the latest attack, which took place at around 9 a.m. in Leszczdol-Nowiny, northeast of Warsaw.

Head teacher Krzysztof Ochmanski said he had heard a scream and run into the corridor.

"He wounded me with the blade of a rather long knife - he had three knives on him - and hit me with the handle," he told the public broadcaster Polskie Radio RDC. "By then, I had managed to restrain him."

Police told the private broadcaster TVN24 that another teacher had also been injured

trying to restrain the attacker. The Interior Ministry said no further lives were in danger. "The attacker was a former pupil of this primary school and is currently a student at a vocational school," a spokeswoman said. "At this moment, we do not know the motives."

An air ambulance flying away from the school, where a small crowd had gathered. The father of one child, waiting outside the school, said pupils had not yet been allowed to leave, but were safe.

Footage on the state news channel TVP Info showed what appeared to be the attacker being handcuffed and put into a police van. Prime Minister Donald Tusk called an emergency meeting amid deepening concern about violence among teenagers.

Inspector Katarzyna Nowak, director of communications for national police, said serious offenders were becoming younger across Europe.

US committed to Med power cable: Rubio

ATHENS

The US supports an EU-backed undersea power cable scheme in the eastern Mediterranean and will use diplomacy to try to remove any possible hurdles, Secretary of State Marco Rubio told a Greek newspaper.

Greece's power grid operator IPTO is developing the €1.9 billion scheme, which aims to link the European mainland to Cyprus and later Israel, but progress has been slow amid a dispute between Greece and Turkey over the maritime area that will be designated for laying down the cable.

Greece wants to resume seabed surveying to determine the route soon, a move Turkey says would need prior coordination between the two countries as it crosses an area under a 2019 maritime deal with Libya, which Athens has rejected.

Rubio said in the interview



with Kathimerini newspaper, published on Thursday, that the US was "very committed" to the project as it promotes energy supply diversification, which he said was necessary due to Russia's war in Ukraine and the situation in the Strait of Hormuz.

"We understand there are some potential impediments, there are some things standing in the way, and we intend to use our diplomatic efforts to remind all parties how important this is to us and why this matters. And I hope to find resolutions," he said.

Meloni secures final approval for contested electoral reform

ROME

Italy's lower house of parliament gave final approval on Thursday to a fiercely contested electoral reform championed by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni which could play a key role in the outcome of a national election due next year.

In a secret ballot, lawmakers approved by 227 votes to 164 a bill introducing a fully proportional electoral system (PR), with a seat bonus guaranteeing a parliamentary majority to any alliance winning more than 42% of the vote.

"We are introducing rules designed to promote the stability and the parliamentary cohesion of any government," Meloni posted on X after the



vote. "Whoever wins must be able to govern."

In a heated debate, centre-left lawmakers accused the government of flouting democracy by forcing through the new voting rules ahead of an election, against the will of the opposition. "Go ahead and change the electoral law, we will win in any case under any voting system," said Democratic Party leader Elly Schlein.

However, her coalition is

42%
Seat bonus: any alliance winning more than 42% of the vote is guaranteed a parliamentary majority

now trailing the opposition in opinion polls as a new far-right group, National Future, erodes the support of the ruling parties.

New Italy poll law puts fragile oppn unity to test

ROME

A new electoral law approved by Italy's parliament on Thursday was conceived by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's coalition as a way to cement its grip on power after the next election, opposition politicians say.

Yet analysts say the reform, which rewards broad alliances rather than individual parties, could ultimately benefit Meloni's centre-left foes if they can overcome their internal divisions and rally behind a single leader.

The reform gives a parliamentary majority bonus to the largest alliance if it wins more than 42% of the vote, encouraging rival parties to join forces before an election.

Meloni says it is intended to increase the prospect of stable government.

When Meloni drew up the bill, her own conservative coalition was ahead in the polls, but its advantage has been eroded by the emergence of a new far-right group, National Future, allowing a cluster of centre-left parties to edge ahead.

However, a requirement in the new law for coalitions to nominate their candidate for prime minister before any election has laid bare divisions between Elly Schlein and Giuseppe Conte, the leaders of the two main opposition groups, the Democratic Party (PD) and the 5-Star Movement.

"The leadership belongs to

the party that gets one vote more. That's not hegemony, it's democracy," Schlein, 41, told a PD meeting last week, making clear she believes the largest opposition force should lead the alliance.

"If there are those who do not recognise this democratic principle, then we will hold primaries," she added.

Conte is indeed pushing for primaries, arguing that voters, not party rankings, should choose the coalition's candidate for prime minister. But a showdown would expose sharp policy differences within the centre-left bloc and personal rivalries.

Primaries will probably make life worse for the left, because they are a contest in which one person says.

PAK-SAUDI MILITARY PACT

Pak military takes on Gulf role sans Parliament vote

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has agreed to rapidly deploy additional forces to Saudi Arabia under a defence pact with Saudi Arabia and Turkey, marking a major departure from Islamabad's approach to a similar request in 2015.

The agreement was activated on Monday as Saudi Arabia faces escalating attacks from Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi group. The move has also drawn

attention to the growing influence of Pakistan's military over foreign and security policy under Field Marshal Asim Munir.

In 2015, Pakistan's parliament unanimously rejected a request to participate in the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen. Islamabad instead pledged to protect Saudi territory and its holy sites while maintaining neutrality in the conflict.

This time, no parliament



tary vote has been held. Pakistan's information ministry said the alliance had completed all necessary government proce-

“There were times in the past when Pakistan's parliament would vote not to send troops, and the military would abide by that decision. But it's a different era now.”

MICHAEL KUGELMAN
Resident Senior Fellow for South Asia, Atlantic Council

dures, while describing operational details of the deployment as confidential.

Then and now

2015
Parliament unanimously rejected a request to join the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen

NOW
No parliamentary vote; more forces deploy under a pact with Saudi Arabia and Turkey

The number of troops, their mission, command structure, costs and duration have not been disclosed. It also remains unclear whether Pakistani forces could directly participate in operations against the Houthis.

The decision comes as

Pakistan is simultaneously acting as a mediator with Iran amid the wider US-led conflict with Tehran.

Constitutional changes last year extended Munir's control over all three services until 2030 and granted him lifetime field marshal status.

Arunachal cricket campaign faces legal setback

ARUNACHAL PRADESH WILL FORFEIT THE MATCH, GIVING SIKKIM FULL POINTS UNDER BCCI PLAYING CONDITIONS.

NEW DELHI

Arunachal Pradesh's cricketing campaign has been thrown into uncertainty after an ongoing legal dispute within the Arunachal Cricket Association (ACA) left the state unable to field teams in national competitions.

The state was scheduled to begin its Vinoo Mankad Trophy campaign against Sikkim in the Plate Group at the KIIT Cricket Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Thursday. However, the team could not be constituted because of an interim stay order on the functioning of the state association. As a result, Arunachal Pradesh is set to forfeit the match, with Sikkim likely to receive full points under BCCI playing conditions.

The dispute began after six district associations — Low-

er Siang, Upper Subansiri, Kamle, Tawang, West Siang and Papum Pare — alleged irregularities in the ACA elections and demanded fresh polls. The matter reached the Itanagar Bench of the Gauhati High Court, which subsequently stayed the functioning of the association.

The crisis has also affected the U-19 Women's T20 Trophy and now threatens Arunachal Pradesh's participation in the Ranji Trophy, which begins on October 11. The state is scheduled to face Nagaland in its opening Plate Group match at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.



The court had heard the matter in September, but its judgment was still awaited. With no recognised office-bearers in place, the association has been unable to organise teams or conduct regular cricketing activities.

-Devajit Saikia, BCCI Secretary

Key points

- **Elections Contested:** Six districts alleged irregularities.
- **Court Injunction:** High Court stayed association operations.
- **Leadership Vacuum:** Factional disputes block BCCI communication.
- **Activities Halted:** Squad selection and matches suspended.
- **Tournaments at Risk:** Ranji Trophy participation threatened.
- **Players Impacted:** Young cricket talents miss opportunities.

ers. Players who train throughout the year are now missing opportunities to represent their state at the national level.

Arunachal Pradesh received full BCCI membership in 2018 along with other North-eastern states. The current administrative deadlock, however, has placed its entire domestic season at risk.

Jason Rowles becomes SA20 auction's costliest player

JOHANNESBURG

Teenager Jason Rowles emerged as the most expensive player at the SA20 Season 5 auction, with Joburg Super Kings (JSK) securing the highly rated South African prospect for \$174,248.

The 18-year-old became the centre of an intense bidding battle between JSK and MI Cape Town before the Super Kings won the race. Rowles, a St David's Marist Inanda matriculant and Rain Schools SA20 graduate, was the standout purchase of the auction.

Former South Africa captain Faf du Plessis also returned to Joburg Super Kings after being bought for \$162,286. The 42-year-old attracted interest from MI Cape Town but will continue his association with JSK at the Wanderers.

West Indies T20 great Kieron Pollard joined du Plessis at JSK after being acquired for \$90,162. Pollard brings extensive T20 experience, power-hitting ability and championship-winning pedi-

gree to the franchise.

MI Cape Town strengthened its squad with South Africa all-rounder Wiaan Mulder, bought for \$156,274, while West Indies batter Shimron Hetmyer was signed for \$90,162.

Pretoria Capitals secured former Proteas batter Rassie van der Dussen for \$30,053. South Africa Test and ODI captain Temba Bavuma will also join the Capitals for his third SA20 stint.

Three-time champions Sunrisers Eastern Cape completed their 19-player squad with South African left-arm seamer Nandre Burger and England all-rounder Craig Overton. MI Cape Town also brought back New Zealand fast bowler Trent Boult and signed 21-year-old Oliver Whitehead.

JSK added USA-based batter Andries Gous and Zimbabwe fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani, further highlighting the league's international reach.



Australia return to South Africa after scandal

NEW DELHI

Australia will return to South Africa for a Test series for the first time since the infamous 2018 ball-tampering scandal, with the three-match contest beginning in Durban on Friday.

Six members of Australia's current squad were part of the 2018 tour, which South Africa won 3-1. Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Nathan Lyon and Steve Smith played in the controversial Cape Town Test, while Matt Renshaw was also part of the touring squad.

The 2018 series was overshadowed by the ball-tampering scandal involving Australia, which led to suspensions for several players and became one of the biggest controversies in the sport. Australia captain Cummins expects some hostility from South African fans but believes the focus will quickly shift to cricket once the series begins.

"There might be a little bit of hostility," Cummins said recently, while adding that his team has moved on from the incident.

Australia will rely heavily on its experienced core, particularly the pace trio of Starc, Cummins and Hazlewood, along with Smith. Lyon's role has been more lim-



ited recently, but he remains an option for the Durban Test.

Renshaw is expected to open alongside Travis Head, while Marnus Labuschagne could retain the No. 3 position after scoring a century in the warm-up match. Smith is set to bat at No. 4.

Australia have suffered injury setbacks, with Cameron Green and reserve wicketkeeper Josh Inglis ruled out of the opening Test. Scott Boland is also likely to miss out, while Australia could select Lyon ahead of Matthew Kuhnemann or potentially play both spinners depending on the pitch conditions.

South Africa also have five players from the 2018 series in their current squad — Temba Bavuma, Keshav Maharaj, Wiaan Mulder, Aiden Markram and Kagiso Rabada. Rabada's participation remains uncertain as he continues to recover from a hamstring injury, with a late decision expected on his availability. With several survivors of the 2018 series still involved, the return of Australia to South Africa is likely to carry plenty of historical significance. However, both teams will be looking to put the past aside and focus on the three-Test battle.

FIA keeps Bahrain software fixes for Singapore GP



NEW DELHI

The FIA has completed its investigation into the software bug that disrupted the start of the Bahrain Grand Prix and confirmed that the software fixes will remain in place for the Singapore Grand Prix this weekend.

The issue emerged after heavy rain delayed the start of the race. During the formation laps, several cars experienced significant power loss while running at low engine speeds in parts of the circuit where a 250kW power reduction had been applied.

Drivers including Max Verstappen, Lewis Hamilton, Sergio Pérez and Nico Hulkenberg were among those affected. The problem resulted in further delays to the race start as some cars slowed considerably.

According to the FIA, its technical team identified the cause within five minutes of the race procedure being suspended. An updated Power Unit software configuration was then issued to address the problem.

The governing body said the configuration used at the Bahrain event will be reinstated for the Singapore Grand Prix if similar wet-weather conditions are expected. A further update to the wet-weather software is scheduled to be introduced for the United States Grand Prix on October 25.

The FIA also said improvements would be made to software testing procedures. It will work with Formula 1 teams and Power Unit manufacturers to strengthen testing, verification and validation processes, including indepen-

dent assessment and feedback from the supplier of the standardised Electronics Control Unit.

The governing body rejected suggestions that the software had not been tested before its deployment. It said teams and Power Unit manufacturers had conducted simulation exercises, while the software package was also tested during full-scale running in Free Practice 1 sessions at the Belgian and Dutch Grands Prix.

The FIA said the revised software was integrated by teams and manufacturers after the issue was identified, allowing all competitors to prepare for the race start. The investigation has now concluded, with additional measures planned to improve the reliability of wet-weather software.

Punjab Kings seek three coaches ahead of IPL

NEW DELHI

Australian coaches James Hopes and Brad Haddin have moved on from Punjab Kings following the departure of spin-bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule, leaving the IPL franchise searching for three replacements ahead of the 2027 season.

Hopes served as the fast-bowling coach under head coach Ricky Ponting, while Haddin was the franchise's fielding coach. Both coaches have now taken up roles with state teams in Australia.

Hopes has been appointed Queensland head coach and will also take charge of BBL side Brisbane Heat. Haddin has taken over as head coach of the New South Wales men's team and could also take up a coaching role in the BBL.

Their departures come after Bahutule left Punjab Kings to join the Indian team as spin-bowling coach under Gautam Gambhir. The franchise will therefore need to fill three positions in its support staff before the IPL 2027 season.

An IPL source said Punjab Kings are expected to complete their coaching appointments before the IPL auction in December. The franchise is reportedly looking at one Indian coach and two overseas coaches.

Hopes joined the Punjab Kings set-up in late 2024 after Ponting was appointed head coach.

He had previously worked with Ponting as part of the Delhi Capitals support staff. Haddin, meanwhile, continued with the Kings after the franchise made changes to its coaching team.

Punjab Kings underwent a major coaching overhaul ahead of IPL 2025, with Ponting replacing Trevor Bayliss as head coach. Hopes replaced Charl Langeveldt as fast-bowling coach, while Bahutule took over the spin-bowling role from Sunil Joshi.

Trevor Gonsalves was retained as assistant bowling coach. With three coaching positions now vacant, Punjab Kings are expected to finalise their new support staff before the December auction as preparations for IPL 2027 gather pace.



ZVEREV TARGETS SHANGHAI SUCCESS, NO. 1 RANKING

SHANGHAI

Zverev believes the trust and support of his team have played a major role in his outstanding 2026 season as he continues his pursuit of the world No. 1 ranking.

The 29-year-old German has enjoyed one of the strongest campaigns of his career, winning two major titles and moving within touching distance of becoming the 30th player in ATP Rankings history to reach the top spot.

Zverev will begin his Shanghai Masters campaign against China's Wu Yibing on Friday. Despite the attention surrounding the rankings, the German said his focus remains on his team and the immediate challenge on court.

"We have all been fighting and working extremely hard for the same goals, and to achieve it together is even more special," Zverev told ATP Media.

His father remains the key figure in his player box, providing familiarity and stability throughout the demanding tennis season. Zverev said having people who know him well helps him deal with difficult moments while keeping everyone focused on their shared goals.

"I think it is important to have these close people because through tough moments you can have an argument and in the next moment you are still fighting for the same things," he said.

Already qualified for the ATP Finals, Zverev has five weeks remaining in the season to add to his title tally and potentially challenge for the top ranking.

However, the German is determined not to become distracted by the possibility of reaching No. 1.

"It is a talking point for everybody at the moment, but I am motivated to keep fighting for good things," he said.

"The only thing I can control is what I do on the tennis court and my next match."

Zverev is making his eighth appearance at the Shanghai Masters. His best performance at the tournament came in 2019, when he reached the final.

With 58 wins already this season, Zverev enters Shanghai in strong form and will look to continue his impressive campaign with another deep run at the Masters 1000 event.



PSL 12 set for March 18 to May 2

NEW DELHI

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Thursday confirmed that the 12th edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) will be held from March 18 to May 2, 2027.

The tournament will once again overlap with the Indian Premier League (IPL), continuing a scheduling clash that has been in place since 2025.

There had been speculation that the PSL could be moved to January because of concerns over advertising revenue during the March-May period. However, the PCB has retained the existing window.

The dates were finalised following consultations with stakeholders after the PSL Governing Council meeting in London on September 1, which was attended by representatives and owners of the league's franchises.

The confirmed window will now be followed by several key events, including direct player signings, retention announcements, the trade window and the player auction.

PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi said the league would aim to build on the success of the previous season.

"HBL PSL 11 showed the world what this league is capable of — thrilling moments that had the whole nation transfixed, record crowds, record broadcasts. HBL PSL 12 will raise the bar further," Naqvi said.

PSL CEO Salman Naseer said the 2027 season would seek to meet the expectations created by the previous edition.

The PSL expanded to eight teams last season following the addition of Hyderabad Kingsmen and Rawalpindiz. The other six franchises are Islamabad United, Karachi Kings, Lahore Qalandars, Multan Sultans, Peshawar Zalmi and Quetta Gladiators.

Peshawar Zalmi won the previous edition, claiming their second PSL title after defeating Hyderabad Kingsmen in the final.

With the dates now confirmed, the franchises will turn their attention to squad planning and preparations for the upcoming season, while the overlap with the IPL could once again create challenges related to player availability and commercial competition.



Strong Indian field set for Delhi Half Marathon on Oct 18

NEW DELHI

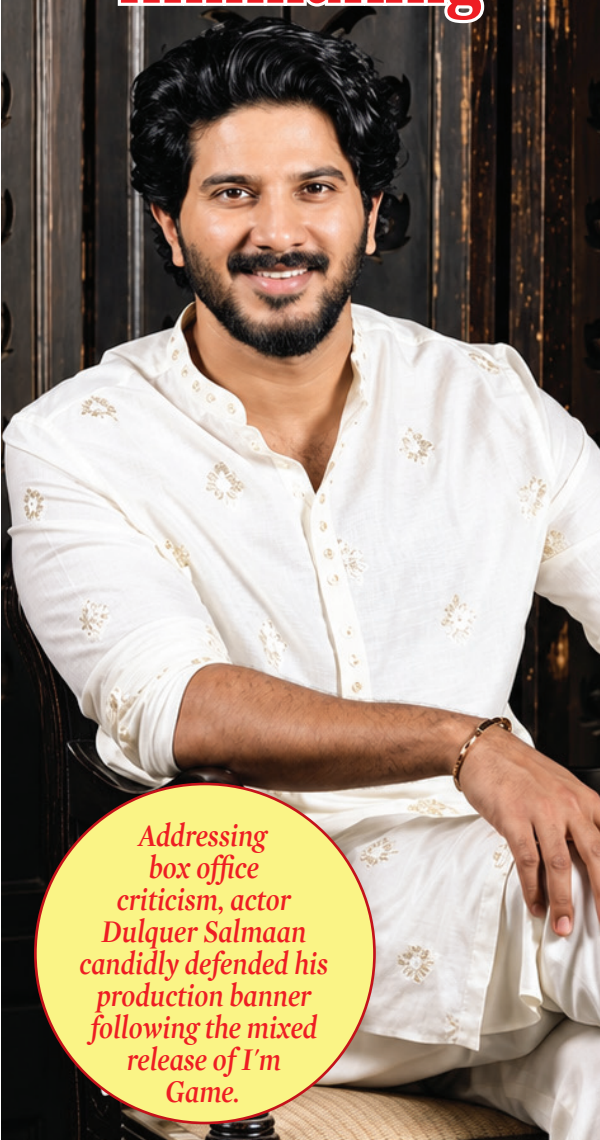
Reigning World 10K Bengaluru Indian Elite champion Harmanjot Singh and former Delhi Half Marathon winner Lili Das will headline a strong Indian field for the 21st edition of the Delhi Half Marathon on October 18.

A total of 22 men and 20 women are set to compete in the Indian Elite category. Harmanjot will make his debut in the World Athletics Gold Label Road Race as the fastest runner in the Indian field, with a personal best of 1:01:46.

The 2026 Asian Cross Country Championships silver medalist has enjoyed an impressive season. He won the Indian Elite race at the World 10K Bengaluru before securing silver at the Asian Cross Country Championships.

Harmanjot said his recent performances had boosted his confidence ahead of the Delhi race.

Unpredictable as life: Dulquer decodes filmmaking



Addressing box office criticism, actor Dulquer Salmaan candidly defended his production banner following the mixed release of I'm Game.

Versatile actor and producer Dulquer Salmaan has strongly defended his production banner, Wayfarer Films, following online criticism regarding the box office underperformance of his latest Malayalam release, I'm Game. The action thriller, which marked his much-anticipated return to Bollywood after a three-year hiatus, received mixed reviews from critics and audiences following its theatrical rollout.

The discussion gained momentum when a disappointed fan took to social media platform X to share a detailed thread blaming the production house for mismanaging the project's release and handling. Rather than ignoring the critique, Dulquer personally responded to the user, acknowledging that many points raised in the analysis were largely accurate. However, the actor emphasized that the ultimate outcome of a cinematic project cannot be simplified or pinned entirely on a single entity.

Defending the massive collaborative effort behind feature filmmaking, Dulquer noted that a project involves hundreds of crew members and is often swayed by unpredictable external factors beyond a team's control. He stressed that no studio or artist deliberately sets out to make mistakes or craft a bad film, comparing the volatile nature of the industry to the general unpredictability of life. Reaffirming his loyalty to his colleagues, the actor firmly declared that he would never distance himself from his team, adding that critics could squarely place the blame on him if they needed a target.

Directed by Nahas Hidayath, I'm Game features an ensemble cast including Antony Varghese, Kayadu Lohar, Mysskin, and Vinay Fort. Despite the initial box office hurdles and mixed public reception, Dulquer's gracious and grounded response has won widespread praise from fans across social media for taking accountability head-on.

Rajinikanth's team dismisses rumors over Dharman



uthu's boundless creative energy and professional approach, reassuring fans that production on Dharman continues to move forward swiftly and strongly without any internal hurdles.

With the rumors officially debunked, the spotlight has shifted squarely back to the massive star-studded ensemble and the film's steady progress. Alongside Rajinikanth, the movie features prominent actors including Simran, Raashi Khanna, and Ram Pothineni, creating immense anticipation within Tamil cinema circles. As the core technical and creative teams lock in upcoming schedules, the makers remain intensely focused on delivering a cinematic spectacle. Meanwhile, Rajinikanth's packed professional calendar also features the eagerly awaited release of Jailer 2, directed by Nelson Dilipkumar and co-starring a stellar supporting cast, which is scheduled to storm box offices worldwide on October 15, 2026.

Shankar & Kamal Haasan resume Indian 3



Director Shankar and legendary actor Kamal Haasan have officially put months of industry speculation to rest by announcing the active resumption of production on Indian 3. Following the underwhelming theatrical performance of Indian 2 back in 2024, the future of the concluding franchise instalment had remained shrouded in deep uncertainty. Questions frequently surfaced regarding whether the makers would quietly shelve the remaining footage, especially as Shankar began aligning commitments for his upcoming mytho-historical venture, Velpari. However, Lyca Productions shattered those doubts by unveiling striking new promotional posters carrying the aggressive subtitle "WAR MODE" alongside the firm declaration that "The Resurgence Begins".

The newly released visual assets feature a gritty, atmospheric aesthetic, showcasing multiple horse riders galloping across a dusty terrain. Crucially, the poster highlights Kamal Haasan reprising dual avatars alongside co-star Kajal Aggarwal. Unlike the contemporary vigilante framework of its predecessors, trade analysts and production insights confirm that Indian 3 will primarily function as a historical prequel. The narrative delves deep into the pre-Independence era, tracing the formative years and ideological evolution of the iconic freedom fighter Senapathy. Kamal Haasan is set to appear as Veeraasekaran, an intense freedom-fighting character from a bygone century, while Kajal Aggarwal steps in as Amirthavalli.

This structural pivot back into historical battlegrounds aims to recapture the raw dramatic intensity that made the original 1996 blockbuster a timeless classic. The ensemble cast also features SJ Suryah, Siddharth, Rakul Preet Singh, Priya Bhavani Shankar, and Bobby Simha. Behind the scenes, core technical pillars return, including composer Anirudh Ravichander, cinematographer Ravi Varman, and Editor Sreekar Prasad, ensuring stylistic continuity across the epic canvas.

With production engines roaring back to life, industry insiders indicate that the team is heavily focused on executing large-scale battle sequences and complex post-office visual effects. While a definitive release date remains officially unconfirmed by the studio, early scheduling projections point toward a targeted summer 2027 theatrical window, depending on how swiftly the remaining patchwork shooting wraps up.

Alias Rukmini release date announcement set



The makers of Alias Rukmini have officially locked in their release date announcement, generating massive excitement among fans eagerly awaiting actor Nithiin's upcoming romantic drama.

Excitement is reaching a fever pitch across the Telugu film industry as the makers of the upcoming romantic drama Alias Rukmini officially lock in the exact time to announce their theatrical release date. Fans have been eagerly waiting for fresh updates about the project, which stars dynamic actor Nithiin in the lead role. According to the latest production updates, the much-anticipated release date will be officially unveiled on 11st October morning at 10:08 AM, accompanied by a special promotional glimpse designed to heighten audience expectations.

The project has generated considerable buzz ever since its unique title announcement video was released by popular actor Nani, who is presenting the movie under his banner, Unanimous Productions. Directed by Murali Kanth Deva-soth—who previously earned critical acclaim for his work on Dhandoraa—the film promises to deliver a fresh and engaging cinematic experience. While the core plot details and the name of the female lead remain tightly kept secrets, the production itself has been progressing at a brisk, uninterrupted pace following the successful wrap-up of its preliminary shooting schedules.

Behind the camera, Alias Rukmini boasts an exceptionally strong technical crew. The soulful music and background score are composed by Vijai Bulganin, while renowned cinematographer Jomon T. John handles the visual framing, and Srujana Adusumilli takes charge of the editing. Produced by Deepthi Ganta, the creative synergy between the cast and crew has fans convinced that this romantic entertainer will offer something truly special on the big screen. Moviegoers and trade analysts alike are now counting down the hours until tomorrow morning's formal announcement, hoping to mark their calendars for what looks to be one of the most exciting box office releases of the season.

Prabhas to sport dual persona in Spirit

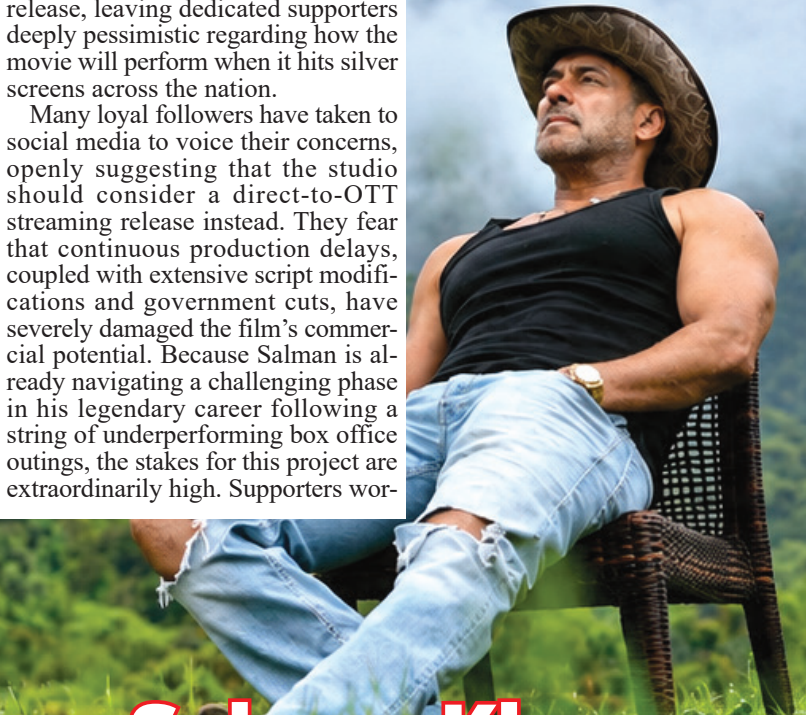


Anticipation for the upcoming pan-India action extravaganza Spirit has reached new heights following recent developmental updates regarding its core narrative and character arcs. Directed by commercial powerhouse Sandeep Reddy Vanga—renowned for his distinctively raw and intense cinematic style—the project marks the first-ever collaboration between the acclaimed filmmaker and Telugu cinema superstar Prabhas. Industry insiders reveal that Vanga has crafted a layered, multi-dimensional role that completely reinvents the actor's screen persona, setting the stage for one of the most explosive cinematic collisions in contemporary Indian cinema.

According to production circles, the narrative relies heavily on a compelling two-dimensional character structure that splits the protagonist's journey across distinct phases and timelines. Prabhas is reported to feature in two visually contrasting avatars throughout the runtime. The first half anchors the star as an uncompromising, fierce narcotics control officer whose strict adherence to duty brings him face-to-face with deep-rooted systemic corruption. Conversely, the narrative's second half pivots into a much grittier zone, introducing an intricate mafia sub-plot and flashing back to a high-stakes underworld conflict in Mumbai where the character's past life and code of ethics are severely tested.

This structural duality allows Vanga to experiment with a cat-and-mouse narrative palette, blending emotional intensity with unbridled, visceral action sequences. Joining Prabhas on screen is an impressive ensemble cast featuring Triptii Dimri, Vivek Oberoi, and veteran actor Prakash Raj, which further broadens the scope of the drama.

Salman Khan faces pessimism over Maatrubhumi



Bollywood superstar Salman Khan's massive fan base is growing increasingly worried about the theatrical prospects of his upcoming movie, Maatrubhumi. While official clearance from the Central Board of Film Certification is finally right around the corner and the government has already issued a formal No Objection Certificate for public exhibition, these regulatory approvals reportedly came at a very steep creative cost. The storyline and narrative depth originally envisioned by the creators differ drastically from the final cut that is currently ready for release, leaving dedicated supporters deeply pessimistic regarding how the movie will perform when it hits silver screens across the nation.

Many loyal followers have taken to social media to voice their concerns, openly suggesting that the studio should consider a direct-to-OTT streaming release instead. They fear that continuous production delays, coupled with extensive script modifications and government cuts, have severely damaged the film's commercial potential. Because Salman is already navigating a challenging phase in his legendary career following a string of underperforming box office outings, the stakes for this project are extraordinarily high. Supporters worry that an unfavorable theatrical run could further tarnish his reputation among general audiences and dampen the mounting hype surrounding his other future cinematic commitments.

Industry analysts note that a star of Salman's stature carries immense pressure with every release, making script integrity vital for connecting with modern moviegoers. As the release date draws closer, all eyes remain fixed on how the film will fare against mounting skepticism.