

‘Firm Karnataka resolve’: DKS govt completes 100 days

Ex-CM Siddaramaiah to inaugurate the milestone celebrations.

BENGALURU

A special programme titled ‘Firm Karnataka Resolve – Path to a Century, Chariot of Progress’ will be held at the Banquet Hall of Vidhana Soudha at 10 am on Thursday to mark the successful completion of 100 days of the Karnataka government under Chief Minister DK Shivakumar.

Former chief minister Siddaramaiah will inaugurate the programme, which will be presided over by DK Shivakumar.

Deputy Chief Minister and Revenue and Sports Minister G Parameshwara, all Cabinet ministers, MLAs, Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha members, MLCs, Chief Secretary

Dr Shalini Rajneesh and senior officials from various government departments are expected to attend.

CM to interact with beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the state government’s five major guarantee schemes — Anna Bhagya, Gruha Lakshmi, Shakti, Yuva Nidhi and Gruha Jyothi — will participate in the programme. Beneficiaries from different sections of society and workers from various sectors will interact directly with the Chief Minister.

Farmers, autorickshaw drivers, hamalis, gig workers, street vendors, ASHA workers, anganwadi workers and pourakarmikas will also take part in the event.

The interaction will focus

on the impact of the government’s welfare schemes on people’s lives and the State’s development plans.

The programme is aimed at highlighting the government’s achievements during its first 100 days and outlining its priorities for the future.

The government said the event would provide beneficiaries a platform to share their experiences and discuss how its welfare-oriented initiatives have brought changes to their lives. It will also focus on the

roadmap for further development and delivery of public services across Karnataka.



ED raids Minister Satish Jarkiholi over FEMA probe

BENGALURU

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted simultaneous searches at 18 locations across Bengaluru and Belagavi linked to Karnataka PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi, his daughter and Chikkodi MP Priyanka Jarkiholi, and several of their associates, as part of an investigation into suspected illegal foreign investments and alleged violations of foreign exchange regulations.

The early-morning operation covered residences and properties linked to the minister and his associates. In Belagavi, searches were conducted at Jarkiholi’s residence in Kuve-mpu Nagar and at the home of his close associate, Dr Girish Sonawalkar, in Laxmi Tekdi.

MP Priyanka Jarkiholi was at home when the raids were conducted. In Gokak, the minister’s hometown, officials searched his Hill Garden residence, while simultaneous raids were carried out at the residences of his supporters, Raju Dharashetti and Vitthal Parasannavar. Search operations were still underway at the time of reporting.

According to sources, the ED is probing suspected overseas investments linked to

Details of the ED Raids

Scope and targets: Searches spanned 18 properties in Karnataka and Maharashtra involving Satish Jarkiholi, MP Priyanka Jarkiholi, Excise official YD Manjunath, and associates.

Allegations: The investigation centers on suspected illegal foreign investments in an African mining venture and irregularities in Karnataka Excise bar licences, tracking potential illegal overseas fund transfers.

Political reactions

Congress response: Karnataka Congress leaders condemned the raids as political vendetta against a prominent Dalit leader intended to deflect attention, with DK Shivakumar defending Jarkiholi as a clean politician.



mining ventures in Rwanda, Uganda and other African countries. Investigators are examining whether funds were transferred abroad in violation of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999, and whether unofficial channels were used for the transactions.

The agency is reportedly scrutinising financial records, bank documents, property papers and other materials to trace the flow of funds and establish the nature of the overseas investments.

DKS cries political vendetta

BENGALURU

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday termed the ED searches on properties linked to PWD minister Satish Jarkiholi as “politically motivated”.

He questioned the timing of the searches, which came a day before the Congress government led by him completes 100 days in office. Asserting that he would stand by Jarkiholi, who he said had done no wrong, he said he had cautioned all his ministers and party legislators about possible action by central agencies against them. He claimed that his government and the party were being “targeted”.

“ED searches on Satish Jarkiholi and his family are not something we were unaware of. There were searches on his family members earlier, too. I don’t know about his other family members and close associates, but Jarkiholi is a senior minister, has businesses, is in politics and is engaged in social service,” He said Jarkiholi was involved in business transactions within the framework of law and had nothing to hide.

‘More raids may come’ “They have the option to do several other things, and they may do it. (Searches) may be done on others, too. I have already cautioned our ministers in this regard. They (ED) will not leave anyone. False narratives are stitched, false allegations are made, and the people are misled,” the CM said.

I was also jailed by the ED, but what happened? I’m today the CM of the state, and it became inevitable for everyone to accept the fact.
-DK Shivakumar, CM

BJP slams Cong for giving ‘political colour’ to ED raids

Bengaluru:

BJP leaders on Wednesday hit out at the Congress-led state government over the ED raids on PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi’s residences and properties, accusing the ruling party of unnecessarily giving a political colour to the searches.

State BJP president BY Vijayendra, former chief minister Jagadish Shettar and former state BJP president Nalin Kumar Kateel said the ED action should be viewed in the context of the agency’s investigation and rejected allegations that the raids were “politically motivated”.

Vijayendra said the ED raids on the residences and properties of Karnataka PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi had taken place as the BJP’s “Ballari Chalo” padayatra entered its final phase, but added that the timing was coincidental.

**BENGALURU**

The Karnataka government is preparing to move the Supreme Court challenging the orders directing the state to release 6,000 cusecs of Cauvery water daily to Tamil Nadu, state Water Resources Minister N Chaluvaryaswamy said on Wednesday.

The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) on Tuesday upheld the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee’s (CWRC) recommendation directing Karnataka to ensure a flow of 6,000 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for 15 days from September 9.

Speaking to reporters, the minister said, “The matter has been discussed at length with Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and preparations are under way to file a petition before the SC tomorrow after consultations with the legal team.”

He also said the government has directed officials to



file a review petition before the CWRC against its order.

The minister said Karnataka’s reservoir levels were currently “very critical” and the state does not have sufficient water to release.

“At present, priority has to be given only to drinking water. At the same time, there is a need to fill dried-up lakes and tanks,” he said.

The situation could improve to some extent only if the state received good rainfall within a week of the Gowri-Ganesha festival, he said expressing concern over the prevailing water situation.

Pointing out that the Tamil Nadu government continues to exert pressure, Chaluvaryaswamy said, the government would seriously consider appointing a Special Advocate to represent Karnataka’s interests before the Supreme Court, as suggested by former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai. “We will also speak to him on the issue,” the minister said.

CM Vijay’s TVK alliance named Secular Social Justice Victory Front

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu’s ruling alliance, led by chief minister Vijay’s TVK, has been named ‘Secular Social Justice Victory Front (Mathachcharpatra Samookaneethi Vetri Koottani)’. This was announced after the alliance partners’ meeting chaired by Vijay on Wednesday that was convened to hammer out key issues, including an official name for the combine.

CM Vijay will be the president of the alliance which will face the upcoming bypoll in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, chief of Tamil Nadu Congress unit B Manickam Tagore said. “We will work together under

the alliance”, Tagore said.

The agenda for the meeting, the second major gathering since the post-poll coalition formed the government, was reportedly on formalising the alliance structure.

However, leaders of the Left parties – CPI(M) and the CPI, which support the government – skipped the meeting at TVK headquarters in Panaiyur.

Leaders who took part in the key meeting included Tamil Nadu Congress Committee President B Manickam Tagore, the grand old party’s Rajya Sabha member and Assembly floor leader, Praveen Chakravarthy and Tharai Cuthbert respectively, as per reports.

BSY to join BJP padayatra valedictory event in Ballari

Mysuru: Former chief minister B S Yediyurappa said that he would participate in the BJP padayatra on the last day and the valedictory convention in Ballari on Thursday.

Speaking to media people in Mysuru on Wednesday, he said that the movement led by B Y Vijayendra has received huge public support.

The former CM said that the padayatra has seen a huge success and has been beyond their expectations.

He also said that state government should have given permission for the convention without any hassles. But it is good that it was given atleast later, he added.

The BJP had earlier an-

Un-ending dispute

The order
The Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) recommended releasing 6,000 cusecs daily for 15 days, which was subsequently upheld by the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA).

Karnataka stand
State Water Resources Minister N. Chaluvaryaswamy stated that reservoir levels are at a “very critical” stage and water is only sufficient for local drinking needs and refilling dried lakes.

Next legal steps
Karnataka planned to file a petition in the apex court and a review petition before the CWRC after consulting legal experts.

varayaswamy said, the government would seriously consider appointing a Special Advocate to represent Karnataka’s interests before the Supreme Court, as suggested by former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai. “We will also speak to him on the issue,” the minister said.

India sends fresh tranche of relief material to Nepal

New Delhi: India on Wednesday sent a fresh tranche of humanitarian aid comprising 35 tonnes of relief material and equipment onboard a C-17 transport aircraft to flood-ravaged Nepal, officials said.

The death toll from the devastating flash floods in Nepal climbed to 1,365 on Wednesday as more bodies were recovered from the affected areas, according to authorities. The first tranche of relief material was sent by India hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to his Nepalese counterpart Balendra Shah on August 26, the day flash floods struck the Himalayan nation.

Modi to host gala dinner for BRICS leaders on Sept 12

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host a gala dinner for leaders of BRICS member countries on Saturday evening as India hosts the BRICS Leaders’ Summit 2026 in New Delhi.

The dinner, scheduled for 7:30 pm at Bharat Mandapam on September 12, will be part of a packed first day of the two-day summit, which will bring together leaders of BRICS member countries for discussions on strengthening multilateralism and promoting more inclusive global governance.

The summit will begin on Saturday afternoon with the arrival of BRICS leaders at Bharat Mandapam. The leaders will then participate in a closed session on “Inclusive Global Governance and Strengthening Multilateralism” at 2:35 pm.



The assurance comes against the backdrop of Chinese survey ship visits and the 99-year Hambantota lease.

NEW DELHI

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Disanayake on Wednesday assured defence minister Rajnath Singh that his country would “never allow its territory to be used for any activities inimical to India’s security interests”, repeating in Colombo the pledge he first gave Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year.

The assurance came on the second day of Singh’s three-day visit, the first by an Indian defence minister to the island nation since KC Pant, defence minister in the Rajiv Gandhi cabinet, travelled there

India-SL sign 3 pacts



India to upgrade six Sri Lanka Air Force L70 guns.

Defence colleges to strengthen academic links.

India-Sri Lanka NCC Youth Exchange Programme formalised.

in 1988.

Sri Lanka’s ports have been the sharpest irritant in the relationship for four years running. The Chinese space and missile tracking ship Yuan Wang 5 berthed at Hambantota in August 2022 over India’s objections.

The research vessel Shi Yan 6, described by Beijing as being on a scientific mission,

docked at Colombo in October 2023.

Colombo barred foreign research vessels from its waters from January 2024. Announced as a one-year measure, the moratorium has stayed in force. India and the US had flagged that such ships map the seabed and monitor missile and satellite activity across the region.

Hambantota itself passed to a Chinese state-run operator on a 99-year lease in 2017, after Colombo struggled to service the loans raised to build it. The Chinese-funded Colombo Port City remains the other pressure point on India’s radar.

Singh, in turn, pitched India as the neighbourhood’s first responder. India considered assistance to Sri Lanka “not a favour, but a responsibility”, he said, and would continue to provide it.

Disanayake thanked New Delhi for the relief mounted under Operation Sagar Bandhu during Cyclone Ditwah and for the rehabilitation package that followed, which covered reconstruction across several parts of the island.

“India will always stand firmly with Sri Lanka whenever the island nation faces a crisis,” Singh had said a day earlier, addressing the Indian diaspora in Colombo.

The two sides described

A broader strategic partnership

The latest defence agreements come against the backdrop of expanding India-Sri Lanka relations across defence, maritime security, connectivity, energy, investment and people-to-people ties.

The two countries have maintained close defence relations for decades, although their relationship has also passed through challenging periods, particularly during India’s involvement in Sri Lanka during the late 1980s. In recent years, however, defence cooperation has increasingly focused on training, capacity building, humanitarian assistance, maritime security and institutional engagement. The three new MoUs add another layer to that relationship by combining defence capability enhancement with professional education and youth cooperation, according to experts.

themselves as “civilisational twins, close neighbours and maritime partners”, and pledged to work jointly for the safety, security, peace and prosperity of the region.

‘Undermines security’: India condemns Houthi attacks on Saudi

New Delhi: In its first response against attacks by Yemen’s Houthi rebels on energy facilities in Saudi Arabia, India said that such strikes undermine regional security and threaten freedom of navigation in the Bab-el-Mandeb strait.

India’s Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal in government’s official response said that India condemns such strikes. Houthis on Tuesday targeted energy facilities belonging to oil giant Saudi Aramco in southern Saudi Arabia as part of a “broad operation.” Saudi authorities said that the strikes triggered fires at multiple oil installations and utility sites and injured 73 people. On Monday, Houthis said that Saudi Arabia launched multiple attacks on Houthi-held areas using aircraft and cruise missiles and struck al-Jawf, al-Bayda, Marib and Taiz provinces.

Quick Read



Patil holds talks with French aerospace, materials firms

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Karnataka Industries Minister M B Patil held discussions with LISI Aerospace, Aubert & Duval and Arke-ma in France on Wednesday, seeking greater investment in the state. Patil urged Aubert & Duval, a leading advanced metallic materials company, to expand its existing manufacturing facility in Belagavi. The company operates from the Aequs Aerospace SEZ and has a partnership with Squad Forging India. LISI Aerospace, which manufactures aerospace components at its Bengaluru facility, shared its future investment plans. Patil urged it to invest further in Karnataka.

BMTC live tracking for app-based taxi users soon

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Commuters using Ola, Uber and other app-based taxis will soon be able to access BMTC's live bus-tracking facility through the Namma BMTC Mobile App 2.0, Transport Minister Byrathi Suresh said. Chairing a meeting with senior officials, Suresh directed BMTC to extend its live-tracking facility to private app-based taxi users, enabling commuters to check bus availability after getting off cabs. The minister also directed BMTC to deploy 200 mini AC electric buses at Metro stations. These buses, part of the 4,500 electric buses being procured under the PM E-DRIVE scheme, will provide connectivity within a 5-km radius of Metro stations.

GBA, police raid vet clinic over animal cruelty allegations; 13 animals rescued

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and police raided a veterinary clinic in Doddakannelli near Bellandur following allegations that street dogs were being subjected to unauthorised orthopaedic procedures and severe cruelty. The raid was conducted at Primecare Vet Hospital after an animal rescue group and a whistleblower submitted alleged video evidence of animal cruelty to the authorities. According to rescuers, 12 dogs and a cat were found on the premises. Four street dogs requiring immediate medical attention were rescued and shifted to another veterinary facility. Six indie dogs were reportedly found to require treatment, while three others were al-

legedly rescued before their leg injuries became irreversible.

The cat was also shifted to another facility after its owner could not be contacted. Owners of some other animals were reportedly informed and asked to collect their pets.

The rescue group alleged that street dogs were being used to practise orthopaedic procedures, claiming that their legs were broken without proper anaesthesia before surgeries were performed.

It further alleged that some animals died following the procedures and were disposed of. Police questioned two doctors in connection with the allegations. Their statements, along with evidence collected during the raid, will form part of the investigation.

The rescuers also alleged that dog catchers were being paid around ₹500 per dog and claimed that some were involved in injuring the animals. These allegations are yet to be independently verified.

An unsterilised Cane Corso and a husky were also reportedly found at the clinic, raising suspicions of a possible breeding operation. The rescue group has urged authorities to investigate whether the clinic is linked to a larger network.

Officials are expected to examine the animals, medical records, CCTV footage and other material recovered from the premises to determine whether offences were committed and whether more animals were subjected to alleged experimentation.

Food safety violations: Officials order temporary closure of hotel

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Officials of the Food Safety and Drug Administration Department conducted an inspection at the popular South Ruchis hotel on Race Course Road on Wednesday following complaints from the public regarding food safety and hygiene violations.

During the inspection, officials found severe unhygienic conditions in the hotel's kitchen and said proper sanitation standards were not being maintained.

As the hotel had failed to comply with prescribed food safety measures and regulations under the Food Safety

and Standards Act, officials ordered its temporary closure with immediate effect in the interest of public health.

Officials said several expired food products were found during the inspection. The seized items included 1 kg coconut powder, 1 kg sambar powder, 800 grams South Ruchis chutney powder, 200 grams rasam powder, one packet of mushrooms, 5 kg mislabelled jagery powder, 45 kg millet, 2 kg ajwain seeds and 121 kg bucket jagger.

The department has intensified food safety inspections across Bengaluru in recent weeks.

CAUVERY WATER CONCERN



R Ashoka said Karnataka cannot afford to release Cauvery water when its own reservoirs and water requirements are under pressure. He demanded that the government place updated scientific data on reservoir storage, inflows, drinking-water needs and agricultural requirements before the Supreme Court and CWMA. He also sought a permanent technical-legal mechanism to defend Karnataka's interests before future water-sharing or release directions are issued.

Chief Minister and Water Resources Minister explain what information and documents were submitted before the Authority. The government should also disclose whether the impact of water release on Bengaluru's drinking-water supply and farmers was adequately highlighted, he said. Ashoka sought a white paper on the performance of the technical and legal teams that

represented Karnataka and demanded action against officials who failed to adequately present the state's case.

He also called for a permanent technical and legal strategy on the Cauvery issue to ensure Karnataka's position is strongly presented before future water-release orders.

"Releasing water even when there is none, and shedding tears after an order

Cauvery Water Row

ISSUE	DETAILS
CWMA direction	Release 6,000 cusecs daily
Period cited	15 days
Water quantity	7.5 TMC
Ashoka's demand	Approach Supreme Court
Key concerns	Drinking water, farmers, reservoir storage
Further demand	White paper on technical and legal team

comes—this must not become the state government's Cauvery policy," he said.

Ashoka urged the government to seek an immediate review of the Authority's direction and pursue legal remedies if required. He said Karnataka's water security, farmers' livelihoods and Bengaluru's drinking-water needs should remain the government's priority.

Teacher uses blood-written placard to seek Kannada school funds

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

A teacher in Shivamogga has written a placard in his blood to draw Primary and Secondary Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa's attention to pending grants for Kannada-medium schools established after 1995.

Prashanth, attached to a school in Shikaripura, recorded a video message displaying the placard, which read, "Release funds for Kannada schools after 1995." He demanded that the grants be released by November 1.

Prashanth said teachers had staged several protests but received only assurances.

NEW PLATFORMS PLANNED FOR GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL, ROADWORK TRANSPARENCY

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byregowda on Wednesday announced plans to launch Sahay 3.0, an upgraded platform aimed at making grievance redressal more citizen-friendly, transparent and effective.

Speaking at a consultation meeting with residents at the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) headquarters, Byregowda said Sahay 3.0 would replace Sahay 2.0 and incorporate suggestions from citizens and experts.

The upgraded platform is expected to offer voice-based complaint registration, multi-lingual support, low-bandwidth accessibility and anonymous complaints in select cases. Citizens will also be required to confirm before a



complaint is closed.

A public dashboard will display complaint status, pending cases and resolution timelines. Users will be able to upload photographs, location details and voice notes, while automated alerts will remind officials about pending complaints. Citizens can also reopen complaints that remain unresolved, he said.

The upgraded Sahay 3.0 platform will allow citizens to file complaints through voice, track their status and reopen unresolved cases. A public dashboard will show pending grievances and timelines. Meanwhile, RIMS will help monitor road projects, with details of over 2,000 km of works already integrated.

RIMS to track road projects

Alongside Sahay 3.0, the government is developing a digital portal for infrastructure works under the Road Infrastructure Management System (RIMS).

The GIS-linked platform

will record road-related projects, including construction, pipeline laying and cable installation, at least six months before work begins. It will provide real-time updates on ongoing and proposed projects and maintain a "road history" of previous works.

Byregowda said data covering more than 2,000 km of road works and ₹9,151 crore in grants from 2022-23 to 2026-27 had already been integrated into RIMS.

Citizens will be able to track project progress through interactive maps, while officials will monitor weekly updates.

The initiatives aim to improve coordination, efficiency and transparency in grievance redressal and infrastructure management, the minister said.



Future-ready cities need integrated urban planning: Yathindra

Karnataka is preparing to strengthen urban infrastructure and municipal services as rapid growth puts greater pressure on cities across the State.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Urban Development Minister Dr Yathindra Siddaramaiah has stressed the need for a comprehensive approach to urban development to build future-ready cities that support economic growth while improving citizens' quality of life.

Speaking at the Karnataka Urban Infrastructure and Investments Summit organised in Bengaluru in collaboration with the Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation (KUID-FC), the Minister said Karnataka was among India's fastest urbanising and economically dynamic states.

He said Bengaluru had emerged as a global technology and innovation hub, while Mysuru, Mangaluru, Hubballi-Dharwad, Belagavi, Kalaburagi, Shivamogga and Tumakuru were developing as important regional economic centres.

The Government's urban development agenda would focus on four key pillars — strong urban governance and integrated planning, effective infrastructure financing, reliable 24x7 water and sewerage services, and sustainable urban transport, he said.

The Minister said the State would expand 24x7 water

Urban priorities

Karnataka's urban development strategy will focus on integrated planning, stronger civic governance and sustainable infrastructure. The Government plans to expand 24x7 water supply, improve sewerage and wastewater reuse, and strengthen public transport. Suburban rail, Transit-Oriented Development, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure will receive attention. Urban local bodies will be encouraged to improve property tax collection and adopt GIS-based valuation, digital services and municipal bonds to strengthen their finances.

supply projects in Belagavi, Hubballi-Dharwad and Kalaburagi, besides strengthening water and sewerage infrastructure in other cities. Greater emphasis would also be placed on wastewater treatment, reuse and efficient management of water resources.

On transportation, he said the Government was promoting public transport, suburban rail, Transit-Oriented Development, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and technology-based traffic management to address congestion and growing mobility needs.

The Government is also working to strengthen the financial sustainability of Urban Local Bodies through improved property tax collection, GIS-based property valuation, digital services and innovative financing mechanisms, including municipal bonds.

The Minister said public-private partnerships, technology and innovative financing would play a key role in strengthening urban infrastructure.

CESS CHALLENGE HEARING

Multiplexes challenge 2% cess, HC seeks govt response

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court on Wednesday sought the State government's response to petitions challenging the imposition of a two per cent cess on cinema ticket revenue collected by theatres and multiplexes under the Karnataka Cine and Cultural Workers Social Security (Welfare) Act, 2024.

A Bench headed by Justice H.T. Narendra Prasad issued notice to the government on petitions filed by the Indian Multiplex Association, PVR INOX and others. The matter was adjourned to Thursday.

During the hearing, counsel for the petitioners argued that

HC QUESTIONS CESS DEMAND

The Karnataka High Court has sought the State government's response to petitions challenging the two per cent cess imposed on cinema ticket revenue. Multiplex operators argue that the welfare Act has not been formally brought into force through a Gazette notification. They have also challenged the Labour Commissioner's circular directing cess collection from September 1, besides questioning its constitutional validity and its impact on multiplex businesses.



Section 1(2) of the Act requires the government to issue a separate notification in the official Gazette specifying the date on which the legislation would come into force. However, no such notification

has been issued so far.

Despite this, notices were being served demanding payment of the two per cent cess from September 1, the petitioners submitted.

The Bench questioned how

payment could be demanded under an Act that had not formally come into force. "Let the Act come into force first; thereafter, we can interpret its provisions," the Bench orally observed.

The petitioners challenged the Labour Commissioner's August 29 circular directing mandatory collection of the cess from September 1. They argued that an administrative circular cannot substitute a statutory Gazette notification and sought its quashing.

They also contended that collecting cess under an unenforced law violates Article 265 of the Constitution. The petitioners further questioned the validity of the State legis-

lation in view of the Centre's Social Security Code, 2020, arguing that the State Act had not received Presidential assent as required under Article 254(2).

Multiplex operators said they only provide venues for screening films and are not direct employers of cinema workers. They also alleged discrimination as OTT platforms, though covered by the Act, have been exempted from the cess under the rules.

The petitioners further opposed the levy on food and beverage revenue, claiming it amounts to an additional burden over GST and affects their business rights under Article 19(1)(g).

Quick Read

Illegal sand transport leads to police case

CH NEWS, CHIKKAMAGALURU
A case was registered against three people at the Koppa police station on charges of illegal sand transportation. A case has been registered against AG Raghavendra of Bananki in Thirthahalli taluk, Puneeth of Holekoppa, and Phaniraj of Kattehakkal on charges of illegally transporting sand in a tipper lorry to Sannakere in Harandur village near the town. Acting on a confirmed tip-off that sand was being illegally transported to Sannakere from Siddha Math, the police went to the spot and inspected the area. They seized the lorry and the property and registered a case.

Applications invited for Solar Pumpset Unit for SC beneficiaries

CH NEWS, CHIKKAMAGALURU
Applications have been invited from interested parties for the distribution of solar pump set units to Scheduled Caste beneficiaries under the National Agricultural Development Scheme. Under this scheme, two units can be distributed and a subsidy of 1.5 lakh will be provided for each unit. Scheduled Caste beneficiaries can apply for the subsidy by installing a solar pump set from an approved company and filling the application form available in the office. Farmers in Mudigere area can obtain the application forms from the office of the Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture, Mudigere and farmers in Kalasa area from the Kalasa Raitha Sampark Kendra. This is the last day to submit the application. For more information, the office of the Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture can be contacted, said a statement from the Horticulture Department.

Kambala arrangements to be discussed thoroughly

The State Kambala Association has decided to convene a meeting of the Kambala Committee as soon as the official invitation letter for the Mysuru Dasara Kambala is received.

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

So far, neither the District Kambala Committee nor the State Kambala Association has received any official written invitation or letter regarding organizing Kambala in the cultural city of Mysuru. It has been decided to call a special meeting only after the official proposal is received and take a final decision on bringing the pavilions and providing cooperation, said State Kambala Association President Dr Deviprasad Shetty Belapu. He gave this information after a joint important consultative meeting of the State Kambala Association and the District Kambala Committee held at the Kadalakere Srishti Garden in Moodbidri. There has been no official communication regarding the Mysore Kambala so far. Only unofficial discussions have taken place. A separate meeting of the Kambala Committee will be called as soon as the official invitation letter arrives. There, the number of pairs of rooms to be sent from the coast, the mode of transporta-



Who raised the issue of permanent financial support from the government for coastal Kambala, the state cabinet meeting to be held in Mangaluru in September, the state government is expected to officially announce a special grant of Rs 5 crore per year for Kambala in the budget. In this regard, the Kambala Committee would like to express its gratitude to the Chief Minister and the government.

—Dr Deviprasad Shetty Belapu, President

tion and arrangements will be thoroughly discussed and decided, Deviprasad Shetty said. For the 4 main categories of Kambala, namely, Hagga Hiriya, Hagga Kiriya, Negilu Hiriya and Negilu Kiriya, only one jockey (runner) or one person who leaves the room (Gidapunar) can participate in the respective category. A person is allowed to participate in only one room in a category. Earlier, since only

one runner or rope-taker used to stand in line for different rooms, others would have to wait for him and get delayed for hours. Now, since there will be separate people for the 4 main categories, the Kambalas will be completed smoothly on time. It has been decided that the competitions in the remaining two categories, namely, Kanehalage and Crosshalage, must be completed by 3 pm.

Slippers controversy in Panchayat, PDO’s arrogance condemned

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Senior social activist Mahendra Varma Jain has expressed his anger by saying that the notice board that requires people to remove their shoes before entering the Uppinangady Gram Panchayat PDO office is a sign of arrogance. He said that there is a rule to enter religious places like temples, basadis, and mosques in public places without shoes. However, a

sign has been installed at the Uppinangady Panchayat office instructing citizens to remove their shoes before entering the PDO office, which is a move that looks down on the villagers of the village. The Panchayat office is the property of the villagers. It is unacceptable to look down on the villagers there. He warned that if this discrimination is not eliminated, a struggle will be inevitable. Panchayat PDO Wilfred

Lawrence Rodrigues said that a request for a notice had been made due to the mud entering the office with slippers during the rainy season. This is not mandatory. He said that in future, this office will be used as the office of the president and vice president. Chief Executive Officer of the District Zilla Panchayat said that appropriate action would be taken after investigating the matter and appropriate action would be taken.

Two-month-old road raises quality concerns

CH NEWS, CHIKKAMAGALURU

Allegations have been made in NR Pura taluk that a road constructed with government funds is deteriorating in just two months due to poor workmanship. The road, which was said to have been constructed at a cost of around Rs 2 crore, has now raised quality questions, with villagers expressing strong anger against the authorities. The incident is said to have taken place in Tawareghatta village under Muttinakoppa Gram Panchayat in NR Pura taluk. The road to the village, which has about 30 to 40 houses, was constructed just two months ago. But now the road has caved in at many places, with asphalt and gravel coming out, the villagers have alleged. An elderly woman from the village swept the surface of the road to show the poor quality of the road. During

A road built at a cost of around Rs 2 crore in NR Pura taluk is crumbling in just two months due to shoddy workmanship.

this, a pile of crushed gravel and stones that was under the asphalt layer came out. Locals have joked that the quality of the road, which cost Rs 2 crore, was shown by sweeping the garbage. Villagers have also raised questions about the timing of the road work. There is a suspicion that the road was constructed during the rainy season about two months ago, and locals have questioned how long the road would have lasted if it had been asphalted during the rains. Who gave permission for the road construction during the rainy season? Who were the officials who checked the quality of the work? Was a quality inspection conducted after the work was completed? Ques-

The villagers have expressed their anger that the road built with government money is deteriorating in just two months, saying that it is not a misuse of public tax money. They have demanded that the concerned authorities should check the quality of the road work and take appropriate action against the guilty.

tions are now being raised among the villagers. There has also been a demand for a comprehensive investigation into the road work in Tavareghatta village and an examination of the quality of the work, materials used and cost. An official clarification from the concerned department regarding the allegation that the road costing Rs 2 crore is being demolished in two months is yet to come out.

Ganja and MDMA seized, two arrested

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

The police here arrested two persons who were allegedly attempting to sell drugs near the government high school ground at Guruvayanakere and seized ganja and MDMA from them. The arrested have been identified as Tvalha alias Ajjar alias Ansar (21), a resident of Sunnath Kere in Kuvettu village, and Ibrahim (29), a resident of Pilichandikallu. Police noticed four persons standing near two-wheelers in a hilly and wooded area close to the ground. When the police approached them, the group attempted to flee. Police chased and caught two of them. MDMA worth Rs 5,000 was seized from Ansar, while 29 grams of ganja was recovered from Ibrahim.

Author Reshel Bretny Fernandes honoured for literary achievements

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Young author and orator Reshel Bretny Fernandes has received recognition for her achievements in literature and public speaking, including acclaim from some of the highest offices in India. Fernandes, who has authored seven books, has been featured in the latest edition of Femhonour Magazine, with her achievements highlighted across pages 12 and 13. Femhonour Magazine focuses on recognising women, celebrating freedom and empowering female achievers across India. Fernandes has

been featured as a young voice making her mark in the fields of literature and leadership. Her literary journey and achievements at a young age have earned her recognition at various levels, further establishing her as an emerging author and orator. Fernandes is currently pursuing her career as a lawyer and is also serving as the district general secretary of the Youth Congress. Her journey from literature and public speaking to law and public service reflects her growing involvement in both creative and leadership spaces.



Govt will not implement Kasturirangan report

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

The Kasturi Rangan report will not be allowed to be implemented under any circumstances. The main goal of our Congress government is to protect the farmers, agriculture, environment and the lives of the people of Malnad, said School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa. A media statement was issued regarding the massive march organised in Shikaripura on September 11 in protest against the Kasturi Rangan report and information about this march has been given. The march will start from Issur, which has been declared as India's first independent village, at 9 am on September 11 and will go to Shikaripura. I will also participate in this march. The Minister called on not only Congress workers but also all those who have the mindset to fight against the Kasturi Rangan report to participate in large numbers and



warn the central government in a non-partisan manner. Former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had rejected the Kasturi Rangan report. However, the central government has been issuing draft notifications repeatedly and now we strongly condemn the fact that the draft notification has been issued for the seventh time. If the Kasturi Rangan report is implemented, the lives of farmers in 1,576 villages in the Western Ghats will be in jeopardy. The minister expressed concern that it will have a severe impact on the lives of people in 484 villages in district alone, and there will also be

a big blow to agricultural activities. Farmers in the Malnad region live in harmony with the environment. They have been farming for generations. Are those who sit in Delhi and consider the arecanut trees as forests aware of the real situation in the hills. He expressed his anger that it is unfortunate that the central government has forgotten humanity about the lives of farmers. Our father and former Chief Minister S Bangarappa had called a special session on the issue of Cauvery water and taken a firm decision to protect the interests of the state. Thousands of people must participate to make the struggle in Shikaripura a success. Minister Madhu Bangarappa said that everyone should raise their voices together to protect the land, water, agriculture, environment and the livelihood of farmers in the hill country and send a clear message to the central government.

Server glitches and poor connectivity hamper SIR hearings

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Server glitches and poor internet connectivity are slowing down the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Dakshina Kannada, making it difficult for Booth-Level Officers (BLOs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) to upload documents and update records. The problem is particularly severe in areas within a two-kilometre radius of the district prison in Mangaluru, where mobile network jammers installed inside the

prison are affecting connectivity. Officials say the disruptions are delaying hearings and document uploads on the SIR portal. A voter who attended a hearing at Bokkapatna Government Primary School after receiving a notice over a mismatch in his name in the 2002 SIR roll had to wait for more than an hour because of server issues. Unable to complete the upload, the official accepted a copy of the document for further processing. I availed half-day leave from work to attend the hearing. However, I could not com-

plete the process within half a day, the voter said. A BLO said poor internet coverage in several parts of the city was further delaying the process. Officials are required to upload supporting documents during hearings to rectify discrepancies identified during the revision. Dakshina Kannada has 16,46,387 voters in the draft electoral roll prepared under the SIR. Notices have been generated for 1,50,125 voters, of which 93,441 had been served. Another 56,684 notices are yet to be delivered. BLOs are facing chal-

lenges in serving notices related to discrepancies such as age mismatches involving parents or grandparents, voters not linked to the previous SIR, and name mismatches. Conducting hearings and uploading documents has added to their workload. Additional Deputy Commissioner K Raju said, the district administration was taking steps to resolve the technical issues. AEROs are handling an average of 50 to 100 hearings daily. We will address the network and server-related issues as well, he said.

Tulu Federation urges state language recognition

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

All India Tulu Federation has urged the state government to declare Tulu an official language of the state. Addressing reporters, Federation President AC Bhandary said Tulu, one of the oldest Dravidian languages,

is the mother tongue of over 1.8 million people and the cultural language of Tulunadu. Despite its rich literary heritage, ancient inscriptions and distinct script, Tulu has neither been accorded official language status nor included in the Eighth Sched-

ule of the Constitution, he said. Bhandary said the demand has been supported through resolutions passed at the World Tulu Convention in Ujire, representations from various organisations, and the report submitted by a committee headed by Dr M Mohan Alva. Legislators

and MPs have also repeatedly raised the issue in the legislature, he added. The Federation, on behalf of all Tuluvus, urges the government to declare Tulu the state's second official language at the cabinet meeting scheduled in Mangaluru, Bhandary said.

Bellare police arrest man for clothes theft

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

A man illegally entered the government girls' hostel in Bellare and stole clothes that the students had hung out to dry before fleeing. Following this allegation, the Bellare police have arrested the accused and produced him before the court, a Dakshina Kannada District Police release said. The arrested accused has been identified as K Ramachandra (35), a resident of Kolthige in Puttur taluk. On the morning of September 2, the clothes of the female students who had been hanging out to dry in the hostel premises went missing. When the female students brought this matter to the attention of the warden, he became suspicious and checked the CCTV footage of the hostel. In the early hours of September 2, an unknown youth illegally entered the hostel premises, picked out the clothes that were hanging out to dry and stole them. The video was clearly captured on the CCTV camera. The superintendent of the government hostel in Bellare had complained about this.

Dilapidated road, boys in the village can't find a girl to marry

CH NEWS, CHIKKAMAGALURU

A situation has now arisen in some villages of the Malnad region where people say, the roads are not good in your village, they are not giving girls for marriage. Villagers have alleged that a marriage has been lost due to the poor condition of the road connectivity. Locals have lamented that the severe road problem faced by the villages in the forests of Kalasa taluk has now taken the form of a social problem. The surrounding villages of Edeyur, Marasanige, Mavinakere and K Kelagur in

Kalasa taluk have been suffering from road problems for many years. The situation worsens further during the rainy season, making it difficult for villagers to travel. According to villagers, a family from outside the village has hesitated to continue their marriage after seeing the condition of the roads in this area. Locals say that the attitude is that a village with bad roads will not give a girl. The villagers have expressed their anger that the road problem in the village is also hindering personal relationships like marriage, which shows the seriousness of the situation.



According to locals, the roads in these villages were tarred about 20 years ago with the help of Zilla Panchayat grants. The villagers allege that the tarring work has not

been done properly since then. Despite continuous requests to the authorities and people's representatives for road repair for the last 10 years, the locals have expressed their dissatisfaction saying that no permanent solution has been found to the problem. The villagers said that there are about 450 to 500 houses in the areas, and most of the families depend on various livelihoods including wage labour. Due to the deteriorating road, daily essential services are also facing problems. Villagers said that around

70 to 80 children in this area are struggling to reach schools and colleges every day. Locals said that due to the lack of proper roads, children are facing many problems including transportation facilities and going to schools and colleges during the rainy season. According to the villagers, candidates from various parties had promised to provide a solution to the road problem when the elections came. Years have passed since the elections, saying things like money has been sanctioned and sanctions have been given.

Quick Read

Jal Nadige walkathon to promote water conservation

CH NEWS, MANDYA
A "Jal Nadige" water walkathon will be held on September 12 to promote water conservation and water management. It will begin at 6:30 am from the Collector's Office and cover Sanjaya Circle, Nanda Circle, Dr. Besagarahalli Ramanna Circle, Karnataka Bank Circle, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Circle and Vinobha Road. Participants will learn about saving drinking and domestic water, rainwater harvesting, recycled water, groundwater recharge and water use in agriculture. The walk will return to the Collector's Office at 8 am. Officials urged people to participate and help protect water for generations.

Loan applications invited for backward classes development

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA
Applications have been invited online through the Seva Sindhu portal for loan schemes supporting the economic development of backward communities. The schemes include personal loans, Ganga Kalyan irrigation, education loans, Swavalambi Sarathi and other programs offered through various community development corporations. Eligible applicants can apply for assistance from corporations representing communities including Vokkaliga, Arya Vaishya, Ambigara Choudaiah, Uppara, Madivala Machideva, Maratha, Kadugolla, Veerashaiva Lingayat, Savita Samaj, and nomadic and semi-nomadic groups. For details, applicants may contact the respective corporation websites, the District Manager's office in Chitradurga, or call 08194-220882 for further guidance.

Bhadra water reaches Chitradurga, raising farmers' hopes

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA
Bhadra Upper River Project water has reached Chitradurga district, bringing fresh hope to farmers who have waited for irrigation support for years. Chitradurga MLA K.C. Veerendra Pappi said the State government has kept its promise and taken steps to bring Bhadra water to drought-prone parts of the district.

Pappi said Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has taken special interest in the project and provided guidance for its progress. The arrival of water has brought happiness among farmers and could open a new chapter for agriculture in the district. He said the project aims to provide reliable irrigation and reduce the impact of uncertain rainfall.

According to the MLA, filling lakes with Bhadra water can also help increase groundwater levels. As lakes and other water bodies receive water, nearby borewells and open wells could benefit from improved recharge. Better water availability may allow farmers to grow different crops, increase production and strengthen agriculture-related economic activities.

Farmers and several organizations have campaigned for the project for many years. Pappi said authorities must closely monitor the canals, project works and water distribution system to ensure that water reaches the intended areas. He also stressed the need for careful water management, lake conservation and measures to prevent wastage. The project could also support drinking water needs in rural areas by improving local water sources and groundwater availability.

Karnataka to review fair sugarcane prices for farmers

Farmers demanded ₹5,500 per tonne, citing improved recovery, fair pricing, and transparency in recovery-rate testing after factories offered lower prices

CH NEWS, HAVERI

The Karnataka government will hold discussions on fixing a fair and profitable price for sugarcane growers, Sugar and Textiles Minister Rudrappa Lamani said.

Speaking at a meeting at the District Collector's Office, he said the government wants to address farmers' concerns while ensuring fairness to all sides.

Farmers at the meeting demanded Rs. 5,500 per tonne for sugarcane. They said some factories had offered lower prices last year because of poor recovery rates. Although recovery has improved this year, growers complained that sugarcane prices have not increased accordingly.

They also sought transparency in the testing process used to calculate recovery rates.

Farmers demanded that growers should be allowed to verify recovery testing and urged the government to establish a dedicated



laboratory for such tests. They also pointed out differences between recovery-based price calculations in North and South Karnataka. The farmers called for uniform standards across the State and asked sugar factories to begin operations early.

Responding to the concerns, Minister Lamani said payments pending from the previous year, factory dues and additional payments would be reviewed.

He said the farmers' demands would be placed before the government and discussed with the Chief Minister and Cabinet. He added that the State would

examine the issue within the framework of existing Central government guidelines.

The meeting also reviewed records on sugarcane crushing, recovery rates and prices at factories during 2024-25 and 2025-26. Deputy Commissioner Vijaya Mahantesh, Superintendent of Police Yashoda Vantagodi, Food Department Deputy Director D.J. Manjunath, farmer leaders, growers and officials attended.

The discussions offered farmers hope that their concerns over fair prices and transparent recovery testing will receive attention at the government level.

'Industries Must Support KPS Schools'

Industries in Haveri district must use CSR funds to improve government schools and support poor children, Minister Rudrappa Lamani said. Speaking at a meeting, he stressed that CSR support should provide quality education, modern infrastructure and better facilities in Karnataka Public Schools. LKG and UKG classes are being introduced in 184 government schools during 2026-27, with English-medium education. A phased plan is also underway for selecting KPS schools, securing land and developing infrastructure. Lamani warned that industries failing to cooperate or honour commitments could face government action.

The district administration urged companies to support education and school development.

Mandya Officials Urge Peaceful Ganesh Festival Celebrations

CH NEWS, MANDYA

The district administration has assured full support for peaceful and joyful Gauri-Ganesh festival celebrations, while warning of strict action against anyone who disturbs law and order.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar said the festival should be observed with devotion and harmony, without creating fear or tension among people.

Speaking at a taluk-level harmony meeting, he urged citizens to prevent incidents that could damage communal peace.

He said everyone, including community leaders, has a responsibility to guide young people, stop antisocial activities and respect the law. He also reminded residents that no individual is above the law.

MANDYA USES MUSIC TO INSPIRE YOUNG VOTERS

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Music is being used in Mandya to encourage young people to understand the value of voting. The District SWEEP Committee organised a youth singing competition called 'Hadu Nanna Goto' at Mandya University.

Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer K.R. Nandini said creative programmes like this can make voter awareness more interesting and effective.

Nandini said every citizen who turns 18 should register as a voter and take part in elections. She stressed that every vote matters in a democracy because people choose their representatives through voting. A strong democratic system, she said, can support the country's progress and help citizens take greater responsibility.

The competition is being held under the SVEEP programme, which promotes voter education and participation. Young participants are writing



lyrics, composing music and singing about voting rights and responsibilities. So far, 15 teams have registered. The winner will receive Rs 10,000, while the second and third place winners will receive Rs 5,000 and Rs 2,500.

The best song will be selected as the 'Mandya District Election Theme Song' and may be used in voter awareness programmes across the district. Officials said the programme will also support campaigns planned for September 19 and 20, while promoting voter registration and participation during the Special Comprehensive Revision 2026.

'Akka Cafe draws tourists, boosting rural women'

Zilla Panchayat CEO Nandini K.R. visited Akka Cafe at Pandavapura Taluk Panchayat premises and reviewed its operations and turnover. Tourists visiting Melukote and Bhu Varahanatha Temple are helping the cafe attract customers, self-help group women said. Nandini suggested GST registration to expand catering services for government offices and other organizations. The cafe already receives outside catering orders, giving women additional income. They said foreign tourists had also praised the food's cleanliness and taste.

Shivamogga gears up for grand Maha Ganapathi

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

With Ganesh Chaturthi approaching, preparations for installing Ganesh idols are underway across Shivamogga. The city is gearing up for the grand celebration organised by the Shivamogga Hindu Mahamandali, which is known for its large-scale Mahaganapathi festivities.

The organisers have been making elaborate arrangements for the installation and celebrations. With thousands of devotees expected to participate, the police department has also stepped up security measures to ensure that the festival passes off peacefully.

Police officials have taken precautionary steps to prevent any untoward incidents during the celebrations. Security arrangements have been strengthened at important locations, while officials are also

keeping a close watch on the movement of people and vehicles during the festival.

The police have issued guidelines for the Ganesh idol immersion procession. Organisers and participants have been advised about what can and cannot be carried during the procession. They have also been urged to cooperate with the police and follow the instructions to maintain law and order.

The Shivamogga Hindu Mahaganapathi celebration is expected to attract a large number of devotees. Authorities and organisers are working together to ensure that the celebrations are conducted peacefully and in an orderly manner. Detailed arrangements have been made for the immersion procession, with special attention being given to public safety and traffic management.

Sunil Kumar seeks special grants for Mahamastakabhisheka

CH NEWS, KARKALA

Karkala MLA V Sunil Kumar has urged the Karnataka government to provide special grants for the upcoming Mahamastakabhisheka ceremony and development works in Karkala. The major Jain religious event is scheduled to be held for 10 days from February 18, 2027.

The Mahamastakabhisheka, conducted once every 12 years, attracts thousands of devotees and visitors from different parts of the country. Considering the importance of the event, Sunil

Kumar has sought additional financial support to improve infrastructure and provide better facilities for devotees.

The MLA has called for funds to strengthen roads, sanitation, drinking water supply, lighting and other basic facilities in and around Karkala. He also stressed the need to improve traffic management and arrangements for the large number of visitors expected during the celebrations.

The special grants, he said, would help the administration complete essential development works before the religious event.

Bhovi Corporation told to speed up welfare projects

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation Chairman Ramappa M. has directed officials to speed up welfare projects aimed at improving the economic, social and educational conditions of the Bhovi community.

He said eligible beneficiaries should receive government assistance within the prescribed time and urged departments to respond quickly to community needs.

Speaking at a progress review meeting at the J.H. Patel Hall, Ramappa reviewed the implementation of various corporation schemes. He said programmes covering self-employment, entrepreneurship, Ganga Kalyan, microcredit and land ownership should reach eligible beneficiaries without delay. Officials were also asked to work towards achieving the targets fixed for each scheme.

Ramappa called on lead bank managers to cooperate in providing banking services for credit-based programmes. He also instructed GESCOM officials to ensure timely electricity connections for borewells being provided under the Ganga Kalyan scheme. Such coordination, he said, would help beneficiaries use government support effectively and become financially independent.

During the meeting, Ramappa examined the progress of different schemes and stressed the need for regular monitoring. He encouraged members of the Bhovi community to make full use of the available programmes and use the opportunities to improve their livelihoods. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Development Corporation District Manager N. Pushpalatha explained the schemes being implemented during the current year.

Zilla Panchayat CEO Varnit Negi, Additional Deputy Commissioner Sidrameshwara,



Bhovi corporation steps up welfare scheme implementation

Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation Chairman Ramappa M. said the government is working for the social and economic progress of the Bhovi community. Speaking at a press conference, he said Rs. 75.60 crore has been allocated for welfare schemes in 2026-27, with Rs. 18.90 crore already released. In Koppal, several schemes have benefited community members through self-employment loans, subsidies, vehicle assistance, microcredit and irrigation support. Under the Land Ownership Scheme, 34 beneficiaries received 47.25 acres of land at a cost of Rs. 4.80 crore. Ramappa said efforts would continue to ensure welfare benefits reach eligible beneficiaries.

Bhovi Development Corporation General Manager Shivaswamy, Deputy Conservator of Forests Nirmala N.K., Assistant Commissioner Maheebul Jilani and other officials attended the meeting. Representatives from social welfare, women's and child development, backward classes welfare and banking departments also participated.

Government of Karnataka - Zilla Panchayat
Office of The Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru
Ph No.: 08262-220936 e-mail: zpedckm@rediffmail.com
Tender Notice No.: 20/2026-27/1544 Date: 07.09.2026

Tender Notice
Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru invites Tenders through K.P.P.P. related to works of Development of Road going from Gollarahalli to Jodibokikere in Jodibokikere G.P., Ajjampura Taluk in Chikkamagaluru District (Indent No.: 29158) (Rs. 70.00 lakhs). Amount put to Tender for the work Rs. 59.15 lakhs. Details of capability to undertake or of having implemented the works should be attached as per Standard Tender Document KW - 3. For the said works the documents downloaded from K.P.P.P. can be filled and uploaded from 07.09.2026 to 21.09.2026 up to 5.30 PM. If possible the Technical Bid will be opened on 23.09.2026 at 5.30 PM. If possible the Financial Bid will be opened on 28.09.2026 at 5.05 PM. If this day is declared as holiday then the next day will be considered. Notice can be read on www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in Further details can be obtained by contacting the case worker during office hours.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru.
DIPR/CKM/KSMCA/26-27/10/779

HASSAN UNIVERSITY
(ಸತ್ಯಪನ-2023)
Hemagangothri Phone : 08172-220014
BM Road, Kenchatathalli, Hassan E-Mail: reg.hassan.uni@gmail.com
Phone : 08172-220014 E-Mail : reg.hassanuni@gmail.com

E-TENDER
Hassan University invites bids from eligible agencies for providing the required human resource services to the University. An e-tender has been issued in this regard. E-Tender No.: HU-2026-27/SE0013 The details of the tender are as follows: Sl. No. Description 1) Human Resource Services / Manpower Services Estimated Amount Rs.66,96,102 Tender Schedule Sl. No.Particulars 1) Last date for tender enquiry Date 17.09.2026 Time 5:00 PM 2) Start date for submission of applications through the e-Procurement portal Date 05.09.2026 Time 11:00 AM 3) Last date for submission of applications through the e-Procurement portal Date 19.09.2026 Time 5:30 PM 4) Opening of Technical Bid Date 21.09.2026 Time 11:00 AM 5) Opening of Financial Bid Date 22.09.2026 Time 11:00 AM Interested agencies are required to participate in the tender through the Karnataka Government e-Procurement portal. The tender documents can be obtained from the e-Procurement portal and the details are available at: http://kppt.karnataka.gov.in
Sd/- B A Jagadeesha KAS Registrar Hassan University, Hassan
ಹಾಸನಸಂ/ಹಸನ/ಹಾಸನ/476/ಕ್ರಿಸ್ತವಿಎಂಎ/2025-26

Quick Read

Ration card holders urged to complete e-KYC

KOPPAL
All ration card holders in Koppala district must complete e-KYC for every member by September 30, District Collector Dr. Suresh B. Itnal said. The process is mandatory under government rules. Of 7,38,156 beneficiaries, only 3,720 have completed e-KYC, leaving 7,34,436 still pending. Pending names have been shared with fair price shop owners across the taluks. Beneficiaries should visit their nearest fair price shop in person to finish the process. e-KYC is completely free, and no fee should be paid. Officials urged cardholders to complete verification before the deadline and continue receiving government benefits without interruption through eligible public distribution services.

Hanukunti power line energized on Sep 10

KOPPAL
JESCOM has warned the public and farmers about electricity supply on the 33 KV Hanukunti power line from September 10. The line from the Batageri power distribution centre, connected to the M/S KNNL LIS Hanukunti project, will carry electricity. People, farmers, landowners and others near the line must not touch or approach electric poles, wires, stay wires or other equipment. The Executive Engineer of the Construction and Maintenance Department urged everyone to remain extremely careful, as electricity may flow at any time. JESCOM said negligence could lead to serious accidents and clarified that it would not be responsible for such incidents.

Rizwan Arshad attacks probe agencies over raids

UDUPI
Karnataka Minister and Udupi district in-charge Rizwan Arshad on Wednesday criticised the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Income Tax Department and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), accusing them of targeting political opponents. He alleged that the agencies were being used by the BJP for political purposes. Speaking to reporters after inaugurating a Prajaseva programme in Udupi, Arshad also criticised the BJP's ongoing padayatra in Ballari under state president B Y Vijayendra. He claimed the march was being organised mainly to protect Vijayendra's position as party president rather than over a genuine public issue. Arshad said Karnataka was facing drought-like con-

Magadi Congress defends Balakrishna amid political attacks

MAGADI
Congress leaders in Magadi have strongly criticized former MLAs A. Manjunath and Belagavadi Rangaswamy for making what they described as baseless allegations against Minister H.C. Balakrishna and Block Congress President K. Krishnamurthy. Speaking at a press conference organized by the Youth Congress at the town Congress office, Congress leader Hallikar Sagar said Balakrishna's work in the constituency was visible through several major development projects. Sagar said projects worth thousands of crores were currently being taken up in the taluk because of Balakrishna's efforts. He said the minister would continue in office for the next one and a half years and the Congress government would remain in power. Sagar challenged Rangaswamy to produce documents supporting his allegations against Krishnamurthy, including claims about an alleged Rs. 8 crore scam in the Vokkaligara Sangh and alleged double registration of a



site. Sagar also accused Rangaswamy of collecting public donations in the name of building a statue of Lakkegowda and questioned his record during his tenure as MLA. He challenged him to discuss the allegations openly with Krishnamurthy, saying the Congress side would accept the outcome if the accusations were proved. He said unsubstantiated statements should not be made simply for political attention. Magadi Youth Congress president Praveen said former MLA A. Manjunath was making frustrated statements because he could not accept the development work being carried out under Balakrishna. He praised the minister for responding to

“Former MLA A. Manjunath was making frustrated statements because he could not accept the development work being carried out under Balakrishna.”
- Praveen, Magadi Youth Congress president

AT A GLANCE

- Congress leaders reject allegations against Minister Balakrishna
- Sagar cites thousands-crore development projects underway
- Leaders demand documents backing corruption allegations
- Rangaswamy challenged over alleged ₹8-crore scam
- Youth Congress accuses former MLA of frustration
- Congress urges opponents to focus on development

sions focused on public issues and the constituency's future.

Accused woman arrested after evading court

MANGALURU
Kavoor police have arrested a woman accused in a theft case who had been absconding after failing to appear before the court. According to police, the woman had repeatedly remained absent from court proceedings despite being directed to appear in connection with the case. Police traced her whereabouts and took her into custody. The accused was later produced before the court for further legal proceedings. Police said efforts are continuing to ensure that accused persons in pending cases comply with court orders.

New guests arrive at Tyavarekoppa safari

SHIVAMOGGA
The Tyavarekoppa Tiger and Lion Safari near Shivamogga has welcomed new animals under an approved animal exchange programme. Eight wolves and four gharials have been brought from Sanjay Gandhi Biological Park in Patna, Bihar, with the approval and guidance of the Central Zoo Authority. As part of the exchange, Tyavarekoppa Safari has sent two male gaurs to the Patna zoo. The animal exchange is aimed at strengthening wildlife conservation, breeding programmes and the diversity of animals available for visitors. Five of the wolves brought from Patna were kept under special quarantine for three weeks. During this period, zoo staff closely monitored their health and

Vayo Mitra camp brings relief to seniors

KOPPAL
A free health camp for senior citizens was held at the Sri Vinayaka Temple in B.T. Patil Nagar, Koppal. Organized jointly by the Zilla Panchayat and Government Ayurveda Hospital, the Vayo Mitra programme helped 65 elderly residents receive essential medical care without cost. Doctors checked participants for diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis and other common health concerns. Blood tests and BP checks were also conducted, allowing doctors to better understand the patients' conditions and provide suitable advice.

Major road development works begin across Dudda

MANDYA
Melukote MLA Darshan Puttannaiah recently performed ceremonial Gudali Puja to mark the beginning of several road development works across villages in Dudda Hobli, under the Melukote Assembly constituency. The projects, taken up by the Public Works Department, have a combined estimated cost of Rs 3.15 crore and are supported by a special grant from the Chief Minister. The works cover important roads in several villages and are expected to improve daily travel for residents, students, farmers and other road users. About Rs 1 crore has been allocated for the main road near Sri Sai Niketan School in Avverahalli. Other sanctioned works include Rs 15 lakh in Avverahalli, Rs 25 lakh in Bilaguli, Rs 20 lakh in Kuri Koppalu and Rs 20 lakh in Chandagalu. Further allocations include Rs 45 lakh for Beeregowdanahalli, Rs 15 lakh for Sampahalli, Rs 25 lakh for Shivalli and Rs 50 lakh for Hullenahalli. The MLA said the projects were planned to address local road needs and



₹45 lakh for Beeregowdanahalli, ₹15 lakh for Sampahalli, ₹25 lakh for Shivalli and ₹50 lakh for Hullenahalli will improve roads and safer travel

provide safer, smoother travel. He urged officials and contractors to complete the works on time without causing unnecessary inconvenience to residents. Local leaders, officials and contractors attended the programme, including C.K. Nagaraj, Ramakrishna, Ningegowda, Siddharaju, Patel Shivakumar, Mahadevappa and Vinay Kumar. Public Works Department Assistant Engineer Jagadish and village representatives were also present. The new road projects are expected to improve connectivity and bring practical relief to people across the area.

Women demand relocation of liquor shop from colony

MAGADI
Residents of Manchanabele Reservoir Colony in Magadi taluk have urged excise officials to relocate the SLN MRP liquor shop away from the residential area. Women's groups and local residents submitted a petition at the town Excise Office, saying the shop has created problems for families, women, children and students living nearby. Stree Shakti and Sanjeevini activist Varija said the liquor shop is close to residential areas and Dalit colonies. She alleged that people from Bengaluru and other places stop their vehicles on roads and footpaths near the shop to consume alcohol, often creating disturbances. According to her, women and girls feel unsafe going out, especially in the evening. She also alleged that illegal alcohol sales take place in some shops and houses from early morning, affecting the village atmosphere. Varija said alcohol addiction has seriously affected several families in the Dalit colony, with some men reportedly losing their lives early. She said women's groups have repeatedly approached excise officials and other authorities, but permanent ac-

tion has not followed. She warned that women's organizations would launch a strong protest if the shop was not shifted from the residential area. She also claimed the liquor outlet was not permitted under the Ashraya housing project rules. Former Gram Panchayat member Umesh said schools and churches are located within about 270 to 280 metres of the shop, while houses are only around 90 to 100 metres away. He said there are nearly 145 houses in the area, most belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families. He alleged that officials submitted an incorrect inspection report stating that SC and ST residents were not present there. Villagers said they had raised the matter with Excise officials, Minister and MLA H.C. Balakrishna. The residents warned that they would stage a dharna, lock the shop and approach the Lokayukta and court if the issue was not resolved legally. Excise Inspector M.R. Vijayalakshmi said legal action regarding relocation had been initiated and letters had been sent to the EO, PDO and Tahsildar. She added that notices had already been issued concerning the complaints. Residents now await concrete action from authorities.

150-year-old traditional pathway closed

MANGALURU
A 150-year-old traditional public pathway in Anantadi village of Bantwal taluk has been closed, causing severe inconvenience to more than 50 families. Residents of Nadumane, Sudekattamaru and Punjavu areas have urged the authorities to remove the obstruction and reopen the route for public use. The pathway is located in Survey No. 137 of Anantadi village and has been used by local residents for more than 150 years. It has served as an important link for families living in the surrounding areas. However, the sudden closure has disrupted their daily movement and left residents struggling to reach essential places. Schoolchildren, elderly people and other residents are among those facing difficulties. Children have trouble travelling to the anganwadi, while residents are

RATION ACCESS CRISIS

Transport expenses: Free ration benefits diminished

CH NEWS, Malingaraya pujar
Getting basic food supplies has become a daily struggle for residents of Wards 16, 17, 18 and 19 in Lakshmeshwar town. People, including elderly residents, women and children, are forced to travel nearly three kilometres to collect rice provided under the government's Annabhagya scheme. For poor families who depend on daily wages, the long journey means losing valuable working hours. Earlier, residents in the Pethban area had a fair price shop

that served them conveniently. However, the shop was closed several years ago. Beneficiaries were then shifted to the Vinayak Fair Price Shop and Someshwar Fair Price Shop. Residents say this decision has created serious difficulties because the shops are far from their homes and difficult to reach, especially for elderly people and families with young children. People from the four wards now have to travel to the Vinayak Fair Price Shop near Kalikadevi Temple in Ward 1. The distance is around three kilometres. Many residents walk in the heat and rain while

carrying heavy ration bags. Those who cannot walk are forced to hire an auto or another vehicle. Residents say transport costs can take away much of the benefit of receiving free rice. Residents claim they have repeatedly approached food department officials and elected representatives, requesting a fair price shop within their wards or somewhere nearby. However, they say their requests have not received proper attention. The growing frustration has led to anger among the affected families, who want the administration to act without further delay.

Lakshmeshwar taluk has 33 fair price shops, but only nine are located within the town limits. Residents believe this number is inadequate for the town's population of more than 40,000 and its growing number of ration card holders. Bharamappa Sherasuri, president of the Kranti Veera Sangolli Rayanna Fan Club, said people often lose an entire day collecting ration. He urged authorities to understand that providing free rice is not enough; it must also be made easily accessible. Residents are now hoping the government will open a shop in Pethban or arrange ration distribution closer to their homes.



- SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM

KARNATAKA MUST SPEAK IN ONE VOICE ON MEKEDATU

Karnataka has much to learn from neighbouring Tamil Nadu when it comes to protecting the interests of the State. On issues that affect the State’s rights and resources, Tamil Nadu’s political parties have repeatedly demonstrated that political differences can be kept aside when a larger cause is at stake. Whether it is the Cauvery water dispute or opposition to the NEET system, the State’s political class has generally rallied around a common position.

Karnataka too needs such political maturity, particularly now when the long-pending Mekedatu balancing reservoir project has once again come into focus.

The proposed project across the Cauvery near Mekedatu in Ramanagara district is intended primarily as a balancing reservoir and drinking-water project, with Karnataka maintaining that it would help meet Bengaluru’s drinking-water needs and regulate water utilisation. The project has been a political issue in Karnataka for years and has also triggered strong opposition in Tamil Nadu.

The Union government’s recent clarification that the 2018 Supreme Court judgment does not require Karnataka to obtain the consent of Tamil Nadu, Kerala or Puducherry before constructing a structure within Karnataka has given the project a fresh political push.

But it would be wrong to interpret this as a blanket final clearance to start construction immediately. The Central Water Commission returned Karnataka’s revised DPR in June this year, seeking modifications to bring it in conformity with the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal award and the Supreme Court judgment. The Supreme Court has also held that the preparation



of a DPR is not the same as final project approval and that the DPR has to go through the Cauvery Water Management Authority.

This legal and procedural background makes it all the more important for Karnataka to proceed with determination, but also within the framework of law.

The present Chief Minister, D.K. Shivakumar, knows the political significance of Mekedatu better than most. As KPCC president, he had undertaken the much-publicised ‘Namma Neeru, Namma Hakku’ padayatra from the Cauvery Sangama near Kanakapura to Bengaluru, demanding implementation of the project. The campaign had taken place despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Today, as Chief Minister, Shivakumar has the opportunity to translate that political campaign into concrete action.

The timing is particularly important. Tamil Nadu has already begun mobilising opposition to the project. The Coordination Committee of All Farmers’ Associations of Tamil Nadu has announced a five-day statewide campaign from September 20 and indicated that it would seek an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi if necessary.

The BJP and JD(S), which are in Opposition, should therefore rise above partisan politics and extend constructive support to the Congress government on Mekedatu. If the project is genuinely in Karnataka’s long-term interest, there should be no question of who gets the political credit. The credit should belong to Karnataka.

This is precisely where the culture of ‘credit politics’ must end. Projects involving the State’s water security, drinking-water requirements and long-term development cannot be reduced to electoral slogans.

At the same time, the government must ensure complete transparency about the project’s cost, environmental implications, rehabilitation requirements, water-sharing obligations and statutory clearances. Karnataka’s legitimate rights must be protected without violating the rights of downstream States or the orders of constitutional and statutory authorities.

There is also a larger question of priorities. Karnataka is facing serious financial pressures, while its guarantee schemes have placed a substantial burden on the State exchequer. The government must undertake a careful review of expenditure and ensure that critical infrastructure projects are not starved of funds. Simply abandoning welfare commitments overnight may not be practical or desirable, but fiscal discipline is essential. Every rupee saved through better targeting and elimination of waste should be channelled into productive infrastructure, including water security.

Mekedatu should not become another political promise endlessly recycled before every election. Karnataka needs a clear roadmap, time-bound execution and a united political voice.

Tamil Nadu has shown that when a State’s interests are perceived to be at stake, political parties can close ranks. Karnataka should demonstrate the same resolve.

Namma Neeru, Namma Hakku should not remain merely a slogan. It should become a shared commitment of every political party in Karnataka. The Cauvery may divide the two States geographically, but Karnataka’s political class must unite firmly when it comes to safeguarding the State’s legitimate interests.

Mekedatu must be pursued with determination, legality and political unity not partisan rivalry.

WHEN A LAKE IS DESTROYED AND ILLEGAL CONSTRUCTIONS HAPPENS WHO IS ACTUALLY HELD RESPONSIBLE?

Kada Agrahara quarry lake a land mark to few is being fading as each day goes by due to our silence. Now construction debris and mud being dumped into the lake small portion by portion the entire lake will be filled with mud and debris to the land level reaching a point where there is no sign of the lake. Already the sides are filled with mud making a pathway for the vehicles carrying debris and mud to dump in the lake and a little portion of the lake is already in process of being covered removing that

part from the lake. Because the lake is being converted into land over time and not immediately people don't recognise the lake fading away. We stay silent now but complaint and worry during the rainy days to how the water floods our roads even during light rainfall that lasts only for 15 mins .our silence now is going to affect us in various ways in future, natural spaces like these would help retain water as each disappear one by one there will be no space for the water to settle in that is when flooding becomes a part of our daily life. After a few years that land would be



purchased by companies or individuals who aren't even aware of the lake, would build buildings or flats, and innocent people will be held responsible and be asked to pay fine and vacate. Are we the one's who are actually responsible paying the price?

Government takes action after the lake is completely destroyed and buildings have come up, who bears the consequences?The people responsible for this disaster would live their lives in peace while the innocent citizens pay the price of their doings.

- IVANIA MARY WILLYS

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY- SEP 10, 2026

In India’s rapidly changing urban landscape, financial setbacks, business losses, mounting loans, job insecurity, family responsibilities and the pressure to maintain a particular standard of living are increasingly becoming sources of intense psychological distress. World Suicide Prevention Day 2026, observed on September 10 with the theme “Changing the Narrative on Suicide,” highlights the urgent need to replace silence and stigma with open conversations, empathy and timely mental-health support.

India continues to face a significant suicide burden. According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, 171,418 suicides were reported in 2023, compared with 170,924 in 2022. The suicide rate was approximately 12.3 per lakh population in 2023. Importantly, nearly two-thirds of reported suicides in 2023 were among people aged 18–45 years,

highlighting the vulnerability of the economically and socially active population. Mumbai recorded 1,406 suicides in 2024, according to official data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). Mumbai ranked fourth among major Indian cities for absolute numbers, behind Delhi (2,905 cases), Bengaluru (2,403 cases), and similar to other metropolitan centers.

For people living in cities, financial distress can become particularly overwhelming. Business failure, accumulated loans, EMI pressures, loss of employment, professional competition, relationship difficulties, social isolation and the perceived need to “keep up” with peers can create a combination of pressures. Financial distress should not be viewed in isolation; it can interact with depression, anxiety, substance use, family conflict and other mental-health challenges.

Family and relationship-re-

lated stress can also contribute significantly to emotional distress. Frequent relationship quarrels, marital conflict, separation or divorce, extramarital affairs, differences between partners or families over caste and social background, family opposition to relationships, domestic disagreements, emotional rejection, loss of trust, loneliness within relationships and unresolved conflicts can leave individuals feeling isolated and overwhelmed. In some situations, intense emotions following a relationship breakdown or prolonged family conflict may compound existing financial, professional or mental-health difficulties. These factors should be understood as possible contributors rather than single or definitive causes of suicide.

Dr. Pratik Surandash, MD Psychiatry, Consultant Psychiatrist, from Apex Group of Hospitals, Borivali said, “A business loss, failed venture, unemployment or inability to

repay a loan can feel like the end of the world when a person is already emotionally overwhelmed. But a financial crisis is a situation not a person's identity or the end of their future. In our cities, where success is often measured through income, lifestyle and professional achievement, people may hesitate to admit that they are struggling. We need to change this mindset. Asking someone how they are coping, listening without judgement and encouraging professional help can be extremely important. The message should be clear: financial problems can be solved step by step; a life cannot be replaced.”

Dr. Pratik Surandash, MD Psychiatry, Consultant Psychiatrist, from Apex Group of Hospitals further added, “Family and relationship conflicts can be equally distressing. Quarrels between couples, separation, divorce, relationship breakdowns, family opposition to a relationship,

differences in caste or social background, betrayal and unresolved emotional conflicts can deeply affect a person's sense of security and belonging. When several stresses occur together, a person may feel that there is no way forward. This is precisely when family members and friends need to listen rather than judge, stay connected and encourage professional help.”

Experts emphasise that suicide prevention requires communities to recognise warning signs early and create safe spaces for conversations. Families, employers, colleagues and friends can play an important role by noticing withdrawal, hopelessness, major behavioural changes or expressions of being unable to cope. This World Suicide Prevention Day, the message is simple but powerful: Start the conversation. Listen without judgement. Encourage help.

- PRITI DOKE

VINOBA BHAVE’S BHOODAN AND SARVODAYA: A VISION FOR INCLUSIVE INDIA

Whenever a nation advances towards economic prosperity, technological excellence and global prominence, it faces a fundamental question: Is development merely about material achievements, or must it also encompass the growth of morality, compassion, coexistence and a sense of responsibility within human beings? India today is moving forward with the vision of a New India, a Developed India and a Prosperous India. At such a moment, the life and philosophy of Acharya Vinoba Bhave remind us that the strongest foundation of nation-building is human character.

September 11 marks the birth anniversary of Vinoba Bhave, whose original name was Vinayak Narahari Bhave. A close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, freedom fighter, thinker, spiritual seeker and pioneer of the Sarvodaya movement, Vinoba was much more than merely Gandhi’s spiritual successor. Such a description would confine the vastness of his personality. He developed an independent intellectual and spiritual vision of his own. Deeply influenced by saints such as Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram, he regarded the Bhagavad Gita as a

spiritual foundation of his life, while social transformation remained the practical expression of his thought. Vinoba’s greatest contribution was his ability to connect spirituality with the real and pressing problems of society. The Bhoodan Movement was a remarkable manifestation of this vision. He travelled from village to village, often on foot, appealing to landowners to voluntarily donate a portion of their land for the landless. This was not merely an effort to redistribute land; it was an attempt to transform the psychology of ownership into a consciousness of sharing and social responsibility.

Bhoodan gradually evolved into the idea of Gramdan, the collective sharing of village resources, expressed in the profound thought, “All land belongs to Gopal.” Embedded in this concept was not merely economic justice, but also social harmony, collective responsibility and ethical trusteeship. Vinoba believed that society could not be transformed by laws alone; it had to be awakened through the conscience of individuals. This vision naturally led him towards Sarvodaya the welfare and upliftment of all. It envisaged a society in which the benefits of development

reached the last person and no individual’s progress came at the cost of another’s exploitation. His ability to persuade the Chambal dacoits to surrender was a powerful demonstration of his moral leadership. Vinoba believed deeply in the capacity of human beings to transform themselves. What was needed, he felt, was not merely punishment or coercion, but an awakening of the goodness within.

There was a profound affinity between Vinoba Bhave’s moral vision and the Anuvrat Movement pioneered by Acharya Tulsi. When Acharya Tulsi launched Anuvrat as a movement for character-building and moral awakening, several leading national personalities supported and encouraged his efforts. Vinoba Bhave was among them. The two great personalities met from time to time and engaged in meaningful discussions on the indispensability of ethical values in nation-building. Both believed that politics, society and the economy could remain healthy only when guided by people of character and conscience. Their journeys on foot also reflected a remarkable spiritual kinship. For them, walking was not merely a means of travelling from one place to another; it was a discipline of

public contact, social awakening and inner discovery. Vinoba often emphasised that walking brings one into direct contact with the earth and deepens one’s relationship with nature.

I have personally experienced this truth. I had the opportunity to walk for many years alongside Acharya Tulsi, the pioneer of the Anuvrat Movement. I discovered that a padyatra does much more than keep the body in motion it opens the closed doors of the mind and intellect. An ordinary person encountered along the way can become a teacher, and life itself becomes an open classroom.

There is a deeply moving personal connection between my family and Vinoba Bhave. My father, the late Shri Ramswaroop Garg, and my mother, the late Smt. Satyabhama Garg, were associated with the Sarvodaya movement. In 1959, Vinoba Bhave came to Ajmer during one of his walking journeys. He came to know that Satyabhama Garg, one of his workers, was suffering from cancer and was struggling between life and death. He personally went to meet her, walking through the narrow lanes of Imli Mohalla and climbing up to the third floor, where he blessed her.

That incident reveals the



- LALIT GARGG

deeply human dimension of Vinoba’s leadership. His concern was not confined to great movements, public platforms or social campaigns. He was a compassionate saint who could feel another person’s suffering as his own. Another significant episode took place at a Sarvodaya conference in Hatundi near Ajmer. My father was an active Sarvodaya worker.

He took Muni Rakesh Kumar Ji, a disciple of Acharya Tulsi, to the conference, where they had an extensive and meaningful interaction with Vinoba Bhave. It was more than a dialogue between two streams of thought; it was a meeting of two powerful currents of moral awakening—the social consciousness of Sarvodaya and the personal ethical discipline of Anuvrat.

Their ultimate objective was the same: transform the individual, transform society and enable the nation to advance on the strength of moral character.

LETTERS TO EDITOR

Life Worth Living Ahead

As World Suicide Prevention Day approaches, we must recognize that every life carries immense value. Mental health struggles often go unnoticed behind everyday smiles, making compassionate community support vital. We need accessible helplines, reduced social stigma, and active listening in our schools and workplaces. Checking in on friends and offering a safe space to speak can literally save lives. Choosing life is a journey best taken together; let us always choose hope over despair.

- Girish Nair

Hope Overcomes Darkest Hours

Rising pressure in daily life has made suicide prevention an urgent priority. Mental health must receive the same attention and care as physical health. Open conversations about anxiety, burnout, and depression can normalize seeking professional help early. Simple acts of empathy, kindness, and early intervention create strong safety nets for those struggling in silence. By prioritizing compassionate healthcare and personal connection, we can remind everyone that no crisis is permanent and hope always remains.

- Sharon Faustina J.

Need Safer Footpaths

Through your paper, I wish to highlight the pathetic condition of footpaths in Bengaluru. Most are broken, encroached by vendors or used for parking, forcing pedestrians to walk on busy roads. This is unsafe, especially for children and elders. The BBMP must clear encroachments, repair footpaths, and ensure they are pedestrian-friendly. Safe footpaths are a basic right, not a luxury.

- Ganesh

PERSONAL HYGIENE IS FREQUENTLY REDUCED TO A MATTER OF SUPERFICIAL APPEARANCE

A routine designed to ensure crisp clothes, fresh breath, and a neat presentation. Yet, viewed through the lens of modern epidemiology and social responsibility, self-care practices form the frontline of defense against infectious diseases. Maintaining personal hygiene is not merely a private routine; it is a fundamental pillar of community health and individual well-being.

At its core, basic hygiene interrupts the transmission cycle of harmful pathogens. Bacteria, viruses, and parasites thrive in subtle environments on skin, under fingernails, and across unwashed surfaces. Simple habits like washing hands with soap for at least 20 seconds drastically cut the spread of respiratory infections and gastrointestinal illnesses. Routine oral care prevents dental caries and periodontal disease, conditions increasingly linked to systemic health issues, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes. By taking care of the body, individuals reduce the burden on healthcare systems and build a personal shield against preventable ailments.

Beyond disease prevention, the psychological impacts of personal hygiene are profound. Daily cleansing rituals send a powerful psychological signal to the brain, promoting mental clarity and self-worth. People who maintain steady personal care habits often report higher self-esteem and reduced stress. Conversely, neglecting personal care is frequently both a symptom and an accelerator of mental distress. A clean physical state provides a sense of control and renewal, offering a stabilizing anchor amid chaotic



ic schedules.

On a social level, hygiene functions as a silent currency of respect. In workplaces, schools, and shared public spaces, personal cleanliness influences how individuals interact and collaborate. It reflects consideration for the comfort and safety of those around us. In close-knit communities, one person's hygiene practices directly affect everyone else. Poor hand hygiene in a shared kitchen or office environment can trigger an outbreak, illustrating how personal choices carry collective consequences.

However, recognizing the importance of hygiene requires acknowledging the structural barriers many face. Clean water, affordable soap, menstrual products, and safe sanitation facilities are not uni-

versally accessible. True progress demands treating hygiene access as a fundamental human right rather than a privilege. Public health initiatives must focus on expanding infrastructure and education, ensuring that everyone regardless of socioeconomic status has the tools needed to maintain bodily integrity.

As global density grows and public health challenges evolve, personal hygiene must be reframed. It is far more than a morning checklist or cosmetic effort; it is an active form of self-respect and civic responsibility. Cultivating mindful hygiene habits protects our bodies, preserves our dignity, and helps create a healthier, more resilient society for everyone.

- SIDDHU

GRIDLOCK CULTURE: RETHINKING HOW WE NAVIGATE CITIES

Urban traffic was once viewed merely as an inevitable inconvenience a minor tax paid for the conveniences of modern city living. Today, however, constant gridlock has evolved into a defining crisis of modern metropolitan life, stifling economic vitality, deteriorating public health, and consuming millions of human hours every single day. Solving this pervasive issue requires shifting our perspective from simply building more roads to fundamentally rethinking how people move.

At its core, traffic congestion is a straightforward failure of space and efficiency. For decades, urban planning has prioritized the private automobile above all other modes of transport. City layouts expanded outward, highways were widened, and massive parking structures replaced green spaces. Yet, highway expansion consistently triggers a phenomenon known as "induced demand": adding lanes attracts more drivers, quickly returning the road to its previous state of congestion. The fundamental truth of urban mobility is that individual passenger vehicles are inherently space-inefficient tools for high-density transport.

The consequences of this reliance extend far beyond idle frustration at red lights. Economically, traffic congestion drains billions of dollars annually in lost productivity, wasted fuel, and delayed supply chains. Environmentally, idling vehicles contribute significantly to urban carbon emissions and localized air pollution, driving up rates of respiratory illnesses in densely populated neighborhoods. Moreover, the daily stress of navigating severe congestion exacts a quiet, cumulative toll on mental health, reducing quality of life and eroding community cohesion. Addressing this challenge demands bold,

structural interventions rather than incremental fixes. Modern urban planning must pivot toward robust public transit networks, dedicated cycling infrastructure, and walkable city designs. Investments in high-frequency buses, light rail, and protected bike lanes provide reliable, affordable alternatives to solo driving. Furthermore, innovative policies like congestion pricing charging vehicles a fee to enter high-density zones during peak hours have proven effective in cities worldwide, simultaneously reducing bottleneck traffic and generating revenue to fund public transit upgrades.

Ultimately, taming traffic is not about waging a war on cars; it is about providing genuine choices. When individuals have fast, safe, and dignified alternatives to driving, roads clear up for essential commercial vehicles, emergency services, and those who truly need to drive. Reclaiming our streets from endless gridlock is essential to building cleaner, healthier, and more vibrant cities for future generations.

- NANDU



TRAGEDY IN HIGH ALTITUDE: HIMALAYAS DEMAND CLIMATE ACTION

The catastrophic flash floods that tore through northern Nepal stretching along the Trishuli River through Rasuwa, Nuwakot, and neighboring districts represent far more than an isolated, seasonal disaster. Triggered by a massive collapse of rock and glacial ice high in the Himalayas near Langtang Lirung, a surging torrent of water, sediment, and debris swallowed entire villages, destroyed vital infrastructure, and claimed over a thousand lives within minutes. This tragedy is a terrifying look into the escalating vulnerability of fragile mountain ecosystems under a rapidly changing climate.

For generations, the high Himalayas were viewed as enduring, immovable shields. Yet, warming global temperatures are destabilizing bedrock, accelerating glacial retreat, and turning ancient mountain slopes into volatile hazards. When tens of millions of tons of ice and rock plunged thousands of meters downstream, standard river monitoring systems designed primarily for monsoon rain surges were rendered utterly useless. The destruction washed away roads, breached hydropower tunnels, and flattened homes, instantly severing tens of thousands of people from healthcare, clean water, and emergency aid.

While immediate emergency responses are critical to provide shelter, medical aid, and clean water to displaced families, the underlying crisis demands a complete transformation in how we address high-altitude disaster management. Developing nations like Nepal bear a disproportionate burden of climate-induced catastrophes despite contributing marginally to global greenhouse gas emissions. Traditional disaster mitigation models such as static flood walls or standard weather monitoring are no longer sufficient against complex, high-velocity events like glacial



collapses.

The path forward requires urgent international solidarity and adaptive infrastructure. Multi-hazard early warning networks equipped with satellite monitoring, seismic tracking, and real-time remote sensing must be deployed across vulnerable alpine regions. Furthermore, global climate finance must actively support mountain communities in building resilient infrastructure that can withstand extreme geological events. The catastrophe along the Trishuli River serves as a stark warning: as mountain landscapes deteriorate, the cost of climate inaction will continue to be measured in human lives.

- ANNA B.

TREES ARE FALLING, AND OUR FUTURE IS COLLAPSING

Every single minute, our planet loses the equivalent of twenty-seven football fields of forest. What was once a lush, breathing blanket of green spanning across continents is being systematically dismantled, burned, and bulldozed. Deforestation is no longer just an environmental talking point buried in academic journals; it is an active, ongoing catastrophe that threatens the foundational stability of our global ecosystem, climate, and economy.

The drivers behind this destruction are largely commercial. Vast tracts of ancient, biodiverse forests are cleared to make room for beef cattle, soy plantations, palm oil production, and timber extraction. Driven by short-term financial gains and relentless consumer demand, industrial agriculture continues to encroach upon lands that took millennia to form. However, treating forests as disposable assets ignores a fundamental truth: trees are the primary biological regulators of life on Earth.

When forests are clear-cut, the consequences spill far beyond the immediate local perimeter. Forests act as massive carbon sinks, absorbing billions of tons of carbon diox-

ide every year. When trees are cut down or burned, that stored carbon is released directly into the atmosphere, transforming what was once a natural defense against global warming into a primary driver of climate change. Roughly 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions can be traced directly to deforestation and land degradation making it a larger contributor to global emissions than the entire global transportation sector.

Equally alarming is the catastrophic loss of biodiversity. Tropical rainforests, which cover less than 10% of Earth's land surface, harbor more than half of the world's terrestrial species. When we destroy these habitats, we trigger an irreversible wave of extinctions, wiping out plant and animal species that are crucial for ecological balance, medicine, and scientific discovery. Furthermore, indigenous communities who have served as nature's most effective stewards for generations are systematically displaced, losing their homes, cultures, and livelihoods to industrial expansion.

The destruction of forests also disrupts the global water cycle. Trees pull water from the soil and release it into the atmosphere through transpiration, generating clouds and rainfall that nourish agricultural regions hun-

dreds of miles away. Stripping forest cover leads to severe soil erosion, desertification, altered weather patterns, and heightened vulnerability to extreme droughts and flash floods.

We cannot simply plant our way out of this crisis with monoculture commercial tree farms; preserving intact, old-growth primary forests is essential. Halting deforestation requires aggressive, non-negotiable policy action and systemic accountability. Governments must enforce strict anti-deforestation laws, eliminate subsidies that fuel illegal land clearing, and legally protect indigenous territorial rights. Global supply chains must be audited to ensure zero-deforestation compliance, and international finance must prioritize compensating developing nations for forest conservation rather than exploitation.

The choices we make today will dictate the habitability of the planet tomorrow. We are rapidly approaching tipping points from which our climate cannot recover. Protecting Earth's remaining forests is not a luxury or a secondary goal it is an urgent imperative for human survival.

- JOHNATHAN

THE SILENT GUARDIANS OF OUR GLOBAL TABLE

Every morning before dawn breaks, millions of men and women step out into fields, paddocks, and orchards to begin work that sustains human life. Agriculture is the ultimate foundation of civilization, yet those who labor to feed the world frequently remain its most overlooked workers. Farmers do not merely grow food; they manage delicate natural resources, drive local economies, and preserve centuries of essential knowledge. Today, as global food systems face unprecedented pressures, supporting agricultural communities is an urgent moral and economic necessity.

The modern farmer operates at a complex intersection of ancient tradition and high-stakes risk. Agriculture requires navigating unpredictable weather patterns, volatile market prices, rising input costs, and shifting environmental regulations. A single hailstorm, late frost, or sudden market crash can erase an entire year's income in hours. Despite taking on enormous financial and personal liabilities to cultivate our crops and livestock, small- and medium-scale farmers often capture only a tiny fraction of the final retail price of the food they produce.

Moreover, farmers stand directly on the front lines of global climate change. Unprecedented droughts, shifting seasonal rainfall, and emerging pests pose daily threats to crop yields and soil fertility. Adapting to these environmental realities demands significant capital investment

in modern technologies such as precision irrigation, drought-resistant seeds, and sustainable soil management costs that many independent growers simply cannot absorb alone. When agricultural infrastructure falters, the resulting food insecurity ripple effect extends to every consumer worldwide.

Beyond economic and environmental challenges, rural farming communities face growing social pressures. High rates of stress, limited access to healthcare, isolation, and an aging workforce threaten the long-term viability of family farms. As younger generations migrate to urban centers in search of financial stability, the world risks losing invaluable generational expertise in land stewardship and sustainable food production.

Protecting our agricultural future requires concerted policy action and consumer support. Governments must reform agricultural subsidies to prioritize independent growers and incentivize eco-friendly practices. Investments in rural infrastructure ranging from cold-storage logistics to high-speed internet access can bridge the gap between farms and modern markets. Consumers, too, hold power by choosing locally grown produce and supporting fair-trade supply chains that guarantee equitable compensation for agricultural labor.

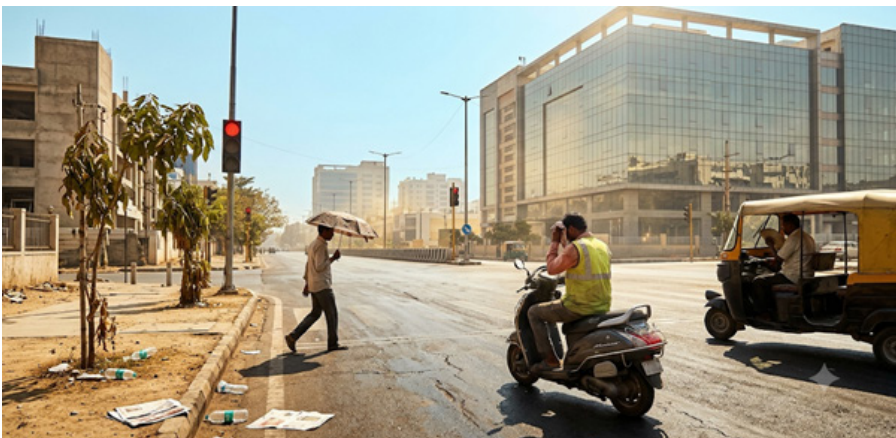
- JOSH

WHEN SUMMER HEAT BECOMES A GLOBAL EMERGENCY

Summer was once the season of ease, long daylight hours, and vibrant outdoor life. Across cultures, it evoked images of coastal retreats, bountiful harvests, and a welcome pause from the routine rhythm of the school and work year. Today, however, that classic identity is undergoing a fundamental transformation. As global temperatures continue to break historic records year after year, summer is rapidly shifting from a period of carefree recreation into a critical annual test of public health, infrastructure, and ecological resilience.

The environmental reality of modern summers is defined by intensity. Heatwaves that used to occur once in a generation are now expected seasonal occurrences, carrying prolonged periods of dangerous temperatures. Urban centers transform into severe heat islands, trapping thermal energy within concrete and asphalt, raising night temperatures, and providing little physical relief for residents. Furthermore, extended summer dry spells amplify the conditions that spark catastrophic wildfires, burning through millions of acres of forest land, destroying ecosystems, and sending dangerous smoke plumes thousands of miles across international borders.

Beyond the visible environmental



destruction, summer heat imposes a severe tax on public health and equity. High temperatures place immense physiological stress on the human body, leading to spikes in heat-related illnesses, cardiovascular distress, and dehydration. Unsurprisingly, the burden falls unevenly across society. Outdoor workers, the elderly, low-income households without access to adequate air conditioning, and urban populations living in areas with minimal canopy cover bear the brunt of extreme heat. What was once viewed as a simple seasonal shift has effectively become a public health challenge that disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations.

Our built infrastructure is similarly struggling to adapt to these new seasonal conditions. Power grids face unprecedented strains as air conditioning demands surge simultaneously across entire regions, risking widespread blackouts precisely when cooling is most critical. Transportation networks suffer as extreme heat warps railway lines, softens road surfaces, and forces flight cancellations. Meanwhile, agricultural operations face shrinking crop yields as intense summer heat and water scarcity combine to stress livestock and deplete crucial soil moisture levels.

- AKASH

Quick Read

Police use DNA, CCTV to trace child abuse suspect

JAIPUR
Police in Kota are examining DNA samples, forensic evidence and CCTV footage to identify the suspected accused in the alleged sexual abuse of a three-year-old girl. A case has been registered under the POCSO Act and other relevant sections. The case came to light after the child fell ill and was taken to a paediatrician, who noticed pain and swelling around her waist and genital area and suspected sexual assault. Due to her young age, police are relying on scientific evidence. DNA samples have been collected from male staff members of the child's nearby play school and other relevant individuals. An FSL team has also examined the location. Police are reviewing CCTV footage to trace the child's movements and identify people who may have contacted her. The accused has not yet been identified.

Woman alleges harassment by Rapido rider

NOIDA
A woman in Noida has alleged that a Rapido delivery partner harassed her after she booked a parcel service. Geetika Srivastava shared screenshots of their conversation on LinkedIn, showing the rider greeting her, asking how she was and later sending an "I love you" message. Srivastava said she warned the rider that she would approach police if he contacted her again. According to her, the rider instead dared her to file a complaint and contact Rapido. Rapido responded to her post, apologised for the experience and asked her to share the booking details, Ride ID and registered mobile number. The company said it takes such complaints seriously and that customer safety, dignity and respect are its priorities.

Kanpur businessman dies after assault outside shop

KANPUR
A businessman, Amit Gupta, died after being severely assaulted by local men when he objected to public urination outside his shop. He succumbed to his injuries in hospital without regaining consciousness. Gupta's family alleged that despite submitting CCTV footage of the assault to police, no arrests were made even 72 hours after the incident. DCP Atul Srivastava said an FIR has been registered at Kakadev police station. Around a dozen people have been detained for questioning, while four suspects have been identified through CCTV footage. Police have formed four dedicated teams to locate and arrest the accused. The investigation into the assault and the circumstances surrounding Gupta's death is underway.

Himachal CM seeks technology push in remote areas

NEW DELHI
Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Wednesday met Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh and discussed proposals to strengthen science and technology initiatives, particularly in remote and tribal areas of the state. Sukhu proposed establishing a centre for astronomy and astrophysics in the high-altitude tribal regions of Lahaul-Spiti and Pangi, modelled on astronomical initiatives in Hanle, Ladakh. He said the areas offered favourable conditions for astronomical research and observations while creating opportunities for local students and youth to develop scientific interest. The proposed centre could also create new avenues for sustainable, knowledge-based tourism in Himachal Pradesh's tribal regions. Sukhu also sought support from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research for expanding demonstration sites for lavender cultivation. He said wider demonstrations would help farmers understand suitable cultivation practices, improve awareness and encourage adoption of lavender as an alternative and remunerative crop.



Vijay-led TVK alliance gets new name

Tamil Nadu's ruling TVK-led coalition adopts a new alliance name amid Congress tensions and differing positions over the 2029 elections.

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu's ruling coalition, led by Chief Minister Vijay and his Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam (TVK), has been named the Secular Social Justice Victory Alliance. The name was announced on Wednesday after an alliance meeting chaired by Vijay at the TVK headquarters in Panaiyur. The gathering focused on formalising the coalition and settling key organisational issues. The meeting was the second gathering of the alliance since the post-poll coalition formed the government. Congress leaders attending included Tamil Nadu Congress Committee president B Manickam Tagore, Rajya Sabha member Praveen Chakravathy and Assembly floor leader Tharahai Cuthbert. Leaders of Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, including Vaiko and his son Durai, also participated.



Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi chief Thol Thirumavalavan and Indian Union Muslim League leaders KM Kader Mohideen, AM Shahjahan and Syed Farooq Basha were among those present. However, Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Communist Party of India leaders, who support the government, did not attend the meeting at Panaiyur. The coalition includes TVK, which won 108 seats in its debut Tamil Nadu Assembly election, along with Congress, which has five MLAs, and two MLAs each from the Indian Union Muslim League and VCK/Left factions

through external support. The TVK-led government was formed after the election results, with Vijay requiring support from at least 10 MLAs to take oath. The alliance meeting came amid reported tensions with Congress. Tamil Nadu Tourism Minister S Rajesh Kumar had said Congress ministers would resign if TVK did not support Rahul Gandhi as the party's prime ministerial candidate for the 2029 general election. Congress had ended its alliance with the DMK after the polls and backed TVK on the condition that communal forces remain outside the government.

J-K Police conduct security drill in Samba

SAMBA

Jammu and Kashmir Police conducted a security mock drill on Wednesday at a border police post in Samba district to strengthen security and improve operational preparedness along the Indo-Pak border. Officials said the exercise tested standard operating procedures for responding to a fidayeen or armed attack and assessed personnel readiness during an emergency. The drill was led by the Samba Additional Superintendent of Police and attended by the Samba Deputy Superintendent of Police, Special Op-



eration Group and the in-charge of Mawa Border Police Post. Personnel were briefed on their responsibilities, including sentry duties, the response to suspicious movement or an attack, and the roles of the LMG post and sentry. The exercise also focused on timely activation of alarm systems and technical monitoring by designated police

personnel. Emphasis was placed on quickly sharing information with the Special Operation Group, police control rooms in Samba and Jammu, and adjoining districts. Officers were also instructed on safe and coordinated movement after ensuring clear visibility, including advancing in buddy pairs while maintaining wireless communication. A detailed debriefing followed the exercise to assess the response and identify areas requiring improvement. Samba Police also displayed the Samba Police Control Room contact number at wa-

Assam strengthens child protection system with new safeguards

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said the state government has introduced a series of measures to strengthen child protection and address gaps in the existing system. The steps are aimed at ensuring greater safety, care and accountability for children across the state, with stronger safeguards for institutions and personnel responsible for their welfare. Sarma said the state has notified the State Child Protection Policy and Juvenile Justice (JJ) Rules, 2026, describing the move as an important step towards building a stronger and more organised child protection framework. He said the government had identified shortcomings in the existing system and was taking systematic measures to improve safeguards. As part of the new measures, Assam has made the appointment of child safeguarding officers and staff screening mandatory. The requirement is intended to ensure that personnel involved in caring for and



Assam introduces new child protection rules, mandatory staff screening and stronger monitoring to improve safety, accountability, care and rehabilitation statewide.

protecting children meet necessary safety standards. The functioning of Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Boards and more than 10 statutory bodies has also been streamlined to improve coordination and accountability. The government has additionally institutionalised Individual Care Plans and home audits to ensure that children's individual needs and safety are regularly assessed and monitored. These measures are designed to strengthen oversight and ensure that children receiving care and protection are sup-

KEY INITIATIVE	
■ Policy:	Child Protection Policy + JJ Rules, 2026
■ Staff:	Mandatory screening
■ Monitoring:	Home audits + care plans
■ Institutions:	CWCs, JJBs and 10+ bodies
■ Focus:	Prevention, care, monitoring and rehabilitation

ported through a structured system. The broader framework covers prevention, institutional care, monitoring and rehabilitation, while placing greater responsibility on statutory bodies and officials working with children. Sarma stressed the importance of closing regulatory gaps and strengthening every safeguard required for child safety. The latest policy and rules are expected to provide a more structured approach to implementing protection measures and improving oversight of institutions and personnel across Assam.

Naidu vows to protect land rights, resolve disputes

AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday said the NDA coalition government was committed to protecting people's rights over their land and resolving long-pending disputes. Addressing the "Mee Bhoomi-Mee Hakku" programme at Machavaram in BR Ambedkar Konaseema district, Naidu said governance must reach people and improve their lives, while highlighting land and water as vital to livelihoods. Naidu said the government was giving high priority to both areas, noting that more than 1,000 TMC of Godavari water had flowed into the sea despite the severe impact of El Nino on the state. He said better utilisation of the water could have delivered significant benefits. He also highlighted the government's "Pedala Sevalo" programme and its efforts to improve living standards through Public-Private-People Partnership. On land issues, Naidu alleged that the previous YSRCP government between 2019 and 2024 had tampered with and destroyed land records and introduced the Land Titling Act in an attempt to acquire people's

"If water is life, land is livelihood. That is why the NDA coalition government is giving high priority to both these programmes."
—Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister

lands. He said the NDA government repealed the Act after coming to power. He also alleged that properties of people disliked by the previous rulers were placed on a prohibited list, causing difficulties for owners. The government is conducting a comprehensive re-survey and issuing Patta-dar Passbooks carrying the Rajamudra, along with e-KYC, QR codes and blockchain-based security features. Naidu said auto-mutation had benefited 1.2 lakh families, while 16 lakh acres had been freed from restrictions and 224 long-pending land issues resolved. He said the government had also settled a 120-year-old land dispute and addressed cases in Shettipalli, Vatticherukuru, Kalidindi, Kangundi and Mudinepalli. In one initiative, action concerning 56.37 acres was taken to benefit 1,410 people and remove difficulties linked to the land dispute.

MPSC aspirant death sparks outrage over leaks

PUNE

The alleged suicide of MPSC aspirant Prathamesh Deshmukh in Pune has triggered outrage among competitive examination candidates amid allegations of paper leaks and financial distress. Police suspect that financial difficulties, including an unpaid debt of Rs 2.5 lakh, may have contributed to his death. The incident has intensified scrutiny of the Maharashtra Public Service Commission and its handling of examinations. Pune, an education hub in Maharashtra, has faced criticism over examination leak controversies involving NEET, CET and the drug inspector examination. MPSC aspirants staged protests in Pune on Monday and Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar on Tuesday, demanding the resignation of the commission's chairman and other officials over alleged leaks. The protests followed allegations concerning the MPSC Excise (Departmental) Examination. Protesters claimed institutional involvement in administrative irregularities and referred to reports alleging that a joint secretary-level officer

was linked to the leakage of examination marking patterns. They demanded the removal and replacement of the MPSC chairman and secretary, criminal investigations and legal action against officials and middlemen allegedly involved. Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee president Harshvardhan Sapkal attacked the government and demanded resignation of the MPSC chairman and secretary. He alleged that the government was avoiding responsibility over the death of a student from Dharashiv. Cockroach Janata Party founder Abhijit

Dipke expressed grief and urged aspirants not to take extreme steps, highlighting the dependence of families on students who move to Pune for preparation. NCP SP MLA Rohit Pawar backed the aspirants, saying the protest was about protecting their future rather than politics. He said candidates would not accept corruption involving payments for government posts. Key demands include comprehensive investigations, strict action and structural reforms to restore integrity in MPSC recruitment and examinations.

MP RAISES INTERN DOCTORS' STIPEND AFTER PROTEST

BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh government on Wednesday agreed to increase the monthly stipend of MBBS intern doctors to Rs 21,500 after a three-day protest demanding higher remuneration. The decision followed a meeting between Deputy Chief Minister and Health Minister Rajendra Shukla

and representatives of intern doctors, the Junior Doctors' Association and the Medical Teachers Association. The agitation was held at several locations across the state, including a major demonstration near Kamala Park in Bhopal. The protests intensified after police used lathis and water cannons to disperse students. Several intern doctors were

injured during the action, prompting the government to order an inquiry into the incident. Shukla said two police personnel who were prima facie found involved had been reassigned to police lines, while an inquiry team had been formed. He assured the delegation that students injured during the police action would re-

ceive proper medical treatment. He also said the government was committed to addressing their concerns with sensitivity. The meeting also discussed strengthening healthcare services in rural areas and the contribution of young doctors to medical facilities in remote parts of Madhya Pradesh. Shukla said the state was working to

improve rural healthcare through an MoU with Sevankur Bharat and appealed to young doctors to serve rural communities with a spirit of service and sensitivity. The revised stipend is expected to offer financial relief to MBBS graduates during their compulsory internship, which involves clinical training and pa-

tient-care responsibilities in government hospitals and other healthcare institutions. The agreement marks an end to the three-day agitation, with the government addressing the central demand for improved remuneration while also focusing on rural healthcare needs and recognising the concerns raised by protesting students statewide.

RAILWAY PROJECTS APPROVED

Cabinet approves 5 railway projects worth Rs 10,021 cr

NEW DELHI

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved five railway multi-tracking projects worth Rs 10,021 crore across Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The projects will add about 540 km to the railway network across 17 districts. They include new lines and doubling works covering Whitefield-Bangarapet, Arakkonam-Renigunta, Hosur-Omalur, Salem-Karur-Dindigul and Secunderabad-



Kazipet. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the projects, planned under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan,

will improve connectivity, logistics efficiency and railway capacity. They are expected to ease congestion and strengthen movement of

PROJECT AT A GLANCE	
Investment:	₹10,021 crore
Network expansion:	About 540 km
States covered:	Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana
Villages connected:	Nearly 2,121
Freight capacity:	47 million tonnes annually
Key corridors:	Whitefield-Bangarapet, Arakkonam-Renigunta, Hosur-Omalur, Salem-Karur-Dindigul and Secunderabad-Kazipet

people, goods and services.

The projects will improve rail access to nearly 2,121 villages with a combined population of around 52 lakh. They will also support connectivity to tourist destinations including Tirupati, Tiruttani and Hogenakkal Falls. The upgraded corridors are important for transporting coal, cement, steel, automobiles, food grains, petroleum products and fertilisers. The additional capacity is expected to generate 47 million tonnes of freight traffic annually, supporting industrial growth and economic activity.



Quick Read

Satya Niketan collapse: Three get police custody

NEW DELHI
A Patiala House Court on Wednesday granted two days of police custody to Mahesh Gupta, contractor Sanoj Kumar and PG operator Sudhanshu in the Satya Niketan building collapse case. Delhi Police had sought three days to investigate the incident and trace another PG operator, Shubham Tyagi. Seven people were killed when the five-storey building collapsed on September 6. Mahesh was produced after completing two days in custody, while Sanoj and Sudhanshu were produced after their fresh arrests. The court ordered a closed-door hearing following a request from Sudhanshu's counsel. Rescue operations have been completed, with 12 people rescued and seven deaths reported.

Water tank collapse in Ranchi kills one worker

RANCHI
An old water tank collapsed near Radium Road, behind the Kotwali police station, on Wednesday evening, killing one worker and leaving several others feared trapped under the debris. The tank collapsed while construction work was underway nearby, trapping labourers at the site. Police and rescue teams rushed to the spot, while JCB machines were deployed to clear the rubble and search for survivors. The area was cordoned off and public movement restricted. Ranchi MLA C.P. Singh visited the site and reviewed rescue efforts. Officials said the tank was structurally weak, but the exact cause remains unclear. A detailed investigation will follow.

Centre seeks Class 6 third-language relief

NEW DELHI
The Centre on Wednesday assured the Supreme Court that consultations would be held soon on granting the current Class 6 batch a one-time exemption from the mandatory third-language board examination in Class 10. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said a meeting with officials would be held "today or tomorrow" to consider the relief. The Centre also raised an "issue" over treating English as a native language and sought time to make submissions. The hearing was adjourned to September 17. The court said the three-language formula would eventually need implementation but stressed better planning, infrastructure and sufficient time for students to adapt. It also issued notice on petitions from minority schools challenging the policy.

No woman's dream will remain unfulfilled due to lack of capital : Yogi

VARANASI
Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday felicitated working women, including Anganwadi workers, cooks, sanitation workers and ASHA workers, at a Working Women's Honour Ceremony in Babatpur-Pindra. Addressing the gathering, he stressed the importance of respecting women and recognising their contributions to society. Yogi said women's safety remained a top priority for the state government and highlighted Mission Shakti as a strong foundation for their security. He said 20 per cent reservation had been ensured for women in the Uttar Pradesh Police. The number of women personnel in the state police has risen

Modi's youth-first pitch focuses on young nation-builders

BJP highlights Modi's youth-first governance, focusing on entrepreneurship, technology, sports, women's empowerment and young Indians as drivers of growth.

NEW DELHI

The BJP's pitch on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25 years in public life highlights a shift in how young Indians are viewed in governance — from beneficiaries of government schemes to drivers of economic growth and national development. The narrative focuses on a generation shaped by smartphones, startups, technology and growing global ambitions. According to BJP national president Nitin Nabin, Modi's governance has sought to expand the scale of Indian ambition across infrastructure, manufacturing, startups, technology, sports, space and defence. The party argues that young Indians increasingly want to build businesses and create opportunities rather than remain limited to seeking



employment. The startup ecosystem has become a key symbol of this approach. The BJP describes young entrepreneurs as moving from "job seekers" to "job givers", with startups and innovation presented as important pathways to economic opportunity. The party also points to initiatives such as Khelo India and Fit India, which it says have brought sports, fitness and youth participation closer to mainstream public policy. Technology and innovation form another part of the governance narrative. The pro-

YOUTH POWER PUSH

- **Youth-first:** Young Indians positioned as growth drivers.
- **Startups:** Shift from job seekers to job givers.
- **Innovation:** Focus on technology and young innovators.
- **Sports:** Khelo India and Fit India initiatives.
- **Women:** Push for economic empowerment and participation.

posed Seva First – Innovation Challenge, aimed at students, startups, professionals and young innovators, is presented as an effort to connect political messaging with India's emerging innovation

culture. The broader argument is that governance is increasingly focused on opportunity, enterprise and leadership alongside basic welfare and access. The BJP extends this framing to women's participation in development. Schemes and initiatives including Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao and Lakhpati Didi are cited as examples of efforts to encourage women's economic and social participation. The party's larger message is that young people should not simply wait for opportunities but help create them. "A developed India by 2047 cannot be built by governments alone. It will be built by the ambition, ideas and enterprise of its youth," a BJP leader said, underlining the central theme of the party's generational pitch.

Maharashtra Government suspends 5 officials over newborn deaths

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government on Wednesday ordered the suspension of five health department personnel over the deaths of three infants in a fire at the Special Newborn Care Unit (SNCU) of Amravati District Women's Hospital on August 24. The action followed an inquiry by a high-level committee, which found the official's prima facie responsible for supervisory lapses. The suspended personnel include the Deputy Director of Health Services, Akola Circle, the hospital's Medical Superintendent, Additional District Civil Surgeon, Administrative Officer and an electrician. The inquiry report high-

lighted serious lapses in technical inspections and equipment maintenance. It found that ventilators were not serviced on time, while fire alarms and sprinkler systems were non-functional. The report also noted that the fire pump house was locked. The government directed disciplinary action against the concerned officers and staff under Rule 8 of the Maharashtra Civil Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1979, citing negligence, supervisory failures and carelessness. During the incident, 36 infants were rescued and safely shifted to other hospitals. The government has also ordered action against contractual employees and directed that re-

sponsible officials from the Public Works Department be penalised. M/s AOV International LLP was held responsible by the inquiry and steps have been ordered to blacklist the company. Proceedings to blacklist Shilar Company will also be initiated after its forensic report is expedited. The state has announced stronger safety measures across government hospitals following the incident. CCTV systems will be installed in all SNCUs and Neonatal Intensive Care Units, while fire safety mock drills will be made mandatory. Hospitals have also been directed to strictly implement standard operating procedures covering fire safety, electrical safety and

medical equipment maintenance. Health Services Commissioner Sanjay Katkar has been asked to regularly coordinate with PWD, electrical, fire, bio-medical and maintenance departments to review safety measures. District Collectors, Zilla Parishad chief executive officers and Municipal Commissioners must complete electrical and fire safety audits of hospitals within three months. The Health Commissioner will also oversee fire safety audits, monitoring and compliance reporting in public and private hospitals. The government further directed that officers and staff who risked their lives to rescue the infants be recognised for their efforts.

DMK to hold Sep 12 protest over Vijay's remarks

CHENNAI

The DMK on Wednesday announced a statewide protest on September 12 against what it described as "scurrilous remarks" made by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay in the Assembly against party chief MK Stalin and late party patriarch M Karunanidhi. The party said the remarks, which included corruption allegations against their respective regimes, were condemnable and had lowered the dignity and tradition of the Assembly. In a statement, the DMK alleged that Vijay's speech on September 7 trivialised the party, Karunanidhi, late Union minister Murali Manan and the sacrifices of Stalin. The party particularly objected to remarks concerning Stalin's imprisonment during the Emergency between 1975 and 1977. The DMK said Stalin had endured "torture" during his one year in prison after being arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). The party alleged that the Assembly had never witnessed such a "disgusting speech" and accused the Chief Minister of setting aside its dignity, traditions and history. It further claimed that Vijay had resorted to crass rhetoric because he was unable to answer questions

Why DMK Protests?
Vijay's remarks: Remarks against Stalin, Karunanidhi.
Assembly dignity: DMK says dignity was lowered.
MISA row: Dispute over Stalin's detention.
Corruption claims: DMK rejects Vijay's allegations.
Political clash: Growing DMK-government confrontation.

DMK announces September 12 statewide protest against Vijay's Assembly remarks targeting Stalin and Karunanidhi, accusing him of lowering Assembly dignity.

concerning alleged governance failures. The DMK said the Chief Minister had thereby transformed himself into an individual "without standards." The statewide protest will be organised under the leadership of district secretaries, with the party describing it as a major demonstration against Vijay's Assembly remarks. The announcement comes amid an escalating political confrontation between the ruling government and the DMK over corruption allegations and the conduct of Assembly proceedings. Vijay had mounted a strong attack on the DMK in the Assembly on September 7, alleging serious and organised corruption during its previous regimes. He cited the Sarkaria Commission report while targeting the Karunanidhi-led government and also referred to Murali Manan. The Chief Minister additionally cited ED documents shared with the state government regarding alleged corruption during the DMK's 2021-26 tenure and named Stalin and Udhayanidhi in this context. The controversy over Stalin's Emergency detention has also drawn a response from Law Minister R Nirmal Kumar, who claimed there was no official record showing that Stalin's detention was under MISA. He said Stalin was arrested following remarks concerning former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her 20-point programme.

CENTRE CLEARS SEPARATE ENGINEERING CADRE FOR DELHI PWD

NEW DELHI

The Centre has approved the Delhi government's proposal to create a separate engineering cadre for the Public Works Department (PWD), giving the capital greater control over its engineering workforce. The move is expected to improve administrative responsiveness, speed up infrastructure projects and strengthen accountability in the execution of public works. Under the decision, 3,214 sanctioned engineering posts across 36 categories in the Delhi PWD will be separated from the Central Public Works Department cadre and brought under an independent Delhi PWD Engineering Cadre. The proposal had earlier received approval from the Delhi Cabinet under Chief Minister Rekha Gupta's leadership.

The issue had remained pending for nearly 30 years. Until now, Delhi PWD's engineering services were largely dependent on the CPWD cadre, with appointments to sanctioned posts being handled through the Central government system. The Delhi government said the arrangement could sometimes slow decisions and make it difficult to respond quickly to the capital's specific infrastructure and administrative requirements. Gupta said Delhi has distinct infrastructure needs because of its scale and pace of development. The city requires continuous construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, government buildings, offices and other public facilities. A separate cadre will allow the government to manage vacancies, deploy engineers, monitor

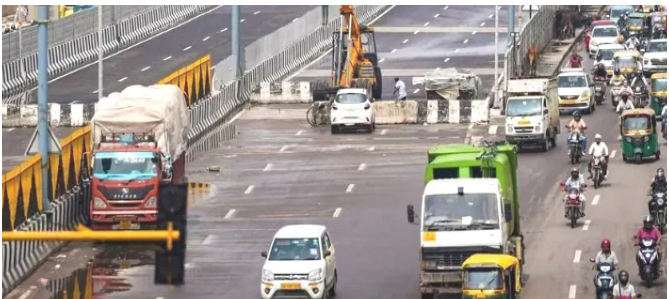
projects and assign officials according to the requirements of different works. The reform is also expected to improve accountability and transparency. Under the previous system, the government said, fixing responsibility for construction deficiencies or irregularities could sometimes be difficult when officials were transferred. The independent cadre would link engineering officials more closely with the Delhi government's administrative structure. The move comes as Delhi prepares for several major projects, including a new Secretariat, mini-secretariats in all 11 districts, mandis, sports grounds, roads, bridges and other public facilities. The government expects the new cadre to create a workforce more familiar with Delhi's infrastructure challenges and development priorities.

NHAI NEW PROJECTS

NHAI sets 80% plantation, 90% survival targets

NEW DELHI

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Wednesday tightened plantation requirements for national highway projects, making provisional completion certification and maintenance payments dependent on meeting prescribed plantation and sapling survival targets. Under the revised guidelines, contractors must carry out plantation on at least 80 per cent of the available right of way (ROW) earmarked for plantation. They must also maintain a minimum 90 per cent survival rate when the plantation is inspected. Median and avenue plantation will have to follow the relevant contract or concession agreement, the Green Highways Policy of 2015, Indian Road Congress specifications and



guidelines issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) and NHAI. Plantation will qualify for the Provisional Certificate of Completion (PCC) or Provisional Commercial Operation Date (PCOD) only when the required thresholds are achieved. If plantation falls below the 80 per cent target, the shortfall must be specifically recorded along with a timeline for completing the

remaining work. NHAI will enforce financial withholdings under the agreement until the plantation is completed and the prescribed target is achieved. The authority has also linked plantation maintenance to payments during the operations and maintenance (O&M) period. In Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC), Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM) and Build-Operate-Transfer

(BOT) Annuity projects, O&M or annuity payments will depend on compliance with the sapling survival norm. Similar compliance will be assessed for BOT-Toll projects. The guidelines require contractors to promptly replace dead plants with saplings of similar age and growth to maintain plantation density and continuity along highway corridors. Before processing operation or annuity payments or certifying maintenance compliance, NHAI will seek assistance from environment and plantation experts to verify field-level compliance and survival rates. The revised requirements aim to ensure that plantation commitments under highway projects are maintained beyond the initial planting stage and continue through the O&M period.

Quick Read

Pak poverty, unemployment rise sharply in FY26

New Delhi

Pakistan's poverty rate rose sharply to 28.9 per cent in fiscal year 2026 from 21.9 per cent a year earlier, according to a report citing the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2025-26. Unemployment also increased, highlighting growing economic pressure on households. Poverty increased across major provinces. Punjab's rate rose to 23.3 per cent from 16.5 per cent, while Sindh recorded 32.6 per cent against 24.5 per cent earlier. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's poverty rate reached 35.3 per cent, while Balochistan remained the poorest at 47 per cent. The number of unemployed people increased to 5.9 million from 4.5 million, while the unemployment rate rose to 7.1 per cent from 6.3 per cent. Pakistan allocated Rs 722.9 billion to the Benazir Income Support Programme in FY26, with Rs 540.27 billion released. The report stressed that stronger job creation, education, skills development, healthcare and economic growth are needed to achieve lasting poverty reduction.

Rentomojo flags key risks ahead of IPO

New Delhi

Rental platform Rentomojo has identified supplier dependence, customer defaults and revenue concentration as key risks ahead of its IPO. The company said disruptions among suppliers, higher procurement costs and quality issues could affect inventory and profit margins. Its top five asset suppliers accounted for 12.18 per cent of capital and operational expenses in FY26. Rentomojo also warned that customer churn, payment delays and contract cancellations could hurt profitability. The top 10 cities contributed 89.51 per cent of its FY26 revenue. The Rs 1,255.57-crore IPO includes a Rs 150-crore fresh issue and Rs 1,105.57-crore offer for sale. The price band is Rs 384-404 per share.

Stocks tumble as West Asia tensions rise

MUMBAI

Indian equity markets opened sharply lower on Wednesday as escalating tensions in West Asia and a surge in crude oil prices weakened investor sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 500.25 points to 75,060.61 in early trading, while the NSE Nifty declined 129.40 points to 23,506.10. The sell-off came amid growing concerns over the impact of higher oil prices on inflation and the Indian economy. Brent crude crossed the \$100-a-barrel mark as the conflict in the Middle East intensified, raising fears about disruptions to global energy supplies. Investors also remained cautious because of weak global market signals and continued geopolitical uncertainty.

Cabinet clears Rs 10,783 cr rail projects

The expanded network will boost freight movement and connectivity across key industrial and cargo corridors in eastern and central India.

NEW DELHI

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved three railway multi-tracking projects worth Rs 10,783 crore across five states, adding about 656 km to the Indian Railways network. The projects will cover 14 districts in West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. The projects are aimed at increasing railway capacity, reducing congestion and improving the efficiency of train operations. The expanded network is expected to strengthen connectivity across important industrial and freight corridors in eastern and central India. The government expects the projects to support an additional 27 million tonnes of freight movement annually. Better rail capacity is also expected to improve the movement of essential commodities and industrial goods while making logistics more efficient.



The projects are targeted for completion by 2029-30. Their implementation is expected to generate employment during construction and create wider economic benefits by improving access to markets, industries and key production centres. The multi-tracking works are part of the Centre's broader effort to expand railway infrastructure and improve the capacity of existing routes. By adding additional tracks on busy sections, Indian Railways aims to handle growing passenger and freight demand while improving operational reliability.

Project fact-file
■ Projects add 656 km of tracks.
■ Target completion set for 2029-30.
■ Spans five eastern and central states.
■ Boosts freight capacity by 27 million tonnes.
■ Improves industrial logistics and commodity movement.
■ Generates localized employment during construction.

The Cabinet decision comes as the government continues to accelerate railway infrastructure expansion across different parts of the country. The latest projects are expected to provide stronger rail connectivity and support economic activity across the five states.

INDIA EYES GLOBAL EXPANSION FOR FINTECH EXPORTS

MUMBAI

India should use its experience in fintech, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and digital public infrastructure (DPI) to expand into international markets, particularly countries in the Global South, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Wednesday. Speaking at the Global Fintech Fest in Mumbai, Agrawal said India has a major opportunity to increase financial services exports by securing a larger share of the growing global fintech trade. He said that if India captures even 10 per cent of global fintech services trade, its exports could rise substantially from around \$8 billion currently to an estimated \$60-80 billion. Agrawal said India is already sharing its digital public infrastructure experience with other countries. The country has signed memoranda of understanding with around 23 nations for cooperation in DPI. The government is also exploring payment-system integration with partner countries, particularly those with large Indian diaspora populations. Such interoperability could make cross-border transactions easier and more affordable. The Commerce Secretary said technology can help reduce the cost of financial services, including remittances and lending. Wider adoption of interoperable digital payment systems and Indian fintech solutions could improve access to financial services in developing economies. He said countries in the Global South could particularly benefit from India's experience in building large-scale digital systems.

Agrawal also highlighted the importance of free trade agreements (FTAs) in supporting fintech exports. India is seeking to address regulatory barriers involving financial services, telecommunications, cross-border data flows, artificial intelligence, investment and movement of professionals through trade negotiations. He said services trade, including financial services, is an important part of these discussions. According to Agrawal, India has concluded nine FTAs over the past four to five years covering countries with a combined GDP of around \$60 trillion. These agreements could create new opportunities for Indian fintech and financial services companies seeking to expand overseas.

PhonePe Founder and CEO Sameer Nigam outlined the company's vision for the next decade of financial inclusion at the Global Fintech Fest (GFF) 2026, focusing on making digital financial services accessible to people across India. Nigam said progress should be measured by whether people are included in the digital economy. He said PhonePe's products were designed to reduce barriers and create a financial system flexible enough to serve users. He highlighted the company's work with NPCI to address barriers linked to smartphones, bank accounts and borders. Nigam pointed to UPI

Greenply adopts LNG trucks for greener logistics

VADODARA

Greenply Industries Limited has partnered with GreenLine Mobility Solutions Ltd to introduce LNG-powered trucks into its outbound logistics operations, marking a move towards cleaner and more sustainable freight transportation. The partnership was formally launched with the flag-off of GreenLine's LNG-powered trucks at Greenply's manufacturing facility in Vadodara. Under the initiative, the trucks will transport Greenply products from the facility to destinations across its distribution network. The company said the move will help bring cleaner mobility solutions into its freight operations while supporting cost-effective logistics. According to Greenply, the LNG-powered trucks can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by up to 40 per cent, sulphur oxides by up to 100 per cent, nitrogen oxides by up to 59 per cent, particulate matter by up to 91 per cent and carbon monoxide by up to 70 per cent. The company said the initiative is part of its wider sustainability efforts, which now extend beyond manufacturing to logistics and distribution activities. Greenply Joint Managing Director Sanidhya Mittal said sustainability should cover the movement of products across the entire value chain. He said the introduction of

GREENPLY DE- PLOYS LNG FREIGHT TRUCKS

Greenply partnered with GreenLine Mobility to introduce LNG trucks at its Vadodara facility, cutting carbon emissions by up to forty percent. This logistics initiative aims to extend supply chain sustainability while maintaining operational efficiency across transport networks.

LNG trucks at the Vadodara facility was a first step towards adopting more responsible mobility solutions while maintaining supply-chain efficiency and reliability. GreenLine CEO Madhur Taneja said the partnership would support cleaner freight transportation without compromising operational efficiency. GreenLine currently operates more than 1,000 LNG- and electric-powered heavy commercial vehicles across major freight corridors in India. Its fleet has travelled more than 100 million kilometres and helped customers reduce over 27,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. Greenply will evaluate the operational feasibility of alternative-fuel vehicles across its dispatch network and explore further opportunities to make its logistics ecosystem more sustainable.

India launches advanced ocean research vessel

NEW DELHI

India has launched a state-of-the-art ocean research vessel, ORV Sagar Manthan, to strengthen indigenous oceanographic research and expand the country's maritime capabilities, according to an official statement. The vessel was launched at Rishi Bankim Shipyard in Kolkata in the virtual presence of Earth Sciences Minister Dr Jitendra Singh. It was designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) for the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research under the Ministry of Earth Sciences. Singh praised the team for completing the launch within two years of signing the contract and about five months after keel laying. ORV Sagar Manthan is equipped with advanced systems for detailed ocean studies. These include dynamic positioning, multibeam bathymetry, multichannel seismic equipment, sub-bottom profiling, weather radar and deployment facilities for remotely operated and autonomous underwater vehicles. The vessel will support surveys along the Indian Ocean mid-oceanic ridges to study mineral resources, establish environmental baselines, collect upper-air data and conduct CTD profiling. Designed to work in extreme conditions, including the Southern Ocean, the vessel has a projected service life of 30 years. It will gradually replace the 43-year-old ORV Sagar Kanaya as India's advanced oceanographic platform.

PhonePe outlines decade-long fin inclusion vision

NEW DELHI

PhonePe is working to expand opportunities for merchants through its Business App, SmartConnect, SmartStore and payment gateway services. Sameer Nigam, PhonePe founder and CEO

PhonePe is working to expand opportunities for merchants through its Business App, SmartConnect, SmartStore and payment gateway services.

Sameer Nigam, PhonePe founder and CEO

UAE, France and Nepal. On savings and investments, Nigam outlined PhonePe's "Sachetization Philosophy", aimed at making financial products easier to adopt through small contributions. PhonePe Daily FD allows users to begin fixed deposits with Rs 100 a day, while gold, silver and mutual fund SIPs can start at Rs 10. He introduced CRISP for market information and discussed AI-based lending, which can complete loan disbursements in 2.5 minutes. Nigam said He said the company's goal was to use technology to make financial security, savings, credit and business growth more accessible to millions of Indians across the country.

Nifty slips below 23,500 as crude surges

MUMBAI

Indian stock markets ended sharply lower on Wednesday, with the Nifty closing below the 23,500 mark and the Sensex losing more than 1%, as Brent crude oil prices crossed \$100 a barrel amid escalating tensions in West Asia. The BSE Sensex fell 812.85 points, or 1.08%, to settle at 74,764.23, while the NSE Nifty declined 203.40 points, or 0.86%, to 23,431.50. Both benchmark indices ended at their lowest levels since June 11, reflecting growing investor concerns over the economic impact of higher oil prices. Brent crude moved above the \$100-per-barrel level for the first time since July as the conflict in the Middle East intensified. Rising crude prices have increased concerns over inflation, India's import bill and corporate costs, putting additional pressure on equities. Selling was broad-based, with 13 of the 16 major sectoral indices ending in negative territory. Information technology stocks were

among the biggest losers, with the Nifty IT index falling 3.2%. Small-cap and mid-cap indices also declined 0.5% each. However, energy and metal stocks bucked the broader trend, gaining 0.6% and 1.8%, respectively. Adani Enterprises was among the notable gainers, rising 5.1% after its parent group announced a stake sale in its airport business. Market analysts said persistent increases in crude and commodity prices remain a major concern for investors.

APSEZ expands eastern India port ops

BHUBANESWAR

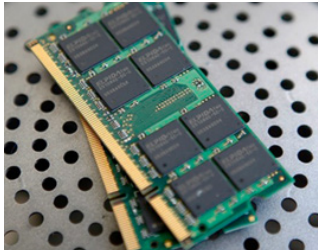
Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) has secured the contract to develop and operate two dry bulk berths at Paradip Port in Odisha, marking its entry into one of India's major ports and strengthening its presence on the eastern coast. The project will add 18 million metric tonnes (MMT) of mechanised dry bulk handling capacity to APSEZ's domestic portfolio. It will be developed under a build-operate-transfer model with a 30-year concession period. The project is expected to improve the company's access to the mineral-rich hinterland of eastern

and central India. The new berths are expected to support the handling of commodities such as coal, limestone and other dry bulk cargo. Their location at Paradip will help APSEZ serve major industrial and manufacturing centres in the region and support the movement of raw materials and finished goods. APSEZ said the expansion is part of its broader strategy to strengthen its port network and improve logistics connectivity across India. The company's entry into Paradip is expected to complement its existing operations on the eastern coast and provide additional capacity for future cargo growth.

India needs targeted localisation to cut China reliance

NEW DELHI

India's growing electronics manufacturing industry continues to depend heavily on China for key components, highlighting the need for targeted localisation of critical parts, according to a recent industry report. While domestic electronics production and exports have expanded rapidly, imported components remain a major weakness in the supply chain. The report noted that India has made significant progress in assembling electronic products, particularly smartphones. However, deeper localisation is required



to increase domestic value addition and reduce dependence on imported components. China remains an important source for several essential parts used by Indian electronics manufacturers. Industry experts said the focus should now move beyond final assembly towards manufacturing

India's electronics manufacturing
Shift focus beyond final assembly.
Manufacture core components domestically.
Target high-import vulnerable items.
Strengthen supply chain resilience.

ing core components such as printed circuit boards, semiconductors, displays, sensors and other critical inputs. Building these capabilities

within India would help strengthen supply chains and reduce exposure to external disruptions. Recent government initiatives, including the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme, are aimed at encouraging investment in domestic component production. The scheme has already approved projects with a combined outlay of around Rs 40,000 crore, supporting a shift towards higher-value manufacturing. The report suggested that India should adopt a targeted approach rather than attempting to localise every component immediately. Priority should

be given to products where imports are large, strategically important or vulnerable to supply disruptions. Such an approach could help companies develop competitive domestic capabilities while keeping manufacturing costs under control. Analysts said stronger local component production would also improve India's position as a global electronics manufacturing hub. As exports continue to grow, deeper localisation could create new investment opportunities, strengthen domestic supply chains and reduce the country's long-term dependence on China.



Behind
the Guns
and Guards:
EXPLORING
BODYGUARD
AND GUNMEN
CULTURE IN
INDIA

Security in India has long been intertwined with power — whether in the corridors of political influence, the gated enclaves of gated communities, or the bustling tech hub of Bengaluru. The phenomenon of personal protection and “gunmen culture” has evolved from historical norms into a multi-layered modern reality that straddles law, class, politics, and perception. This feature investigates how and why it exists, what laws govern it, how it shapes (and is shaped by) society, and how it manifests locally in Karnataka and Bengaluru.

Origins of Armed
Bodyguards in India
From Royal Retainers to Private Security

The concept of protecting individuals with personal guards in India has historical roots in royal courts and feudal systems long before modern policing. Kings and chieftains maintained armed retainers for both ceremonial and defensive purposes, signaling authority and safeguarding against rivals. While modern India abolished princely states, the social memory of armed protection persisted.

Even today, certain cultural practices around weapons — such as ceremonial reverence during festivals — reflect traditional associations of arms with defense and heightened status.

In post-independence India, law enforcement duties primarily belonged to formal police and armed forces.

However, as urbanization surged and public policing struggled to keep pace with demand, private entities — extending from corporate houses to political figures — began hiring dedicated personal protection officers. In metropolitan cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, private guards now supplement official capabilities and sometimes substitute for state protection altogether.

- Historical legacy of armed retinues influencing modern norms
- Shift from state monopoly on force to privatized protection
- Cultural attitudes toward personal arms and security



Legal Framework Governing
Armed Security in India
Arms Act, PSARA Licensing, and Enforcement

The Arms Act, 1959 forms the backbone of firearm regulations in India. Under this statute, civilians (including private security personnel) can hold weapons only with strict licensing and compliance. However, enforcement challenges have surfaced. For instance, in earlier public litigation, the Centre told the Supreme Court there was no specific regulation governing the use of arms by private security agencies once they were licensed — opening concerns about potential misuse and the lack of oversight.

Parallel to firearm laws is the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act (PSARA), 2005, which governs licensing

and operations of security firms that supply guards and bodyguards. In Karnataka, businesses must obtain a PSARA license from the State Home Department to legally deploy guards, bodyguards, and other security services; operating without one leads to penalties and legal liabilities.

Despite these frameworks, implementation remains inconsistent. A local investigation in Bengaluru revealed that only around 400 of nearly 950 private security firms in the state were properly registered, with many operating illegally. Additionally, many agencies fail to provide mandated training, raising concerns about preparedness and professionalism.



- Arms Act and its limitations regarding private armed guards
- PSARA licensing requirements and compliance challenges in K'taka
 - Gaps between law and enforcement

POWER, PERCEPTION, AND POLITICS
Political Gunmen Culture

Gunmen culture intersects deeply with politics in India. Across states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Karnataka, political heavyweights and power brokers often cultivate entourages that include armed aides. Politicians seek not just protection but symbolic muscle — a signifier of influence, capacity to intimidate opposition, and secure territory.

In Karnataka, such dynamics surface starkly. In January

2026, three private gunmen were arrested in connection with a politically charged clash in Ballari, leading to accusations of assassination attempts and requests for enhanced police security by a sitting legislator. Such episodes highlight how political actors sometimes operate in a grey zone where private armaments overlap with contention and violence.

Moreover, elected leaders

and VIPs in India are provided security by the state based on threat perceptions — categorized as X, Y, Z, and Z+ — which entail armed personnel drawn from police reserves. In Karnataka, over 500 armed guards and gunmen protect VIPs including political figures and corporate leaders, illustrating how official and private protection blur lines of authority and identity.

Bodyguards in Bollywood
& Popular Media
From Reel Glamour to Street Perception

The cinema and television industries have significantly shaped popular imagination about bodyguards and gunmen. Indian films often depict personal security officers as hyper-competent, loyal warriors — combining elements of action heroism with class, charisma, and swagger. These portrayals resonate with audiences and reinforce the mystique around armed protection.

Bengaluru, with its vibrant film society culture and youth demographics, is a city where such media images find traction. Films showing bullet-dodging bodyguards or suave protectors at nightclubs influence how aspirants and audiences alike visualize what bodyguards do and represent.

While these portrayals are mostly fictionalized, they contribute to a cultural cachet that sometimes obscures the realities of security work (long hours, low pay, limited training). They also elevate the desirability of being seen with armed protection, not just for safety but for status.



Caste, Class, and Power Dynamics
Who Gets Protection — and Who Pays the Price

Security culture in India is inseparable from social hierarchy. Traditionally, those with wealth and influence — from feudal landlords to corporate chiefs — could command protection. This dynamic persists today: affluent neighborhoods in Bengaluru and other cities hire private guards and armoured car escorts, while residents of lower-in-

come areas often must rely on minimal official policing.

Scholars and analysts note that underlying caste and class inequalities shape the security industry itself. Many private guards hail from economically weaker backgrounds and rural regions, with little say in their working conditions. They tend to be contract labor, poorly paid, and lacking benefits,

even as they serve clients from elite classes.

This dynamic raises ethical questions. Protection may be abundant for the elite, but for the average citizen — migrant workers in Bengaluru or small business owners in townships — safety often means counting on overcrowded police forces rather than armed detachment.

Gunmen as Status Symbols
Power, Prestige, and Visibility

In certain Indian socio-political circles, having armed protection — even beyond what law or threat levels logically require — becomes a symbol of prestige and influence. Politicians, film stars, industrialists, and even some wealthy technocrats in Bengaluru and elsewhere may employ visible security details.

This trend overlaps with India's broader “status goods” culture, where cars, homes, and personal entourages signal success. Armed guards — especially in conspicuous uniforms — can embody that same cultural script. While some individuals genuinely require such protection due to real threats, others use it as an emblem of social position.

It's worth noting that this phenomenon intersects with public perceptions. A local

social media trope in Bengaluru jokes about residents reacting strongly (but humorously) even when confronted with celebrity bodyguards blocking traffic — a cultural flashpoint that underscores how armed protection can also provoke public attitudes and reactions.



- Armed guards as symbols rather than solely protectors
- Public perception and cultural narratives
- Local anecdotes reflecting attitudes toward visible security

Private Security Industry
Boom in India
Growth, Demand, and Complexity

India's private security sector is one of the fastest-growing industries in the country. With police-to-population ratios below United Nations recommendations, private security guards — licensed and unlicensed — fill a gap across corporate campuses, hospitals, malls, tech parks, and residential complexes in metros like Bengaluru.

Firms now offer a range of services: unarmed guards, armed gunmen, executive protection, and specialized bodyguard services tailored to corporate executives and VIPs. Several agencies in Bangalore and Karnataka market armed gunman services for banks, cash transit, and high-risk personal protec-

- Expansion of private security in urban India
- Services offered and specialization trends
- Regulatory and quality challenges

tion. Yet this boom has complexity. While demand has surged, industry regulation has lagged. Enforcement of training standards and background checks varies, and clients sometimes hire cheaper, non-compliant security providers. Even in well-heeled communities, the security industry's rapid growth raises questions about professionalism versus profitability.

Conclusion: Guarded Realities

The terrain of bodyguards and gunmen culture in India is a mosaic of legal regulation, economic impetus, social hierarchy, and cultural representation. In cities like Bengaluru, the ubiquity of private security reflects both real concerns — from crime prevention to personal threats — and broader socioeconomic currents. While armed protection provides safety and peace of mind for some, it also raises questions about equity, professionalism, policy enforcement, and the privatization of what was once a core public function. As India's urban landscapes continue evolving, the culture of bodyguards and gunmen will likely remain a potent lens through which to understand power, security, and society itself.

Max Verstappen compares Red Bull to ‘turtle’ at Monza

MONZA

Max Verstappen felt like a slow turtle on the track during the Italian Grand Prix, but his clever braking skills still helped him secure a solid podium finish.

Starting from the 3rd row on the grid, the Red Bull driver quickly forced his way into the front pack at Monza. By lap 12, he managed to grab the lead of the race. However, his time at the front did not last long. The fast Mercedes cars, driven by George Russell and a charging Kimi Antonelli, soon caught up to him. Antonelli put on an amazing recovery drive, fighting his way up from the very back of the grid after taking a penalty.

Verstappen simply could not match the raw straight-line speed of his rivals. He admitted that watching other cars breeze past him on the long straights was frustrating and not much fun at all. He compared his car to a slow turtle while the Mercedes machines flew right by him.

Yet, the race was far from a total disaster for the Dutch driver. He pointed out that his car performed brilliantly under heavy braking. This strength allowed him to pull off some daring moves and fight back by diving down the outside into the corners. He used this

Crawling like a turtle on the straights, Max Verstappen relied on master class braking to salvage a podium.



specific braking tactic to make the most out of a tough situation and keep himself in the thick of the action.

Aside from pure speed issues, Verstappen also complained about the heavy power of the electric overtake mode used during the race.

Once he took the lead, he felt like an easy target because the Mercedes power units had a clear deployment advantage. Even after a pit stop for fresh tyres, passing other cars proved to be a real challenge once they activated their extra

electrical boost.

In the end, Antonelli took a brilliant victory on his home soil, while Russell crossed the line right behind him. Verstappen brought his Red Bull home in a respectable third place.

He felt pleased with the team’s hard work to bounce back after a rough weekend in Zandvoort. Even though Red Bull managed a strong turnaround, Verstappen knows his team still has plenty of homework to do on their straight-line speed before the next race.

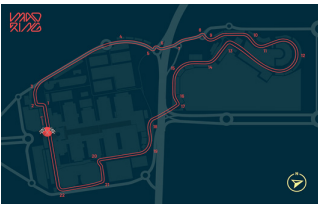
Madring ready for first ever F1 Spanish GP

MADRID

Formula One returns to the Spanish capital for the first time in decades this weekend, marking a historic chapter as the sport debuts at the brand-new Madring circuit for the 14th round of the 26 season. Bringing elite motorsport back to Madrid for the first time since the legendary Circuito de Jarama hosted events decades ago, this new layout promises an entirely unpredictable weekend where established team hierarchies could be completely rewritten.

Championship leader Kimi Antonelli arrives in Spain holding a commanding 66 point advantage over Mercedes teammate George Russell, following a sensational victory last time out at Monza. However, the unique technical demands of the 22 corner street-and-purpose-built facility are expected to level the playing field.

Featuring the longest banked turn on the entire Formula One calendar and tight, unforgiving walls, the circuit demands absolute precision from every driver while offering a vibrant, Miami-like atmosphere in the heart of the city.



2026 SPANISH GP TIMELINE	
Friday, Sept 11:	FP1 (13:30) FP2 (17:00)
Saturday, Sept 12:	FP3 (12:30) Qualifying (16:00)
Sunday, Sept 13:	The Grand Prix (15:00)

The action kicks off on Friday, September 11th, with Free Practice 1 at 13:30 local time, followed by Free Practice 2 at 17:00. Teams will have one final hour of practice on Saturday, September 12th, at 12:30 before fighting for grid positions during Qualifying at 16:00. The lights go out for the grand prix on Sunday, September 13th, at 15:00 local time. Trackside temperatures are forecasted to exceed thirty degrees Celsius with brilliant sunshine, ensuring a punishing test of reliability and tire management under clear skies. Fans around the globe can catch every moment live

through F1 TV Pro and F1 TV Premium, which offer ad-free streaming, onboard camera feeds, multi-view options, and ultra-high-definition 4K broadcasts compatible with major devices like Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and Android TV. Live timing services will also remain active across F1.com and the official mobile application.

Beyond the headline act, the weekend serves as a major showcase for rising motorsport talent. Formula 2 returns to action with Nikola Tsolov leading the championship standings by eleven points over Rafael Camara, featuring practice on Friday, a reverse-grid Sprint Race on Saturday at 14:15, and the main Feature Race on Sunday at 11:25. Meanwhile, the Formula 3 season reaches its thrilling conclusion in Madrid, where championship leader Freddie Slater and Ugo Ugochukwu will battle for the ultimate crown through a packed schedule of sprint and feature events wrapping up on Sunday morning. Local heroes like Carlos Sainz and Fernando Alonso will also enjoy massive support from passionate home crowds as the entire motorsport world focuses its attention on Spain.

Red flags in testing, but Sainz expects smooth racing

MADRID

Formula One driver Carlos Sainz has brushed off concerns regarding potential chaos ahead of the sport’s much-anticipated debut at the brand-new Madring circuit next weekend. As the hybrid street-and-permanent track officially takes over hosting duties for the Spanish Grand Prix, recent junior category testing raised eyebrows across the paddock after triggering a staggering nineteen red flags over just two days, with 11 stoppages caused by drivers colliding directly with the unforgiving barriers.

Addressing the media about the demanding layout, the home favorite acknowledged that navigating the venue will present one of the most intense driving hurdles seen in the championship for years. Draw-



ing comparisons to high-speed street venues like Jeddah, Baku, and even the iconic Macau circuit, he noted that handling modern one-thousand-horsepower hybrid machines within such tight confines demands absolute perfection and unwavering concentration from every single competitor on the grid.

Despite the alarming prevent testing statistics, the experienced racer remains confident

that the premier class will adapt smoothly to the unique surroundings. Pointing out that modern grand prix racing routinely visits high-risk street venues without descending into permanent disarray, he emphasized that professional drivers naturally adjust to narrow margins and close walls over the course of a practice weekend. While yellow flags, safety cars, and sudden qualifying interruptions remain a distinct possibility given the technical nature of the layout, he expects the overall race weekend to run with standard competitive professionalism.

The upcoming weekend carries immense personal significance for the local hero, marking his first appearance representing a major manufacturer at a home grand prix hosted directly in his birthplace of Madrid.

Antonelli represents F1’s new breed, says Wolff

LONDON

Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff believes young Formula One star Kimi Antonelli represents a new breed of drivers who are better equipped for top-tier success than any previous generation. Following Antonelli’s historic victory at the Italian Grand Prix in Monza, Wolff pointed to advanced training tools like professional simulators as a major reason why modern teenagers adapt so quickly to complex machinery.

The 20-year-old Italian driver secured a stunning win from 19th on the grid, putting him 66 points clear of teammate George Russell in the championship standings and sparking wild celebrations across Italy. Wolff explained that today’s young competitors treat advanced simulators as powerful training environments rather than simple video games. Because drivers



Toto Wolff praised Kimi Antonelli as part of a new generation equipped with advanced simulator skills after his historic Italian Grand Prix victory at Monza.

categories digitally—from rally cars to GT machines—they build cognitive abilities and mental bandwidth at an extremely early age.

According to the Mercedes boss, this constant digital practice makes everything on the real track feel like it is moving in slow motion, allowing rookies to handle immense

pressure effortlessly. Wolff even compared Antonelli’s incredible capacity to learn and absorb information to a self-improving artificial intelligence agent. While older champions like Max Verstappen and Lando Norris also embrace virtual racing, this new wave of teenagers enters the pinnacle of motorsport with an even deeper baseline of experience.

Antonelli’s emotional victory at Monza made him the first Italian to win his home grand prix in 60 years and sent the nation into a frenzy.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni sent official congratulations, major newspapers dedicated pages to his historic drive, and the youngster celebrated by eating spaghetti out of his championship trophy.

As the season moves forward, the young Mercedes driver remains on a clear path toward potentially making history as the youngest world champion in the sport. Wolff believes that as simulator technology and training methods continue to evolve, the next wave of rising drivers will bring even more layers of talent to the grid.

Can Hamilton bridge the 76-point gap?

MONZA

Lewis Hamilton’s pursuit of a record-breaking 8th Formula One world championship suffered what could be a fatal blow following a chaotic and frustrating Italian Grand Prix at Monza. What was intended to be a crucial weekend springboard for the Ferrari star instead devolved into a damage-limitation exercise, leaving him trailing runaway championship leader Kimi Antonelli by a daunting 76 points.

The trouble began immediately on the opening lap when



a tight first-chicane clash with teammate Charles Leclerc forced the seven-time world champion wide and off the

track into the gravel. Although Leclerc retired moments later following a high-speed accident at the Parabolica, Hamilton was left buried deep in the chasing pack. Ferrari’s strategic choices further complicated his afternoon, notably opting against pitting him during a mid-race Virtual Safety Car. This left the red machine horribly exposed on the straights, unable to fend off faster rivals before he ultimately crossed the finish line in sixth place.

Reflecting on the damaging afternoon, a dejected Hamilton conceded that the pace differ-

ential of the Mercedes power units makes bridging the gap an uphill battle. While mathematically remaining in contention with roughly nine rounds left on the calendar, the British veteran acknowledged that overcoming such a massive deficit is realistically out of reach. As the paddock packs up and heads to Spain for the historic maiden race at the Madring, Ferrari faces immense internal pressure to sort out its operational consistency and team rules of engagement if they hope to salvage anything from the remainder of the season.

Records are made for breaking: Sebastian Vettel

BERLIN

Former four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel has admitted he would feel “very happy” to see his long-standing record as Formula One’s youngest title-holder broken by Mercedes prodigy Kimi Antonelli.

Vettel famously set the benchmark in 2010 at 23 years and four months old. However, 20-year-old Antonelli currently commands a commanding 66-point lead at the summit of the 2026 championship standings following a breathtaking victory from 19th on the grid at Monza.

With a massive cushion over teammate George Russell and multiple wins under his belt, the young Italian is on a clear trajectory to shatter the German’s historic milestone by more than three full years.

Asked by media outlets, including RacingNews365, whether watching his 16-year-old record fall would feel bittersweet, Vettel dismissed the notion entirely. The former Red Bull star emphasized that records are naturally meant to be broken



and praised the teenager for delivering an extraordinary campaign.

Observing the sport purely from a spectator’s perspective nowadays, Vettel noted that he appreciates the sheer dedication and heavy labor required behind the scenes to reach the pinnacle of motorsport.

While expressing a mild wish for a tighter multi-driver battle at the front to spice

up the closing rounds, Vettel insisted that whoever ultimately secures the crown will thoroughly deserve the historic achievement.

As Antonelli prepares for the upcoming round at the Madring circuit, the endorsement from one of the sport’s ultimate modern greats highlights the immense respect the current generation holds for his meteoric rise.

Spanish GP: Williams unveil 1981-inspired livery



MADRID

Williams has revealed a special heritage-inspired livery for the upcoming Spanish Grand Prix, celebrating Formula One’s return to the Spanish capital. The one-off design pays direct homage to the iconic white, green, and navy blue color scheme of the team’s 1981 championship-winning FW07C—the exact car raced the last time the sport visited Madrid at the Circuito de Jarama.

The striking new look will adorn the racing machines of home hero Carlos Sainz and teammate Alex Albon throughout the race weekend. The team officially unveiled the retro design

during a lively Fan Zone appearance featuring Sainz in Madrid’s busy Plaza De Callao, drawing massive crowds of local supporters.

Team leadership explained that the vintage aesthetic is more than just a visual tribute, serving as a reminder of the engineering precision and competitive spirit that defined their past. Team Principal James Vowles noted that connecting the historical legacy of the 1981 squad with the modern organization helps inspire their ongoing journey back to the front of the grid. Powered by title sponsor Atlassian, the project highlights how traditional values continue to shape their modern technical development.

Power struggles, team tension: Stroll’s Monza radio

MONZA

Hidden team radio from the Italian Grand Prix revealed a tense moment when Lance Stroll shouted at his Aston Martin race engineer to wake up during a difficult race.

Aston Martin endured a miserable weekend at Monza, ending with a double retirement. Stroll was forced to park his car after 26 laps due to a suspected hydraulic problem, while his experienced teammate Fernando Alonso also retired early with car damage. Both drivers had qualified near the very back of the grid, highlighting the team’s ongoing power shortage on the long Italian straits.

During the race, Stroll found himself struggling with energy management issues and battery trouble. As rivals easily sailed past him, his race engineer, Gary Gannon, instructed him over the radio to change his settings by switching to mode nine.

