



'India is a launchpad for global growth'

'India not just a market': PM Modi woos New Zealand investors.

AUCKLAND

India is not only a market but a launchpad for global growth, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday as he invited New Zealand's top business leaders to invest in diverse sectors of the Indian economy.

In an interaction with a select group of CEOs and corporate leaders in Auckland, Modi said the landmark India-New Zealand free trade agreement - signed earlier this year - would add depth and dynamism to the bilateral economic ties and open new opportunities for market access, investment and talent mobility.

PM Modi emphasised that the two nations' shared democratic values, diversity and commitment to sustainable development provide a robust foundation for an ambitious, forward-looking economic partnership.

"In India, we have made reform, perform, and transform the basis of governance. Today, India has policy stability, political stability, and continuity of growth," he said.

"Therefore, our message to the world is: India is not only a market; India is a launchpad for global growth," Modi said.

The prime minister made the remarks shortly after holding wide-ranging talks with his New Zealand counterpart Christopher Luxon that led to 18 key outcomes, including 10 agreements.

Modi also made a mention



of a decision to upgrade the bilateral ties between the two countries to the level of strategic partnership.

"This is not just a diplomatic milestone; it is a new resolve for our shared future. This year, a free trade agreement was signed between the two countries in a record time of nine months," he said.

"This will open new opportunities for market access, investment, services, technology, and talent mobility for all of you. I am confident that by working with renewed vigour and enthusiasm, we will double bilateral trade by 2030," he added.

In the bilateral talks, New Zealand committed to invest USD 20 billion in India over the next 15 years.

"This is not just about investment, but also a commitment to participate in India's development journey," Modi told business leaders.

In India, we have made reform, perform, and transform the basis of governance. Today, India has policy stability, political stability, and continuity of growth.

-Narendra Modi, PM

Luxon calls Modi's visit historic

The future of India and New Zealand is intertwined and that the trade agreement between the two countries would create fresh opportunities for businesses and support India's journey towards becoming a developed nation, PM Modi said while attending the 'Kia Ora Modi' community event in Auckland, attended by New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon. Luxon, calling the visit historic, said the relationship had the warmth of "a family reunion that's been waiting 40 years in the making".

"Today, India is the world's fastest-growing major economy. Our growing middle class, large-scale digital adoption, and infrastructure push make India a unique growth story," he said.

India-NZ: A partnership 'made for each other'

India and New Zealand have set an ambitious target to double bilateral trade to ₹35,000 crore by 2030 following talks between PM Modi and his Kiwi counterpart Christopher Luxon. The meeting yielded 18 concrete outcomes, including 10 agreements. Key among them were a roadmap to expand ties in the next four years, a framework for enhancing Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation, and a reciprocal logistics support pact between the Indian Navy and the New Zealand Defence Force.

Key takeaways from PM MODI'S NEW ZEALAND VISIT

▶ ₹35,000 CRORE Bilateral Trade Target By 2030

India and NZ aim to double trade in goods and services.

▶ 40 YEARS First Indian PM Visit To Auckland In Four Decades

The visit marked a major diplomatic milestone.

▶ 2030 New Strategic Partnership Roadmap

The roadmap will guide cooperation in trade, defence and technology.

▶ 1 ANNUAL DIALOGUE Maritime Security Cooperation

Both countries agreed to hold a maritime security dialogue every year.

▶ 3 MARITIME PACTS Defence Ties Get A Push

Agreements cover maritime cooperation, hydrography and logistics support.

▶ 1 TOURISM AGREEMENT Direct Flights In Focus

Both sides agreed for non-stop air connectivity.



S JANAKI (1938–2026) The voice for every emotion takes eternal rest

MYSURU

Veteran playback singer S Janaki, affectionately revered as the "Nightingale of South India," passed away on Saturday at a private hospital in Mysuru following age-related health issues. She was 88.

Her passing was confirmed by her family, with her granddaughter sharing an emotional note stating that the iconic singer passed away peacefully.

Her passing brings to a close one of the most remarkable careers in Indian music history. For more than six decades, Janaki's voice became synonymous with emotion, versatility and musical excellence across multiple Indian languages.

A career that transformed Indian playback singing

Born on April 23, 1938, in Pallapatla, Andhra Pradesh, Janaki entered the film industry after being noticed by AVM Studios. She made her playback debut in 1957, beginning a journey that would see her become one of India's most prolific singers.

During her career, she is estimated to have recorded between 20,000 and 30,000 songs across more than 17 languages, including Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Hindi, Odia and several international languages.

Her ability to adapt her voice to different emotions, characters and musical styles earned admiration from composers, singers and audiences alike.

S. Janaki was widely recognised for her exceptional vocal control and expressive singing.

She could effortlessly perform: Romantic melodies, Emotional ballads, Devotional songs, Folk music, Semi-classical compositions, Children's voices through remarkable vocal modulation. Her performances brought life to countless memorable film songs and helped shape the sound of South Indian cinema for generations.

Iconic collaborations

Throughout her career, Janaki worked with many of India's greatest music composers and singers. Her collaborations with Ilaiyaraaja produced numerous timeless classics that continue to remain popular decades later. Her extraordinary linguistic versatility allowed her to sing for audiences across different regions without losing emotional authenticity.

Retirement from music

After a career spanning nearly six decades, Janaki retired from playback singing in 2017.

She spent her later years away from public life in Mysuru, choosing a quieter lifestyle while remaining deeply respected by fans and the music fraternity.

An everlasting legacy

S. Janaki leaves behind a legacy that few artists can match. Across thousands of recordings, countless awards and generations of listeners, she transformed playback singing into an emotional art form. While her voice has fallen silent, the music she created continues to inspire singers and audiences alike, ensuring that the 'Nightingale of South India' will be remembered for generations to come.



Her extensive musical achievements include:

■ NATIONAL FILM AWARDS:

Four-time winner for Best Female Playback Singer (for 16 Vayathinile, Oppol, Sitaara, and Devar Magan).

■ STATE AWARDS:

An unprecedented 33 State Film Awards across the South Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.

■ LINGUISTIC & STYLISTIC RANGE:

Sang in over 20 languages and was renowned for her unparalleled ability to effortlessly modulate her voice for characters of all ages, including remarkable children's voices.

■ ACADEMIC HONORS:

Awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Mysore in 2009 for her outstanding contributions to cinema and music.

■ STATE HONORS:

Recipient of the prestigious Kalaimamani award from Tamil Nadu and the Rajyotsava award from Karnataka.

Padma Bhushan refusal

In 2013, the Government of India selected S Janaki for the Padma Bhushan. However, she respectfully declined the honor, stating that it had come too late in her career. She also expressed disappointment that artists from South India had often not received national recognition equal to their contributions. Her decision attracted public attention and reflected her principled stand on artistic recognition.

Cultural soundtrack for generations

Legendary playback singer S Janaki, widely revered as the "Nightingale of South India," defined the cultural soundtrack for generations. Over her prolific six-decade career, she recorded an estimated 48,000 songs across more than 20 Indian and foreign languages.

K'taka to come up with guidelines in light of Ram temple theft

BENGALURU: Following the Ayodhya Ram Temple donation theft case, the state government has got into the act to prevent any such instance. Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has already directed that CCTV cameras be installed in temples coming under the Muzrai department.

In the wake of this, the Endowment Department has also begun making preparations.

The Endowment Department is now set to release guidelines for temples.

The department has already prepared the guidelines and submitted a report to the minister concerned.

The guidelines regarding hundi security, temple premises, and CCTV installation are likely to be issued soon.

Guidelines for Muzrai Dept temples could include;

Only one hundi should be placed for the entire temple.

Hundis should not be placed inside the temple, outside, or in various parts of the temple premises.

During hundi counting, it will be mandatory for taluk-level officials to visit and inspect.

CCTV installation will be mandatory at places where devotees donate money to the hundi.

Hundi counting must be done at a single designated place in the temple, and CCTV coverage must be there.

Promote online payment options at temples.

Temple CCTVs should be monitored by the police.

The district deputy commissioners should also monitor them.

15 Indians killed as tourist boat capsizes off Vietnam coast

PHU QUOC (VIETNAM)

At least 15 Indians tourists were killed when a boat capsized off Vietnam's southern island of Phu Quoc on Saturday.

The speed boat was carrying 36 people, including 32 Indian tourists, three crew members and one attendant. The boat capsized about 400 metres off Hon May Rut Ngoai, an island in the An Thoi archipelago off the coast of Phu Quoc.

Among the 21 survivors, two are in critical condition, according to the report. India's embassy in Vietnam said it was monitoring the incident and had established emergency response centres in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi to assist affected families.

The report, which quoted authorities in the Phu Quoc Special Economic Zone, stated that nearby tourist boats provided assistance before border guards, the navy, the coast guard and other forces joined the

search-and-rescue operation.

The embassy has set up control rooms as search and rescue operations are underway. Exact details of the incident are being ascertained by local authorities. "In a tragic incident, a boat carrying several Indian tourists has capsized near Phu Quoc Island in Vietnam," the embassy said in a post on X.

Local reports suggested at least 15 people, including Indians, died in the incident as rescue operations are underway.

Victims from AP identified

Authorities identified two of the Indian tourists involved in the accident as residents of Andhra Pradesh. Ravi Teja (41), a resident of the Housing Board Colony in Hindupuram, was among those who died in the tragedy. Another victim, identified as Sri-dhar, a mobile phone shop owner from Kadapa, also lost his life in the accident. Visuals from his residence showed grieving family members,

Indian embassy sets up control rooms

The Indian Embassy said it was closely monitoring the situation and had established control rooms in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi to assist affected families. In an X post, the embassy said, "In order to provide information and assistance to affected families, a Control Room at the Consulate General of India in Ho Chi Minh City has been set up which can be reached at: +84 36 281 7930, +84 91 552 37 14 and +84 33 452 0414. A Control room has been established in Hanoi and can be reached at +84 91 308 9165. We are available for any assistance and queries."

including his wife and younger brother, mourning his death.

Officials said another tourist from Anantapuram district survived the accident and is reported to be safe.

STRICT NO TO ABUSE OF POWER

No 'deals' or crime: DKS warns Karnataka police force

BENGALURU

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday cautioned police officials against involvement in any kind of "deals" or criminal activities, warning of strict action against those involved.

He was speaking after launching 32 state-of-the-art mobile forensic vans and 75 Bolero vehicles for district police units at Vidhana Soudha.

"Police officers should not be involved in any deals or criminal activities. Strict action will be taken against anyone found involved. You may treat this as my request or as an official directive," Shivakumar said.

The CM also announced Rs



10 lakh reward for the police team that busted the drug network.

"This is a new boost to our police department. At the border, there are soldiers; within the state, there are police personnel. Because of

both, our state and country can live in peace. On behalf of the government, I congratulate you. Success comes when your determination is stronger than your capabilities," Shivakumar said.

Entire country watching Karnataka

Noting that the police have seized narcotics worth Rs 375 crore in the past year, he said the department has arrested 1,500 drug peddlers, which is a significant achievement.

"The entire country is watching Karnataka. The government has decided to award a Rs 10 lakh cash prize to the team that dismantled the drug network. I congratulate all the officers. Every citizen should have confidence and respect for the police department. Your success is the government's success," he added.

'Will take steps to prevent drugs from entering or passing through K'taka'

Referring to his recent meet-

ing with Kerala Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala to discuss cross-border drug trafficking, Shivakumar said he assured the minister that he "will take all necessary measures to prevent drugs from entering or passing through Karnataka."

"Our police department is recognised as one of the most efficient in the country. This reputation has been earned through the hard work, dedication, and efficiency of our personnel. The government will always stand by you in your day-and-night service. Sometimes, unfortunate incidents occur, but even in such situations, our government will ensure that your morale remains strong. You uphold the law and protect society," he said.

Teams to curb rowdiness

According to him, crime has taken many new forms, and with the advent of artificial intelligence, several measures have been introduced to improve crime detection.

"I have also directed the formation of dedicated teams in all police stations to curb rowdiness," he added.

Absolute transparency in police recruitment

He called for absolute transparency in police recruitment and warned that no one should secure a government job through bribery. "Merit alone should be the basis for appointments. The government will stand with you. You, in turn, should discharge your duties with honesty and responsibility," he said.

QUICK READ

**Fake certificate:
KPSC chief's daughter
booked****Bengaluru**

The Vidhana Soudha police have registered an FIR against Suma S Sahukar, daughter of Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) chief Shivashankarappa. Investigators revealed she allegedly submitted fake income and caste certificates while applying for a government job as an Industrial Extension Officer. The serious document fraud came to light during a routine official verification process. In her application, Suma claimed her entire family's annual income was just Rs 40,000. However, authorities discovered her father earns a hefty monthly salary of over Rs 2 lakh. She now faces criminal charges for trying to illegally misuse government reservation benefits.

**Man jailed for
defaming state anti-
corruption agency****Bengaluru**

The Bengaluru Sessions Court has sentenced SG Shankar from Bellary to six months in prison for writing derogatory letters against the Karnataka Lokayukta. The court also ordered the convicted man to pay a five thousand rupee fine for intentionally defaming the anti-corruption agency. The trouble began after Shankar filed a false complaint against a government official in 2015. When investigators closed the case as baseless, an angry Shankar sent highly abusive letters to top officials. Even after receiving a legal warning notice, his arrogant behavior continued, forcing the Lokayukta office to file a successful defamation lawsuit against him.

DKS-HDK clash over river-linking data

The political dispute erupted after Kumaraswamy criticised the CM during a Belagavi visit, saying sharing water and linking major rivers like Krishna, Cauvery, and Godavari "is not like doing real estate in Bengaluru"

BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar strongly hit back at Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy's recent critical statements regarding the proposed inter-state river-linking project.

According to reports, Shivakumar asserted that Kumaraswamy should first consult with the Prime Minister and the Union Jal Shakti Minister to obtain official data regarding the project before making public remarks.

The political dispute erupt-

ed after Kumaraswamy openly criticized the Chief Minister during a visit to Belagavi. The Union Minister stated that sharing water and linking major rivers like the Krishna, Cauvery, and Godavari "is not like doing real estate in Bengaluru."

He claimed that the Chief Minister lacks accurate information regarding the exact water allocation guaranteed to the state following the historic struggles of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda. Kumaraswamy further alleged that the current state govern-



ment had quietly given its consent to the project without holding necessary discussions



with opposition parties or informing the public. Responding firmly to the

allegations, Shivakumar stated that he is prepared to give a fitting answer to anyone at any appropriate time. He dismissed the opposition's claims of keeping the state in the dark and implied that the Union Minister should cross-verify ground realities with the central ministries responsible for water resources before issuing premature public statements.

Beyond the irrigation dispute, Chief Minister Shivakumar utilized the press briefing to highlight his government's firm resolve to transform Kar-

nataka into a completely drug-free state. He emphasized that the administration is actively working to spread comprehensive anti-drug awareness among school students, college youth, and parents.

He urged all citizens to cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies in this ongoing social mission, specifically highlighting the Karnataka Police Department's newly launched 'Beda Bro' (No Bro) digital and grassroots public campaign aimed at eradicating drug abuse across the state.

CENTURY CLUB IS A PUBLIC AUTHORITY: HC

BENGALURU

In a landmark judgment delivered recently, a two-judge division bench of the Karnataka High Court ruled that Bengaluru's historic Century Club constitutes a "public authority" and must officially operate under the purview of the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

The division bench, comprising Justice Anu Sivaraman and Justice Venkatesh Nayak T., dismissed an appeal filed by the club's management.

The high-profile appeal attempted to challenge a previous single-judge order passed by Justice Suraj Govindaraj, which had similarly aligned with the Karnataka Information Commission's stance to open the club's investments, internal records, and executive operations to regular public inspection.

The legal battle dates back to 2012 when social activist and High Court advocate S. Umamathy filed an RTI application requesting the club's cataloged rules and financial archives.



The Court ruled that Bengaluru's historic Century Club is a public authority under the RTI Act, as its 1913 land grant constitutes substantial state financing

The Century Club rejected the request, firmly asserting that it was an independent, private members' association funded strictly via internal subscription fees and day-to-day member contributions. Management argued that the 7.5 acres of premium land it occupies inside Cubbon Park was handed over in 1913 by the Maharaja of Mysore, Narasimharaja Wodeyar, alongside Sir M Visvesvaraya, as a personal pre-independence donation rather than a piece of government property.

However, the High Court thoroughly rejected the club's defense. The division bench emphasized that any land granted by an erstwhile ruler or king during the pre-inde-

pendence era was executed on behalf of the princely state's government, meaning the land remains public property.

The court further noted that the current market valuation of the massive 7.5-acre property in the dead center of Bengaluru runs into hundreds, if not thousands, of crores of rupees. Because the club pays no active rent and its entire survival relies on this public property, the free land grant constitutes an immense "indirect state subsidy."

The bench concluded that since member fees pale into insignificance when compared to the value of the land, the organization is substantially financed by the state, making transparency via the RTI Act legally mandatory.

9 ARRESTED IN ₹30-CRORE DRUG BUST

BENGALURU

Bengaluru Police have dealt a massive blow to international drug trafficking by seizing narcotics worth a staggering 30.43 crore rupees.

The successful operation led to the arrest of eight individuals, including five foreign nationals, two locals, and one suspect from a neighboring state.

Different law enforcement teams, including the Hebbal Police, Girinagar Police, and the CCB's Narcotics Control Unit, teamed up for the separate raids. Together, they confiscated 29 kilograms of MDMA crystals, 20 grams of cocaine, and 1,000 ecstasy pills.

This major bust is part of a wider, highly successful crackdown on illegal substances in the city. So far in 2026, authorities have registered nearly 3,000 drug cases, seizing contraband worth 221.27 crore rupees. The fight against narcotics has accelerated even further over the last month, resulting in over 700 arrests and wiping another



50.43 crore rupees worth of drugs off the streets.

Local authorities attribute these rapid successes to a newly launched public safety campaign called "Operation RISE." This initiative stands for Refuse, Inform, Support, and Empower. It unites the police force with education, health, and revenue departments to shield the local youth from addiction and smash smuggling networks.

In just the first nine days of this new campaign, police have already filed 135 cases and locked up 161 dealers. Top officials confirmed that they will continue to intensify these strict operations to completely wipe out the drug menace and keep the city's neighborhoods safe.

HM defends issue of residence certificates

BENGALURU

Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge strongly defended the state government's decision to issue Permanent Residence Certificates, sharply criticizing the opposition BJP for its resistance.

The political dispute erupted after the BJP claimed that issuing these residency certificates poses a severe threat to national security and could potentially benefit illegal immigrants.

Rebuffing these allegations, Kharge questioned the logic behind the opposition's stance, asking why a legitimate state government should be barred from verifying its residents. He pointed out that official government authorities, not political party workers, responsibly handle the documentation process.

Highlighting broader citizenship debates, Kharge questioned what documents would



ever suffice to prove a person's identity if widely accepted credentials like passports, bank accounts, and identity cards are deemed insufficient by critics.

He further turned the tables on the central government, arguing that if illegal immigration is occurring, the responsibility lies with Union Home Minister Amit Shah

and central border management, rather than state level administrative procedures.

Beyond the certificate controversy, Kharge also addressed the highly anticipated state cabinet expansion. Dismissing traditional beliefs regarding the inauspicious "Ashada" month, he emphasized that governance and public welfare must always take precedence over superstitious timelines.

He assured that the cabinet expansion would take place very soon to effectively manage ongoing climate challenges like severe droughts and floods.

Regarding recent anti-corruption developments, the minister maintained a firm stance, stating clearly that nobody stands above the law and all official procedures regarding prosecution permissions will strictly follow established legal frameworks carefully.

Loan harassment drives B'loru auto driver to end life

BENGALURU

A local auto driver, Yusuf Jamal Uddin, tragically ended his life after recording a final video detailing extreme financial harassment. Yusuf consumed poison on Bellali-Kannur road after sending the heartbreaking clip to his son, who rushed him to a hospital where he unfortunately passed away. In the video, Yusuf explained that a lender named Umesh fiercely threatened his family and demanded illegal, soaring interest rates on a loan. Despite earning daily wages, Yusuf could not keep up with the aggressive extortion. Police have registered an official case and launched an urgent investigation to capture the accused lender.

Traffic snarls trigger alarming air pollution spike

BENGALURU

Breathing the air in India's Silicon City is now as damaging to your health as smoking two cigarettes a week, or ten a month, a shocking new official report reveals.

According to the Central Air Pollution Control Board, Bengaluru's rapid vehicular growth is choking the city. Every single day, nearly 3,000 new vehicles hit the roads, including 2,100 two-wheelers and 600 cars. This massive surge has turned the city into the world's second most congested urban center.

Data shows an alarming trend over the last three years. In the 2025-26 fiscal year alone, registrations peaked with over 1.55 lakh new cars and 5.25 lakh two-wheelers. The city's total vehicle count stands at a staggering 1.25 crore, out of Karnataka's total

3.5 crore vehicles.

Alarmingly, when counting commuters from neighboring areas, over 1.5 crore vehicles cram onto roads designed for just 50,000. This extreme gridlock, combined with the loss of millions of trees chopped down for infrastructure development, has trapped toxic emissions across the tech hub.

While the situation is terrifying for local residents, the report notes that India's capital faces an even deadlier crisis. Delhi's toxic air quality is equivalent to smoking two cigarettes every single day, fueled by 600 new cars joining its roads daily.

Environmentalists warn that without immediate public transit reforms and aggressive green initiatives, Bengaluru's once-famed pleasant weather will permanently vanish behind a thick cloud of toxic automotive exhaust.

BOYS DRIVE STATE'S 18.1% SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE

BENGALURU

Karnataka has emerged with a mixed record in education, showing improvements in school facilities and teacher availability while facing the country's highest secondary school dropout rate. According to the latest report, 18.1 percent of secondary students leave school before completing their education, the high-

est in India. Boys are more affected, with nearly 22 percent dropping out compared to around 14 percent of girls.

The state has made progress in other areas. Schools with zero students have reduced sharply from more than 1,000 to just 104. The student-teacher ratio has improved, allowing better attention for children. Most schools now provide drink-

ing water, electricity and clean toilets, while over half have computers and internet access.

Despite these improvements, government schools have lost more than 7.8 lakh students over the past four years as many families shift to private institutions. Overall student enrolment has also declined this year, including first-grade admissions.

RURAL VOTES, BIG CHANGES

Panchayat polls likely in Oct or Nov: Khandre

BENGALURU

Rural areas across Karnataka are gearing up for big changes. Village panchayat elections will finally take place this October and November, Rural Development Minister Ishwar Khandre announced recently.

The terms for most local councils have already ended. Officials are currently busy reshaping voting zones and fixing seat reservations. This crucial preparatory work will

finish by next month, allowing the State Election Commission to conduct the voting within forty-five days. Minister Khandre highlighted that village governance fulfills Mahatma Gandhi's dream of true local self-rule.

To make daily life easier for rural families, the government plans to launch a doorstep delivery service for 'e-property' digital land records once current surveys end. However, this helpful service will completely exclude layouts built

illegally on public wasteland.

Financially, the state is facing major hurdles. Minister Khandre strongly criticized the central government for holding back ₹2,186 crore in vital development funds over minor technical software glitches, urging local MPs to demand the state's rightful share immediately. On a brighter note, he assured residents that there is absolutely no shortage of drinking water funds despite dry weather, as ₹117 crore has already been

sent to needy villages.

Additionally, Karnataka is expanding its rural employment scheme to stop migration. The Minister guaranteed that poor and underprivileged communities will find stable work close to home, meaning nobody needs to move to crowded urban slums for survival. Lastly, Khandre slammed the central government's proposed 'One Nation, One Election' system, calling it a dictatorial move to control the country.



QUICK READ

Tiger spotted on a road, tourists alarmed

Chikkamagaluru
A large tiger appeared on a road connecting Holagadde and Kavikal Mutt in Chikkamagaluru district, causing concern among villagers and tourists. Visitors who had arrived to watch the sunset captured the rare sight on their mobile phones while maintaining a safe distance. The tiger stood on the road for a few moments, looked towards the vehicles, and later moved back into the forest. The area, located near the Muthodi forest range, has witnessed increased movement of wild animals in recent months. Forest officials advised people to avoid approaching wildlife and immediately report sightings.

Bus conductor arrested for harassing college students onboard

Mangaluru
A private bus conductor was arrested for allegedly sexually harassing college students and exposing himself aboard a moving bus in Mangaluru, police said. The accused, identified as 32-year-old Irfan from Uppinangady, was working on a private bus operating between Mangaluru and Vitla. The incident allegedly occurred on July 9, when he reportedly made obscene gestures, exposed his genitals, and called female students to the rear seats, subjecting them to sexual harassment. Following a complaint by the students, Mangaluru South Police registered a case and arrested the accused on Friday. Further investigation is underway.

Karnataka Sub-Registrar offices open today

Mangaluru
The Karnataka Department of Registration and Stamps has decided to keep all Sub-Registrar Offices across the state open on Sunday, July 12, despite it being a public holiday. The move aims to clear pending work and ensure uninterrupted services for citizens. Officials said the offices will function like a regular working day, allowing people to register property documents, purchase stamp papers, and access other departmental services. The decision was taken in the public interest to reduce the accumulated workload and speed up disposal of applications. Authorities urged citizens with pending registration-related work to utilise the additional working day.

Mangaluru clears 35,160 traffic cases, collects Rs 92 lakh

Mangaluru
Mangaluru City Police have disposed of 35,160 pending traffic violation cases, collecting Rs 92.43 lakh in fines under the Karnataka government's 50 per cent penalty concession scheme. The initiative, held from June 21 to July 10, allowed motorists to settle cases pending up to May 2026 by paying half the original penalty amount. Nearly 19,000 cases were detected through AI-based traffic cameras, while over 16,000 were booked by traffic personnel. Meanwhile, police initiated action against dangerous drivers, recommending licence suspension for 224 motorists involved in fatal accidents and serious offences. So far, 137 licences have been suspended.

Minister Khader directs inquiry into McGann hospital allegations

Karnataka Minister U.T. Khader orders probe into Thirthahalli maternal death case over alleged McGann Hospital negligence.

SHIVAMOGGA

Karnataka Health Minister U.T. Khader has ordered a comprehensive inquiry into the death of a woman after childbirth in Thirthahalli, following allegations of negligence by doctors at Shivamogga's McGann Hospital. The minister gave the assurance during a high-level meeting on the progress of the district health department held at the Zilla Panchayat hall on Saturday. He responded to concerns raised by MLA Araga Jnanendra and directed officials to conduct a detailed investigation into the incident. Khader said it was extremely painful and unacceptable that such a case had occurred at a major district hospital like McGann Hospital. He instructed the Shivamogga Deputy Commissioner to appoint expert officials,



complete the investigation quickly, and submit a report. Raising the issue during the meeting, MLA Araga Jnanendra alleged that the hospital had failed to provide timely treatment to a woman from Thirthahalli who had arrived for delivery with severe bleeding. He claimed that she was referred to Mangaluru due to lack of proper treatment and died while being shifted. Jnanendra questioned who would take responsibility for the woman's death and demanded strict action against

negligence. He also submitted medical referral documents from McGann Hospital to the minister, highlighting the seriousness of the case. MLA Channabasappa said poor management at McGann Hospital had created difficulties for economically weaker patients. He claimed that after the establishment of Shivamogga Medical College, the district hospital had faced several challenges due to inadequate arrangements. Legislative Council member D.S. Arun also criticised

the alleged practice of referring patients to private hospitals without clear reasons. He urged authorities to prevent unnecessary referrals and improve healthcare services at the government facility. The minister said several demands related to McGann Hospital fall under the Medical Education Department, while others concern the Health Department. He assured that a meeting involving the Medical Education Minister and district legislators would be held soon in Bengaluru to discuss solutions.

Kodagu BJP demands withdrawal of permanent residence notification

MADIKERI

The Kodagu district unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Karnataka government's notification regarding the Karnataka Permanent Residence Certificate (PRC) 2026, alleging that it raises serious constitutional, legal, and national security concerns. Former Karnataka Assembly Speaker K.G. Bopaiiah made the demand during a press conference in Madikeri, stating that India's Constitution provides a single citizenship system across the country. He alleged that creating a separate category of permanent residents without proper constitutional or statutory authority could affect the existing legal framework. Bopaiiah claimed that the eligibility criteria mentioned in the notification mainly depend on residence verification by revenue officials and lack mandatory verification of Indian citizenship through competent central authorities. He alleged that there were no strong safeguards to prevent illegal immigrants or foreign nationals from obtaining such certificates.

He further claimed that individuals residing illegally in India could misuse local documents or fraudulent methods to obtain permanent residence certificates. According to him, such certificates could later be used for accessing government benefits, official documents, educational admissions, employment opportunities, and other facilities. The BJP leader said the issuance of such certificates could create risks related to national security and public order. He urged the Union Home Ministry to appoint a competent authority to examine the constitutional validity of the PRC notification and direct the state government to suspend its implementation until the review is completed.

Sringeri MLA T.D. Rajegowda says ₹1.86 crore retaining wall built at Gorigudda to prevent rain-related damage and ensure safety.

₹1.86 crore retaining wall constructed at Gorigudda Site

SRINGERI

A retaining wall has been constructed at Gorigudda in Sringeri at a cost of ₹1.86 crore to prevent possible damage caused by soil erosion during heavy rainfall, MLA T.D. Rajegowda said. The MLA visited the affected site and held a meeting with officials at the taluk office and court hall regarding the damage to the retaining wall. He said the structure was built after obtaining technical advice from engineers and experts from various departments. Rajegowda said instructions had been issued to the Deputy Commissioner to take appropriate action if any mistakes were found in the construction work. He added that a special technical committee appointed by the state government was already inspecting the site and further action would be taken based on the expert report.



The MLA said residents living below the hill area and nearby traders had been shifted from the risk zone as a precautionary measure. If any shortcomings were found in the construction of the retaining wall, the responsibility to restore it properly would be taken up, he said. Responding to criticism from opposition parties, Rajegowda said protests were welcome but added that the issue should not be politicised. He denied allegations of corruption and challenged critics to prove any wrongdoing committed during his tenure as

MLA. He said the safety of residents and protection of public infrastructure remained the priority and assured that necessary measures would be taken after receiving the technical committee's findings. Before the meeting, Rajegowda inspected the damaged portion of the retaining wall. Officials including Tahsildar Anup Sanjog, Executive Officer Sudeep, Block Congress president Ramesh Bhat, and other Congress leaders were present during the inspection and meeting.

MASSIVE FOOT MARCH PLANNED TO DHARMASTHALA IN SUPPORT

BELTHANGADY

The State President of the Ati Hindulida Mathadheeshara Mahasabha visited the temple and held discussions with Dharmadhikari Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade. The seers also submitted a support letter expressing solidarity with Heggade. Sri Pranavananda Ram Mahaswami said legal action should be taken against those involved in conspiracies against Dharmasthala. He stated that the organisation would continue to stand with Dr. Veerendra Heggade and support him in facing challenges. Highlighting the contribu-

tions of Dharmasthala, the seer said the institution has provided scholarships to thousands of students, created employment opportunities, helped lakhs of people overcome alcohol addiction, and supported the renovation of around 30,000 temples. He also said that a large number of people from backward communities have benefited from the rural development programmes associated with Dharmasthala. According to him, these initiatives have played an important role in improving social and economic conditions among disadvantaged sections.

Concerns regarding safety arrangements at dumping yards and waste management facilities. Authorities may review existing preventive measures to avoid similar incidents in the future. Residents and local officials appreciated the efforts of the fire personnel in controlling the situation and preventing further damage. A detailed assessment of the losses and damage caused to the waste management unit is expected after the completion of inspections.



BJP accuses Karnataka government of weakening SIR process

SHIVAMOGGA

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Shivamogga has accused the Karnataka government of attempting to weaken the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process by issuing permanent residence certificates. BJP district president N.K. Jagadeesh made the allegation during a press conference, claiming that the SIR process was progressing smoothly across the country but confusion was being created only in Karnataka due to actions of the state government. Jagadeesh said the Election Commission of India had already provided guidelines to voters on filling SIR forms using the 2002 electoral roll. He alleged that the Congress-led state government was trying to introduce new procedures that could disrupt the ongoing verification process.

He claimed that issuing permanent residence verification certificates without proper checks could affect the integrity of the SIR exercise. Jagadeesh also alleged that certificates were being provided even to people from other countries who had settled in Karnataka after marriage, calling the practice illegal. Former Legislative Council member R.K. Siddaramanna also criticised the state government's decision, stating

BJP alleges Karnataka government's permanent residence certificates could weaken SIR process, demands strict verification and accuses Congress of creating confusion over voter verification procedures.

that the Election Commission was conducting the SIR process properly but the state's move could create obstacles. Siddaramanna alleged that permanent residence certificates were being issued without adequate verification and said concerns regarding the matter had been communicated to the Union Home Ministry. The BJP leaders demanded that the verification process be carried out strictly according to Election Commission guidelines and urged authorities to prevent any misuse of residence certificates. The press conference was attended by BJP leaders including former MLA Roopali Naik, S. Dattatreya, Santosh Ballakere, Harikrishna, Malatesh, Chandrashekhar, and S. Manjunath. The allegations have intensified the political debate in Karnataka over the implementation of the SIR process and the role of state authorities in voter-related verification procedures.

Tribals allegedly restricted from crossing river in Savanalu

BELTHANGADY

Residents of Hittilapela area in Savanalu village of Dakshina Kannada district have alleged that tribal families have been restricted from crossing a river after authorities put up banners warning people against crossing the waterway. The issue has reportedly affected tribal Malekudiya families living in the remote Hittilapela region, where residents depend on the river for daily travel and access to essential services. Locals said the absence of proper road connectivity and a bridge has forced them to use the river route for years. According to residents, a banner was installed near the river stating that crossing the waterway was prohibited as the river was overflowing. They alleged that instead of providing a permanent solution, such as constructing a bridge, the administration had restricted their movement. The area falls under the limits of the Kudremukh National Park, and residents have long faced difficulties related to transportation, especially during the monsoon season. Heavy rainfall causes the river level to rise, making crossings dangerous and leaving

ing families with limited access to nearby areas. Local people claimed that officials had previously visited the area after incidents involving people struggling to cross the river and had assured them that steps would be taken to construct a bridge. However, residents said no significant progress has been made so far. Community organisations have criticised the alleged restriction, stating that preventing river crossings without providing alternative arrangements has increased difficulties for tribal families. They urged authorities to address the issue by ensuring safe transportation facilities and improving basic infrastructure. The residents have called for immediate action to provide a permanent connectivity solution, particularly before further monsoon-related challenges arise. Officials are expected to respond to the allegations and clarify the measures being taken for the safety and welfare of the affected families. The issue has highlighted the continuing challenges faced by remote communities in accessing essential services due to inadequate infrastructure in rural areas.

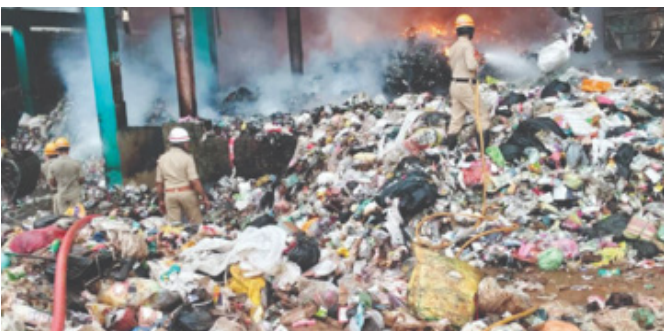
GARBAGE FIRE INCIDENT

Fire accident at Karkala dumping yard causes heavy losses

KARKALA

A major fire broke out at the Kariyakal dumping yard under the Karkala Municipality limits, causing extensive damage to accumulated waste and equipment at the waste management facility. The fire reportedly spread rapidly through the waste materials stored at the dumping yard, resulting in a large quantity of garbage being reduced to ashes. Machinery and other equipment used for waste management operations were

also damaged in the incident, causing losses estimated to be worth lakhs of rupees. Soon after receiving information about the fire, personnel from the Karkala Fire and Emergency Services rushed to the spot and began efforts to control the flames. Firefighters worked continuously through Thursday night and Friday to bring the situation under control. Fire service teams from Moodbidri also joined the operation and assisted the Karkala unit in extinguishing



the blaze. The firefighters faced challenges due to the nature of the waste materials, which can continue burning

for extended periods and make firefighting operations difficult. Karkala Fire Station Officer

Chandrashekar led the operation, along with firefighters Rupesh, Hariprasad, Sridhar, Muzabil, Bheemappa, Dinesh, and Ganesh Basavaraj. The teams worked day and night to prevent the fire from spreading to nearby areas. Officials said the exact reason behind the fire has not been identified yet. An investigation is expected to be conducted to determine whether the incident occurred due to technical issues, negligence, or other causes. The fire has highlighted

concerns regarding safety arrangements at dumping yards and waste management facilities. Authorities may review existing preventive measures to avoid similar incidents in the future. Residents and local officials appreciated the efforts of the fire personnel in controlling the situation and preventing further damage. A detailed assessment of the losses and damage caused to the waste management unit is expected after the completion of inspections.

QUICK READ

Tourists damage cattle grass while making reels

Hassan

Tourists driving off-road vehicles for social media reels at Gavi Betta in Sakleshpur have damaged cattle fodder and local roads, causing anger among residents. The area is home to wildlife including bison, porcupines, wild cats, monkeys and peacocks. Locals said the vehicle activities are disturbing animals that visit the region for water and shelter. Despite restrictions on vehicle movement, some tourists entered the area and caused destruction. Residents have urged authorities to take strict action against such activities and protect the natural surroundings. They said preserving the habitat is important for both livestock and wildlife living in the region.

Twelve goats stolen from farm shed in Hulasur

Hulasur

Twelve goats worth around Rs 1.40 lakh were stolen after thieves broke the lock of a farm shed at Alavai village in Hulasur taluk. Farmer Praveen Bhandari, who rears goats along with farming, found the theft when he visited the shed the next morning. He had locked the goats inside the shed on the previous night before returning home. The stolen animals included four female goats, one male goat and seven young goats. A complaint has been registered at Mehkar Police Station, and police have started an investigation to identify and arrest the accused involved in the theft.

People must unite to protect democracy: CPI Leader

Rojorio criticised BJP and RSS policies, alleging social divisions and democratic changes, urging unity to protect harmony

RAICHUR

CPI(ML) Liberation State Secretary Clifton D. Rojorio called on people to unite to protect democracy and constitutional values during the party's second district conference held in Raichur. He said collective efforts from citizens are necessary to safeguard democratic principles and ensure the rights of people remain protected.

Addressing the gathering at Sharan Madara Channaiiah Bhavan town hall, Rojorio criticised the policies of the BJP and RSS, alleging that they were creating divisions in society. He claimed that attempts were being made to change the country's democratic character and move towards a different political system. He urged people to remain aware and united to protect social harmony.



Rojorio also spoke about economic issues and said globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation policies were affecting workers. He alleged that wealth was becoming concentrated among a few large businesses while labour rights were facing challenges. He called for stronger movements to protect employment opportunities and the interests of working communities.

District Secretary Nagaraja Pujar said the Special Inten-

sive Revision (SIR) of voter lists raised concerns regarding citizens' voting rights. During the conference, party members discussed political, economic and social issues affecting the country. Resolutions were passed on matters including agriculture, irrigation, employment, education, healthcare, women's safety, and the rights of Dalit and backward communities.

The conference also decided to strengthen the party organi-

sation from villages to district levels. Members planned to increase party membership, provide political education to workers and expand public campaigns on people's issues. A 16-member district committee was elected during the meeting, with Nagaraja Pujar being re-elected as district secretary for another term.

Several party leaders and members participated in the conference, including Aziz Jagidar, Basavaraja Belagurki, Viresh Lingasugura, R. H. Kalamangi and others. The meeting concluded with a commitment to continue public outreach programmes and work on social issues. Party leaders said they would focus on strengthening grassroots movements and addressing concerns of communities across the district through organised efforts and public participation.

SIR PROCESS GAINS MOMENTUM IN KODAGU DESPITE HEAVY RAINS

MADIKERI

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is progressing rapidly in Kodagu district, with Booth Level Officers (BLOs) continuing door-to-door visits despite frequent rainfall. Officials said 93.19 per cent of enumeration form distribution has been completed so far.

The Election Commission's SIR process aims to ensure that no eligible voter is left out and no ineligible person is included in the electoral roll. BLOs began distributing enu-

meration forms to households from June 30 and will continue their visits until July 29.

During their visits, booth-level officers are providing each voter with two copies of pre-printed enumeration forms containing existing voter details. They are also assisting residents in filling out the forms correctly. Voters are required to submit the completed forms to BLOs within the deadline, either physically or through online submission along with supporting documents.

Officials warned that voters

who fail to submit the forms may be categorised as absent, migrated, deceased, or duplicate and may not be included in the draft electoral roll.

Kodagu district currently has 4,68,657 registered voters, and enumeration forms have been distributed to 4,36,733 voters. In the Madikeri Assembly constituency, covering Somwarpet, Kushalnagar, and Madikeri taluks, 96.20 per cent of the distribution target has been achieved.

In the Virajpet Assembly constituency, covering Madikeri, Virajpet, and Ponnampet taluks, 90.07 per cent of forms have been distributed.

Officials said digitalisation of submitted forms is also underway. After receiving all forms, the Electoral Registration Officer will prepare the draft voter list on August 5.

Voters will have an opportunity to submit claims and objections from August 5 to September 4.

The final electoral roll will be published on October 10 and shared with political parties. It will also be uploaded on the official website for public access.

Yadgir completes distribution of SIR enumeration forms

YADGIR

The distribution of Enumeration Forms under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll has been completed across Yadgir district, District Collector and District Election Officer Rahul Pandve said. He stated that Booth Level Officers successfully distributed all forms to eligible voters as part of the campaign to prepare an accurate and error-free voter list.

According to officials, the district has a total of 10,53,236 registered voters. Since June 30, Booth Level Officers have been visiting every household to distribute the forms. The campaign will continue until July 29, during which voters are expected to submit the completed forms along with the required documents for verification.

The district administration said all 10,53,236 printed forms have been distributed, achieving 100 per cent coverage. So far, 1,86,796 forms, or 17.74 per cent, have been digitised, while 1,645 applications have been submitted through the online system. During verification, officials identified 2,598 entries requiring correction, including deceased voters, permanently shifted residents, duplicate registrations and other cases.

Taluk-wise, the distribution process has been completed in Shorapura, Shahapur, Yadgir, Gurmitkal, Wadagera and Hu-



District administration completed form distribution, digitised 17.74% entries, received online applications, and identified corrections involving deceased, shifted, duplicate, and other voter records

nasagi. Shahapur recorded the highest digitisation progress, followed by Hunasagi, Gurmitkal, Shorapura, Wadagera and Yadgir. Officials said the revision process is progressing smoothly across the district.

Rahul Pandve appealed to residents to cooperate with Booth Level Officers by providing the necessary documents and correct information. He said public participation is essential to ensure the electoral roll remains accurate, transparent and inclusive, allowing every eligible citizen to exercise their democratic right during future elections.

MP Prabha urges strict women safety measures

DAVANAGERE

MP Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun has directed police officials to take strict action to protect women after reports of alleged sexual assault cases in some fitness clubs across the district. She instructed District Superintendent of Police Shekhar H. Tekkannavar to prioritize women's safety and ensure immediate response to complaints.

An emergency meeting was held where officials were asked to review security systems in gyms, fitness centres, commercial stores and other places frequently visited by women.

The MP said CCTV systems and safety arrangements should be properly checked and rules must be followed strictly in all such establishments. She also called for meetings with fitness club and gym owners to create awareness about women's protection.

Providing a safe environment for women is a major responsibility of the administration and police department, the MP said while asking officials to respond quickly to every safety complaint. She added that strict monitoring and timely action would help build confidence among women across the district. The authorities are expected to continue efforts to prevent crimes and create safer spaces through better coordination and stronger security measures for the public.



Lok Adalat reunites three couples in Humanabad

HUMANABAD

The Rashtriya Lok Adalat held at the Humanabad court on Saturday brought happiness as three couples reunited after resolving family disputes. The couples, who were involved in legal cases due to differences, reached a settlement through the Lok Adalat and decided to restart their married lives willingly. Senior Civil Judge Kantu Kurane and First Additional Civil Judge Santosh B. guided the proceedings, where the couples exchanged flower garlands and began a new chapter together. Judges and officials later offered sweets and wished them a peaceful and

happy future.

The event showed the importance of Lok Adalat in settling family matters through mutual understanding and restoring relationships. Lawyers including Taluka President Manjunath Reddy, General Secretary Vijayakumar Nathe, Senior Advocates Ravi Nirma, Ashok Verma, Kiran Hanumashetti, Laxman Nandi, Satish Rampure, Salman Ali, Prabhakar Nagarale, Ravikant Hoogar and Krishna Muguli were present. Their presence highlighted the support for peaceful solutions and encouraged people to use legal forums for resolving conflicts without further disputes.



Comprehensive voter list revision launches in Chitradurga

CHITRADURGA

Additional District Electoral Officer B.T. Kumaraswamy hit the ground, inspecting polling booths across Chitradurga, Holalkere, and Hosadurga. His mission? Ensuring the Special Comprehensive Revision of Voter Lists runs flawlessly so every eligible resident can vote. During his visit, Kumaraswamy reviewed the progress of Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and emphasized the immense responsibility they carry. He

urged the officers to work with utmost loyalty and dedication. To ensure total accuracy, he instructed BLOs to conduct thorough door-to-door checks. If a house is locked, officers must return at least three times to gather the required details. Kumaraswamy also engaged with locals, encouraging them to fill out their census forms correctly and participate actively in the revision process. The ultimate goal is simple: a complete, error-free voter list where no citizen is left out.

Banjara leaders oppose internal reservation policy in Karnataka

KADUR

Former MLA P. Rajeev has criticised the Karnataka government's internal reservation policy, alleging that the allocation has adversely affected the Banjara community and could impact the educational and social progress of its younger generation.

Speaking at a public awareness meeting organised in Kadur against the government's reservation decisions, Rajeev alleged that the Congress government had implemented an unscientific distribution of internal reservation and failed to consider the actual social and educational conditions of communities.

He said members of the Banjara community should understand the implications of the reservation allocation and create awareness among people living in tandas across the state.

Rajeev recalled that the community had earlier opposed the Sadashiva Commission report and had demanded



reservation benefits based on population and social conditions. He claimed that the previous BJP government had responded to the community's demand by providing 4.5 per cent reservation covering four communities, including Koracha, Korama, Bhovi, and Banjara.

He alleged that the Congress government later criticised the BJP's decision and created confusion among the community through political campaigns. According to him, such developments affected the BJP's performance in several constituencies, including Chikkamagaluru and Kadur.

Rajeev accused the Congress government of causing injustice to the Banjara com-

munity and appealed to community members to unite and oppose what he described as unfair policies.

He urged people in tandas to remain active in raising awareness and protecting the interests of the community. He called for continued public participation until the government addressed their concerns.

The meeting was attended by former Tanda Development Corporation chairman Basavaraj Naik and community leaders including Limbyanaik, Tulasiram, Guruprasad, Govindanaik, Anandanaik, Manikantha Rathod, Kavita-bai, Lakshmana Naik, B.T. Gangadhara Naik, Srinivasa Naik, and others.

AI-ENHANCED-TEACHING

AI poses a challenge to teachers: Mithun

MANGALORE

AI has brought major challenges to education, and teachers must receive continuous training to handle the changing environment, said Mangalore City Deputy Commissioner of Police Mithun H.N. He said artificial intelligence should be used effectively to improve teaching methods and provide quality education to students.

Speaking at an event in Jepingamogaru, Mithun launched the Civil Service Guide programme for school students at Yenepoya School auditorium. He explained that AI is influencing many fields and bringing changes in learning systems. According to him, tech-



nology can reduce teachers' workload and help students understand subjects better.

He added that teachers have responsibility to identify student talent and encourage their growth. He appreciated MEEF's effort to introduce civil service examination awareness among high school students and develop interest

in public service careers. Mithun said confidence, personality development, current knowledge and awareness of technology are important for students preparing for future challenges.

Mithun shared that his own journey from a hill town to engineering studies and teaching profession helped him

gain experience before preparing for civil services. MEEF Honorary President Umar Tike said the organisation aims to provide quality education and create awareness about competitive examinations. He said the programme focuses on current affairs, positive thinking and personality development among students.

Yenepoya Group Director Yenepoya Abdullah Javed inaugurated the programme while MEEF President Musabba P Barry presided over the event. National Teacher Awardee Narasimha Murthy H.K. conducted a seminar on artificial intelligence during the programme. MEEF officials, school principals and

education representatives also participated in the gathering. The event highlighted the need for teachers to adapt to new technologies while maintaining human values in education. Experts believe that responsible use of AI can support teachers and students by creating better learning opportunities. The initiative aims to prepare young learners for future careers and encourage them to explore civil service opportunities with confidence. As education systems continue changing, teachers and students must work together to use technology wisely and build a stronger future learning environment for society with innovation and equal opportunities for all generations.

BJP leaders oppose PRC process over security concerns

Beldale and Patil questioned PRC verification, raising concerns over reliance on local officials and lack of central agency checks

BIDAR

BJP State Secretary and Bidar South MLA Dr. Shailendra Beldale, along with BJP District President Somnath Patil, have demanded that the Karnataka government withdraw its notification regarding the Permanent Residency Certificate (PRC) process. They alleged that the move could create constitutional and national security concerns and urged authorities to stop the process immediately.

In a joint statement, the leaders said India follows a single citizenship system under the Constitution and claimed that creating a separate category of permanent residents could affect this principle. They argued that the notification may raise questions related to constitu-

tional provisions and legal authority. They also requested the Union Home Ministry to examine the matter and take necessary action.

Beldale and Patil expressed concerns over the verification process for issuing PRC certificates. They said the current system relies mainly on local revenue officials and questioned whether proper checks through central agencies are included. They claimed that without detailed citizenship verification, there could be possibilities of misuse and illegal residents obtaining official documents through incorrect information.

The BJP leaders said matters related to citizenship, immigration and national security come under the responsibility of the central government. They warned that PRC certifi-



icates could potentially be used for accessing government services, education opportunities, employment benefits and other facilities. They urged that no certificates should be issued until a complete verification system involving central agencies is established.

Beldale alleged that the timing of the notification

raised concerns and claimed it required immediate review by the Centre. Patil also said the process could affect internal security if not properly examined. They demanded that the Union Home Ministry appoint officials to study the legal validity of the notification and direct the state government to pause implementation until the review is completed.

The BJP leaders maintained that their demand was aimed at protecting constitutional rules and national security. They said the government should ensure that all procedures related to residency and citizenship follow proper legal standards. The controversy over the PRC notification is expected to continue as political parties and authorities discuss its impact and future implementation.

BIDADI PROJECT PROTESTS TURN INTO PHYSICAL CLASH

RAMANAGARA

Tensions over the proposed Bidadi Township project increased after supporters and opponents of the plan clashed during separate protests in Byramangala village. The disagreement between both groups started with heated arguments and later turned into a physical fight. Police officials stepped in to control the situation and prevent further conflict between the farmers involved.

Farmers from different parts of Karnataka reached Byramangala to protest against the township project. They arrived in private buses and raised slogans opposing the state government's plan. Many local farmers also joined the protest, expressing concerns about losing agricultural land. They said protecting farming areas was their main priority and demanded that their voices be heard before any major decisions are taken.

At the same time, another group of local villagers gathered in support of the Bidadi Township project. They ques-



tioned why farmers from other districts were coming to their village to protest and said local people should decide matters affecting their own area. The disagreement between both sides soon became intense, leading to a confrontation. Police personnel tried to calm both groups and asked them to maintain peace. When their efforts did not immediately succeed, officials separated the groups to avoid further trouble.

The issue has also drawn political reactions, with Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy criticising the government's handling of the situation. He alleged that the interests of farmers were being ignored and questioned the police action during the protests.

Meanwhile, some farmers opposing the project started a symbolic blood protest by placing drops of blood on the township map to show their determination to protect their land.

The Bidadi Township project continues to create strong emotions among residents and farmers. While supporters believe the project may bring development and opportunities, opponents fear it could affect agricultural communities. Authorities are now facing the challenge of maintaining peace while addressing the concerns of all groups. Further discussions between officials, farmers, and local residents may decide the future direction of the project.

SIR Cup cricket match raises voter awareness

KARWAR

The Zilla Panchayat, SWEEP Committee organized a SIR Cup cricket match to create awareness among citizens about the Special Electoral List Revision and the importance of returning Emanation Forms on time. Booth Level Officers visited homes across the district and distributed forms that voters must complete and submit for the revision process. Dr Dileesh Shashi, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer, said people should cooperate to ensure no eligible voter is excluded from the electoral list.

He added that various departments, including Revenue, RDPR, Police and me-

dia organizations, are responsible for spreading information about the exercise.

Awareness activities such as letter writing programmes for parents and campaigns through students were also conducted in the district. Dr Shashi said sports help officials reduce stress and improve teamwork while performing their daily duties.

The event saw participation from teams representing the Zilla Panchayat, Revenue Department, Police Department and journalists. During the matches, Dr Shashi played as an opening batsman for the Zilla Panchayat team and supported the side with valuable partnerships until the final over.

The Police team won the

final match against the Revenue Department team after a competitive game.

Officials present at the occasion included Zilla Panchayat Chief Planning Officer Somashekhara Mesta, Chief Accountant Anand Sahabib, Assistant Director Ravi Nayak and other dignitaries.

The programme highlighted the need for public participation in voter list revision and encouraged citizens to complete the forms without delay. The awareness drive through sports aimed to make the electoral revision process easier and more effective for everyone in the district and strengthen democratic participation among citizens.

Kambala debate sparks Mysuru Dasara controversy

BENGALURU

The proposal to organise Kambala, a traditional coastal sport, during the famous Mysuru Dasara festival has created a major debate in Karnataka. While some leaders have opposed the inclusion, others have welcomed the decision, saying it can showcase the state's diverse cultural traditions. The issue has now become a topic of discussion among political leaders and cultural groups.

Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy criticised the government's decision and said Kambala should not be included in Mysuru Dasara. In a statement shared on social media, he said Dasara has its own long-standing traditions and adding unrelated events could affect its cultural identity. He explained that Kambala represents the heritage of coastal Karnataka and should remain connected to its natural surroundings and regional traditions. Kumaraswamy urged authorities to respect the feelings of both Mysuru and coastal communities.

Mysuru royal family member and MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wodeyar also opposed the proposal during the Dasara preparation meeting. He said the cultural background of Dasara and Kambala are different and combining them may not be appropriate. Yaduveer sug-



Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy opposed including Kambala in Mysuru Dasara, saying it could affect the festival's traditional cultural identity

gested that authorities should first focus on improving existing Dasara arrangements instead of adding new attractions. He said coastal cultural activities are respected but should be presented in the right place and context.

However, Karnataka State Kambala Association President Deviprasad Shetty supported the government's move. He said Kambala is not limited only to coastal areas and represents the pride of the

entire state. He pointed out that other coastal art forms have received appreciation after being presented in Mysuru. Shetty added that Kambala has gained international attention and supporters are ready to help organise the event if financial issues arise.

The disagreement over Kambala at Mysuru Dasara has highlighted the challenge of balancing regional traditions with wider cultural celebrations. Supporters believe the event can introduce coastal heritage to more people, while opponents feel traditional boundaries should be protected. The final decision by the government will determine whether Kambala becomes part of this year's Dasara celebrations or remains limited to its original cultural region.

Food safety training strengthens Honnavar traders' practices

KARWAR

The Food Safety and Drug Administration of Uttara Kannada district and the Food Safety Training Certification Center held a one-day training program for food traders at Social Club Hall in Honnavar. The event was organized with the Honnavar Traders' Association to promote safe food practices and better hygiene among sellers. Food Safety Officer Dr. Vaishali Nayak led the program and urged food entrepreneurs to focus on quality, cleanliness and environmental hygiene while ensuring proper standards in their businesses.

Honnavar Taluka Traders Association President Sandeep Poojary highlighted traders' concerns and encouraged them to obtain required certificates and licenses from the department. Trainer Yashwant Arun from the Central Government Food Safety Training Certification Center explained business management, safety measures, cleanliness, adulteration control and the importance of mandatory certificates. Food Inspector Deeksha, District Coordinator Manoj Nayak, retired Food Safety Officer Arun Kashibhatta and local traders attended the session. The initiative aimed to improve food safety awareness and help traders follow better practices for a healthier and safer community.

Lok Adalat brings families back together in Kolar

KOLAR

The National Lok Adalat held in Kolar district received an excellent response as six couples reunited after resolving their differences through mutual agreement. The event became a special moment when couples who were facing separation due to small misunderstandings exchanged flower garlands and decided to begin their married life again. The successful settlement highlighted the importance of compromise and peaceful solutions in family disputes.

The mega Lok Adalat programme was organised at the Kolar court premises, where several long-pending cases were resolved with the consent of both parties. Civil, criminal, property, bank-related, and family disputes were settled through discussions and mediation. Officials said preparations for the event had been carried out for the past few months, with special efforts made to convince parties and help them reach friendly agreements.

Family cases, including divorce and maintenance disputes, received special attention during the hearing. Through counselling and mediation, six couples were able

to overcome their differences and reunite with happiness. The couples' decision to leave behind past conflicts and continue their relationship became one of the main highlights of the event. The process showed how alternative dispute resolution methods can help families avoid lengthy court battles.

Senior judge B. S. Jayashree described the Lok Adalat process as a national festival because it provides an opportunity for people to settle disputes peacefully. Principal District and Sessions Judge Vijayakumar M. Ananda Shetty, District Bar Association President L. Srinivas, judges, lawyers, and other officials were present during the programme.

The Kolar Lok Adalat demonstrated how cooperation between courts, lawyers, and citizens can bring quick solutions to difficult matters. By encouraging dialogue instead of conflict, such programmes help reduce the burden on courts and provide relief to people. The reunion of six couples became a positive example of how understanding and compromise can rebuild relationships and create a happier future for families.



RURAL-HEALTHCARE UPGRADE

Koppal Hospital launches robotic surgery centre

KOPPAL

K.S. Hospital in Koppal has launched a modern Robotic Joint Replacement Surgery Centre to provide advanced medical treatment to people in rural areas. The new facility was inaugurated in the presence of His Holiness Abhinava Sri Gavisiddeshwara Mahaswamiji of Koppala Gavi Math.

The centre aims to bring metro city-level healthcare technology closer to patients in North Karnataka. Earlier,

many people had to travel to cities like Bengaluru and Hyderabad for robotic joint replacement procedures. With the new facility, patients can now access similar advanced treatment within their own region.

Hospital head and joint replacement surgeon Dr. Basavaraj S. Cavatar and his team will perform surgeries using the latest robotic technology. The hospital said the treatment will offer several benefits, including lower costs, faster recovery, reduced pain,



less bleeding and shorter hospital stays. Patients may also be able to walk independently on the same day after surgery.

K.S. Hospital has also arranged cashless treatment facilities through major government health insurance schemes and private insurance providers. The initiative is expected to support poor and middle-class families by reducing financial pressure during medical treatment.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Cavatar said the hospital's

aim was to provide high-quality healthcare with advanced technology at affordable prices for rural communities. He added that the institution remains committed to its mission of delivering better healthcare services to all patients.

Doctors, hospital staff, public representatives and citizens attended the inauguration ceremony. The new robotic centre marks an important step towards improving healthcare facilities in the region.

QUICK READ

Woman postal officer murdered in Indore**Indore**

A woman officer posted with the Department of Posts was allegedly stabbed to death by her husband at their residence in Madhya Pradesh's Indore on Saturday, police said. The deceased has been identified as Urmila Saini, who was serving with the postal department in Indore. The incident took place at the Postal Colony in Manorama Ganj under the jurisdiction of the Sanyogitaganj police station. According to police, the accused, identified as Akhilesh Saini, allegedly attacked his wife with a knife, inflicting multiple stab wounds that proved fatal. The woman died on the spot before she could receive medical assistance. In a development that has stunned investigators, the accused allegedly went to his daughter's school immediately after the murder, handed over an ATM card to her, and then fled.

NCP-SP's Siddiqui defends Maulana Rashidi's remark**Mumbai**

NCP-SP leader Naseem Siddiqui on Saturday came in support of an alleged objectionable remark made by the All India Imam Association President Maulana Sajid Rashidi, associating sexual assault cases with women opting for late marriages, saying At least 50 per cent of rape cases occur because women are not married off early. Earlier on Friday, Maulana Rashidi sparked a major controversy by making a similar statement during a public interaction. Rapes are occurring because marriages are being delayed. If you want to ensure your daughters' safety, get them married early, Rashidi had said. Speaking to IANS, Naseem Siddiqui defended the Maulana's statement, saying: 'What he said is absolutely correct.'

Bengal appoints 9-member panel to review UCC draft bill**Kolkata**

The Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari-led government has issued a notification naming the other eight members of the nine-member committee headed by retired Judge of the Supreme Court, Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, to study the draft of the Uniform Civil Code Bill, West Bengal, 2026. Aiming to implement a UCC, the committee headed by Justice Desai will study the Bill and give recommendations, following which the final Bill will be drafted and tabled on the floor of the Assembly in August this year. The other eight members of the high-powered committee are former Meghalaya Governor Tathagata Roy, West Bengal's Resident Commissioner in New Delhi Dushyant Nariala, West Bengal Home Secretary Sanghamitra Ghosh, retired anthropology professor Ratna Bhattacharya.

'Ram Temple donation theft 'great sin'**Kolkata**

Congress leader Kanhaiya Kumar on Saturday demanded a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the Ayodhya Ram Temple donation scam. Calling the donation theft a "great sin," Kumar also sought the immediate dissolution of the trust managing the temple.

VP calls Bihar the 'Margdarshak' of Bharat's democratic journey

Radhakrishnan urged Bihar legislators to uphold constitutional values and strengthen democratic governance through constructive co-op; highlights patience as key to successful political journey.

GAYA

Vice-President CP Radhakrishnan on Saturday inaugurated a two-day Orientation-cum-Training Programme for the members of the 18th Bihar Legislative Assembly, stressing that the vision of a developed India cannot be achieved without the comprehensive development of Bihar.

Addressing legislators at the Bihar Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (BIPARD) in Gaya, he called upon elected representatives to place constitutional values and public welfare above political differences while performing their legislative responsibilities.

Highlighting the importance of democracy, the Vice President said differences of opinion are a natural and healthy feature of parliamentary functioning. However, he emphasized that all legislators must

remain united in their commitment to the Constitution, which should serve as the guiding principle for every decision taken inside the Assembly.

He remarked that debates and discussions strengthen democracy when conducted with respect and responsibility, while constructive cooperation helps accelerate the nation's progress.

Radhakrishnan also underlined the significance of parliamentary procedures such as Question Hour, Zero Hour, and the Business Advisory Committee.

He said these institutional mechanisms provide legislators with valuable opportunities to raise issues concerning their constituencies beyond party affiliations. He urged members of the Assembly to ensure the smooth, disciplined, and productive conduct of legislative business, adding that



effective participation in these proceedings enhances democratic accountability and governance.

Several senior leaders attended the inaugural programme, including Bihar Governor Lt Gen (Retd.) Syed Ata Hasnain, Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, Assembly Speaker Prem Kumar, Chairman of the Bihar Legislative Council Awadhesh Narain Singh, and other distinguished dignitaries.

The Vice President appreciated the efforts of the Presiding Officers of the Bihar Leg-

islative Assembly and the Bihar Legislative Council for organizing the programme in collaboration with the Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE) and the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

He noted that such orientation and training initiatives equip newly elected legislators with the knowledge and skills required to effectively discharge their constitutional responsibilities and strengthen democratic institutions.

Expressing gratitude to the

Only Hindus have right to speak on Ram Temple, Lord Ram: Acharya Krishnam

MORADABAD

Spiritual leader Acharya Pramod Krishnam on Saturday asserted that only Hindus have the right to speak about the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple and Lord Shri Ram, while claiming that opposition parties have no moral authority to comment on the temple because they did not support its construction.

His remarks came amid an intensifying political debate over religious issues ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections.

Addressing the media, Acharya Pramod Krishnam said the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple represents the faith and sentiments of millions of Hindus. He alleged that political parties in the opposition had consistently opposed or failed to support the temple's construction and therefore could not legiti-

He accused opposition parties of politicising the Ram Temple issue ahead of Uttar Pradesh elections.

mately claim ownership of the issue or criticise those associated with it.

He further accused the Congress, the Samajwadi Party, and other opposition parties of attempting to exploit the Ram Temple issue for electoral gains.

According to him, these parties are trying to influence Hindu voters by raising the temple issue in the run-up to the 2027 Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh.

Claiming that the opposition was pursuing divisive politics, Acharya Pramod Krishnam said these parties believed that a united Hindu community would reduce their electoral prospects. He

alleged that efforts were being made to mislead voters and create divisions within society to secure political advantage during the forthcoming elections.

The spiritual leader also supported Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's recent remarks alleging that previous governments had planned attacks on temples. Backing the Chief Minister's statement, Acharya Pramod Krishnam claimed that attacking temples had become a recurring pattern under the Samajwadi Party and said the Chief Minister's observations were justified.

Referring specifically to the Samajwadi Party, he alleged that as elections approach, the party is attempting to divide Hindu voters in the hope of improving its electoral performance.

He maintained that such political strategies would not

succeed if people remained united.

Reacting to Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav's statement that Sanatan Dharma and socialism are essentially the same, Acharya Pramod Krishnam dismissed the comparison.

He said Akhilesh Yadav had no real connection with the principles of socialism and drew a comparison by stating that Akhilesh Yadav's relationship with socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia was similar to Rahul Gandhi's relationship with Mahatma Gandhi.

The spiritual leader also commented on the Union Home Ministry's reported guidelines concerning the use of the slogan Vande Mataram. Describing the slogan as an integral part of India's freedom movement, he said it symbolises the spirit and identity of the nation.

Heavy rainfall alert across Uttarakhand until July 14

**DEHRADUN**

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a detailed forecast warning of heavy rainfall across several districts of Uttarakhand from July 11 to July 14, prompting the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) to direct all district administrations to remain on high alert in view of the possibility of weather-related incidents.

According to the IMD, several districts in the Garhwal and Kumaon divisions are likely to witness isolated spells of heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, lightning and intense showers over the next four days, raising concerns over landslides, flash flooding and disruption of normal life.

In response to the forecast, the State Emergency Operations Centre has instructed all district authorities to remain vigilant and ensure preparedness to deal with any emergency arising from adverse weather conditions. The weather department has predicted isolated heavy rainfall in Dehradun, Pauri Garhwal, Chamoli, Pithoragarh, Bageshwar, Nainital, Udham Singh Nagar and Champawat districts on July 11.

TV actor Rohit Chandel arrested under POCSO for stalking, harassing teen girl

MUMBAI

Actor Rohit Chandel, who predominantly works in television has been arrested by the Ghatkopar police for allegedly stalking, repeatedly calling, harassing and assaulting a 16-year-old girl in an eastern suburb of Mumbai.

Police have booked the actor under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. As per the complaint, the accused, who is a resident of an eastern suburb, had allegedly repeatedly called the minor on her mobile phone from his number as well as several other numbers, allegedly harassing her.

The complaint further alleges that on July 5, he confronted the girl near her resi-

dential building, chased her, picked up an argument, abused her and assaulted her by hitting her with his hands.

The police have booked him under Sections 78, 115 (2) 352 of the BNS and Section 12 of the POCSO Act. The accused called her several times from December 2025 to July 7.

Rohit Chandel began his acting career with supporting roles before gaining wider recognition through youth-oriented and family dramas. Over the years, he has appeared in popular television shows earning praise for his natural screen presence and versatility.

He made his television debut in 2014, and gradually built his career through shows. His breakthrough came when he portrayed Peshwa Baji Rao in 'Kashibai Bajirao Ballal', earning recognition for his commanding screen presence. He also appeared in the streaming series 'Escapade Live'.

He is also quite active on social media, where he shares glimpses of his personal life, fitness routine, and behind-the-scenes moments from shoots. However, the recent allegations put his social media conduct under extreme scrutiny.

**FRESH ASSET FOUND**

RHFL probe: ED attaches fresh ₹1,021 crore assets

NEW DELHI

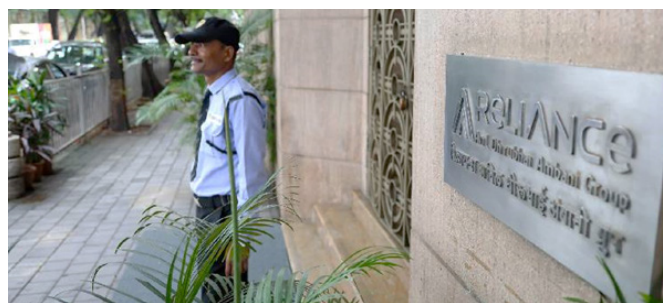
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday announced the attachment of fresh properties worth Rs 1,021 crore in connection with its ongoing investigation into Reliance Home Finance Limited (RHFL) and Reliance Commercial Finance Limited (RCFL).

With the latest action, the total value of assets attached in cases involving the Reliance Anil Ambani Group has reached Rs 20,367 crore under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering

Act (PMLA).

According to the ED, the investigation was launched following multiple First Information Reports (FIRs) registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). These FIRs were filed after complaints from several public and private sector banks alleging large-scale financial irregularities involving the two finance companies.

The agency stated that its investigation has so far revealed that public funds amounting to Rs 15,548 crore, raised by RHFL and RCFL, were allegedly diverted



through a complex network of shell companies and group entities that were reportedly controlled and managed by the Reliance Anil Ambani Group.

In its official statement, the ED said the newly attached as-

sets include equity shares of Reliance Power Limited held by Reliance Infrastructure Limited. The attachment also covers certain loan amounts receivable from Sasan Power Limited and Reliance Power

Assembly Speaker for hosting the programme in Gaya, Radhakrishnan observed that the initiative had symbolically brought Patna to Gaya, reflecting the state's commitment to decentralising important legislative activities and encouraging wider participation.

Referring to the ancient republican traditions of Vaishali, he said India possesses one of the world's oldest democratic heritages and is rightly recognised as the Mother of Democracy.

He described Bihar as the guiding force in India's democratic journey and urged lawmakers to preserve and strengthen the state's rich political legacy.

Drawing inspiration from the teachings of Lord Buddha, the Vice President reminded legislators that public representatives are elected to serve the people rather than govern over them.

Hizbul changes Kashmir game plan with Pakistani recruits

NEW DELHI

The Hizbul Mujahideen, once projected as a home-grown terror outfit in Jammu and Kashmir, has recently begun changing its strategy.

The group, which had remained largely inactive after Indian security forces dismantled most of its networks in Jammu and Kashmir, has now launched a fresh recruitment drive.

An Intelligence Bureau official said that the recruitment pattern is, however, different and today the Hizbul Mujahideen has more Pakistani fighters as compared to the local Kashmiris.

This clearly shows that the local Kashmiris no longer want to be part of this outfit; hence a decision to recruit Pakistanis in large numbers has been taken, the official said.

The official said that on July 8, a meeting was held to commemorate the death anniversary of slain Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani.

CM Omar Abdullah alleges BJP offered Rs 20-30 cr to NC MLAs to switch sides

SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) Vice President Omar Abdullah on Saturday alleged that attempts were being made to destabilise his government by luring party legislators with large sums of money, ministerial positions, and promises of restoring statehood.

He claimed that his party would resist any effort to engineer defections and vowed that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would not gain power in the Union Territory through indirect means.

Addressing party workers on the 26th death anniversary of his grandmother, Begum Akbar Jahan, at her mausoleum in Hazratbal, Srinagar, Omar Abdullah alleged that one of the National Conference's legislators from the Jammu region had been offered between Rs 20 crore and Rs 30 crore, along with a ministerial berth and an assurance of statehood, in exchange for switching political allegiance.

Without identifying the legislator, the Chief Minister claimed that such offers reflected an attempt to weaken the National Conference.

He said those making the offers believed that elected representatives could be persuaded to abandon their principles for financial incentives, but maintained that the party would not yield to political pressure or inducements.

Omar Abdullah further alleged that after efforts involving money and ministerial posts failed, attempts were now being made behind closed doors to persuade National Conference legislators to defect.

He asserted that he would not allow any political party

to gain a backdoor entry into power in Jammu and Kashmir by breaking his party.

The Chief Minister also renewed his demand for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, stating that the National Conference had spent nearly two years pursuing the issue through dialogue rather than confrontation.

He said his government had deliberately given the Centre sufficient time to fulfil its commitments but was now compelled to intensify its campaign as there had been no visible progress.

Announcing the party's next course of action, Omar Abdullah said the National Conference would stage a peaceful protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on July 20 to press for the restoration of statehood.

He emphasised that while the protest would remain peaceful and democratic, the patience shown by the people of Jammu and Kashmir should not be interpreted as a sign of weakness.

Questioning the delay in restoring statehood, the Chief Minister pointed out that both the delimitation exercise and Assembly elections had already been completed.

Abdullah said these developments had fulfilled key milestones that were earlier cited by the Centre in connection with the political roadmap for Jammu and Kashmir.

QUICK READ



Russia missiles hit Kyiv, six injured in attack

Kyiv
Russia launched ballistic missile strikes on Ukraine's capital Kyiv early Saturday, injuring at least six people, officials said. The attack damaged a non-residential building in one district, while smoke was reported in another area. An office building also caught fire following the strikes, according to the city military administration on Telegram. Emergency teams responded to the affected sites as authorities assessed the extent of the damage. The latest assault highlights the continuing intensity of Russian attacks on Ukrainian cities despite ongoing international efforts to reduce the conflict and protect civilian areas.

Trump-threatened U.S.-Canada bridge to open on July 27

Montreal
A long-awaited bridge linking Canada and the United States will open to the public on July 27, ending months of uncertainty after U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to block the project earlier this year. Canada's Ministry of Infrastructure said Canada and Michigan had agreed on the opening date with the support of the U.S. government. The Gordie Howe International Bridge is expected to strengthen cross-border trade and generate billions of dollars in economic activity over the coming decades. In February, Trump criticised the project, arguing the United States had been treated unfairly and should hold at least a 50% ownership stake.

fresh allegations of forced disappearances in Balochistan

Balochistan
Fresh allegations of enforced disappearances and custodial abuse have surfaced in Pakistan's Balochistan province, with three men reportedly detained in separate incidents while another allegedly died after being released from custody. According to The Balochistan Post, two businessmen from Khuzdar district and a 24-year-old resident of Gwadar were taken to undisclosed locations by security personnel. Separately, the family of Riaz Bugti alleged he died in a Karachi hospital after suffering torture during detention following a June 12 raid by Counter-Terrorism Department personnel. Authorities have not publicly responded to the allegations, which could not be independently verified.

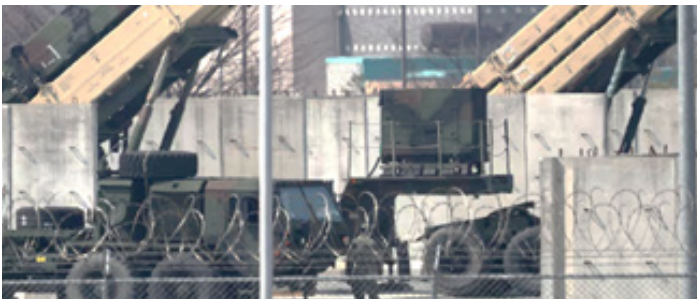
PATRIOT PRODUCTION DELAYS LOOM

Trump pledges patriot missile production for Ukraine

KYIV

US President Donald Trump's pledge to allow Ukraine to produce Patriot air defence missiles has been welcomed by Kyiv as a major sign of support, but defence experts warn that the impact may take more than a year to materialise.

The announcement, made during Trump's meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at a NATO summit, could eventually strengthen Ukraine's ability to counter Russian missile attacks. However, experts say establishing production facilities, arranging



supply chains, and manufacturing Patriot interceptors will require significant time. Ukraine currently faces a shortage of interceptor missiles as Russia continues attacks on cities and energy infrastructure.

The Patriot system remains the only weapon in Ukraine's arsenal capable of intercepting Russian ballistic missiles, making the shortage a critical challenge for Kyiv. Defence analysts said short-term benefits from do-

mestic production would likely be limited. Building facilities for advanced systems such as Raytheon's PAC-2 interceptors or Lockheed Martin's PAC-3 missiles could take at least 12 months or longer.

Trump's proposal was also described as lacking specific details, including discussions with manufacturers involved in Patriot production. Experts suggested that initial production may take place in Europe, where existing supply chains and facilities could support faster manufacturing before eventually moving operations to Ukraine.

Taiwan detects Chinese naval activity around island's waters

Taiwan detects Chinese naval, official vessels near territory as defence ministry monitors activity amid ongoing regional tensions

TAIPEI

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence (MND) on Saturday reported detecting a Chinese naval vessel and an official ship operating around the island's surrounding waters. The activity was recorded up to 6 am local time, with Taiwan's armed forces monitoring the situation and responding accordingly.

In a statement shared on social media platform X, the MND said that one vessel from the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) and one Chinese official ship were detected near Taiwan. The ministry added that no Chinese



military aircraft were observed operating around Taiwan during the reported period.

The latest development follows a similar detection on Friday, when Taiwan reported two sorties of Chinese mili-

tary aircraft, five naval vessels, and three official ships operating around the island. Taiwan's defence authorities said they continued to track and respond to the activities. Military movements around Taiwan have in-

creased in recent years as tensions between Taipei and Beijing continue. China claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has repeatedly opposed what it considers moves toward Taiwanese independence.

Taiwan, however, maintains its own government, military, and economic system and operates separately from Beijing.

The Taiwan issue remains one of the most sensitive geopolitical matters in the region, involving questions of sovereignty, security, and international relations. Several countries closely monitor developments around the

Taiwan Strait due to its importance for regional stability and global trade.

Earlier, China urged the United States to exercise greater caution regarding Taiwan-related matters. Chinese officials have stated that Taiwan issues carry significant implications for bilateral relations and regional peace.

Taiwan's defence ministry has continued publishing regular updates on Chinese military activities around the island as part of its efforts to maintain transparency and inform the public about security develop-

North Korea slams NATO summit over military buildup claims

SEOUL

North Korea on Saturday criticised the United States and its allies following a NATO summit held this week, accusing them of strengthening military blocs and increasing arms build-ups.

Pyongyang said NATO leaders had unfairly portrayed North Korea's military activities and exercise of what it described as legitimate sovereign rights as a security threat. The remarks were made by the North Korean Foreign Ministry in a statement carried by state media KCNA. The ministry accused the alliance of increas-



ing tensions through higher defence spending and closer military cooperation with countries in the Asia-Pacific region. It said NATO's actions reflected a growing confrontation between military blocs.

North Korea has repeatedly criticised US-led security partnerships and opposed military cooperation between Washington and its allies, arguing that such moves threaten regional stability. The country has continued developing its military capabilities despite international concerns over its nuclear and missile programmes.

Magnitude 4.1 earthquake strikes Myanmar

NAYPYIDAW

An earthquake of magnitude 4.1 struck Myanmar in the early hours of Saturday, according to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS). The tremor occurred at a depth of 90 kilometres at 12:20 AM Indian Standard Time.

The NCS shared details of the earthquake on social media platform X, stating that the quake was recorded at latitude 21.698 N and longitude 94.504 E in Myanmar.

The latest earthquake follows another tremor of magnitude 4.5 that hit Myanmar on Friday evening. The earlier earthquake was reported at a depth of 100 kilometres and occurred at 6:59 PM IST, according to NCS

NCS reported on X that the Myanmar earthquake occurred at latitude 21.698 N and longitude 94.504 E, providing details of the seismic event

data.

Myanmar is located in a seismically active region and remains vulnerable to earthquakes due to its position between several tectonic plates, including the Indian, Eurasian, Sunda, and Burma plates. The interaction of these plates creates significant geological activity across the country.

A major fault system, the Sagaing Fault, runs through Myanmar and is considered a

key source of earthquake risk. The fault extends through populated areas, including regions around Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago, and Yangon.

Experts have noted that densely populated cities can face considerable risks from seismic events, even when located away from major fault lines. Historical earthquakes have affected several parts of Myanmar, highlighting the need for continued monitoring and preparedness.

Authorities continue to track seismic activity across the region through monitoring systems operated by the NCS and other agencies. No immediate reports of damage or casualties were available following the latest earthquake.

Pakistan faces wheat crisis amid production shortfall fears

LAHORE

Pakistan is grappling with a worsening wheat supply crisis as officials, industry representatives and provincial authorities warn of a production shortfall that could trigger a food security challenge, prompting fresh calls for large-scale imports.

According to The Express Tribune, concerns were raised during a meeting of the Wheat Board chaired by Federal Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain in Islamabad. Participants, including representatives from flour mills, grain traders, farmer organisations and the Cereal Association, estimated that Pakistan could face a wheat deficit exceeding 3.5 million tonnes.

Stakeholders urged the government to immediately approve the import of at least 2 million tonnes of wheat to stabilise domestic supplies and ease pressure on markets. They also called for a transparent and competitive import policy, arguing that permits should be issued fairly to all eligible flour millers and traders rather than a select group of companies.

Provincial officials presented a grim assessment of wheat stocks during the meeting. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's chief secretary said the province currently has only about 30,000 tonnes of wheat in reserve and has already secured 250,000 tonnes from the Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) following federal assistance. He added that Punjab continues to supply more than 70 per cent of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's flour requirements.

Officials from Sindh reported rising wheat prices due to declining availability and said authorities had launched anti-hoarding operations to improve market conditions and ensure smoother supplies.

Punjab officials, however, defended the province's performance, stating that it had achieved its wheat production target of 21.9 million tonnes. They also reiterated the provincial government's commitment to keeping flour and bread prices affordable despite mounting financial pressures. The discussions have intensified debate over Pakistan's wheat management policies, with industry

India emerges partner in Monaco's marine innovation drive

MONTE CARLO

India is emerging as an important partner in Monaco's efforts to promote sustainable yachting and marine innovation, according to Bernard d'Alessandri, General Secretary of the Yacht Club de Monaco.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 13th Monaco Energy Boat Challenge, d'Alessandri praised India's growing participation in the sector, highlighting the performance of Indian team Sea Sakthi as evidence of the country's potential in sustainable marine technologies. He said India's rapid development presents a unique opportunity to build modern marina infrastructure and adopt next-generation boats without the limitations of older systems. "You can start with a white page, and it's much easier to start in a good way," he remarked.

D'Alessandri noted that India was among the first countries to participate in the Monaco Energy Boat Challenge, underscoring the importance of collaboration as the maritime industry shifts toward cleaner technologies. He also stressed that Monaco's environmentally sensitive Mediterranean coastline makes sustainable boating essential, adding that partnerships with countries like India can help accelerate innovation.

NAME CHANGE

I, SYED NISAR AHAMMED, S/o, Syed Ismail, Resident of No 44,14th Cross 6th Main Padarayana Pura Bengaluru Dist 560026, have changed my name to SYED NISAR AHMED, vide affidavit dated: 11.07.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

It is for information that I, SANGEETHA M D/o MURALI, R/o No. 202, B-Block, Elegant Valley Apartment, Near Prakruthi Driving School, B E M L Complex, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore South, Kenchanahalli, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560098, declare that the name of my father and mother have been wrongly written as MURALI and RADHIKA in my all educational documents. The actual name of my father and mother are K. V. MURALI MOHAN and RADHIKA Y respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, R RACHAPPA S/O RACHANAYKA R/o 71, 0 Kaliyuru, T Narasipura, Talakadu Hobali, Mysuru, Mamballi, Karnataka-571442, have changed the name of my minor son SHIVANAYAKA Raged 16 years and he shall hereafter be known as SADASHIVAR.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHIVAPPA V S/O VENKATARAMU, R/o Word No. 14, Someswara Kaloni, Magadi, Ramanagar, Karnataka - 562120, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHIVAV.

CHANGE OF NAME

It is for information that I, SANGEETHA M D/o MURALI, R/o No. 202, B-Block, Elegant Valley Apartment, Near Prakruthi Driving School, B E M L Complex, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore South, Kenchanahalli, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560098, declare that the name of my father and mother have been wrongly written as MURALI and RADHIKA in my all educational documents. The actual name of my father and mother are K. V. MURALI MOHAN and RADHIKA Y respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, MOHAMED ISHAQ, S/o, Abdul Rasool, Resident of Old No 2/D 1, New No 44, Central Street Neelsandra Bengaluru Dist 560047, have changed my name to MOHAMED ISHAQ, vide affidavit dated: 11.07.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ANNAPOORNIMA S C D/o RAJAPPA, R/o Bettadahalli, Kabbaligere, Arkalgud, Hassan, Karnataka - 573130, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RENUKA B R.

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA CMis.No.348/2026

Petitioners: Sri.Halukrishnappa S/o Late Narayanappa @ Bodappa Aged about 83 years, Riat Konaghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and others
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death The Tahsilidar Doddaballapura Taluk
PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the mother of petitioner No.1 and mother in law of petitioner No.2 and grandmother of petitioner No.3 by name LATE MUTHAMMA W/O LATE NARAYANAPPA @ BODAPPA who died on 03.04.1999 at Konaghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk

In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 11.08.2026 In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.

Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 10th day of July 2026.

By order of the court
Chief Ministerial Officer Prt Civil Judge & JMFC
Doddaballapura
Advocate: Manjula.J, Opposite to Court Complex, 4th Ward, Rojura, Doddaballapura Taluk

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA CMis.No.348/2026

Petitioners: Sri.Halukrishnappa S/o Late Narayanappa @ Bodappa Aged about 83 years, Riat Konaghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and others
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death The Tahsilidar Doddaballapura Taluk
PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the father of petitioner No.1 and father in law of petitioner No.2 and grandmother of petitioner No.3 by name LATE NARAYANAPPA @ BODAPPA S/O LATE SHERAGAPPA who died on 24.02.1995 at Konaghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk

In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 11.08.2026 In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.

Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 10th day of July 2026.

By order of the court
Chief Ministerial Officer Prt Civil Judge & JMFC
Doddaballapura
Advocate: Manjula.J, Opposite to Court Complex, 4th Ward, Rojura, Doddaballapura Taluk

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND J.M.F.C. AT DEVANAHALLI CMis No. 382/2026

BETWEEN:- Sri. Nanjagowda... Petitioner
AND:- The Thasilidhar, Devanahalli Taluk... Respondent

PUBLIC NOTICE

In the Above case Aunty of the Petitioner namely PUTTAMMA W/o Late Munibachappa was died on 17-02-1999. An application has been filed with before Hon'ble II Additional Civil Judge and J.M.F.C., Devanahalli to obtain the death certificate of the said person, which will be heard at 11:00 a.m. on 25.08.2026.

By the order of Hon'ble Court
Chief Ministerial Officer, Civil Judge & JMFC Court Davanahalli
Advocate for Petitioner
Address of service: Sri Bharath. J, Advocate Office at: 2ND Floor, Krishnappa Building, Koracharapaly, Devanahalli Town.

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND J.M.F.C. AT DEVANAHALLI CMis No. 383/2026

BETWEEN:- Sri. Nanjagowda... Petitioner
AND:- The Thasilidhar, Devanahalli Taluk... Respondent

PUBLIC NOTICE

In the Above case Mother of the Petitioner namely MUNIYAMMA W/o Late Bachappa was died on 03-12-2020. An application has been filed with before Hon'ble II Additional Civil Judge and J.M.F.C., Devanahalli to obtain the death certificate of the said person, which will be heard at 11:00 a.m. on 25.08.2026.

By the order of Hon'ble Court
Chief Ministerial Officer, Civil Judge & JMFC Court Davanahalli
Advocate for Petitioner
Address of service: Sri Bharath. J, Advocate Office at: 2ND Floor, Krishnappa Building, Koracharapaly, Devanahalli Town.

CH CLASSIFIED

To Place Classified ad Contact : 080-41209042

Indian-American teen leads 300 cadets in US Navy



NEW YORK

A 17-year-old Indian-American student from New York has taken on a major leadership role by commanding nearly 300 fellow students in her school's Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) unit.

Riddhi Chauhan, a student at Benjamin N. Cardozo High School in Queens, serves as the Battalion Commanding Officer, the highest student rank in the programme. She arrives at school before 7 am four days a week to conduct drill practices, oversee training activities, manage battalion operations, and support cadet welfare.

The NJROTC programme, supported by the US Navy, focuses on developing leadership, discipline, teamwork, and character among high school students across the United States.

Chauhan joined the programme to strengthen her leadership skills and contribute to her school community, eventually developing an ambition to become a Naval Officer.

Her journey to the top student position included several leadership roles, such as Academic Commander, STEM Commander, Platoon Leader, and Inspection Commander. During her tenure as Academic Bowl and secure first place in a national academic competition.

QUICK READ

Oregon withdraws delay request in Paramount merger case

PORTLAND
Oregon's Attorney General has withdrawn a court request to delay Paramount's planned 110 billion dollar takeover of Warner Bros. Officials said Paramount refused to provide requested records and would not cooperate with the investigation. The state is now considering its next legal action. Paramount welcomed the decision, calling the merger lawful and good for competition. However, the deal still faces review from other states over possible competition concerns. The merger has also raised worries among Hollywood workers, including actors and writers, who fear job losses if the companies successfully join together.

Over 1.7 crore ITRs filed before deadline

NEW DELHI
The Income Tax Department said over 1.7 crore taxpayers have filed their income tax returns for the 2025-26 financial year so far. The department shared the update on Saturday, encouraging more people to complete their filings before the July 31 deadline. Returns for Assessment Year 2026-27 are being accepted, with taxpayers using the available online facilities. Officials said timely filing helps avoid last-minute issues and ensures smoother processing. The department continues to remind citizens to submit their returns within the given period and follow tax rules carefully for a hassle-free filing experience across the country.

New SEC rules boost market transparency efforts

NEW YORK
The United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has introduced new rules requiring activist investors to reveal the identities of their clients in official regulatory filings. The updated guidance aims to improve transparency in financial markets and applies to important documents such as Schedule 13D filings and proxy statements. The decision could affect hedge funds, which have traditionally kept the names of their investors private. Legal experts said the move was unexpected and may bring major changes to how activist investment campaigns are carried out across the country. The SEC explained that investors who create special investment groups to buy shares in a company and push for changes must now identify the people supporting those campaigns. The regulator also said clients who invest more than 500 dollars in partnerships created to influence company decisions must be

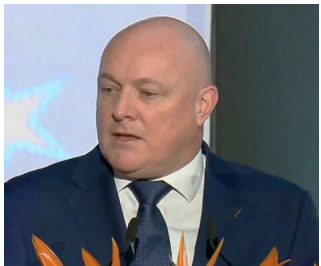
Assam budget boosts tea sector with incentives

GUWAHATI
Assam's new Budget 2026-27 introduced several measures to support the tea sector with subsidies, tax relief and incentives aimed at strengthening production, exports and worker welfare. Finance Minister Jayanta Malla Baruah announced a Rs 3 per kg subsidy for export-oriented premium Assam CTC tea, while support for orthodox and specialty tea was increased from Rs 10 per kg to Rs 15 per kg. The government also raised the agricultural income tax exemption limit for small tea growers from Rs 2.5 lakh to

New Zealand PM highlights India's economic progress

Luxon praised India's transformation since his 1990s visit, highlighting its growth from a low-income economy into a global economic power

NEW DELHI
New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said India has achieved major economic progress, with 250 million people moving out of poverty under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. He said the country's middle class has expanded to 440 million people and could reach 750 million by 2030, describing the change as an impressive transformation during a business and sports event in Auckland. Luxon said he has admired India's progress for many years and remembered his first visit to the country during the 1990s while working with Unilever. He explained that India has changed greatly from those early days,



moving from a low-income economy toward becoming a stronger global economic force. He also praised improvements in infrastructure, education, tourism, and business opportunities. The New Zealand leader highlighted discussions with Prime Minister Modi about India's rapid development, including the expansion of airports and the growing need for more aircraft to support

domestic travel. His comments came during Modi's visit to New Zealand, which marked the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to the country in four decades. The visit also strengthened relations between India and New Zealand as both nations upgraded their ties to a Strategic Partnership. They introduced a roadmap for cooperation until 2030 and aimed to increase bilateral trade to NZD 7 billion. The two countries also agreed to support cooperation in areas including agriculture, skills, innovation, tourism, and the early implementation of their trade agreement. Luxon's remarks highlighted India's changing economic position and growing international importance. He said the

country's development journey has created new opportunities for millions of people and inspired observers around the world. As India continues expanding its economy and global partnerships, leaders from other nations are watching its progress closely. The focus now remains on maintaining growth, creating opportunities, and ensuring that development benefits people across all sections of society. Experts believe continued reforms and cooperation will help India strengthen its position further while supporting inclusive growth for future generations. The nation is expected to remain a key contributor to global economic progress through innovation and sustainable development in future.



Gadkari urges BRICS to build future mobility

NAGPUR
Union Minister Nitin Gadkari called for stronger cooperation among BRICS nations to create sustainable, resilient and modern transport systems during the third BRICS Transport Ministers' Meeting held in India. He said joint efforts among member countries can shape the future of global mobility through innovation, partnership and shared responsibility.

Speaking at the event, Gadkari highlighted India's progress in roads, railways, maritime infrastructure and aviation. He said India has developed the world's second-largest road network and expanded expressways and multimodal connectivity across regions. Projects such as economic corridors, tunnels and greenfield expressways show the country's focus on combining development with environmental protection and technological advancement. He also praised the Hybrid Annuity Model for attracting private investment in infrastructure projects. Gadkari explained that Indian railways are undergoing major modernisation through electrification, Vande Bharat services and high-speed rail development. He also mentioned digital maritime initiatives and green shipping efforts aimed at improving logistics efficiency and connectivity. Emphasising green mobility, the minister highlighted electric buses, cleaner fuels and the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan as key steps for integrated transport planning. He said safety remains a priority and referred to schemes supporting acci-

Gadkari highlighted green mobility, safer transport, and PM Gati Shakti, urging BRICS cooperation on sustainable infrastructure, clean technologies, innovation, and improved connectivity

dent victims and eco-friendly construction methods using recycled materials. Gadkari urged BRICS members to cooperate on challenges including infrastructure funding, emissions, congestion and last-mile connectivity. He called for greater knowledge sharing, research and technology partnerships in areas such as electric mobility, green hydrogen and digital transport systems. He expressed confidence that the meeting would strengthen cooperation among emerging economies and create practical solutions for future transport needs. The minister said BRICS countries can build cleaner, safer and smarter systems by working together and sharing experiences. He added that sustainable infrastructure will support economic growth and improve lives worldwide. The meeting reflected India's commitment to inclusive development and international cooperation in transportation. As global mobility demands continue changing, BRICS nations are expected to play an important role in creating solutions that balance progress, environment and public needs. Through collaboration and innovation, the countries aim to build a stronger and more connected future.

India said the report lacked evidence of unfair export advantages and failed to provide country-specific proof for its claims

India seeks review of proposed US tariff

NEW DELHI
India has asked US trade authorities to reconsider a proposed 12.5% tariff after raising concerns over a report related to forced labour issues. The government said trade disputes should be solved through discussions and bilateral negotiations instead of one-sided actions. Commerce official Brij Mohan Mishra said India takes the elimination of forced labour seriously and believes the investigation does not meet required legal standards under the US Trade Act. India argued that the report lacks sufficient evidence link-

ing its policies with unfair advantages for Indian exporters. It said the investigation combined several economies together without providing specific proof against each country. Officials stated that the findings relied on broad data and limited examples rather than detailed sector-based information. India also said there was no clear evidence showing that the absence of a nationwide import ban on forced labour products harmed American industries. The country requested the USTR to review the proposed measure and continue dialogue through trade channels. Representatives from Indian

industry bodies including APE-DA, Ficci and CII also opposed the proposed tariff. APEDA said claims about imported rice affecting competition were not supported by strong evidence. It explained that India's rice imports are small and serve specific market needs. The agency added that strict checks prevent the export of imported rice produced through forced labour. Industry groups warned that additional duties could increase costs for exporters businesses and consumers in both countries. They said Indian companies already follow compliance rules and that higher tariffs could affect supply chains.

Apple sues OpenAI over alleged trade secrets

CUPERTINO
Apple has filed a lawsuit against OpenAI and two former Apple employees, claiming they stole confidential company information to help develop new artificial intelligence hardware. The legal case was filed in a federal court in California and has increased tensions between the two technology companies. Apple said the former employees shared secret designs, manufacturing methods, and supplier details before leaving the company. OpenAI denied the claims, saying it does not use or seek other companies' trade secrets and remains focused on creating technology that benefits people around the world. According to Apple, the two former employees, Chang Liu and Tang Yew Tan, took important company information before joining OpenAI.

FSSAI issues nine notices to Swiggy Instamart

BENGALURU
FSSAI has issued nine notices to Swiggy Instamart after several consumers reported receiving expired, rotten and unsafe food items. The food regulator asked the company to submit a detailed report explaining rule violations, safety checks and steps planned to avoid such incidents in future. The complaints included deliveries of expired snacks, spoiled organic eggs, foul-smelling parathas and contaminated infant food products. Some customers claimed that items were delivered even after their use-by dates, while others raised concerns over poor storage conditions and repeated quality problems. The regulator said such issues could affect public health and reduce consumer trust in online grocery services. Customers also complained about delays in responses and weak grievance handling systems. Many said companies often provided refunds but failed to explain how they would prevent similar food safety issues. The food authority noted that complaints about milk, eggs and other daily essentials had also increased. FSSAI has directed Swiggy Instamart to share details of its hygiene monitoring methods and corrective actions. The move comes after the regulator recently examined several products for misleading claims and other safety concerns. Officials said strict checks are needed as online food and grocery platforms serve a growing number of people across the country. The company is now expected to review its processes and improve safety standards. Authorities said protecting consumers requires quick action, better monitoring and stronger responsibility from businesses handling food products.

OECD ECONOMIES FACE PRODUCTIVITY LOSSES FROM AGEISM

NEW DELHI
A new report from the World Economic Forum and Marsh has warned that age-related workplace barriers could cause OECD economies nearly \$500 billion in productivity losses by 2040. The report explains that older workers aged 55+ are often pushed away from jobs because of discrimination, limited opportunities, and workplace challenges. These problems are expected to create major economic pressure as populations grow older and the number of working-age people increases more slowly. The analysis notes global population aged 65+ is expected to rise by more than 50% by 2040, reaching 1.3 billion people. Meanwhile, the working-age population is projected to grow only 13%,

creating concerns about labour shortages and economic growth. The report highlights that extended unemployment among older workers may result in significant financial losses for countries including the United States, France, Canada, Japan, and others. It also warns that ageism affects health, linking it to millions of disease cases and higher healthcare costs. Many older workers leave the workforce completely because they feel unwanted or unsupported, meaning official unemployment figures may not show the full impact. The WEF report suggests that companies can address the issue by building workplaces where different generations work together. Multi-generational teams can improve creativity, innovation,

and knowledge sharing. Experienced employees can guide younger workers, while gaining new digital skills through cooperation. The report also points to examples from South Korea, Japan, and Sweden, where policies have helped increase employment among older adults through flexible systems and better opportunities. Governments and businesses are encouraged to remove unfair age barriers and recognise the valuable skills of older employees. Experts believe supporting older workers can improve productivity while reducing pressure on public finances and strengthening economies. The report concludes that tackling ageism will benefit individuals, employers, and society by creating inclusive workplaces where people of all ages can contribute effectively.

EPFO restores passbook portal with enhanced security

NEW DELHI
EPFO has restored its passbook portal after completing scheduled maintenance, allowing members to access their provident fund statements again. The organisation said the migration process was aimed at improving processing efficiency, security and reliability of its digital platform. The portal was taken offline for database consolidation and software upgrades before returning with stronger systems. EPFO informed users that recently processed accounting year records are available, while older records

are being migrated and will appear soon. Members do not need to take any action because the process is automatic. EPFO also said that some claims and service requests may face delays for up to two weeks as additional verification and validation checks are completed. The restoration comes before the expected credit of 8.25 per cent annual interest for the financial year 2025-26, which is likely to begin from July 15. The organisation has changed the process for Universal Account Number activation. Members must now

use the UMANG application with Aadhaar-based Face Authentication Technology instead of the Unified Member Portal. New EPF rules also require members to keep a minimum 25 per cent balance before making partial withdrawals. The updated system is expected to provide safer and smoother services to millions of subscribers. EPFO said these changes will strengthen digital operations and improve the overall experience for employees and employers while managing provident fund accounts.



Abhishek Praises Rohit's Selfless Leadership and Accountability

Abhishek Nayar credited Rohit Sharma's leadership for strengthening team unity through accountability, empathy, and unwavering support during difficult phases.



MUMBAI

Former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar has praised India captain Rohit Sharma for his leadership qualities, saying his willingness to accept responsibility and protect his teammates helped create a united and confident dressing room during some of the team's most challenging periods.

Reflecting on his tenure with the Indian cricket team, Nayar said Rohit's approach to captaincy went beyond tactical decisions on the field. According to him, the skipper consistently prioritised the well-being of his players, ensuring that setbacks did not negatively affect the team's morale or individual confidence.

Speaking to JioStar, Nayar recalled an instance following

the Mumbai Test when India had suffered a disappointing series defeat. He said Rohit addressed the media after the match and openly accepted responsibility instead of placing the blame on any individual player.

Nayar remembered Rohit telling reporters that the team had won many series in the past and losing one should not define them, while personally taking responsibility for the defeat. According to the former assistant coach, such statements reflected Rohit's character and his ability to ease pressure on the squad during difficult moments.

He said that defeats always hurt the players and the support staff, but Rohit's greatest strength as a leader was his concern for teammates who were struggling. Nayar explained that the captain would

always identify the players who had been most affected by poor performances, such as those who had failed to score runs, and would make a conscious effort to lift their spirits.

According to Nayar, Rohit's empathetic approach helped players regain confidence instead of becoming overwhelmed by criticism. He noted that the captain never singled out teammates for mistakes or publicly criticised anyone after disappointing performances.

Instead, Nayar said, Rohit consistently accepted responsibility himself, acknowledging his own shortcomings rather than making excuses or attributing failures to others. This attitude, he added, earned the captain immense respect within the dressing room and created an atmo-

sphere where players felt supported even under intense public scrutiny.

The former assistant coach also highlighted another example from the Sydney Test, where Rohit Sharma did not feature in the playing eleven. Despite not taking part in the match, Rohit appeared before the media and addressed questions openly, demonstrating accountability even when he was not directly involved on the field.

Nayar said Rohit's communication style was always honest and straightforward. He never attempted to avoid difficult questions or present a misleading narrative, choosing instead to speak candidly about the team's performances. According to him, this transparency played a key role in building trust among players.

Parthiv Patel Raises Concerns Over India's Fielding & Team Balance

NEW DELHI



Parthiv Patel criticised India's fielding standards and urged greater focus on specialist T20 bowlers and balanced batting combinations.

Former India wicketkeeper-batter Parthiv Patel has expressed serious concerns over India's fielding standards following the men's team's 2-0 T20I series defeat to Ireland and the recent setback against England. Describing fielding as the most alarming issue in Indian cricket, Patel said repeated lapses in catching have become a worrying trend across the men's, women's, and junior teams.

Speaking to JioStar, the former cricketer said India's disappointing performances against Ireland were influenced not only by batting and bowling but also by costly mistakes in the field. According to him, dropped catches at crucial stages of both matches allowed Ireland to post competitive totals and ultimately shifted the momentum away from India.

Patel observed that in the opening T20I, India missed two or three important catching opportunities that could have significantly restricted Ireland's total. He argued that had those chances been converted, Ireland would not have crossed the 180-run mark. Similar fielding lapses were witnessed in the second match as well, reinforcing what he described as a persistent weakness in the team's overall performance.

Calling for immediate improvement, Patel said fielding has become an area that Indian cricket can no longer afford to overlook. He stressed that catches dropped at critical moments often determine the outcome of closely contested T20 matches and that raising fielding standards should become a priority for coaches and selectors alike.

Apart from fielding, Patel also questioned India's long-term strategy in building its bowling attack for the shortest format of the game. He suggested that the team management should begin identifying and nurturing bowlers who specialise specifically in T20 cricket instead of repeatedly relying on established all-format players. According to Pa-

tel, India often looks towards senior fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah to solve bowling problems whenever he returns from injury or rest. He also referred to pacer Prasidh Krishna as another familiar option who continues to receive opportunities. However, Patel believes the selectors should broaden their search and invest in emerging bowlers who possess skills specifically suited to T20 cricket.

He named bowlers such as Prince Yadav and Mohsin Khan as potential candidates who could be developed into specialist T20 bowlers. Patel argued that just as India has specialist batters for the shortest format, it should adopt a similar approach when selecting and grooming bowlers capable of excelling in T20 conditions.

The former wicketkeeper also turned his attention to India's batting combination, expressing concern over the team's heavy dependence on left-handed batters in the top order.

He said a batting line-up featuring six left-handers among the top seven players may not provide the ideal balance required for sustained success in international cricket. In this context, Patel underlined the importance of Tilak Varma regaining his batting form. He suggested that Tilak's return to consistent run-scoring would help strengthen India's middle order while providing the team management with greater flexibility in maintaining a balanced batting unit.

McIlroy among three in lead, Yellamaraju is sixth and Theegala 38th at Scottish Open

NORTH BERWICK

Indo-Canadian Sudarshan Yellamaraju rose to tied sixth, while Sahith Theegala improved to T-38 even as big names including Scottie Scheffler exited the Scottish Open at the halfway stage.

A dramatic second round shook up the leaderboard at The Renaissance Club. As winds picked up and the tricky coastal links began to show their teeth, a stellar three-way tie emerged at the top of the leaderboard. Defending Masters champion Rory McIlroy, South Korea's rising star Tom Kim, and England's Jordan Smith all climbed to a 9-under-par total to anchor the final weekend groups.

However, many fell victims to conditions as an unexpected, low cut line of 2-under-par claimed several of golf's biggest heavyweights. The most staggering casualty of the day was world number one Scottie Scheffler, alongside 2026 PGA Championship winner Aaron Rai, both of whom were sent out early after failing to navigate the worsening afternoon conditions. Rory McIlroy continued his perfect preparation for the upcoming Open Championship at Royal Birkdale with another super performance. Backing up his opening-round 65, the Northern Irishman took full advantage of the par 5s to sign for a 4-under-par 66. McIlroy looked completely poised on the greens, demonstrating the exact type of links control required to orchestrate a weekend repeat of his prior triumphs at North



Berwick. Matching him was Tom Kim. The South Korean star paired his first-round 65 with a highly disciplined 66, showcasing remarkable iron play to keep himself firmly in the hunt. Joining the duo at the summit was Jordan Smith, who executed a blistering 7-under-par 63, a masterful display of ball-striking.

While the marquee leaders established the benchmark heading into the weekend, Indo-Canadian prospect Sudarshan Yellamaraju stole the headlines with a breakout performance. After securing a steady 2-under 68 on the first day, Yellamaraju, a rising talent, combined superb ball-striking with brilliant green work, highlighted by a fine 38-foot birdie putt on the par-3 11th.

Yellamaraju endured a roller-coaster scorecard, birdying three in a row from the fourth hole before a bogey on the eighth saw him turn at 2-under. He caught fire again on the back nine, adding four birdies against one more bogey to finish with a stellar 5-under-par 65. The brilliant round hoisted him into a tie for sixth place at 7-under-par total. Sitting just two strokes off the multi-way lead, Yellamaraju heads into the weekend squarely in the fight for his first career DP World Tour breakthrough.

Mitchell Santner Backs Jacob Duffy to Lead NZ Attack

GUYANA

New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner has expressed full confidence in fast bowler Jacob Duffy, saying the experienced seamer is ready to lead the Black Caps' pace attack during the upcoming five-match One-Day International series against the West Indies.

With several first-choice fast bowlers unavailable, Santner believes Duffy has earned the responsibility of guiding a relatively inexperienced bowling unit.

Speaking ahead of the opening ODI, Santner said Duffy has consistently performed whenever given opportunities over the past few years and is now well positioned to take charge of the pace department. He noted that while several younger bowlers are part of the squad, Duffy's experience makes him the natural leader of the at-

tack. The 31-year-old fast bowler returns to New Zealand's ODI squad after missing the team's recent Test tour of England due to paternity leave. His return provides valuable experience to a bowling line-up that will be without several regular pace spearheads for the West Indies series.

New Zealand have rested leading fast bowlers Matt Henry, Will O'Rourke, and Kyle Jamieson following their recent Test commitments, while Ben Sears has been ruled out because of injury. As a result, Duffy is expected to shoulder greater responsibility throughout the five-match series.

The pace attack accompanying Duffy includes Nathan Smith, Kristian Clarke, uncapped fast bowler Matt Fisher, and Ben Lister, who was drafted into the squad as a replacement for the injured

Sears. The series is expected to provide valuable international exposure for the younger members of New Zealand's bowling unit.

Duffy heads into the ODI series after an impressive run of form in franchise and international cricket. Most recently, he represented Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the Indian Premier League, where he claimed nine wickets in six matches and made a notable impact with the ball.

The fast bowler also enjoyed a memorable 2025 on the international stage.



Deepti Sharma hails India's top order after gritty fifty puts visitors in control at Lord's

LONDON

India all-rounder Deepti Sharma credited the team's top-order batters for laying the perfect foundation after her fighting half-century guided the visitors to a competitive 285 on the opening day of the historic first-ever women's Test at Lord's on Friday.

Smriti Mandhana (83 not out), Harmanpreet Kaur (58) and Deepti (57) guided India through some middle order trouble as they recovered to post

350-6 before striking early with the ball when Kranti Gaud sent Tammy Beaumont back for 11 with the score at 21-1.

The



left-handed all-rounder attributed the key partnerships to the solid foundation laid by the top-order. It feels good that I was able to do this partnership at a crucial time. All credit goes to our 3-4 batters who gave a good start.

Jemi, Harry di (Harmanpreet) and Smriti. They built the innings very well, Deepti was quoted by ICC as saying.

The all-rounder also highlighted the challenging nature of the pitch, which offers turn and inconsistent bounce. The wicket is slightly turning and sometimes keeping low. The wicket is not the same.

We have to be prepared

when the ball can bounce and when it can stay low. Tomorrow (Day 2) will be a very important day for us. Mandhana drew praise from Deepti, who held the innings together in a precarious position.

I think she batted really well. Sometimes it happens.

Few players got out early and sometimes had to take that responsibility. I think she showed her character today. From there, she started her innings. India's bowlers can be buoyed by the way the pitch behaved late on Day 1, and Deepti reckons they can make the most of it if they maintain their discipline.

We will focus more on our bowling strength. Like today's wicket, we were getting a slight turn. But sometimes, the ball was bouncing.

It will help us tomorrow. But we have to focus on our right areas. We have to continue to bowl back-to-back. Playing at Lord's for the first time in a Women's Test match is a proud moment for the players and Deepti spoke of how the women's game has evolved in recent years. Tests are always special. It is an amazing feeling to play cricket. Women's cricket has grown a lot in the last 4-5 years.

Animesh Kujur clocks India's second-fastest 100m, sets fastest overseas time by an Indian

WETZLAR

India's national 200m record holder Animesh Kujur continued his rapid rise as one of the country's premier sprinters by clocking a personal best 10.14 seconds to finish second in the men's 100m final at the PUMA Fast Arms Fast Legs 2026 meet on Saturday.

The Odisha athlete's performance is the fastest 100m ever recorded by an Indian on foreign soil and the second-fastest by an Indian overall, only behind Gurindervir Singh's national-leading 10.09 seconds. Animesh had shown his form earlier in the day by winning his heat in 10.19 seconds. He improved in the final, shaving one hundredth of a second off his previous personal best of 10.15 seconds. This continues a season in which he has consistently lowered his times. Already the national record holder in the

men's 200m, Animesh has established himself among India's fastest-ever 100m runners. He now owns three of the five fastest 100m times by an Indian, with the all-time list as follows: Gurindervir Singh (10.09s), Animesh Kujur (10.14s), Animesh Kujur (10.15s), Gurindervir Singh (10.17s), and Animesh Kujur (10.18s). His progress in the shorter sprint comes after he secured qualification for the Asian Games 200m at the Inter-State National Athletics Championships in June. He clocked 20.74 seconds, comfortably below the Athletics Federation of India qualifying standard of 20.88 seconds.

Despite achieving the qualifying mark easily, Animesh admitted he was not happy with the timing, saying qualification was his only goal. Honestly, I was not here for timing. The idea was to secure the qualification mark for the

Asian Games. Since I have got it now, I will focus on improving before the Asian Games, he said after the race. His personal best in the 200m is still the national record of 20.32 seconds.

The Inter-State Championships followed India's bronze medal finish in the mixed 4x100m relay at the Asian Relay Championships, where Animesh played a key role. His coach, Martin Owens, revealed that after a demanding travel schedule, the focus had been on securing qualification instead of chasing a fast time. Although Animesh has often said the 200m is his preferred event, many of his biggest improvements in the past year have been in the 100m. Since setting the national 200m record in May 2025, he has gone below 20.50 seconds only once. In the 100m, he has twice lowered the Indian record before Gurindervir Singh reclaimed it with a national-best 10.09 seconds.

Shubman Gill Names Federer as His Greatest Sporting Inspiration

NEW DELHI

India's Test and One-Day International captain Shubman Gill has revealed that tennis legend Roger Federer remains his biggest sporting inspiration outside cricket, saying the Swiss great's elegance, composure, and effortless style have always fascinated him. Speaking ahead of the Wimbledon finals, Gill also backed world No. 1 Jan-nik Sinner to win the men's singles title and drew interesting comparisons between tennis and cricket.

In a conversation with JioStar, Gill explained that his admiration for Federer goes beyond what fans see on the court. As a professional athlete himself, he said he un-

derstands the immense effort required to make elite-level performances appear natural and effortless.

Recalling his early years as a sports fan, Gill said many people admired Federer because of the ease with which he played. However, he believes only fellow athletes truly appreciate the discipline, practice, and dedication hidden behind such graceful performances.

According to Gill, he has often been described as an effortless batter in cricket, but he knows how much preparation goes into producing that impression. He said this personal experience has made him admire Federer even more, as the Swiss maestro consistently displayed ele-

gance and control throughout his illustrious tennis career.

When asked to compare a tennis stroke with one of his favourite cricket shots, Gill immediately pointed to Carlos Alcaraz's famous drop shot. He said the Spaniard's ability to surprise opponents with the delicate stroke reminded him of his own trademark short-arm jab in cricket.

Gill described both strokes as quick, deceptive, and highly effective, adding that timing and precision are equally important in executing them successfully. He suggested that despite being

different sports, cricket and tennis share similarities in skill, anticipation, and shot selection.

Looking ahead to the Wimbledon men's singles final, Gill expressed confidence in Jan-nik Sinner's chances of lifting the prestigious title. He praised the Italian for his consistent performances and calm demeanour, saying Sinner has developed into one of the finest players on the international tennis circuit. Gill also commended Sinner's conduct away from the court, stating that the world No. 1 carries himself with professionalism and humility.





Spain defeated Belgium 2-1 with another late winner, booking a FIFA World Cup semi-final against France

Spain Edge Belgium to Reach FIFA WC Semi-finals

INGLEWOOD

Spain secured a dramatic 2-1 victory over Belgium to advance to the FIFA World Cup semi-finals, with substitute Mikel Merino once again emerging as the match-winner after capitalising on a costly goalkeeping error late in the contest.

In a closely fought quarter-final played before a sold-out crowd at Los Angeles Stadium, Spain and Belgium went into the halftime break level at 1-1 after an entertaining opening 45 minutes. However, the European champions maintained sustained pressure in the second half before finally finding the decisive breakthrough in the closing stages.

The winning goal came after Belgium suffered a major setback when first-choice

goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois was forced off through injury during the second half. His replacement, Senne Lammens, was unable to deal with a low strike from defender Pau Cubarsi, spilling the ball into the danger area.

The loose ball fell perfectly for Merino, who reacted quickest to fire it into the net and send the largely pro-Spain crowd into celebration. The goal marked another decisive contribution from the midfielder, who had also scored the winning goal as a substitute during Spain's 1-0 victory over Portugal in the Round of 16.

Speaking after the match, Merino said his latest decisive contribution was the result of preparation rather than luck. He stressed that when a team enters matches fully prepared, positive outcomes often fol-

low, adding that Spain's focus remains firmly on winning the World Cup.

The victory takes Spain into the World Cup semi-finals for the first time since their triumphant campaign in 2010, when they lifted the trophy for the first time in the nation's history. With only two matches separating them from another world title, Merino said the players are determined to make the most of the opportunity.

Spain head coach Luis de la Fuente praised his team's determination and immediately shifted focus to the upcoming semi-final against tournament favourites France. He acknowledged the quality of the French side but expressed confidence that Spain would prepare thoroughly for the challenge.

We're going to work hard to

try and beat France, the coach said, adding that the pressure would be shared by both teams as they compete for a place in the World Cup final.

Spain made an aggressive start against Belgium and were rewarded midway through the first half. Midfielder Fabian Ruiz opened the scoring in the 30th minute after Courtois produced an excellent diving save to deny the initial effort. Ruiz reacted quickly to the rebound, placing his shot through the legs of defender Timothy Castagne and into the net.

The goal justified De la Fuente's decision to start Ruiz ahead of Pedri, a selection that had surprised many before kickoff. Pedri was later introduced early in the second half after Ruiz completed another influential performance in midfield.

Scaloni Backs Messi to Continue Dominating World Football

KANSAS CITY

Argentina head coach Lionel Scaloni has dismissed concerns over Lionel Messi's age, insisting that the Argentine captain remains capable of being the world's best player for as long as he chooses to continue his playing career. Speaking ahead of Argentina's FIFA World Cup quarter-final against Switzerland, Scaloni praised Messi's fitness, commitment, and match-winning influence during the tournament.

Messi has played a pivotal role in Argentina's campaign, scoring eight goals to stand level with France forward Kylian Mbappe as one of the tournament's leading scorers. The 39-year-old has also provided crucial leadership, helping guide the defending

champions through difficult moments as they pursue another World Cup title.

One of Messi's most memorable performances came in Argentina's dramatic Round of 16 victory over Egypt. Trailing 2-0 with just 11 minutes remaining, Argentina produced a remarkable comeback to win 3-2. Messi scored one goal and also provided an assist for defender Cristian Romero as Argentina completed the stunning turnaround.

The Inter Miami forward entered the World Cup under a cloud of uncertainty after recovering from a muscle strain shortly before the tournament. However, his performances have silenced doubts about his physical condition and ability to perform at the highest level despite being the oldest player in Argentina's squad.

Addressing questions about Messi's fitness, Scaloni said the captain's work with his personal fitness coach had contributed positively to his preparation. While acknowledging that Messi had undertaken additional conditioning work, the coach suggested there had



not been any dramatic change in the physical numbers compared to previous years.

According to Scaloni, the most significant aspect of Messi's game remains his total commitment whenever he steps onto the field. He said the Argentine legend consistently gives everything he has during matches and becomes extremely dangerous whenever he senses an opportunity to influence the game.

The Argentina coach described Messi as a player who transforms into an unstoppable force whenever he is fully engaged, praising both his determination and his ability to create decisive moments under pressure.

Scaloni also said he was not surprised by Messi's continued excellence at the age of 39. He suggested that those expecting age to diminish the forward's abilities simply do not understand the level of dedication and professionalism that has defined Messi's extraordinary career.

Reiterating his confidence in the captain, Scaloni said he firmly believes Messi will remain the world's best player for as long as he wishes to continue playing. He stressed that this opinion is based on his understanding of Messi's qualities rather than simply his role as Argentina's head coach.



Mbappe keeps France's greatness comparison on ice as semi-final beckons

BOSTON

France have been drawing comparisons with greats of the past with their World Cup run, in which Kylian Mbappe and Ousmane Dembele have scored 13 goals between them, but Les Bleus' captain said the current team have not achieved anything yet.

Didier Deschamps' side reached the semi-finals by subduing Morocco 2-0 on Thursday in an impressive display of patience and dominance to set up a clash with either Spain or Belgium, who face each other later on Friday.

I was a champion (in 2018) and a World Cup runner-up (in 2022) and this team has not achieved anything yet, said Mbappe, who has 20 goals from 20 World Cup appearances - including four in finals.

It is, however, the one who has the biggest potential. There are so many qualities in this squad, it allows you to dream.

However, the 27-year-old, who leads the goal-scoring chart in this edition with eight goals, level with Lionel Messi, insisted that France were not there yet.

As far as I know, this squad has not won anything yet. I've always said that the strongest teams were the ones who win trophies. It's not the case for this team yet, so no, it's not the strongest, Mbappe added.

France have reached four of the last seven World Cup finals, lifting the trophy in 1998 and 2018, losing in 2006 and 2022. Should they take part in the July 19 showdown in New York, they will sustain the comparison with West Germany, arguably the ultimate tournament nation with four finals between 1974 and 1990. Mbappe said France needed to keep their feet on the ground.

We know this team's potential. But we have to show it on the pitch. We're confident, but we still have a lot to prove if we want to be considered as an almost unbeatable team, he said.



ATALANTA

Morocco's FIFA World Cup journey came to an end in the quarter-finals after a 2-0 defeat to France on Thursday, but the African side has once again underlined its growing stature on the global stage. Having become the first African nation to reach successive World Cup quarter-finals, Morocco will now begin preparations for an even bigger objective as one of the co-hosts of the 2030 FIFA World Cup.

The defeat in Boston mirrored Morocco's experience at the previous World Cup, where France had also ended their campaign in the semi-finals. Despite falling short once again against the European giants, Morocco's performances throughout the tournament were widely regarded as another significant achievement for African football.

Competing in the expanded 48-team World Cup held across Canada, Mexico, and the United States, Morocco produced several memorable displays. They eliminated the Netherlands during the knockout stages and also pushed Brazil hard in their opening match of the tournament, demonstrating



their ability to compete consistently against some of the world's strongest teams.

The team's success came despite uncertainty surrounding a coaching change just three months before the start of the World Cup. Mohamed Ouahbi, who guided Morocco to the FIFA Under-20 World Cup title last year, was promoted from the youth setup to take charge of the senior national team and managed a smooth transition.

Ouahbi's appointment initially raised questions about Morocco's

preparedness for such a major tournament. However, his side displayed tactical discipline, resilience, and attacking quality throughout the competition, reinforcing confidence in the team's long-term development.

Following the quarter-final defeat, the Morocco coach remained optimistic about the future, pointing to the youthful nature of the squad and the abundance of talented players emerging through the country's football system. He expressed confidence that the current group

would continue to develop and become stronger over the coming years.

Morocco has already secured qualification for the 2030 FIFA World Cup as one of the tournament's co-hosts alongside Portugal and Spain. With automatic qualification assured, the national federation is expected to use the coming years to further strengthen the squad and build a team capable of competing for the title on home soil.

Although Ouahbi appears well positioned to continue leading the team, he faces important challenges before the next World Cup. Morocco must first navigate the upcoming Africa Cup of Nations tournaments in 2027 and 2028, competitions that often carry immense pressure for coaches across the continent.

African football has a history of frequent managerial changes following disappointing tournament results, and Ouahbi is aware that continued success will be necessary to retain the confidence of supporters and administrators. His predecessor, Walid Regragui, departed after failing to guide Morocco to victory in the Africa Cup of Nations final against Senegal in Rabat.

England's Kane confirms golf outing with Trump, praises president's game

MAIMI

England captain Harry Kane has confirmed he once played golf with U.S. President Donald Trump, describing the experience as surreal and praising the president's game.

Trump told reporters earlier this week that he had played golf with Kane, calling the England, opens new tab striker a great player and a good golfer.

Speaking on Friday on the eve of their Cup

quarter, Kane confirmed the round took place in Palm Beach, Florida, about 18 months ago.

I played all right, to be honest, Kane told reporters in Miami. He invited me to play when I was down in Palm Beach. So yeah, when the president invites you somewhere ...

It was a pretty surreal experience just to meet him and obviously play golf with him. His golf is pretty good, to be honest, Kane added. I hope I can play as well as him when I'm his age. So yeah, unique experience and I

was just grateful he invited me down to play.

Trump had complimented the Bayern Munich forward on his Truth Social platform following England's 3-2 last-16 victory over Mexico, writing: Harry Kane of England is a GREAT player!!!

The following day, Trump revealed the pair had played golf together. I think Kane is a great player, Trump said. I played golf with him and I like him a lot. He's a good golfer. He's really great.



Is Icon Star Allu Arjun eyeing a political debut?

Icon star Allu Arjun's potential entry into politics. Rumors suggest that the actor, widely known as the "Icon Star," is quietly laying the groundwork for a future political debut while managing his heavy lineup of upcoming pan-India movies.

Amid growing rumors of a future political debut, actor Allu Arjun's team dismissed claims regarding his long-term governance plans.

According to recent reports, the actor has shifted his focus toward strengthening his ground-level fan associations, known as the "Allu Arjun Army." Internal directives have allegedly been issued to these groups to move beyond film promotions and engage deeply with the public through structured social service activities. Industry analysts are drawing parallels to the grassroots strategy deployed by Tamil actor Thalapathy Vijay, who systematically transformed his fan clubs into a robust political foundation.

Adding fuel to the fire, unconfirmed reports claim Allu Arjun recently held a private meeting in Mumbai with renowned political strategist Prashant Kishor to map out a concrete strategy. Observers note that the actor could also leverage the political experience of his father-in-law, Chandrasekhar

Reddy. The current blueprint reportedly targets a direct political entry in about eight years, specifically aiming for the 2034 elections. This timeline would allow the star to complete his massive cinematic commitments, including high-profile projects with acclaimed directors Atlee and Lokesh Kanagaraj. However, Allu Arjun's core team has moved quickly to dismiss these claims. Sarath Chandra, the actor's personal manager, issued a statement on social media clarifying that there is no truth to the circulating political rumors. The official denial has left fans confused, especially given the precise details concerning the actor's alleged long-term planning. While the Pushpa star historically demonstrated his interest in governance by endorsing selective candidates during the last elections, his team maintains his focus remains entirely on cinema.

HEMA MALINI

celebrates Diamond Jubilee
with tribute to Dharmendra

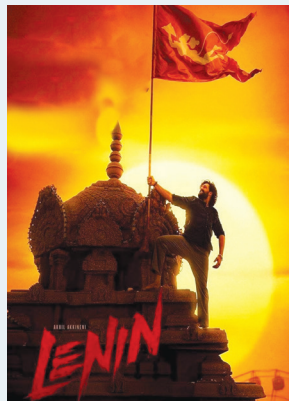
Mumbai's iconic Shanmukhananda Hall transformed into a celebration of pure Bollywood nostalgia. The film fraternity gathered for the Hema Malini – Live in Concert event to celebrate the legendary "Dream Girl's" Diamond Jubilee, marking her extraordinary 60 years in Indian cinema.

The grand charity event also doubled as a deeply emotional posthumous tribute to her late husband and frequent on-screen co-star, Dharmendra.

screen co-star, Dharmendra. Reflecting on their decades-long journey together, Hema Malini recalled her husband's final wishes for the family and his unwavering support. She shared how he always encouraged her to keep dancing, creating, and engaging with the public, even when she took on fewer film projects. She noted that he always wanted the family to remain firmly united. Visibly moved by the grand musical tributes playing around her, the actress-turned-politician also reflected on recently accepting the prestigious Padma Vibhushan, which was conferred posthumously upon Dharmendra in recognition of his monumental contribution to arts and culture.



Akhil Akkineni's 'Lenin' registers power-packed debut



highly positive upward trend, steadily increasing with each passing show as the day progressed. This consistent growth across both single screens and multiplexes indicates strong audience engagement and excellent word-of-mouth recommendations.

The project features rising actress Bhagyasri Borse as the female lead, who's on-screen chemistry with Akhil has been praised by fans. The strong opening represents a major professional victory for Akhil, especially following the disappointing box office performance of his previous high-budget spy thriller, *Agent*. Despite that setback, the young actor successfully demonstrated his strong star pull, attracting massive crowds back to the theaters. The gritty promotional trailers and high-octane action sequences have effectively restored significant goodwill for him among dedicated cinema enthusiasts.

Looking ahead, the commercial prospects for Lenin appear exceptionally bright over the weekend.

Tollywood star Akhil Akkineni's highly anticipated action drama *Lenin* made a power-packed debut at the global box office. After facing multiple production delays and release postponements, the rural action entertainer finally arrived in theaters, generating decent reviews and highly encouraging word-of-mouth feedback from early morning moviegoers.

According to official trade reports, Lenin pulled off an impressive start by raking in Rs 16.7 crore gross worldwide on its opening day. Box office trackers noted that theater collections witnessed a

AJAY DEVGN defies critics with Dhamaal 4

Ajay Devgn's highly anticipated comedy film *Dhamaal* 4 made a profitable start at the domestic box office. Despite receiving highly mixed reviews from film critics upon its grand theatrical release, the multi-starrer comedy caper managed to overcome sluggish advance ticket sales to register a fair opening-day collection.

According to early trade estimates, the latest installment in the hit franchise collected a notable Rs 15.5 crore nett across the country. Box office analysts highlighted that the film's first-day performance closely mirrored the box office trajectory of Akshay Kumar's recent multi-starrer *Welcome to the Jungle*. Both commercial comedies suffered from weak pre-sales booking trends but ultimately recorded solid opening numbers. This success was heavily

driven by a massive surge in walk-in audiences and excellent theater occupancy across major mass entertainment centers.

The theatrical footprint of Dhamaal 4 expanded rapidly as the day progressed. Ticket sales started quietly during the morning shows but witnessed sharp growth in the evening, eventually peaking during late-night screenings in key territories like Delhi-NCR and Maharashtra. This building momentum suggests that family audiences are embracing the slapstick entertainer as a lighthearted stress-buster for the weekend. Experts project a very strong first weekend for the project, noting a solid jump in online ticket bookings the next morning.

Ananya Panday sports chic look at Wimbledon



Ananya Enjoys Wimbledon, Pitbull Concert in London

Bollywood actress Ananya Panday is making the most of her European vacation with a perfect mix of sports, fashion, and music. After attending Paris Haute Couture Week, she watched the Wimbledon men's singles semi-finals in London wearing a stylish red dress. She later headed to BST Hyde Park to enjoy Pitbull's live concert, where she sang along to his hit song Rain Over Me and shared the moments on Instagram. The refreshing holiday comes after a challenging phase in her film career, with her recent releases underperforming at the box office. Fans praised her cheerful spirit and vacation updates.

Bollywood actress Ananya Panday has been making the most of her European vacation, transitioning seamlessly from elite sporting events to high-energy music festivals. Fresh off her appearance at Paris Haute Couture Week, the actress was spotted in London enjoying a packed schedule that included the 2026 Wimbledon Men's Singles Semi-Finals and an energetic live concert by Cuban-American rapper Pitbull.

Panday shared a series of updates with her followers on Instagram, detailing her star-studded day out. For her afternoon at the All England Club, she opted for an effortlessly chic look, sporting a bright red poplin day dress. From her premium seats, she witnessed a thrilling day of tennis as defending champion Jannik Sinner clinical out-clashed seven-time champion Novak Djokovic, and Germany's Alexander Zverev ended the fairytale run of British wildcard Arthur Fery to set up a blockbuster final.

Directly following the action on Centre Court, the actress headed over

to BST Hyde Park to let her hair down at Pitbull's headline gig. Standing right in the fan pit, Panday posted a video capturing a massive sea of fans grooving along to the rapper's discography. In the clip, she can be seen singing along word-for-word to "Rain Over Me," Pitbull's iconic 2011 global chart-buster that features Puerto Rican-American singer Marc Anthony. She captioned the concert story simply: "@Pitbull @ the park."

The much-needed break comes at a time when Panday is looking to recalibrate her professional career back home. The actress has recently faced a tough string of box office disappointments, with her last two major releases, *Tu Meri Main Teri Main* and *Tu Meri Chand Mera Dill*, failing to create an impact. The latter, a romantic drama directed by Vivek Soni and co-starring Lakshya, explored the complexities of college lovers entering adulthood. Despite the heavy box office setbacks, Panday looked completely refreshed and high-spirited as she danced the night away in London.

Prithviraj shines in thriller **I, Nobody**



Director Nisam Basheer's highly anticipated crime drama 1, Nobody, starring Prithviraj Sukumaran, hit Telugu screens recently. Navigating the delicate balance between a slow-burn heist mystery and intense family drama, the movie presents an exceptionally creative premise but ultimately suffers from highly uneven narrative execution, earning a critical rating of 2.75 out of 5.

The story follows Rajeev, a quiet, ordinary government employee whose life takes a drastic turn when he is accidentally taken hostage during a massive Rs 17 crore bank robbery. Although the fleeing thieves die in a catastrophic getaway crash, the missing cash remains unrecovered. Soon, a media frenzy and deep police suspicions convince society that Rajeev was the true mastermind behind the heist, forcing him to fight a corrupted system to protect his family.

The core strengths of the thriller lie in its stellar lead performances and underlying social commentary. Prithviraj Sukumaran delivers an absolute masterclass in restraint, using subtle facial expressions to capture the immense dread of an ordinary man cornered by society.

Parvathy

Thiruvothu is equally brilliant as his resilient wife, Meera, providing a grounded emotional anchor. Furthermore, the film sharply critiques how rumor-mongering social media channels irresponsibly warp public perception for internet traffic.

However, the film stumbles significantly in its narrative pacing. The first half moves at an incredibly sluggish pace, bogged down by repetitive scenes that could have easily been trimmed. While the second half begins with high-octane physical momentum, it quickly loses steam due to a forced subplot involving the Chief Minister that feels wholly disconnected from the core plot.

Ultimately, *I, Nobody* is a decent one-time watch that relies heavily on its cast's stellar performances and an outstanding, atmospheric background score by Jake Bejoy. Sharp cinematography by Dinesh Purushothaman elevates the movie's grim mood, though a tighter script would have transformed this messy final act into a thoroughly satisfying cinematic experience.

Romantic drama
Hrudhayam Murali
WINS HEARTS

