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Babar Azam returns to ICC Test Top 10



K'TAKA CABINET CONUNDRUM ENDS!

DKS allocates portfolios to 23 ministers in his cabinet; keeps Finance, Law and other key depts; the 33-member cabinet now heads into the monsoon joint legislature session without a female minister.

BENGALURU

Dispelling the suspense, Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday allocated portfolios to the 23 ministers in his cabinet, alongside a minor rejig of portfolios previously assigned.

The allocation, which comes a day before the Monsoon Session of the Legislative Assembly is set to begin on August 13, takes effect immediately.

Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot issued the notification on Wednesday under Article 166(3) of the Constitution read with Rule 5 of the Karnataka Government (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1977.

The delay since the August 3 swearing-in, which took the strength of the Council of Ministers to 33, just one short of the sanctioned limit, had left the new ministers without clarity on their departments amid Shivakumar's meetings with the high command in New Delhi over a potential minor reshuffle, possibly to include a woman minister.

However, the allocation comes after Shivakumar decided against an immediate cabinet reshuffle following discussions with the Congress high command in Delhi.

After returning to Bengaluru on Monday, Shivakumar had said the government would consider a reshuffle, including the induction of a woman minister, after the monsoon session. The decision followed growing discontent among senior Congress MLAs, who were left out of the expanded cabinet.

The party had been weighing changes to accommodate some of the disgruntled leaders, but sources said dropping newly-inducted ministers could trigger another round of dissent.

Congress had taken nearly two months to expand the ministry after Shivakumar and the first batch of 13 ministers were sworn in on June 3. Subsequently, 19 ministers were inducted on August 3, adding to the pressure on the leadership to settle competing demands over portfolios.

The sanctioned strength of Karnataka's council of ministers is 34, including the CM.

After the expansion, the cabinet now has one vacant berth.

Shivakumar retains key portfolios

DK Shivakumar retained key portfolios, including finance, cabinet affairs, personnel and administrative reforms, intelligence, information, law and justice, parliamentary affairs and legislation, agriculture marketing, town and country planning, and urban local bodies under BDA and BMRDA. He will also hold all unallotted portfolios.

Among the major allocations, UT Khader has been given Minority Welfare, Haj and Wakf, and Health and Family Welfare.

Ramalinga Reddy has been moved from the Water Resources portfolio to Forests

High points

Two months after assuming charge as Chief Minister, Shivakumar expanded his Cabinet on August 3.

He inducted 19 ministers, bringing the total strength to 33.

One slot remains vacant, which is expected to be filled by a female leader.

The missing representation

Zero women's representation in the cabinet has sparked pushback from civic groups and political opponents, and pressure is mounting on the Karnataka CM to fill up one vacant berth with a woman.

while N Chaluvayyaswamy has been assigned the Water Resources portfolio.

B Nagendra, who has been accused in a case involving alleged misappropriation of Valmiki Scheduled Castes Development Corporation's funds scam, has been allotted the Planning and Statistics portfolio.

Madhu Bangarappa will continue as the Minister for School Education and Literacy. Basavaraj Rayareddi, who was reportedly eyeing the Finance portfolio, has been given Higher Education. Rayareddi had served as the Higher Education Minister during the first Siddaramaiah government.

BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan has been given charge of Housing, while KH Muniyappa has been moved from the



Chief Minister DK Shivakumar along with his deputy Dr G Parameshwara holds a key meeting with cabinet colleagues and senior leaders at his home office Krishna in Bengaluru on Wednesday. The strategic session took place following the allocation of portfolios to 19 newly-inducted ministers and ahead of the state legislature's monsoon session.

food and civil supplies to the Social Welfare Department, the portfolio he had been lobbying for.

Shivalinge Gowda has been given excise, which has been transferred out of the Finance Department.

Puttaranga Shetty will oversee Animal Husbandry and Sericulture Departments, while Vijayanand Kashappanavar has been assigned Small-scale Industries and Public Enterprises.

Santosh Lad will handle Labour and Employment. KS Basavanthappa has been given Muzrai, Fisheries, Ports and Inland Water, while SS Mallikarjun will oversee the Mines, Geology and Horticulture Departments.

Narendra Swamy will handle Agriculture, HC Balakrishna Municipal Administration and B Nagendra, the minister of Planning and Statistics.

The portfolio allocation comes amid a broader expansion in the Karnataka Cabinet. However, despite much talk about inducting a woman minister into the Cabinet, the latest portfolio allocation does not indicate the inclusion of any woman minister.

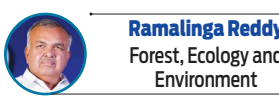
The Congress leadership is also facing demands for greater representation for women in the ministry. Laxmi Hebbalkar, Annapoorna E Thukaram and Kaneez Fathima were among the names considered for induction, but the issue has been deferred for now.

Karnataka cabinet list 2026



DK Shivakumar, Chief Minister

Finance; Cabinet Affairs; Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms; Intelligence; Information; Law, Justice and Human Rights; Parliamentary Affairs and Legislation; Agriculture Marketing; Commissionerate of Town & Country Planning; all Urban Local Bodies under BDA and BMRDA areas; all unallotted portfolios.



Ramalinga Reddy
Forest, Ecology and Environment



BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan
Housing



Lakshman Savadi
Cooperation, excluding Agriculture Marketing



KH Muniyappa
Social Welfare



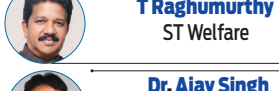
Rudrappa Manappa Lamani
Sugar and Textiles



Shivraj Tangadagi
Backward Classes Welfare; Kannada and Culture



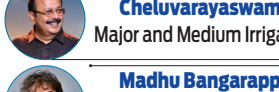
UT Khader
Minority Welfare; Haj & Wakf; Health and Family Welfare



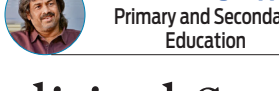
T Raghunurthy
ST Welfare



Dr. Ajay Singh
Minor Irrigation; Science and Technology



Cheluvayyaswamy
Major and Medium Irrigation



Madhu Bangarappa
Primary and Secondary Education



Basavaraj Raya Reddy
Higher Education



Shivalinge Gowda
Excise



Puttaranga Shetty
Animal Husbandry and Sericulture



Vijayananda Kashappanavar
Small Scale Industries; Public Enterprises



Santhosh Lad
Labour and Employment



KS Basavanthappa
Muzrai; Fisheries; Ports and Inland Water



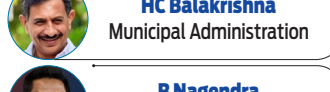
SS Mallikarjun
Mines and Geology; Horticulture



Rizwan Arshad
Food and Civil Supplies; Consumer Affairs



Narendra Swamy
Agriculture



HC Balakrishna
Municipal Administration



B Nagendra
Planning and Statistics

Cong MLA Ponnanna appointed as Political Secretary to CM



Bengaluru: Karnataka government on Wednesday appointed Congress MLA AS Ponnanna as Political Secretary to Chief Minister DK Shivakumar with a cabinet minister's status.

Interestingly, the AICC had earlier named him as the party's nominee for the post of

Deputy Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly.

"AS Ponnanna, Member of the Legislative Assembly from the Virajpet Assembly Constituency, is hereby appointed as the Political Secretary to the chief minister with immediate effect and until further orders, and is accord-

ed the status of a Cabinet Minister," an official notification said.

Ponnanna, who was a ministerial aspirant, had expressed displeasure over not being inducted into the cabinet, which, incidentally was expanded last week. An advocate, he had served as CM's

legal advisor during Siddaramaiah's tenure.

A letter from the Congress high command to CM Shivakumar on August 3, which included the list of ministers to be sworn in that day, had mentioned Ponnanna's name as the party's nominee for the Deputy Speaker's post.

SC to hear TN's Cauvery plea on Aug 17

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said pleas of the Tamil Nadu government and others, including the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), seeking directions to the Karnataka government to immediately release Cauvery river water to the state, will be taken up for hearing on August 17.

Senior advocate P Wilson, appearing for some farmers, mentioned a separate plea for urgent listing before a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana. "This was to come up tomorrow before Justice Vikram Nath (-led bench). But he is not well," the CJI said.

Earlier, the Tamil Nadu government had said the state was not getting its due share of Cauvery waters in a rain-deficient year. On August 10, the

K'taka bandh today

Kannada Okkuta led by veteran Kannada activist Vatal Nagaraj, with support from pro-Kannada and farmers' organisations, has called a statewide bandh from 6 am to 6 pm on Thursday. The protest is centred on the Cauvery water dispute and demands progress on irrigation projects, including Mekedatu, Mahadayi and Kalasa-Banduri.

apex court agreed to examine on August 13 a plea by the Tamil Nadu government, seeking directions to the Karnataka government for the immediate release of its share of Cauvery waters.

On August 3, Chief Minister Joseph Vijay-led Tamil Nadu

'Will decide future course after Aug 13'

Minister Ramalinga Reddy said the state would find it difficult to release 12,000 cu-secs of Cauvery water daily to Tamil Nadu as directed by the CWMA. He said the government would decide its future course of action based on the outcome of a Supreme Court hearing on Thursday, asserting that it would ensure that no injustice was done to the state.

government moved the Supreme Court, seeking directions to the Karnataka government for immediate release of their share of Cauvery waters.

As per sources, Tamil Nadu claimed that Karnataka had failed to release water to Tamil Nadu on a proportionate basis.

NEW DELHI

Observing that the state "cannot have the luxury of prolonging trials for years", the Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Karnataka government to provide infrastructure for an additional special court to exclusively deal with cases under the UA on a day-to-day basis.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana passed the directions while hearing a plea filed by Shahid Khan, an accused in a PFI conspiracy case in which the prosecution proposes to examine 707 witnesses, including a few protected witnesses.

"We direct the State of Kar-

nataka to immediately provide the requisite infrastructure, including the creation of one additional post in the Karnataka Higher Judicial Service, along with the requisite staff and other allied facilities as per the norms fixed by the High Court. The necessary sanctions shall be accorded within two weeks," the CJI said in the order.

Once the state sanctions the requisite infrastructure, staff and posts, the chief justice of the Karnataka High Court will spare a judicial officer to preside over the special court to deal exclusively with Unlawful Activities Act on a day-to-day basis, the court said.

"The present case

shall also be entrusted to the special court. The Presiding Officer shall first examine the three protected witnesses, followed by the other vital witnesses, to ensure that the material evidence for the prosecution is recorded within a maximum period of three months," the bench ordered.

After the examination of material witnesses, the petitioner shall be at liberty to apply afresh for release on bail, it said. "Such an application shall be considered on its own merits without being influenced by the observations made in the impugned order," it said.

The court also took note of the existing workload of the special court.

'STATE CAN'T HAVE LUXURY OF PROLONGING TRIAL'

Ensure infra for special UAPA court: SC to K'taka

SC directives & infra needs

Judicial post: Create one new post in the Karnataka Higher Judicial Service for an exclusive presiding officer.

Staff & facilities: Provide supporting staff and allied facilities matching High Court guidelines.

Sanction window: Give official approvals and funding within two weeks.

Caseload control: Reduce judge burdens, noting a single judge should manage 12 to 15 UAPA trials instead of 90

Trial guidelines

■ **Fast-track hearing:** Run day-to-day proceedings without stoppages for routine bail requests.

■ **Witness priority:** Examine key protected witnesses and vital persons within a strict three-month window.

Congress leaders mark Siddaramaiah's birthday with welfare activities in Mysuru

MYSURU

Congress leaders and supporters celebrated former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's birthday by organising various welfare activities for the poor and underprivileged in Mysuru on Wednesday.

At the Government School for Blind and Deaf Children in Tilak Nagar, the Shivanna Sneha Balaga, in association with BGS Apollo Hospital and Sanjeevini Dental Clinic, conducted a free health check-up and distributed medicines and food to the students. MLC Dr. Thimmaiah, Mysuru City Congress president R. Murthy, Congress leader Shivanna, Ravi Manchegowdanakoppalu, Asha, Ravi, Dairy Venkatesh and Suresh Gold were among



those present.

Meanwhile, Congress leaders led by former Mysuru Zilla Panchayat member and Guarantee Schemes Committee chairman K. Maruthi celebrated Siddaramaiah's birthday at K.R. Hospital by distributing biscuits and sweets to patients. Maruthi said Sid-

daramaiah had always championed the interests of the poor, backward communities, Dalits and farmers and worked for the overall development of Karnataka.

In another programme, the Dr. S. Yathindra Siddaramaiah Foundation celebrated Siddaramaiah's birthday by



cutting a cake and distributing sweets in front of the Srikantheshwara Temple in Nanjangud taluk. Foundation founder K.R. Ravikumar said prayers were offered for Siddaramaiah's continued strength and active participation in politics and for the Congress to return to power

in the next election.

Zoo Authority chairman Rangaswamy, Ravi, president of Kempri Siddanahundi Gram Panchayat, Biligere Gold Suresh, Beerayya, Guarantee Schemes Committee member Ravi and several Congress workers and supporters participated.

'A good friend is equal to a library': Prof. Chandrashekar

MYSURU

Just as temples are filled with devotees, libraries too should be filled with students, said Prof. M. Chandrashekar, senior professor, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Mysuru.

Speaking at a programme organised by the City Central Library to mark the birth anniversary of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, regarded as the Father of Library Science in India, as Librarians' Day. Prof. Chandrashekar who inaugurated the programme by offering floral tributes to the portrait of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, said a good book is equal to a hundred friends, while a good friend is equal to a library.

Speaking on the occasion, Amshi Prasannakumar, a senior journalist, explained the close and inseparable relationship between journalism and libraries and highlighted the importance of making effective use of library resources.

Rakhi Chennabasavanna advised students not to depend solely on artificial intelligence but to cultivate the habit of reading books. Reading makes a person complete, writing makes one precise

and speech prepares one for life," she said.

G. Anand, Assistant Professor at Sharada Vilas Degree College, said books have the power to transform individuals into cultured and responsible citizens.

Dr. B. Mallikarjunaswamy, Vice-Principal of Government Girls' High School, People's Park, and a member of the City Library Authority, who presided over the programme, said he had faced difficulties in life due to not having a close association with libraries and urged students to make continuous and meaningful use of library facilities.

Certificates and prizes were distributed to students who emerged winners in various competitions held as part of the programme.

Deputy Director of City Central Library Manjunath B., Deputy Director of District Central Library Suma B. Kodihalli, Chief Librarian Padmashree T., Assistant Librarian of People's Park Library Sowmya S., Librarian of City Central Library Syed Noorussabha Salar, Office Superintendent Latha H. and First Division Assistant Shobha L. were among those present.



Hebbal residents fume over vehicles blocking house gates

MYSURU

Residents of Second Cross Road near Surya Bakery in Hebbal are reportedly facing daily inconvenience as car owners allegedly park their vehicles in front of residential gates, blocking access to homes and creating frequent confrontations.

A.R. Satyanarayana Murthy, an advocate and resident of Hebbal, has brought the issue to public attention, stating that residents have been forced to tolerate the problem for a long time. According to him, vehicles are parked indiscriminately in front of house gates without considering the inconvenience caused to occupants trying to enter or leave their homes.

The situation, he said, becomes more serious when residents question the motorists. Instead of moving their vehicles, some car owners allegedly respond aggressively and engage in heated arguments.

In a recent incident, the owner of a car allegedly reacted angrily when ques-



tioned for blocking a residential gate. The motorist reportedly claimed that the road was government property and questioned the resident's authority to object to the parking.

Murthy has appealed to the jurisdiction traffic police to intervene and take appropriate action against motorists who block residential entrances and allegedly intimidate residents. He cautioned that repeated parking disputes could escalate into serious law-and-order issues if motorists resort to threats or physical confrontation.

Residents have urged the traffic authorities to regulate parking in the area and ensure that access to residential properties is not obstructed. They said public roads cannot be treated as an excuse to inconvenience homeowners.

"Youth have a crucial role in building a strong nation"

MYSURU

Youth have a very important role to play in building a better and stronger nation. Young people should remain aware and protect themselves from dangerous infections such as HIV/AIDS and come forward to build a healthy society, said District AIDS Control Officer Dr. Brinda.

She was speaking after inaugurating the International Youth Day programme held at Chamarajendra Government College of Visual Arts, Mysuru, today. The programme was jointly organised by the Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society, Bengaluru, the District Health and Family Welfare Department, Mysuru, the District AIDS Prevention and Control Unit, Mysuru, and Chamarajendra Government College of Visual Arts, Mysuru.

She said everyone should



join hands in building an AIDS-free India and ensure that information and awareness about HIV/AIDS reach all young men and women in society.

District Health Education Officer Muneendramma said it was a matter of concern that Karnataka ranks third in the country in terms of the number of people living with HIV. She stressed the need to create widespread awareness among students at the college level itself.

College In-charge Administrative Officer Jai Shankar, who presided over the pro-

gramme, said information should not be confined to oneself but should be shared with friends to create greater awareness. He said everyone should work towards making Karnataka an AIDS-free State and, at the same time, extend mental and social support to people living with HIV without discriminating against them.

District Supervisor of the District AIDS Control Unit Savitha, counsellors Rajani Shankar, Andani, Balaram and Pradeep, college secretary Sumanth and others were present.

5-day FDP on Universal Human Values held

MYSURU

The five-day Faculty Development Programme (FDP) on Universal Human Values (UHV-II) was inaugurated with the presence of distinguished dignitaries, resource persons, coordinators, faculty members and participants from various institutions across the Mysore. This FDP is Self-funded Programme and approved by NCCIP-AICTE.

The dignitaries present on the inauguration function included Umesh Namdev Jadhav, Member, NCCIP, AICTE as Resource Person; G. Jayaprakash, Regional Coordinator, NCCIP AICTE Southwest Region and Bhagyalakshmi V, Assistant Pro-

fessor, Dept. of ECE, MIT Thandavapura, Mysore as Co-Facilitators; and Sri R Srinivasan, Retired Assistant Commissioner Central Taxes as Observer.

Dr. Bhagyashree S R, Convener, Dean Research, ATMECE delivered the welcome address. She extended a warm welcome to all the dignitaries and participants and expressed her gratitude for their presence and support in making the FDP possible.

R Srinivasan, UHV Observer, delivered the introductory address on Universal Human Values. He highlighted the importance of understanding human values and explained their relevance to the objectives of



the UHV FDP. He emphasized the need for individuals to develop clarity about themselves, their relationships, and their responsibilities towards society and nature.

Dr. Basavaraj L, Principal,

ATMECE, Mysore, delivered the Presidential address. In his address, he emphasized that Universal Human Values plays an important role in helping individuals understand themselves, develop harmonious rela-

tionships, and recognize their interconnectedness with nature. He encouraged all the faculty members to actively participate in the FDP and make effective use of the learning and insights gained throughout the programme.

The programme commenced with the rendition of the Nadageethe, followed by an invocation presented by Ms. Manasa V and Ma. Sahana N. The inaugural session concluded with the Vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Jyothi D N, Associate Professor and Head, Dept. of Civil Engineering, The inaugural programme was formally compered by Ms. Tanya R., Assistant Professor Department of MCA.

'50 Years of bandhs, but what did Karnataka gain?'

MYSURU

Former MLC H. Vishwanath has urged people not to support the Karnataka bandh called by Kannada activist Vatal Nagaraj on August 13, terming it "unnecessary" and warning that repeated shutdowns only inflict losses on ordinary people and small businesses.

Speaking to reporters here on Wednesday, Vishwanath said Karnataka had witnessed bandhs for nearly five decades, but they had failed to produce any meaningful solution.

Over the last 50 years, how many bandhs have been held and what has been achieved? There have only been huge losses. The bandhs primarily hurt small traders, street vendors and ordinary workers, while large five-star hotels and major showrooms often escape the impact. Instead of shutting down the State, the governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu should sit across the table and resolve contentious issues through dialogue. The public must not to support the bandh even if attempts were made to enforce it forcibly.

'Siddaramaiah's interference must end'
Taking aim at former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Vishwanath alleged that his interference in the functioning of the govern-

ment had increased considerably.

"Siddaramaiah should immediately stop interfering and allow the new Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to function independently," he said, adding that Shivakumar should be given freedom to choose a Cabinet that would enable him to govern effectively.

Vishwanath also accused Siddaramaiah of displaying excessive "son affection" by backing his son, Yathindra Siddaramaiah.

He questioned the decision to appoint Yathindra as Mysuru district in-charge minister, arguing that he lacked the experience required to handle the responsibilities associated with a globally renowned city like Mysuru.

"Mysuru is a world-famous city and major personalities visit it. Handling such responsibilities requires experience," Vishwanath said.

Make Tanveer charge of Mysuru

On the Cauvery issue, Vishwanath praised Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar for the steps being taken and urged people to support him.

He also suggested that Congress MLA Tanveer Sait be inducted into the Cabinet and given charge of Mysuru district, saying his experience would benefit the city and the district.



BHEEMANA AMAVASYA WOMEN OFFER PRAYERS FOR MARITAL BLISS

MYSURU

The spirit of tradition and devotion filled Mysuru on Wednesday as women across the city observed Bheemana Amavasya, performing special rituals and offering prayers for the well-being, longevity and prosperity of their husbands and families.

From the early hours of the morning, homes and temples witnessed women preparing for the auspicious occasion with traditional decorations, oil lamps and special puja arrangements. The festival, observed during the Amavasya (new moon) in the month of Ashada, holds a special place in Karnataka's cultural and religious traditions.

Women dressed in colourful traditional attire performed the customary puja and sought divine blessings for the welfare of their families. The lighting of lamps formed a significant part of the celebrations, lending a festive glow to households.

In several homes, women prepared traditional offerings and decorated the puja space with flowers, turmeric, kum-



kum and other auspicious items. The rituals were accompanied by the chanting of prayers and devotional songs, creating a spiritually charged

atmosphere.

The festival is also associated with the traditional 'Bheemana Amavasya' ritual, in which women worship

symbolic representations of Bheema and his wife Draupadi or a pair of sacred objects representing the divine couple. The rituals are believed to strengthen marital bonds and bring happiness and prosperity to the family.

Temples in different parts of Mysuru also witnessed devotees offering prayers and participating in special pujas. The festival provided an opportunity for families to come together and preserve customs handed down through generations.

For many women, Bheemana Amavasya is not merely a religious observance but also a celebration of family values, affection and togetherness. Elder members of families guided younger women in performing the rituals, helping pass on the significance of the festival to the next generation.

The colourful festivities, traditional attire, fragrant flowers and glowing lamps added to the charm of Mysuru on Wednesday, showcasing the city's rich cultural heritage and deep-rooted traditions.

Mysuru Police warn of strict action against forceful bandh

MYSURU

Mysuru City Police have warned of stringent legal action against anyone indulging in unlawful activities in the city in the guise of protests during the Karnataka bandh on August 13, called by several organisations.

In a statement, the police said no form of protest has been permitted by the department in Mysuru city. The police have specifically warned protesters against forcibly shutting down shops, commercial establishments, schools, colleges or offices. They have also prohibited blocking roads or disrupting the movement of the public.

The burning of tyres or effigies has also been banned. Police said strict criminal action would be initiated against individuals involved in acts that disturb law and order or cause damage to public or government property.

Tricolour to Fly High Again Over Amrith Sarovars on Aug 15

MYSURU

As the entire nation gears up to celebrate the 80th Independence Day with patriotic fervour, the Mysuru Zilla Panchayat has made elaborate preparations to hoist the Tricolour at all 85 Amrith Sarovars developed under the V.B. G. Ram G. (MGNREGA) scheme and conduct special awareness programmes on water conservation.

The national flag will be unfurled by dignitaries at all 85 Amrith Sarovars developed under the scheme, followed by the rendition of the National Anthem. A Tiranga Yatra will also be organised with the participation of the people. Local residents and schoolchildren will present patriotic songs, skits and other cultural programmes. As a mark of the Independence Day celebrations and to promote environmental protection, saplings will also be planted at the sites.

The programmes are aimed at creating awareness about individual and community-based water conservation measures to tackle drought



conditions, besides encouraging rural people to avail themselves of individual livelihood-support facilities available under the V.B. G. Ram G. scheme.

People's representatives, schoolchildren, villagers, youth clubs, self-help group members, community organisations, officials and staff will join hands to make the programmes a success. The initiative is expected to give a meaningful and socially relevant dimension to this year's Independence Day celebrations.

As part of the celebrations, flag hoisting will be held at the bunds of all 85 Amrith Sarovars across the district — 16 in H.D. Kote, 16 in Hun-

sur, 15 in Mysuru, 5 in Nanjangud, 4 in Periyapatna, 6 in Saligrama, 8 in Saragur and 15 in T. Narasipur.

'Independence Day to Spotlight V.B. G. Ram G. Scheme and Rural Employment'

"The State Government is giving special emphasis this year to creating greater awareness about the V.B. G. Ram G. scheme and encouraging the generation of more employment opportunities locally. At the same time, Independence Day is being celebrated meaningfully by educating people about individual and community water conservation measures and their role in strengthening drought

management," said S. Yakesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Mysuru Zilla Panchayat.

Hubs of water and environmental awareness'

"At a time when the State is witnessing inadequate rainfall and declining groundwater levels, awareness on water and environmental conservation will be created at all 85 Amrith Sarovars in the district as part of making the 80th Independence Day truly meaningful. Those who served and sacrificed for the freedom of the country will also be remembered and honoured on the occasion," said Bheemappa K. Lali, Deputy Secretary (Development), Mysuru Zilla Panchayat.

Top cop leads devotional service atop Chamundi Hill

WINS BLESSINGS OF MYSUREANS

MYSURU

Setting an inspiring example of public service, the Mysuru City Police Commissioner Seema Latkar personally stood at the Sri Chamundeshwari Temple premises atop Chamundi Hill and served food to devotees.

It is said to be the first time in the history of the city police that a Police Commissioner has personally stood atop Chamundi Hill and rendered such devotional service.

Thousands of devotees who had arrived for darshan were served rice, sambar and prasada by the Commissioner himself. She stood in the queue like an ordinary devotee, without any VIP arrangements. Special priority was given to women, children and senior citizens.

The Commissioner's gesture of setting aside administrative duties and giving importance to serving the public has won heartfelt appreciation from the people



of Mysuru. Devotees praised the initiative, saying, "We need officers like this."

Police personnel also joined the Commissioner in distributing prasada during the programme held at the Chamundeshwari Temple premises. The arrangements were made in a disciplined manner to ensure that devotees faced no inconvenience. Through this gesture, the

Commissioner conveyed the message that "being a police officer is not only about maintaining law and order, but also about mingling with people and serving them."

The humanitarian initiative has also received widespread appreciation on social media, with people of Mysuru lauding the Commissioner for his service and gesture of devotion.

247.7 Tonnes of waste cleared from 7 GVPs in Mysuru

MYSURU

The Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) on Wednesday cleared a whopping 247.7 metric tonnes of waste and construction and demolition debris from seven Garbage Vulnerable Points (GVPs) across the city as part of its Independence Day Cleanliness Drive-2026.

The drive was organised under the MCC's "80 Waste-Free Sites" initiative to mark the 80th Independence Day. The civic body undertook intensive cleaning and transformation activities at identified garbage dumping hotspots in different zones.

The largest quantity of waste—around 220 metric tonnes of construction and demolition waste—was removed from Bhoothale Grounds in Zone 1. At Excel Plant Road in Zone 2, nearly 60 volunteers participated in the drive and cleared about 20 metric tonnes of waste.

In other areas, one metric tonne each was cleared from the GVP opposite Mandi Market in Zone 6 and Bani-mantap 4th Cross Park Point in Zone 7. At Raghavendranagar Road in Zone 9,



around 100 people participated and removed 1.5 metric tonnes of waste.

The GVP near St. Anne's School in N.R. Mohalla, Zone 8, yielded two metric tonnes of waste. At the Youth Hostel Point in Zone 4, two metric tonnes of construction and demolition debris and 0.2 metric tonnes of other waste were cleared.

MCC officials, including Deputy Commissioner (Development) Sindhu, Executive Engineers Srinivas and Srinivasamurthy, Zonal Assistant Commissioners Ramesh and Girish, engineers, environmental officials, health inspectors, supervisors and pourakarmikas took part in the operation.

Students from NIE Engineering College, Bharata Seva

Dal School and CAVA, along with Subbanna High School students and staff, local residents, traders and members of the public, also participated.

The Corporation said the collected waste had been transported to designated processing and disposal facilities. Beautification, painting and installation of awareness boards will be taken up at the cleaned sites, while regular monitoring will be carried out to prevent fresh dumping.

The MCC has appealed to citizens to segregate waste at source and hand it over only to authorised waste collection vehicles. It warned that strict action and penalties would be imposed against those found dumping waste or C&D debris illegally at the transformed sites.

I-D celebrations: Tiny patriots steal the show at Future Price School

MYSURU

The spirit of patriotism came alive at Future Pride School in Vijayanagar as around 100 tiny tots dressed up as legendary freedom fighters and national leaders as part of the Independence Day celebrations.

The colourful fancy-dress programme was organised by the Pranikhya Educational Charitable Trust's Future Pride School, in association with Jyothi Educational Institution, with the objective of introducing children to India's freedom struggle and instilling patriotism in them from a very young age.

Speaking on the occasion, Pranikhya Educational Charitable Trust's Future Pride School Chairman Manjunath S. Gowda said the programme was aimed at nurturing a sense of love for the nation among children during their formative years. "Children between two-and-a-half and five years of age are studying in our Pre-KG, LKG and UKG classes. Every year, as part of Independence



Day celebrations, we encourage them to dress up as freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the country. This helps children learn about patriotism in an interesting and memorable manner," he said.

He pointed out that fancy-dress competitions for children often feature popular fictional characters such as Spider-Man and other entertainment-oriented themes.

"We do not encourage such extravagance in our school. Instead, we use these occasions to introduce children to the heroes who fought for India's freedom," he said.

Personalities including Kirtur Rani Chennamma, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Onake Obavva, Jyotiba Phule, Narayana Guru, Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri were depicted by the

children. Their impressive costumes and innocent portrayals attracted the attention of parents and other spectators.

Future Pride School Secretary Pushpa Manjunath, staff members of Patanjali Yoga Institution, office-bearers of the Coorg Pombalick Kodava Sangha in Vijayanagar Fourth Stage, school staff and parents of the children were present.

Painting competition held to create groundwater conservation awareness

MYSURU

With the objective of creating awareness among schoolchildren about groundwater conservation, a district-level painting competition and prize distribution programme was held at the premises of Maharaja Government Pre-University College, under the slogan "Water Today, Tomorrow's Hope" and on the theme "Our Earth – Our Water – Our Strength."

The programme was jointly organised by the Mysuru District Groundwater Department, the Directorate of Groundwater and M.N. Ran-

garao & Sons Pvt. Ltd., Mysuru.

Earlier, taluk-level painting competitions had been organised for students of Classes 8, 9 and 10 from government, aided and private schools in all nine taluks of Mysuru district.

Certificates and prizes were distributed to 27 students who secured first, second and third places at the taluk level. A district-level painting competition was subsequently conducted for the 27 selected winners.

Certificates and prizes will be presented to the students securing first, second and

third places in the district-level competition at the Independence Day celebrations to be held on August 15.

Education Officer of the School Education Department Virup Wesley, Manager and HR of M.N. Rangarao & Sons Pvt. Ltd. Meenakshi Devi, Manager Subramanya P., Vice-Principal of Maharaja Pre-University College Dr. Mahesh D., Subject Inspectors Meenakumari Pati, Rajayya S. and Chandrashekar S., Senior Geologists of the District Groundwater Department Dhanalakshmi R. and Dr. Prasannakumar, among others, were present.

RTO OFFICIALS SEIZE THREE VEHICLES FOR NON-PAYMENT OF TAX

MYSURU

On the directions of Mysore Division Joint Transport Commissioner, Mrs. Shobha.M., Mr. Deepak.L., Regional Transport Officer, Mysore Sub-Division, conducted an operation and seized 03 vehicles plying without paying inter-state tax.

Ramachandra C.N, Assistant Regional Transport Officer, Anantharamu and Harshita.N, Motor Vehicle Inspectors. Manjunath B.N, Superintendent and Ravi M.R. First Class Assistant were present.



Power supply disruption in Mysuru today, tomorrow

MYSURU

Due to underground cable work being taken up in the Chamundipuram Sub-Division, power supply will be disrupted in several areas on August 13 and 14.

Areas affected on August 13:

Under Vidyananyapuram feeder, Vidyananyapuram 4th Main, 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th and 15th Cross, Andani Circle and surrounding areas will face disruption.

Under Ramanuja feeder, areas from 1st to 19th Cross of Ramanuja Road, 1st to 19th Cross of Basaveshwara Road, Hosabandikeri, Chamundipuram Circle, areas around St. Mary's School, Madhwachar Road and surrounding areas will be affected.

Areas affected on August 14:

Under Vidyananyapuram feeder, power supply will be disrupted in and around Chandravihara Kalyana Mantapa, NIE College, Bindu Bakery, Nataraja Kalyana Mantapa, Post Office Road and Ramakrishnaiah Main Road, Executive Engineer of the Narasimharaja Mohalla Division stated this in a release.



Plastic and paper national flags banned

MYSURU

The district administration will celebrate Independence Day on August 15, 2026, with the district in-charge minister hoisting the national flag at 9 a.m. at the Torch Parade Ground. Cultural programmes by schoolchildren will follow. A cultural programme will also be organised at Kalamandira at 6 p.m.

In order to uphold the dignity and honour of the national flag, the display, use and sale of plastic and paper flags have been strictly prohibited. The Deputy Commissioner has urged the public and students to use only cloth national flags.

Quick Read

Peenya police promptly rescue youth from suicide attempt

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Peenya Police demonstrated exceptional responsiveness by saving a 26-year-old man from suicide. Following an alert via the 112 emergency helpline regarding a severe emotional breakdown over a failed relationship, Hoysala-115 officers ASI Kemparajayya and AHC Thippeswamy reached the scene in just six minutes. The personnel provided vital counseling and emotional support, ensuring his safety. He was subsequently handed over to his friend for ongoing care. This swift, humane intervention highlights the efficiency of Bengaluru City Police and the 112 system in crisis management, reinforcing public trust.

Karnataka bandh gets mixed support; KSRTC, metro to operate

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The Karnataka bandh called for August 13 over the release of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu is receiving mixed support from Kannada organizations. Vatal Nagaraj-led groups, including the Dr. Rajkumar Fans Association, Kannada Sena and Kannada Jagruthi Vedike, are supporting the protest. However, the Narayana Gowda and Shivaramagowda factions of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike, private transport unions, farmers' organizations and most auto unions are not supporting the bandh. KSRTC, BMTC and metro services are expected to operate normally. Schools, colleges, hospitals, shops, hotels, government offices and industries are also expected to remain open. Some private-school and hotel associations have extended only moral support to the bandh.

K'taka bans sale, distribution of tobacco & nicotine products

Karnataka has banned tobacco and nicotine products, intensifying enforcement to protect public health.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka has prohibited the sale and distribution of products containing tobacco or nicotine across the State. The Department of Food Safety and Drug Administration issued a notification on August 10, imposing the prohibition for one year from the date of issuance. The department said stringent enforcement measures are being undertaken against products containing tobacco and/or nicotine. Food Safety Officers are conducting special inspections targeting the manufacture, storage, transportation, distribution and

"The department is undertaking stringent enforcement measures against products containing tobacco and/or nicotine."
— Srinivas K, Commissioner, Food Safety and Drug Administration

sale of gutkha, pan masala and other prohibited products. The action has been taken under Section 30(2)(a) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and Regulation 2.3.4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011. Commissioner Srinivas K said the notification was issued on August 10 under the provisions of the law.

Tobacco-Nicotine Ban: Key Points

Ban: Sale and distribution of tobacco/nicotine products

Effective: August 10, 2026

Duration: One year

Targeted products: Gutkha, pan masala and other prohibited products

Enforcement: Manufacture, storage, transport, distribution and sale

Prajwal Revanna found with phone inside Bengaluru prison

Surprise raid exposes alleged phone use by rape convict inside Bengaluru prison.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, serving a life sentence after a rape conviction, was allegedly found using a mobile phone inside Bengaluru prison, prompting action against jail officials. According to sources, Crime Branch officials found Revanna with a mobile phone during a surprise raid. A case has been registered and an investigation launched to determine how the device entered the prison. Jail authorities have suspended Assistant Superintendent Eeranna Rangapur for alleged dereliction of duty and security lapses. Jail Superintendent Ansuch Kumar has also been served a show-cause notice seeking an explanation. The incident has renewed concerns over alleged preferential treatment of high-profile prisoners. Revanna was sentenced to life imprisonment last year

Prajwal Revanna Phone Row: Key Facts

Prisoner: Prajwal Revanna

Status: Serving life imprisonment

Incident: Allegedly found using mobile phone

Action: Jail official suspended

Further action: Superintendent served show-cause notice

Probe: Crime Branch investigation underway



after being convicted in a rape and intimidation case. He was also convicted for circulating videos of the sexual assault. The latest development has also revived memories of actor Darshan's alleged prison

privileges in 2024, when photographs and videos showing him using a phone and socialising inside the prison surfaced. Several officials were subsequently suspended and Darshan was transferred to Ballari Central Prison.

Kharge ordered surprise raid after prison lapses

Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge said he ordered a surprise raid at Bengaluru's Parappana Agrahara Central Prison after noticing administrative lapses during his recent visit. Around 100 Central Crime Branch personnel conducted the operation with Chief Minister D K Shivakumar's approval, uncovering several violations, including prohibited items in inmates' cells. Kharge said officials suspected of facilitating the violations have been suspended and warned of strict legal action. He said similar surprise raids would be conducted across prisons in Karnataka. A technical audit of prison digital infrastructure, including mobile-phone jammers, has also been ordered amid reports that some were not functioning properly. The Minister ruled out VIP treatment for inmates.



Expedite Ejipura buffer road, flyover works: Maheshwar Rao

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao directed officials to expedite the Ejipura buffer road and flyover works and ensure timely completion. Maheshwar Rao issued the directions while reviewing the progress of various development works in the Bengaluru South City Corporation limits under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA). He directed officials to speed up the 5.45-km buffer road project from Lower Agaram Junction to Ejipura Road. The project includes a 2.45-km stretch from Lower Agaram Road to Ejipura Road and another three-km



stretch from Ejipura Road to Sarjapur Road. For the project near Ejipura, 5.34 acres of Defence Department land has been handed over. Around 90 per cent of the retaining wall work has been completed, while drainage and footpath works are progressing. The Commissioner directed officials to design the

road to facilitate rainwater percolation instead of allowing it to flow away. As the adjoining ST Bed Colony is a low-lying area, suitable stormwater drains must be constructed to ensure smooth flow and prevent flooding.

Ejipura road work

Reviewing the flyover work, Rao directed officials to deploy additional manpower and accelerate construction. He also instructed officials to widen the narrow footpath along the service road beneath the flyover after completion. A dedicated cycle track must be developed along with the footpath, with suit-

able measures to prevent two-wheelers from entering it. Officials were also asked to prepare an estimate for installing adequate lighting beneath the flyover.

Jayanagar white-topping

Rao also reviewed the 690-metre white-topping project from Nagarjuna to Cool Joint on 22nd Cross, Jayanagar. He directed officials to open the completed stretch to traffic after curing and immediately take up the remaining portion. He also ordered shops to provide dustbins and directed officials to warn and fine establishments encroaching on footpaths.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Kadugodi police acted swiftly to rescue a 16-year-old girl in distress after receiving an emergency call from her mother. At around 3.33 pm, the girl's mother contacted the 112 emergency response system, informing police that her daughter had consumed an excessive quantity of tablets and sustained an injury to her left hand. The information was immediately relayed to ASI Shivraj P. and APC Anil Kumar, who were on duty in Hoysala-232 of Kadugodi Police Station. The personnel reached the location within minutes and assessed the girl's condition. During their interaction, police learnt that the girl

Infrastructure, scientific waste management to get priority: Yatindra Siddaramaiah

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Urban Development Minister Dr Yatindra Siddaramaiah has directed officials to prioritise urban infrastructure, civic services and scientific waste management across municipal corporations. A State-level committee meeting on the Mahatma Gandhi Urban Development Scheme (Phase-II) was held in Bengaluru under the Minister's chairmanship. The meeting reviewed infrastructure and development works being undertaken across municipal corporation limits and took several key decisions. Officials were directed to develop dedicated mobile applications or software to provide citizens easy access to municipal



corporation details, public services and essential information. All municipal corporations were asked to establish waste processing units with capacities higher than the quantity of waste generated in their jurisdictions. Authorities were also directed to procure segregation machines to facilitate scientific processing of waste at source. An action plan worth ₹185 crore for various infrastructure development works in Hassan Municipal Corporation was approved. For Tumakuru Municipal Corporation, an action plan worth ₹6 crore was approved for alternative works, including construction of overhead water tanks at B.M. Pallya and Shettihalli.

CONTROL ROOM

Mobile/WhatsApp: 9480685705

Landline: 080-22975936 / 080-23636671

The Corporation urged citizens to make use of the weekly programme and digital complaint mechanism to report civic issues and help improve service delivery across North Bengaluru.

the Sahaaya 2.0 portal and immediately forwarded to the concerned departmental officers for necessary action. The Corporation said citizens will receive SMS updates containing details of their registered complaints and information about the officers assigned to address them. The initiative is aimed at strengthening direct communication between citizens and civic authorities and ensuring quicker resolution of local problems. Residents who are unable to participate in the Phone-In Programme can also submit their grievances through the Sahaaya 2.0 mobile application.

Deadline extended to August 22 for clearing vacant sites

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has extended the deadline for owners of vacant sites to clear debris and overgrown vegetation from August 15 to August 22, following requests for additional time. The extension comes as part of the "Freedom from Waste" campaign, being implemented by the GBA in coordination with the BDA, BESCOM, KRIDE, BMRL and KIADB to improve public spaces and make Bengaluru cleaner and safer. As part of the campaign, 100 trucks and 25 excavators have been deployed across the city to remove illegally dumped debris, weeds and other waste from public spaces. More than 30,000 tonnes of debris and overgrown vegetation have been cleared so far. The GBA said sustained improvement also requires property owners to take responsibility for maintaining their vacant sites. Owners have been urged to remove accumulated debris and weeds at the earliest.

Kadugodi police rescue minor girl in distress

was reportedly undergoing severe emotional distress following disturbing videos allegedly being sent to her by her maternal uncle through phone calls and messages. Recognising the seriousness of the situation, the police immediately arranged for her safe transportation to a hospital through a 108 ambulance. She was provided medical treatment at the hospital. The prompt intervention by the police and emergency medical personnel helped ensure that the minor received timely medical attention. The incident highlights the importance of quick communication and coordinated emergency response in protecting lives during critical

situations. The timely call made by the girl's mother enabled the 112 response team and Kadugodi police personnel to reach the location without delay. Police officials said the operation demonstrated the importance of the 112 emergency response system and the role of first responders in handling sensitive emergencies. The coordinated response involving the girl's family, Bengaluru City Police and emergency medical services ensured that she was moved to medical care promptly. The incident also underlines the importance of seeking immediate assistance when a person, particularly a minor, is in an acute emotional or physical crisis.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY

Worker safety priority as Tunnel Road underpass expedited

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru Central City Corporation Commissioner Jagadeesh G. directed officials to expedite the Wind Tunnel Junction underpass work while ensuring strict worker safety standards. The Commissioner inspected the ongoing underpass construction at Wind Tunnel Junction near the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre on Old Airport Road. He directed officials and the contractor to deploy additional workers and complete the project within the stipulated timeline. He stressed that safety measures must be strictly followed during concreting and earthwork. Proper barricad-



ing, safety signboards and essential protective equipment for workers must be provided before construction activities begin. Temporary alternative

roads have been arranged on both sides of the junction using available spaces belonging to the Defence Department, ISRO, NAL and private

Safety measures made mandatory

The Commissioner directed officials and the contractor to ensure proper barricading, safety signboards and protective equipment at the site. All precautionary measures must be implemented before concreting and earthwork begin. Temporary alternative roads will facilitate traffic movement during construction. Officials have also been asked to prevent congestion, minimise inconvenience to motorists and closely monitor construction quality while ensuring timely completion of the underpass.

properties. Officials were instructed to ensure construction does not inconvenience motorists or lead to traffic congestion. Jagadeesh also

directed officials to continuously monitor every stage of the project and ensure that the work meets prescribed quality standards and technical specifications.

KEY DIRECTIONS

Location	Wind Tunnel Junction, Old Airport Road
Project	Underpass construction
Priority	Worker and public safety
Speed up	Deploy additional workers
Traffic	Alternative roads arranged
Quality	Continuous monitoring mandated

7,694 tonnes of C&D waste cleared in North Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru North City Corporation has disposed of 7,694 metric tonnes of construction and demolition (C&D) waste between August 1 and 11 under the "Freedom from Waste" campaign. The campaign is being implemented under the directions of Greater Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda and the guidance of Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar. The highest quantity of waste was cleared on August 5, when 1,230 metric tonnes were disposed of, followed by 1,146 tonnes on August 6 and

953 tonnes on August 4. On August 1, 228 tonnes were disposed of, followed by 42 tonnes on August 2 and 242 tonnes on August 3. The Corporation cleared 938 tonnes on August 7, 906 tonnes on August 8, 567 tonnes on August 9, 706 tonnes on August 10 and 736 tonnes on August 11. Centre-wise, Marenahalli recorded the highest disposal at 6,551 metric tonnes, followed by Yarappannahalli with 1,075 tonnes. Venkatapura accounted for 22 tonnes, while Vitasandra recorded 46 tonnes. The Corporation said the drive would be intensified to ensure Bengaluru North becomes free from C&D waste.

Quick Read

Workshop encourages farmers to adopt beekeeping

CHIKKABALLAPURA
The Horticulture Department held a one-day workshop on beekeeping and detecting heavy metals in vegetables and fruits on Wednesday. Senior Assistant Director N. Ramesh inaugurated the programme at the Agriculture Department Training Hall. He explained government facilities for beekeeping and highlighted honey production as an additional income source for farmers. Expert Santosh explained scientific beekeeping methods, bee colony management, box maintenance, conservation and honey production. Officials also created awareness about identifying heavy metals in farm produce. Assistant Director Nitin DV., horticulture officers Lakshmi- pathi, Hemavati and Sophia Sultan, department staff and several farmers attended the programme.

Religious leader Ibrahimsaba Doddamulla passes away

DHARWAD
Ibrahimsaba alias Basha- saba Usmansaba Doddamulla, 76, a respected Islamic religious leader of Jamia Masjid in Amminabavi, died on Wednesday. He had served Amminabavi and nearby villages for many years. His religious service and community guidance earned him widespread respect. Abhinava Shantaliga Shivacharya Swamiji of Amminabavi Sansthan Panchagriha Hiremath visited his residence and offered condolences. Doddamulla had also served as vice president of Amminabavi Gram Panchayat. He is survived by his wife, eight sons, two daughters and grandchildren. MLA Vinay Kulkarni expressed sorrow over his death.

Mandya Employment Office to hold direct interview

MANDYA
The Mandya District Employment Exchange Office, with M.P. Guarding Solution Pvt. Ltd. and HDFC Life Insurance, will conduct a direct interview on August 14 at 10 a.m. at its Mandya office. Vacancies are available for Electricians and Business Development Managers. Candidates aged 18 to 40 who have completed SSLC, PUC, ITI in Fitter, Welder or Electrician trades, Diploma, or any degree can apply. Selected candidates may work in Mandya and Bidadi. Applicants should bring their resume or bi- odata. For details, contact 9164642684, 9113500761, 9113875775 or 9741939716 before attending the interview.

Deputy Commissioner reviews waste management progress in Mandya

Officials explained waste collection, segregation of recyclables, treatment processes, and scientific disposal of the remaining non-recyclable waste safely

MANDYA

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar inspected several solid waste management facilities in Maddur and Mandya on Wednesday, reviewing waste collection, treatment, recycling and disposal under the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 and Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban)-2.0. At Hutagere and Shivapura in Maddur taluk, Kumar examined traditional waste disposal work and the functioning of solid waste management units. Officials explained the treatment of collected waste, separation of recyclable materials and scientific disposal of the remaining waste. He directed officials to ensure waste segregation at source, proper collection, recycling and safe disposal while maintaining environmental and public health standards. At Kalenahalli village, Kumar inspected waste collection and processing activities. He ordered officials to complete biomining and bioremediation of remaining



DEPUTY COMMISSIONER INSPECTS GIRLS' HOSTEL IN MADDUR

The Deputy Commissioner made a surprise visit to the BCM Girls' Hostel in Maddur and inspected facilities provided to students. He checked food quality, drinking water, cleanliness, toilets, bathrooms, sanitary pads, healthcare, accommodation, electricity, safety, library and reading facilities. He also spoke with students about their problems and needs. Officials were instructed to provide nutritious food, maintain hygiene, ensure enough sanitary pads and create a better study environment. The Deputy Commissioner had lunch with students and checked the food quality directly. He also ordered regular monitoring, with special attention to student safety, health and education.

waste within the stipulated period and dispose of treated material scientifically. Waste left after processing should be placed in sanitary landfills, while leachate and groundwater quality must be

monitored regularly. He also directed separate collection of wet and dry waste during door-to-door services and checks on borewell water, fruits, vegetables and grass grown at the facility.During

Solid waste management review

Four waste facilities inspected across Mandya district

Source segregation of wet, dry waste mandated

Scientific processing and recycling given priority

Biomining and sanitary landfill disposal ordered

a surprise visit to the 3R waste management unit at Kuvempunagar, Mandya, he reviewed work based on reducing, reusing and recycling waste. He instructed officials to reduce waste generation, promote reuse and properly process recyclable materials. He also called for effective implementation of the rules and measures to control stray dogs, including sterilisation and anti-rabies vaccination. Officials were told to submit progress details through the district Swachhtam portal and work towards making Mandya cleaner, safer and environmentally sustainable.

BJP leaders oppose Nagendra's return to Karnataka cabinet

BIDAR

BJP state secretary and Bidar South MLA Dr. Shailendra Beldale and district president Somnath Patil have criticised the Congress government over B. Nagendra's return to the Karnataka cabinet.

They alleged that his re-induction, despite his earlier resignation linked to the Maharshi Valmiki Development Corporation case, showed the government was not serious about corruption allegations.

In a joint statement, the BJP leaders said Nagendra had resigned from the previous Siddaramaiah cabinet after the alleged Rs. 187 crore irregularities in the corporation came to light. They recalled that the BJP had protested and demanded his removal at the time. They said the investigation into the case was still continuing and questioned the decision to bring him back as a minister.

The leaders also raised questions about the transparency of the government and asked why a person facing allegations in the case had been given another cabinet position. They alleged that

Leaders questioned government transparency, asking why an accused received another cabinet post, while alleging misuse of tribal welfare funds and ED scrutiny of related transactions

funds meant for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes were misused and claimed that the Enforcement Directorate investigation had also examined transactions connected to the case.

The BJP leaders demanded that Nagendra resign immediately or be removed from the cabinet. They warned that if the government did not act, the BJP would join hands with its JD(S) ally to raise the issue inside and outside the legislature. They also announced plans for protests, including demonstrations in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office. The leaders said their campaign would continue until their demand was addressed, making Nagendra's cabinet return a fresh political flashpoint in Karnataka.

Officials prepare Gram Panchayats for job fair

CH NEWS, RONA

Rona and Gajendragad taluks are preparing to hold a Job Card Fair and special awareness campaign from August 15 to help rural families obtain local employment.

The programme will be conducted at Gram Panchayat level, with officials making arrangements to ensure eligible families can access employment opportunities and participate in rural development activities.

Speaking at a meeting at the Taluk Panchayat Sabha Bhavan, Executive Officer Chandrashekar B. Kandakura said preparations had been completed in Gram Panchayats under both taluks. He said the campaign would focus on creating more employment days while ensuring that rural families receive the benefits of the scheme without difficulty. Officials will verify exist-

ing job cards, issue new cards to eligible applicants, renew cards and complete e-KYC procedures.

Job demands will also be accepted according to the rules, and applicants will receive acknowledgements for their requests.

People have been asked to approach their Gram Panchayat with the required documents to use the services.

The administration will conduct house-to-house visits, village meetings and publicity campaigns using posters and banners to explain the Job Card Fair.

Officials and staff have also been instructed to work together, maintain attendance and progress records digitally, and keep related documents updated.

Kandakura said the main aim is to bring employment opportunities closer to eligible families and encourage their participation in local development works.

DC orders tough measures to improve road safety

KALABURAGI

District Collector Ikram Sharif has directed officials to take strict measures to reduce road accidents and improve traffic safety across Kalaburagi district.

Speaking at the District Road Safety Committee meeting, he said road safety must receive top priority and warned that negligence in implementing safety measures would invite legal action against responsible officials and contractors.

The Collector ordered strict checks on overloaded trucks carrying material from mines and quarries in Chittapur, Sedam, Wadi and Jewargi areas. CCTV cameras must be installed at mine and quarry entry and exit points within 15 days, with live links provided to transport and police officials. Violating vehicles should be seized and FIRs registered, while serious violations could lead to quarry

Major highlights of meeting

■ CCTV installation at quarries mandated within 15 days

■ Overloaded vehicles face seizure and FIRs

■ Speed checks intensified across highways and roads

■ Truck terminals proposed in three key locations

■ Road safety audit ordered within 30 days

■ Accident black spots targeted for immediate correction

licence cancellation.

Officials were also told to effectively use speed detection guns and CCTV cameras on highways. Transport and police departments should jointly check speed governors on buses, lorries and cement factory vehicles. The Public Works Department and Na-

tional Highways Authority of India were asked to identify locations for truck terminals in Sedam, Chittapur and Sirsagi to reduce roadside parking.

The Collector also ordered installation of digital weighbridges and strict enforcement of the ban on heavy vehicles entering city limits between 7 am and 10 pm.

He directed officials to seek central approval to bring the Humnabad Cross-Afzalpur Cross road under National Highway authority jurisdiction.

A district-wide road safety audit must be completed within 30 days, with accident black spots identified and corrected. Unsafe speed bumps should be removed, while reflectors and warning signs must be installed. Sharif said the administration's main goal was saving lives and warned that deliberate delays or poor roadwork could result in FIRs and legal action.

Karnataka group rejects Cauvery bandh as unscientific

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

The Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (Praveen Shetty) faction has said it will not support the Karnataka bandh called over the Cauvery water sharing issue.

Abhishek Balaji, Kalyana Karnataka president of the organisation, said the sudden bandh would trouble ordinary people and lacks a clear basis.

He said the Cauvery issue is important, but stopping normal life across the state is not a practical solution. He urged senior activist Vatal Nagaraj to use his experience and influence to seek a logical end to the dispute. Balaji said Karnataka has every right to protect its water interests, but protests should not create hardship for citizens.He also urged Nagaraj to raise other major public issues, including corruption and the closure of government schools.

Bhima Amavasya draws devotees to Mahadeshwara Betta

CH NEWS, CHAMARAJANAGAR

Devotees gathered at Sri Male Mahadeshwara Betta in Hanur taluk for Bhima Amavasya, with elaborate temple decorations and special arrangements.

Secretary G. Puroshottam of the Area Development Authority oversaw preparations to ensure devotees received basic facilities and smooth access.

A devotee from Hosur, Tamil Nadu, Rose Ramesh, decorated the temple with one

lorry of flowers costing Rs. 15 lakh. About 20 varieties, including lilies, orchids, carnations, gerberas, daisies and roses, adorned the sanctum, gopuram, temple grounds, Rudraksha Mantapa, Basava vehicle and chariot procession. Special pujas including Gandhabhishhek, Bilvachane and Kumkumarchane followed the traditional rituals.

Thousands of devotees arrived from across the state, stood in queues, offered prayers, lit lamps and performed mudi seva. Tight po-

lice security was arranged under District Superintendent of Police M. Muthuraj.

The authority provided clean drinking water, toilets, special Dasoh services and additional buses, helping pilgrims move comfortably. Authority staff, including Mahadevaswamy, Rajashekar and Umesh, worked to assist visitors.

Devotees praised the arrangements and administration for maintaining order and convenience during the festival year.

Officials urge students to embrace reading

CH NEWS, UDUPI

Field Education Officer Dr. Ellamma said reading books is a powerful way to gain knowledge and improve language skills and general awareness. She urged people, especially students, to develop a regular reading habit. She said libraries provide valuable opportunities for learning, reflection and personal growth at every stage of life, and career preparation for students.

KSRTC LAUNCHES WEEKEND JOG FALLS PACKAGE TOURS

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

KSRTC has introduced a new package tour service to Jog Falls from Bengaluru, Davanagere, Challakere, Chitradurga, Holalkere, Hassan, Shivamogga and Tumakuru packages offer different routes and fares ranging from Rs. 450 to Rs. 1,000, according to the schedule.

The tours are designed to make travel easier while allowing visitors to explore scenic and cultural attractions. Passengers can book advance tickets through the official KSRTC websites and obtain further information through the KSRTC booking service or helpline 080-26252625.

The Bengaluru package uses a non-AC sleeper and includes Varadahalli, Varadammoola, Ikkeri, Keladi, Sagara and Jog Falls, with accommodation, at Rs. 3,300. Davana-

gere, Challakere, Chitradurga, Holalkere,

Hassan, Shivamogga and Tumakuru packages offer different routes and fares ranging from Rs. 450 to Rs. 1,000, according to the schedule.

The tours are designed to make travel easier while allowing visitors to explore scenic and cultural attractions. Passengers can book advance tickets through the official KSRTC websites and obtain further information through the KSRTC booking service or helpline 080-26252625. The package aims to make monsoon travel easier, comfortable and memorable for families, tourists and devotees

Khashempur consoles families of six accident victims

CH NEWS, BIDAR

Former minister and JD(S) leader Bandeppa Khashempur visited Rajgera village in Bidar South constituency on Wednesday and paid his respects to six workers who died in a road accident near Zaheerabad, Telangana.

The workers were returning home after working in the neighbouring state.Khashempur visited the bereaved families, offered prayers for the departed souls, provided personal assistance and consoled relatives. He also expressed concern for six others injured in the accident and prayed for their speedy recovery. He said the tragedy was deeply painful because all six deceased workers belonged to the same village.He recalled a similar 2022 accident near Bemalkhedra, where six labourers from Udamanalli village died. Khashempur said he had then urged the government to prevent such incidents and expand employment opportunities locally.

HISTORIC LAKE THREATENED

Bheeshma Lake faces pollution crisis amid neglect

CH NEWS,Malingaraya Pujar

Bheeshma Lake, a historic landmark and important water source in Gadag-Betageri, is facing severe pollution, raising concern among residents and environmentalists.

Sewage entering the lake has reportedly caused a foul smell and large numbers of fish to die. Residents fear continued contamination could affect the area's groundwater.

The lake attracts visitors who come to see the 116-foot statue of Jagadguru Basaveshwara and enjoy boating. It is also used by residents for



morning and evening walks. However, the worsening stench has made the area unpleasant, while people are worried that polluted air and water could create health problems.

The recent death of thousands of fish has increased

"The historic Bheeshma Lake should be made pollution-free immediately. A scientific purification unit or an alternative canal should be arranged so that sewage water does not permanently enter the lake. Strict action should be taken against the officials who have violated the Lokayukta's order. Otherwise, in the coming days, the Gadag-Betageri Citizens' Forum and the public will jointly organize a violent protest in front of the Municipal Council office"

- Santosh Akki, Yuva Morcha Gadag District President

public concern. Residents suspect that sewage and other pollutants have reduced oxy-

gen levels in the water. They have demanded that the pollution control authorities and municipal officials collect water samples and conduct scientific tests to identify the exact cause of the fish deaths.

The issue has also raised questions about official action. Deputy Lokayukta Justice K.N. Phanindra reportedly inspected the lake following a public complaint and directed officials to stop sewage from entering it. Residents allege that while the flow was temporarily stopped, no permanent alternative arrangement was made, allowing sewage to accumulate

near the lake and eventually enter the water.

The pollution has created another serious concern because wells and borewells around the lake depend on groundwater recharge. Several private tankers reportedly draw water from nearby sources for supply across the twin cities. Residents fear contamination could eventually affect drinking water and public health. They have urged authorities to act immediately, test the water, stop sewage inflow permanently and protect the lake before the damage becomes irreversible.



P. SUNIL KUMAR, EDITOR
CH NEWS, BENGALURU

KARNATAKA'S CABINET DELAY: A POLITICAL RECORD BEST AVOIDED

The prolonged delay in completing Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's Cabinet has emerged as one of the most unusual instances of delayed cabinet expansion in Karnataka's post Independent political history. D.K. Shivakumar became Chief Minister on 3 June 2026, along with 13 other ministers. His first major expansion took place on 3 August 2026, when 19 additional ministers were inducted. That means the first major expansion came about 61 days after he assumed office.

The delay naturally raises questions about political management within the ruling Congress. Cabinet formation is not merely about distributing positions. Ministers are entrusted with departments that directly influence administration, policy implementation and delivery of government programme. Leaving a substantial number of positions vacant for two months inevitably creates an impression of political uncertainty. Karnataka has certainly witnessed difficult cabinet formations before. Coalition governments, leadership changes and competing political interests have frequently complicated the distribution of portfolios. In 2019, B.S. Yediyurappa famously headed what was effectively a one man government for 25 days before expanding his ministry. Earlier governments, including the Dharam Singh administration, also experience lengthy gaps between subsequent expansions. Those circumstances, however, were not identical to a newly constituted government beginning with a substantially incomplete ministry.

Therefore, it would be premature to declare the Shivakumar government's 61-day wait conclusively the longest cabinet-expansion delay since Independence without exhaustive historical verification. Nevertheless, available comparisons indicate that it is certainly among the longest and perhaps the longest in Karnataka's modern political history.

The larger issue, however, is not the record, Karnataka needs a government whose attention is directed towards governance rather than prolonged negotiations over ministerial positions. The Cabinet is finally taking shape. The challenge before the government now is to ensure that the time lost in political negotiations is recovered through decisive governance.



JESHA S., SENIOR EDITOR
CH NEWS, BENGALURU

COCKROACH JANTA PARTY: WHEN A GOOD CAUSE TURNS INTO A BAD OPTICS BATTLE

In the last few weeks, what started as a Gen Z-led street protest has snowballed into memes, slogans, trolling and a political flashpoint being called the "Cockroach Janta Party". The name itself is meant to mock. But behind the mockery lies a bigger story of young people demanding accountability and a system that is struggling to respond without dismissing them.

The good cause, Gen Z took to the streets for reasons that are hard to argue with. Corruption and misuse of public funds, viral videos of lavish government spending while basic services crumble sparked anger. Unemployment and paper leaks: For a generation entering the job market, delayed results and leaked exams feel like a betrayal. The lack of dialogue, many young protesters said they were not against the government, but against being ignored. Social media became their parliament. The intent was not chaos. It was visibility. And for a few days, it worked. The protest forced conversations in newsrooms classrooms and even Parliament about issues that were being brushed aside.

How it turned, the bad optics, but every movement risks being hijacked by both opponents and its own extremes. What began as issue-based dissent is now being reduced to, trolling and name-calling, "Cockroach Janta Party" is being used to dehumanise protesters. Once you give a movement a derogatory label, it becomes easier to ignore its demands. Vandalism and misinformation, few clips of property damage and fake news are now being used to define the entire protest. Political weaponization opposition parties are trying to own it, ruling party supporters are trying to malign it. The original Gen Z voice is getting lost in the noise. The danger is clear when criticism turns into caricature, the public stops listening to the message and only sees the messenger.

The way forward, the solution, a protest named as an insult cannot be the end of the conversation. If we want to move from slogans to solutions, 3 things need to happen. Institutional listening, not lecturing, create structured youth consultation forums at state and central level. Not photo-ops, but quarterly public hearings where students, job seekers, and young professionals can present data-driven grievances. Separate the cause from the chaos, law enforcement must deal with vandalism and misinformation firmly, but without criminalising dissent. Labelling an entire generation as "anti-national" or "cockroaches" will only push more people to the streets. Deliver tangible outcomes, the fastest way to end a protest is to address its core. Fast-track recruitment, transparent exam systems, and a public dashboard for government spending would do more than any press conference.

Gen Z is not protesting because they hate the country. They are protesting because they care enough to show up. Mocking them as the "Cockroach Janta Party" might win a news cycle, but it will lose a generation. The government, the media, and the public all have a choice, reduce this to memes, or turn it into reform. The cockroach survives everything. The question is will our democracy?

AUGUST 12: WHEN THE UNIVERSE PUTS ON A SHOW, ALL IN ONE DAY



PRADIVYA NAMBIAR

There are some dates that make you want to look up, August 12, 2026, is one of them. Across the world, the Moon will sweep across the face of the Sun in a total solar eclipse. India will miss that spectacle, as the eclipse will occur beyond our horizon. But the Indian sky has its own story to tell. As darkness falls on August 12, the Perseid meteor shower will be approaching its annual peak. And as the night gives way to morning, several planets will gather across the sky.

One day. Multiple celestial events. And a reminder that the universe never really stops putting on a show. The eclipse we won't see.

A total solar eclipse is among nature's most dramatic spectacles. For observers within the path of totality, the Moon will completely cover the Sun, briefly turning day into darkness. The solar corona will emerge around the silhouette of the Moon, creating a sight that lasts only minutes but can remain unforgettable for a lifetime. The August 12 eclipse will be visible from parts of the Arctic, Greenland, Iceland and Europe, among other regions. India, however, is outside the eclipse's visibility zone. There will be no darkened afternoon here. No crescent Sun. No sudden mid-day twilight. The eclipse will be happening elsewhere while India is already preparing for night. And that is when our own celestial show begins.

The Perseids arrive, every August, Earth passes through the dusty trail left behind by Comet 109P/Swift-Tuttle. Tiny particles from that ancient trail enter Earth's atmosphere at tremendous

speeds, heating the surrounding air and creating the brilliant streaks we call meteors. Together, they form the Perseid meteor shower one of the year's most anticipated meteor displays. This year, the timing offers an added advantage. The Perseids reach their peak around August 12-13, close to the New Moon. With little moonlight brightening the sky, darker conditions can make it easier to see the shower's fainter meteors. There is no countdown. No fixed schedule. One moment, the sky may be completely still. Then a bright streak can suddenly race across it and disappear almost instantly. You may wait minutes for the next one. Or several may arrive close together. That unpredictability is part of the magic. The best time to watch.

The Perseids can appear throughout the night, but the hours after midnight and before dawn are generally the best time to watch. Find the darkest, safest location available. Get away from streetlights and bright buildings if you can. A quiet rooftop, open terrace or rural location can all work, provided it is safe and offers a wide view of the sky. You do not need a telescope. For meteors, your eyes are often the best instrument.

Put the phone away. Let your eyes adjust to the darkness. Lie back and look across as much of the sky as possible. Then wait. The sky does not need your attention. It simply needs you to notice it. Before sunrise, look for the planets. And if you are still awake, the sky has another surprise. In the morning hours, six planets — Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune — will appear across the broad region of sky along the ecliptic, the apparent path followed by the Sun and planets. It may be

described as a "six-planet alignment," but the planets are not literally arranged in a straight line through space.

From Earth, however, they can appear to gather across the same stretch of sky. Not all six will be equally easy to see. Mars and Saturn should be among the more accessible planets. Mercury and Jupiter will be closer to the horizon and may be more difficult to spot as dawn approaches. Uranus and Neptune are much fainter and are better suited to binoculars or a telescope. And perhaps you will not see all six. That is perfectly fine. Seeing even a few of them together is a reminder of the extraordinary scale of our solar system. Worlds separated by hundreds of millions — and sometimes billions — of kilometres can appear, from our tiny vantage point on Earth, to share the same patch of sky.

One day. An entire universe.

That is what makes August 12 so compelling.

The eclipse will belong to those watching from its path. The Perseids will belong to everyone willing to step outside after midnight. And before sunrise, the planets will quietly take their places across the morning sky. Different events. Different distances. Different celestial mechanics. Yet from Earth, they become part of one extraordinary day. A day that begins with the Moon eclipsing the Sun somewhere in the world. A night illuminated by ancient fragments of a comet. And a morning in which distant planets appear to gather above us. Perhaps the most remarkable thing is that none of it requires us to go anywhere. No ticket. No telescope. No journey into space. Just a clear sky, a little darkness and a willingness to look up.

DARJEELING DIARIES: HISTORY, HERITAGE AND HILLS

A hill town where history, culture and the rhythm of daily life blends quietly beneath the mist. The blowing whistle of the toy train, the lingering smell of delicious food and the sight of prayer flags fluttering with the wind Darjeeling greets every traveller not just with its scenic beauty but also with a story that lingers in the heart of every visitor. Darjeeling is known as the Queen of Hills, known for its rich history which is seeped into the cobblestoned roads but the place is more than its postcards — it's not a memory of the past but a thriving community which continues to preserve its heritage. The name continues to carry the legacy of the past generation telling its history of shifting powers, and it's culture continues to thrive in the blend of Nepali, Tibetan, Lepcha and Bengali tradition. From the aromatic tea that is famous across the globe to the festivals, food and places that define its rich soul. It is best discovered slowly, step by step like the lingering taste of tea.

Land of the thunderbolt history and heritage to help understand Darjeeling as it is today, one must begin with its name, a word that carries both legend and geography within it. It has been derived from the Tibetan word "Dorje" meaning thunderbolt and "Ling" meaning place or land. Darjeeling literally translates to "Land of the Thunderbolts." From its name grew a history shaped by power and transformation. It was once a home to the Lepcha people; the land eventually came under British influence in the 19th century. The British saw Darjeeling as a retreat from the heats of Calcutta (now Kolkata) and a fertile ground for cultivation. Soon tea plantation was introduced and it was hailed as the "champagne of teas." The British introduced the iconic Darjeeling Himalayan Railway's toy train which is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The rise of tea cultivation brought along the arrival of workers from Nepal and Tibet which added another intricate layer of culture, language and tradition to the town.

A confluences of culture, festivals and community life but Darjeeling is not defined by its history alone but by the people in their unbridled joy, the colours of festivals and the quiet lifestyle. The



town is a melting point of communities: Nepali, Tibetans, Lepcha, Bhutia and Bengali family's side by side, celebrating each festival with gusto. Festivals are celebrated with fervour from Dasain and Tihar which lights the home of Nepali people, Losar brings the Tibetan New Year with fluttering prayer flags across the monasteries. Christmas in Darjeeling carries the charm of an old hill while the Bengali Durga Puja adds grandeur to the streets. Music is woven in the life of people, the folk songs carried by the madal drums or young bands strumming guitars and singing in cafes blends the tradition with modern rhythm.

Flavours of the hills from tea gardens to global cuisines, the culture too makes its way to the homes of the people to their table. Here every meal from the steaming bowl of thukpa to a cup of golden tea tells a story of migration, memory and belonging. Darjeeling food reflects its diverse roots: momo with fiery dipping sauce sold on every nook and corner of the street, hearty bowls of thukpa in winter, churpi (Himalayan traditional cheese which is made of yak's milk) chewed by the kids like candies and aloo dum mixed with spicy chutney fills the heart of every local. The colonial shadow continues to linger in the aged worn bakeries which still serve sponge cakes and pastries along with the classic British staple food, letting the locals and the traveller's glimpse back to the past. In recent times the locals have embraced East Asian cuisine with the rise of K-pop and K-dramas. Today Korean cuisine such as bibimpap, kimbap, ramen is as common in Darjeeling cuisine as traditional Nepali foods were. Dish-

es like wontons and stir-fried noodles have become a staple food of the young youth. Yet amidst all the food, Darjeeling tea remains the crown jewel without the aromatic sip of rich tea, the days of the locals doesn't begin.

Iconic landmarks and scenic views in its streets, monasteries, pagoda, gardens and viewpoints Darjeeling carries memories that are carved into the very mind of the travellers. Tiger Hill draws a mass of crowds at the break of dawn just to get the glimpse of the snowy hilltop of Kanchenjunga, where the first rays of sun kiss the mountain on clear mornings, sometimes even Mount Everest is visible. The Peace Pagoda and old Ghoom Monastery help bring spiritual calm in the hearts of the people, while Chowrasta and Mall Road thrums with the vibrant life like the echoes of the storming hooves of horses running along at the heart of Chowrastra. The toy train still charms every traveller with its slow rhythmic sound while tea estates stretch like green carpets across the hills. Botanical gardens, colonial school and the hidden corner remind the travellers that Darjeeling is not just a travel vacation spot but rather a well lived town filled with countless stories that compels the visitors to return back to the Queen of Hills — bring back travellers with a tint of nostalgia.

Gorkha Haat and the Spirit of local enterprise is a lively community market held every Thursday is more than just a bazaar, it celebrates indigenous foods, crafts and sustainable products. Here you will find everything from homemade pickles, millet snacks and churpi to traditional crafts and local farm products. For residents, it's a weekly gathering that sustains livelihoods and tradition and for visitors it is an authentic way to taste the food and live through the tradition Gorkha Haat is Dar-

jeeling's answer to modern consumer culture — a reminder that heritage can thrive alongside innovation and technology. Darjeeling's voice has found its way on online platforms through Ask-Darj which is a WhatsApp based AI chatbot dubbed as a "local in a pocket" which offers instant answers to real life questions: hidden cafes, taxi rates, even public restrooms — things only locals will know.

Perhaps that is Darjeeling's magic not just the beauty it shows but the stories it holds, waiting to be discovered by the people. Darjeeling lingers not as a single picture but as a collage filled with names, history, culture, tradition, flavours all tied together by the locals. Its tea estates, toy trains and festivals speak of a heritage deeply rooted in the hills with the rise of East Asian cuisine which has influenced the town. To visit Darjeeling is to step in both the world — the past that shaped it and the present which is moulding the life and yet keeping its past alive. It does not only offer a journey to the travellers but it becomes one with them. The hills do not stand still and neither does Darjeeling. It is always moving like the locals vibrant with life.

To reach Darjeeling means to embrace every part of the journey winding roads, slow trains and sudden glimpse of snowy hill tops.

Whether you arrive through the winding roads from Siliguri, watching the plains slowly merging with the hills or aboard the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, where each turn reveals a new scenery. Within the town too, the steep stairways and the narrow lanes make every walk a new discovery even the locals living in Darjeeling many years are still discovering new pathways almost as if Darjeeling itself insists on being explored one place at a time. Yet Darjeeling is more than just a destination for the locals, it is home, a place of work, struggle and resilience — a town that balances its rich heritage with the demand of modern changes. Tourism fuels much of the economy but tea gardens and small trades continue to sustain the economy. Young people often look beyond the hills for opportunities yet their pride for Darjeeling remains deeply rooted. Political movements for recognition and identity have shaped modern decades, but amidst challenges, the rhythmic life continues to go on. Children in school uniforms running across the street, vendors arranging fresh vegetables and fruits in the bazaar and friends sitting in stalls sharing a cup of tea in the evening relaxing after a long day.

— SUHASINI THAPA MANGAR

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Cleaner Streets, Healthier City
Garbage accumulation on city roads has become a serious public health concern. Despite regular collection, waste is often dumped in open spaces. Authorities must ensure timely collection and strict action against

littering. Citizens should also segregate waste responsibly. A cleaner city requires cooperation between residents and civic authorities.

-Sharon Faustina J

Safer Roads Need Attention
Poorly maintained roads, potholes and inadequate street lighting are causing inconvenience and safety concerns for commuters. The civic authorities should conduct regular inspections and repair dam-

aged roads promptly. Pedestrians and motorists deserve safe infrastructure. Citizens can help by reporting hazardous locations so that timely action can prevent accidents and improve road safety.

-Stephen Joshua J

Control Noise Pollution Now

Noise pollution from unnecessary honking, loudspeakers and traffic has become a growing problem in residential areas. It affects students, elderly people and patients. Authorities should strictly enforce noise regulations and create awareness among the public.

-Mary Vanaja R

Quick Read

Police probe deaths of engaged bank employees

HUNSUR
A 26-year-old bank employee from Hunsur was found dead, while her fiancé was also found dead in Kerala, police said. Anushree, who worked as a clerk at a bank on Hunsur bypass road, was engaged to Amal, an employee at a bank in Ernakulam. Their wedding had been scheduled for December 26, 2026. Anushree was the elder daughter of Chandan, who lives on B.M. Road. Amal was the son of a family in Kerala. The circumstances surrounding the two deaths are being investigated. A complaint has been registered at Hunsur city police station, and police have begun further investigation into the matter.

Two arrested in Bidar ATM cash robbery case

BIDAR
Bidar police have arrested two accused in the January 2025 ATM robbery, ending a year-and-a-half-long search. The suspects allegedly attacked ATM staff near an SBI bank in the city, opened fire and escaped with about Rs 83 lakh. The incident occurred on January 16, when two employees were carrying cash to refill an ATM. During the escape, the accused later fired at a bus check in Hyderabad, killing Giri Venkatesh and seriously injuring Shivakumar. CCTV footage helped investigators trace the suspects to Bihar. Police are questioning the arrested men to uncover further details and identify others involved in the case.

Lorry, two cars collide near Jewargi, driver injured

JEWARGI
A serious road accident involving an Eicher lorry and two cars occurred near Hasanapur Cross at Katti Sangavi on the Jewargi-Kalaburagi road Wednesday. The lorry, travelling from Kalaburagi towards Jewargi, reportedly collided head-on with a Swift and a Nexa car heading towards Kalaburagi. Both cars were badly damaged in the crash. The lorry driver suffered serious injuries and was taken to hospital for treatment. The Nexa car driver sustained minor injuries, while other passengers escaped unharmed. Traffic was disrupted for some time following the accident. Faratabad police reached the spot, inspected the scene and began an investigation.

HAVERI

Life becomes meaningful when people develop humanitarian values along with a spirit of service and generosity, said Sanjeev Kumar Neeralgi, District Honorary Working President of the Indian Red Cross Society. He was speaking at a Geneva Convention Day programme held at SGSLP Government First Grade Women's College in Neelanagoudra Nagar. The programme was organised jointly by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Indian Red Cross Society dis-

Officials urge Chitradurga voters to complete SIR forms

Officials said BLOs began door-to-door census forms June 30, covering 14,40,534 voters at 1,661 polling stations, mostly computerized

CHITRADURGA

More than 12.98 lakh voter census forms have been computerized in Chitradurga district as part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner T. Venkatesh said. He urged eligible voters who have not submitted their forms to complete the process before August 17. According to officials, Booth Level Officers have been distributing census forms door to door since June 30. Forms were issued to 14,40,534 voters across 1,661 polling stations, with more than 90 percent already computerized. The exercise is being conducted un-



der the directions of the Election Commission of India to update and verify electoral records. Constituency-wise, 2,32,691 forms have been computerized in Molakalmuru, 2,31,880 in Chitradurga, 2,22,415 in Holalkere, 2,21,920 in Hiriyur, 2,00,228 in Challakere and 1,89,541 in

Hosadurga. During verification, officials identified 70,133 permanent migrations, 30,768 deaths, 21,262 duplicate entries and 18,695 absentee cases. The deadline for submitting completed census forms has been extended to August 17 from the earlier August 8 date. Polling station rationalisation will also be completed by August 17. The draft electoral roll will be published on August 24, after which voters can file objections from August 24 to September 23. Officials will process applications and objections until October 22. The final electoral roll is scheduled for publication on October 27. The district administration has appealed to voters

Statistics
12,98,675 census forms computerized so far
14,40,534 voters received census forms
1,661 polling stations covered across district
70,133 permanent migration cases identified

to submit their forms within the revised deadline and cooperate with election officials. Authorities said timely participation would help ensure accurate voter records and a smoother electoral process in the district.

Legal success requires practical skills, says Joshi

KALABURAGI

Retired Karnataka High Court Justice C.M. Joshi said legal professionals need more than textbook knowledge to succeed in their careers. He stressed the importance of detailed subject study, continuous legal research, practical experience, discipline and strong ethical values while speaking at an interaction programme for law students and young lawyers at the Central University of Karnataka. The programme, organised by the university's Law Department, focused on practical aspects of legal practice, court etiquette, professional ethics, legal research and the growing role of artificial intelligence in the judicial system. Joshi said lawyers must carefully study the facts and legal issues of every case and present their arguments responsibly after thorough preparation. He said learning does not

stop after completing a law degree. Instead, professional education truly begins with legal practice, requiring lawyers and students to develop a habit of continuous study and lifelong learning. He advised young professionals to avoid unnecessary arguments in court and remain focused on relevant legal issues. Speaking about artificial intelligence, Joshi urged lawyers to use AI-based legal tools carefully. He said information obtained through such systems must be checked for accuracy and should not replace human judgment. Professional responsibility, ethical values and careful reasoning, he added, must remain central to legal research and judicial work. During the interaction, Joshi shared experiences from his education, legal career and time as a judge, explaining how hard work, discipline and practical knowledge helped him progress.

Yadgir DC orders action to improve roads and footpaths

YADGIR

District Collector Rahul Pandey inspected roads, footpaths, markets and public areas across Yadgir city on Wednesday and directed officials to improve cleanliness and remove obstacles affecting public movement. During his early morning tour, he reviewed conditions from the Degree College area to Kanaka Circle and instructed officials to take immediate action. The Collector inspected internal roads and discussed traffic problems with Municipal Commissioner Umesh Chavan. He sought details about road widths and obstructions and ordered officials to remove anything blocking smooth traffic. He also directed that construction materials kept on roads be cleared immediately and that roads remain open across

their full width for public use. Pandey stressed that footpaths should be free of encroachments so pedestrians can move safely. He ordered officials to clear garbage from roadsides and impose fines according to rules on people who dump waste in public places. He also directed regular sweeping and thorough cleaning of roads to remove accumulated soil and dirt and keep the bitumen surface clearly visible. During his visit to the vegetable market, the Collector instructed officials to maintain cleanliness and ensure the area remains orderly. He also asked them to identify drains without slabs and install the required covers without delay. He said roads and footpaths must be maintained in a manner that ensures safe movement for residents. The Collector interacted with residents during the inspection and listened to their

BJP opposes Nagendra's return amid Valmiki case

YADGIR

BJP leaders in Yadgir have opposed the reinstatement of B. Nagendra as a minister while the investigation into alleged financial irregularities in the Maharshi Valmiki Development Corporation is continuing. District BJP president Basavarajappa Gowda Vibhutihalli said the party would strongly protest the decision and demanded that Nagendra resign. Speaking at a press conference at Patrika Bhavan, Vibhutihalli said Nagendra had earlier resigned from the cabinet following allegations involving around Rs. 186-187 crore in the corporation. He questioned the decision to appoint him again while investigators are still examining the

The BJP leader alleged tribal welfare funds were misused, called Nagendra's cabinet return a betrayal, and cited ED documents mentioning fund transfers and Telangana accounts

case. The BJP leader alleged that money meant for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes was misused and described Nagendra's return to the cabinet as a betrayal of the community. He referred to Enforcement Directorate investigation documents, which, according to him, mention transfers of corporation funds to different bank accounts and the opening of accounts in Telangana.

Manvi DSP warns against illegal untouchability practices

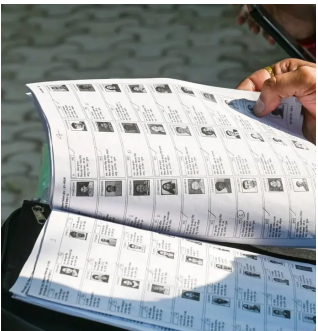
MANVI

Manvi Deputy Superintendent of Police Chandrashekarnayak said victims from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities would receive appropriate legal protection while addressing their grievances. He was speaking at an SC-ST grievance meeting held at the Manvi police station and organized by Raichur District Police and Manvi Police. He said police would maintain peace and curb illegal activities within the station limits. He assured participants that complaints from SC-ST communities would receive necessary legal assistance. He also warned that untouchability is illegal and said action would be taken against discriminatory practices. PSI Somashekar Kenchareddy said police will act against hooliganism near schools, colleges and girls' hostels across Manvi and other parts of the taluk. He said theft and other illegal activities are being controlled, with some suspects already arrested. Police have also discussed plans with municipal officials to install more than 100 CCTV cameras at important places and junctions in town. Tahsildar Bheemaraaya Ramasamudra said officials had been asked to report on possible misuse of SEP and TSP funds meant for SC and ST development. He said action would follow rules on Bagair Hukum cases. Community leaders and officials, including Bagayyanayaka, Social Welfare Officer Shahida Begam, Municipality Manager Narasimha and others, attended the meeting. Participants welcomed the assurance of legal support and urged authorities to act quickly on grievances and ensure safety and equal rights.

VIJAYANAGARA BEGINS MAJOR REVIEW OF VOTER RECORDS

VIJAYANAGARA

The Election Branch in the Vijayanagara district is currently performing a thorough review of voter records. District Commissioner Kavita S. Mannikeri stated that this detailed process aims to make the special revision of electoral rolls completely transparent and accurate. Local officials are carefully examining every record to guarantee that all eligible citizens keep their voting rights. At the same time, they are working hard to remove duplicate or ineligible names from the system. During recent house-to-house checks of census forms, election workers identified 38,392 deceased voters and 69,339 permanently displaced individuals. Furthermore, they gathered details on 244,392 total cases across the district to



update the rolls properly before publishing the official draft list. Out of these checked records, 140,777 voter entries were successfully corrected following rollback and re-verification procedures. The remaining 103,615 records will receive official inquiry notices after the draft list is published. This step gives concerned citizens a chance to submit required documents and clear up any details. District officials confirmed that deceased and

permanently displaced names will be fully separated before the final electoral roll is published. Commissioner Mannikeri issued a strong warning regarding fraud. Anyone who submits false information, misuses family documents, or attempts illegal voter registration will face criminal charges. Officials noted that residents whose names are already present in the 2002 electoral roll do not need to provide new documents. Meanwhile, those whose parents or family members appeared on old lists can simply provide proof of relationship documents. Citizens who find mapping errors or receive official notices are advised to contact their local Assistant Electoral Registration Officer immediately to submit the necessary paperwork.

Congress workers push Sachin Patil for district president

GADAG

Karnataka Janapara Bhakti Vedike state youth unit president Suresh Beladhadi said Sachin D. Patil should be appointed Gadag District Congress president, describing him as a capable young leader who can strengthen the party from the grassroots. He said Patil could help Congress face upcoming local body and Assembly elections with confidence. Beladhadi led hundreds of workers and supporters to meet AICC secretary and district chief observer Vivek Bansal. They submitted a petition seeking Patil's immediate appointment. The group said Patil had remained a loyal party worker for nearly two decades and had developed strong organizational experience. They urged the observer to consider his record while deciding the district leadership.

Arun Beladhiya, who led the petition effort, said Patil had the organizational ability to strengthen the Congress in all four Assembly constituencies of the district. He warned that denying an young leader such responsibility could weaken the party. Senior Congress workers Krishna H. Hadapada, Hanumanthappa Rampura and Rafiq Abbigeri supported the demand and joined the appeal. Hundreds of party leaders, office-bearers of organizations and supporters attended the meeting and expressed strong backing for Patil. Beladhadi said the demand reflected the aspirations of workers who want leadership ahead of elections. The petitioners appealed to the AICC observers to consider the request and take a decision that would strengthen the party in Gadag.

Dharwad digitizes over 83% of SIR forms

HUBBALLI

As part of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Dharwad district has digitised 13,50,609 enumeration forms, accounting for 83.27 percent of the 16,21,961 forms distributed, Deputy Commissioner and District Electoral Officer Snehal R. said. The exercise is aimed at updating voter records and ensuring an accurate electoral roll. Officials identified 2,71,352 electors in categories including permanently shifted, deceased, absent and duplicate entries. The figure

includes 1,26,768 permanently shifted voters, 52,618 deceased voters, 26,756 duplicate entries, 63,667 absent voters and 1,543 cases placed under other categories during the verification process across the district. Constituency-wise, 1,93,394 forms have been digitised in Navalagund, 1,77,518 in Kundgol and 1,93,036 in Dharwad. Hubballi-Dharwad East recorded 1,80,738 forms, while Hubballi-Dharwad Central recorded 2,03,269. Hubballi-Dharwad West recorded the highest figure at 2,15,935, followed by Kalaghatgi with 1,86,719 digitised forms.

Geneva Convention Day highlights humanity and service

Humanity above all. District and state branches, and the college's Youth Red Cross Unit. Neeralgi urged students and young people to develop an interest in social welfare and contribute to society. He said the Red Cross works worldwide to promote peace and humanitarian service, while the Geneva Convention highlights the importance of protecting human values and supporting world peace. Neeralgi encouraged students to develop leadership, compassion and a willingness to help others. He also said efforts were being made to secure greater government support for developing gov-

ernment schools and colleges in the district. He urged students to aim for success in different fields while remaining committed to social responsibility. Red Cross district officer and writer Hanumantha Gowda Gollara explained the purpose of the Geneva Convention and said the organisation works with humanity as its guiding principle. Students also spoke about the importance of humility, cooperation and helping others alongside education. College Principal Prof. Indira Bagalkote said learning should go together with social service and hu-



manitarian activities. YRC Programme Officer Veeresh Hitalamani introduced the event, while Dr. Ankit Anand explained the activities of the Youth Red Cross Unit. Sever-

al Red Cross office-bearers, college lecturers, officials, staff members and students attended the programme and supported its message of service, compassion and peace.

BJP PRESSURE BLOCKED MEETING HALLS, SAYS CJP

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke has accused the BJP of pressuring venue owners in Delhi, claiming several halls refused bookings for the party’s volunteer meeting

NEW DELHI

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke on accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of putting pressure on banquet and hall owners to prevent the party from holding meetings. Dipke claimed venue owners refused to rent their spaces because they feared facing trouble.

Dipke said a meeting of CJP volunteers planned in Naraina was cancelled after the banquet hall booked for the event withdrew the reservation at the last moment. Earlier, organisers had contacted venues before finding one that agreed to host the gathering. However, the booking was later cancelled when they reached the venue.

Speaking to reporters, Dipke said the party had approached at least 10 places,



but none were willing to provide space. He claimed that venue owners repeatedly cited “pressure from above” and said they could not risk allowing CJP members to use their premises. Dipke described the situation as an attempt to stop the party from organising its volunteers.

The CJP founder alleged that the pressure came from the ruling BJP, but he did not

provide evidence to support the claim. The allegations come as the CJP seeks to organise meetings and expand its activities in the national capital. The party has drawn public attention through its unusual name and political messaging.

The cancellation has raised questions about the ability of smaller political groups to find venues for public meet-

“At least 10 places refused to give us space, saying there was pressure from above”
Abhijeet Dipke, CJP founder

AT A GLANCE

- ➔ 10+ halls reportedly refused
- ➔ CJP volunteer meet cancelled
- ➔ Last-minute venue booking revoked
- ➔ Dipke alleges BJP pressure
- ➔ Meeting was planned in Naraina
- ➔ BJP response not mentioned

ings. While Dipke has accused the BJP of interfering with the party’s activities, the allegation remains his claim. No response from the BJP was included in the report, leaving the dispute unresolved for now.

Delhi HC questions Meta’s copyright rules

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked Meta to explain how it decides which users can access its copyright management tool, which helps creators protect original content on Facebook and Instagram.

A bench led by Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani was hearing a petition filed by content creator Mohit Kumar. He alleged that some people downloaded his videos and later used Meta’s Rights Tool to claim copyright over the same content.

Kumar argued that he was unable to protect his own videos because Meta had not provided him access to the copyright management tool. He questioned why other users could use the system to claim ownership while the original creator was left without similar access.



“It is like giving the key to the robber and not to the owner of the house.”

Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani

WHY THIS MATTERS

Creators need better control over their content as copyright misuse, Meta’s access rules, and digital ownership come under increasing scrutiny.

The court has now sought an explanation from Meta about the eligibility and criteria used to provide access to its copyright management system. The matter could have wider implications for content creators seeking stronger protection against unauthorised use of their work on social media platforms.

Rajya Sabha erupts over row on cultural identity

NEW DELHI

A political row erupted in the Rajya Sabha after CPM MP John Brittas alleged that BJP MP Sushmita Dev made a derogatory remark against him, calling him “lungi wala” during proceedings.

Brittas said the remark was made while he was speaking in the House. He said he was wearing a dhoti at the time and expressed pride in his Malayali and South Indian identity. The allegation led to a heated exchange between the two MPs.

The issue quickly disrupted proceedings in the Rajya Sabha, with the confrontation creating an uproar in the House. The proceedings were subsequently adjourned until 2 pm as tensions rose over the



alleged comment.

According to Brittas, the remark was inappropriate and directed at his appearance. He objected to the language used against him and said that wearing traditional clothing was not something he should be criticised for. He maintained that he was proud of his cultural identity.

The incident has added to tensions in Parliament, where political disagreements frequently lead to heated exchanges between members. The allegation also sparked discussion over the language used by lawmakers during parliamentary debates and the importance of maintaining dignity during proceedings.

Quick Read



Cyber fraud accused's bail plea rejected

New Delhi

A Delhi court has denied anticipatory bail to Ajay Sharma, accused in a cyber fraud case. The court said custodial interrogation was necessary to trace the money trail, recover digital evidence and identify the suspected fraud network. Additional Sessions Judge Samar Vishal said investigators needed custody to understand Sharma’s alleged role and uncover further details of the case. The investigation will continue as authorities examine financial transactions and digital evidence linked to the suspected fraud.



SpiceJet flight delayed after AC failure

New Delhi

More than 100 passengers on a Delhi-Pune SpiceJet flight faced hours of discomfort after the aircraft’s AC failed. Passengers said the cabin became unbearably hot and humid. The aircraft returned from the runway after protests. The flight, scheduled for 9.55 pm, finally departed around 5 am, nearly seven hours late. Passenger Leshpal Javalge said children, elderly passengers and pregnant women struggled in the heat. SpiceJet said an alternate aircraft was arranged and apologised for the inconvenience.

Container ship collided riverbank near harbour

KOLKATA

A container ship collided with the Hooghly riverbank near Diamond Harbour in West Bengal after strong river currents and a possible steering gear problem affected the vessel’s movement. No injuries were reported.

The Singapore-flagged MV Nawata Bhum was carrying containers from Port Klang, Malaysia, to the Port of Kolkata when it failed to complete a turn near Diamond Harbour, around 50 km from Kolkata. The 147.82-metre vessel

struck the riverbank close to Nurpur ferry ghat, damaging part of the embankment.

An official said the ship’s master noticed the steering problem and repeatedly sounded the horn to alert people near the riverbank. Officials said the situation could have been more serious if a ferry had been operating close to the collision site. Strong currents in the Hooghly may also have contributed to the accident.

The ship’s pilot immediately informed the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port Authority af-

ter the collision. The authority’s pilots guide vessels through the river’s difficult navigation channel, which has several sharp bends and shallow areas.

Tugs have been sent to the site and are expected to pull the ship away during the next high tide. Officials said the vessel’s hull was not damaged and that it could continue towards Kolkata with tug assistance. The incident has renewed attention on navigation safety along the busy Hooghly waterway, where similar accidents have occurred in the past.



Haridwar begins mega clean-up after Kanwar Yatra

HARIDWAR

Haridwar has begun a massive clean-up operation after nearly 48 million pilgrims visited the city during the two-week Kanwar Yatra, leaving more than 7,000 tonnes of garbage behind.

Large piles of plastic, clothes, Kanwars and non-degradable polythene have been reported across the city. The worst-affected areas include Ganga ghats, busy markets, roads connecting the city to national highways and parking areas used during the pilgrimage.

Hundreds of sanitation workers have been deployed to clear the waste as pilgrims began leaving after the Shrawan Shivratni Ganga Aarti. Officials said the cleaning

process will take several days as the garbage must be collected, transported and properly disposed of.

Municipal Corporation Town Commissioner Nandan Kumar said around 7,000 tonnes of waste was generated during the pilgrimage and clearing operations began on Tuesday evening. Workers have been deployed in groups around Har-ki-Pauri and the Mela area. Experts have urged authorities to remove the waste quickly, warning that delays could worsen pollution and increase health risks in the pilgrimage city. The clean-up drive is now focused on restoring public spaces and preventing the accumulated waste from creating further environmental and health problems.

₹9.4 crore worth of meth seized, three foreigners held

MUMBAI

Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS), with help from local police, has busted an inter-state drug racket and seized methamphetamine worth ₹9.4 crore from Mumbai and Greater Noida.

The operation led to the arrest of an Israeli national and two foreign women. Officials seized 2,050 grams of methamphetamine worth around ₹4 crore from Bandra East in Mumbai. Another 2,688 grams, valued at ₹5.4 crore, was recovered from a factory in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

According to officials, the Israeli national told investigators during questioning that he had purchased the drug from the Greater Noida factory. Acting on the information, the ATS and local police raided the facility and recovered the suspected drug along with materials allegedly used for manufacturing it.

The seizure comes days after a separate operation in Mizoram, where 15 kg of methamphetamine tablets val-



ued at ₹45 crore were recovered from an ambulance. Three people, including a woman allegedly posing as a patient, were arrested in that case. The vehicle was also seized during the operation.

The Mizoram operation was conducted jointly by the Assam Rifles and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence after receiving information about the suspected drug movement. The arrested suspects and seized material were handed over to the DRI for further investigation and legal action under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act. The recent seizures highlight continued efforts by enforcement agencies to track illegal drug networks operating across states.

Rural skilling scheme leaves youth unplaced

NEW DELHI

Nearly one in three rural youth trained under the government’s flagship skilling programme have not secured reported employment, according to a parliamentary standing committee report.

Since the launch of the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) in 2014, more than 1.8 million rural youth have received training. However, only around 1.2 million were placed in jobs, giving the programme an overall placement rate of about 65%.

The committee, headed by Congress MP Saptagiri Sanakar Ulaka, also questioned the performance of Rural Self Employment Training Institutes. Of the 6.2 million people trained through these institutes, only 4.5 million were reported to have started self-employment.

The placement rate dropped further to 47.7% in 2025-26, compared with an average of 77.7% during the previous three financial years. The

RURAL SKILLING AT A GLANCE	
• 1.8 million youth trained under DDU-GKY.	
• Only 1.2 million secured placements.	
• National placement rate stands at 65%.	
• 2025-26 placement rate fell to 47.7%.	
• Tamil Nadu led with 95.3% placement.	

government attributed part of the decline to changes introduced under DDU-GKY 2.0, which increased the minimum period required for a job to qualify as a placement from three months to six months.

The committee also noted major differences between states. Tamil Nadu recorded the highest placement rate at 95.3%, while Uttar Pradesh stood at 43%. Experts said skill training alone cannot guarantee employment, as the availability of suitable jobs also plays an important role.

BIHAR-PROHIBITION-POLICY-POLITICAL-REACTIONS

Bihar liquor ban faces fresh review debate

PATNA

A new report by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) recommending a review of Bihar’s liquor prohibition has triggered fresh political debate over the state’s eight-year-old ban. Leaders from the ruling and Opposition parties have offered different views on its impact and enforcement.

Bihar introduced complete prohibition in 2016 under Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. JD-U leaders have defended the policy, pointing to changes in rural communities, particularly among women. JD-U spokesperson Neeraj Kumar said prohibition would continue and rejected the possibility of adopting Gujarat’s model.



“Prohibition will remain in force in Bihar; anyone who touches it will be destroyed.”
—Neeraj Kumar, MLC

JD-U MP Devesh Chandra Thakur took a more measured view, saying the ban had reduced public drinking and related disturbances but completely stopping alcohol consumption was unlikely. He supported reviewing the policy, stressing that prohibition should be controlled rather than loosely enforced.

Bihar Prohibition Minister Madan Sahani said people in-

volved in illegal liquor trade and smuggling would face strict action.

He also said the government would pursue legal measures against liquor brands seized in the state. Meanwhile, Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi called for a prohibition system similar to Gujarat, while RJD MLA Bhai Virendra criticised enforcement and questioned efforts to stop smuggling through Bihar’s borders.

The contrasting positions have brought the liquor ban back into political focus. Supporters continue to highlight its social benefits, while others are calling for changes in implementation. The NCAER report has added fresh momentum to a debate that has continued since prohibition began in Bihar.

Fire at school in Manesar, no casualties reported

Gurugram

A fire broke out at Kautilya Academy in Manesar around 7.40 am after an electrical short circuit in the kitchen caused an explosion. Around 150 students were safely evacuated, three fire tenders were sent to the school, but two were delayed by traffic. The third reached within 15 minutes and firefighters brought the blaze under control within another 15–20 minutes. School staff broke classroom windows to help clear smoke. Officials confirmed that no casualties were reported.

Quick Read

Indonesia ferry fire leaves, one dead

Jakarta

One person died and 172 others were rescued after the KM Putri Yasmin ferry caught fire in waters off Indonesia's Lombok on Wednesday, authorities said. The ferry was travelling from Padangbai port in Bali to Lembar port in Lombok when the incident occurred in the Lombok Strait at 4:39 a.m. More than 200 rescue personnel were deployed, with boats assisting passengers and searching for anyone still missing. Among those rescued was one Australian national, while the remaining survivors were Indonesian. Authorities said the cause of the fire was not immediately known. Officials were also checking whether overcrowding contributed to the incident.

Ebola death toll surpasses 2,000 in Congo

Kinshasa

The death toll from Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo has crossed 2,000, with more than 4,000 cases confirmed, according to health authorities. The outbreak has raised concerns over the spread of the deadly virus and increased pressure on local health services. Health workers and authorities are continuing surveillance, treatment and containment measures to limit further transmission. Communities affected by the outbreak are being urged to follow public health guidance and report suspected infections promptly. The latest figures highlight the continuing challenge posed by Ebola in the country and the need for sustained medical and emergency response efforts.

Six killed in Houthi strike on ship

Aden

Yemen has claimed that six people were killed in a Houthi "double-tap" strike targeting a ship in the Red Sea's Bab al-Mandeb Strait. The incident has raised fresh concerns over maritime security along the vital international shipping route. Yemeni authorities said the attack involved repeated strikes on the vessel, though further details about the ship and the identities of those killed were not immediately available. The Bab al-Mandeb Strait is a key passage connecting the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and is heavily used by commercial vessels. The reported attack adds to ongoing tensions and security threats facing ships operating in the region.

RAIN BRINGS FLOODS

Philippines warns of water-borne diseases amid floods

MANILA

Philippine health authorities have warned residents in flood-hit northern areas about the rising risk of water-borne diseases as heavy southwest monsoon rains continue to affect several parts of the country. Health officials in the Ilocos region urged people to take precautions against illnesses including leptospirosis, dengue and influenza, which can become more common during the rainy season. The warning came as flooding continued across the region, according to local media re-

Putin warns of retaliation over vessel seizures

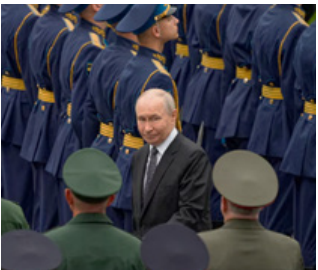
EU authorities detained crews and inspected shadow fleet vessels while expanding sanctions against hundreds of linked ships

MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned that Russia will respond in kind if European countries seize Russian merchant vessels, escalating tensions as the European Union steps up measures against Moscow's so-called shadow fleet.

According to Russia's state-run TASS news agency, Putin described the seizure of Russian ships as "piracy and banditry" and said Moscow would be forced to retaliate if such actions were implemented. He added that any Russian response would not necessarily be confined to the waters where Russian vessels were seized.

Putin said Russia could take action "wherever we deem it necessary and appropriate,"



according to TASS. His remarks come as European governments consider stronger maritime enforcement against vessels suspected of helping Russia evade Western sanctions. The EU has also expanded sanctions targeting hundreds of ships linked to the shadow fleet, while some European authorities have detained vessels and crews for inspections.

The shadow fleet refers to a network of vessels that Russia

Shadow Fleet Scrutiny

Russia faces intense European scrutiny over its shadow fleet used to bypass sanctions. Meanwhile, President Putin criticized NATO during a Sakhalin visit, accusing the alliance of expanding dangerously in the Asia-Pacific and escalating tensions across the Arctic region.

is accused of using to transport oil and other goods while avoiding international sanctions and restrictions. European nations have increased scrutiny of these ships as part of efforts to tighten economic

Palestinian students sue Columbia over discrimination

WASHINGTON

A group of current and former Palestinian students and staff have sued Columbia University, accusing the institution of discriminatory treatment of its Palestinian community since late 2023, according to a court filing in New York.

The lawsuit alleges that Columbia failed to adequately protect Palestinian students and staff from harassment while subjecting members of the community to what the plaintiffs described as unfair and biased disciplinary proceedings. The case comes amid continuing disputes over the university's handling of pro-Palestinian demonstrations and tensions surrounding free speech and campus safety.

Columbia has previously rejected accusations of discrimination and said it opposes hate and harassment. The university did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment. Local media reported that Columbia declined to comment on the pending litigation.

Protests have taken place at Columbia and universities across the United States since the outbreak of the Gaza war following the October 2023 attack by Hamas. Demonstrators have called for an end to U.S. support for Israel and demanded that universities



Campus Protests and Disciplinary Measures

Library Demonstration: In May 2025, Columbia University suspended more than 65 students following a pro-Palestinian protest that shut down the institution's main library.

Free Speech Backlash: Free speech organizations heavily criticized the university's disciplinary approach, which encompassed arrests, multi-year suspensions, expulsions, and the revocation of academic degrees.

Multi-Million Dollar Agreement: In July 2025, Columbia announced an agreement to pay more than \$200 million to the U.S. government to settle federal investigations and restore the vast majority of its withheld federal funding.

divest from companies they say support Israel.

The university faced renewed scrutiny over its response to campus protests. In May 2025, Columbia suspended more than 65 students after a pro-Palestinian demonstration shut down the university's main library. The action came while the university was negotiating with the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump, which had withheld federal funding after accusing Columbia of failing to adequately address antisemitism during campus protests.

Protesters, including some Jewish organisations, have rejected claims that criticism of Israel or support for Palestinian rights is inherently antisemitic. They have argued that advocacy for Palestinian rights should not be equated with support for extremist groups.

Columbia later agreed to pay more than \$200 million to the U.S. government to resolve federal investigations and restore most of its federal funding.

The agreement was announced in July 2025.

Mahmut alleges Uyghur identity erasure through children

LONDON

On International Youth Day, Uyghur rights activist Rahima Mahmut has raised concerns over the alleged separation of Uyghur children from their families, saying the practice threatens the community's language, culture and identity.

Mahmut, executive director of Stop Uyghur Genocide, alleged that up to 900,000 Uyghur children had been separated from their parents as of 2019 and placed in state-run

boarding schools and residential kindergartens. She said the number could be considerably higher.

According to Mahmut, the separation of children from their families is part of a wider campaign aimed at weakening Uyghur cultural and religious identity. She alleged that children are increasingly educated in Mandarin rather than Uyghur and face pressure to adopt political and cultural values promoted by the Chinese state. Mahmut also referred to

footage that she said showed Uyghur children aged between five and 11 being encouraged to pledge loyalty to the Chinese military while speaking in Mandarin. She described such practices as indoctrination rather than education. She further alleged that some children had been left without parents because family members were detained in political prison camps, while others were separated from their parents following forced labour transfers. Mahmut also raised allegations

concerning forced abortions and sterilisation among Uyghur women, saying such policies had affected families and future generations.

Her comments come amid longstanding international concern over China's treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Researchers and human rights organisations have documented concerns about family separation, state-run boarding schools and restrictions on Uyghur language and cultural expression.

North Korea fires missile ahead of drills

SEOUL

North Korea fired a ballistic missile toward waters off the Korean Peninsula's east coast on Wednesday, South Korean and Japanese authorities said, days before major military exercises between the United States and South Korea.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missile was launched from the Wonsan area at around 6 a.m. local time. It travelled about 700 km before falling into the sea, according to South Korean and Japanese defence authorities. The launch came six days after another suspected ballistic missile was fired from the same area.

The latest test occurred ahead of the annual Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, scheduled from August 17 to 27. The drills are designed to strengthen the allies' ability to respond to North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile threats. Pyongyang has long criticized the exercises as preparations for an invasion.



The allies conduct drills to counter North Korea's nuclear threats, while Pyongyang condemns the exercises as invasion preparations

Analysts said the timing of Wednesday's launch could have been intended to send a warning to Washington and Seoul. Hong Min, a researcher at the Korea Institute for National Unification, said the test may have been part of North Korea's weapons development programme, but deciding when to conduct it also involved a political calculation.

Taiwan condemns Chinese navy drill near Island

TAIPEI

Taiwan has condemned planned Chinese naval exercises with an Indonesian warship in waters east of Taiwan, calling the move dangerous and accusing Beijing of trying to create a false impression that it exercises jurisdiction over the area.

China's Defence Ministry said the planned mid-August activity would be a navigation exercise involving an Indonesian navy ship. It would mark the first time China has conducted a military drill with a foreign country in waters east of Taiwan.

Indonesia, however, said its warship, the I Gusti Ngurah Rai, was carrying out routine "passing exercises" while returning from a visit to Russia. Indonesian Navy spokesperson Tunggal said such exercises were a traditional practice when naval vessels transit through another country's maritime area and were not related to war fighting.

Ousted Myanmar Envoy Goes On Trial In London

LONDON

Myanmar's former ambassador to the United Kingdom, Kyaw Zwar Minn, went on trial in a London court. He faces criminal charges for trespassing at the official diplomatic residence, a property he has stubbornly refused to vacate after being sacked for opposing the 2021 military coup in his home country. The dramatic situation began 5 years ago when Minn was locked out of his embassy

shortly after the February 2021 military takeover. He had publicly called for the release of Myanmar's detained civilian leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. Although the junta replaced him with their own chosen representatives, Minn refused to leave the ambassador's residence in northwest London, where he has continued to live ever since. Prosecutors charged him last year with trespass covering a period between May 2021 and November 2024.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SURESH RAI**, S/o. Narayana Rai Nuliyalu Bajadaguttu, Resident of No. 14, Belaku 4th Cross, Patelappa Layout, Nagashetty Halli, RMV 2nd Stage, Bengaluru -560094, Karnataka, have changed my name to **SURESH RAI B**, vide affidavit dated: 12.08.2026 before notary R. BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MUZAMIL**, Resident of No. 1193, Joseph Garden, D J Halli, Bengaluru -560045, Karnataka, have changed my name to **MUZAMIL PASHA**, vide affidavit dated: 12.08.2026 before notary R. BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

IN THE COURT OF THE 1ST ADDL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPUR

Cri.mis. No: 181/2026

Petitioner: 1. Sri.Muniraju S/o Late Karagaiah Aged about 63 years, 2. Sri.Munikrishna S/o Late Karagaiah Aged about 55 years, 3.Sri. Rakesh S/o Muniraju Aged about 34 years 4.Smt.Manjuja W/o Munikrishna Aged about 48 years 5.Kum.Rekha D/o Munikrishna Aged about 22 years All are residing at Ekashipura Village Kasaba Hobali, Doddaballapur Bangalore Rural Dist. **V/s Respondent: The Thahasildar, Doddaballapura Taluk Doddaballapura.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of father of petitioner No.1,2 and grandfather of petitioner No.3 & 5 and mother in law of petitioner No.4 by name KARAGAI AH S/O LATE YALLAPPA who died on 15.05.1986.

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 05.09.2026 at 11:00 am. 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 07.08.2026.

By order of the court
Chief Ministerial Officer, Prl. (Jr. Dvnm) & JMFC Court, Doddaballapur
Advocate of Petitioner: Manjunath K.B., Doddaballapur-561203

IN THE COURT OF THE 1ST ADDL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPUR

Cri.mis. No: 182/2026

Petitioner: 1. Sri.Muniraju S/o Late Karagaiah Aged about 63 years, 2. Sri.Munikrishna S/o Late Karagaiah Aged about 55 years, 3.Sri. Rakesh S/o Muniraju Aged about 34 years 4.Smt.Manjuja W/o Munikrishna Aged about 48 years 5.Kum.Rekha D/o Munikrishna Aged about 22 years All are residing at Ekashipura Village Kasaba Hobali, Doddaballapur Bangalore Rural Dist. **V/s Respondent: The Thahasildar, Doddaballapura Taluk Doddaballapura.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of mother of petitioner No.1,2 and grandmother of petitioner No.3 & 5 and mother in law of petitioner No.4 by name GANGAMMA W/o Late KARAGAI AH who died on 14.03.1970.

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 05.09.2026 at 11:00 am. 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 07.08.2026.

By order of the court
Chief Ministerial Officer, Prl. (Jr. Dvnm) & JMFC Court, Doddaballapur
Advocate of Petitioner: Manjunath K.B., Doddaballapur-561203



Quick Read

Hi-Tech Pipes profit falls 4.2%, shares slide

Mumbai

Hi-Tech Pipes reported a 4.2 per cent year-on-year decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 20.04 crore for the June quarter of FY27, as higher expenses and finance costs offset strong revenue growth. Revenue from operations surged 78.5 per cent to Rs 1,412.8 crore from Rs 791.4 crore a year earlier. EBITDA rose 20.3 per cent to Rs 49.38 crore, but its margin narrowed to 3.5 per cent from 5.2 per cent. Total expenses climbed 81.5 per cent to Rs 1,386.9 crore, while finance costs more than doubled. Shares fell nearly 7 per cent to Rs 78 on the NSE.

IT services M&A hits \$14.8 billion in H1

New Delhi

IT services mergers and acquisitions recorded 449 deals worth about \$14.8 billion in the first half of 2026, an EY India report said. Deal volume remained broadly stable compared with 456 transactions in H1 2025 despite economic uncertainty, softer discretionary spending and AI-led disruption. Cloud services, data and analytics, cybersecurity and managed services led activity. Seven major transactions accounted for much of the disclosed deal value, while excluding them, value stood at about \$4.5 billion. Strategic buyers represented 47 per cent of deal volume, while PE-backed roll-ups accounted for 36 per cent and direct private equity investments 17 per cent. M&A activity is expected to remain selective through 2026.

ABN Amro raises guidance to €6.8 billion earnings

Amsterdam

Dutch lender ABN Amro raised its annual commercial net interest income guidance to €6.8 billion after reporting stronger-than-expected second-quarter results. The revised target is up from €6.4 billion previously forecast. Quarterly profit jumped nearly 30 per cent to €780 million, exceeding market expectations by more than €100 million, helped by higher revenue and cost controls. The bank's shares rose about 5 per cent to a record high in early trading. ABN Amro's cost-to-income ratio improved to 53.7 per cent from 61.5 per cent a year earlier, already beating its 2028 target of below 55 per cent. The bank's CET1 capital ratio stood at 15.9 per cent.

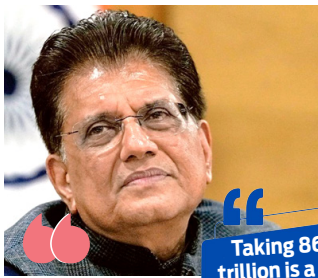
Exports grew 15% in 4 months, says Goyal

Achieving the \$1 trillion target would mark a major milestone, up from previous exports of about \$863 billion

NEW DELHI

India recorded around 15 per cent growth in exports during the first four months of the current financial year and is targeting total exports of \$1 trillion this year, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said recently.

Goyal said the latest export performance reflected India's growing strength in global markets despite continuing uncertainty and geopolitical conflicts. He said achieving the \$1 trillion target would be a significant milestone, noting that exports stood at about \$863 billion in the previous financial year. The minister's comments come as India seeks to expand its presence in international markets through trade agreements, greater competitiveness and wider market access for domestic businesses. India has concluded several



free trade agreements in recent years, creating additional opportunities for exporters across different sectors.

During April-June, India's exports rose 15.92 per cent to \$129.32 billion, while imports increased 19.89 per cent to \$216.18 billion, according to available trade data. Final export and import figures for July are scheduled to be released on August 13. Goyal has stressed the need for Indian businesses to improve scale, competitiveness and

access to overseas markets to sustain export growth. The government is also seeking to strengthen domestic manufacturing and encourage companies to identify products that can be produced competitively within India.

India recorded its highest-ever combined goods and services exports of about \$863 billion in 2025-26, with merchandise exports contributing around \$442 billion and services exports exceeding \$421 billion. The government now aims to build on this performance and push exports towards the \$1 trillion mark during the current financial year. Goyal said the strong growth in the first four months provides encouraging signs, although global economic conditions and geopolitical uncertainties remain key challenges for exporters.

Vaishnaw highlights UMANG transaction milestones

NEW DELHI

The Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG) has registered more than 11.66 crore users and recorded about 798 crore transactions over the past 3 years, highlighting the growing use of digital platforms for accessing government services, according to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw provided the figures in a statement submitted to the Rajya Sabha on August 7. As of July 31, around 2,575 government services were available through UMANG, including 880 services from the Central Government and 1,695 from state governments.

The government said UMANG and other Digital India initiatives are aimed at making citizen services more accessible while reducing the need for physical visits and paper-based procedures. The platforms can be accessed through mobile applications



The UMANG platform offered approximately 2,575 government services, comprising 880 central and 1,695 state services

and web portals, allowing citizens to use services from different government departments through a single digital interface. DigiLocker has also recorded significant growth. The platform has more than 72.43 crore registered users and provided access to about 72.86 crore documents and related transactions during the same three-year period. It cur-

rently offers 5,437 document types and services, including 661 from the Central Government and 4,776 from state governments.

The government said both platforms are integrated with digital public infrastructure such as Aadhaar, eSign and API Setu. Security measures, digital document verification and consent-based sharing are intended to support secure and paperless service delivery.

To expand access in rural and remote areas, the government has also strengthened the network of Common Service Centres. As of June 30, 4,07,122 centres were functioning at the Gram Panchayat level nationwide, with 70,069 operated by women Village Level Entrepreneurs. The government said digital literacy programmes such as PMGDISHA and the availability of services in multiple Indian languages are helping improve access. Central and state departments are also continuing to add more services to UMANG and DigiLocker.

FCNR inflows may lift FY27 loan growth to 16%

Recent estimates indicate that measures implemented by the RBI could draw substantial foreign-currency inflows into the banking system

NEW DELHI

Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) deposit inflows could provide Indian banks with additional funding and push overall loan growth to around 16 per cent in FY27, particularly benefiting lenders with weaker liability franchises, according to a report. The expected inflows come after the Reserve Bank of India introduced measures to encourage FCNR(B) deposits and improve foreign-currency funding for banks. Analysts expect the measures to ease pressure caused by loan growth continuing to outpace deposit mobilisation. Recent esti-

mates suggest the RBI measures could attract substantial foreign-currency inflows into the banking system.

Banks have faced increasing competition for domestic deposits as credit demand remains strong. The resulting gap between credit and deposit growth has pushed lenders to seek alternative funding sources, including certificates of deposit and wholesale borrowings. FCNR deposits could provide a relatively stable source of foreign-currency funding and reduce dependence on more expensive liabilities. The benefit is expected to be greater for banks that have comparatively weaker liability franchises. Such lenders could use FCNR inflows to strengthen their funding base, support additional lending and reduce reliance on costly wholesale deposits. Banks with established overseas operations and stronger access to foreign-currency deposits may also be well positioned to capture the opportunity.

Earlier estimates from Motilal Oswal Financial Services had raised the FY27 credit-growth forecast for banks under its coverage to 14.6 per cent from 13.6 per cent. Large private-sector banks were projected to grow loans faster than public-sector lenders, supported by improving funding conditions and a revival in corporate credit demand. The improved funding outlook could also help banks manage their credit-deposit ratios, which have remained elevated as lending has expanded faster than deposits. However, analysts expect net interest margins to remain under pressure in the near term because deposit costs are still high and CASA growth remains subdued.

FCNR inflows could therefore become an important source of liquidity during FY27, helping banks meet rising loan demand while gradually easing funding pressures. The extent of the impact will depend on the

FCNR deposits ease bank funding pressure

Banks face growing competition for domestic deposits amid strong credit demand. To bridge this funding gap, lenders are turning to Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) deposits as a stable alternative. Analysts project strong credit growth of 14.6% for FY27, favoring private lenders.

size and speed of foreign-currency inflows and how effectively banks convert the additional liquidity into credit growth. If sustained, the funding support could help the banking sector approach the 16 per cent loan-growth mark while improving conditions for lenders seeking to strengthen their liability base.

Indian chip startups raise \$206 million since 2022

NEW DELHI

Indian semiconductor startups have raised about \$206 million through 51 funding rounds since 2022, with investors increasingly directing larger amounts of capital toward companies that are closer to commercialization, according to a reports. The report said semiconductor startups raised \$61.9 million during the first half of 2026, equivalent to about 81 per cent of the \$76.6 million raised during the whole of 2025. At the same time, the number of funding rounds has declined, indicating that investors are becoming more selective.

Funding rounds fell from 16 in 2024 to 13 in 2025 and 7 during the first half of 2026. Despite the decline in deal numbers, the amount of capital deployed has increased, reflecting growing investor preference for startups that

have progressed further in product development, validation and commercialization. The report said 7 recent Series "A" funding rounds raised a combined \$73.7 million, accounting for roughly one-third of the total capital raised by Indian semiconductor startups since 2022. For many companies, the period between seed funding and Series A ranged from seven to 22 months.

Government-backed semiconductor programs are also increasingly linked with private venture investment. Of the 24 chip-design projects supported under the Design Linked Incentive programme, 14 later secured institutional venture capital. Together, these companies raised \$100.8 million across their 1st and 2nd funding rounds. The report said India's semiconductor startup ecosystem is also expanding beyond traditional chip design.

N CHANDRASEKARAN TO STEP DOWN FROM TATA

NEW DELHI

Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran's decision not to seek reappointment after completing his current term reflects his integrity and will provide the Tata Group sufficient time to ensure a smooth leadership transition, Association of National Exchanges Members of India (ANMI) President Kamlesh Shroff said recently. Chandrasekaran has decided not to offer him-

self for another term when his current tenure ends on February 20, 2027. His decision came after the Tata Sons board failed to reach consensus on extending his tenure. Shroff said the move should not necessarily be viewed as a fallout from the reported differences over his renewal.

Shroff said Chandrasekaran's nearly four decades of contribution to the Tata Group demonstrated his commitment and hard work. He said

choosing to step down rather than pursue another term without unanimous support showed the chairman's credibility and integrity. "I think that after doing four decades of work at the company," Shroff said, describing the decision as part of the normal course of leadership transition. He also said Chandrasekaran's willingness to remain in office until the end of his existing term would give the organisation adequate time to

prepare for the next chairman.

The ANMI president said it would be difficult to speculate about who could succeed Chandrasekaran, adding that the Tata Group was expected to follow an appropriate process to identify a suitable candidate. He said he was not aware of any major names currently expected to be part of the succession process. Chandrasekaran, who became Tata Sons chairman in 2017 after serving as chief execu-

tive of Tata Consultancy Services, has overseen the group through a period of significant expansion and strategic investment. His departure comes amid reported tensions between Tata Sons and Tata Trusts, which controls a majority stake in the holding company.

Shroff said the decision to complete the full tenure and facilitate a carefully managed transition was a positive approach.

NYC council probes Polymarket over marketing practices

NEW YORK

The New York City Council has opened an investigation into prediction market platform Polymarket over allegations that it used predatory marketing practices to attract young traders, including minors. Council Speaker Julie Menin raised concerns in an August 11 letter to Polymarket CEO Shayne Coplan. The letter also mentioned Kalshi, Coinbase and Gemini Titan. Prediction markets allow users to trade contracts linked to outcomes in politics, sports, entertainment and other areas. The industry has grown rapidly, drawing millions in trading activity and increasing regulatory scrutiny.

The council cited reports alleging that Polymarket worked with marketing agents and social media influencers to reach young adults and minors through deceptive advertising. Allegations include undisclosed influencer payments, fake trades shown on websites resembling Polymarket, and content portraying losing bets as successful. Officials also questioned whether campaigns encouraged insider trading.

The council asked Polymarket to provide details about its influencer and social media activities and explain its marketing practices clearly. A Polymarket spokesperson said the company looked forward to engaging with the council.

The inquiry comes as prediction markets face concerns over gambling and consumer protection concerns. Polymarket operates under US Commodity Futures Trading Commission regulation.

TECH INFRASTRUCTURE FOCUS

Bank of America pledges \$250 billion for US infrastructure

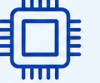
NEW YORK

Bank of America said on Wednesday it plans to deploy \$250 billion by July 2027 to support digital and infrastructure projects across the United States, joining a growing push by major Wall Street banks to finance investments in artificial intelligence, energy and critical infrastructure. The bank said its new Critical Infrastructure Finance Initiative will provide lending, investments, capital markets services and banking and advisory support for projects considered important to the US economy. The programme is aimed at mobilising large-scale private capital while supporting economic growth and job creation.

Bank of America said the \$250 billion commitment will focus on three major areas. The first is digital infrastructure, including artificial intelligence data centres and computing facilities. The

second covers energy and power infrastructure, including renewable energy generation and energy storage. The third includes core infrastructure such as transportation networks and natural gas projects. The target will be measured over an 18-month period beginning January 1, 2026, and ending July 4, 2027. Karen Fang, global head of infrastructure and sustainable finance at Bank of America, said meeting the country's growing infrastructure requirements would require capital to be deployed across increasingly connected sectors.

Fang said the financing would include corporate and project-level funding through both public and private markets. She added that the bank could deploy more capital after July 2027 if demand remains strong, as many infrastructure projects require substantial investment before becoming operational. The initiative comes

INVESTMENT ALLOCATION SUMMARY			
INVESTMENT CATEGORY	TARGET SECTORS & PROJECTS	LOCATION / SCOPE	PURPOSE
 DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE	- ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) DATA CENTERS - COMPUTING AND TECH FACILITIES - SEMICONDUCTORS - TELECOMMUNICATIONS	UNITED STATES 	 TO EXPAND COMPUTING CAPACITY AND POWER MODERN TECHNOLOGY DEMANDS.
 ENERGY & POWER INFRASTRUCTURE	- RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION (AND CONVENTIONAL) - ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS - POWER GRID OPTIMIZATION	UNITED STATES 	 TO MEET RISING ELECTRICITY DEMAND AND UPGRADE GRID TRANSMISSION.
 CORE INFRASTRUCTURE	- TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS - NATURAL GAS PROJECTS - WATER SYSTEMS - CRITICAL MINERALS	UNITED STATES 	 TO SUPPORT BASIC ECONOMIC SYSTEMS, SUPPLY CHAINS, AND LONG-TERM COMMUNITY GROWTH.

as demand for AI data centres, critical minerals and energy infrastructure grows rapidly in the US. Technology companies are expanding computing capacity, while

rising electricity demand is encouraging investment in power generation, transmission and storage.

Bank of America's announcement follows similar

moves by other major US financial institutions. Morgan Stanley recently said it would facilitate about \$1.5 trillion over the next decade for technology and infra-

FOCUS AREAS OF THE INVESTMENT

- Digital Tech:** Building AI data centers, computer chips, and modern tech facilities..
- Power and Energy:** Funding green energy sources, power storage, and electricity grids.
- Core Systems:** Upgrading roads, transport networks, water systems, and natural gas projects.

Summary of the investment

- Target Amount:** \$250 Billion.
- Time Frame:** 18 Months
- Main Goal:** Boost Jobs and Tech Growth

structure projects, while JPMorgan Chase announced a \$1.5 trillion plan last year focused on strategic industries. Fang said greater infrastructure investment could support economic growth and create long-term employment opportunities.



Pep talk: Ready for success at Chelsea

Chelsea has officially signed Spanish left-back Pep Chavarria from Rayo Vallecano on a five-year contract until 2031

LONDON

English football club Chelsea has officially completed the signing of Spanish defender Pep Chavarria from La Liga team Rayo Vallecano. The 28 year-old player has signed a long-term 5 year agreement that keeps him at Stamford Bridge until the summer of 2031.

Chavarria is set to join his new teammates at the Cobham training ground immediately. The squad is currently working hard to prepare for the upcoming 2026 to 2027 season, hoping to bounce back from a disappointing 10th place finish in the Premier League last year.

After finalizing the move, the excited defender shared his thoughts with club media. He stated that joining such a massive global organization feels like a dream come true. He acknowledged that this is a huge challenge for his career, but he feels fully ready to give his absolute best. He promised to work tirelessly to help the team win trophies and achieve great success on the pitch. He also took a moment to thank



his family for their endless love and support throughout his journey.

The journey to the Premier League has been a steady climb for the left-back. He started his career playing for his local team, UE Figueres, in the 4th tier of Spanish football. He made his senior debut at just 18 years old. He quickly grew into a fast, attack-minded defender who loved joining the attack.

Later, he moved to UE Olot before joining Real Zaragoza in the Spanish 2nd division in 2020. He proved himself at every single step, eventually earning a transfer to Rayo Vallecano in 2022.

Over the past 4 years, Chavarria became a key player for Rayo. He helped them achieve historic results, including 2 consecutive 8th place finishes in La Liga. Last season, he played 44 matches and helped his former club reach a European final, where they narrowly lost to Crystal Palace.

Now, the experienced defender is ready for a fresh start in London. Fans hope his talent and fighting spirit will help fix the defensive problems that troubled the Blues last year. Chelsea will start their new league campaign with a tough London derby match against Fulham on August 24th.

‘...Club football still offers me more’

NEW DELHI

Former Liverpool manager Arne Slot has finally explained why he turned down the chance to become the next head coach of the Netherlands national football team. The 47 year old coach emerged as the top candidate to replace Ronald Koeman following the 2026 FIFA World Cup tournament.

Slot held formal discussions with the Royal Dutch Football Association, known as the KNVB, regarding the high-profile vacancy. However, he ultimately chose to end the talks before discussing any potential contract terms. Speaking with media outlets, the Dutch tactician made it clear that his passion lies in the day-to-day rhythm of club management rather than international football.

He noted that at this specific point in his professional career, he prefers being out on the training pitch with his players every single morning. He pointed out that this intense daily connection is something national team man-



agers simply do not get to experience. Despite declining the offer, Slot expressed deep respect for his home country's football association and praised everyone for handling the professional negotiations so smoothly. He firmly believes that club football still has plenty of exciting challenges and opportunities left to offer him.

Slot also wanted to shut down rumors that money played any role in his final choice. He has been a free agent since May, when he left

Liverpool after spending just one brilliant season at Anfield. In that single campaign, he successfully guided the Merseyside giants to the Premier League title before departing the club. Although managing his national team sounds like an amazing honor, Slot felt the timing was completely wrong for now. He admitted that coaching the Netherlands remains a major dream for his distant future, but right now, he wants to focus entirely on leading a club team every single week.

Sarthak deserves this success, says Dagar

NEW DELHI

The North Delhi Strikers secured a dominant 8 wicket victory over the West Delhi Lions in a recent Delhi Premier League match at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. Following the impressive team win, standout bowler Mayank Dagar took time to praise team captain Sarthak Ranjan for his ongoing brilliant form with the bat. Reflecting on the match, Dagar explained that it was a very convincing performance from the squad. He noted that the bowlers did a fantastic job restricting the opponents before the batters chased down the target with ease. He highlighted the great team balance, pointing out that everyone understands their specific role clearly. Interestingly, the middle and lower-order batters have not even needed to bat yet because the top-order players



are taking total responsibility and performing consistently.

Dagar then shared high praise for his skipper. Having played cricket together since their under-16 and under-19 days, Dagar expressed pride in watching Sarthak grow both as a player and as a per-

son, stating that he truly deserves his current success. During the match, Dagar delivered an exceptional bowling spell, claiming 2 wickets while giving up only 14 runs across 4 overs. He even grabbed attention with a unique wicket celebration, which he revealed was inspired by football star Paul Pogba.

Batting first, the West Delhi Lions struggled against the disciplined Strikers attack and managed 146 runs for 7 wickets. Mayank Gusain top-scored with an unbeaten 42, while Sombir Sheokand added 34. In response, North Delhi made a flying start as captain Sarthak and Vaibhav Kandpal put on a massive 160 run opening partnership. Sarthak scored a quick 57 runs off 30 balls, while Kandpal stayed not out on 64 to guide the Strikers home safely with 8 wickets remaining.

BABAR AZAM RETURNS TO ICC TEST TOP 10

DUBAI

Pakistan cricket Captain Babar Azam has made a triumphant return to the top 10 of the official ICC Test batting rankings. This exciting update follows Pakistan's impressive 8 wicket win over the West Indies in Port of Spain, which successfully tied their recent 2 match Test series.

During that crucial match, the skilled right-handed batter played a major role in securing victory. He scored 88 runs in the first innings and stayed calm under pressure to finish with 24 not out during the successful run chase. This strong display pushed him up 5 spots to 10th place globally. It marks his 1st time back in the elite top group since September 2024, ending a 2 year absence.

Meanwhile, teammate Abdullah Shafique made an even bigger jump in the batting list. Recalled to bat at number 3, he won the Player of the Match award after hitting a brilliant, unbeaten 160 runs in the first innings alongside 24 not out in the second. His stellar effort vaulted him up 25 places to 32nd position.

Pakistan bowlers also enjoyed great success in the latest rankings update. Off-spinner Sajid Khan climbed 5 spots to reach 30th place in the bowling charts. Fast bowler Mohammad Ali moved up to 85th, while left-arm spinner Ali Usman made a massive leap of 58 spots to land at 97th.

For the West Indies, fast bowler Shamar Joseph moved up one notch to 19th after claiming 3 wickets in the game. Teammate Brandon King also rose to joint 69th despite missing the 2nd innings due to a back injury.

At the very top of the global Test lists, Australian star Travis Head keeps his place as the number one batter. Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah holds the top spot for bowlers, and Indian star Ravindra Jadeja remains the leading all-rounder. Additionally, recent one-day matches between Afghanistan and Ireland brought ranking shifts, with Afghan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz climbing to 11th and captain Rashid Khan strengthening his hold on the top ODI bowling spot.

Following Pakistan's Test series draw against the West Indies, captain Babar Azam has re-entered the ICC top ten batting rankings after a two-year absence



Can Dickwella fill SL's batting void?

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka Cricket has announced a 16 member squad for the upcoming first Test match against India, which begins on August 15th in Galle. Captain Dhananjaya de Silva will lead the team, but the hosts will be missing two key starting batters for this important series opener. Star batter Kusal Mendis has been ruled out of the fixture due to a right hamstring injury. He suffered the setback while running between the wickets during a domestic 2020 match in Colombo last month. He has been undergoing treatment and rehab at the National High Performance Centre ever since.

Meanwhile, opening batsman Pathum Nissanka is also unavailable for selection. He is currently recovering from a wrist surgery that he underwent in London during July.

With both senior players



sidelined, the national selectors recalled veteran wicket-keeper Niroshan Dickwella to add experience to the dressing room. Dickwella, who has played 54 Test matches, last represented the country in the red-ball format back in 2023. His selection edges out younger hopeful Anjala Bandara. In addition, off-spinning all-rounder Keshara Nuwantha has earned his very first Test call-up. He impressed

selectors by taking 3 wickets in a recent 3 day warm-up match against the visiting Indian side. Top-order batsman Nishan Madushka also kept his place in the squad following strong scores of 66 and 63 not out during that same practice game.

The squad features a strong core of experienced players, including Vice-captain Kamindu Mendis, Dinesh Chandimal, and Lahiru Udara. The spin attack will rely heavily on Prabath Jayasuriya and Ramesh Mendis, supported by newcomer Nuwantha. Meanwhile, the fast bowling lineup includes Asitha Fernando, Lahiru Kumara, Vishwa Fernando, Milan Rathnayake, and Dilshan Madushanka. Following the opening match in Galle, the second and final Test of the series will take place at the historic Sinhalese Sports Club Ground in Colombo from August 23rd to 27th.

Fencing stars push India medal count to 29

LAGOS

India's fencing stars delivered a stunning show on day three in Nigeria. The team grabbed 3 gold medals, one silver, and one bronze, pushing their total medal count to an amazing 29. In the women's foil event, Kanaglakshmi won the gold medal with a sharp performance. Her teammate Joys Ashitha proudly took the silver right behind her. Next, Rajendran Shanthimol Sherjin fought hard in the men's epee category to claim India's 2nd gold of the day.

The gold rush did not stop there. Singh Karan Singh showed great skill to win the men's sabre final. Another Indian player, Kumarasana Padma Gisho Nidhi, added a bronze medal to the proud tally. As this exciting championship ends today, the joyful Indian squad is ready for the final matches. Fans back home are cheering loudly, hoping the team finishes this wonderful journey with even more shiny medals.



Taekwondo tournament: Chitradurga wins overall, Tumakuru Finishes 2nd

BENGALURU

Chitradurga and Tumakuru districts emerged as the 1st and 2nd overall winners respectively at the 3 day 41st State-Level Sub-Junior, Junior and Senior Taekwondo Championships, along with the 10th Cadet Kyorugi, 14th Poomsae, 3rd Para Taekwondo and 4th Expo Taekwondo competitions organised by the Karnataka State Taekwondo Association in Chitradurga. More than 450 athletes from 14 districts participated in the tournament.

The event was conducted under the leadership of Karnataka State Taekwondo Association President J. Thirumal, along with Chitradurga Taekwondo Association coaches and the organisers of the state-level tournament, M. Sunitha Praveen Kumar and M. Anitha Manthesh.

In the Sub-Junior Girls category, Tumakuru district secured

1st place, while Chitradurga finished 2nd. In the Sub-Junior Boys category, Bengaluru bagged the 1st position and Tumakuru secured the 2nd position.

In the Cadet Boys category, Bengaluru emerged 1st and Tumakuru finished 2nd. In the Cadet Girls category, Chitradurga secured 1st place, followed by Bengaluru in 2nd place.

In the Junior Boys category, Chitradurga emerged victorious, while Bengaluru secured the 2nd position. In the Junior Girls category, Bengaluru secured 1st place and Tumakuru finished 2nd. In the Senior category, Tumakuru secured the 1st position, while Bengaluru finished 2nd. Chitradurga won the Overall Championship, with Tumakuru securing the 2nd position.

Darwin Test: Shanto ready for Australia

DARWIN

Bangladesh cricket captain Najmul Hossain Shanto remains confident that his team is fully prepared to face Australia's fierce pace bowling attack, despite a disappointing collapse in their recent practice match. The upcoming match marks Bangladesh's first Test on Australian soil since 2003, creating huge excitement among cricket fans.

The visitors suffered a setback when they were bowled out for just 54 runs during a warm-up game against a local side. However, Shanto insisted that one bad performance during the preparation stage will not define his team's overall readiness. He pointed out that the squad intentionally trained on bouncy pitches back home over the last few months to prepare for this tough tour. In addition, arriving in Australia nearly two weeks early helped the players adapt to the local conditions and pitch bounce.

Acknowledging the quality of the opposition, Shanto noted that dealing with Australia's world-class fast bowlers, including Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, and Josh Hazlewood, will present a massive test. He highlighted that handling the brand-new ball will be the biggest obstacle for his top-order batters. He urged his team to play with high concentration, stick to their natural game, and aim to bat for long periods to build strong innings.

The visiting team received a significant boost ahead of the clash with star player Litton Das declared fully fit to play. His return brings stability, depth, and crucial experience to the middle order. Bangladesh is also considering a balanced bowling line-up featuring three fast bowlers alongside two frontline spinners, Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Taijul Islam.

