

**India, Czech Republic agree to expand defence industrial ties**

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Ellyse Perry re-enters top 10 ODI batters

UPI USERS BREATHE EASY!

MDR ON TRANSACTIONS OVER RS 2,000 DEFERRED FOR NOW

The new NPCI framework, announced September 15, was scheduled to take effect on October 15.**The fresh rule prescribed a 0.4% fee on eligible bank account-funded merchant payments above Rs 2,000, capped at Rs 300 per transaction.**

NEW DELHI

In a major relief to UPI users, the decision to levy a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) of 0.4% on transactions over Rs 2,000 has been deferred, with NPCI on Tuesday saying a new date for the implementation will be decided after Diwali.

According to the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) circular issued last month, a 0.4% MDR was to be levied on Person-to-Merchant UPI payments above Rs 2,000 from October 15.

Festive season relief

"UPI and Services Steering Committee today decided that, keeping in mind the festive season, Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on select Person-to-Merchant (P2M) UPI transactions shall be implemented immediately post Diwali on a date to be notified separately," NPCI said in a statement.

The MDR has to be paid by merchants, not consumers, and capped at Rs 300 for transactions of Rs 75,000 or more.

The decision to defer has come amidst allegations by the Opposition, which termed it a tax, and said that the levy on specified UPI transactions above Rs 2,000 will burden consumers.

Details of proposed MDR As per the circular dated September 15, payments between individuals, as well as the vast majority of everyday merchant payments were to remain free.

Essential services, such as



DEFERMENT RECAP

The implementation of a 0.4% Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on UPI transactions above Rs 2,000 has been deferred.

The decision was made by the UPI and Services Steering Committee, citing the festive season.

A new date for the MDR implementation will be announced after Diwali. The MDR is to be paid by merchants, not consumers, and is capped at Rs 300 for transactions of Rs 75,000 or more.

REASON FOR DELAY

The decision follows heavy pushback from trade bodies, MSMEs, and merchant associations, who argued that introducing fees during peak festive shopping would raise business costs and dampen retail consumption.

What the new framework proposes

P2P stays free: Person-to-person (P2P) UPI transfers remain completely free.

Small merchants exempt: Small and eligible merchants as well as transactions up to ₹2,000 remain exempt.

Proposed rates for P2M (Person-to-Merchant) above ₹2,000:

- **Standard Rate:** A 0.4% MDR on eligible bank account-funded merchant transactions exceeding ₹2,000.
- **Cap:** Capped at a maximum of ₹300 per transaction for high-value transactions of ₹75,000 and above.
- **Flat fees/special sectors:** A flat MDR of ₹5 per transaction for select categories (such as fuel, telecom, insurance, railways, and agriculture inputs) over ₹2,000, and a nominal 0.02% MDR (capped at ₹300) for capital market, mutual fund, and stockbroker transactions.

Who pays: The MDR is charged to the merchant, not the consumer.

railways, telecom, fuel, and insurance, were to attract a flat Rs 5 fee per transaction

above Rs 2,000. Capital markets transactions (mutual funds, stockbroking) were to

get a lower 0.02 per cent rate, also capped at Rs 300.

The National Payments Corporation, which operates the UPI platform, decided to levy MDR on certain UPI transactions aimed at creating a sustainable revenue framework for the digital payments ecosystem.

As per the NPCI, the amount collected will be shared among banks and other entities in the UPI ecosystem.

Of the MDR collected, 40% will go to customers' banks, 30% to payment gateways, 20% to the UPI app and the remaining 10% to the sponsoring bank of the UPI app.

Industry reaction

Welcoming the decision, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said the government's move to defer the proposed MDR charges on UPI transactions is "timely and pragmatic", particularly during the crucial festive and wedding season, when millions of traders and MSMEs depend on higher business volumes.

"Additional transaction costs could have placed an avoidable burden on merchants operating on thin margins and discouraged the wider acceptance of digital payments," CAIT said.

It shared that the decision follows the meeting held on September 30, 2026, when a delegation of around 20 trade leaders met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and highlighted the implications of the proposed 0.4% MDR on UPI transactions exceeding Rs 2,000.

Net closing around Modi, Shah, Gyanesh: RaGa

Rahul hosts high tea for INDIA bloc, says resistance to continue and will triumph.

NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Tuesday stepped up his attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre, saying democracy has been "destroyed" under the ruling dispensation, and the Opposition is fighting together to restore "democracy" in the country.

Rahul, who, along with Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha and Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, has been spreading the INDIA bloc protest alleging "vote theft" by the ruling BJP through Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, vowed that "those responsible, including PM Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Gyanesh Kumar, and others, will be brought to justice".

Addressing the INDIA bloc's joint press conference at his official residence here, following a high tea hosted by him for the Opposition leaders, leaders of student organisations, and civil



Details of the event & allegations

➤ **INDIA bloc stance:** Rahul Gandhi, alongside Rajya Sabha Opposition Leader Mallikarjun Kharge, participated in a joint press meet, protesting alleged "vote theft" and manipulation of electoral systems.

➤ **Named figures:** Gandhi targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, committing to hold them accountable.

➤ **Opposition response:** The INDIA bloc maintains that opposition parties are united in fighting to restore democratic norms and safeguard institutions. ➤ **Ruling party response:** Union Ministers and BJP leaders have strongly criticized Gandhi's remarks. Home Minister Amit Shah and other leaders accused the Congress leader of undermining and defaming India's democratic and parliamentary institutions.

to be so simple that you can destroy the Indian Constitution and get away with it," he said.

'Can't demand right to protest in Delhi, deny it in Bengaluru: CM

Bengaluru: Asserting that the right to protest must be upheld without double standards across the country, Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday sought a detailed report on the police action against protesters in Bengaluru.

His remarks came a day after several protesters were detained while attempting to march towards the Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer's office,

demanding the resignation of CEC Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in the SIR. The police crackdown drew sharp criticism after participants alleged forceful detention. Two photojournalists and three reporters were manhandled by four police personnel while performing their duties during the protest.

In an X post, he said the right to peaceful protest was funda-

mental to democracy and that the government could not demand that right for itself in New Delhi while denying it to others in Bengaluru. "I have taken note of yesterday's incident involving protesters and members of the media. I have sought a full report on the circumstances that led to the police action. If there has been any unnecessary use of force or excess, accountability will follow."

Ashoka demands white paper on K'taka drought management

Bengaluru: Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R Ashoka on Tuesday demanded a white paper detailing the state government's drought response, accusing Chief Minister DK Shivakumar of focusing on the sting operation controversy and Delhi visits instead of addressing farmers' distress.



Addressing the media here, he said drought had affected 217 taluks, with an estimated loss of ₹46,324 crore, while the government had announced only ₹1,500 crore in relief. He claimed that farmers were returning the ₹2,500 assistance to deputy commissioners, alleging that the amount was inadequate.

Civic poll: Gandhinagar stands with BJP!

Dandhinagar: The ruling BJP retained control of all three urban local bodies that went to polls in Gujarat on October 11, winning 38 of the 44 seats in the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation (GMC) and securing majorities in the Thara and Okha municipalities.

The Congress won five seats in Gandhinagar, while an Independent candidate won one ward. The AAP, which

won one seat in the previous election, failed to secure any seats.

Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel congratulated the BJP candidates and party workers and said the victory reflected public faith in the party's development agenda.

The BJP's tally in Gandhinagar fell from 41 seats in 2021 to 38 this time, while the Congress improved its tally

from two to five. A total of 130 candidates contested the 44 seats across 11 wards.

In Thara municipality in Banaskantha district, the BJP won 19 of the 24 seats, while the Congress secured the remaining five.

In Okha municipality in Devbhumi Dwarka district, the BJP won 29 of the 32 seats for which polling was held. The Congress won three seats.

BLOOMBERG NEW ECONOMY FORUM

'Power to Empower': PM Modi's new mantra

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday unveiled his "power to empower" vision, emphasising that the real question was not who possessed power but how it was being utilised to benefit people.

Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum in New Delhi, the PM said the Centre has embodied the principle of Power to Empower in its governance approach and work culture.

"India's progress is rooted in collective growth and shared opportunities," he said, adding that power is not just the ability to move ahead, but it is also the ability to empower others.

'Digital power opened up greater openings for India'

Modi said that in the present era, digital power has emerged as one of the key drivers of this transformation and is playing a significant role in advancing this vision. "The digital power has opened up greater opportunities for India."

The Prime Minister said that India's economic growth is taking place on a strong foundation amidst global uncertainty. The GDP growth stood



at 7.8% in the first quarter of this financial year.

He highlighted that today, India's foreign exchange reserves exceed 700 billion dollars and the banking system is in its strongest position in many decades. India's reform express continues to move ahead at high speed.

'India progressing, carrying everyone along'

He said that India's progress in the 21st century is a story of advancing together with everyone and carrying everyone along. Whenever the world needs a steady pillar, India extends its hand in support, recognizing its responsibility.

He further said today, India is home to more than 2,000 Global Capability Centres that are providing services to companies across the world.

The Prime Minister said technology, data, knowledge and innovation have become important sources of power in the 21st century. The government constant endeavour is to ensure that India's capabilities open new doors of opportunity for other countries as well.

"India is the Mother of Democracy and it has over 100 languages, around 80,000 registered newspapers and publications, and more than 1,000 satellite television channels." He highlighted that India had lifted 25 crore people out of poverty over the past decade.

'India's startup ecosystem shows steady growth'

Modi said India's startup ecosystem has expanded significantly since 2014, with the number of startups crossing 2,50,000. He noted that nearly

KPSC scam: SC allows Karnataka to replace 2 SIT members

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday modified a Karnataka High Court order directing a fresh probe into two recruitment cases involving the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), allowing the state to suggest replacements for two members of the Special Investigation Team (SIT).

A bench comprising Justices Manoj Misra and Vijay Bishnoi

directed that a revised SIT be constituted within 10 days. The Karnataka DGP will nominate an officer not below the rank of Additional Director General of Police to head the team. The HC will subsequently review the SIT's composition.

The state had challenged the HC's September 21 order, objecting to its selection of SIT members.

QUICK READ

Anti-drug activist shot dead by medical store owner in Punjab

CHANDIGARH

Anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh alias Jhota, known for raising his voice against drug abuse and the illegal sale of addictive substances at chemist shops, was shot dead in broad daylight in a busy market in Punjab's Mansa town. Police are on the lookout for the medical store owner, who chased and opened fire on the activist and his companions as the public watched in horror, allegedly enraged over being questioned for the sale of addictive drugs to an elderly man. The incident has invited widespread condemnation from political leaders, who cornered the ruling AAP government over the deterioration of law and order in the state. Following the murder, the activist's supporters held a protest outside the Civil Hospital in Mansa, while his family refused to cremate the body. Jhota's father slammed the AAP government, saying that drugs are sold openly in the state and his son was killed while fighting the menace.

Drones hit ships in Black Sea, sinking one, prompting rescue ops

SOFIA

Drones struck two ships in the Black Sea off Bulgaria on Tuesday, sinking one and prompting emergency rescue operations, Prime Minister Rumen Radev said. Rescuers evacuated all 15 crew members from one ship, the Maltese-flagged Chelsea 3, with five receiving treatment for minor injuries, Radev said in a video posted to social media. The crew, which included seven Ukrainian citizens and eight Azerbaijan citizens, reported the ship's deck and hull were hit by three aerial drones. One crew member from the sunken vessel was rescued, Radev added, without providing details about the others aboard. The strikes on the two ships occurred 18 and 17 miles (29 and 27.5 km) from the Bulgarian coast. During an emergency meeting of Bulgaria's Security Council on Tuesday, Radev called the attacks "absolutely unacceptable" and said Bulgaria was seeking NATO and European Union assistance.



Quick Read



Bengaluru's Chakravayuha to be recreated for Durga Puja

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The RT Nagar Socio Cultural Trust will celebrate its 20th year of Durga Puja with a 7,500-sq-ft theme pandal depicting the Mahabharata's Chakravayuha at Gate 9, Palace Grounds, from October 15 to 21. The theme draws parallels between the legendary formation and Bengaluru life, where residents often feel trapped in complex cycles. The pandal will feature art, craft, technology and mechanical elements, including rotating structures. Organisers expect more than the 2.5 lakh visitors recorded last year. The programme includes folk singer Poushali Banerjee on October 16, performers from Nagaland's Hornbill Festival and a 100-woman Dhunuchi Naach performance on October 17. The Nandi sisters will perform on October 18, while singer Nikita Gandhi is scheduled for October 20. Entry and parking will be free.

K-RERA holds builders liable for project expenses

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-RERA) has ruled that builders cannot pass on project-related expenses to homebuyers before handing over possession. In an order concerning a Kengeri apartment, the authority directed a private builder to remove 18% GST levied on Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) charges for domestic water supply and correct the buyer's payment statements. K-RERA said promoters remain responsible for municipal taxes, water and electricity charges, maintenance and other statutory dues until possession is handed over. The authority also rejected the builder's claim for delay interest for more than 600 days, noting the absence of documentary evidence proving payment delays. The buyer had additionally disputed ₹18,487 in extra charges. K-RERA directed the builder to justify the GST collection and issue refunds wherever applicable.

KARNATAKA QUOTA APPEAL

Karnataka to consider SC appeal on quota

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka government will consider approaching the Supreme Court after the High Court struck down provisions of a 2022 law that increased reservation for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara said on Tuesday. Parameshwara said the state Cabinet would decide the next course of action, including whether to challenge the High Court's order. The ruling concerns the law that raised reservation for SCs from 15% to 17% and for STs from 3% to 7%.

The changes, introduced during the tenure of former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, raised the overall reservation quota in Karnataka from 50% to 56%, including the existing 32% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

"When our government

Siddaramaiah seeks court relief over social media video

The former chief minister has sought judicial intervention as his son alleges a campaign to damage his reputation.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has approached a court seeking a stay on alleged false publicity against him on social media, while his son, Minister Yathindra Siddaramaiah, dismissed a controversial video as fake.

Yathindra on Tuesday alleged that the video was part of a conspiracy to tarnish his father's image and spread false propaganda. He said a complaint had also been filed seeking action against those responsible for circulating it.

"There was false publicity against me on social media. Hence, I am seeking a stay," Siddaramaiah told reporters, without elaborating on the legal proceedings.

Rejecting suggestions that the video amounted to a sting operation, Yathindra said it was intended to damage the veteran Congress leader's reputation.

"This is not a sting operation but a conspiracy to spread false propaganda and tarnish someone's image," he said.

Yathindra questioned whether the allegations should



The political situation today has deteriorated to such a low level. Even a senior leader like Siddaramaiah has to face such false allegations.

— Yathindra Siddaramaiah, Urban Development Minister

be allowed to circulate without a response, arguing that people unaware of the facts could mistake the video for genuine material.

"They are spreading false propaganda. Can we simply sit back and watch?" he asked.

Asked about the political climate that had prompted his father to seek legal interven-

tion, Yathindra said even senior leaders were increasingly facing what he described as baseless allegations.

Yathindra said his father had informed him about the video soon after it surfaced and expressed his intention to file a complaint. He advised Siddaramaiah to proceed after obtaining legal advice.

YATHINDRA DEFENDS FATHER

Karnataka Minister Yathindra Siddaramaiah has defended his father amid a social media video controversy. He rejected the suggestion that the video was a sting operation, describing it instead as an alleged conspiracy to spread propaganda. Yathindra said his father decided to file a complaint after the video surfaced and acted on legal advice. He also expressed concern that people unfamiliar with the facts could believe the video was genuine.

Siddaramaiah Video Row

- **Court move:** Siddaramaiah seeks a stay on alleged false publicity on social media.
- **Video controversy:** Yathindra calls the video fake and alleges a conspiracy to tarnish his father's image.
- **Complaint filed:** Yathindra seeks action against those responsible for circulating the video.

The minister added that there was no reason to feel disheartened if one had done nothing wrong, while expressing concern over the state of the political system.

"Once we enter politics, we have to face whatever comes our way," he said.

Zameer sets four-month deadline for housing project

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan has directed officials to complete the construction of houses at Mangala Grama in Maligondanahalli, under the Yeshwanthpur Assembly constituency, within four months and hand them over to beneficiaries with all basic amenities.

During his visit to the locality, the minister inspected the ongoing construction work being undertaken by the Slum Development Board and instructed officials to expedite the project to meet the deadline.

He stressed that the houses should be completed within the stipulated period and handed over only after ensuring the availability of basic infrastructure and essential facilities. The direction is aimed at ensuring that beneficiaries can occupy their houses with the necessary amenities in place.

Samatha Sainika Dal representative Venkataswamy and Slum Development Board Commissioner Raghavendra were present during the inspection.

The minister's visit provided an opportunity to review the progress of the housing project and issue directions regarding its timely completion.

Govt to review police action against anti-CEC protesters

The state government has promised scrutiny of police conduct after demonstrators and journalists reportedly faced force during Monday's protest.



Police action under scrutiny

Review ordered

The Karnataka government will examine the police response to Monday's anti-CEC protest in Bengaluru.

Media personnel targeted

Two photojournalists and three reporters were allegedly manhandled by four police personnel while covering the demonstration.

Our responsibility is not merely to maintain law and order, but to create an environment where every citizen can express dissent freely, peacefully and without fear.

— Priyank Kharge
Karnataka Home Minister

threat to law and order, but as a democratic right that the system must safeguard.

Kharge also appealed to protesters to cooperate with the police and inform the authorities about demonstrations to ensure the safety of participants and the protection of others' rights.

"The police are here to protect your rights, not to stand in the way of your voice," he said.

The government's announcement comes amid questions over the handling of the demonstration and the treatment of media personnel covering the protest. The proposed review is expected to examine the police response as the government reiterates its commitment to safeguarding peaceful dissent.

IAS officer booked for assault on police in Bengaluru pub

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

An Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre and three others have been booked for allegedly assaulting police personnel and obstructing them from discharging their duties during a late-night inspection at a bar and restaurant in Bengaluru.

The case was registered at Cubbon Park police station on October 10 against Vikas Marmat, Special Officer of the Kuppam Area Development Authority in Andhra Pradesh, and three others identified as Abhay Uday Singh, Nitish and Roshan.

According to the FIR, the incident occurred between 1

am and 1.30 am on October 10 at Cavore, a bar and restaurant on Residency Road.

Police Inspector Arun Salunke of the Special Enquiry Wing of the Central Crime Branch (CCB), who filed the complaint, said he and his team were inspecting bars and restaurants under the Cubbon Park and Ashok Nagar police station limits on the directions of the Bengaluru City Police Commissioner.

When the team reached the establishment and began checking customers' identity cards to verify their age, the four men allegedly picked a quarrel with the police personnel.

KIA showcases K'taka's heritage for Dasara

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) is celebrating Dasara 2026 with live cultural performances, traditional art installations and interactive experiences showcasing Karnataka's rich artistic and cultural heritage. The festivities will continue until October 17 across the airport's terminals.

A major attraction is the Dasara Gomme display at the Terminal 2 arrival forecourt, curated by Padma Shri awardee and puppeteer Anupama Hoskere. The airport will also host a Togalu Gombeyatta shadow-puppetry performance by ninth-generation puppeteer Gunduraju and his team on October 16, from 6 pm to 8 pm at the T2 arrival forecourt.

Passengers can participate in hands-on activities celebrating the State's traditional crafts. The Channapatna Experience Centre offers opportunities to paint traditional



lacquered wooden toys, while the Terracotta Experience Centre allows visitors to paint figurines inspired by Karnataka's terracotta traditions.

Traditional Karnataka board games, including Huli Kuri, Saalu Aata, Aligulimane and Chowkabara, will feature in a dedicated games zone, offering travellers an opportunity to explore indigenous recreational traditions.

Dollu Kunita, the traditional drum dance, is among the cultural performances being presented as part of the celebrations.

According to KIA, the initiative aims to make cultural

discovery an integral part of the passenger experience rather than limiting celebrations to festive decorations. The activities are rooted in authentic Karnataka art and craft forms, allowing travellers to engage with the stories and skills behind the State's traditions.

Dasara, celebrated as Naada Habba or the State festival, is particularly associated with Mysuru, where elaborate festivities mark Karnataka's cultural identity. Through the airport-wide programme, KIA seeks to bring the State's living heritage to residents and visitors travelling through Bengaluru.

Quick Read



Congress, INDIA bloc demand CEC's removal

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

Congress workers and INDIA bloc leaders staged a protest at Jagat Circle, demanding the cancellation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The demonstration was led by District Congress president Dr Kiran Deshmukh, with protesters raising slogans against the Union government and opposing the SIR exercise. As part of the protest, demonstrators burnt a poster of Gyanesh Kumar at Jagat Circle. They alleged that the Union government was attempting to suppress activists' voices and weaken democratic dissent. The protesters demanded that the SIR process be scrapped and the Chief Election Commissioner removed from office. Congress workers and INDIA bloc leaders participated in the demonstration, urging the authorities to act on their demands.

Civic body warns of Rs 50,000 fine for waste dumping

CH NEWS, RAICHUR

The City Corporation has warned owners of vacant plots that fines ranging from Rs 5,000 to Rs 50,000 will be imposed for failing to maintain cleanliness and allowing garbage and construction debris to accumulate on their properties. In a public notice, the civic body has directed plot owners to clean their vacant sites within seven days. If owners fail to comply with the directive, the corporation will undertake the cleaning work using its machinery and staff. The expenses will be calculated based on the size of the plot and the quantity of waste dumped on the premises. The corporation has urged property owners to keep their sites clean and cooperate with authorities to prevent waste accumulation and maintain cleanliness across the city.

AAP MLA Anil Jha charges BJP with horse-trading, seeks stricter law

CH NEWS, BIDAR

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Anil Jha has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of engineering defections to destabilise opposition parties and governments, urging opposition parties to unite and press for stricter anti-defection legislation in Parliament.

Addressing the media in Bidar, Jha alleged that political manoeuvres were being used to weaken the Congress and other opposition parties. He referred to splits in the Nationalist Congress Party led by Sharad Pawar and the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, as well as political developments involving the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal and the Biju Janata Dal in Odisha.

Claiming that around 25 MLAs could be targeted in the latest developments, Jha proposed that legislators elected on party tickets be barred from switching parties for five years. He also called for a 10-year ban on contesting elections for those who defect.

Jha questioned the BJP's financial growth, alleging that its assets had increased around 3,500 times over the past 12 years. He claimed the party's bank balance had risen from ap-



Farmers block highway, demand Rs 5,500 per tonne of sugarcane

CH NEWS, VIJAYAPURA

Farmers staged a road blockade at Yalagur Cross near Al-matti in Vijayapura district, demanding that the sugarcane price be fixed at Rs 5,500 per tonne and their long-pending demands be fulfilled.

The protest was organised under the leadership of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha Hasiru Sene following the failure of a meeting of farmers in Delhi to resolve their demands.

The protesters urged the government to implement the recommendations of the M.S. Swaminathan Commission to ensure remunerative returns for farmers. They also demanded that the Union government procure 100% of the ethanol produced by sugar factories.

Further, they sought an increase in the minimum selling price of sugar from Rs 30 to Rs 60 per kg, arguing that better returns were necessary to address the financial difficulties faced by farmers.

Raising slogans in support of the farming community, the protesters called on the authorities to intervene and resolve their concerns. They



They also demanded that the Union government procure 100% of the ethanol produced by sugar factories

stressed that farmers needed fair prices for their produce amid mounting agricultural costs and other challenges.

The blockade disrupted traffic on the busy highway, leaving hundreds of vehicles stranded in long queues on both sides of the road. Commuters faced considerable inconvenience as traffic movement was affected during the protest.

The farmers reiterated their demand for immediate government intervention and concrete measures to safeguard their livelihoods and ensure better returns for sugarcane growers.



ed statement and demanded legal action.

Association president Raghupati Sharanappa said the remarks had caused anxiety among tipper owners, drivers, workers and their families, whose livelihoods depended on the vehicles.

He said disagreements and problems involving overloaded vehicles should be resolved through lawful means rather than threats. Statements about setting vehicles on fire could create fear among the public and endanger the livelihoods of hundreds of families, he said.

The association urged the authorities to examine the MLA's statement and take appropriate action under the



Opposition raises concerns over dissent

Jha accused the Union government of suppressing democratic dissent by registering multiple FIRs against leaders and members of the INDIA bloc. He urged opposition parties to unite against what he described as restrictions on peaceful protests and called for stronger legal safeguards against political defections.

democratic governments should facilitate peaceful demonstrations rather than restrict them.

He warned that governments risked facing public backlash if they ignored people's concerns and urged the Centre to uphold constitutional values and democratic freedoms.

Jha further demanded an investigation into the assets of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and his family members and called for the CEC's removal from office.



ASHA workers demand Rs 15,000 monthly honorarium

Hundreds march from Jagat Circle to Zilla Panchayat office, highlighting delayed payments, inadequate equipment and increasing workload.

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

Hundreds of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) workers staged a protest in Kalaburagi, demanding a minimum monthly honorarium of Rs 15,000 and the fulfilment of their long-pending demands.

Organised by the district unit of the Karnataka State Samyukta ASHA Workers' Association, the protest began at Jagat Circle, from where the workers marched to the Zilla Panchayat office, braving the scorching sun.

Association district president Shivalingamma Nandur said the government had failed to fulfil their demand for minimum wages despite repeated appeals over the past three to four years. She alleged that an earlier assurance to provide an honorarium of Rs 10,000 per month had also not been implemented.

She said ASHA workers were assigned numerous app-based tasks but had received only SIM cards, without mobile phones. Their honorari-



Rs 5,000 paid now, after 15 years	Rs 10,000 promised earlier, not paid	Rs 15,000 demanded, with incentives
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ums were also frequently delayed by three to four months, causing financial hardship.

Several Primary Health Centres lacked data entry operators, she said, adding that work performed by ASHA workers was not always recorded properly, affecting their incentive payments.

Shivalingamma also raised concerns over duties related to tuberculosis patients, alleging that workers were required to collect sputum samples and transport them to hospitals themselves. She demanded

proper arrangements for the safe handling and transportation of samples.

Association honorary district president V.G. Desai said ASHA workers had served for 15 years and handled nearly 30 types of responsibilities while receiving an honorarium of only Rs 5,000.

Citing Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Haryana and Delhi, he said ASHA workers in those States received monthly honorariums of Rs 15,000 or more. He urged Karnataka to provide workers

Homeless protesters demand house sites, threaten extreme step

CH NEWS, YADGIR

The sit-in protest by Slum Janandolana Karnataka and the Savitribai Phule Women's Organisation, demanding house sites for landless families, entered its seventh day in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Yadgir.

The protesters warned of consuming poison if the district administration failed to provide a written assurance on allotting house sites. They announced that their agitation would continue under the slogan "Give Us Sites or Give Us Poison".

According to the protesters, the district administration had promised six years ago to allot government land at Mundargi to eligible beneficiaries following an agitation for housing sites for landless families in Yadgir city. However, the promised land has not been allotted, prompting the organisations to resume their protest.

Organisation secretary Renuka Saradagi said women had left their families during the Navaratri festival to participate in the agitation outside the Deputy Commissioner's office.



Organisation secretary Renuka Saradagi said women had left their families during the Navaratri festival to participate in the agitation

She said the organisations had staged protests on earlier occasions, but their demand remained unresolved. The protesters said they would not withdraw the agitation until officials gave them a written assurance regarding the allotment of sites.

The organisations reiterated that landless families had been waiting for years for the promised housing sites and urged the administration

What they want

- 1** A minimum honorarium of Rs 15,000 a month, including incentives
- 2** Timely payments: honorariums are often three to four months late
- 3** Digital equipment: workers got SIM cards but no mobile phones
- 4** Safe arrangements to handle and transport sputum samples

with a minimum monthly payment of Rs 15,000, including incentives.

Association district secretary Geetha Badiger, AIU-TUC district secretary S.M. Sharma, and leaders Tayamma Naribol, Sangeetha Nayikodi, Bhagyajyoti, Yallamma Chittapur and Lakshmi Jera-tagi participated in the protest along with hundreds of ASHA workers. They urged the government to ensure timely payments, provide digital equipment and improve working conditions.

Still waiting

since land at Mundargi was promised

6 years
of the sit-in at the DC's office

7th day

to resolve the issue without further delay.

Hanumanth Shahapurkar, Sangeeta Happal, Eramma Kolar, Yankamma Malikeri, Shankamma Kotimani, Sangeeta Harikeri and Nirmala Sungalkar were among those participating in the protest.

The protesters appealed to the district authorities to honour the earlier assurance and take concrete steps to provide house sites to eligible beneficiaries.

DALIT RESERVATION ROW

Narayanaswamy calls Congress anti-Dalit, seeks Rahul's resignation

CH NEWS, RAICHUR

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Chavadi Narayanaswamy accused the Congress government of being anti-Dalit over its handling of reservations for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). He demanded that the State government approach the Supreme Court immediately to protect reservation benefits for these communities.

Speaking to reporters in Raichur, Narayanaswamy said he was campaigning for BJP leader and sitting MLC Shashil Namoshi in the MLC election. He also planned to campaign in Kalaburagi for two days.

Referring to the reservation issue raised by former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, Narayanaswamy alleged that the Congress government had failed to present its case effectively before the judiciary, resulting in the withdrawal of reservation-related measures. He urged the government to take immediate legal steps to safeguard the interests of SC/ST communities.

Criticising Rahul Gandhi's



protests over the issue, Narayanaswamy questioned his leadership and demanded his resignation as Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. He alleged that the Congress was more interested in destabilising the Union government than securing justice for Dalits.

Narayanaswamy also criticised former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's visit to Delhi to protest over the reservation issue, claiming that the developments had undermined the dignity of Karnataka's leadership. He alleged that Rahul Gandhi had insulted the peo-

ple of Karnataka and questioned the manner in which the former Chief Minister was treated.

He further criticised Siddaramaiah's public remarks about people approaching him with grievances. Narayanaswamy said the former Chief Minister should investigate complaints and resolve problems through the administration rather than make public statements about them. He also alleged that internal disputes within the Congress were adding to the difficulties faced by party leaders.

Referring to Siddarama-

His demands

- The State government should approach the Supreme Court immediately to protect SC/ST reservation benefits
- Rahul Gandhi should resign as Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha
- The Congress government should put SC/ST reservation before its internal conflicts

iah's experience as Chief Minister for eight years, Narayanaswamy said the senior leader was now being targeted by members of his own party and was facing internal political pressure.

He maintained that the Congress government should prioritise protecting SC/ST reservation benefits and addressing the concerns of marginalised communities instead of engaging in internal political conflicts.

Narayanaswamy reiterated that the State government must pursue legal remedies to safeguard reservation benefits and demonstrate its commitment to the welfare of Dalits and other disadvantaged groups.



Quick Read

Private company announces walk-in interview for jobs

CH NEWS, KARWAR

The Karwar Project Employment Exchange has announced a walk-in interview to fill vacancies at Swatantra Micropin Limited, a private company. The interview will be held on October 15, from 10 am to 2.30 pm, at Chandavara Road, Kumta, near Heravatta Post Office. Candidates who have completed SSLC, PUC, ITI or any degree are eligible to attend. Both men and women aged 18 to 30 can apply. Job locations include Karwar, Ankola, Kumta, Honnavar, Murudeshwar, Sirsi and Siddapur. Interested candidates must carry a copy of their resume. For details, contact 8277005959, 8951460061 or 08382-226386, or visit the employment exchange office.

WALK-IN ON OCTOBER 15
10 AM TO 2.30 PM, KUMTA

Students must apply for NMMS scholarship before deadline

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Applications are invited for the National Meanscum-Merit Scholarship (NMMS) examination for the 2026–27 academic year. The last date to apply online is October 31. Students studying in Class 8 at government, aided and local body schools are eligible to apply. The online application facility opened on September 23 through the NMMS login on the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board website. School heads and vice-principals across the district have been instructed to submit eligible students' applications online without fail. For further details, students and schools can contact their respective Taluk Block Education Officers or the District Nodal Officer, the DIET principal stated.

LAST DATE TO APPLY
OCTOBER 31

Academy hosts conference on rare mineral security

CH NEWS, KARWAR

The Karnataka Science and Technology Academy will organize a two-day national conference on "Security of Rare Mineral Value Chain for Sustainable Development" on November 4 and 5 at its office. Scientists from reputed institutions will deliver technical lectures. Scientists, mining industry representatives, researchers, academicians, officials, entrepreneurs, startups, buyers and exporters can participate. Young scientists and research scholars can also present papers, with a cash prize for the selected paper. Interested participants must register by October 30 at <https://forms.gle/wgyoGKPoZ-VK8RjhcA>. For details, contact 9620767819 or 9743084194, or visit <https://kstacademy.in>, said Dr. Anand R., Academy CEO.

CONFERENCE ON
NOVEMBER 4 AND 5
REGISTER BY OCTOBER 30

Karnataka plans overseas offices to attract more investments

Patil stressed that Karnataka must compete for global investments by studying each country's industrial strengths and specialised sectors before planning strategies.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Government is considering opening Invest Karnataka Forum (IKF) offices in the United States, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and France to attract more foreign investment into the state's industrial sector, Minister for Large and Medium Industries M.B. Patil said on Tuesday.

The proposal was discussed at a meeting of the IKF Board of Directors held at Khanija Bhavan. Patil directed officials to examine the benefits and challenges of opening offices in these countries, consult relevant stakeholders and submit a detailed report before taking further steps.

"There is strong competition among states to attract industrial investment. Some states have already taken steps to establish offices in these countries. Karnataka cannot afford to fall behind. We must study each country's industrial strengths and specialised sectors before deciding on the right approach," Patil said.

He noted that Karnataka's economy was entering an important phase, with growing opportunities in manufacturing, semiconductors, aerospace and defence. Attracting investments from international markets has therefore become a priority for the government.

The minister said discussions had also covered appointing qualified professionals to head IKF offices in selected countries. In other loca-



Minister M.B. Patil at the meeting of the Invest Karnataka Forum Board of Directors at Khanija Bhavan in Bengaluru.

Patil warns KIADB plot defaulters of cancellation

Minister for Large and Medium Industries M.B. Patil has directed officials to cancel industrial plot allotments under KIADB rules if entrepreneurs fail to make payments within the prescribed period.

At a review meeting at Khanija Bhavan, he warned that officials who failed to enforce the rules would face action.

Allottees must pay 30 per

cent of the amount within one month. An additional month may be granted upon request, with 10 per cent interest. If payment remains pending, the allotment must be cancelled.

Patil said high demand required strict enforcement and urged officials to allot recovered plots to financially capable investors. Senior Industries Department and Karnataka Udyoga Mitra officials attended the meeting.

There is strong competition among states to attract industrial investment. Karnataka cannot afford to fall behind."

— M.B. Patil, Minister for Large and Medium Industries

He stressed that Karnataka must engage directly with potential investors in their home countries to explain the state's industrial opportunities. Without such efforts, investors could choose other states for their projects, he warned.

Aequus Group CEO Aravind Melligeri attended the meeting virtually. Industries Department Principal Secretary S. Selvakumar, Commissioner of Industries Khushboo Goyal and IKF Chief Operating Officer Praveen were also present.

tions, the government is considering appointing country leads through the forum. Another meeting will be held soon to continue discussions and take the proposal forward. Patil said the government had restructured IKF after

coming to power to make it more active and effective in attracting investments. With the new industrial policy identifying priority sectors, the state is seeking to strengthen its position in the global investment market.

Gadag reservation list review sought for panchayat elections

CH NEWS, GADAG

Kanth Pujar, Gadag district president of the State SC/ST Fake Caste Certificate Prevention Committee, has demanded a review of reservation allocations for the upcoming Taluk Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat elections.

In a public statement, Pujar said the draft reservation list for the 2026 Gadag Taluk Panchayat elections had been released. According to him, all seven constituencies reserved for Scheduled Tribes (ST) in Gadag taluk had been

allotted to ST women, leaving male social workers, party activists and community leaders without an opportunity to contest from these seats.

Pujar argued that the reservation process should follow the rotation system under the Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act, 1993. He said constituencies reserved for women in one election term should be considered for the general ST category in the subsequent term, wherever applicable under the rules.

He expressed concern that allocating all seven ST-re-

7 Taluk Panchayat seats reserved for STs in Gadag taluk, all allotted to ST women in the draft list

served constituencies to women could limit opportunities for ST male candidates. He urged the authorities to review the draft list and consider distributing the seats more evenly between ST men and women.

The committee has demanded that at least three or four of the seven constituencies be allotted to ST general candidates, with the remain-

ing seats reserved for ST women, subject to the applicable legal provisions and rotation rules.

Pujar appealed to the concerned authorities to examine the issue seriously and ensure fair opportunities for eligible candidates. He said a review of the reservation list was necessary to address the concerns raised by ST male aspirants ahead of the elections.

Tangadagi says opposition sting operation plot will be exposed

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj S. Tangadagi has alleged that a conspiracy by opposition parties behind the reported sting operation against him would soon be exposed. Speaking to reporters at Arasu Bhavan on Tuesday, he accused opposition leaders of trying to damage the state government's image because they could not tolerate its development initiatives.

Tangadagi alleged that opposition parties were waiting for opportunities to



level accusations against the government and create divisions within its ranks. He said Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had advised ministers to remain cautious. Referring to Union Minister H.D. Ku-

maraswamy's repeated claims about possessing a pen drive, Tangadagi said the government was taking precautions against possible allegations. These were the minister's claims, and he did not provide evidence to establish the alleged conspiracy.

He said political opponents were natural in public life but should appreciate good work regardless of party differences. He criticised leaders who, according to him, were making allegations despite failing to undertake development projects while in

power. Tangadagi added that he had no personal experience with sting operations and was willing to speak openly with the media.

The minister also discussed the selection process for Karnataka Rajyotsava Awards. Five sub-committees have been formed to examine nominations and recommend eligible candidates in a one-to-two ratio. Their reports will be considered at the next advisory committee meeting.

The Karnataka Ratna Awards have been an-

'Officials must act against waste and water shortages'



District In-charge Secretary Dr. N. Manjula with officials during her visit to Chintamani taluk.

CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPURA

District In-charge Secretary Dr. N. Manjula has directed officials to launch a special drive to clear plastic and other waste from roads connecting towns across Chikkaballapura district.

She issued the instructions while chairing a Disaster Management Committee meeting at the Chintamani Taluk Panchayat Hall on Tuesday.

Manjula stressed the need for proper waste disposal across all urban local bodies. Although GPS systems have been installed in garbage collection vehicles, senior officials must regularly monitor the data and ensure timely waste clearance. She called for better supervision to maintain cleanliness along roadsides and in urban areas.

The meeting also reviewed the district's drinking water situation. With rainfall recorded at 51 per cent below normal, all eight taluks have been declared severely drought-affected. Currently, 48 villages are facing drinking water shortages, and another 285 villages may experience similar problems if there is no rainfall over the next two months. Officials were instructed to identify private borewells and seek owners' cooperation to ensure water supply. Eleven urban wards are already facing shortages, requiring advance planning to address further difficulties.

The secretary reviewed the progress of the Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj departments, along with urban local bodies. She provided guidance to officials on improving implementation and addressing local issues.

Before the meeting, Manjula visited Vasanthahalli village under Kotagal Gram Panchayat in Chintamani taluk and heard residents' concerns about drinking water. She later inspected the Science Park at the Government High School in K. Raguttahalli village. She also visited the Government First Grade College and Post-Graduate Centre, Ambedkar Bhavan, and the Government Women and Children's Hospital in Chintamani to review their conditions.

District Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Dr. Y. Naveen Bhat, Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr. N. Bhaskar, Assistant Commissioner D.H. Ashwin, Deputy Secretary Atiq Pasha, and other district and taluk-level officials attended the meeting.

Students learn disaster safety and emergency response

BAGEPALLI: My Bharat Chikkaballapura organized a disaster management awareness programme at the Government ITI College in Bagepalli on Tuesday to mark the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Students learned about natural and human-made disasters, their risks, safety precautions, emergency response and post-disaster relief and rehabilitation. The session highlighted ways to prevent loss of life and property during emergencies.

Organizers stressed that preparedness, timely action and public cooperation are essential for disaster management. Students were encouraged to spread awareness in society.

District Youth Officer A. Mahendra Reddy, Principal Manjunatha Gowda, Taluk Fire Officer Lakshman, fire department representative Balappa, faculty members and students attended.

AFFIDAVIT

I, **Smt. K. Lavanya**, W/o Sri. Kuttibabu K., aged about 42 years, R/at Bengaluru - 560099, hereby declare that my name is correctly mentioned as **Smt. K. Lavanya** in my Aadhaar Card, PAN Card and Voter ID, but is wrongly mentioned as **Smt. G. Lavanya** in my Passport. Hence, I request the concerned authorities to correct my name in the Passport as **Smt. K. Lavanya**. Vide Affidavit Date 13.10.2026 sworn to before **P. C. RAMAIAH**, Notary & Advocate, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Murugesapandi S/o** Thangavel R/ o Flat B001, SLV Sankalpa Apartment Survey No 2 Hosa Road Bhuvanewari Layout **N a g a n a t h a p u r a** Naganathapura Electronics City Bengaluru Karnataka - 560100, I have changed the name of my minor daughter **Magizhini** to **Magizhini Murugesapandi** aged 6 years

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client by name Sri. Mahalingaiah C.S son of Sri. Siddalingaiah, residing at: Hunasannahalli Village, Kanakapura Taluk and Bangalore South District, has lost Original Registered Sale Deed dated 19-03-2022, executed by Smt. Sukanya. K.R and her Children in favour of Smt. Sheela. B.G, which is duly registered as Document No. KNK-1-15047/2021-22, CD. No. KNKDL1363, Book-1, Registered on 19-03-2022 and Registered at Sub Register office, Kanakapura, while Xerox at Kanakapura Town on 10-09-2026. Hence, if anyone found the said document, please intimate the same or handover the same to me or my client.

Place: Ramanagara.
Date: 13-10-2026.

Contact Address: Rajini. M.S., B.A., LL.B., Advocate, 1st Floor, Society Building, PLD Bank Road, Opposite Old Bus Stop, Ramanagara Town-562159.
Mob: 8884242935.

CLASSIFIED

To Place Classified ad
Contact : 080-41209042

INAUGURATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS SET

Mandya prepares for Chief Minister's visit on October 31

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar is scheduled to visit Mandya district on October 31 to inaugurate completed development projects and lay foundation stones for new works. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar has directed officials to complete all preparations well in advance to ensure the programme runs smoothly.

Chairing a preparatory meeting at his office, Dr. Kumar instructed departments to submit verified lists of projects ready for inauguration or foundation-laying. The details must include accurate technical information and official signatures. He said draft lists would not be



accepted. Project details, including costs and progress, must be finalized in coordination with the respective MLAs.

The programme will be held on the Mandya University campus. Officials have been directed to arrange the stage, seating, drinking water, food, sanitation and public access facilities. Committees have been formed, with responsibilities assigned to ensure proper coordination among departments.

Officials must also submit

detailed information about government welfare schemes and beneficiaries. Records should clearly show the number of people who have already received benefits, assistance ready for distribution and the progress of ongoing schemes. Accurate statistics will be required for the Chief Minister's programme.

As around 40,000 people are expected to attend, arrangements for food and drinking water must be adequate. Departments have also been asked to establish exhibition stalls showcasing their schemes, achievements and public services.

District Superintendent of Police Dr. Shobharani V.J. said around 800 buses were

planned to transport visitors. Designated parking areas, signboards and traffic management measures would be arranged. Barricades and security arrangements would also be made at the helipad where the Chief Minister's helicopter is expected to land. Officials will ensure cleanliness, public safety and law and order.

The meeting was attended by Project Director Chandrashekhar, Agriculture Department Joint Director Jayaswamy G.S., Food and Civil Supplies Joint Director Prateek Hegde, District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr. Bettaswamy, Mandya University Vice-Chancellor Kalpashree and other district-level officials.

Quick Read

Venu Srinivasan visits Chamarareshwara Temple

CH NEWS, CHAMARAJANAGAR

TVS Motor Company Chairman Emeritus Venu Srinivasan arrived by helicopter in Chamaraajanagar and offered prayers at the historic Chamarareshwara Temple. He performed Panchamrita Abhishek to Lord Chamarareshwara and saffron archana to Kempnanjamba Devi and Sri Chamundeswari Devi. Priests explained the temple's history and traditions. Srinivasan was informed about the temple's upcoming 200th anniversary and assured cooperation in its development. Temple executive officer Rajashekhar was present. After the visit, Srinivasan travelled to his coffee estate at Bedaguli in Chamaraajanagar taluk.

State-level under-14 chess tournament begins Oct 15

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

A state-level chess tournament for the Under-14 category for the 2026-27 academic year will be held at MMDRS, Hirebenakal, in Gangavathi taluk on October 15. The tournament is being organised jointly by the Koppal district administration, Zilla Panchayat, School Education Department and other local authorities. The inauguration is scheduled for 10 am on Thursday. The programme will include flag hoisting, lighting of the sports torch, administration of the sports pledge and an inaugural ceremony. MMDRS principals Rajeshwari and Ramalingappa, Block Education Officer H.B. and other education officials and teachers' association representatives are expected to participate.

Mahalakshmi Mahila Mandala celebrates temple anniversary

CH NEWS, GADAG

The Mahalakshmi Mahila Mandala celebrated the first anniversary of the Mahalakshmi Temple at Gaddadevaramath Oni in Shahapur Peth with special religious programmes during Navaratri and Dasara. The celebrations included special prayers and a Rudrabhisheka ceremony, attended by members of the Mahila Mandala. The women participated in the programme with devotion and enthusiasm. A special highlight of the event was that all members of the Mahalakshmi Mahila Mandala wore sarees of the same colour, adding unity and beauty to the anniversary celebration.

FIR registered against 20 activists over Somanna car gherao

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

Police have registered a suo motu FIR against 20 Youth Congress and NSUI activists for allegedly surrounding Union Minister V. Somanna's car and displaying black flags on B.H. Road in Shivamogga on Monday. According to police, the incident occurred when Somanna was travelling from the city's private bus stand towards Parekh Vinayaka Mall to attend a private event. The activists allegedly surrounded the moving vehicle, displayed black flags along with Congress and NSUI flags, and raised slogans against the BJP-led Central Government. They also reportedly attempted to block the minister's vehicle. Police personnel intervened immediately and removed the protesters from around the car, clearing the way for the minister to continue his journey.

Anna Seve App launches statewide for easy ration e-KYC

Food Minister Rizwan Arshad announced in Bengaluru an initiative enabling PDS and Anna Bhagya beneficiaries to complete processes without visiting shops or offices

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka's Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs will make the Anna Seve mobile app available across the state from October 14, allowing ration card beneficiaries to complete their electronic Know Your Customer (e-KYC) verification from home. Food Minister Rizwan Arshad announced the initiative in Bengaluru, stating that the app would help beneficiaries of Public Distribution System (PDS) schemes, including Anna Bhagya, complete the process without visiting fair price shops or government offices. Developed jointly by the

National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Department of e-Governance, the app uses facial authentication technology provided by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). Beneficiaries can download it free from the Google Play Store.

e-KYC Deadline Set For October 20

The app was initially tested in eight districts, including Bengaluru, Udupi, Uttara Kanna-da and Ballari. During the pilot phase from October 1 to 12, around 1,60,267 beneficiaries completed their e-KYC using the app.

According to the department, Karnataka has approximately 2.67 crore PDS bene-

ficiaries, of whom more than 2.06 crore have already completed the verification process.

However, the department has clarified that beneficiaries who completed their e-KYC a year ago must also repeat the process. The final deadline for completing the verification is October 20.

Relief For Elderly Beneficiaries

The new facility is expected to make verification easier for elderly people and others who find it difficult to travel to ration shops or stand in long queues.

Through facial authentication, eligible beneficiaries can complete the required veri-



cation using their mobile phones. The initiative aims to simplify the process and improve access to essential public distribution services. The department has urged ration card holders to complete their e-KYC before the deadline to avoid delays in the verification process.

Key details		
LAUNCH DATE	E-KYC DEADLINE	BENEFICIARY COVERAGE
October 14, statewide rollout	October 20, including repeat verification	2.67 crore PDS beneficiaries
VERIFICATION PROGRESS	PILOT RESULTS	TECHNOLOGY & ACCESS
Over 2.06 crore completed e-KYC	1,60,267 beneficiaries across eight districts	UIDAI facial authentication; free Android app on Google Play Store

Koppal farmers advised to choose crops based on soil moisture

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

The Agriculture Department has advised farmers in Koppal district to select suitable crops and varieties based on soil moisture for the 2026-27 Hingaru (rabi) season to improve yields and reduce cultivation costs. The Joint Director of Agriculture urged farmers to consider soil type, available moisture, rainfall and irrigation facilities before sowing. Farmers were advised to avoid large-scale sowing during the current rainfall deficit and ensure sufficient moisture for crop growth. Crop Selection Based On Soil Conditions Farmers with deep black soil can grow Bengal gram, sorghum and safflower, which are suitable for retaining residual moisture. In medium-depth black soil, sowing decisions should depend on available moisture. Short-duration varieties of Bengal gram and sorghum are recommended for red soil and areas with low moisture retention. In fields lacking sufficient moisture, sowing should be delayed until adequate rainfall occurs.

Bengaluru lawyers demand CEC Gyanesh Kumar's resignation

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Lawyers staged a protest outside Gate 1 of the Karnataka High Court in Bengaluru on Tuesday, opposing the arrests of lawyers and students during a demonstration in Delhi demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

The protesters raised concerns over allegations of voters' names being deleted from electoral rolls and police action against demonstrators. They called for the protection of voting rights and the independence of constitutional institutions.

Lawyers Raise Concerns Over Electoral Process

Lawyer S. Balan accused the Chief Election Commissioner of misusing his constitutional position and alleged that citizens were being deprived of their voting rights. He questioned the statements made to the Supreme Court regarding Form 6 and claimed that Form 7 was being used to target minority communities. He demanded legal action against Kumar and called for his removal.

Balan also criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah over alleged political



interference in constitutional institutions.

Protesters Condemn Police Action

Lawyer and legal activist Narasimhamurthy condemned the alleged police action against lawyers, students and journalists. He said attacks on legal and media professionals were unacceptable and referred to previous arrests of activists, including G.N. Saibaba and Father Stan Swamy, as well as cases linked to Bhima Koregaon.

Appeal For Supreme Court Intervention

M. Muniyappa, president of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lawyers' Association, expressed concern over alleged deletions from electoral rolls and urged the Supreme Court to investigate the matter.

He called on lawyers' asso-

Protection of voting rights and the independence of constitutional institutions

ciations and civil society organisations to join a wider movement to protect democratic rights. He also demanded a review of the 2023 law governing appointments to the Election Commission to safeguard its independence.

Muniyappa criticised the arrests of protesters in Delhi and the removal of students demonstrating at Freedom Park in Bengaluru. He announced plans to lead a delegation to submit a memorandum to the Governor, seeking intervention to protect voting rights and ensure the integrity of the electoral process.

The allegations raised during the protest remain subject to verification.

Spend all welfare funds within timelines: DC



CH NEWS, KARWAR

Deputy Commissioner K. Lakshmi Priya directed all department officers to utilize welfare funds released under Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe schemes within their stipulated deadlines.

Chairing a progress review and District-Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee meeting at her office hall on Tuesday, she stated that welfare delivery must brook no delay. She stressed that funds earmarked for community facilities must directly reach eligible beneficiaries without bureaucratic roadblocks.

Turning to safety and legal protection, Priya instructed officials to provide immediate financial and medical assistance to victims whenever cases of atrocities against SC and ST individuals are reported. Authorities must actively inform these victims about available rehabilitation support. Additionally, she directed officers to immediately inspect sites and clear any encroachments detected on land reserved for community welfare.

Senior officers attended the session, including Zilla Panchayat Deputy Secretary M.S. Allabaksh, Urban Development Cell Project Director Zaheer Abbas, and Social Welfare Department Deputy Director Umesh Y.K. The administration reaffirmed its collective commitment to safeguarding rights, securing reserved lands, and ensuring community members gain total access to every rupee allocated for their ongoing socio-economic progress.

At a glance

- **Strict Fund Deadlines:** Utilize all allocated welfare funds within stipulated periods without delays
- **Immediate Victim Support:** Provide instant financial, medical, and rehabilitation assistance to atrocity victims
- **Land Encroachment Clearance:** Inspect and clear encroachments on lands reserved for community welfare
- **Bureaucratic Accountability:** Ensure welfare benefits reach eligible beneficiaries without administrative hurdles

Koppal plans simple Valmiki Jayanti celebration

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Sri Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti will be celebrated in a simple and symbolic manner across Koppal district on October 26. This quiet observance comes due to the enforcement of the election model code of conduct for the North-East Teachers' Constituency.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Suresh B. Itnal announced this plan during an official preparatory meeting on Tuesday. The Social Welfare Department organised the gathering at the Deputy Commissioner's office hall.

Dr. Itnal explained that strict election rules prevent large public gatherings right now. However, he assured the public that a grand celebration will be held once the election code of conduct ends. The administration will choose the final date after consulting Valmiki community members. Dr. Itnal urged local leaders to

discuss the matter together, select a suitable date, and inform district officials soon.

For the official event on October 26, leaders will offer floral tributes and prayers before Sri Maharshi Valmiki's portrait at 10 am inside the Deputy Commissioner's office hall. The Deputy Commissioner instructed all regional government offices and Gram Panchayats to follow this exact routine by holding quiet prayers on their premises.

Key officials attended the planning session, including Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Varnit Negi, Project Director Manjunath Gundur, and Deputy Director Ajjappa Sogalada. Prominent community leaders, such as Dr. K.N. Patil and Suresh Donni, also participated actively. Everyone agreed to honour the revered sage with deep devotion, while fully respecting the legal election boundaries.

Nitte jackfruit processing unit lies idle, Nemiraj alleges

KARKALA

The jackfruit processing unit established in Nitte village of Karkala taluk to provide employment to rural women is reportedly lying unused. Social activist Belippadi Nemiraj Rai has alleged that the unit exists only in name, raising concerns over the use of government funds and the future of local farmers and women.



KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2, Almatatti- 586201.
E-mail: dam_division@rediffmail.com
No: KBJNL/DDA/PB/TND/2026-27/1736 Dated: 09.10.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal Only)

On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore the undersigned invites tender on Item Rate & Percentage basis from the eligible contractors for the work indents of **Two Cover – (1) I. No. I. No. 3700—371.37 Lakhs (Others) (2) I.No. 3701—318.32 Lakhs (Others)** **The contractor can have access and submit e-tender from 12.10.2026 to 31.10.2026 up to 5-00 Pre-bid meeting on Dt: 22.10.2026 at 11.00 am in the office of Executive Engineer, KBJNL Dam Safety Unit-2 Almatatti, Cover-I opened on Dt: 03.11.2026 at 11-00AM & Financial Bid I.No. will be opened on 06.11.2026 at 11-00 AM** at the Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2 Almatatti. For clarifications office of the undersigned may be contacted during office hours (Phone No. 08426-281027). Further information about electronic tendering can be had from kppp.karnataka.gov.in.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2, Almatatti
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಮಜಯಪುರ/350/ಕೆಎಸ್ ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026-27

CH CLASSIFIEDS



ಹಾಸನ ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ, ಹಾಸನ

HASSAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, HASSAN (An Autonomous Institute under the Dept of Medical Education, Government of Karnataka) SRI CHAMARAJENDRA HOSPITAL CAMPUS, HASSAN
Website: <https://himshassan.karnataka.gov.in/>
Phone/Fax No.08172-231699, 231599,
Email:directorhims@yahoo.com
No :HIMS/TS/EQT/6/2026-TNDR-HIMS-HSNDTE:12.10.2026

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-procurement only) <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

HIMS, Hassan, invites e-tender for supply of Medical Equipment's and other items to various Department of HIMS Teaching Hospital, and Maintenance of Maintenance of STP/ETP Plant of HIMSHassan, from the manufacturer or authorized dealers in two cover bid system as per KTCP Act-1999. Sl. No.Name of the Equipment's 01)ETO Gas Sterilizer Machine 200 ltr with 5 years warranty with consumables and SS Horizontal continuous Bend Sealer Machine 04 Department CSSD Qty 1 EMD Rs 30,000/- 02)2000 LPH RO Plant Department Dialysis Qty 1 EMD Rs 53,000/- 03)EEG Department Psychiatry Qty 1 EMD Rs 17,250/- 04)ECT Department Psychiatry Qty 1 EMD Rs 25,975/- 05)Alcohol Breath Analyzer Department Psychiatry Qty 2 EMDRs 6,250/-
- The Supplier can have access to e-tender documents from 14.10.2026 through website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> on payment of transaction fee (non-refundable) as fixed by e-portal. Last date for submission of tender application is up to 28.10.2026 5:00 p.m., For further details contact the undersigned in the office during working hours or through website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>
Sd/- Chief Administrative officer, Hassan Institute of Medical Science, Hassan.
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಸನು/ಹಾಸನ/607/ಕೆಎಸ್ ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026-27

To place a classified ad contact: 080-41209042

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In The Court Of IV Civil Judge Class-I, District Court, Ujjain
Presiding Officer: श्री अनुराग शर्मा

(आदेश 5 नियम 20 व्यवहार प्रक्रिया संहिता 1908 के अन्तर्गत प्रकाशन हेतु)
(EX.A.0000040/2026)

सुचील गुप्तावादी
Vs
मेसर्स चिक एंड लर्न प्राइवेट लिमिटेड मार्क्स सी ई ओ. श्री वायवुप्रतिवादी

Process Id:- 7026
पेशी दिनांक :- 17/11/2026

प्रतिवादी:-
(1)मेसर्स चिक एंड लर्न प्राइवेट लिमिटेड मार्क्स सी ई ओ वायवु पिता खीन्दन
पता:- 4/1 द्वितीय तल टावर डी बरेरेखु मेन रोड बैंगलुरु कर्नाटक
(2)किंबु पिता वायवु खीन्दन पता:- 4/1 द्वितीय तल टावर डी बरेरेखु मेन रोड बैंगलुरु कर्नाटक
(3)भीरती थिया गोकुलधर पति डी वायवु खीन्दन पता:- 4/1 द्वितीय तल टावर डी बरेरेखु मेन रोड बैंगलुरु कर्नाटक
(4)श्री वायवु पिता खीन्दन पता:- 4/1 द्वितीय तल टावर डी बरेरेखु मेन रोड बैंगलुरु कर्नाटक

यह कि प्रार्थी क्रं.1 सुचील गुप्ता पिता स्व. श्री रामबाबु गुप्ता, आयु-73 वर्ष, व्यवसाय-चिकित्सक, निवासी-एस एस होस्पिटल एवं रिसर्च सेंटर 76 विक्रम मार्ग उज्जैन आदि-3 द्वारा एक जयपत्र प्रवर्तन के लिये आवेदन अर्न्तगत आदेश 21 नियम 11 सीपीसी का न्यायालय द्वारा प्रकरण का निर्णय एवं जयपत्र दिनांक 21/01/2026 के अनुसार आपके विरुद्ध प्रवर्तन के लिए वाद संस्थित किया है, आपको इस न्यायालय में सूचना के प्रकाशन के 30 दिवस के भीतर वाद का उत्तर देने के लिये उपसंज्ञात /हाजिर होने के लिये समन किया जाता है, आप न्यायालय में स्वयं या किसी ऐसे प्लीडर (अधिवक्ता) द्वारा उपसंज्ञात हो सकते है, जिसे सम्यक अनुदेश दिये गये हो और जो इस वाद में संबंधित सभी सारवान कथनों का उत्तर दे सके। आपको यह निर्देश भी दिया जाता है कि उस दिन अपनी प्रतिरक्षा का लिखित कथन प्रस्तुत करें और उस दिन ऐसे सब दस्तावेज जो आपके कब्जे या शक्ति में है ऐश करें जिन पर आपका प्रतिरक्षा या मूजराई का दावा या प्रतिवादा आधारित हो, और यदि आप अन्य किसी दस्तावेज पर चाहें वह आपके कब्जे या शक्ति में हो अपनी प्रतिरक्षा या मुजरा के दावे या प्रतिवादे के समर्थन में साक्ष्य के रूप में निर्भर करते है तो ऐसी सभी दस्तावेज की लिखित कथन के साथ उपलब्ध की जाने वाली सूची में प्रविष्टि करें।
आपको सूचित किया जाता है कि यदि आप उत्तर बताई गई अवधि में इस न्यायालय में उपस्थित नहीं होते तो वाद की एक पक्षीय सुनवाई कर उसका निपटारा आपकी अनुपस्थिति में किया जायेगा। साथ ही यह भी सूचित किया जाता है कि यदि आप निराकरण मध्यस्थ के माध्यम से करने के इच्छुक हैं तो पीठासीन अधिकारी को अवगत करें।

यह आज तारीख 12 October 2026 को मेरे हस्ताक्षर से और न्यायालय की मुद्रा लगा कर दिया गया है।



न्यायालय की मुद्रा

दिपण्डी-प्रवर्तन आवेदन की प्रति संलग्न है। क्र 5 को दैनिक अवधि का समाचार पत्र के उज्जैन संस्करण में प्रकाशन हेतु स्वीकृति क्र 178 पर राशि 1500 रुपये जमा है। स्वीकृति की छायावर्ति संलग्न है। क्र 1 से 4 को आई सी सी वर्ल्ड न्यूज़ प्लेयर के बैंगलुरु संस्करण में प्रकाशन के माध्यम से तारीख की जायेगी। स्वीकृति की छायावर्ति संलग्न है।
कुप्या ध्यान दें:-
1. यदि किसी कारणवश उक्त तिथि को न्यायालय अवकाश पर रहेगा तो आगामी कार्यदिन पर यह प्रकरण सुनवाई में लिया जायेगा।

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Quick Read

Sensex surges over 1,100 points, Nifty gains 1.6%

MUMBAI
Benchmark equity indices rebounded sharply on Tuesday, recovering from the previous session's losses as investor sentiment improved after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman indicated openness to discussions on key market-related taxes, including long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax and securities transaction tax (STT). The Finance Minister said she would be keen to hear the views of market participants on LTCG tax and STT, describing such debates as healthy. Her comments boosted investor confidence and sparked broad-based buying across sectors.



Rupee jumps 77 paise, logs sharp gains for second day

NEW DELHI
The Indian rupee appreciated by 77 paise against the US dollar in early trade on Tuesday, supported by RBI measures aimed at reducing immediate dollar demand and curbing excessive positions in the foreign exchange market. The domestic currency opened at 95.17 and then gained ground to touch 95.05, up 77 paise over its previous close. The measures, including a dedicated dollar window for oil marketing companies through designated banks and higher costs for certain foreign exchange hedging transactions, are expected to reduce dollar demand in the spot market and curb speculative positions against the rupee.

On the outlook for the rupee, experts expect the Indian currency to trade in a 95.60-97.50 per dollar range by end-2026, with most projections clustering around the 96-97 per dollar mark. Earlier in October, the Reserve Bank of India tightened rules governing forex derivatives trades to curtail speculative bets against the rupee and asked banks to create a 20 per cent reserve for dollar purchases of over \$2 million. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.15 per cent lower at 102.43.

Singapore DyPM on India trip to bolster bilateral economic ties

NEW DELHI
Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Energy, Trade, and Industry Minister Gan Kim Yong is on an India trip from October 13 to 15, with the visit reaffirming the long-standing and multifaceted bilateral relationship between the two countries, according to a Singapore government statement. Deputy Prime Minister Gan will be in New Delhi on Tuesday and Wednesday, where he will participate in the 8th Bloomberg New Economy Forum and speak on a panel on how countries are moving towards self-sufficiency globally. A member of the BNE Advisory Board, he will also meet senior Indian government officials and business leaders on the sidelines of the forum. He will visit Chennai on October 15.

FM keeps door open to LTCG tax ahead of Budget 2027

ON THE RUPEE, NIRMALA SITHARAMAN SAID THE RBI WAS FOCUSED ON CURBING EXCESSIVE VOLATILITY RATHER THAN DEFENDING A PARTICULAR EXCHANGE RATE.

NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday declined to rule out changes to the long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax regime, saying preparations for the next Union Budget have begun but it was too early to indicate the government's position. Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum, Sitharaman acknowledged that investors in India and abroad have been raising concerns about the country's capital gains tax framework. She said the government would carefully consider views on the issue as it prepares the Union Budget for 2027-28,

scheduled to be presented on February 1, 2027. The minister also highlighted the securities transaction tax (STT) as a related matter, noting that market participants have questioned whether different asset classes should be treated similarly. She indicated that the government would listen closely to feedback on both taxation issues. Under the current rules, long-term capital gains on listed equities and equity mutual funds held for more than one year are taxed at 12.5 per cent. Gains of up to Rs 1.25 lakh annually are exempt from the tax. These provisions were introduced in the July 2024

Budget, when the government raised the LTCG tax rate from 10 per cent and increased the annual exemption threshold from Rs 1 lakh. The Union Budget 2026 retained the existing capital gains tax structure despite expectations among some market participants for a lower rate or a higher exemption limit. However, it increased the STT applicable to futures and options trades. Industry groups and foreign portfolio investors have argued that India's tax framework affects the competitiveness of domestic equity markets and investment flows. Foreign investors have also remained net sellers of Indian



LTCG on listed equities



Not right moment to say what govt will consider on LTCG

- Sitharaman declines to rule out changes to long-term capital gains taxation.
- Budget 2027-28 is scheduled for presentation on February 1, 2027.
- Listed equities and equity mutual funds currently attract a 12.5 per cent LTCG tax after one year.

equities for extended periods this year.

India, Czech Republic agree to expand defence industrial ties

NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday held talks with Czech Republic Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade Karel Havlicek in New Delhi, reviewing bilateral defence industrial cooperation and agreeing to expand collaboration in the sector.

The meeting comes as India seeks to strengthen domestic defence manufacturing under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative while expanding partnerships with international partners. Both sides reviewed progress in existing defence industry collaborations and expressed satisfaction with the performance of joint ventures involving Indian and Czech entities.

Singh said the discussions focused on building on the achievements of these partnerships and widening cooperation through the India-Czech Joint Defence Committee. The mechanism is expected to support further



engagement between the two countries in defence production and industrial collaboration.

He added that both sides had acknowledged progress in joint ventures and agreed to deepen collaboration to advance India's domestic defence manufacturing objectives.

India has increasingly emphasised indigenous production of military equipment, technology development and industrial partnerships as part of its broader defence strategy. Cooperation with international partners can provide opportunities for technology exchange, manufacturing collaboration and strengthening domestic industrial capabilities.

In separate remarks earlier

Had a wonderful meeting with the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, Karel Havlicek in New Delhi today."

—Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister, on X

Key focus areas

- Expanding defence industrial cooperation
- Strengthening existing joint ventures
- Promoting indigenous defence manufacturing
- Deepening collaboration through the India-Czech Joint Defence Committee

in October, Singh highlighted the changing nature of modern warfare, saying military operations now extend beyond conventional land, sea and air domains to include space, cyberspace, the electromagnetic spectrum and information operations.

India's flex office market likely to hit 160 MSF by 2030

NEW DELHI

India has retained its position as the world's most mature flexible office market and is expected to cross the 100 MSF mark in 2026, expanding to about 160 million square feet by 2030, a report said on Tuesday.

The country's flexible office inventory reached 88.7 million square feet in the first half of 2026, accounting for 10.5 per cent of the country's office stock, the report from Cushman & Wakefield said. Moreover, the country scored 100 per cent on the firm's Flexible Office Market Maturity Index and flexible workspace is evolving from an amenity into a strategic component of occupier real estate portfolios, it added.

According to an Upfex analysis, India's share of global bookings increased sharply from 2.2 per cent in H1 2025 to 10.2 per cent in H1 2026, making it the second-most active market globally after the United States, the report noted.



India continues to demonstrate strong momentum across occupier demand, supply growth and operator activity. The expansion is being underpinned by sustained occupier demand.

Flexible office operators leased 8.4 MSF across India's top eight cities in H1 2026, their strongest-ever first-half performance, while flexible workspace now accounts for around 20 per cent of overall office leasing in India.

In addition, operators leased 44.1 MSF of space, representing more than 720,000 flex seats between 2023 and 2025, while managed office requirements averaged between 350 and 500 seats, the report noted.

'India regulating AI without stifling innovation, investment'

MUMBAI

India is taking a very smart approach to regulation when it comes to artificial intelligence (AI), regulating to the point where it is not stifling innovation and investment, Sandip Patel, MD, IBM India and South Asia, said on Tuesday, adding that AI governance is very, very critical at this crucial juncture.

On the sidelines of the 'IBM Think 2026' conference here, Patel said this balanced approach would continue for a while as AI technology evolves.

Digital sovereignty, he said, is not just an India issue but a global one. For Patel, digital sovereignty means 'Digital Swaraj'.

"I think it's important, both from an AI and infrastructure standpoint. You have to maintain a level of sovereignty that is aligned to the regulations that you are governed by as an enterprise, but also the kinds of workloads that you are, in fact, working with," he said.

The government plans to bring out a consultation paper on AI regulations soon, with a key focus on ensuring AI safety and curbing the danger posed by deepfakes. The consultation paper will focus on skilling, safety, and ensuring that no one is left behind as the AI technology advances.

According to Union Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, AI cannot be governed through legislation



alone and "We have to bring a techno-legal solution".

Data provenance, data accuracy, whether an enterprise uses only the data it is supposed to use and whether it is clear about how it uses that data all come with governance, Patel said.

"Model governance is also the key, which means what models are you using, when are you using it. Are you updating the models? Is your model relevant for what you are trying to use it for? Those are all questions that come into model governance," said Patel.

"I think the bigger question that we should be asking ourselves is how do we drive digital sovereignty? And the issue of sovereignty, it's not just an India issue; it's global."

SANDIP PATEL MD, IBM India and South Asia

RBI may raise repo rate by 75 basis points, say brokerages

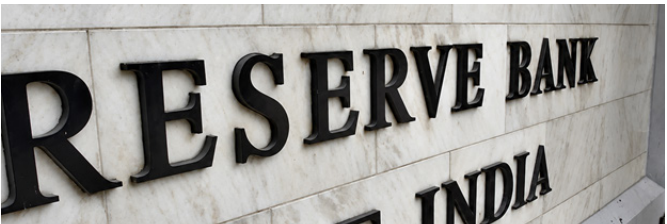
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may keep tightening monetary policy into the first half of 2027-28, with leading global brokerages forecasting repo rate hikes adding up to around 75 basis points as inflation risks rise.

Brokerages including Bank of America (BoFA), Goldman Sachs and UBS have warned that escalating tensions in the Middle East, disruptions to energy supplies and strengthening El Niño conditions could push consumer prices up, according to a report.

BoFA and UBS expect the RBI to raise the repo rate at its monetary policy meetings during FY27, and the tightening cycle could run into the first half of FY28. The forecasts reflect concern that costlier energy and weather-related disruptions could add to inflation.

UBS sees India's headline inflation averaging around



5.2 per cent in FY27 and staying above 5 per cent through the first half of FY28. It also warned that adverse weather could hit global food prices, with the effect possibly showing up after a delay.

Historically, major weather disruptions have fed through six to 18 months after their peak, the brokerage said. With the peak likely between November and February, the biggest impact on global food prices could come in 2027 and early 2028.

Inflation worries have grown since consumer price index (CPI) inflation rose to a 23-month high of 5.54 per cent in September from 4.8 per cent in August, driven

Inflation in September

Food	7.74%
Food and beverages	7.36%
Rural	6.08%
Headline CPI	5.54%
Urban	4.88%

Up from 4.8% headline and 5.97% food inflation in August

mainly by dearer food and vegetables.

Food inflation climbed to 7.74 per cent in September from 5.97 per cent in August, while inflation in food and beverages rose to 7.36 per cent from 5.66 per cent.

LEADERS STEP UP ENGAGEMENT

India-Canada relations better than ever: Canadian envoy

NEW DELHI

The chemistry between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney is "excellent", and the two nations have never had as "good a relationship" as they have right now, Canadian High Commissioner to India Christopher Cooter said on Tuesday.

Speaking ahead of Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand's arrival in New Delhi later in the day, Cooter went over recent engagements between the leadership of the two countries, among them meetings between External Affairs Minister (EAM) S



Jaishankar and Anand. He also spoke about the coming visit of Canada's Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu.

"I think it is fair to say that we never had as good a rela-

tionship as we have right now. Starting at the highest level, the chemistry between our two Prime Ministers is excellent. They have met four times in just over a year. Of-

ficials are also meeting regularly. We recently had our National Security Advisor here for discussions with his Indian counterpart, and our Foreign Minister is coming here. This will be her 10th meeting with India's External Affairs Minister over the past year," the Canadian High Commissioner told media persons.

"Our Trade Minister will also visit next week, leading a delegation of 300 Canadian business representatives. I believe this is the largest trade delegation we have ever taken anywhere, certainly to India. They will be here for a week, going to several cities in southern India. We have got dialogues on energy, migration and defence, and we

expect a defence-related visit in the near future. We had at least six other ministers visiting India over the past year. Our Prime Minister of course came here in March. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to come to Canada in early December. At that point, we are hoping to sign our first Free Trade Agreement during that visit."

BILATERAL TIES IN A NUTSHELL

Leadership chemistry: Modi-Carney ties "excellent" after past tensions	High-level engagements: leaders' meetings, including at the G7; Jaishankar-Anand talks	Trade goal: both nations aim for two-way trade of about \$70 billion by 2030	Upcoming: Modi expected in Canada in early December; both sides aim for an FTA
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NEPAL'S HIMALAYAN DISASTER: A STARK WARNING INDIA CANNOT AFFORD TO IGNORE



LALIT GARGG

The devastating floods and landslides that struck Nepal have once again exposed a harsh truth: when human intervention disrupts nature and the fragile Himalayan ecology is ignored, the consequences can be catastrophic. In the Bhote Koshi river system, the collapse of a massive section of glacier, accompanied by an enormous flow of ice, rocks and debris, temporarily obstructed the river. The sudden release of the accumulated water and debris subsequently triggered a devastating flood, causing widespread destruction in Nepal and Tibet's adjoining areas of China.

According to reports available up to August 29, 579 deaths have been confirmed in Nepal and five in Tibet, while nearly 2,482 people are reported missing. Thousands have been rescued, but relief and rescue operations remain extremely challenging because of difficult terrain and the continuing threat of further disasters. This is not merely a natural calamity affecting Nepal; it is a frightening warning for the entire Himalayan region.

Preliminary scientific assessments suggest that a large portion of the glacier broke away and plunged downhill, generating a massive flow of ice, rock, soil and debris. This obstructed the river, and the pressure of the accumulated water and debris eventually produced a sudden and destructive flood. Experts caution that describing the event simply as a "flood" would be misleading. It represents a multi-hazard disaster, in which glacial collapse, landslides, debris flows and river flooding became interconnected and intensified one another.

The most significant message emerging from this tragedy concerns climate change. The Himalayas are not merely a snow-covered mountain range; they are the foundation of Asia's water security. As temperatures rise, glaciers are retreating rapidly and new glacial lakes are forming. According to the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the Hindu Kush Himalaya region has around 25,000 glacial lakes, and rising temperatures are increasing the risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs). Nepal has recorded more than 90 GLOF events since the 1920s.

It would, however, be scientifically incorrect to attribute the Nepal disaster solely to global warming. Seismic activity, geological instability, extreme rainfall, avalanches and weakened mountain slopes can all play significant roles. Climate change should instead be understood as a risk multiplier, a factor that is creating a more vulnerable background in which such hazards can become more frequent, intense or destructive. Scientists have rightly cautioned against declaring any single disaster a direct consequence of climate change without examining long-term climatic and geological changes together.

The Nepal disaster carries an equally profound warning for India, and India must learn from it. The Kedarnath tragedy, the 2021 Rishi Ganga disaster, and the recurring floods, landslides and cloudbursts across the Himalayan states have already demonstrated that the mountains' capacity to absorb human intervention is not unlimited.

Roads, tunnels, hydropower projects, hotels, settlements and other infrastructure are expanding rapidly in the Himalayas in the name of development. But a fundamental question must be asked: Are we adequately assessing the ecological and geological carrying capacity of these fragile mountains before undertaking such projects? Development is essential, but development that comes at the cost of hollowing out the mountains can ultimately become a threat to both human life and development itself.

The greatest need today is to move beyond "relief after disaster" to "preparedness before disaster." Advanced satellite surveillance, drones, weather radar, river sensors, continuous monitoring of glaciers and glacial lakes, and artificial-intelligence-based forecasting systems must be developed and deployed extensively across the Himalayan region.

Early-warning systems must not remain confined to capitals or administrative headquarters. Warnings must reach the remotest mountain village through mobile alerts, sirens, radio networks and trained local volunteer groups. The possibility of another glacial lake outburst even after the present disaster has demonstrated a crucial reality: one disaster can create the conditions for another.

Rivers do not recognize political boundaries. For transboundary river systems such as the Bhote Koshi, real-time exchange of information among Nepal, China, India and other Himalayan countries on river flows, rainfall, landslides, glacial lakes and avalanches is essential. A critical warning available to one country can save thousands of lives in another. The Himalayan region therefore needs a shared regional disaster early-warning network, supported by real-time data sharing and coordinated emergency response mechanisms.

India should seriously consider developing a dedicated Mountain Safety Policy for its Himalayan states. Before constructing roads or tunnels in fragile mountain areas, scientific assessments of geological risks, natural drainage channels, landslide susceptibility and local ecology should be mandatory. Uncontrolled deforestation, unplanned construction along riverbanks, unnecessary cutting of mountain slopes and excessive pressure from tourism must be strictly regulated. Local communities should become the first line of disaster preparedness, because they are usually the first to suffer when calamity strikes and often the first capable of providing immediate assistance.

The world can learn valuable lessons from Japan, Switzerland and other mountainous countries in disaster management, building safety, early-warning systems and community-based preparedness. But the Himalayas cannot continue to be viewed merely as a destination for tourism and economic expansion. They must be recognized as a living, fragile and highly sensitive

This can become a powerful warning and a catalyst for a new environmental consciousness aimed at protecting the mountains, safeguarding human lives and securing the future of generations yet to come.

ecological system. The greater humanity's ambition to control nature, the more devastating nature's resistance can become.

The tragedy in Nepal, therefore, is not merely an occasion for mourning; it is a moment for deep introspection and decisive action. We must understand that the mountains are not meant to be conquered; we must learn to live in harmony with them. The pace of development must be aligned with nature's capacity. The impacts of climate change must be mitigated. Scientific warnings must be taken seriously. Ecological carrying capacity must guide infrastructure planning, and cross-border cooperation must be strengthened.

If India and the world learn these lessons in time, the water that swept through Nepal will not remain merely a story of destruction.

GEN Z AND THE CHANGING FACE OF INDIAN POLITICS

Indian politics is witnessing a generational shift, with Generation Z increasingly using social media, public debates and protests to question those in power. For these young citizens, politics is no longer confined to elections, party offices and campaign speeches. It is about jobs, education, rising prices, corruption and whether elected representatives deliver on their promises.

Unlike traditional political engagement, much of Gen Z's participation begins online. A video, report or public statement can trigger nationwide debate within hours. Young people are demanding evidence, transparency and accountability rather than accepting political claims at face value. Social media has given them platforms to challenge official narratives and

bring local concerns to wider public attention.

Yet, the digital revolution comes with challenges. Misinformation, manipulated videos and partisan propaganda can distort public opinion. Information shared rapidly is not necessarily accurate, and popularity does not guarantee credibility. The ability to distinguish verified facts from misleading content is therefore essential. Questioning authority must go hand in hand with responsible sharing of information and a willingness to consider evidence that challenges personal beliefs.

Gen Z is not politically uniform. Its members hold diverse ideological views and come from different social, economic and regional backgrounds. Some actively support political parties, while others challenge the political establishment itself. Their

concerns and priorities cannot be reduced to a single ideology or electoral preference. What matters is whether democratic institutions remain open to scrutiny, regardless of which party holds power.

Allegations of corruption must be investigated fairly, wrongdoing established through due process and the rights of those accused protected. Political influence should never be used to silence legitimate questions. Equally, accusations should not automatically be treated as proof of guilt. A healthy democracy depends on independent institutions, transparent procedures and equal application of the law.

Social media outrage, however, cannot substitute for sustained civic participation. Voting, understanding public policy, attending community meetings and monitoring rep-



Manjunath G Y

resentatives are equally important. Democracy requires more than criticism; it demands informed participation, respect for differing opinions and commitment to constitutional values. Young citizens can make their voices count by engaging with local governance, examining candidates' records and following up on promises after elections.

Political leaders must recognise that concerns over employment, affordable education, equal opportunities and transparent governance cannot be dismissed as temporary

youth discontent. These issues require credible policies, clear explanations and measurable results. Young people also need opportunities to participate meaningfully in discussions that shape their future, rather than being approached only during election campaigns.

Gen Z's political influence will ultimately depend not on online followers or viral posts, but on its ability to seek the truth, ask informed questions and participate consistently in public life.

India's future depends partly on whether its young citizens remain spectators or become active participants in shaping governance. Their questions deserve clear answers, while their democratic responsibilities demand equal seriousness. A healthy democracy must welcome questioning voices, not fear them.



DR. VIJAY GARG

WOMEN AND OPPORTUNITY: THE CHANGING GENDER LANDSCAPE OF IITS AND IIMS

For decades, the campuses of India's premier institutions were often seen as predominantly male spaces. The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) became symbols of engineering excellence, while the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) emerged as gateways to management, leadership and corporate careers. Women were present in both systems, but their representation was comparatively limited, particularly in some technical and quantitative disciplines.

That picture is gradually changing.

More women are now entering prestigious higher-education institutions, competing successfully in demanding entrance examinations and moving into professional careers that were once heavily dominated by men. The changing gender landscape of IITs and IIMs is not simply a story about numbers. It reflects wider changes in aspirations, educational access, family attitudes, career choices and the participation of women in India's professional economy.

From the Classroom to the Boardroom

The journey of a woman entering an IIT or IIM does not end with admission. For many students, these institutions provide access to laboratories, research opportunities, internships, industry networks, entrepreneurship programmes and global exposure. At IITs, women are increasingly visible across engineering, science, technology and interdisciplinary programmes. At IIMs, women have expanded their presence in management education and are preparing for careers in consulting, finance, technology, marketing, entrepreneurship, public policy and other sectors.

This creates an important chain:

Education → Skills → Opportunity → Employment → Leadership.

When more women participate at every stage of this chain, the effect can extend beyond individual careers.

Why Is the Change Happening?

Several factors are contributing to the changing landscape. First, awareness about professional education has increased. Families in towns and villages are increasingly familiar with competitive examinations, scholarships, coaching resources, online learning and career opportunities. Second, digital education has reduced some traditional barriers. A student does not necessarily need to live in a major metropolitan city to access lectures, study material, test series, mentoring and

information about competitive examinations. Third, changing social expectations have encouraged more girls to consider careers in engineering, management, science,



technology and research. Fourth, the visibility of successful women matters. When young students see women working as engineers, scientists, entrepreneurs, professors, administrators, managers and corporate leaders, professional success becomes more imaginable.

IITs: Changing the Engineering Classroom

Engineering education has historically had a gender imbalance, particularly in several branches of engineering. Increasing female participation therefore represents an important transformation. Women entering IITs are not simply increasing the number of female students. They are participating in areas that shape the future including artificial intelligence, computer science, biotechnology, electronics, renewable energy, mathematics, data science and other emerging fields.

The importance of this participation goes beyond employment. The technologies designed today influence healthcare, transportation, education, agriculture, finance and communication. Greater diversity among students and professionals can bring a wider range of experiences and perspectives into these fields. However, representation should not be measured only by admission figures. The more meaningful question is whether women receive equal opportunities to participate in research, leadership, internships, entrepreneurship and high-growth professional sectors.

IIMs: Women and the Changing Management Classroom

Management education has also witnessed significant changes in female participation. Business schools are training future managers, entrepreneurs, consultants, pol-

icymakers and corporate leaders. As more women enter management programmes, the classroom becomes more representative of the society and workforce that these institu-

tions serve.

Women graduates are increasingly entering sectors that were once perceived as predominantly male. They are building careers in finance, consulting, technology, consumer businesses, healthcare, education, startups and public administration. The presence of women in management education can also influence younger generations. A girl who sees women leading companies or managing major projects may begin to regard leadership not as an exception but as a realistic career possibility.

Placement Packages Are Only One Part of the Story

Higher salary packages and strong placement opportunities naturally attract students toward premier institutions. But the value of IITs and IIMs should not be reduced to the highest salary package announced during a placement season. A quality education provides knowledge, analytical ability, communication skills, professional networks and the confidence to solve complex problems. Salary is an important outcome for many students, but it should be considered alongside job role, learning opportunities, career progression, workplace culture, location, work-life balance and long-term professional development. For women in particular, the transition from campus to workplace also raises broader questions about workplace equality, safety, flexibility, parental responsibilities and opportunities for advancement.

The Next Challenge: From Representation to Retention

Getting more women into prestigious institutions is only the beginning. The larger challenge is ensuring that women remain and progress through the professional pipe-

line. A student may successfully enter an IIT or IIM, obtain a degree and secure a good job. But professional equality requires opportunities to reach senior positions

as well. This means institutions and employers need to pay attention to mentoring, fair evaluation, workplace flexibility, parental support, professional development and transparent career progression. The goal should not simply be more women entering the pipeline. It should be more women successfully moving through the pipeline.

The Importance of Role Models

Every generation needs role models. When girls meet women engineers, scientists, managers, entrepreneurs, professors and administrators, they receive a powerful message: professional ambition is compatible with being a woman. Schools therefore have an important role to play. Career counselling should begin before students reach the stage of choosing a college. Girls should be encouraged to explore mathematics, science, technology, business and other fields according to their interests and abilities. At the same time, boys should also be educated about gender equality. A balanced professional world is not a women's issue alone; it is a social issue.

Opportunity Must Reach Beyond Metropolitan India

One of the most important questions is whether the changing gender landscape is reaching students from rural areas and smaller towns. Talent exists everywhere, but opportunities are not distributed equally. A girl from a small town may have the ability to enter a premier institution but may lack access to high-quality preparation, mentoring or reliable career information. Scholarships, digital learning, affordable coaching, improved school education and career guidance can help narrow this gap. The future of Indian ed-

ucation should therefore focus not only on increasing female participation but also on making that participation socially and geographically diverse.

A Larger Economic and Social Impact

When women receive high-quality education and meaningful employment, the benefits can extend to families and communities. Educated women can contribute to household income, support children's education, participate in decision-making and become role models for younger generations. Their professional experiences can also influence social attitudes toward women's careers. At the national level, greater participation of women in skilled professions can contribute to India's human-capital development. But participation must be accompanied by genuine opportunity. A degree alone does not guarantee equality. Equal access to professional growth is equally important.

Beyond Numbers

The changing gender landscape of IITs and IIMs should ultimately be understood as part of a broader transformation in Indian society. The question is no longer simply whether women can enter the country's most competitive institutions. Women have already demonstrated their ability to compete, learn and succeed in demanding academic environments. The more important questions are: What opportunities will they receive after graduation? How many will move into leadership? Will workplaces provide conditions that allow them to build long-term careers? And will girls from every social and geographical background have a fair chance to participate?

The answers will shape the next phase of India's educational and professional development. IITs and IIMs are more than campuses. They are institutions that influence the

“The real achievement will not simply be seeing more women entering these institutions. It will be seeing them learn, lead, innovate, create businesses, conduct research, build institutions and shape India's future on equal terms.”

— Dr. Vijay Garg

aspirations of millions of young Indians. As more women enter their classrooms, laboratories, hostels, placement programmes and leadership networks, they are helping redefine what India's professional future can look like.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rising Online Scam Menace

Online frauds are rising daily. People get fake calls claiming to be banks, courier services or police. Many, especially senior citizens, lose life savings. Cyber police must run awareness drives in Kannada and English. Banks should simplify reporting. Digital India must be safe, not scary, for common citizens to trust.

— Manjama

Protect Street Dogs Humanely

The stray dog issue in Bengaluru needs a humane solution, not cruelty. Daily attacks on children are reported, but killing dogs is not the answer. BBMP must scale up ABC (Animal Birth Control) and vaccination drives sincerely. Feeding zones and public awareness will ensure safety for both humans and animals.

— Shanthama

Quick Read

Blast in PoK village kills four, triggers alert

JAMMU

A powerful blast in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), near the Line of Control (LoC), killed four residents on Monday and triggered a security alert along the Indian border. The explosion occurred in the Satwal-Naki area while villagers were reportedly laying water pipes. The victims were identified as Faizan Sagheer, Waqas Sharief, Ishtiaq and Asim Rafiq. The blast is suspected to have involved an improvised explosive device (IED). Meanwhile, Army personnel discovered two landmines in Mendhar sector and destroyed them safely. Nearly a dozen landmines have been detected recently, with heavy rainfall sometimes bringing buried explosives to the surface.

Anti-drug activist shot dead in Punjab's Mansa

MANSA

An anti-drug activist was shot dead by a medical store owner in Punjab's Mansa district on Tuesday while questioning the alleged sale of certain drugs, police said. The activist, Parvinder Singh, popularly known as Jhota, was confronting the store owner over medicines allegedly being sold to a man. He was recording their argument on his mobile phone when the incident took place. A video of the confrontation reportedly captured Jhota saying that the store owner had taken out a pistol. The owner then allegedly opened fire at the activist, with the incident being recorded on the phone. Jhota was rushed to a hospital after the shooting but died from his injuries, police said. His death has raised concerns about the risks faced by people who expose suspected illegal drug sales. The activist was known for highlighting the illegal sale of addictive drugs at chemist shops in Mansa. He had previously exposed several such cases in the district. Further details about the investigation and any arrests were not available.

Lucknow businessman's death triggers murder probe

LUCKNOW

The death of 28-year-old businessman Shiva Sharma has triggered a murder investigation after his mother accused his girlfriend, social media influencer Shraddha Dubey, and others of murder, assault and blackmail. Sharma died after falling from the fourth floor of an apartment in Lucknow on October 9. The post-mortem report recorded multiple injuries, including damage to his lungs, liver and spleen. Police are examining CCTV footage, messages and a white Audi reportedly seen at the apartment after the fall. The FIR names Dubey and four others. The allegations remain unproven, and the investigation continues.

Bengal erupts in protest against Election Commission

Party leaders alleged restrictions on demonstrators, accusing authorities of using police and central forces to prevent supporters from reaching the protest site.

KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) held a protest rally in Kolkata on Tuesday against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the Election Commission, alleging restrictions on a peaceful demonstration. Party leader

Two days of protest

- MON**
INDIA bloc march, led by Rahul Gandhi, towards the Supreme Court; petition filed
- MON**
Mamata Banerjee: hold polls on the existing rolls until every eligible voter is listed
- TUE**
TMC rally in Kolkata against CEC Gyanesh Kumar

Kunal Ghosh accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the administration of preventing supporters from reaching the protest site through police and central force deployment.

TMC protesters raised slogans, including "Vote Chor,



Gaddi Chor," during the demonstration. Ghosh said the party's youth and student wings had organised the rally under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee and informed the police about the programme in advance through email. However, he alleged that security personnel blocked routes across parts of the city from Tuesday morning.

Ghosh further claimed that people travelling to the demonstration were stopped across North and Central Kolkata. He maintained that the gathering was entirely peaceful and accused the BJP of opposing the protest. The

TMC leader also alleged that Gyanesh Kumar had rigged votes to benefit the BJP, making serious accusations against the poll body chief without providing further details.

The protest comes amid wider opposition concerns over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. On Monday, former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said elections should be held using existing electoral rolls until every eligible voter's name was included in the lists. Her position focused on ensuring that eligible

What the TMC alleges

- Routes:** blocked across parts of Kolkata from Tuesday morning
- Supporters:** stopped across North and Central Kolkata
- Notice:** police informed of the rally in advance by email
- Slogan:** "Vote Chor, Gaddi Chor"

voters were not excluded from electoral records during the revision process.

Separately, INDIA bloc leaders and supporters, led by Rahul Gandhi, marched along Barakhamba Road towards the Supreme Court of India on Monday over the alleged SIR irregularities. The group filed a petition in the apex court. The developments highlight continuing opposition protests over electoral roll revisions, with the TMC's Kolkata rally adding to calls for scrutiny of the process and concerns about access to voting rights.

Coast Guard seizes boat suspected of diesel smuggling off Mumbai

MUMBAI

The Indian Coast Guard has apprehended an Indian fishing boat suspected of smuggling diesel at sea off the Mumbai coast. The vessel, named Haridwar Krupa, was intercepted during a surveillance operation near Prongs Lighthouse after it allegedly ignored warnings and attempted to escape. The boat, its crew and seized evidence were later escorted to Mumbai Harbour for further investigation.

The operation began after Coast Guard ships received instructions to closely monitor suspicious maritime movements in the area. During patrol, personnel spotted the fishing boat operating near a merchant vessel. When challenged through the VHF maritime communication channel, the boat reportedly failed to respond and ignored repeated warnings. It then attempted evasive manoeuvres, prompting a Coast Guard ship to begin a pursuit that ended with its successful interception.

A specialised boarding team subsequently searched the vessel and conducted a



preliminary investigation. During questioning, the boat's master reportedly admitted that approximately 4,000 litres of illicit diesel had been received at sea. Investigators also found that around 500 litres of the fuel had been discharged overboard during the chase, allegedly in an attempt to destroy evidence and avoid detection.

The boarding team confiscated relevant operational documents and six mobile phones to support the investigation. A joint investigation involving the Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy, State Intelligence Bureau and State Police has been initiated to examine the suspected smuggling activity and establish the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Officials said the operation demonstrated the force's surveillance and response capabilities against suspected illegal networks operating at sea.

BJP alleges Rahul Gandhi pushed pregnant journalist

NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of pushing journalist Richa Parashar during an INDIA bloc protest march in New Delhi on October 12. BJP leaders claimed that Parashar, who is reportedly three months pregnant, sustained injuries and received hospital treatment. The allegations have not been independently verified.

BJP leader Rajesh Bhatia said Parashar's sister approached his office in Rajendra Nagar at around 8.30 pm seeking assistance. According to Bhatia, she reported that her sister had been injured in the alleged incident and needed medical care. Bhatia said he contacted BJP MLA Umang Bajaj and other party leaders, who later visited the hos-



pital to enquire about her condition.

BJP national spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari also shared a video of his hospital visit on social media, alleging that Parashar was pushed while performing her professional duties. BJP leaders condemned the alleged incident and called for accountability. MLA Umang Bajaj said public representatives should answer journalists' questions rather than engage in physical confrontations.

The incident reportedly oc-

curred during an INDIA bloc march against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and alleged electoral irregularities.

BJP leaders are reportedly preparing to approach the National Commission for Women and Delhi Police, seeking an investigation. As of October 13, no immediate official response from Gandhi or Congress leadership had been reported. Congress supporters described the allegations on social media as politically motivated.

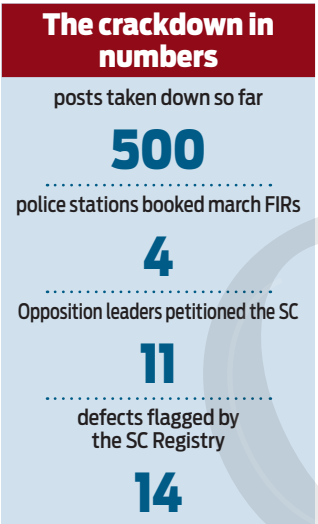
Delhi Police files FIRs over fake posts during SIR protests

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has registered more than four first information reports (FIRs) against social media handles allegedly spreading false information and misleading narratives during protests over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

According to sources, several Pakistani social media handles have also been identified for allegedly circulating anti-India content. Around 500 social media posts allegedly spreading rumours or attempting to disturb public order have been taken down so far.

The action comes amid wider police measures following Monday's Opposition march towards the Supreme Court. Delhi Police registered FIRs at Connaught Place,



Tilak Marg, Barakhamba and Mandir Marg police stations over alleged violations of prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

The march was led by Rahul Gandhi and involved INDIA bloc leaders and supporters protesting against alleged irregularities in the SIR exercise. Eleven Opposition leaders subsequently filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging decisions taken by the Election Commission in connection with the electoral roll revision.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court Registry flagged 14 defects in the writ petition filed by Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and nine other Opposition leaders. The Registry also sought clarification on why Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners SS Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had been named as respondents in a petition filed under Article 32 of the Constitution.

Centre forms panel to probe death of IIIT-Ranchi student

RANCHI

The Ministry of Education has formed a three-member committee to investigate the death by suicide of a first-year student at the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Ranchi, amid student protests over alleged delays in providing emergency medical assistance. The students have demanded the resignation of institute director Rajeev Srivastava and better medical facilities on campus.

The committee, chaired by Professor Rajni Abbi, director of the University of Delhi's South Campus, has been asked to submit its report within 15 days. Its other members are Dr Jitendra Nagpal, a senior psychiatrist at Delhi's Moolchand Hospital, and Heera Lal Poonia, deputy secretary in the Ministry of Education's Department of Higher Education. The panel was constituted through an order dated October 12.

The incident necessitates a closer examination of the implementation of these measures at the institutional level and identify any deficiencies requiring corrective action."

— Ministry of Education

The committee will examine whether the institute has implemented the ministry's July 2023 guidelines on emotional and mental well-being in higher education institutions. It will review basic facilities, counselling and mentoring arrangements, institutional support systems and student grievance redressal mechanisms. The panel will also identify gaps, examine records, interact with stakeholders and recommend measures to prevent similar incidents. The ministry said interim administrative arrangements would also be made to

ensure the institute functions smoothly.

The student's death came to light on the night of October 10 after hostel residents found his room locked from inside and alerted the authorities. The administration informed the police, and a case of unnatural death was registered. Khelgaon police station officer-in-charge Nirbhay Kumar said an investigation was underway to establish the circumstances surrounding the death.

The agitation also affected academic activities, with examinations scheduled for Monday postponed. IIIT registrar Munuren Samson Champia said the institute's chairperson visited the protest site and attempted to hold discussions with students, but a standoff occurred before formal talks could begin. The committee's findings are expected to help assess the institute's student support systems and identify corrective steps.

KERALAM ASSEMBLY CLASH OVER PUBLIC HEALTHCARE CRISIS

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Keralam Assembly witnessed heated exchanges on Tuesday over alleged medicine shortages and problems in public healthcare, with opposition members walking out after the Speaker denied permission for an adjournment motion. Health Minister K Muraleedharan rejected claims of a healthcare crisis, acknowledged shortages of 24 medicines and said urgent measures had been taken to address the problem.

The opposition raised the issue through a motion submitted by MLA K V Sumesh, alleging serious failures in the state's healthcare system. Muraleedharan blamed the previous government for leaving substantial dues unpaid to pharmaceutical companies, which he said had affected medicine procurement.

The minister also addressed the death of a patient following alleged medical negligence at Kottayam Medical



College, saying a preliminary inquiry had been completed and a detailed report was expected within a week. His remarks triggered protests and noisy exchanges in the House.

Opposition leader Pinarayi Vijayan challenged the government's explanation, alleging inadequate medicine supplies, staff shortages and disruptions in public hospitals. He said the previous administration had completed procurement procedures, including tenders, and issued purchase orders for 493 medicines. Vijayan attributed the difficulties partly to the absence of a head at Kerala Medical

The only shortage was of a remedy for the opposition's disappointment over losing power."

— K Muraleedharan Health Minister of Keralam

Services Corporation Limited, which handles medicine procurement and distribution.

Vijayan also raised concerns over seven vacant Junior Health Officer posts in Attappady, the reported absence of mobile medical units and alleged job losses affecting more than 1,000 healthcare workers.

UNDERAGE DRINKING CRACKDOWN

Keralam vows action against bars serving minors

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Keralam government has vowed stringent action against bars serving alcohol to people below the legal drinking age of 23, following a fatal Mini Cooper crash near Kochi that claimed three young lives. Excise Minister M Liju told the Assembly on Tuesday that the department had registered cases against



three bars allegedly involved in serving liquor to the accused.

Responding to a question

Cases registered against three bars allegedly involved in serving liquor to the accused

from Ernakulam MLA T J Vinod about Sunday's accident, Liju said he had directed senior excise officials to act promptly after learning about

the incident. He stressed that the government would not compromise on enforcing the rules and was considering stricter guidelines to prevent bars from serving alcohol to people below 23.

He said the existing Abkari Act contained provisions to take action against establishments violating age restrictions, while the government was examining additional

measures to strengthen enforcement.

The accident occurred at Nedumbassery near Kochi in the early hours of Sunday. Three youngsters, including two women and a man, all aged around 21, were killed when a speeding Mini Cooper allegedly driven by a 19-year-old youth rammed into their scooter. Police alleged that the driver was

under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crash.

The accused, identified as Kochi native Suhail, was arrested and booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder. Police said his mother had gifted him the luxury car for his birthday and that investigators had found videos purportedly showing him driving at speeds exceeding 200 kmph.

Quick Read

Manipur police arrest 12 in explicit content case

IMPHAL

Manipur police have arrested 12 people and detained a juvenile for allegedly circulating and selling sexually explicit content on social media. The operation, named ‘Operation Dignity’, targeted individuals suspected of sharing non-consensual videos and photographs of women, including child sexual abuse material. An FIR was registered at Moirang Police Station in Bishnupur district following a tip-off on October 3. A case was registered under the IT Act, POCSO Act and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Investigators identified over 150 channels and groups and are tracing financial transactions and potential additional victims.

UP man kills stepfather over mother’s remarriage

RAMPUR

A 30-year-old businessman, Navjot, was allegedly shot dead by his 22-year-old stepson, Avdeep Singh, in Uttar Pradesh’s Rampur district on October 10. Police said Avdeep opposed his mother Kamal Kaur’s remarriage and conspired with his cousin, Rajandeep Singh, 23, to commit the murder. Navjot was attacked at his car service centre in Kumhariya Kalan around 5 pm. The accused allegedly arrived in a grey Alto car, opened fire and fled. Police arrested both suspects within 48 hours using CCTV footage and other evidence. They recovered the car, three firearms, six live cartridges and two empty cartridges. Avdeep had reportedly returned from New Zealand five days before the incident. Police said the murder appeared to have resulted from a family dispute.

Air India cancels Saudi flights until Oct 17

NEW DELHI

Air India has cancelled all flights to and from Riyadh, Dammam and Jeddah until October 17, 2026, due to the evolving situation in Saudi Arabia. The airline announced the decision on Tuesday, saying it was closely monitoring developments and assessing when safe operations could resume. The airline said affected passengers would be offered a full refund if they cancelled their bookings. It added that the safety and security of passengers and crew remained its highest priority. The latest extension follows an earlier decision to suspend flights to and from Riyadh until October 15. Air India said it would continue monitoring the regional situation before resuming services. IndiGo has also extended the suspension of flights to and from Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam and Madinah until October 17. It said updates were being shared through the contact details provided during booking and that support teams were available to assist passengers. Akasa Air has also suspended flights to and from Riyadh and Jeddah until October 17. The airline said the decision followed an assessment of the changing situation, with passenger safety remaining its main concern. All three airlines said they would continue monitoring developments and assess conditions before resuming safe operations.

Amit Shah calls for regional unity against terrorism

Addressing the first BIMSTEC Home Ministers’ Meeting in New Delhi, the Union Home Minister urged joint action against cross-border security threats.

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday called on BIMSTEC member countries to strengthen regional cooperation to fight terrorism, disrupt terrorist financing and organised crime, and prevent terrorist networks from finding safe havens. He reaffirmed India’s policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism while addressing the first BIMSTEC Home Ministers’ Meeting in New Delhi.

Shah said BIMSTEC had become an important platform for regional integration, economic cooperation and collective security. He stressed that the security



arrangements of each member country should support the safety of others through shared responsibility and coordinated action.

“India has always adopted a ‘zero tolerance’ policy against terrorism,” Shah said. He urged member countries to ensure that terrorist groups

India has always adopted a ‘zero tolerance’ policy against terrorism.”

— Amit Shah, Union Home Minister

could not recruit members, establish training centres, collect funds or conduct operations against neighbouring nations from any part of the region.

The Home Minister also called for closer coordination among law enforcement agencies and the exchange of verified, actionable intelligence. He said countries should share information about terrorists, their

associates, criminal networks, financial channels and cross-border activities to strengthen regional security.

Shah further urged BIMSTEC members to improve cooperation on mutual legal assistance and extradition, in accordance with their national laws and relevant agreements. He said such measures would help authorities bring criminals to justice and prevent them from escaping legal action across borders.

Highlighting the connection between drug trafficking, organised crime and terrorism, Shah called for a coordinated regional strategy to tackle narcotics smuggling.

He said the illegal proceeds from drugs could strengthen criminal groups and support terrorist activities.

“We must adopt a whole-of-region approach,” Shah said, adding that the diversion of precursor chemicals and transactions through the dark web had made the challenge more complex. He emphasised that individual countries could not effectively address these threats without collective efforts.

BIMSTEC, or the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, comprises Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The

Shah’s call to BIMSTEC

1

No recruits, training centres, funds or bases for terror groups anywhere in the region

2

Share verified, actionable intelligence on terrorists and their networks

3

Closer cooperation on mutual legal assistance and extradition

4

A coordinated regional strategy against narcotics smuggling

regional grouping aims to promote technical and economic cooperation among its member countries.

Nilekani proposes last-minute papers to prevent exam leaks

Infosys Chairman recommends a large question bank and late paper generation to strengthen exam security and reduce opportunities for illegal sales.

NEW DELHI

Nandan Nilekani, Infosys Chairman and head of the high-powered task force on examination reforms, has proposed generating question papers at the last minute to prevent leaks. Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum in Delhi on Tuesday, he said creating a large bank of questions and preparing papers shortly before examinations could reduce the incentive to sell them illegally.

Nilekani explained that having a fixed question paper creates opportunities for people to obtain and sell it before the examination.

He suggested maintaining a massive question bank and generating the paper for each examination only at the last moment. He said this approach could help address the root causes of paper leaks and make examinations more secure.

The six-member task force was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after Dharmendra Pradhan resigned on July 25 following student protests at Jantar Mantar. Although Nilekani did not reveal its recommendations, he said Modi was keen to implement the panel’s suggestions. The task force has held about 18 panel meetings and 40 consultations, receiving more than 50,000 suggestions from students, parents, doct

groups and examination agencies.

Nilekani also called for expanding the network of computer-based testing centres. He said around 1.5 lakh locations currently conduct examinations and that the number should increase. Moving towards computer-based testing would require better infrastructure, including secure facilities, information technology tools and reliable internet connections.

Nilekani said paper leaks could be solved by addressing their underlying causes systematically.



Andrabi denies issuing order on uniform Friday sermons

SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board chairperson Darakhshan Andrabi on Tuesday denied issuing any order requiring uniform Friday sermons, following a controversy over a proposed initiative. Her clarification came after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti opposed the reported move.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Andrabi said the Board had issued no directive requiring religious preachers to deliver common sermons. She stressed that religious scholars and preachers remained free to decide what they wanted to discuss during Friday prayers. Rejecting allegations of interference in religious matters, she said, “There is no order. There is no order anywhere.”

Andrabi explained that religious scholars had discussed social concerns, including drug abuse and problems affecting young people. According to her, the proposed initiative aimed to address such issues through



sermons, while leaving the final choice of topics to individual preachers. She maintained that the plan was not intended to control religious discourse or impose a common message on mosques across the region.

Responding to Omar Abdullah’s allegation of BJP interference in Muslim religious affairs, Andrabi questioned the claim and asked, “Where did BJP interfere?” She also said she was proud to be associated with the party. Andrabi clarified that a proposed core committee would consist of religious scholars and that she herself would not be a member. She reiterated that preachers would have the freedom to choose their sub-topics without interference from the Board.

The controversy followed reports about plans for common Friday sermons focusing on social issues in Kashmir.

MUMBAI

Sindhudurg district in Maharashtra’s Konkan region has launched a community-driven campaign to build 10,000 Vanrai bunds to conserve rainwater and tackle drought. Around 5,000 bunds have already been completed, with residents joining efforts to improve groundwater levels and strengthen water security across villages.

Vanrai bunds are low-cost, temporary structures built across small streams and drainage channels using locally available materials. They



slow the flow of water, allowing it to remain in an area longer and seep into the soil. The initiative aims to improve groundwater recharge and reduce the risk of drinking water shortages in the coming months.

State Fisheries and Ports

Minister Nitesh Rane, who is also Sindhudurg’s guardian minister, said all eight talukas in the district were facing drought-like conditions. He described the campaign as a community-driven effort to prevent similar situations in the future.

Sindhudurg Collector Trupti Dhodmise and Zilla Parishad Chief Executive Officer Dr Apoorva Basur are leading the initiative. They have mobilised residents, women’s self-help groups, students, elected representatives and government officials to take part in the work.

The bunds are expected to help retain rainwater and recharge groundwater, potentially improving water availability in nearby wells. However, villagers have also requested a permanent bund at the site to meet their long-term water needs.

Telangana to hold special voter enrolment camps

HYDERABAD

The Election Commission of India has directed officials across Telangana to hold special voter enrolment camps on October 15 and 16 for eligible citizens whose names are missing from the draft electoral rolls published on August 17. The initiative aims to help first-time young voters and others left out of the draft lists register themselves.

Chief Electoral Officer

C Sudharshan Reddy said instructions had been issued to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation commissioner, who also serves as Hyderabad’s district election officer, and all district collectors to organise the camps. Electoral Registration Officers will conduct the exercise at every polling station on both days.

Eligible applicants can submit Form-6 to seek inclusion in the electoral rolls. The facil-

ity is intended for first-time electors and citizens whose names were not included in the draft lists.

“The Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) should conduct the special camps on these two days at every polling station, where applicants whose names did not figure in the draft electoral rolls can file applications in Form-6 for enrolling themselves as voters in the electoral rolls,” Reddy said.

Special enrolment camps

WHEN

October 15 and 16

WHERE

Every polling station

FORM

Form-6 for inclusion

WHO

Those left out of the August 17 draft rolls

The Chief Electoral Officer also directed booth-level officers to remain present at the designated polling stations during the camps.

AIADMK alleges corruption in TN’s power procurement

CHENNAI

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Tuesday accused the Tamil-led Vettri Kazhagam (TVK)-led Tamil Nadu government of corruption in power procurement. He alleged that the government had purchased electricity from private companies at rates as high as Rs 35 per unit, worsening the financial condition of the Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation (TNPDC).

Palaniswami said frequent



power cuts had caused hardship for residents. He blamed the government’s planning and administrative decisions,



alleging that public difficulties were being used to support corrupt practices.

According to Palaniswami,

the TNPDC awarded contracts to five private companies to procure 4,400 megawatts of electricity daily between October 12 and 31. He questioned the reported procurement rates of Rs 32 to Rs 37 per unit, comparing them with Andhra Pradesh’s reported rates of Rs 16 to Rs 20 per unit for October.

The AIADMK leader also alleged that the government had cancelled earlier power procurement contracts in May over corruption concerns. He said the government had

promised cheaper, long-term agreements in June but later turned to short-term purchases at higher prices.

Palaniswami further claimed that revised electricity billing policies had increased bills for some households from around Rs 1,500 to nearly Rs 4,000. He warned that expensive power purchases could increase TNPDC’s debt and eventually lead to privatisation. The allegations were made in a statement by the AIADMK leader.

TN’s power procurement row

Daily power procurement

4,400 MW

Companies awarded contracts

5

Reported purchase rate per unit

Rs 32–37

Alleged rise in household bills

Rs 1,500–4,000

Quick Read

As diesel prices soar, Bolivian farmer turns trash into tractor fuel

LAJA

Etson Machaca, a resident of the Bolivian Altiplano, where rising fuel costs are threatening farmers' livelihoods, has built a small plant that converts plastic bags, old tires and used oil into energy for his tractors. The operation is small, turning out only 80 to 150 liters of gasoline and diesel a day, but the savings have been a lifesaver for Machaca since Bolivia's centrist government ended state diesel subsidies last month to shore up public accounts. His plant makes fuel for 7 to 10 bolivianos (\$0.60 to \$0.86) a liter, while diesel on the open market costs about double that, at 18 bolivianos (\$1.54) a liter.

Russia hits energy targets despite Trump ceasefire announcement

KYIV

Russia struck at least six energy targets in deadly air attacks across Ukraine, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, adding that this showed Moscow had no interest in the energy ceasefire announced by US President Donald Trump. Trump, under pressure over high energy prices before next month's US midterm elections, caught Kyiv and its European allies off guard over the weekend when he declared that Ukraine and Russia had agreed not to hit each other's energy systems. "It is increasingly evident that Russia is unwilling to accept an energy ceasefire proposed by the United States and intends to continue its terrorist air attacks against our people and communities," Zelenskyy said on X.



8 hurt in supermarket stabbing in South Korea's Incheon

SEOUL
A stabbing at a supermarket in the South Korean city of Incheon on Tuesday wounded eight people, one of whom suffered a cardiac arrest, police said. Officers called to the scene arrested a male suspect and were investigating the motive and circumstances of the attack, a police spokesperson said by telephone. According to a witness, the suspect appeared to have knives tied to both hands and went through several floors of the shopping complex attacking people until bystanders overpowered him and handed him over to police. South Korean media reports described the suspect as a man in his 60s who was wearing an electronic monitoring ankle bracelet. The victims were six women and two men, and the woman in cardiac arrest was in her 20s, the reports said. Incheon, west of Seoul, is home to South Korea's main airport and is part of the wider Seoul metropolitan area. A series of stabbing rampages in 2023, including attacks that left several people dead and injured, shook South Korea. In a more recent case in May, a man in his 20s fatally stabbed a 17-year-old girl and wounded another teenager in the southwestern city of Gwangju.

Saudi halted alerts before deadly airport strikes

The deadly Riyadh airport strikes killed at least 18 people and wounded over 300, raising questions about security preparedness and government communication.

RIYADH

Saudi Arabia stopped issuing public warnings of imminent military attacks days before a series of deadly strikes on Riyadh airport killed at least 18 people and wounded more than 300, raising questions about the kingdom's preparedness and public safety measures.

The government has not explained why its national early warning system remained silent before four attacks on the Saudi capital over the past week. The absence of alerts has prompted concerns among regional officials and political analysts about the country's vulnerability to further attacks and its ability to protect residents and visitors.

The warnings had previously highlighted the violence threatening Saudi Arabia's efforts to project an image of stability during its conflict



with Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis. Analysts said the decision to withhold alerts also appeared aimed at maintaining a sense of normalcy despite the growing security risks.

"They want to have it both ways: to launch a military operation and at the same time try to give confidence to the population and external stakeholders," said Sultan Alamer,

a US-based Saudi academic and Senior Resident Fellow at the Middle East Policy Council.

Saudi Arabia's civil defence authority, which operates under the interior ministry and manages emergency alerts, did not respond to questions about the absence of warnings. The government media office also did not respond to requests for comment.

No alerts to public before 4 Riyadh attacks

- Riyadh airport strikes killed at least 18 people and injured more than 300.
- Public threat alerts reportedly stopped after September 29.
- Saudi Arabia has since resumed alerts.
- Analysts questioned the impact of the silence on public confidence and security preparedness.

The authority resumed issuing alerts, warning of potential threats in Riyadh and southern cities.

Saudi Arabia introduced its mobile-phone and social-media warning system in May. Its last alert before the recent strikes was issued on September 29 for the southern province of Najran.

Drone strikes sink cargo ship off Bulgaria

SOFIA

Eleven sailors were missing on Tuesday after a drone attack sank a cargo ship off Bulgaria's Black Sea coast, prompting Sofia to summon Russia's ambassador amid concerns over a possible second deadly maritime incident in the region within a week.

Bulgarian officials said two cargo ships were struck by drones overnight, with one sinking near the village of Krapets. Five crew members from the sunken vessel were rescued, while a search and rescue operation continued for the missing sailors. President Iliana Iotova identified the ship as the Guinea-Bissau-flagged HS Dignity.

A second vessel, the Malta-flagged Chelsea 3, was hit by three drones. All 15 crew members, comprising seven Ukrainians and eight Azerbaijanis, were rescued, with no serious injuries reported.

Russian Ambassador Eleonora Mitrofanova said she had no information from Russia's Defence Ministry about attacks on commercial vessels and suggested the incidents could have been a provocation by a third party.

The attacks drew condemnation from Ukraine and the



Two ships hit	
11	SAILORS MISSING FROM THE SUNKEN HS DIGNITY
5	HS DIGNITY CREW RESCUED
15	CHELSEA 3 CREW RESCUED

European Union. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen described the Black Sea as another front in the escalation of Russia's war against Ukraine, adding that those responsible should be held accountable.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha accused Moscow of disregarding civilian lives and warned that attacks on Black Sea shipping threatened global food security.

The latest incidents follow the sinking of another vessel in Bulgaria's Black Sea exclusive economic zone a week earlier, when nine Syrian sailors and one Egyptian were lost.

Orban denies ordering seizure of Ukrainian gold convoy

BUDAPEST

Former Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban has denied directing authorities to seize two Ukrainian cash-in-transit vehicles carrying \$82 million in cash and gold, saying Hungarian officials acted independently during the March incident.

Seven Ukrainian nationals transporting the assets were briefly detained by Hungarian authorities on suspicion of money laundering. The seizure heightened tensions between Budapest and Kyiv ahead of Hungary's April election, which ended Orban's 16-year tenure as prime minister.

Ukraine's state-owned Oschadbank said its employees had been transporting the money and gold from Austria



to Ukraine as part of a routine operation. The bank said similar transfers had been conducted weekly since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Hungarian prosecutors subsequently opened an investigation into the handling of the case, including allegations of unlawful detention and mis-

What actually happened

- **MARCH**
Two Ukrainian vehicles carrying \$82 million in cash and gold seized; seven Ukrainians briefly detained
- **APRIL**
Hungary's election ends Orban's 16-year tenure as prime minister
- **JUNE**
Prosecutors name Janos Hajdu as a suspect

treatment of the Ukrainian nationals. In June, prosecutors named Janos Hajdu, a former head of Hungary's counter-terrorism forces and current security chief for Orban's Fidesz party, as a suspect.

Orban has not been questioned in the investigation.

SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un toured a defence industry museum that displays an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States, state media KCNA showed on Tuesday. The report came a day after US President Donald Trump said he might meet Kim during a planned trip to Asia. Trump is expected to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in China in mid-November.

Kim attended the opening of the new Defence Revolution Museum on Sunday with his daughter, known as Ju Ae, and his wife, Ri Sol Ju, KCNA said.

A display in front of the Hwasong-20 launcher appeared to show a multi-



ple-warhead design, along with a world map showing ranges that reach beyond the US mainland to the Middle East, Australia and South America, according to Shin Jong-woo, Secretary General of the Korea Defence and Security Forum.

"The exhibition appears intended to highlight the achievements of Kim's defence science development programme," Shin said. "It gave the impression of propaganda aimed at gaining a strategic advantage ahead of a

potential North Korea-US summit."

Analysts said the museum also pointed to a wider effort by Kim to turn North Korea's weapons displays into lasting symbols of the regime's military accomplishments.

"By turning what were once temporary weapons exhibitions into a permanent museum, Kim is institutionalising his military achievements and portraying North Korea's nuclear and missile buildup as a completed and enduring legacy," said Lim Eul-chul, a professor at Kyungnam University's Institute for Far Eastern Studies.

In a separate announcement, North Korea said it had test-fired a tactical ballistic missile to confirm a successful technical upgrade to an unspecified key component.

Ex-gang leader faces maximum penalty of life in prison

LAS VEGAS

A former gang leader was due to be sentenced on Tuesday for orchestrating the 1996 drive-by shooting that killed hip-hop star Tupac Shakur in Las Vegas, bringing to a close the only prosecution over a long-unsolved murder that shaped the golden age of rap music.

Duane "Keffe D" Davis, 63, who was found guilty of first-degree murder in August, was scheduled to return to a Las Vegas courtroom, where he faced a maximum penalty of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Davis has said he will appeal his conviction. Until his arrest in 2023, the killing of Shakur, who was shot dead in the passenger seat of an SUV driven by his record executive, Marion "Suge" Knight, had remained one of America's most notorious cold cases

for nearly three decades.

Davis was tried and convicted of hurriedly masterminding the murder in revenge for the beating of his nephew by Shakur and members of the rapper's entourage inside the MGM Grand casino on the Las Vegas Strip on September 7, 1996.

The casino clash grew out of hostility between two Los Angeles-area street gangs: the South Side Compton Crips, of which Davis was the self-described leader, and Mob Piru, which was linked to Shakur, Knight and their music label, Death Row Records.

Members of both groups were in Las Vegas that night to watch a world heavyweight title fight between Mike Tyson and Bruce Seldon.

Within hours of the brawl, Davis drove his nephew and two other associates out in a white Cadillac to look for Shakur and Knight, deter-



THE CASE

Maximum penalty: life in prison without parole

- Duane "Keffe D" Davis, 63, found guilty of first-degree murder in August
- Tupac Shakur, 25, shot dead in Las Vegas in 1996
- Davis has said he will appeal

mined to settle scores, according to an account Davis later gave police in an unrelated investigation, which prosecutors cited at his murder trial.

Will prioritise welfare reform over popularity: Merz

FRANKFURT

Friedrich Merz, the German Chancellor, said on Tuesday that he was prepared to risk declining popularity to push through long-delayed welfare reforms, arguing that changes were necessary to improve the prospects for younger generations.

Speaking at a conference organised by an employers' association, Merz said his priority was to put Germany on the right path rather than win public approval. He stressed that reforms should help secure better opportunities for young people amid mounting concerns about the country's social security systems.

"I have no intention of becoming the nation's darling. My intention is to set this country on the right course so that, above all, we can once again offer the younger generation decent prospects," Merz



said.

His remarks come as his governing coalition faces growing political uncertainty following defeats in state elections last month and a decline in opinion poll ratings. The situation was further complicated by the resignation of Germany's labour minister, who belonged to the centre-left Social Democratic Party (SPD).

The minister's departure has added pressure on the coalition as it seeks to advance reforms amid political dis-

"I have no intention of becoming the nation's darling."

FRIEDRICH MERZ German Chancellor

agreements and public concerns over economic and social policies.

Merz also highlighted the urgent need to overhaul Germany's pay-as-you-go pension system, saying the country was at least 30 years late in addressing the issue. Under this system, contributions from current workers and employers help finance payments to existing retirees.

The chancellor warned that demographic changes would require difficult decisions to ensure the system remains sustainable. He said pension contributions paid by workers and employers would have to increase temporarily to accommodate these changes.

Hezbollah announces housing aid for war-hit families

BEIRUT

Lebanon's Hezbollah will provide financial assistance of up to \$14,000 to families whose primary homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable during this year's war with Israel, Executive Council chairman Ali Damoush announced on Tuesday.

Under the assistance plan, eligible families in Beirut and its southern suburbs will receive \$14,000, comprising

\$8,000 for furniture and \$6,000 for rent. Families elsewhere in Lebanon will receive \$12,000, including \$8,000 for furniture and \$4,000 for rent. The rates remain unchanged from those offered in 2024.

The programme covers families whose homes were destroyed, severely damaged or declared uninhabitable following technical assessments. However, eligibility is restricted to households that used the affected properties as

their primary residences and do not own a second home.

Payments will be distributed in four instalments over one year. The first payment will amount to \$3,500 for eligible families in Beirut and its southern suburbs and \$3,000 for families elsewhere in Lebanon.

Damoush said eligibility and assistance would be determined through criteria assessing the extent of damage to each property. He did not

disclose the total amount Hezbollah would allocate to the programme.

The announcement follows reports that Hezbollah received \$200 million from Iran last month to support displaced Lebanese families. Two people familiar with the transfer provided that figure,

although the United States disputed the report, saying the money was "not there". Iran has not commented publicly.

Israel's bombardment and ground invasion have displaced hundreds of thousands of people since Hezbollah entered the regional conflict in support of Iran on March 2.



\$14,000	\$12,000	4
Beirut and its southern suburbs	elsewhere in Lebanon	instalments over one year

Ellyse Perry re-enters top 10 ODI batters

DUBAI

The latest update to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's Player Rankings reflects the sweeping dominance of the Australian national team during their ongoing home One Day International (ODI) series against Bangladesh. Capitalizing on a powerful start that has secured an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match bilateral campaign under the ICC Women's Championship umbrella, several key Australian players have made massive upward strides across the batting, bowling, and all-round standings.

Veteran all-rounder Ellyse Perry headlines the changes for the batting group, climbing two spots to re-enter the elite top 10 rankings. Perry's consistent poise and ability to anchor the innings continue to anchor Australia's formidable top order. Meanwhile, rising star Georgia Voll made one of the most eye-catching leaps of the update, surging eight places to claim 28th position

following her exceptional match-winning contributions in Brisbane.

In the bowling department, Annabel Sutherland and Megan Schutt cemented their status as two of the world's premier wicket-takers. Sutherland, who delivered a sensational spell of four wickets complemented by an unbeaten 25 runs in the opening fixture at Allan Border Field, climbed to fourth place among bowlers and 17th in the batting charts. Veteran pace spearhead Megan Schutt also advanced two positions to secure fifth place in the bowling rankings following her clinical four-wicket haul in the second encounter.

Despite trailing in the series, visiting Bangladesh side members found positives through individual milestones. Captain Nigar Sultana Joty jumped 11 places to share 24th position in the ODI batting list, while teammate Sobhana Mostary climbed 11 spots to share 35th place.

Concurrently, the latest rankings captured stellar T20I performances from the West Indies and Zimbabwe series.

West Indies leg-end

Stafanie Taylor made a remarkable resurgence following a brilliant 64 off 39 balls that secured a clean 3-0 sweep against Zimbabwe. Taylor vaulted seven places to 40th among T20I batters and skyrocketed 29 spots in the all-rounder rankings to reach 39th.

Australia sweeps headlines as international women's cricket rankings shift following stellar performances across thrilling global series.



Nurul anticipates Afghanistan's spin bowling strategy

DHAKA

As the Bangladesh cricket squad packs its bags for the upcoming One Day International tri-series in the United Arab Emirates, wicketkeeper-batter Nurul Hasan has shared his tactical expectations. The multi-nation tournament, which also includes Zimbabwe, kicks off in Abu Dhabi on October 17 and serves as a vital preparatory stepping stone for upcoming marquee events like the Asia Cup and the ODI World Cup.

Speaking to reporters at the airport prior to their departure, Nurul pointed out that Afghanistan will likely alter their strategy for the limited-overs games. Although their current Test setup relies heavily on a pace-oriented approach, the return of world-class spin maestro Rashid Khan alongside other elite slow bowlers means they will likely favor turning tracks in the shorter format.

To counter such challenges, Bangladesh has injected fresh variety into their own bowling lineup by handing a maiden ODI call-up to mystery spinner Aliss Al Islam. Nurul believes that having a specialized mystery spinner provides a massive tactical advantage, especially when playing matches on foreign soil



I think they will try to back their strong zone, and their spin attack is good, so I feel they may opt for a little bit more spinning wicket.

- Nurul Hasan, Wicketkeeper-batter

where unexpected variations can trouble opposing batting line-ups.

Looking at the bigger picture, Nurul emphasized that the squad is traveling with absolute confidence and a clear championship mindset. Rather than treating the tri-series as mere practice, the team views it as a crucial platform to establish winning momentum and boost team morale ahead of demanding international tournaments. Addressing concerns about the severe heat in the UAE, the experienced cricketer noted that extreme weather conditions remain an equal challenge for all competing nations, meaning adaptability and teamwork will ultimately decide who lifts the trophy.

GILL AND SHAFALI CLAIM ICC MONTHLY HONORS

DUBAI

Indian cricket celebrated a remarkable double today as national team stars Shubman Gill and Shafali Verma claimed the prestigious ICC Men's and Women's Players of the Month awards for September 2026. This phenomenal clean sweep marks only the third time in history that both honors have gone to representatives from the Board of Control for Cricket in India simultaneously.

Gill extended his record-breaking streak by securing his fifth monthly accolade in the men's division, tying him with West Indies captain Hayley Matthews for the most career wins. His latest triumph stems from a historic batting masterclass during India's home ODI series against the West Indies. After anchoring the opening match with a brilliant 110 runs to guide his side to an eight-wicket victory, Gill delivered a performance for the ages.

In the subsequent fixture, the right-handed maestro smashed an astonishing 223 runs off just 133 deliveries, etching his name into the record books by scoring the fastest double-century in one-day international history. His explosive innings successfully hunted down a daunting 406-run target, thrilling home fans and cementing India's dominance. Reflecting on the honor, Gill expressed immense gratitude while emphasizing the shifting landscape of modern cricket. He noted that the rapidly accelerating pace of ODI matches requires instant adaptation and sharp tactical awareness. With the upcoming ICC Men's Cricket



World Cup scheduled in southern Africa next year, Gill stressed that the squad remains fiercely dedicated to elevating their standards and building a resilient, balanced team prepared to conquer future global challenges.

Meanwhile, destructive opening batter Shafali Verma captured her second career monthly award following a stellar run of form across major continental tournaments. Shafali finished as India's leading run-scorer during their triumphant Women's Asia Cup campaign, piling up an astonishing 360 runs at an astonishing strike rate of 184.61 while also chipping in with six valuable wickets.

She seamlessly carried that momentum into the Asian Games, playing a pivotal role in her team's gold-medal charge. Her standout moments included a magnificent, unbeaten century against Bangladesh in the semi-final, followed by a crucial 48-run knock in the final against Sri Lanka. This honor adds to her previous win in November 2025, which followed her match-winning exploits in the Women's World Cup final.

Meg Lanning returns as Melbourne Stars Captain

NEW DELHI

Cricket legend Meg Lanning is stepping back into the captaincy role for the Melbourne Stars ahead of the 12th season of the Women's Big Bash League. She takes over the leadership duties from star all-rounder Annabel Sutherland, who led the team for the past two seasons.

Sutherland made the brave and unselfish choice to step aside to reduce her heavy workload and focus entirely on her personal performance with bat and ball. Newly appointed head coach Richard Pyrah praised Sutherland for her incredible humility and character, noting that putting the team's needs first takes genuine strength. Pyrah expects this change to bring out the absolute best in Sutherland, who has been in phenomenal form recently, including starring in Australia's T20 World Cup victory and earning Player of the Tournament honors in The Hundred.

Although Lanning

admitted that taking on the captaincy again was not initially part of her plans, she embraced the challenge without hesitation. Having previously led the Stars for five seasons, she is eager to guide the squad when the new campaign kicks off on October 28. This time, leadership will be a collaborative effort. Lanning, Sutherland, and Kim Garth plan to share the responsibility to ensure no single player bears too much weight.



Meg Lanning returns as Melbourne Stars captain, while Annabel Sutherland steps down to focus on peak performance and shared leadership.

Chris Green to lead Australia in Hong Kong Sixes

HONG KONG

Versatile all-rounder Chris Green will step up to captain Australia's seven-man squad for the upcoming Hong Kong Sixes 2026 tournament. The action-packed three-day competition is scheduled to run from October 30 to November 1, bringing high-energy cricket back to international fans worldwide. Australia enters the global showcase with high hopes of capturing their second championship title. Their only previous tournament victory came back in 2010. To achieve this goal, selectors have assembled a balanced lineup tailored specifically for the fast-paced, high-scoring demands of the six-a-side format.

Captain Green will anchor the side alongside seasoned fast bowler Kane Richardson. The squad also features explosive batting talents and utility players including Jack Wood, Max Bryant, Nick Hobson, Alex Ross, and Matt Kelly. This blend of international experience and dynamic stroke play is designed to match the aggressive tempo of the historic tournament.



Organizers have expressed immense excitement over Australia's confirmation. Anuraag Bhatnagar, Director of Marketing and Commercial at Cricket Hong Kong, China, highlighted that the team's competitive spirit will elevate the tournament's overall quality and deliver an unforgettable spectacle for cricket enthusiasts.

The 2026 edition introduces several exciting milestones, including a landmark partnership with JSW Sports as the official commercial partner. Fans eager to catch the explosive hitting and innovative shot-making can purchase tickets for HKD 780 to secure full access across all three days.

Kerkez urges Liverpool to bounce back

NEW DELHI

Following a painful 3-0 defeat against rival powerhouse Manchester City at Anfield, Liverpool defender Milos Kerkez has stepped forward to emphasize that securing victories is the absolute priority for the club. The weekend loss marked the first major setback under the leadership of manager Andoni Iraola, halting the team's early-season momentum in the English Premier League. However, the squad has little time to dwell on the disappointment, with an important European fixture approaching fast.

The high-stakes domestic clash remained tightly contested and scoreless for more than an hour, with both tactical units canceling each other out in a tense battle. Liverpool displayed immense discipline and resilience during the opening forty-five minutes, successfully thwarting waves of attacking pressure while creating moments of promise. The momentum shifted dramatically in the sixty-second minute when midfielder Ryan Gravenberch received a second yellow card, resulting in a red card that reduced the hosts to ten men.

Kerkez admitted that the dressing room felt immense frustration over the final scoreline, noting that the team went toe-to-toe with their op-

ponents until numerical disadvantage took its toll. Once Manchester City gained a player advantage, they capitalized on open spaces and controlled possession to secure three second-half goals.

Looking ahead, Liverpool aims to channel this frustration into positive energy as they travel to face Austrian side LASK in the UEFA Champions League. Kerkez stressed that winning is embedded in the club's culture, and an immediate response is required to restore confidence.



Palmer is a special football beast, says Pedro

NEW DELHI

Chelsea forward Joao Pedro has showered high praise on teammate Cole Palmer and manager Xabi Alonso as the club prepares for their upcoming Premier League fixture against Everton. Sitting comfortably in the race for a top-six spot, the London side is riding high on strong teamwork and clear tactical direction. Pedro, currently leading the club's scoring charts with five goals, highlighted Palmer's incredible impact on the pitch. Describing him as a complete football player, Pedro noted that Palmer possesses a rare abil-

ity to score incredible goals, deliver precise passes, and decide matches from anywhere on the field.

The Brazilian striker also shed light on how the team's front line functions so smoothly. By combining short passes to Palmer's feet and driving spaces open for Morgan Rogers, the attacking trio creates constant danger for opposing defenses. However, Pedro made sure to credit midfielder Moises Caicedo as well, calling him the best in the world at his relentless ball-winning and defensive protection. Beyond individual brilliance, Pedro pointed out that manager Xabi Alonso has transformed the squad's mindset.

