



Oppn protests
grow over Imran
Khan's medical
care

P8



'India's energy
decisions
based on cost
not pressure'

P9

P12 Steve Smith
Added To
Australia
Squad



INDIA TAKES 'AI' CENTRE STAGE

All eyes are on New Delhi, where India is hosting the AI Impact Summit 2026 — and markets worldwide are watching closely



NEW DELHI

The world's largest artificial intelligence conclave, the India AI Impact Summit 2026, kicked off at Bharat Mandapam here on Monday, drawing technologists, policymakers, industry leaders, founders, and enthusiasts in huge numbers to deliberate on the transformative impact of the technology.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday inaugurated the event and visited various stalls, and spoke with the companies participating in the expo. The expo features over 600 high-potential startups and 13 country pavilions showcasing international collaboration in AI

ecosystem. Expo brings together global technology firms, startups, academia and research institutions, central and state governments, and international partners.

At the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, many global leaders are sched-

uled to attend the AI Impact Summit, including French President Emmanuel Macron and Brazilian President Lula da Silva - the presence of these heads of state underscores the high-level international engagement and interest around the AI agenda.

5 days
Feb 16-20

3,250
speakers

500
sessions

High-profile speakers

Sundar Pichai of
Alphabet (Google)

Sam Altman of OpenAI

Dario Amodei of
Anthropic

India stands at forefront of AI transformation: PM

NEW DELHI

As India hosts the AI Impact Summit at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said India stands at forefront of AI transformation.

Taking to X, PM Modi wrote, "Bringing the world together to discuss AI! Starting today, India hosts the AI Impact Summit at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi. I warmly welcome world leaders, captains of industry, innovators, policymakers, researchers and tech enthusiasts from across the world for this Summit."

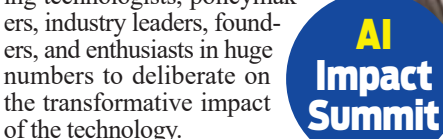


The AI Impact Summit has drawn global attention to the country's growing tech capabilities, terming it a moment of pride for the nation and a reflection of the potential of India's youth.

He added, "The theme of the Summit is Sarvajana Hitaya,

Sarvajana Sukhaya or welfare for all, happiness for all, reflecting our shared commitment to harnessing Artificial Intelligence for human-centric progress." The PM further said, "AI is transforming several sectors, including healthcare, education, agriculture, governance and enterprise."

"The AI Impact Summit will enrich global discourse on diverse aspects of AI, such as innovation, collaboration, responsible use and more," he wrote. He thanked the people of India, as the nation stands at the forefront of the AI transformation.



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uled to attend the AI Impact Summit, including French President Emmanuel Macron and Brazilian President Lula da Silva - the presence of these heads of state underscores the high-level international engagement and interest around the AI agenda.

'India a 'full-stack AI leader in world'

Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI Altman described India as a potential "full-stack AI leader" and announced plans to expand the company's footprint in the country. He said India has become OpenAI's second-largest user base globally, after the US, with over 100 million weekly active users. "OpenAI is committed to doing its part to help build AI in India, with India, and for India," he added.

GLOBAL REACTIONS

Pride in India's scientific progress

Bill Gates, Businessman Bill Gates said it was a matter of immense pride that global leaders are converging in India for the summit. In a post on X, he said: "It is a matter of immense pride for us that people from all over the world are coming to India for the India AI Impact Summit. This also shows the capability of our country's youth."

'India isn't just participating, it's shaping what's next'

Cristiano Amon, CEO, Qualcomm "India is not merely part of the global AI conversation but is actively shaping its future. The next phase of AI growth will depend on democratising access through efficient data centres, powerful on-device intelligence and advanced connectivity such as 6G."

'AI for economic development and social good'

Shantanu Narayen, chairman and CEO of Adobe India has consistently demonstrated what ambition and imagination can achieve. He praised the government's leadership in convening the first global AI summit in the Global South and reaffirmed Adobe's commitment to commercially safe and responsible AI innovation.

AI boost for farmers: India to rolls out Bharat-VISTAAR

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday will roll out Bharat-VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources), an AI-driven multilingual platform aimed at delivering farm-related information directly to farmers in their own language via mobile or a simple phone call.

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan will formally launch the initiative in Jaipur, in the presence of Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma.

Designed as a round-the-clock "digital agriculture expert," Bharat-VISTAAR can be accessed in two modes, including via a dedicated helpline number (155261). Its conversational AI assistant, named 'Bharati', will offer guidance on crop planning, packages of practices and pests, weather forecasts, markets, scheme information, eligibility, application, and grievance.

FEATURES

AI advisories

Schemes info

Multilingual support

Open APIs

Voice Access

State Systems

"Disturbing Trend": SC junks plea over Sarma's 'Miya' remark

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court struck a displeased note Monday afternoon as it turned down petitions to file a police case, and order an inquiry by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma over alleged hate speech incidents.

A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant, and including Justice Joymalya Bagchi

and Justice Vipul Pancholi, directed the petitioners to first approach the Gauhati High Court and lamented the growing trend of the top court becoming the first stop to resolve disputes, particularly before an election.

In this instance, Assam will hold an Assembly election likely in March or April.

The incidents in question refer to a video, released by the ruling BJP's Assam unit,

that showed him shooting at a photograph of Muslims and, before that, comments about Miyas, i.e., Bengali-speaking Muslims whom the BJP has called "illegal infiltrators".

On these issues – the video and the comments – the court urged political parties to restrain themselves and "act within the boundaries of constitutional morality". "But this (approaching of the Supreme Court directly) is becoming a trend just before elections," the petitioners were told.

X goes down worldwide, including India

MUMBAI

Social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, went down for thousands of users worldwide on Monday, with reports of widespread disruptions pouring in from the US, UK and India.

According to Downdetector, outage complaints surged to more than 25,000 at around

18:30 IST, as users reported problems accessing the platform and loading posts. The cause of the outage was not immediately clear.

Users across multiple countries flagged issues nearly simultaneously, suggesting the disruption was not limited to a specific geography. Many said the app and website failed to refresh feeds, while others reported

login problems. Downdetector's live tracking showed a sharp spike in complaints within a short window, pointing to a significant service interruption. Most of these users reported issues with the website, while others raised complaints about the app. A portion of netizens also struggled to access their feeds or timelines on X, the data showed.



7 charred to death as massive blaze engulfs chemical factory

BHIWADI (RAJASTHAN)

Seven workers were burnt alive in a massive fire that broke out at a chemical factory in Rajasthan's Bhiwadi on Monday, while 10 workers are still feared trapped.

When the fire broke out around 9.30 am, 20-25 workers were working in the factory. Within minutes, flames spread from the private industrial unit and engulfed large section of the factory. Some workers managed to escape.

Additional District Magistrate Sumita Mishra said the incident first came to light

during routine police patrolling in the area. Police, fire brigade personnel, medical teams, and administrative officials swiftly reached the site and cordoned off the spot to facilitate relief efforts.

The fire was brought under control after one-and-a-half hours of firefighting operations.

Authorities have yet to confirm the exact cause of the fire.

The district administration has announced a magisterial inquiry to determine the cause of the fire and assess any lapses in safety protocols.

QUICK READ

Trade deal: Indian team to visit US next week

NEW DELHI: A team of Indian officials will visit the US next week to finalise the legal text for an interim trade agreement, which is expected to be signed in March, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Monday. The visit is likely to start from February 23. India and the US earlier this month released a joint statement announcing that a framework for an interim trade agreement has been finalised. "The joint statement lays down the contours of the deal. Now the contours of the deal has to be translated into a legal agreement, which will be signed between the two sides," he told reporters here. Joint Secretary in Commerce Ministry Darpan Jain to lead a delegation to US.

Sabarimala: SC to hear petitions from April 7

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday said a nine-judge bench would start from April 7 its final hearing on a batch of petitions relating to discrimination against women in religious places, including Kerala's Sabarimala Temple. A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said the Constitution bench, to be set up by the CJ, will commence the crucial hearing on the petitions on April 7 and conclude its proceedings on April 22. The court asked the parties to file their written submissions on or before March 14.

Woman takes 20 furry friends home, sets trend

BENGALURU

After the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) announced that it would give away stray dogs for adoption, people now are coming forward to take them in.

In a heartwarming act of compassion, Sujaya Jagadish from the North City Corporation limits has adopted 20 street dogs in one single move, providing them with safety, care, and a new lease of life.

The adoption was carried out in accordance with legal provisions under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (PCA Act) and the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules,



GBA breaks its own rule!

Citing growing complaints over public safety, neighbourhood disturbances and gaps in registration, the GBA has drafted a comprehensive regulatory framework aimed at bringing order to the city's estimated 2 lakh pet dogs. Of the rules, including mandatory microchips and breed curbs, three dogs cap had drawn widespread criticism.



2023. The GBA has vaccinated, sterilised and tagged the dogs before handing them over to the new owner.

The Authority had earlier faced criticism for feeding stray dogs chicken rice and building shelters for them. Now, the authority is adopting a new approach by giving

away the dogs for adoption.

GBA's efforts started bearing fruits

The response to the adoption drive has been encouraging, with people coming forward to take in the stray dogs. The GBA hopes that this initiative will promote animal welfare and improve public health in the city.

The GBA has appealed to the public, NGOs, and resident welfare associations to come forward and adopt stray dogs. The authority is providing vaccinated and spayed dogs for adoption, and hopes that this will help reduce the stray dog population in the city.



QUICK READ



Union Defence Minister arrives in Bengaluru

BENGALURU
Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who is on a two-day tour of Bengaluru to participate in various programmes and meetings in Bengaluru, arrived at the HAL airport on Monday by a special flight. The Union Defence Minister was welcomed by senior officials including Chairman and Managing Directors of HAL Dr Sunil, Manoj Jain of BEL, Shantanuraj of BEML, Mahadeva Rao of BDL, Lieutenant General JK Gera and others. The Defence Minister will participate in various programmes to be held in Bengaluru for two days on Monday and Tuesday.

200 companies attend capacity-building workshop

BENGALURU
More than 200 organisations from within Electronics City, Bommasandra Jigani, Veerasandra, and neighbouring industrial clusters participated in the capacity-building workshop on the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS) at IIIT-B. The workshop focused on assisting stakeholders to update apprenticeship reforms, thereby urging them to increase the number of apprentices and establishments under the ambit of apprenticeship. Organisations included those working in defence and aerospace, power, retail, telecom, IT and ITes, electronics, and automotive sectors.

FIR over attempt to call, threaten ex-SC judges

BENGALURU
An incident has been reported in which a former Supreme Court judge was called and tried to threaten him by pretending to be an officer of the Bengaluru Cyber Cell. An FIR has been registered in this regard at the Cyber Crime Police Station. Supreme Court Principal Secretary Bharat Parashar has filed a complaint against former Supreme Court judge J Chelameswar for allegedly trying to intimidate him by a fraudster who called him. The police have registered a case based on this complaint. On January 9, unknown persons who called tried to threaten him by introducing themselves as officials from the Cyber Cell of Bengaluru. On the instructions of J Chelameswar, Bharat Parashar filed a complaint with the Cyber Police Station of Bengaluru against the unknown persons who had threatened him.

‘SBMC begins clearance of dead, dangerous trees’

BENGALURU
On the orders of Commissioner KN Ramesh of South Bengaluru Municipal Corporation (SBMC), the Forest Unit of South Municipal Corporation has been carrying out an operation to remove dry and dangerous trees and dry and dangerous branches in the roads, parks and lakes of 6 assembly constituencies under the limits of Bangalore South Municipal Corporation from September 2, 2025 till now for the safety of the public.

BWSSB lists 448 water-critical zones in city

Officials say these are not large layouts or entire colonies, but small, concentrated micro-pockets within larger supply zones

BENGALURU

With temperatures climbing earlier than usual in Bengaluru, BWSSB has identified 448 high-alert water-stressed pockets and launched a Rs 10.1-crore summer preparedness plan to prevent shortages.

According to IMD, daytime temperatures in Bengaluru are expected to hover between 29 degree celsius and 30 degree celsius. The city recorded 30 degree celsius on Sunday, while areas around KIA are likely to see a further rise in the coming days.

Unlike previous years, when emergency measures were triggered after complaints increased, BWSSB

this time mapped vulnerable areas in advance. Most of the identified pockets are interior stretches in north and east Bengaluru, where residents depend heavily on groundwater and borewell sustainability remains uncertain. Officials said these are limited clusters where drinking water access could become critical if groundwater levels fall sharply between March and May. To address the risk, BWSSB will deploy 1,260 mini-water tanks across its four zones.

Each Sintex tank, with a capacity of 5,000 litres, will serve as a local drinking water buffer in stress-prone areas. In addition, 117 BWSSB tankers have been earmarked for deployment, while 104



private tankers have been identified to be hired as back-

up if required. About 60 additional tankers have also been

arranged in anticipation of rising demand. Standard BWSSB tankers carry between 6,000 and 12,000 litres. To improve distribution, 91 additional Cauvery water filling points are planned. The Board has also arranged reverse support for 196 reverse osmosis plants across the city.

Further, 47 water infrastructure works and 14 lake-filling projects are under way to strengthen local water availability during peak summer. Officials said this year’s approach focuses on decentralised storage and quicker tanker turnaround. The early preparedness comes amid higher-than-normal Feb temperatures and uncertainty over

groundwater levels. However, BWSSB chairman Ram Prasath Manohar V said the city is better placed than it was in 2024. “I don’t see much summer difficulty for the city; we are well prepared this year, he said, pointing to improved Cauvery supply capacity.

Under the Cauvery Stage V augmentation, BWSSB now has a total pumping capacity of 773 million litres per day (MLD), of which around 400 MLD is currently being utilised. We still have more than 40% additional pumping capacity available. Even in a worst-case scenario where groundwater levels fall more than expected, we can match the requirement with Cauvery water, he said.

Min Reddy raises alarm over poor performance of e-buses

BENGALURU

The number of BMTC bus accidents in Bengaluru has been increasing in recent times. Most of the accidents are caused by BMTC electric buses (EV Bus).

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy has expressed his anger over the maintenance of these electric buses and has written a second letter to Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy.

Lakhs of people rely on BMTC buses every day. BMTC has over 6,000 buses, out of which about 1,700 are electric buses.

But in recent times, EV buses have been causing a lot of accidents and brake failures. BMTC is running these buses on a contract basis from private companies on the GCC model as per the instructions of the central government. The company itself is filling the drivers in these buses. Therefore, no action is being taken against the driver



First letter yield no results: Min

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said 5-6 months ago, I had written a letter to Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy regarding the maintenance of electric buses. But there was no reply, assured that would solve the problem in 45 days. Hence, I have written a second letter.

who caused the accident. In addition, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy has expressed dissatisfaction that the operations of BMTC Corporation are being affected due to lack of maintenance of electric buses and battery problems.

Still, these electric buses are breaking down more often. EV buses are supposed to run 200 kilometers in a day. But the battery is only getting 100-120 kilometers. They are breaking down repeatedly, the Transport Minister has said.

Stat should ensure adequate medicine supply: BYV

BENGALURU

BJP state President and MLA BY Vijayendra has expressed concern about what would happen to the poor if the Chief Minister, who has given the opportunity to travel abroad to MLAs, also sends the Health Minister to Australia and New Zealand.

He spoke at a press conference on Monday at the BJP state office. The poor are currently suffering due to lack of medicines in government hospitals in rural areas. He alleged that information is being received that surgeries have been postponed in many places. The Health Minister criticized the Chief Minister for not paying attention to this. Vijayendra urged the state government to take steps for adequate supply of medicines before sending the MLAs out.

Unable to tolerate the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Congress government had also stoned Janaushadhi Kendras. He said



Siddaramaiah’s son Yathindra said that after Shivaratri, DK Shivakumar will also be good; it will be good for everyone, and he criticized that he did not say that it will be good for the people of the state. He analysed that the Chief Minister’s son had very sensitively exposed the Chief Minister’s resignation from his post. Yathindra also gave a hint that he would join the cabinet if the Chief Minister resigns.

Above all, the Congress government led by Siddaramaiah has done injustice to the people of the entire state in the last two and a half years.

Accident claim: HC frees insurer, fixes liability on bike owner

BENGALURU

In a twist-filled compensation battle stemming from a 2009 road accident, the high court has held that the owner of an implicated motorcycle, and not the insurer must pay enhanced damages to an injured stenographer, after finding evidence of collusion and wrongful vehicle implication.

Justice P Sree Sudha, while enhancing the compensation, exonerated ICI-CL Lombard General Insurance Company Limited from any liability, observing that the case involved a deliberate attempt to rope in an insured vehicle to secure wrongful financial gain.

The case dates back to August 30, 2009, when J Subramanya, a Stenographer at the Office of the Director, Karnataka Engineer Research Station in Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS), was travelling from Mysuru to

Pandavapura. Near Hotel Mayura at Srirangapatna on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Road, his motorcycle was allegedly hit by a Hero Honda bike ridden rashly from the opposite direction. In his first complaint filed the very next day, he named one Suresh as the rider of the offending vehicle and claimed serious injuries that kept him off work for months. However, the narrative shifted dramatically just days later. A second complaint, filed on September 6, 2009 by a relative, cited an entirely different vehicle and another rider, S Shivakumar, as being involved in the crash, raising suspicions about the authenticity of the claim.

Initially, the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal at Pandavapura awarded a modest Rs 79,850 with 6 percent interest in 2013 against Subramanya’s claim of Rs 20 lakh.

Mom tied up with maternity shoot, kid drowns in pond

BENGALURU

What began as a routine visit to a maternity photoshoot venue ended in grief for a woman from JP Nagar after her three-year-old boy drowned in a pond at a private studio in Giddanahalli, near Magadi Main Road. C Lakshveer had accompanied his mother, Swathi, who is seven months pregnant, to The Shire Studio, a location popular for maternity and pre-wedding shoots.

Swathi had gone to the studio with a pregnant friend who had booked the venue for her photoshoot. Swathi’s husband Charan Raj, a software engineer, had travelled to the US for work about a week earlier. Before leaving, Swathi informed him that she was headed for the shoot and took Lakshveer along. According to investigators, Swathi was occupied with the photoshoot while the child was playing within the studio premises. The property has three small ponds. Police suspect Lakshveer may have

wandered towards one of them and accidentally slipped into the water.

When Swathi could not find her son, she began searching the premises. He was later found in one of the ponds. Studio staff pulled him out and rushed him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Police said the pond had more than 2ft of water. Lakshveer, who was about 3ft tall, may have been unable to regain his footing, possibly getting stuck in the mud, they said. A case of unnatural death has been registered at Madanayakanahalli police station based on a complaint filed by Swathi’s father, Ramesh Babu. The complaint does not blame the studio management. The child’s body was handed over to the family after autopsy at Nelmangala government hospital. Police said Charan Raj has been informed and is returning to Bengaluru. Officers added that the grandparents were in shock and could not provide detailed statements.

LIFELINE, NOT ANYMORE?

Indira canteen under fire over rubbery idlis, watery sambar

BENGALURU

Hailed once as a lifeline for the urban poor, Indira Canteens of Bengaluru are now battling complaints of poor food quality, staff shortages and crumbling infrastructure.

A visit to several Indira Canteens across the city reveal a worrying picture, watery sambar, undersized portions, locked toilets and erratic water supply were common place. Launched in 2017 to provide affordable meals, Rs 5 for breakfast and Rs 10 for lunch

and dinner, the canteens cater to thousands of customers daily. As per guidelines, a breakfast should weigh 225 grams and meals 300 grams. However, customers allege these standards are rarely met. Bengaluru has 198 Indira Canteens out of which 169 are operational and 29 suspended.

At the Rajajinagar canteen, regular customer and daily wage worker Manjunath Gowda said, we come here even now only because it is affordable. But idlis are often hard, and sambar is watery. For Rs



10, we don’t expect luxury, but at least basic quality should be maintained.

Rajanna Byali, a sanitation worker and another regular

customer at KR Market canteen, echoed similar concerns. Hailing from Bidar, Rajanna came in search of work in Bengaluru and worked with BBMP for over two years. Sometimes the rice is undercooked, and the vegetables are very few.

Still, we eat because we cannot afford hotels, he said. We have a canteen inside the GBA building, but the challenge is that we are not always around the GBA head office. When I head out, I search for the nearest canteen, but find

that most of them are poorly maintained and their food quality is poor. It is a challenge for us to cook three meals a day at home because of time and cost factors. But swallowing the morsel that is served here is painful.

The cooking staff say they are stretched thin. Shobha Murthy, who has been working at the Chalavadi Palya canteen for six years, said, “We cook and serve hundreds every day with very limited staff. If one person is absent, the whole system struggles.”

QUICK READ



Satish Sail congratulates KSMCA's new MD

BENGALURU
Satish Krishna Sail, MLA of Karwar Constituency and chairman of Karnataka State Marketing Communication and Advertising Limited (KSMCA) greeted B Anand on assuming office as the Managing Director.

Car collides with bike, overturns in city

BENGALURU
An incident that took place on the night of Sunday has caused panic among the public. A car was driven arrogantly on a narrow road and the driver fled the scene after getting out of the overturned vehicle. The incident took place at Cholorupalya 5th Cross under KP Aghraha police station limits. The car lost control and overturned after colliding with a parked bike. The KP Aghraha police who were in the night duty, immediately visited the spot and conducted an investigation.

Cops seize luxury car without number plate

BENGALURU
The Traffic Police have seized a luxury car that was unauthorised and modified without a number plate and silencer in the city. The owner of the car, who was travelling on Magadi Road in the city, had modified the vehicle of his choice. This is a clear violation of traffic rules. The Magadi Road traffic police, who were on morning patrol, were informed about the modified vehicle by a person. As soon as the complaint was received, the police swung into action and brought it to the notice of senior officials of the western division. The vehicle without silencer and number plate was immediately seized. Police said the operation was successful with the cooperation of the public. The seized car has been handed over to the Regional Transport Office for further legal action.

RSS remark: State BJP lambasts Min Priyank

'If he verbally and continuously criticizes the RSS, he can please the high command leaders and gain some status'

BENGALURU

At a book launch event, Priyank Kharge had criticized the RSS as a devil. State BJP leaders have given a sharp response to this. Opposition leader R Ashok posted that Minister Priyank Kharge, who is under the illusion that if he verbally and continuously criticizes the RSS organization, he can please the high command leaders and gain some status in the party and even more power, has been doing the same thing on a daily basis. The day is not far when the demons who have been betraying the trust of the people of Kalyan Karnataka by permanently putting up a board saying "Come tomorrow" for development and enjoying power with the grace of the people of Kalyan Karnataka for four decades will be driven away. He criticized that insulting the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and spitting in the same sky are the same.



BJP state President BY Vijayendra said that his department is not serious, no meeting has been held regarding the department. National and international issues are important to him. Till now, Priyank Kharge should say why Kalaburagi is backward as he is from an influential family. Kalyan Karnataka is not developed, Priyank Kharge has never raised his voice about this. Recently, the Govinda Rao Committee gave a report, did Priyank Kharge not get time to read that report? In that report, he lamented that 59 most backward taluks are in Kalyan and Kittur Karnataka. Did he make this statement as a result of hatred towards

the Sangh Parivar. Is it a statement of frustration. Is it a childish or an unwise statement. In rural language, it is a statement of head chatter, a statement of arrogance. Priyank Kharge is in a responsible position. Kharge has not understood the Sangh's hundred years of achievements, its commitment in building society, its sacrifice, and its role in building the country. He has made the statement for the sake of words, to be in the news in the media, and to divert the fight for the CM post. He may also be an aspirant to become the Chief Minister. He has asked whether he is acting like he has eyes but is blind and has ears but is deaf.

EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH



Devotees gather in large numbers for the Brahma Rathotsava of Kadumallikarjuna Swamy temple at Malleswaram in Bengaluru on Monday.

GBA moots skywalks in 18 traffic hotspots

BENGALURU

The South Municipal Corporation has planned to construct skywalks in traffic hotspot areas. The Outer Ring Road, South Municipal Corporation has decided to ease traffic congestion and make pedestrian walkways easier. It is planning to submit proposals for the construction of skywalks in as many as 18 areas. Bangalore city is infamous as the second traffic city. Due to traffic problems



and traffic congestion, even crossing the road is becoming difficult. Therefore, the Bangalore South Municipal Corporation is planning to construct skywalks. In the initial phase, it has decided to submit a proposal to the Urban Development

Department for the construction of 18 skywalks. There is a possibility of constructing skywalks in areas known as traffic hotspots, along with the Outer Ring Road and roads where ITBT companies are located. Plans have been made to construct skywalks in 18 areas. Skywalks at 18 locations include near Konanakunte Cross, Kumaraswamy Layout Junction, Yelachenahalli Metro, Sarakki Junction and Near Vasanthapura Cross.

Summer safety: GBA clears hundreds of dangerous trees

BENGALURU

With the arrival of summer and rising safety concerns, the Bengaluru Central City Corporation has intensified its preventive action by removing dry and dangerous trees and branches across its jurisdiction. The extensive drive was taken as a precautionary measure following multiple incidents of tree falls during summer months in previous years. Special teams were deployed to inspect vulnerable locations, including



42 dried trees, 395 branches go off

Across both zones, the civic body removed a total of 42 dried trees and 395 dried branches. In addition, 15 dangerous trees and 369 risky branches were cut and cleared, significantly reducing potential threats to public safety.

busy roads, public parks, and lake boundaries, ensuring public safety. Zone-wise clearance drive are; Zone 1-CV Raman Nagar Area: In this zone, teams removed 20 completely dried trees and cleared 193 dried branches. Additionally, 10 dangerous trees and 159

risky branches were cut and safely removed. Zone 2 - Gandhinagar Area: The operation in Gandhinagar resulted in the removal of 22 dried trees and 202 dry branches. Alongside this, 5 dangerous trees and 210 hazardous branches were identified and eliminated.

Biklu Shiva murder: CID questions BJP MLA Byrathi

BENGALURU

The CID team, which has taken MLA Byrathi Basavaraj into custody in the murder case of rowdy sheeter Shivaprakash alias Biklu Shiva, which took place under the jurisdiction of Bharathinagar police station, has intensified the investigation. CID sources said that they are planning to take into custody the other two main accused in the case, Jagadish and Kiran, who are in judicial custody, on the basis of a body warrant. Jagadish, who was identified as a close associate of Byrathi Basavaraj, is accused of abetting the murder of Shivaprakash. CID officials, who have collected the conversation (technical evidence) allegedly held between Jagadish and Basavaraj in the case, are now examining its authenticity. The investigators, who will seek permission from the court for voice testing, will then collect voice samples of both and send them to the FSL. If the voice in the conversation is confirmed, MLA Basavaraj will face further difficulties. Kiran, who played a direct role some boys from Mal-



ur. He also made the same accused meet MLA Byrathi Basavaraj at a birthday party. CID investigators have found some photos taken by the accused on that occasion. In this context, CID sources have informed that Kiran will also be taken into custody and questioned. Yesterday, the 42nd ACJM court judge ordered the remand of MLA Byrathi Basavaraj, the fifth accused in the murder case, to CID custody for 7 days. Byrathi Basavaraj was produced at the Koramangala residence of the city's 42nd ACJM court judge. During this, DySP Gautham, the investigating officer of the case, submitted the MLA's angiogram report before the judge. After examining the report and questioning, the judge issued an order remanding Byrathi Basavaraj to CID custody. Rowdysheeteer Biklu Shiva alias Shivaprakash was murdered at night in front of a house near Halasuru Lake in Bengaluru on July 15. 8-9 assailants who came in a car beat Shivaprakash to death with deadly weapons and fled the scene.



Amid power tussle, foreign trip of 27 MLAs kicks up row

BENGALURU

The issue of leadership change is being discussed at a large scale in state politics. After Yathindra's statement and DK Shivakumar's Delhi visit, the chair change has gained further importance. Following this, the MLAs' foreign trip has created a stir. The Congress MLAs, who have said they don't care about the high command's statement, have decided to go on a foreign trip. Around 27 Congress MLAs and Legislative Council members are preparing to go on a foreign trip. Top sources said that they are likely to go on a trip to Australia and New Zealand. MLAs Puttaranga Shetty, Raghavendra Hitnal, BM Nagaraju, Yashwantrao Patil, Anil Chikka-madhu, JT Patil, Allama Prabhu Patil, Banavanagouda Daddal, AR Krishnamurthy, Turavihal, BB Chimanakatty, BR Patil, Raghu Murthy and MLC Shivakumar are among the many people who are in the foreign trip team. They are preparing for a foreign trip on February 17.

Mahashivaratri celebrated at Kengeri Ganesha playground

BENGALURU

On the occasion of Mahashivratri, Mahashivratri celebrations were held with great pomp at the Kengeri Ganesha playground in Yeshwantpura area. Devotees started chanting Shivanama from the morning itself, and arrangements were made for the public to have darshan of the Shivalinga modeled after Kedarnath in Uttarakhand. More than 45 thousand devotees had come in droves. Devotees were seen standing in queues since morning to offer prayers and get darshan. Arrangements were made for the distribution of prasad and tambattu



especially for the fasting devotees. Thousands of devotees who arrived had darshan of the god with devotion and became purified. On this occasion, special Rudrabhishek and puja were performed. Devotees came and had darshan of the god throughout the day. Devotees came with devotion and worshipped the 12 Shivalingas, which are symbols of the twelve Jyotirlingas. They had darshan. The Kedarnath Shivalinga was decorated with various fruits and flowers on Shivaratri. It was special that a separate line was arranged for senior citizens and special needs.

RIDES GET SAFER

Women-only 'Sakhi Autos' hits Bengaluru roads

BENGALURU

Bengaluru has taken a major step towards enhancing women's safety in public transport with the launch of the exclusive 'Sakhi Auto' service. Designed solely for women passengers, the new initiative aims to provide secure, comfortable, and reliable mobility across the city, addressing long-standing safety concerns and daily travel challenges. Currently, around 2,000 Sakhi Autos have begun operating on Bengaluru's roads. The service is available from 6 am to 12 midnight, ensuring dependable transport during peak travel hours. Officials have stated that the long-term plan is to extend the service round-the-clock, offering 24/7 availability in the coming days. The key focus of the initiative is to create a safe and stress-free travel experience for women, particularly those who commute daily for work, education, and essential activities. The service is ex-



pected to benefit students, working professionals, and women who often face difficulties in securing safe transportation, especially during late hours. Booking a Sakhi Auto has been made simple and accessible through digital platforms, Via WhatsApp: Users can send a message to 6361933364 to book an auto. Via Website: Passengers can also reserve rides through ride.sakhiwomen.in. These easy booking options aim to ensure quick access and minimal waiting time for commuters.

Blend modern knowledge with human values: Guv

BENGALURU

"Success is possible only for those who continue with hard work, discipline and determination," said Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot. He was addressing the gathering after inaugurating the Silver Jubilee celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of the Saradha Group of Institutions at Attibele, Bengaluru. Emphasizing the role of value-based education, he said here is a need for an education system that instills morality and integrates modern knowledge with human values. He called upon students to strive to preserve religion and culture, uphold national unity and integrity, promote equality and harmony in society, and contribute towards nation-building.



QUICK READ



Chickpea Procurement Under MSP Registration Begins

Chitradurga
The Karnataka State Co-operative Marketing Federation has commenced the registration process for procurement of chickpea under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme for the year 2025-26 in Chitradurga district. Announcing this in a press release, KSCMF Chitradurga Branch Manager Basavesh stated that the initiative aims to ensure fair prices for farmers and protect them from market fluctuations. The procurement process will be carried out in association with National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED). Farmers in the district are required to complete registration.

Kannadiga Chandan's Mortal Remains Reach Native Village

Devanhalli
The mortal remains of Chandan, a Kannadiga who was tragically killed in a shooting incident in Canada, arrived at his native village amid an atmosphere of profound sorrow and mourning. Family members, relatives, friends, and hundreds of villagers gathered to pay their last respects as the body was brought home. Chandan had reportedly been working in Canada for the past few years in pursuit of better employment opportunities and to support his family back in Karnataka. News of his death in the firing incident had shocked the local community, leaving residents grief-stricken.

Hoax bomb threat email triggers security scare at district court

Davanagere
A bomb threat email received at the District Court in the city's Devaraj Arasu area on Monday morning triggered panic and a full-scale security check of the court premises. According to police, the threat message was received on the official email ID of the District Court at around 8.30 am. Following this, the bomb disposal squad and dog squad rushed to the spot and conducted a thorough inspection of the entire court complex. After detailed checks, officials confirmed that no explosive materials were found and declared the threat to be a hoax. Police have launched an investigation to trace the origin of the email and identify the sender.

K'taka Seeks ₹5,000 Cr for Bhadra Project, Urges Immediate ₹300 Cr Drought Relief

CHITRADURGA

Planning and Statistics Minister D. Sudhakar, along with district MLAs, met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at Vidhana Soudha, on Monday, seeking ₹5,000 crore in the 2026-27 State Budget for the Bhadra Upper Bank Project. They also urged immediate release of ₹300 crore to carry Bhadra water up to the Gonur Aqueduct in Chitradurga taluk.

The project aims to provide micro-irrigation to 2,25,515 hectares across Chitradurga, Chikkamagaluru, Tumakuru, and Davanagere districts, utilizing 29.90 TMC of water. It includes filling 367 minor ir-



rigation tanks to 50% capacity and releasing 2.00 TMC to Vani Vilasa Sagara, improving groundwater levels and

reducing fluoride content in Pavagada and Sira taluks.

The revised project cost is ₹21,167.93 crore, with

₹11,409.55 crore already spent and about ₹10,000 crore required for completion. Farmers in Central Karnataka, facing drought and migration for decades, expect yields to rise three to four times once completed.

Under the Chitradurga branch canal, 152 tanks will be filled, irrigating nearly 3 lakh acres. Work up to 114 km near Gonur Aqueduct is nearing completion, and trial water release is planned by February 2026. If achieved, around 90 tanks across five taluks will benefit. Leaders stressed urgent fund release to meet deadlines and address drinking water shortages.

Tension prevailed after contractors fought publicly outside city KEB office premises

Contractors Clash In Front Of KEB Office

TUMKUR

A tense situation unfolded in the city on Monday when a group of contractors allegedly engaged in a heated altercation that escalated into a physical clash in front of the Karnataka Electricity Board (KEB) office. The incident, which occurred during working hours, created panic among staff members and members of the public who were present at the time.

According to eyewitnesses, the dispute reportedly began over issues related to contract work and pending payments. What started as a verbal argument soon intensified, with both sides exchanging harsh words before resorting to physical confrontation. Onlookers stated that pushing and shoving quickly turned into blows, drawing the attention of passersby and nearby shopkeepers.



Employees inside the KEB office were said to have been alarmed by the commotion. Some staff members attempted to calm the individuals involved, while others alerted the police to prevent the situation from spiraling further out of control. The sudden outbreak of violence disrupted normal activities in and around the office premises for a brief period.

Police personnel arrived at the scene shortly after receiving information about the

clash. They intervened and managed to separate the groups, restoring order. Authorities reportedly questioned those involved and warned them against taking the law into their own hands. Further inquiry is expected to determine the exact cause of the altercation and whether any formal complaints will be filed.

Local residents expressed concern over the incident, stating that public offices should remain peaceful spaces. They urged authorities to ensure stricter security measures to prevent such occurrences in the future. Officials have not yet released an official statement regarding the matter. However, sources indicated that efforts are being made to mediate the dispute and resolve the underlying issues between the contractors to avoid further unrest.

Uttara Kannada, Shivamogga Win State Kabaddi Titles

TUMKUR

The State-level Kabaddi tournament held at the historic Siddaganga Math witnessed electrifying performances, spirited sportsmanship, and overwhelming public participation as teams from across Karnataka battled for top honours. The prestigious event, organized with the support of local sports bodies and community leaders, concluded with Uttara Kannada and Shivamogga teams emerging as champions in their respective categories.

The tournament brought together some of the finest Kabaddi talents from various districts, turning the sprawling grounds of Siddaganga Math into a vibrant arena of competitive energy. Players displayed remarkable agility, strength, and tactical brilliance throughout the matches, keeping spectators on the edge of their seats. The finals, in particu-

lar, were fiercely contested, with both winning teams showcasing exceptional teamwork and resilience.

In the men's category, Uttara Kannada secured a well-deserved victory after a gripping final encounter that highlighted their defensive solidity and swift raiding strategies. Their disciplined gameplay and coordinated efforts proved decisive against strong opposition. Meanwhile, in the women's category, Shivamogga delivered a commanding performance to clinch the championship title, earning applause for their consistency and determination.

The tournament was inaugurated in the presence of distinguished guests, including sports officials and dignitaries associated with Siddaganga Math. Organizers emphasized the importance of promoting traditional Indian sports like Kabaddi at the grassroots level. They noted that such events not

only foster athletic excellence but also strengthen unity and community spirit among youth.

Hundreds of spectators, including students, local residents, and Kabaddi enthusiasts, gathered to witness the thrilling matches. The atmosphere remained festive throughout the event, with supporters cheering passionately for their respective district teams. Special arrangements were made to ensure smooth conduct of the tournament, including proper seating, medical assistance, and refreshments for participants and visitors.

Speaking at the valedictory ceremony, organizers congratulated all participating teams and encouraged young athletes to continue pursuing sports with dedication and discipline. They reiterated that platforms like these play a crucial role in identifying emerging talent and nurturing future champions.

MANJUNATH TEMPLE VISIT

Former MLA Manjunath Offers Prayers at Temple

RAMANAGARA

Former MLA A. Manjunath visited the revered Mahadeshwara Temple in Banandoori and offered prayers amid a devotional atmosphere. The visit drew the attention of local residents and devotees who had gathered at the temple premises for regular worship and special rituals.

During his visit, Manjunath participated in traditional rituals conducted by the temple priests. He sought blessings for the well-being of the people of the region and prayed



for peace, prosperity, and communal harmony. The temple authorities welcomed him and facilitated the rituals as per established customs.

Speaking briefly to the me-

dia after offering prayers, the former legislator said that temples and spiritual centers play a vital role in preserving cultural heritage and strengthening social unity. He emphasized the

importance of maintaining and developing such historic religious sites so that future generations can continue to draw inspiration from them.

Several local leaders and supporters accompanied Manjunath during the visit. Devotees present at the temple greeted him warmly and expressed appreciation for his continued engagement with the community even after his tenure as MLA. Many residents noted that public representatives visiting religious institutions reflects their connection with grassroots tradi-

tions and local sentiments.

The Mahadeshwara Temple at Banandoori is considered an important spiritual center in the area and attracts devotees from nearby villages throughout the year. Special rituals and offerings are often organized on auspicious occasions, drawing large gatherings of worshippers.

Temple authorities stated that they regularly conduct community-focused activities, including religious events and social service initiatives, with the cooperation of local volunteers.



Balakrishna Offers Prayers at Mahadeshwara Temple

RAMANAGARA

MLA Balakrishna visited the Mahadeshwara Temple located in Billakempamahalli village and offered special prayers seeking prosperity and well-being for the people of his constituency. The visit drew the attention of local residents, party workers, and temple devotees who gathered in significant numbers to witness the ceremony.

The special puja was conducted in accordance with traditional rituals under the guidance of temple priests. Vedic chants and devotional hymns filled the temple premises as the MLA participated in the rituals with devotion. He offered flowers, coconuts, and other sacred items to Lord Mahadeshwara, praying for peace, development, and harmony in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Balakrishna expressed his deep faith in Lord Mahadeshwara and said that he regularly seeks divine blessings before undertaking important initiatives. He emphasized the importance of preserving cultural and spiritual traditions in rural areas and assured villagers of his continued commit-

MLA Balakrishna performed a special puja at the village temple

ment to addressing their developmental needs.

Local leaders and community elders welcomed the MLA and felicitated him during the visit. Several issues concerning village infrastructure, drinking water supply, and road connectivity were informally discussed with him after the puja. Residents took the opportunity to submit petitions highlighting their concerns and expectations. Temple authorities appreciated the MLA's visit and stated that such interactions help strengthen the bond between public representatives and the community. They also noted that the Mahadeshwara Temple remains a significant spiritual center for surrounding villages, attracting devotees during festivals and special occasions. The visit concluded with the distribution of prasadam among devotees. Security arrangements were in place to manage the crowd, ensuring that the ceremony proceeded smoothly and peacefully.

Special Maha Shivaratri Pooja At Muktinatheshwara Temple

CHITRADURGA

A grand and spiritually uplifting Maha Shivaratri celebration was held at the historic Muktinatheshwara Temple in the city, drawing hundreds of devotees who participated with deep devotion and reverence. The temple premises resonated with chants of Om Namah Shivaya as special rituals and pujas were performed throughout the day and night.

The celebrations began early in the morning with traditional abhishekam to the Shiva Linga using sacred items such as milk, curd, honey, tender coconut water, and holy water. Priests conducted elaborate rituals in accordance with Vedic traditions, seeking blessings for peace, prosperity, and well-being of all devotees. The temple was beautifully decorated with flowers, mango leaves, and colorful lights, creating a divine atmosphere.

Devotees observed fasts and stood in long queues to offer prayers and seek blessings of Lord Shiva on the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivaratri. Many devotees participated in the night-long jagaran, singing bhajans and devotional songs in praise of



Lord Shiva. Special arrangements were made by the temple administration to ensure smooth darshan for the large gathering.

Religious discourses highlighting the spiritual significance of Maha Shivaratri were also organized. Speakers explained the importance of devotion, self-discipline, and righteous living as taught in Hindu scriptures. The festival, symbolizing the divine union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, was celebrated with immense enthusiasm and faith. Volunteers and local authorities worked together to manage crowd control and provide drinking water and prasadam to devotees. The event concluded peacefully, leaving devotees spiritually enriched and filled with divine blessings.

Heavy Traffic Jam On Isha Foundation Road

CHIKKABALLAPUR

Severe traffic congestion was witnessed on the road leading to the Isha Foundation as thousands of devotees thronged the spiritual center to participate in the grand Maha Shivaratri celebrations. Vehicles were seen lined up for several kilometers, resulting in long delays and slow movement throughout the day.

The massive influx of devotees heading towards the foundation created heavy traffic pressure on the connecting highways and interior roads. Police personnel and traffic authorities were deployed in large numbers to regulate vehicle movement and ensure safety. Despite the arrange-

ments, the sheer volume of cars, buses, and two-wheelers caused significant bottlenecks.

Devotees from different parts of Tamil Nadu and neighboring states began arriving early in the morning to attend the all-night spiritual event organized on the occasion of Maha Shivaratri. The celebrations at Isha Foundation are widely known for their large-scale participation, cultural programs, meditation sessions, and the presence of spiritual leader Sadhguru.

Authorities diverted traffic at several junctions and implemented temporary parking arrangements to manage the situation. Volunteers from the foundation also assisted in guiding vehicles and helping pilgrims reach designated areas.

QUICK READ



Boiled And Filtered Water Prevents Disease: Health Officer

BALLARI
District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr. Yella Ramesh Babu has advised the public to drink boiled, cooled and filtered water to prevent possible cases of vomiting and diarrhoea during the summer season. In a press release, he stated that with the onset of summer and ongoing fairs and festivals, there is a higher risk of water- and food-borne diseases due to consumption of contaminated water and food. Illnesses such as vomiting, diarrhoea, typhoid, cholera, Hepatitis-A, giardia, salmonella, shigellosis, amoebiasis and E. coli infections can spread under such conditions.

Deadline Extended For Minority Residential School Admissions

BALLARI
The last date for submission of online applications for admission to Class 6 in Minority Morarji Desai Residential (English Medium) Schools and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Residential (CBSE) Schools for the academic year 2026–27 has been extended till February 28. The schools are functioning under the Department of Minority Welfare in the district. Applications for free admission are being accepted through the Seva Sindhu online portal. Eligible students seeking admission to these prestigious residential institutions are advised to submit their applications before the revised deadline.

District-Level Sports Meet For Government Employees

BALLARI
The Karnataka State Government Employees Association, in association with the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Ballari, and the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, will organise a two-day district-level sports and cultural competition for state government employees on February 17 and 18 at the District Stadium in Ballari city. More than 1,200 state government officers and employees serving across Ballari district are expected to participate in the event. The competitions aim to promote physical fitness, teamwork, cultural talent and camaraderie among government staff working in various departments.

Complete Works Swiftly, Maintain Quality: Shashi

RAMANAGARA
City Municipal Council President K. Sheshadri (Shashi) has directed engineers and contractors to maintain quality standards and complete ongoing development works at the earliest, warning that disciplinary action would be taken if complaints are received regarding substandard execution.
On Monday, he inspected concrete road construction works being carried out under the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) with-

Satish Jarkiholi To Visit Ballari

PWD Minister to chair review meeting with officials on February 17

BELLARY

Public Works Department Minister and Belagavi District In-charge Minister Satish Jarkiholi will undertake an official visit to Ballari district on February 17 to review developmental works and ongoing infrastructure projects under his department.
According to a press statement issued by his close aide N. Rajappa, the minister is scheduled to hold a comprehensive progress review meeting with officials of the Public Works Department (PWD) concerning works undertaken in Ballari and Vijayanagara districts. The meeting will be held at 11 am



at the Hyatt Hotel located in Vidyannagar Township, Toranagallu.
Senior engineers, executive engineers, assistant executive engineers and other departmental officers from both districts are expected to attend the meeting. Officials will

present detailed reports on the status of various road development projects, bridge constructions, government building works and other infrastructure initiatives currently being implemented under the PWD. Sources indicated that the minister will closely examine physical and financial progress of ongoing works, identify bottlenecks delaying completion, and issue necessary directions to ensure adherence to timelines. Special emphasis is likely to be laid on quality standards, proper utilization of allocated funds and speedy execution of pending projects. The visit is considered significant as Ballari and Vijayanagara districts

are witnessing multiple infrastructure upgrades aimed at improving connectivity and public facilities. The review meeting is expected to provide an opportunity for field-level officers to present ground realities and seek guidance on resolving administrative or technical challenges. Minister Jarkiholi has consistently stressed transparency, accountability and efficiency in the execution of public works projects. Officials are hopeful that the review will help accelerate development activities and enhance coordination among departments for effective implementation of government schemes in the region.



Ten New City Buses Launched In Ballari

BALLARI

In a major boost to urban public transport, ten new city buses have been allocated to the Ballari division to provide affordable, systematic and safe transportation facilities to city passengers. The announcement was made by Divisional Controller Inayat Bagban of the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), Ballari Division.
With the addition of these ten buses, services will now be operated on seven routes within Ballari city, covering ten schedules daily. The newly introduced buses will ply on key routes including S.P. Circle–Allipur, S.P. Circle–Trauma Care Centre, S.P. Circle–Bandihatti, OPD–Bisilahalli, OPD–Hussain Nagar, S.P. Circle–Prashanth Nagar and New Bus Stand–Sanganakallu.
Important junctions and landmarks covered under these routes include Durgamma Temple, CBT, Gadagi Chennappa Circle, BSNL City Bus Stop, Railway Circle, H.R.G. Circle, Rangamandira, Valmiki Bhavan, Kaul Bazaar, TB Sanatorium, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Vasavi School, Fire Station, Women Police Station, Sangam Circle, District Administrative Building, Patel Nagar and Taranath Hospital, among others. These routes are expected

Enhanced urban transport services to operate across seven routes.

to significantly improve connectivity across residential, commercial and institutional areas of the city.
Each new bus has been procured at a cost of ₹39 lakh and is equipped with modern passenger-friendly features. The buses have large LED destination boards, automated entry and exit doors, LED interior lighting and seating capacity for 40 passengers. For safety, four CCTV cameras, automatic fire extinguishing systems, reverse parking alarms and GPS-based location tracking with panic buttons have been installed.
Powered by 187 HP BS-6 engines, the buses are built in accordance with Automotive Industry Standard AIS-052 bus code norms. With the addition of these vehicles, the total number of city buses operating in Ballari has increased to 25. Passengers can avail a daily bus pass for ₹50 allowing unlimited travel, while monthly passes are available at ₹810 for general passengers and ₹725 for senior citizens. Services will operate from 7.15 am to 8.30 pm daily via the Railway Station route. Authorities have urged citizens to make maximum use of the improved city transport facilities.

Congress MLA Ravikumar Gowda Ganiga voices strong support for KPCC chief.

MANDYA

Congress MLA Ravikumar Gowda Ganiga has asserted that as many as 136 legislators are in favour of Deputy Chief Minister and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) President D. K. Shivakumar, describing him as a mass leader who enjoys overwhelming support within the party.
Speaking to reporters, Ganiga said the majority of Congress MLAs stand firmly behind Shivakumar's leadership and organisational capabilities. Out of the total strength, 136 MLAs are in support of DK Shivakumar. His contribution to strengthening the party at the grassroots level cannot be ignored, he stated.
Ganiga emphasized that Shivakumar played a crucial role in reviving the Congress in Karnataka and mobilising cadre strength across the



state. According to him, the party's recent electoral successes were made possible due to collective leadership, with Shivakumar's efforts in building booth-level networks and energising workers proving decisive. The MLA also pointed out that internal discussions within the party are a normal democratic process and should not be misinterpreted as divisions. Congress is a disciplined party. Decisions are taken collectively under the guidance of the high command. However, it is a fact that DK Shivakumar

commands strong backing among legislators, he added.
Political observers note that statements such as these assume significance amid periodic speculation regarding leadership dynamics within the Karnataka Congress. Ganiga maintained that the party remains united and focused on governance and implementation of its guarantee schemes for the welfare of the people. He further appealed to party workers to remain united and avoid engaging in unnecessary speculation. Our priority is to deliver on promises made to the people of Karnataka. Leadership matters will be resolved within the party framework, he said. The remarks are likely to intensify discussions within political circles, even as Congress leaders continue to reiterate that the government remains stable and committed to development initiatives across the state.

Officials Caught Napping At KDP Meeting

KOPPAL

The District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (KDP) meeting, convened to review developmental works and address public grievances, witnessed an embarrassing scene in Koppal on Sunday as some officials were reportedly seen sleeping and using mobile phones during the proceedings.
The meeting was held at the JH Patel Hall in the District Administrative Building under the leadership of Koppal District In-charge Minister Shivraj Thangadgi. The KDP meeting is considered a crucial platform where elected representatives and senior officials discuss the progress of government schemes, infrastructure projects and district-level issues.
However, during the session, certain officials allegedly displayed a lack of seriousness. While discussions on key development works were underway, a few officers were seen dozing off, while others were engrossed in their mobile phones. The inattentive behaviour reportedly drew criticism from participants present at the meeting. Sources said the meeting covered important topics including ongoing infrastructure projects, welfare scheme implementation and pending works across the district. The KDP forum is meant to ensure accountability and coordination between departments to accelerate development activities. The alleged casual attitude of some officials has therefore raised concerns about commitment and administrative discipline. Observers noted that such meetings require full attention from all departments, as decisions taken during KDP sessions directly impact public welfare and district planning. The incident has sparked discussion among political circles and citizens regarding the seriousness with which review meetings are conducted. While no official statement has been issued regarding the conduct of the officers, the episode has highlighted the need for greater professionalism and responsibility during high-level review meetings intended to address the district's pressing development concerns.

Woman Injured In Daylight Attack

SHIVAMOGGA

A shocking incident of assault has come to light from Almane village in Thirthahalli taluk of Shivamogga district, where a young woman was allegedly attacked with a broken beer bottle by a youth after she rejected his love proposal on Valentine's Day.
According to police sources, the incident occurred on February 14 but came to light later. The accused, identified as Swaroop, had reportedly confessed his love to the young woman on the occasion of Valentine's Day. However, when she refused to accept his proposal, he allegedly assaulted her in a fit of rage.
The young woman sustained serious injuries to her hand and neck during the attack. She was initially rushed to J.C. Hospital in Thirthahalli town, where she received primary treatment. Due to the severity of her injuries, doctors referred her to Manipal Hospital for advanced treatment. Her condition is said to be stable but serious.

Following the attack, tensions escalated in the area. Upon learning about the assault, friends of the injured woman allegedly confronted and attacked Swaroop. He too sustained injuries, including a head injury, during the scuffle. The accused youth is currently undergoing treatment at J.C. Hospital in Thirthahalli.

A case has been registered against Swaroop at the Thirthahalli Police Station under relevant sections of the law. Police have initiated an investigation into the incident and are recording statements from witnesses.

The incident has sparked concern among residents, highlighting the dangers of obsessive behaviour and violent reactions to rejection. Authorities have appealed to the public to resolve personal disputes peacefully and warned that strict action will be taken against those involved in acts of violence. Further investigation is underway to ascertain the complete sequence of events surrounding the incident.



Mandatory Registration For Shops

GADAG

All shopkeepers and commercial establishment owners within the limits of Gadag-Betageri City Municipal Council have been directed to mandatorily register their establishments under the Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1961 and Rules, 1963.
In a public notice, Labour Inspector Umesh S. Hullannavar stated that registration is compulsory for all shops and commercial establishments operating within the municipal limits, irrespective of whether they employ workers or not. Establishments that have not yet completed registration with the Labour Inspector's Office, Gadag 2nd Circle, must immediately initiate the process.
Authorities have clarified that even businesses functioning without employees are required to obtain registration under the Act. Owners and entrepreneurs must apply online through the Karnataka Government's e-Karmika portal and submit the prescribed fee along with necessary documents to secure the registration certificate.

Crores spent, yet villagers struggle for drinking water supply

HAVERI

The ambitious Har Ghar Jal project, launched under the Jal Jeevan Mission with the objective of providing safe drinking water to every rural household, has reportedly fallen into disrepair in Neshvi village of Rattihalli taluk in Haveri district.
Though the project was implemented at an estimated cost of around ₹50 lakh, villagers allege that even after nearly five years, water is not being supplied to individual homes. Over 600 houses in the village were fitted with pipelines under the scheme, raising hopes that residents would receive regular tap water connections. However,

those expectations have now turned into disappointment.
Residents say that despite crores of rupees being spent across various villages under the Har Ghar Jal initiative, the ground reality remains far from satisfactory. In Neshvi village, pipelines have been laid to doorsteps, but taps remain dry. As a result, people are forced to depend on public taps and standposts for their daily water needs.
Villagers expressed frustration that instead of enjoying the promised door-to-door supply, they now queue up at common water points. In some areas, public taps are overcrowded as families gather with pots and containers to collect water.

Court awards death penalty to three men in Israeli woman rape, murder case



KOPPAL

A court in Karnataka on Monday sentenced three men to death for sexually assaulting an Israeli tourist and murdering a youth in Koppal district last year. The Gangavathi Civil Court convicted Mallesh alias Handi Malla, Sharanabasava and Chaitanya Sai on February 7 and pronounced the sentence on February 16. According to the prosecution, the crime occurred near Sanapur on March 6, 2025. A homestay owner had taken tourists — Pankaj from Maharashtra, Bibhas from Odisha, Daniel from the US, and an Israeli woman — for stargazing near the Tungabhadra canal. The three accused allegedly arrived on a motorcycle and picked a fight over a financial dispute. They then pushed the three men into the canal and threw stones to prevent them from escaping. Bibhas Kumar drowned, while Daniel rescued Pankaj. The assailants raped the homestay owner and the Israeli woman and fled with mobile phones, cash and a camera.
Public Prosecutor Nagalakshmi said the case involved gang rape, murder, attempted murder, robbery and extortion. Judge Sadananda Nagappa Naik awarded capital punishment under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita and life imprisonment till natural death for gang rape. The convicts can appeal.

Bill Gates, AP CM review natural farming, AI innov

YSRCP asks what advantages Bill Gates' visit will offer to the people of Andhra Pradesh

AMRAVATI

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates visited an agricultural field in Undavalli on Monday, accompanied by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.

The duo observed crops cultivated through natural farming techniques and were briefed on how the state is integrating Artificial Intelligence into agriculture. Officials explained that AI tools are helping farmers monitor crop health, increase productivity, and receive timely guidance based on soil conditions, crop type, and market prices.

CM Naidu lauded farmers



for blending traditional methods with modern technology, calling them pioneers in adopting innovation while preserving heritage practices.

Gates received a warm traditional welcome and was shown demonstrations of drones being used to improve farming efficiency. Naidu



also recalled his first meeting with Gates in 1997, when he shared his vision for building a technology ecosystem and later presented his Swarna Andhra 2047 initiative, aimed at long-term development and prosperity.

The visit included discussions on potential collaboration with the Gates Foundation to promote sustainable agriculture and enhance the

overall quality of life in the state. Naidu emphasized Andhra Pradesh's ongoing efforts to empower farmers through technology while encouraging environmentally friendly and natural farming methods.

The engagement highlighted the state's commitment to combining tradition with innovation, demonstrating how modern tools like AI and drones can work alongside time-tested agricultural practices. Gates' visit underscored the global interest in Andhra Pradesh's model of sustainable and technology-driven agriculture, setting an example for other regions to follow.

YSRCP questions purpose of Gates' visit

The Yuva Jana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) on Monday questioned the purpose of Bill Gates' visit to Andhra Pradesh, alleging the government is focusing on publicity over pressing issues in welfare hostels. Party spokesperson TJR Sudhakar Babu asked what tangible benefits Gates' visit would bring to the people and criticized repeated displays of graphics and visuals of the proposed capital city without real progress on the ground.

YSRCP highlighted ongoing health concerns in welfare hostels, citing nearly 900 students injured or hospitalised over 14 months due to illness or alleged food poisoning, including rat bite incidents. The party accused Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu of using Gates' visit to divert attention from governance failures. Sudhakar Babu demanded that Gates, along with government leaders including Education Minister Nara Lokesh and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, visit welfare hostels and eat the same midday meals as students to understand the issues firsthand.

‘Extremely tragic’: Shah condoles Bhiwadi chemical factory fire

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday expressed grief over the death of seven people in a chemical factory fire in Bhiwadi, Rajasthan.

He offered condolences to the families of the deceased and prayed for the swift recovery of those injured. Shah said the local administration is providing all possible medical assistance to the victims.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also expressed sorrow, call-

ing the incident tragic and urging prompt care for the injured. The fire occurred in the Khairthal-Tijara district, with officials confirming that seven people were burned to death and several others injured.

Rajasthan Congress President Govind Singh Dotasra criticized the state government, saying such accidents have become common. He recalled a similar chemical tanker fire in Ajmer that killed 16 people and demanded urgent action to prevent future tragedies.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma described the inci-

dent as “heartbreaking” and directed the district administration to carry out relief and rescue operations. He prayed for the departed souls and wished speedy recovery for the injured. Authorities continue to investigate the cause of the fire and assess damages.

The Bhiwadi fire has once again highlighted safety concerns in industrial areas, prompting political leaders to call for stricter regulations and immediate action to protect workers and nearby residents.

US Ambassador Gor visits Western Command HQ

CHANDIGARH

US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor on Monday landed in Chandigarh and said he looks forward to visiting the Western Command of the Indian Army.

Sharing his plans on X, he wrote, “Just landed in Chandigarh. Looking forward to visiting the Western Command of the Indian Army.”

The visit highlights the growing defence partnership between the United States and India. Earlier, Gor welcomed Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), during his visit to India, underscoring the focus on strengthening cooperation in defence and security.

From February 3–4, India and the US held the 24th Joint Technical Group Plenary at DRDO headquarters in New Delhi. The meeting reviewed ongoing collaboration in defence science and technology and explored ways to advance critical and emerging defence technologies under the India-US Major Defence Partnership framework.

In November, Indian Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi visited the United States, holding high-level discussions on maritime security, operational interoperability, and joint humanitarian and disaster response efforts.

In October, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth signed a ten-year Defence Framework Agreement in Kuala Lumpur, marking a new chapter in India-US military cooperation.

The agreement sets a long-term roadmap for joint projects, capacity building, and strategic collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region.

Ambassador Gor's visit to the Western Command reinforces the ongoing efforts to deepen bilateral defence ties and strengthen strategic cooperation between India and the United States.



Gogoi calls Bhupen Borah an asset to Cong

GUWAHATI

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi praised Assam PCC chief Bhupen Kumar Borah, calling him a party asset.

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Monday lauded Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) chief Bhupen Kumar Borah, describing him as a “strong Congress leader” and an “asset” to the party amid internal discussions. Speaking to reporters in Guwahati, Gogoi said senior leaders had a detailed three-hour meeting with Borah to address concerns.

“Bhupen Kumar Borah is our asset. He is fighting against evil. If any wrong was done, as a brother, I apologize to him,” Gogoi said. He also confirmed that Leader of the Opposition in

the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, spoke with Borah.

Earlier in the day, Borah confirmed his resignation from the Congress, stating that he had sent his resignation to the party high command but chose not to provide immediate reasons. “I don't deem it necessary to speak on why I resigned. I have certainly resigned and sent my resignation to the high command. Whenever I think it necessary, I will call you and speak in detail,” he told reporters.

Borah hinted that his resignation stemmed from internal issues beginning with the Be-hali episode. He also expressed dissatisfaction with internal decision-making, especially regarding participation in the Majuli yatra.

Indian AI, gaming startups shine at AI Impact Summit 2026

NEW DELHI

The AI Impact Summit 2026 began on Monday, putting Indian AI and gaming startups in the spotlight. The event, a global platform for Artificial Intelligence, brought together policymakers, investors, tech leaders, and startups to present real-world AI applications across multiple sectors.

Five Indian ventures—Yes-gnome, Metasports (Hitwicket), Koyozo, Youth Buzz (Ourcadium), and Evivve—demonstrated AI-driven innovations reshaping gaming, creative production, and enterprise solutions. Yes-gnome introduced Sketly AI, a platform for rapid creation of production-ready game assets, allowing studios to maintain visual consistency while reducing timelines. Metasports showcased Hitwicket, its multiplayer cricket game with 18 million users, featuring a generative AI-powered real-time commentary engine that personalises narration and voice output.

Koyozo displayed its mobile gaming ecosystem, including

Indian AI and gaming startups showcased innovative technologies, highlighting the country's growing strength in AI-powered entertainment

Koyozo One hardware with hall-effect joysticks and haptic feedback, paired with Koyozo Club for smart controls and remote play integration. Youth Buzz presented “Man vs. GPT” on its Ourcadium platform, where human players compete against adaptive AI, offering audiences an interactive view of AI learning and strategy.

The summit highlighted India's rising influence in AI-native gaming and immersive technologies. Startups demonstrated how AI can streamline production, enhance gameplay, and create original entertainment experiences. With innovation at the core, the event positioned India as a hub for homegrown AI solutions in gaming, creative industries, and interactive media, attracting global attention from investors and technology leaders.

DPIIT Joint Secretary Says AI Will Transform Future Jobs

Shri Sanjiv, Joint Secretary at the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), said on Monday that artificial intelligence (AI) will bring a transformative era for India. Speaking at the AI Impact Summit in New Delhi, he reassured people that fears of AI causing job losses are unfounded, comparing them to concerns when computers were first introduced in the late 1990s and early 2000s. “Hosting this summit for the first time is a major moment for India,” Sanjiv said. “AI, like computers, will create new opportunities and bring a revolution in the days ahead.”

NHRC orders report on DU journalist assault case

NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Monday issued notices to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), North Delhi, and the Vice Chancellor of Delhi University regarding the alleged assault of a female journalist and content creator during a UGC protest at Delhi University's North Campus on February 13.

The complainant alleged that a mob attacked her physically and verbally, targeting her based on caste, a n d threatened her with further violence. The incident has been described as caste-based violence, an infringement on press freedom, and a serious violation of her fundamental rights to life, dignity, and personal security. She sought an impartial investigation, action against the accused, security measures, legal aid, and compensation.

The NHRC, presided over by Member Priyank Kanoongo, said the allegations prima facie indicate a violation of human rights. The Commission has directed the DCP and Vice Chancellor to inquire into the matter and submit an Action Taken Report within two weeks.

Taking to X, Priyank Kanoongo stated, “A complaint has been received of violent misconduct towards a female journalist at Delhi University. The miscreants will be dealt with as per the law. We will not tolerate the insult to women under any circumstances.”

The NHRC's intervention underscores its commitment to protecting the rights of journalists and ensuring accountability for violence and harassment on university campuses.



GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

Public Works Department

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

Phone No. : 08338/ 273859 E-Mail: eepwdckd@gmail.com

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/7193 DATE: 13/02/2026

Time Extension Short term and e-Tender Notification-1

This Office E-tender notification No. PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/6910 Dated 09/02/2026 was called & Now the First time extension is made for the works at SI No. 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 30, 51, 53 & 66 is as below.

Calendar of events for the works at SI No. 3, 4, 6 & 8:

1)Last date for queries & clarifications : 21-02-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 23-02-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 25-02-2026 at 4.30 PM, 4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): “after approval of Technical bids”, 5)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

Calendar of events for the work at SI No. 1, 2, 5, 7 & 9:

1)Last date for queries & clarifications:25-02-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids :27-02-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 02-03-2026 at 4.30 PM, 4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): “after approval of Technical bids”, 5)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

All other conditions of the tender remain unchanged.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BG/MRO-NO-1854/KSMCA/2025-26

Altum Credo

ALTM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD

Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinita, Wakdevadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005. Maharashtra (India)

Possession Notice [Rule 8(1)] (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Altum Credo Home Finance Private Limited hereinafter referred as “ACHFL” under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (no. 3 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand notice dated 19.10.2024 with respect to Loan Agreement No.1192020100055 calling upon the Ashoka N. J (“Borrower”), KH Sharada (“Co-Borrower”) Nirmalamma Jayadevappa (“Co-Borrower”), to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice being Rs. 4,57,097/- (Rs. Four Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand and Ninety Seven Rupees Only) as on 30-SEP-2024 within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice.

1. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of said rules on the 10th day of February of the year 2026.

2. The borrower/secured debtor and the public, in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with property will be subject to the charge of the ACHFL for an amount of Rs. 4,57,097/- (Rs. Four Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand and Ninety Seven Rupees Only) as on 30-SEP-2024 and further interest from 30.09.2024.

3. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that Piece and parcel of Property No 58, E Swathu No. 151200201900400096, measuring 6.88848 X 15.24 Mts Le. 104.98 Sq imts, situated at Naraganahalli Village, Naraganahalli Gram Panchayath, Davangere and Bounded on East by: Road, West by: House of Hanumanthappa, North by: Road. South by: Conservancy Road.

Place : Davangere, Karnataka
Date : 10.02.2026

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

CH CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad
contact: 080-41209042

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಉಡುಪಿ

ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ

ಮೌಲಾನಾ ಅಜಾದ್ ಭವನ, ಶಿವಳ್ಳಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಮಹೇಶ್ವರ - 576104 ಉಡುಪಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ

ದೂ: 0820-2573596, E-mail: domudupi@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಅಸಂಇಲ/ಮೊ.ನು/ಆಆ-59/2025-26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11-02-2026

ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಿಂಗ್ ಮಂಡಳಿ ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ: (ದ್ವಿ ಲಕ್ಷೀಟಿ ಪದ್ಧತಿ)

ಉಡುಪಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಕಛೇರಿಗಳು, ವಿಶ್ವಾಸ್ ನಿಯಮಗಳು, ವಸತಿ ತಾಲೀಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ ವಿವಿಧ ವೃದ್ಧದ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊರ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲದ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

(1) ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಗೆಜೆಟ್ ದೂ.79.28 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು (2) ಇಂ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ನಿಗದಿತವಿರುವ ಮೊತ್ತ: ದೂ.1.58 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು (3) e-portal ನಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಲಕ್ಷೀಟಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ಸಮಯ: ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10-03-2026 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಯೊಳಗೆ. (4) e-portal ನ ಚಿಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು & ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಕ್ಷೀಟಿಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಮೇಕೆ: ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಉಡುಪಿ, ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14-03-2026 ಮೂವತ್ತೈ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆ (ಸ್ಥಳ & ದಿನಾಂಕ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತದೆ) (5) e-portalನ ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಲಕ್ಷೀಟಿಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಮೇಕೆ: ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆ ನಂತರದಲ್ಲಿ ತೀರಲಾಗುವುದು. (6) ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿಳಾಸ: Website: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಉಡುಪಿ, ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: (0824) - 2211078

ಸೂ/-ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಉಡುಪಿ

ಇಲಾಖಾಸಹಾಯಕಿ/ಸಹಾಯಕಿ(723) 25-26 ಓ: 16.02.2026

Altum Credo

ALTM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD

Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinita, Wakdevadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005. Maharashtra (India)

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1. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of said rules on the 11th day of February of the year 2026.

2. The borrower/secured debtor and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with property will be subject to the charge of the ACHFL for an amount of Rs. 8,06,274/- (Rupees Eight Lakhs Six Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Four Only) as on 08.07.2025 and further interest from 08.07.2025.

3. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Property No. 39/P, E Swathu No. 151200302200420081, measuring 15.8496 X 12.8016 Mtrs. Situated at Hanagavadi Village, Hanagavadi Gram Panchayath, Harihar, and Bounded on: On and Towards East: Road, On and Towards West: Property of Sanna Hanumanthappa, On and Towards South: Property of S. Mallikarjunappa, On and Towards North: Property of D. Rudrappa.

Place : Harihar, Karnataka
Date : 11.02.2026

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು

ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ

ನಂ.1 ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಎಸ್.ಜಿ.ಪಿ. ಆವರಣ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು.

ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 080-22255210

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಕಆ/ಕಮಿ/ಶಾ.ಧ-ಸಕಾನಿ-2&ಸಕಾನಿ-4/2025-26/79 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13.02.2026

ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಗಾಗಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನ (ಐಎಫ್‌ಐ)

ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ನಂ.1, ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಮೋರ್ಚಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಹ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರಿಂದ ಚಿಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸುವರು. (<https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>). ಚಿಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜುಗಳನ್ನು ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಮೋರ್ಚಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20.02.2026, 16.00 ಗಂಟೆಯೊಳಗೆ. ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಮೋರ್ಚಲ್ ನ ಮಾರ್ಗಸೂಚಿಗಳ ಅನ್ವಯ ಚಿಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರಗಳು ಇಂತಿವೆ: ಶಾಸಕರ ಭವನ-2, 3 ನೇ ಹಂತ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಠಡಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 157-158 ಇವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಪ್ರೈವಿಂಗ್ ಮಾಡುವುದು ಕಾರ್ಪೊರೇಷನ್ ಮಾಡುವುದು, ನೆಲಹಾಸು ಹಾಕುವುದು, ಕೆಟಕಿಂಗ್ ಮೆಶ್ ಹಾಕುವುದು, ಶೌಚಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಫಿಟ್ಟಿಂಗ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸುವುದು, ಸ್ವಾನಗ್ನಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಟೈಲ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಕುವುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿತ ಸಿವಿಲ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ವಿವಿಧೆ ಒಟ್ಟು 66 ವಿವಿಧ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು. ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ: ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 1.98 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು. ಗರಿಷ್ಠ :ರೂ. 24.19 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಇಂದಿ: ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 5,000/- ಮತ್ತು ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 50,000/- ಇತರೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಚಿಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಬಹುದು.

ವಾಸಭವನ-ಉ.ನಿ.ಸಿ/5665/ಕೊಪಂಎಂ/2025-26 ಸೂ/-ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು.

Altum Credo

ALTM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD

Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinita, Wakdevadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005. Maharashtra (India)

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1. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of said rules on the 11th day of February of the year 2026.

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Place : Harihar, Karnataka
Date : 11.02.2026

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

QUICK READ



EaseMyTrip shares soar after big capital raise

New Delhi
Shares of Easy Trip Planners Ltd, which runs the popular travel platform EaseMyTrip, jumped 20% on Monday. The sharp rise follows the company's announcement to raise up to Rs 500 crore to support growth. The board approved issuing new shares or other securities, subject to approvals. The funds will help expand hotel and holiday services, improve technology, and explore strategic opportunities. Over the past month, EaseMyTrip shares have risen about 13%, reflecting strong investor confidence.

Asian markets rise on US rate-cut hopes

Tokyo
Asian markets opened slightly higher on Monday as easing selling pressure and softer US inflation data fueled hopes of a Federal Reserve rate cut later this year. Japanese shares rose after reports showed the economy grew in the fourth quarter of 2025, recovering from the previous slump. The yen stayed mostly steady against the dollar. Australian stocks also climbed, while China's markets remain closed for Lunar New Year. US markets were shut for Presidents' Day.

Pausing rally, gold, silver ETFs fall as precious metals decline

NEW DELHI
Gold and silver prices fell on Monday as the US dollar strengthened following US inflation data. MCX April gold futures dipped 0.56 per cent to Rs 1,55,023 per 10 grams, while MCX March silver futures dropped 1.99 per cent to Rs 2,39,501 per kg around 12:30 am.
The dollar index rose 0.10 per cent to 97 after January's US CPI showed a 0.2 per cent increase, down from December's 0.3 per cent. Annual US inflation came in at 2.4 per cent, lower than the previous 2.7 per cent. Analysts said a stronger dollar makes bullion more expensive for buyers holding other currencies.
Gold is expected to find support at Rs 1,54,000 and Rs 1,53,150, with resistance at Rs 1,56,800 and Rs 1,58,200. Silver's support lies at Rs 2,38,800 and Rs 2,32,000, with resistance at Rs 2,49,100 and Rs 2,55,000.
Despite short-term dips, analysts noted the broader trend for precious metals remains positive due to geopolitical tensions, central bank buying, and investors seeking alternatives to bonds and currencies. COMEX silver is trading between \$73 and \$84 after a sharp correction from record highs above \$121, reflecting short-term bearish pressure.
Investors are closely watching upcoming US economic releases, including the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) minutes, GDP estimates, and PCE inflation data, for guidance on the Fed's interest rate moves.
Market participants are also monitoring crude oil price trends, influenced by US-Iran talks and ongoing Russia-Ukraine negotiations, which could impact global inflation and commodity markets further.

Pentagon threatens to end Anthropic AI ties over dispute

NEW DELHI
US based artificial intelligence firm Anthropic is facing a serious challenge as the Pentagon considers ending its partnership with the company over how its AI models can be used by the US military.
Reports say Pentagon officials are unhappy that Anthropic insists on keeping some limits on the use of its AI, especially for military purposes. The defence department, also called the Department of War in some reports, wants AI tools that can be used for "all lawful purposes," including weapons development and battlefield tasks. Anthropic has resisted loosening its safety rules, leading to growing tension with US defence leaders.
One point of controversy is the reported use of Anthropic's AI model Claude during a US military operation that captured former Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. Claude was deployed through a partnership with AI software firm Palantir Technologies. Although neither Anthropic nor US officials have publicly confirmed the details, multiple media reports link the AI's use to that mission.
Anthropic emphasises its commitment to safe and ethical AI. The company has said it continues to support US national security work, but wants to ensure its technology is not used for autonomous weapons or mass domestic surveillance.
Analysts say it would be difficult for the Pentagon to replace Claude quickly because competing models are still being developed.

'India's energy decisions based on cost not pressure'

India clarified that its energy purchase decisions will be guided by costs, risks, and availability, not political pressure

NEW DELHI
At the Munich Security Conference on Saturday, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar emphasized India's commitment to strategic autonomy amid recent US sanctions on Russian oil.
His remarks came after US leaders, including President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, claimed that India had agreed to halt additional imports of Russian crude following new US sanctions on Moscow's energy sector.
Jaishankar strongly refuted these claims, stating that India remains independent in its foreign and energy policy decisions. "We are very much wedded to strategic autonomy because it is very much a part of our history and our evolution," he said during a panel discussion with German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul. He added that strategic autonomy is a core principle supported across India's political spectrum.
Highlighting the complexity of the global oil market, Jaishankar explained that Indian oil companies, like those in Europe, make decisions based on practical considerations. "They look at availability, look at costs, look at risks and take decisions that they feel are in their best interest," he said. When asked directly about stopping Russian oil purchases, he reiterated India's independent approach: "Would I make choices which may not agree with your thinking — yes, it can happen."
India has not officially confirmed or denied the US claims regarding Russian oil. This energy debate coincides with a recalibration in India-US trade ties. Following a recent phone call between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Trump, both nations announced a reduction in US tariffs on Indian goods from 50 per cent to 18 per cent, including removal of a 25 per cent tariff imposed last year over India's Russian oil imports.
India's firm stance signals that its energy and trade decisions will continue to prioritize national interest over external pressures.

Pakistan has increased petrol by PKR 5 and high-speed diesel by PKR 7.32, citing global market movements and regulatory recommendations

Pak economy in shambles: Fuel prices soar amidst public outrage

ISLAMABAD
The Pakistan government on Sunday announced a hike in fuel prices, raising petrol by PKR 5 per litre to PKR 258.17 and high-speed diesel (HSD) by PKR 7.32 to PKR 275.70 per litre for February.
The petroleum division attributed the increase to international market trends and suggestions from the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra).
HSD is widely used in heavy transport vehicles, agricultural machinery, and trains, meaning the price rise could lead to higher costs for vegetables, grains, and other essential items. Petrol, mainly used in private vehicles, rickshaws, and two-wheelers, directly affects the daily budgets of middle- and lower-middle-class families. Residents expressed concern over the growing burden of fuel costs amid ongoing inflation.
Earlier this year, flour prices also surged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly in Shangla and surrounding districts. A 20-kilogram bag now costs around PKR 2,850, while a 40-kilogram pack sells for up to PKR 5,700 and a 50-kilogram bag for roughly PKR 7,000. Citizens blamed weak government oversight, hoarding, and profiteering for making basic food items unaffordable.
The combination of rising fuel and food costs is intensifying financial strain for low- and middle-income households. Economists warn that continued increases in transport and agricultural costs could push overall inflation higher in the coming months.
Residents are urging both the provincial and federal governments to implement strict price controls on essential commodities and ensure transparency in fuel distribution to protect vulnerable families.
Without timely action, the rising cost of living could further strain household budgets across Pakistan.

Anthropic opens Bengaluru office, expands India ties

BENGALURU
Anthropic has opened its new office in Bengaluru, marking its second base in the Asia-Pacific region. The move comes as India becomes the second-largest market for its AI assistant, Claude.ai, reflecting strong adoption across enterprises, education, and agriculture sectors.
The Bengaluru office will be led by Managing Director Irina Ghose. She highlighted India's highly skilled developer community and robust digital infrastructure, noting that nearly half of Claude usage in the country involves computer and mathematical tasks such as building applications and modernising systems. Anthropic also reported that its run-rate revenue in India has doubled since October 2025.
Several partnerships accompanied the launch. Air India is using Claude Code to accelerate software development, while Cognizant has deployed the AI tool to 350,000 employees worldwide. In the social impact sector, the company is working with Pratham to pilot an "Anytime Testing Machine" for students in 20 schools.
Anthropic is also focusing on regional language capabilities, curating training data in 10 Indian languages including Hindi, Bengali, and Tamil. Collaborations with Karya and the Collective Intelligence Project are testing model performance on local tasks in agriculture and law.
The company is leveraging the Model Context Protocol (MCP) in India, with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation recently launching the first official government MCP server. Swiggy is also using the open-source protocol to allow users to order groceries directly through Claude.
Irina Ghose said India represents "one of the world's most promising opportunities to bring the benefits of responsible AI to vastly more people and enterprises." She added that the country's technical talent and digital ecosystem provide a strong foundation to ensure AI technology reaches those who can benefit most.

CRISIS WORSENS

Flour crisis deepens in Baloch as prices surge

BALOCHISTAN
Flour prices in Quetta are rising sharply, adding to the struggles of households already hit hard by record inflation. A 50-kilogram bag now sells for around Rs 6,600 to Rs 6,800, while a 20-kilogram pack costs Rs 2,650 to Rs 2,750, figures that were unimaginable only months ago.
Residents from low- and middle-income neighborhoods say they must carefully calculate daily expenses, often reducing consumption, borrowing, or relying on relatives. Many report that wages remain stagnant while food costs continue to climb, forcing families into financial stress. Community elders blame weak enforcement for unchecked price hikes by retailers.
The situation is particularly worrying as Ramadan approaches, a month when food consumption traditionally rises. Vulnerable families fear they may not be able to store even the minimum flour needed for sehri and iftar. Citizens are urging authorities to act immediately, calling for subsidies, stricter inspections, and penalties for profiteering. They warn that failure to intervene will damage public trust in official relief promises and worsen hardship.
The Quetta crisis reflects broader challenges across Balochistan, where transportation issues and supply disruptions keep prices higher than in other provinces. Families say patience is running out, and what they need most is practical help rather than assurances.
Traders continue to raise rates with little accountability, and authorities have yet to offer visible relief. Residents hope urgent steps will be taken to make flour affordable before Ramadan, as soaring prices threaten not only daily meals but also the ability to observe traditional fasting rituals. Without swift intervention, hardships in Quetta are expected to deepen further in the weeks ahead.

'AI will not kill jobs but will unbundle them'

NEW DELHI
Artificial Intelligence (AI) is advancing at a record pace, and the sector is expected to see massive growth in the coming three years, Puneet Chandok, President of Microsoft India and South Asia, said on Monday.
Speaking at the "AI for Disaster Management" session during the AI Impact Summit 2026, Chandok highlighted the speed of AI development over recent months, calling the progress "incredible."
Chandok noted that coding is one of the most important applications of AI today. What began as simple coding assistance has now grown into integrated business operations. "AI-powered digital colleagues are increasingly becoming teammates within organisations," he said. AI is also drafting legal documents, raising questions about how companies manage control and sovereignty over these systems.
He stressed that businesses are moving from cloud-first to AI-first strategies. "The next generation of companies will be built primarily on AI foundations rather than just cloud infrastructure," Chandok explained.
Responding to concerns about job losses, he said AI will not destroy jobs but will reshape them. "AI will not kill jobs, but it will unbundle jobs," he said, urging individuals to continuously upgrade their skills. "If you are not learning AI today, you are not learning anything," he added.
Chandok predicted that AI growth over the next three years could scale up a thousand times, reflecting the technology's rapid evolution and adoption. He emphasized that the world is ready to embrace AI and that organisations must adapt quickly to leverage its potential fully.
With AI becoming more powerful and pervasive, businesses and individuals alike must prepare for a future deeply shaped by artificial intelligence.

AI models are evolving fast, and the sector could grow exponentially over the next three years, says Microsoft India President Puneet Chandok



'India must use AI urgently for inclusive growth'

MUMBAI
As the India AI Impact Summit 2026 began in New Delhi on Monday, senior policymakers emphasized the need to use artificial intelligence (AI) to drive inclusive growth across the country.
Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran warned that delaying AI adoption each year limits economic and technological opportunities. "India needs to act now to use the benefits of AI to promote inclusive growth," he said, adding that the country could become the first large society where human potential and machine intelligence reinforce each other.
Nageswaran called for a "Team India" approach, involving government, private sector, academia, and policymakers, and stressed strengthening foundational education and scaling high-quality skills. He noted that AI progress "will not happen by drift" and requires urgency, political will, and strong state capacity. He also recommended reforms in education and skills, expansion of labour-intensive services, and removal of regulatory bottlenecks, warning that lack of action could trigger social and economic instability.
S. Krishnan, Secretary of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, highlighted the importance of keeping AI human-centric and democratically accessible. "There needs to be democratic access to AI resources, and it must be done in a way that people are at the centre of this process," he said, describing AI as a key driver of growth for India and the Global South.
Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed global participants, calling it a matter of great pride that people from around the world are attending the summit.
The AI Expo, running from February 16 to 20 alongside the summit, will cover more than 70,000 square metres across 10 arenas. It will host technology firms, startups, academia, Union Ministries, state governments, and international partners, showcasing AI innovations and their potential to accelerate economic and social development in India.



Karnataka's Energy Evolution: Last 1,000 days under Energy Minister KJ George

Over the past roughly 1,000 days, the Karnataka Energy Department has navigated a transformational journey — steering the state's energy landscape from periods of challenge to notable achievements in power security, renewable expansion, infrastructure strengthening, and consumer welfare. At the heart of these efforts has been Energy Minister K. J. George, whose leadership has aimed at strengthening reliability, promoting sustainability, and supporting agrarian and household power needs.

National recognition and 'Energy Efficiency' awards

The state's efforts have not gone unnoticed at the national level. Karnataka earned the National Energy Conservation Award for its accomplishments in energy efficiency and conservation, reflecting its strong performance in the State Energy Efficiency Index over multiple years. This award underscores the government's commitment to sustainable practices and benchmark performance in efficiency across sectors. Minister George, while acknowledging these accolades, emphasized that energy conservation efforts are integral to combating climate change and improving long-term sustainability.



- Future Outlook and Strategic Priorities
- Looking ahead, Karnataka's energy trajectory appears focused on several strategic priorities
- Augmenting renewable capacities (solar, wind, hybrid systems).
- Building energy storage solutions such as pumped hydro and battery installations to address intermittency.
- Enhancing grid robustness to support energy export opportunities.
- Continuing consumer-friendly policies that balance affordability with environmental responsibility.

While challenges remain — especially in storage infrastructure and scaling emerging technologies — the consolidated efforts over the last ~1000 days have laid a firm foundation for Karnataka's energy future. Overall, through targeted reforms, infrastructural investments, renewable energy scaling, and welfare-oriented schemes, the Karnataka Energy Department under Minister K. J. George has delivered significant progress. The focus on stability, sustainability, and inclusivity is reshaping the state's energy narrative — moving it closer to energy security, green transformation, and widespread societal benefit.



Power security and uninterrupted supply

One of the most significant accomplishments during this period has been Karnataka's consistent power availability with no reports of unscheduled power cuts. In recent remarks, Minister George highlighted that Karnataka now enjoys a surplus power position, where interruptions occur only for planned maintenance, and not due to shortages. This marks a shift from earlier volatility in energy supply, ensuring residents and businesses operate without unexpected disruptions.

The increased demand for electricity in the state — rising from approximately 8,000 MW to nearly 14,000 MW — has been met with strategic planning and proactive grid management. By balancing generation, distribution, and demand-side measures, the Energy Department has prioritized elevation of supply reliability across urban and rural sectors.

Transition from 'deficit to surplus'

There was a time not too long ago when Karnataka grappled with power shortfalls. However, over the last few years this narrative has reversed. In 2024, the energy sector saw a sweeping turnaround: from facing supply constraints to generating enough electricity not just for internal consumption but also to sell on power exchanges. In fact, Karnataka reportedly earned over ₹1,400 crore by selling electricity in the market and returned significant power units to states from where it had borrowed during lean periods.

This achievement reflects the Energy Department's strategic emphasis on strengthening generation capacity, effective grid management, and optimizing supply mixes — including hydropower, thermal, and renewable sources. Notably, three major thermal power plants overseen by the state energy corporation (KPCL) have posted record generation figures, showcasing both capacity augmentation and enhanced operational efficiency.



Expansion of renewable energy & clean power goals

Karnataka's strides toward clean and sustainable energy have been remarkable. The state has consistently increased renewable energy generation, pushing green sources closer to the core of its energy mix. On certain days, renewable resources have powered up to 80% of the state's electricity supply, driven by robust wind and solar output along with hydro-power contributions.

Under Minister George's tenure, investment in renewables has been a key priority. Initiatives include large-scale solar parks — for instance, proposed projects similar to existing ones like Pavagada Solar Park — and significant targets to expand wind and hybrid capacities in collaboration with central and private entities.

A major milestone was Karnataka leading the nation in wind power capacity additions for the 2024–25 period, with over 1,300 MW installed, earning recognition during Global Wind Day celebrations. The government highlighted plans for expanding up to 17 GW of future wind projects and establishing renewable energy reserve zones to systematically harness wind resources.

These efforts align with the broader vision of India's net-zero and sustainability targets, strengthening Karnataka's position as a leader in renewable energy adoption among Indian states.

Infrastructure growth & distribution enhancements

To support growing demand and improve power delivery,

the Energy Department has emphasized infrastructure expansion. Plans were unveiled to erect multiple substations across the state, aimed at reducing distribution losses and boosting grid resilience. These substations also facilitate smoother handling of demand fluctuations in both agricultural and residential segments.

Workforce strengthening has been another critical focus. Minister George announced major recruitment and placement drives for thousands of linemen and engineers to address operational shortages that previously slowed pole shifting, transformer repairs, and new line installations. This cadre boost is likely to accelerate rural electrification and enhance service quality across utility companies.

These moves reflect a holistic approach — integrating physical infrastructure with human resource capacity to ensure that expanded generation and ambitious renewable goals translate into real benefits for end users.

Consumer-centric initiatives: Farmers & households

A defining theme of the last three years has been the government's attention to power affordability and equity. Under the Gruha Jyothi scheme, eligible households receive free electricity for up to 200 units per month, significantly reducing energy costs for millions across the state. This subsidy scheme has seen widespread enrollment and has become a cornerstone of poverty alleviation and economic support.

Karnataka Labour Ministry: Championing Protection for Migrant Labour and Gig Economy Workers

The Karnataka Labour Ministry plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the rights, welfare, and working conditions of millions of workers in the state. With rapid economic growth in sectors such as construction, services, domestic work, and digital platforms, Karnataka has one of India's most diverse labour forces. Among these, migrant labourers and gig workers represent especially vulnerable segments whose informal employment status traditionally left them outside the ambit of social security and formal protections.

Karnataka attracts large numbers of internal migrants due to its industrial expansion and booming urban centres. According to labour department estimates and national registrations, tens of lakhs of workers in Karnataka are identified as unorganised or interstate migrants, although only a fraction are formally registered in welfare databases. Many of these workers come from states such as Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal to take up construction, domestic services and other informal jobs that are essential to the state's economy but often lack statutory protections and benefits.

Recognising these challenges, the Labour Ministry under the leadership of Labour Minister Santosh Lad has undertaken a series of policy initiatives aimed at enhancing social security, formalising labour participation and improving the monitoring and welfare mechanisms for these workers.

One of the key focus areas has been the welfare of gig economy workers—a rapidly growing category of



workers engaged through digital platforms for services like ride-sharing, food and grocery delivery, logistics, and other app-based gigs. In August 2025, the Karnataka Legislature passed the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2025, a landmark piece of legislation piloted by Santosh Lad that seeks to extend social security and safety protections to gig workers.

The Bill mandates the creation of a Gig Workers Welfare Board and a Gig Workers Welfare Fund, financed by a welfare fee collected from platform aggregators (ranging from 1 % to 5 % of payouts), to ensure benefits like income security, occupational health protections, and dispute resolution mechanisms. It also requires gig workers to be registered and platforms to maintain transparent records of transactions and payments, which will be monitored digitally by the labour department for compliance.

Santosh Lad has stated that many gig workers put in long hours under challenging conditions—exposed to traffic pollution and health risks—and therefore need structured welfare support that moves beyond traditional

contract definitions. Beyond gig workers, the ministry has also been proactive in supporting migrant labourers through measures such as issuing smart cards to register unorganised workers, enhancing access to welfare benefits, and inaugurating temporary housing complexes for construction labourers in industrial zones. These initiatives aim to bridge the gap between formal welfare schemes and the informal nature of much migrant work.

To improve monitoring of migrant labour, state policies increasingly emphasise better registration and data integration, co-operation with national labour databases (like e-Shram), and co-ordination with district administrations to identify and enrol migrant workers into welfare programmes. This data-driven monitoring is crucial given that many migrant labourers remain undocumented in official records.

Overall, the Karnataka Labour Ministry, guided by Minister Santosh Lad, is expanding the state's labour governance framework to be more inclusive of informal, migrant, and platform-based workers—recognising that a secure and equitable labour ecosystem must adapt to new forms of work while strengthening protection for those who have historically lacked formal rights and recognition.



Transforming Healthcare Sector: Karnataka's Medical Education Dept Marks 1,000 Days of Progress Under Sharan Prakash Patil

Over the past 1,000 days, Karnataka's Medical Education Department has undergone a period of accelerated growth and structural reform, guided by the leadership of Sharan Prakash Patil, Minister for Medical Education and Skill Development. With a clear emphasis on accessibility, infrastructure expansion, and quality enhancement, the department has strengthened Karnataka's position as a leading hub for medical education and public healthcare in India.

One of the department's most visible achievements has been the expansion and upgradation of government medical colleges across the state. Under Minister Patil's stewardship, several district hospitals have been upgraded with modern diagnostic facilities, advanced operation theatres, and improved emergency care units. These upgrades have not only enhanced patient care but also created improved learning environments for undergraduate and postgraduate medical students.

A major thrust area has been increasing medical seats to meet the growing demand for healthcare professionals. By systematically strengthening faculty recruitment, improving teaching infrastructure, and ensuring compliance with national regulatory standards, Karnataka has added new MBBS and postgraduate seats in government

institutions. This expansion directly contributes to addressing the doctor-patient ratio and strengthening rural healthcare delivery in the long term.

The department has also prioritized the modernization of medical equipment and digital health systems. Teaching hospitals have adopted upgraded laboratory services, imaging facilities, and digital record-keeping systems. These initiatives have allowed students to train in technology-enabled environments while ensuring faster and more efficient patient services. Telemedicine facilities have also been expanded, bridging gaps between tertiary care centers and remote communities.

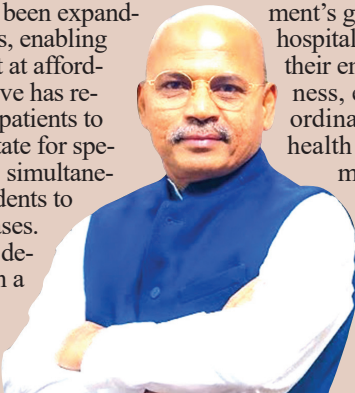
Another key milestone in the past 1,000 days has been the strengthening of super-specialty services in government medical institutions. Departments such as cardiology, neurology, nephrology, and oncology have been expanded in select colleges, enabling advanced treatment at affordable costs. This move has reduced the need for patients to travel outside the state for specialized care, while simultaneously exposing students to complex clinical cases.

Human resource development has been a consistent focus. The department has taken mea-

sures to streamline faculty appointments and ensure transparent recruitment processes. By addressing faculty shortages and encouraging academic research, the government has aimed to create a more robust academic culture within its institutions. Increased emphasis on research publications, skill development programs, and simulation-based training has further strengthened academic standards.

Importantly, infrastructure development has extended beyond classrooms and wards. Student hostels, staff quarters, and campus facilities have been upgraded in many institutions to create supportive learning environments. These improvements reflect a broader understanding that medical education depends not only on academic excellence but also on adequate living and working conditions.

Public health responsiveness has also improved under the department's guidance. Teaching hospitals have enhanced their emergency preparedness, ensuring better coordination during public health challenges. Investments in oxygen plants, critical care beds, and infection control systems have strengthened institutional resilience and readiness.





QUICK READ

Israeli-Arab man charged with spying for Iran

Tel Aviv

An Israeli-Arab man has been charged with spying on former Defence Minister Yoav Galant for Iran. Fares Abu al-Hija, 32, was arrested in January near Galant's home. Prosecutors say he was recruited through Telegram and paid in cryptocurrency by an Iranian agent. He allegedly took photos, delivered secret codes, and hid mobile phones with secure apps. Israel's security agency said such Iranian efforts have increased since the 2025 war between Iran and Israel.

Another Awami League leader dies in police custody

Dhaka

A local leader of the Awami League has died in police custody in Bangladesh. Shamikul Islam, 60, was head of the party in Palashbari. Officials said he became seriously ill at Gaibandha District Jail and died on the way to Rangpur Medical College Hospital on Sunday. Reports said several cases were filed against him after the party lost power on August 5, 2024. He had been arrested more than once and was in jail at the time of his death.

Post-poll violence escalates across Bangladesh

Dhaka

At least nine people were injured, and a house was set ablaze amid rising post-election violence in multiple districts of Bangladesh. The incidents follow the 13th national parliamentary election, which saw a decisive victory for the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. In Lalpur upazila of Natore district, six people were hurt after clashes between two groups of BNP workers on Saturday night. Police arrested two suspects and recovered a firearm at the scene, according to Md Mojibar Rahman, officer-in-charge of Lalpur Police Station. Elsewhere, 35-year-old Giasuddin Rasel, a BNP election agent in Sherpur district, was injured in an attack allegedly by Jamaat-e-Islami members. In Feni district, a Jamaat supporter, Nurul Absar Belal, was reportedly assaulted by BNP workers at his home and later taken to Feni General Hospital.

Oppn protests grow over Imran Khan's medical care

A senior leader of MWM said protests will continue in Islamabad and Balochistan, warning that history does not forgive oppressive rulers

QUETTA

A senior leader of Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) has strongly criticised the government's handling of peaceful protests demanding treatment for jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Allama Ali Hasnain Husaini said authorities denied food, water and medicines to key opposition figures during a sit-in in Islamabad.

He said Senate Opposition Leader Allama Raja Nasir Abbas Jafri and National Assembly Opposition Leader Mahmood Khan Achakzai were not given basic necessities for three days. Husaini called the move undemocratic and inhuman.



man. He warned that the government would be fully responsible if any harm came to the leaders.

Jafri, who has diabetes, needs regular medicine, Husaini said, calling it a basic human right. He added that protests would continue in Islamabad and Balochistan, warning that history does not forgive oppressive rulers.

Lawmakers have staged a sit-in outside Parliament House and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House since Friday. They are demanding proper medical care for Khan, founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Protesters say his right-eye vision has fallen to 15 percent. A medical report submitted to the Supreme Court of Pakistan stated Khan suffered a blood clot that badly damaged his eye. The report was filed by lawyer Salman Safdar after visiting him in Adiala Jail. Khan was recently taken to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences for an eye procedure. His party said neither his family nor senior leaders were informed about the treatment.

Officials warn Jamaat-e-Islami may pressure the government despite Bangladesh Nationalist Party majority, while Tarique Rahman prioritizes stability and balanced foreign relations

B'desh PM-in-waiting Rahman faces Jamaat challenges

DHAKA

Tarique Rahman prepares to lead Bangladesh amid concerns over Jamaat influence and internal instability.

Tarique Rahman will take charge as Prime Minister following a massive election win by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. Many citizens see his victory as a fresh start after a turbulent period under Muhammad Yunus.

However, concerns remain over the strong rise of Jamaat-e-Islami, which secured 77 seats, its best result ever. Analysts say Rahman's biggest challenge will be restoring order at home rather than managing foreign relations.

Security officials warn that Jamaat could try to pressure the new government if it is denied a major role. Though the BNP holds a clear majority, Jamaat's expanded reach gives it influence, especially in border areas near West Bengal.



Intelligence sources allege that during Yunus's tenure, relaxed visa rules and open sea routes benefited Inter-Services Intelligence operations. They claim these routes were mis-

used for smuggling arms, drugs and militants.

Critics also accuse Jamaat supporters of encouraging mob violence, targeting media, minorities and political opponents. Police were often slow to act, further weakening law and order. Despite its gains, experts say Jamaat is disappointed it did not win power outright. The party has long faced criticism for opposing Bangladesh's independence in 1971. Observers believe voters rejected its ideology in favor of stability.

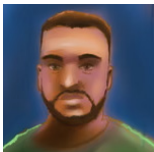
Rahman has promised balanced foreign ties while putting Bangladesh first. Officials say he is unlikely to allow Jamaat unchecked freedom, as his priority will be restoring peace and strengthening institutions in a divided nation.

Bondi beach shooter appears in Sydney court

SYDNEY

Naveed Akram, accused of the deadly Bondi Beach terror attack, appeared in a Sydney court for the first time on Monday. The 24-year-old faces 59 charges, including 15 counts of murder and one count of committing a terrorist act.

Akram appeared via video-link from a supermax prison, where he has been held since being discharged from hospital after the December 14, 2025 attack. Authorities allege



that Akram, along with his father Sajid—who was shot dead by police at the scene—opened fire on a Jewish Hanukkah celebration using rifles and shotguns. The attack killed 15 people and injured dozens, marking Australia's deadliest mass shooting since 1996.

Court documents revealed that the father and son had practiced firearms training at a rural property before the attack. During Monday's administrative hearing, Akram remained mostly silent, speaking only when addressed by the presiding Magistrate. His lawyer, Ben Archbold, said it is too early to indicate what plea his client will enter. The case is set to return to court in April.

Earlier this month, Mike Burgess, Director-General of Security of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, told a Senate hearing that the attackers had successfully avoided detection before the attack. Burgess said the alleged terrorists "demonstrated a high level of security awareness to hide their plot" and effectively stayed off intelligence and law enforcement radar.

Authorities continue to investigate the circumstances of the attack, the motives behind it, and the security lapses that allowed it to occur. The trial of Naveed Akram is expected to draw significant attention due to the scale of the tragedy and its impact on the Australian community.



Activists raise alarm over Pak judicial actions

QUETTA

A leading rights organisation has accused Pakistani authorities of using the judiciary to silence activists, pointing to the continued detention of Mahrang Baloch and human rights lawyer Imaan Mazari-Hazir.

The Baloch Voice for Justice said the prolonged imprisonment of the two women reflects a wider effort to suppress marginalised communities. It noted that nearly a year has passed since Mahrang Baloch and other leaders of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee were arrested.

According to the group, the Balochistan High Court heard bail pleas on December 17, 2025. While the defence completed its arguments, prosecutors allegedly failed to present strong evidence. The court reserved its decision, but no verdict has been issued after almost three months.

The rights body said such delays violate Article 10-A of Pakistan's Constitution, which promises a fair and timely trial. It warned that justice delayed weakens trust

A human rights group claims Pakistan is misusing courts to silence activists, citing delays in bail hearings and harsh sentences against prominent campaigners.

in the legal system and harms personal liberty.

The organisation also raised concern that the Islamabad High Court has not scheduled hearings for cases involving Mazari-Hazir and her husband, Hadi Ali Chat-ta. It alleged interference by intelligence agencies in judicial matters, calling it a threat to judicial independence.

Last month, a court reportedly sentenced Mazari-Hazir and her husband to a total of 17 years in prison and fined them heavily in a case linked to social media posts.

The arrests and convictions have drawn international criticism, with activists saying the situation tests Pakistan's commitment to rule of law and civil liberties.

Indian Navy ship 'Surat' made a port call in Bahrain

MANAMA

The Indian Navy said the visit of INS Surat to Bahrain has reinforced India's commitment to regional maritime security. The Navy stated that the ship's engagements improved coordination and information-sharing with multinational partners.

During its stay, INS Surat interacted with the Combined Maritime Forces, which is based in Bahrain. The group works to promote security and stability in international waters. The Navy said the meetings boosted operational cooperation and strengthened efforts to keep global sea lanes safe. The visit highlighted India's focus on working closely with friendly navies in important maritime regions. Officials said such exchanges improve interoperability and build trust among partner nations.



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Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

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1	3	7	9	8	4	2	6	5
4	2	5	1	3	6	8	7	9
2	5	8	4	7	1	6	9	3
3	7	6	5	9	2	1	8	4
9	4	1	8	6	3	5	2	7
7	1	3	2	5	8	9	4	6
5	9	2	6	4	7	3	1	8
8	6	4	3	1	9	7	5	2

Fill a 9x9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3x3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.



CHILDHOOD CANCER

Less than 30% of kids with cancer survive in Pak

ISLAMABAD

Health experts say fewer than 30 percent of children diagnosed with cancer in Pakistan survive, mainly due to late diagnosis and limited treatment facilities.

Around 10,000 children are diagnosed with cancer in Pakistan every year. Experts shared these figures at an awareness session organised by the Indus Hospital and Health Network. They said nearly 400,000 children and teenagers worldwide develop cancer each year, with about 80 percent of cases re-



ported in low and middle-income countries.

In developed nations, survival rates range between 80

and 85 percent. However, in countries like Pakistan, survival is much lower because of delayed detection and lack of

specialised care.

Dr Naeem Jabbar, a consultant in pediatric haematology-oncology, said most childhood cancers can be cured if treated on time. He explained that unlike adult cancers, childhood cancers usually have no clear link to lifestyle. With proper treatment, cure rates can reach up to 85 percent.

He added that survival in Pakistan remains low due to poor awareness of early symptoms, shortage of trained specialists, limited treatment centres and families stopping treatment because of high

costs. Common cancers among children include leukaemia, lymphoma, brain and bone tumours, and other rare types.

Doctors said treatments such as chemotherapy, surgery and radiotherapy are available if started early. Dr Shumail Ashraf said the department in Karachi handles about 1,000 new cases yearly and has treated over 16,000 children since 2014.

Experts urged parents and teachers to recognise warning signs early and seek timely medical help.

Omarzai All-Round Heroics Seal Afghanistan Victory

Afghanistan secured their first 2026 T20 WC win, defeating UAE by five wickets

NEW DELHI

Afghanistan registered a crucial five-wicket victory over the UAE in the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Monday, keeping their slim Super Eights hopes alive. The win was powered by a brilliant all-round performance from Azmatullah Omarzai, whose incisive spell of 4-15 dismantled the UAE's lower order before his unbeaten 40 off just 21 balls guided Afghanistan home with four deliveries to spare.

On a surface with noticeable moisture, Omarzai adjusted his line and length cleverly, exploiting the conditions to trouble the batters. His disciplined approach ensured that the UAE, despite a promising start, could only post 160/9. Mujeeb Ur Rahman provided solid support with two wickets, while



Rashid Khan delivered a tidy spell that restricted scoring in the middle overs.

The UAE innings was initially rocked by early set-backs, but a fluent 84-run third-wicket partnership between Alishan Sharafu and Sohaib Khan revived their fortunes. Sharafu struck a composed 40, while Sohaib continued his fine form at the venue with a well-crafted 68

off 47 balls, including five boundaries and two sixes. His second consecutive fifty at the ground helped the UAE recover momentum and push them towards a competitive total, even as four wickets fell in the final five overs.

Chasing 161, Afghanistan faced early pressure but opener Ibrahim Zadran anchored the innings with a steady 53 off 41 deliveries, laced with

five fours and a six. His composed knock stabilized the chase before his dismissal reopened the contest. The UAE bowlers, led by Muhammad Arfan's disciplined two-wicket spell, kept things tight and raised hopes of an upset.

However, Omarzai returned to the spotlight in the closing stages. Displaying composure and power, he struck two fours and three sixes in his match-winning cameo, ensuring Afghanistan clinched their first points of the tournament. Afghanistan's batting depth ultimately proved decisive against a UAE side whose middle-order collapse left them with a total that was competitive but not commanding. The result also confirmed South Africa's qualification for the Super Eights, joining India and the West Indies, who had already secured their spots.



Jaipur Clinch Raffles Sirmour Cup Title

JAIPUR

Jaipur Polo Team produced a commanding performance to defeat Carysil Suhana 14-10 and lift the prestigious Raffles Sirmour Cup, marking their eighth title of an exceptional season. The victory was built on attacking precision, tactical discipline, and sustained control across six competitive chukkers.

Carysil Suhana made a confident start, applying early pressure and capitalising on quick transitions to establish a 3-1 lead at the end of the opening chukker. Their sharp movement and proactive play unsettled Jaipur in the early exchanges. However, Jaipur regrouped effectively in the second chukker, improving their possession game and tightening their defensive structure. Despite their resurgence, Carysil narrowly held onto a 4-3 advantage at halftime.

The contest turned deci-

Jaipur Polo Team dominated Carysil Suhana to secure their eighth season title

sively in the third chukker. Jaipur shifted gears with authority, unleashing a flurry of goals through swift ball movement and incisive forward play. Lance Watson spearheaded the charge with clinical finishing in front of goal, while Manuel Fernandez Llorente provided strong support in attack. Their combined efforts overturned the deficit as Jaipur surged ahead 8-6 by the end of the period, seizing full control of the momentum.

The fourth chukker evolved into a tactical battle, with both teams displaying defensive discipline. The score remained unchanged at 8-6, but Jaipur's composure and structured approach ensured they maintained control of proceedings. Gradually, they

tightened their grip, dictating the tempo and limiting Carysil's attacking opportunities.

Jaipur extended their dominance in the fifth chukker, applying sustained pressure that translated into sharp finishing. Their relentless attacking display stretched the lead to 11-6, placing them firmly within sight of the trophy. Carysil Suhana mounted a spirited comeback attempt in the final period, with Matias Vial and Manuel Prado leading the charge and narrowing the margin.

However, Jaipur's attacking depth and game management proved decisive. Lance Watson delivered a standout performance with an impressive nine goals, anchoring the team's offensive superiority. Manuel Fernandez Llorente added four crucial strikes, while HH Maharaja Sawai Padmanabh Singh of Jaipur contributed one goal to seal the triumph.

DUBAI

Veteran batter Steve Smith has been officially added to Australia's squad for the ongoing T20 World Cup, providing a timely boost ahead of their must-win encounter against Sri Lanka at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Pallekele on Monday evening.

Smith's inclusion comes at a critical juncture in the tournament, with Australia needing a victory to keep their campaign on track. Known for his composure and vast experience in high-pressure situations, Smith's presence is expected to add stability to the batting order. His ability to anchor innings while accelerating when required makes him a valuable asset, particularly in crunch games.

Australia's campaign has faced stiff competition in the group stages, and team management appears keen to reinforce the squad with proven performers. Smith, who has

featured prominently across formats for Australia over the years, brings tactical awareness and adaptability to different match scenarios. His experience in subcontinental conditions could prove crucial on the Pallekele surface, which often offers assistance to both spinners and stroke-makers.

The clash against Sri Lanka is seen as pivotal for Australia's progression in the tournament. With net run rate and points table dynamics playing a significant role at this stage, every aspect of team balance becomes vital. Smith's addition may allow Australia to restructure their batting combination, potentially offering greater flexibility in the middle order.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, are expected to pose a strong challenge on home-like conditions. The evening fixture



Steve Smith Added To Australia Squad

Veteran batter strengthens Aus ahead of crucial T20 WC clash

under lights at Pallekele could also bring dew into play, influencing bowling strategies and field placements.

Australia's team management has expressed confidence that Smith's inclusion will provide the necessary

depth and experience for the high-stakes contest.

As the five-time world champions prepare for the decisive encounter, all eyes will be on how the reshaped lineup performs in what promises to be a fiercely contested battle.



Cerundolo wins Argentina Open title, his first ATP Tour crown since 2024

BUENOS AIRES

Top seed and local favorite Francisco Cerundolo secured his fourth ATP title with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Italy's Luciano Darderi in the Argentina Open final. A defeated finalist in 2021 and 2025, hometown favourite Cerundolo held his nerve in a see-saw final set, in which all but two games featured at least one break point, to lift his fourth ATP Tour trophy and his first on Argentine soil.

Cerundolo struggled at times on serve but dominated at the baseline to take the match in one hour and 37 minutes on the outdoor clay of the Buenos Aires Lawn Tennis Club.

The 27-year-old broke Darderi early in both sets and sealed victory with a trademark inside-out forehand. This is the best moment of my career so far, said Cerundolo, who had lost two previous finals at the ATP 250 event.

I wanted to win in my hometown and country, in front of my family and friends. I thought this day might never come but today I played one of the best matches of my career. I played aggressively and didn't let him take the initiative at any stage. It's a final so you have to go for it, and I played for every point here.

Second seed won 73 percent of first serve but just 24 percent on his second, while committing 29 unforced errors. The No. 19 player in the ATP Rankings, Cerundolo is the seventh home champion in the history of the Argentina Open, which was first held in 2001.

Carlsen Crowned First Freestyle Chess Champion

NORWAY

Norway's Magnus Carlsen added yet another accolade to his illustrious career, becoming the first official FIDE Freestyle Chess world champion with a comeback victory over American grandmaster Fabiano Caruana in Germany. The 35-year-old sealed the title in Weissenhaus with a composed draw in the fourth and final game of the match, completing a 2.5-1.5 triumph against his 33-year-old opponent. The result marked a historic milestone in the newly formalised freestyle format.



der the International Chess Federation (FIDE), further reinforcing Carlsen's status as one of the game's greatest competitors. Carlsen's path to the crown, however, was far from straightforward. The defining moment of the contest came in Sunday's dramatic third game.



Rashid Khan Claims Historic 700th T20 Wicket

NEW DELHI

Afghanistan captain Rashid Khan etched his name deeper into cricketing history by becoming the first player to claim 700 wickets in T20 cricket. The landmark moment came during Afghanistan's Men's T20 World Cup Group D encounter against the United Arab Emirates at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi on Monday.

Rashid entered the contest on 699 wickets and reached the milestone in the 16th over of the UAE innings. Mu-

hammad Arfan attempted a reverse sweep but missed the delivery and disturbed his stumps, resulting in a hit-wicket dismissal. The wicket handed Rashid his historic 700th scalp in the shortest format of the game. Notably, the leg-spinner refrained from an animated celebration, choosing instead to stay focused as Afghanistan sought a crucial win to keep their slim Super Eights hopes alive.

The achievement followed a brief wait. Rashid had moved to 698 and 699 wickets during Afghanistan's previous match against South Africa at the Narendra Modi Stadium in

Ahmedabad last week. In New Delhi, he bowled 3.2 overs without success before finally striking. Prior to dismissing Arfan, he had conceded 17 runs in 20 deliveries, underlining the patience required before reaching the milestone.

Rashid has long dominated the T20 wicket charts. Retired West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo sits second with 631 wickets, while fellow West Indian off-spinner Sunil Narine is the closest active cricketer with 613 scalps.

In the international arena, Rashid also leads the list of T201 wicket-takers with 191 wickets for Afghanistan. New

Zealand's retired pacer Tim Southee, with 164 wickets, and leg-spinner Ish Sodhi, with 162, follow him on that list.

Speaking last week about the impending milestone, Rashid had maintained a grounded perspective. 700 wickets, whatever the achievement is, it will continue. I have not kept any target in my mind that I will take 700 wickets and stop. When I play for the national team at the World Cup, I make 100% effort. And when the team requires it, I take the wicket, he said. With this historic feat, Rashid Khan further cemented his legacy as one of the finest T20 bowlers the game has witnessed.



Ganguly on India's dominance over Pak in T20 WC

NEW DELHI

After India recorded a 61-run triumph over arch-rivals Pakistan in the Group A clash of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, former India skipper Sourav Ganguly believes the idea of an automatic big match between India and Pakistan is outdated, as the intensity and competitiveness that once defined the rivalry no longer feel the same. Defending champions India's win over Pakistan also confirmed their place in the Super Eights. Ishan Kishan's blistering 77 had set the tone earlier in the evening, and India's bowlers ensured the target of 176 was always out of reach to dismiss Pakistan for 114 in 18 overs.