# CITY HILIGHTS

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The Truth Speaks

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DROUGHT, SUGARCANE GROWERS' ISSUES

## CM SEEKS PM'S APPOINTMENT

Shivakumar appealed to protesting sugarcane growers to withdraw their agitation and urged all stakeholders to work together towards a solution.

**MYSURU**

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has sought an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss Karnataka's drought situation and the problems faced by sugarcane growers, and plans to seek the participation of Opposition leaders in an all-party delegation.

Speaking to reporters at Mysuru airport on Sunday, Shivakumar said he hoped Opposition leaders would join the delegation, as they had earlier expressed their willingness to participate.

Responding to the ongoing sugarcane farmers' protest, he said he had already held discussions with the growers and appealed to them to call off their agitation.

"Everyone should sit together and find a solution. There is no point in politicising the issue or criticising others. Farmers' welfare and livelihoods are important to us," Shivakumar said.

**Support price**

Asked whether the state government should contribute towards the support price for sugarcane, he said the matter could be discussed, adding that the government had to consider the interests of farmers growing different crops.

On the arrest of a suspected terrorist in Kalaburagi, the Chief Minister said he would give the police complete freedom to gather information and investigate the case. He cautioned against making political statements on sensitive matters.

Reacting to BJP and JD(S) leaders' claims that a coalition government would return to power in Karnataka in 2028, Shivakumar questioned JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy's earlier declaration about dissolving his party if it lost an election.

The Chief Minister thanked Karnataka's people, particularly Mysuru residents, for supporting the Dasara celebrations. He urged visitors to stay until night to enjoy the city's illumination.



**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- **PM meeting:** Appointment sought to discuss drought and sugarcane farmers' issues
- **Farmers' protest:** Appeal to growers to withdraw agitation
- **Police investigation:** Freedom to probe the Kalaburagi case
- **Dasara:** Visitors urged to enjoy Mysuru's night-time illumination

**DASARA AIR SHOW**

Rain affected the air show planned as part of Mysuru Dasara celebrations. Shivakumar said the district administration hoped to conduct the show on Monday, depending on weather conditions. The Chief Minister said he also wished to witness the event. He thanked the people of Karnataka, particularly Mysuru residents, for their cooperation during the festivities and urged visitors to remain in the city until night to enjoy the illumination.

## Actor Tiger Shroff shot at in Mumbai's Juhu, escapes unhurt

**A video soon emerged in which a man identifying himself as Anil Pandit, claiming to be from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, said Tiger was on their hit list.**

**MUMBAI**

Bollywood's star Tiger Shroff came under a chilling real-life threat on Sunday evening when three unidentified motorcycle-borne men allegedly opened fire at him near Pushpa Park in Mumbai's upscale Juhu.

The incident took place around 7.30 pm as the actor was leaving a venue in the area after playing football at Pushpa Park. Shroff escaped unhurt in the firing, sending a shock through the film fraternity as senior police officers rushed to the spot.

According to initial reports, fans had gathered outside the venue to catch a glimpse of the actor when the firing took place. While Tiger remained safe, his driver and an autorickshaw driver were injured in the incident, police said.

The Juhu Police station and Crime Branch-CID of Mumbai Police have launched massive investigations to track down the suspects.

Forensic experts have recovered empty bullet casings confirming that three rounds were fired directly at Tiger Shroff's BMW. Preliminary ballistic reports indicate that the bullets were fired from close range by a motorcycle-borne pillion shooter, pointing to a calculated effort to either intimidate or inflict severe harm.



Shroff (36) is the son of the legendary actor Jackie Shroff and Ayesha Dutt.

**Police form 15 teams to probe firing**

Providing official details on the incident, a senior police official stated that the firing took place around 7 PM when actor Tiger Shroff was leaving after completing personal work in the area. Confirming that the actor did not sustain any gunshot injuries and remains completely safe, the police have launched a thorough investigation and formed around 15 specialised teams to track down the suspects.

**Lawrence Bishnoi gang 'claims' responsibility**

The Lawrence Bishnoi gang has reportedly claimed responsibility for the incident and has asked the actor to apologise to the underworld don. A purported audio clip also went viral on social media platforms in which one person named Anil Pandit claimed that anyone working with Salman Khan will not be spared.

**SALMAN KHAN, ROHIT SHETTY TARGETS OF BISHNOI GANG**

In the recent past, the Lawrence Bishnoi gang had targeted actor Salman Khan and filmmaker Rohit Shetty. Over the last few years, the Bishnoi gang repeatedly targeted Salman Khan and even opened fire towards his Galaxy Apartments home on Bandra Seaface. The rivalry stems from the 1998 blackbuck poaching case, in which actor Salman Khan was accused of killing a blackbuck—an animal sacred to the Bishnoi community. On 1 February, 2026, in the wee hours, a group of persons linked to the Bishnoi gang aimed their pistol fire towards the home of Rohit Shetty's nine-storey home in Juhu - and one of the bullets hit the glass of the gym inside the building.

**BISHNOI GANG ELIMINATED BABA SIDDIQUE**

It may be recalled that former Maharashtra minister and NCP leader Baba Siddique—who was considered close to the Hindi entertainment industry—was shot dead by members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang on 12 October 2024 in the Bandra East area of Mumbai. As many as 27 arrested people have been charge-sheeted in the case.

## Cong govt unfit to give pensions: Ashoka

**Bengaluru:** Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka on Sunday criticised the Congress government for deploying a large police force to prevent persons with disabilities from protesting on Mysuru Road, alleging that their pension payments had been pending for five months.

Participating in the protest, Ashoka said the persons with disabilities had been demonstrating for 30 days, but the government had failed to address their demands. He alleged that they were being employed in government offices for a monthly salary of Rs 10,000 and had taken to the streets seeking justice.

"If the government is not eligible to provide pensions, let it put up a board declaring that the treasury is empty. Why deploy thousands of policemen and 40 buses to stop persons with disabilities from protesting?" he asked.

He said the protest was intended to expose what he called the government's financial mismanagement. He warned that more than 1,500 persons with disabilities would lay siege to Vidhana Soudha if their demands were not met.

## Rahul Gandhi vows to fight 'vote chori'

**MARGAO**

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of orchestrating alleged "vote theft" behind the scenes, claiming that Union Home Minister Amit Shah operationalised it and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar implemented it.

Addressing a rally in Margao in South Goa on the concluding day of the Congress's 'Goy Rakhon Yatra', Gandhi alleged that Modi, Shah and Kumar were facing mounting pressure over the party's allegations of electoral malpractice.

"There is no confusion anymore. Gyanesh Kumar implements the vote theft, Amit Shah operationalises it, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi does the entire planning from behind the scenes," Gandhi said.



> PM Modi, Amit Shah and CEC Gyanesh Kumar will face justice and pay the price for what they have done.
>
> - Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader

The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha warned that the three would face justice over the alleged irregularities. He also claimed that the Congress had evidence of electoral malpractice in several states, including Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Assam.

"PM Modi, Amit Shah and CEC Gyanesh Kumar will face justice and pay the price for what they have done," he said.

Gandhi had led protests against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise and Kumar in New Delhi. He alleged that opposition votes had been deleted, votes added in favour of the ruling party, and voters shifted between districts or brought in from other states.

**Accountability vow**

Asserting that the ruling leadership is under immense pressure and fearing future legal consequences, Rahul Gandhi vowed that they will eventually face justice and pay the price for their actions.

Claiming that more than 45 defamation cases had been filed against him, including by people associated with Modi and Shah, Gandhi said no case had been filed over his allegations of vote theft.

He suggested that the government was reluctant to pursue the matter legally because it could lead to a full-fledged legal battle.

Urging voters to give the Congress a full majority in the 2027 Goa Assembly elections, Gandhi called on party workers to continue engaging with people across the state.

**'Nothing can save Gyanesh': Cong seeks major EC revamp**

**New Delhi:** As the Election Commission "resumes" distribution of "readable" electoral rolls to parties after a "gap of eight years", Congress on Sunday said "nothing can save" Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar while insisting that a "thorough" revamp of the poll body and its IT system is required. Party general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said the decision to provide electoral rolls in readable PDF format was the result of the whole nation being on the streets against the "vote chors". The attack comes as the Congress prepares to host I.N.D.I.A. bloc parties at a rally in Ramlila Maidan on November 1 against the CEC. In a post on 'X', he said over the past two years, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and the Congress have been "persistent, insistent and consistent" in demanding that the EC provide electoral rolls in searchable format to all parties. The demand was repeatedly refused by the ECI - which stopped providing searchable voter rolls in 2018 when the Congress found lakhs of bogus voters in Madhya Pradesh. The demand was denied for eight years to enable 'vote chori'," he claimed.

## 15 killed as truck mows down devotees outside Gwalior temple

**GWALIOR**

At least 15 people, including several teenagers, lost their lives and more than 25 were injured when a speeding truck ploughed into devotees gathered for Navratri prayers outside a temple in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior district early on Sunday, police said.

The paddy-laden truck, bearing a Punjab registration number, entered a no-entry zone on Chinar Road at around 1.30 am, crashed into several devotees waiting for darshan and roadside shops before hitting the Sheetla Mata temple's entrance gate, they said.

**People trapped under temple wall, driver flees**

The impact brought down a section of the temple wall, trapping people under the debris, officials said.

The truck driver fled the scene, and police teams were searching for him, they added.

An investigator said the truck's brakes may have failed, forcing the driver to swerve left in a desperate attempt to control the vehicle. Had it continued straight, he said, it would have ploughed into at least 600 to 700 devotees.



**PM Modi announces Rs 50k ex gratia relief**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident and announced ex gratia relief of Rs 2 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for each injured.

**MP CM declares Rs 4 lakh each for kid of deceased**

MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced financial assistance of Rs 4 lakh each to the families of the deceased, Rs 2 lakh for each seriously injured person and Rs 50,000 for other injured persons. The government will also bear the treatment expenses of the seriously injured, he said.

**QUICK READ**

### 15 houses burnt in Manipur's Kamjong, 3 hurt in gun attack

**IMPHAL/KAMJONG**

At least 15 houses belonging to the Kuki community were set on fire in a hill village in Manipur's Kamjong district, forcing a large number of civilians to flee and take shelter in forest areas and a nearby Army camp, officials said on Sunday. Suspected militants attacked Chassad village late on Saturday night and set the houses ablaze, they said. Earlier during the day, a Kuki civilian was killed, and four others sustained bullet injuries when suspected militants attacked the village. In a statement, police said a joint column of the Assam Rifles, the Border Security Force and Kamjong Police had been deployed in the affected area to bring the situation under control.

### TIAL halts flights for 'Alpassi Arattu' procession on Oct 20

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

Flight services at the Thiruvananthapuram international airport will be temporarily suspended from 4 pm to 9 pm on October 20 to enable the traditional "Arattu" procession of Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple to pass through the runway, TIAL said on Sunday. The ritual is in line with a decades-old practice involving the Travancore Royals. The Thiruvananthapuram International Airport Ltd (TIAL) stated that the flight services would be suspended to facilitate the 'Alpassi Arattu' procession by the Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple. The airport has been pausing operations and rescheduling flights twice every year for decades to enable the bi-annual centuries-old ceremonial procession. The practice began centuries ago and it has been continuing even after the establishment of the airport in 1932.

'IMPARTIAL PROBE DOUBTFUL'

## HDK questions inaction against man behind sting op

**The Union Minister accused the state govt of shielding the individual and demanded accountability, while questioning investigators' demand for supporting documents.**

**HASSAN**

Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Sunday questioned the Karnataka government's failure to act against a person who allegedly admitted to conducting a sting operation, raising doubts over the impartiality of the ongoing investigation.

"When the person concerned has admitted to conducting the sting operation, what more documents are they asking for?" he asked, referring to his meeting with the Director General of Police (DGP) on Saturday, when he submitted a representation seeking action. He said the response had left him doubtful about whether the case would be investigated properly. Kumaraswamy also alleged that more than 100 police personnel had been subjected to sting operations and objected to what he described as disrespectful remarks about a former prime minister.

**STING OPERATION CONTROVERSY**

- **Demand:** Action against the person who allegedly conducted the operation
- **Police meeting:** Kumaraswamy submitted a representation to the DGP
- **Allegation:** Govt shielding the individual
- **Other issue:** KPSC recruitment irregularities



The minister accused the government of linking unrelated cases and alleged that he was being politically targeted. Referring to alleged irregularities in Karnataka Public Service Commission recruitment, he said no action had been taken despite information being provided.

Kumaraswamy denied misusing his official position and warned that the state's present administration would have to face consequences. He expressed confidence that a coalition government would return to power in Karnataka in 2028.

On the ongoing sugarcane farmers' protest, he said the state government's response to growers' demand for an additional Rs 1,000 per tonne would be crucial.

Kumaraswamy said his party remained committed to farmers' welfare and that he would continue raising their concerns within his limits.

**Shivakumar part of plot to dethrone Siddaramaiah: Yediyurappa**



**Davanagere:** BJP Parliamentary Board member and former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa charged that many leaders including Chief Minister D K Shivakumar hatched a conspiracy to dethrone Siddaramaiah from the post of chief minister. Addressing media persons, here on Sunday, he stated that tolerance of Siddaramaiah is difficult to understand, but noted that the truth will soon come to light. He remarked that a systematic plot was executed to remove Siddaramaiah from the top post and create chaos in the state. D K Shivakumar is intoxicated by power and shows no willingness to correct his mistakes. Responding to a question, he said, the state government is oblivious to the drought situation and the hardships faced by the people and farmers. It is displaying the height of irresponsibility at every turn. Despite having a vast majority, the Congress is running a 'Tughlaq-style' (arbitrary and chaotic) administration. The people must teach them a fitting lesson in the next election.

Quick Read



## Shops encroach on footpaths, leaving pedestrians at risk

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Pedestrians in Shivajinagar are being forced to walk alongside moving traffic as shopkeepers, vendors and other establishments occupy footpaths and spill onto roads. Meenakshi Koil Street, OPH Road, Ibrahim Sahib Street and surrounding junctions have witnessed widespread obstructions, residents said, urging the police and Bengaluru Central City Corporation to intervene. Two-wheeler rider Rajesh N said shopkeepers had encroached on public space without effective action from authorities. Near Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital, pedestrians also face difficulties as reconstruction of a collapsed compound wall, which gave way in April, remains incomplete six months later. Residents want authorities to clear encroachments and restore safe walking space.

## 102 crore pages of land records enter digital age

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Karnataka's Revenue Department has scanned more than 102 crore pages of land and revenue records under the Bhoosuraksha digitisation project, with the remaining 47.82 crore pages scheduled for completion by December-end. Launched in January, the initiative aims to preserve permanent records, documents requiring 30-year retention and old, fragile files vulnerable to damage or loss. As of October 12, officials had scanned 1,02,18,46,713 pages, including 82.34 crore pages in the 'A' category and 19.84 crore in the 'B' category. Scanning has been completed in six Deputy Commissioners' offices, eight Assistant Commissioners' offices and 155 taluk offices. The remaining offices have been directed to complete the work by December-end.

# Khandre seeks plan for 1,000 rural bus shelters

Karnataka plans to improve rural passenger facilities by proposing new shelters in villages with high bus commuter numbers.

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU



**1,000** rural bus shelters proposed | **5,927** gram panchayats in Karnataka | **15 days** to submit the proposal

Karnataka Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Eshwar Khandre directed officials to prepare a proposal for constructing 1,000 bus shelters in villages under the VB-G RAM G employment guarantee scheme.

The minister, in a written communication to the department secretary and the VB-G RAM G commissioner on Sunday, asked officials to identify 1,000 villages with high passenger footfall and design shelters reflecting local heritage and rural character.

He directed officials to estimate material and wage costs under the scheme and submit a detailed proposal within 15 days, according to a release from his office.

### Waiting in sun and rain

The initiative followed reports that residents in several villages across Karnataka's 5,927 gram panchayats were forced to wait for buses in the sun and rain because shelters were unavailable, despite the operation of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) services.

Some existing bus shelters were also reportedly in a dilapidated condition and at risk of collapse, highlighting the need for construction and maintenance.

The VB-G RAM G scheme permitted the construction of new bus shelters and the maintenance of existing facilities. The proposed initiative was also expected to generate employment for unskilled workers under the scheme.

Khandre asked officials to formulate a comprehensive plan covering village selection, construction requirements and expenditure estimates to ensure that the proposed shelters addressed local transport needs.

# Congress betrayed teachers, graduates and youth: Suresh Kumar

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU




> "The Congress government promised to fill all sanctioned vacancies within a year of coming to power, but more than two lakh posts remain vacant. This is its achievement."
>
> – S. Suresh Kumar Former minister and BJP MLA

**The BJP alleges that recruitment delays, unfilled vacancies and the absence of an education policy have disappointed Karnataka's young people.**

**NDA CONTESTS FOUR SEATS**

- NORTH-EAST TEACHERS: Shashil Namoshi
- WEST GRADUATES: Sankanur
- SOUTH-EAST GRADUATES: Suresh
- BENGALURU TEACHERS: A.P. Ranganath
- POLLING: October 23

The BJP has expressed confidence in the NDA's victory in all four Legislative Council constituencies, accusing the Congress government of failing to fulfil its promises to teachers, graduates and unemployed youth.

Former minister and BJP MLA S. Suresh Kumar, speaking at Jagannath Bhavan in Malleshwaram, said the Congress had failed to fill sanctioned vacancies within a year, as promised. More than two lakh government posts remained vacant, he alleged. The government had also failed to provide examination fee exemptions to unemployed candidates and delayed the Yuva Nidhi scheme.

Describing the October 23 Legislative Council elections as a litmus test for the government, he said BJP and JD(S) workers were jointly campaigning for NDA candidates in all four constituencies.

Shashil Namoshi is contesting from the North-East Teachers' Constituency, Sankanur from the West Graduates' Constituency, Suresh from the South-East Graduates' Constituency and A.P. Ranganath from the Bengaluru Teachers' Constituency.

Suresh Kumar urged voters to give NDA candidates their first-preference votes and mark ballots correctly to minimise invalid votes.

He said the previous BJP-JD(S) government had recruited 15,000 teachers and highlighted the Vidyagama programme and teachers' contribution during the COVID-19 pandemic.

He criticised the Congress government for rejecting the National Education Policy and failing to introduce a state education policy despite forming a committee. He also alleged administrative failures in Karnataka Public Service Commission recruitment and questioned the implementation of the Gruha Lakshmi guarantee scheme.

Suresh Kumar further criticised Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar over alleged remarks asking seers to serve as ambassadors and campaign for him.

# Chemical tanker overturns and catches fire on NICE Road



**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

A chemical tanker overturned and caught fire near the Kanakapura toll plaza on NICE Road on Sunday, causing traffic jams stretching several kilometres.

The tanker, which was travelling from Chennai towards Mumbai, reportedly suffered a sudden tyre burst. The driver lost control, and the vehicle brushed against a car before overturning, police said. The tanker caught fire soon after the accident.

Firefighters struggled to bring the blaze under control for more than an hour and a half as flames engulfed the vehicle.

### Fears of explosion

The tanker belonged to a Mumbai-based chemical company and reportedly contained four to five separate tanks. Two tanks had caught fire, raising concerns that the flames could spread to the remaining tanks and trigger a major explosion.

The tanker driver managed to escape after the vehicle caught fire. No casualties were reported in the incident.

### Traffic severely affected

The blaze brought traffic on NICE Road to a near standstill. Vehicles were stranded in queues stretching nearly five kilometres on the stretch from Anjanapura towards Bengaluru city. Traffic moving out of Bengaluru was backed up for around three kilometres.

Talaghattapura traffic police rushed to the spot and began regulating vehicles to ease congestion. Alternative arrangements were also made to divert traffic.

A temporary connection to an adjoining road was created using sand to facilitate U-turns and help vehicles move away from the congested stretch.

The fire and emergency response operations disrupted movement in both directions, leaving commuters stranded as police worked to manage the situation and reduce the traffic pile-up.

# Karnataka brings physical RTI applications under Sakala

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

**Karnataka has streamlined information requests by bringing physical applications under Sakala and widening online filing access across the state.**

**Key changes**

- **2 days:** to register physical applications online
- **Sakala Act, 2011:** now covers their registration
- **3 centres:** Bengaluru One, Karnataka One and Gram One take online RTI filing
- **Relief:** compensation for applicants facing delays

Karnataka has introduced measures to simplify access to information, improve transparency and strengthen monitoring of applications filed under the Right to Information Act.

The state government, with the approval of Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, has brought the registration of physical RTI applications under the Karnataka Sakala Services Act, 2011, and expanded online filing through public service centres.

Under the first measure, public authorities receiving RTI applications by post or in person must register them on the online RTI portal within two days of receipt.

The move will ensure that applicants receive an online registration number and can track the status of their applications. It is also expected to reduce the chances of applications being lost or overlooked.

If an application is not registered within the stipulated two days, the applicant will be eligible for compensatory relief under the Sakala Act. The official concerned will also be held accountable for the delay, an official statement said.

### Filing at service centres

The government has also extended online RTI filing facilities to Bengaluru One, Karnataka One and Gram One centres across the state.

The initiative is intended to help people who lack access to computers or are unfamiliar with using the internet. Applicants can visit their nearest centre, submit applications with staff assistance and pay the prescribed RTI fee along with a nominal service charge. An online acknowledgement will be issued at the centre.

The inclusion of Gram One centres at the gram panchayat level is expected to improve access for rural residents.

Harsha Gupta, Principal Secretary, Department of Public Services, said the measures would bring physical applications, online submissions and service-centre filings onto a common platform, making it easier to monitor statutory timelines and identify delays by information officers.

## Cabinet to decide on BTC land for High Court this month

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU



The Karnataka government is expected to decide later this month on allocating land at the Bangalore Turf Club (BTC) premises for a new building of the High Court of Karnataka.

The proposed building is expected to come up on 12 to 15 acres at the Race Course premises to address the need for additional space for the High Court.

The government had informed the High Court in July 2026, through an affidavit filed in response to a public interest litigation, that it would soon pass a resolution allocating BTC land for the new building.

Earlier, in February, the Cabinet had approved a plan to relocate BTC races to Kunigal Stud Farm in Tumakuru district. The club had also agreed to shift its operations out of Bengaluru, according to reports.

The proposed relocation is expected to facilitate the development of the new judicial facility. The High Court has sought alternative accommodation, citing the need for a separate building.

Meanwhile, the Karnataka government has allotted seven acres in Nagarbhavi for the National Law School of India University's (NLSIU) South Campus. The campus will include 2,000 student rooms and 90 residential units for faculty and staff, apart from other facilities.

The government has also announced plans to establish a coaching institute to prepare law graduates for judicial service examinations and provide continuing education for young lawyers.

The proposed institute is intended to address the lack of specialised coaching facilities for law graduates aspiring to enter the judiciary. The initiatives form part of broader efforts to strengthen legal education and judicial infrastructure in Karnataka.

SWR CLEANLINESS DRIVE

## *SWR observes Swachhata Pakhwada across railway network*

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU




South Western Railway (SWR) observed Swachhata Pakhwada from October 1, 2026, with a series of activities aimed at improving cleanliness, beautification, public awareness and scientific waste management across its jurisdiction.

The campaign focused on cleanliness drives, removal of unauthorised advertisements, awareness programmes and implementation of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026. Activities conducted from October 9 to 18 covered railway stations, schools and other institutions.

SWR identified 397 locations for removing unwanted posters, banners and illegal advertisements. Beautification drives were also conducted.

To discourage spitting and gutka stains, 191 cleaning drives were organised under the "No Red & Yellow Spot" initiative. Anti-spitting messages were also displayed through 57 posters.

Between October 11 and 15, the railway conducted 124 awareness sessions involving 1,885 participants. It also administered 41 pledges on solid waste management and displayed 112 posters to promote cleanliness.

Twenty training sessions on four-stream waste segregation were held for On-Board Housekeeping Services personnel, station-cleaning staff and pantry workers, benefiting 1,823 employees.

All 47 bulk waste generators under SWR were registered. The railway also had two biogas plants, four composting facilities, one Material Recovery Facility and 17 plastic bottle-crushing machines to support waste management.

**In numbers**

| | |
|---|---|
| 397 | LOCATIONS CLEARED OF ILLEGAL ADS |
| 191 | DRIVES AGAINST SPITTING STAINS |
| 124 | AWARENESS SESSIONS |
| 1,823 | STAFF TRAINED IN WASTE SEGREGATION |

Chief Public Relations Officer Dr. Manjunath Kanamadi said the initiatives had aimed to strengthen cleanliness, scientific waste management and public participation across SWR's jurisdiction.

## NHAI resumes work on Kaniminike foot overbridge

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

> "Many of us have witnessed deaths on this stretch, and for the next few days, we would dread crossing it. Seeing the work begin is a big relief."
>
> — Sameer, University student

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has resumed construction of a long-delayed foot overbridge (FOB) at Kaniminike on the Bengaluru–Mysuru Highway following multiple pedestrian deaths and accidents on the stretch.

The black spot, located about 600 metres from the Kaniminike Toll Plaza, has witnessed four pedestrian deaths since January 2025 and more than 10 non-fatal accidents, according to Bengaluru Traffic Police data.

The 100–150-metre stretch is particularly hazardous for students of a private university situated about 100 metres away. More than 1,000 students use the route daily, with several staying in paying guest accommodations across the highway.

In the absence of a foot overbridge, students have been forced to cross the busy highway. Although the toll plaza offers a safer crossing option, pedestrians often avoid it because it requires an additional kilometre of walking.

"Many of us have witnessed deaths on this stretch, and for the next few days, we would dread crossing it. Seeing the work begin is a big relief," said Sameer, a university student.

Construction had begun nearly 22 months ago but remained incomplete for more than six months beyond the expected timeline. The contractor said the structural design had to be modified after property owners raised concerns about the bridge abutting their sites.

The contractor said the substructures had been assembled elsewhere and brought to the site, while work on the superstructure was under way. Land-related issues and rising steel prices had also contributed to the delay.

The contractor assured that construction would be completed within a week and the bridge opened to pedestrians within 10 days, offering safer access across the highway.

Quick Read

## Siblings critical after electric shock in Rajanukunte



**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Two siblings were seriously injured after suffering an electric shock while playing outside their rented house at Addevishwanathapura in Rajanukunte, Bengaluru North taluk, on Sunday. The injured children, Ayaan, five, and Saanvi, 13, are undergoing treatment in the ICU of Victoria Hospital. The incident occurred when Ayaan reportedly touched an overhead electric wire with a metal measuring tape used in construction. His sister suffered a shock when she came out to take him inside. Saanvi reportedly lost her right hand. Their father, Kotreshi, alleged negligence by the house owner and BESCOM officials. Based on his complaint, Rajanukunte police registered a case against house owner Somashekhar and BESCOM officials.

# Karnataka extends ration card e-KYC deadline to November 10

BENEFICIARIES CAN COMPLETE VERIFICATION THROUGH THE ANNA SEVE APP OR AT FAIR-PRICE SHOPS ACROSS KARNATAKA.

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has extended the deadline for ration card beneficiaries to complete e-KYC verification from October 20 to November 10, giving more time to those yet to update their details.

The Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs extended the deadline as a large number of beneficiaries were yet to complete the process.

The department has directed 1,15,87,298 beneficiaries who completed e-KYC more than a year ago to undergo verification again.

The process is also pending for 3,82,362 beneficiaries who have never completed e-KYC and 54,27,396 whose verification was completed more than five years ago.

All eligible beneficiaries must complete the process by November 10 through the Anna Seve mobile application or at fair-price shops using the AHARA software.

The department has warned that further action may be taken under the rules against those who fail to comply.




**1.15 crore**
beneficiaries to verify again

**54.27 lakh**
last verified over five years ago

**3.82 lakh**
never completed e-KYC

### RATION CARD E-KYC

- New deadline: November 10, 2026
- Re-verification required: 1.15 crore beneficiaries
- Never completed e-KYC: 3.82 lakh beneficiaries
- Last verified over five years ago: 54.27 lakh beneficiaries
- Where to complete: Anna Seva app or fair-price shops

### DEADLINE HISTORY

The original deadline for ration card e-KYC was September 30. With many beneficiaries yet to complete verification, the state extended it to October 20 and has now pushed it further to November 10, 2026. Beneficiaries can complete the process through the Anna Seva mobile app or at fair-price shops using AHARA software. Those living outside Karnataka can also use the app, which is available nationwide, to complete verification remotely.

**App facility extended nationwide**

The Anna Seve app is now available across India to help Karnataka ration card holders who have moved to other states for work. They can download the app and complete e-KYC from their current location. An updated version is available on the Google Play Store, and existing users can update the application.

## Siddaramaiah sting: Over 15 questioned, video's origin unclear

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU



Police investigating the alleged sting operation targeting former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah have questioned more than 15 people, but several crucial aspects of the case remain unresolved.

The investigation was initiated after Siddaramaiah lodged a complaint concerning links to a video allegedly recorded as part of a sting operation against him. Investigators are yet to establish the identity of the device used to upload the original video, the source of the links and the location from which the footage was uploaded.

According to reports, investigators have identified the person who recorded the video. However, they have not established where it was uploaded from or whether the upload originated in India using a fake IP address or from another country.

Those featured in the video, along with people suspected of having recorded it, have been questioned and subsequently released. While investigators have established that the footage was recorded in 2022, several questions surrounding its circulation and origin remain unanswered.

The cybercrime police are continuing their investigation to determine how the video was uploaded and circulated, and to identify those responsible.

Meanwhile, former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa alleged that D.K. Shivakumar, now the Chief Minister, had conspired to remove Siddaramaiah from the Chief Minister's post. Speaking in Davanagere, he said the developments had created confusion, while the public was watching the situation.

Industries Minister M.B. Patil described sting operations as a curse for the state and demanded a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe. Speaking in Vijayapura, he called for those responsible to be punished and the person who carried out the operation to be arrested, irrespective of their identity.

The investigation continues, with the origin and circulation of the video remaining central to the case.

## Governor Sudha Yadav performs Kanya Puja

**CH NEWS,**

BENGALURU



Karnataka Governor Dr Sudha Yadav performed Kanya Puja at Lok Bhavan on Sunday as part of the Navaratri celebrations, inviting underprivileged girls from Bengaluru to participate in the traditional ritual.

Girls from the Nagammanagar slum area in Gandhinagar were invited to Lok Bhavan for the ceremony on October 18. Yadav performed the puja rituals and later had lunch with the children.

She distributed school bags, books and stationery to the girls as part of the programme. The event combined the traditional religious observance with an interaction with children from an economically disadvantaged neighbourhood.

Kanya Puja, also known as Kanjak Puja in some regions, is an important ritual during Navaratri. Young girls are worshipped as manifestations of the divine feminine, with families and institutions marking the occasion through prayers, food and gifts.

The ritual is commonly observed on Ashtami or Navami, the eighth and ninth days of Navaratri.

The Governor's participation formed part of the festival celebrations at Lok Bhavan. The girls' visit also provided an opportunity for them to interact with the state's constitutional head in an official setting.

## Karnataka makes night attendance mandatory for government doctors

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has made it mandatory for government doctors to reside at their designated headquarters and record night attendance through the geofencing-based Kartavya app to improve public service delivery.

The first phase will begin on November 1, 2026, covering doctors working at taluk hospitals and primary health centres under the Health and Family Welfare Department.

Doctors must record attendance through the app after 9 pm while physically present within the geographical limits of their designated headquarters.

Employees on sanctioned leave, those performing approved official duties elsewhere and those with prior permission to leave their headquarters will be exempt. Reasons must be recorded in the app.

Commissioners and District Health Officers will review attendance reports monthly. Employees found staying away from their headquarters without permission will face disciplinary action under service rules.

The government took the decision after a Lokayukta inquiry reportedly found that some employees were managing their duties from distant locations, causing inconvenience to the public.

Principal Secretary of the Department of Public Services Harsha Gupta issued the order with the Chief Minister's approval. The system may be extended to other departments based on the pilot programme's results.

## Heavy rain forecast in districts; Bengaluru stays cool

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Several parts of Karnataka are likely to receive rain over the next few days under the influence of a low-pressure system and the northeast monsoon, while Bengaluru continues to experience cloudy skies and intermittent drizzle.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), rainfall is expected across coastal and interior districts, with some areas likely to witness thunderstorms and strong winds.

Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada districts are likely to receive moderate rain accompanied by thunderstorms. In North Interior Karnataka, Belagavi, Dharwad, Gadag and Haveri, along with several other districts, may experience light to moderate rainfall and winds gusting at 30–40 kmph.

**Heavy rain warning:** The weather department has forecast heavy rainfall in Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan and Kodagu districts of South Interior Karnataka. Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural and other districts in the region are also expected to experience continued rainy weather.

Rainfall is likely to persist on Monday across several coastal and South Interior Karnataka districts. Chikkamagaluru, Tumakuru, Davanagere, Vijayanagara, Ballari, Chitradurga and Shivamogga may receive heavy rain accompanied by lightning and strong winds.

Bengaluru and its surrounding districts are expected to receive light to moderate rainfall, according to the forecast.



## CH Observer

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**From illegal garbage dumps near schools and memorial halls in Seshadripuram to hazardous, uncleaned tree debris blocking footpaths in Kumara Park West, frustrated local residents are facing escalating civic neglect. These recurring sanitation and infrastructure failures pose severe health and safety risks, prompting urgent demands for proactive municipal intervention and strict monitoring across the neighborhoods.**

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Garbage is being dumped directly in front of Seenu Transport in Ramakrishnappa Block, right next to A.V. Varadachar Memorial Hall in Seshadripuram (behind Kino Theatre). This recurring littering is creating a major nuisance for locals, who are urging authorities for immediate cleanup and strict monitoring.




Garbage is being illegally dumped right in front of Shalimar Residency on 2nd Main Road in Jai Bheema Nagar, Seshadripuram, directly against a school compound wall. This unhygienic practice poses serious health and safety risks to students and residents, prompting urgent calls for municipal cleanup and strict enforcement.



A felled tree has been left unattended on 1st Main Road in Kumara Park West (Seshadripuram, near Pebbles and right in front of Shreyas Hotel), leaving the pavement damaged and unrepaired. This creates a severe hazard for pedestrians, who are forced onto the busy road, demanding prompt municipal clearance and footpath restoration.

# BCCC Chief leads Wind Tunnel Road cleanup

To overhaul urban sanitation Bengaluru Central Commissioner Jagadish G. led a cleanliness drive on Wind Tunnel Road to eradicate garbage spots.

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

In a major push to overhaul urban sanitation and public hygiene, Bengaluru Central City Corporation Commissioner Jagadish G. personally spearheaded a high-profile cleanliness and beautification drive along the busy Wind Tunnel Road and H.A.L. Road corridors within the C.V. Raman Nagar Division.

Launched under the broader umbrella of the ongoing "Freedom from Waste Campaign," the targeted municipal initiative spans a 700-meter stretch designed to permanently eradicate notorious garbage black spots and transform neglected public spaces. During an intensive site inspection, Commissioner Jagadish G. directed Solid Waste Management officials to deploy rigorous enforcement measures against illegal garbage dumping, ensure continuous waste clearance, and implement preventive mechanisms to protect public land from recurring littering.

Demonstrating hands-on leadership to inspire community participation, the Commissioner personally picked up a paintbrush to coat boundary walls, officially inaugurating the aesthetic rejuvenation phase.

He was joined by Bengaluru East City Corporation Additional Commissioner (Development) Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar, prominent civic activist Arun Pai from the well-known "The Ugly Indian" organization, local volunteers, and municipal sanitation staff. Together, the team worked side by side to scrub walls, paint colorful murals, and spread public awareness regarding community cleanliness.

Beyond waste management, municipal leaders utilized the inspection to address broader regional infrastructure challenges.

Officials held collaborative high-level discussions regarding cross-jurisdictional bottlenecks along the boundaries shared by the Central and East City Corporations. Key agendas included accelerating urgent pothole-filling operations, upgrading deficient street lighting networks, and repairing damaged civic infrastructure to ensure seamless commuter movement.

Concluding the inspection, senior administrators instructed local engineering and sanitation departments to coordinate closely and resolve pending civic grievances immediately. The proactive collaboration between municipal authorities, civic bodies, and grassroots volunteer groups underscores the administration's renewed commitment to building a cleaner, healthier, and more visually appealing urban environment for residents across the city.




**Commissioner's directions**

- → Strict action against illegal garbage dumping
- → Continuous waste clearance on the stretch
- → Preventive steps to protect public land from littering
- → Faster pothole filling and better street lighting on the Central-East boundary

# Lingarajapuram drain work hits local businesses

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Ongoing civic infrastructure work along a major thoroughfare in the capital city has triggered widespread frustration among local merchants, commuters, and nearby residents. Massive excavation efforts associated with a storm-water drain reconstruction project on Lingarajapuram Main Road, heading toward the Hennur flyover, have severely disrupted daily commercial activity and triggered severe traffic gridlock.

Municipal authorities launched the project along a 400-meter stretch to upgrade aging drainage systems, repair uneven road surfaces, and rebuild footpaths. However, contractors have dug trenches nearly two feet deep directly in front of commercial establishments, making physical access nearly impossible for customers. Local business owners report staggering financial losses since the construction began.



**Excavation for a storm-water drain project on Lingarajapuram Main Road has caused traffic gridlock, business losses, tree felling, and severe dust hazards.**

Store owners and food vendors voiced deep concerns over plummeting sales. A local juice vendor stated that his daily earnings have been slashed by more than half because pedestrian customers are afraid to cross the makeshift wooden planks placed over the open trenches. Similarly, automotive repair shops and eateries struggle with heavy dust pollution, stagnant water, and blocked entryways, forcing merchants to spend extra hours cleaning or remaking spoiled goods.

Beyond commercial hardships, the project has also drawn sharp criticism from environmental advocates and neighborhood residents regarding the loss of urban greenery. Locals reported that roughly 10 to 15 century-old trees were cut down to accommodate the excavation work, sparking deep disappointment among community members who value the local canopy. Furthermore, commuters complain that peak-hour traffic congestion has become unbearable due to narrowed roadways and sluggish vehicular movement.

Medical experts have also warned about the health hazards posed by thick airborne dust blankets generated by the machinery. Prolonged exposure to fine particulate matter and construction dust can aggravate chronic respiratory conditions like asthma, bronchitis, and other severe lung ailments, putting pedestrians and shopkeepers at continuous risk.

Addressing the mounting public backlash, senior civic officials defended the necessity of the overhaul, explaining that modernizing the drainage infrastructure is crucial for preventing future flooding and accommodating upcoming utility projects. Municipal engineers estimate that the remaining construction will take approximately one more month to finish, after which the new drainage network and paved footpaths will be fully operational. Local business owners and residents now hope authorities will accelerate the pace of work to restore normalcy to the busy neighborhood as quickly as possible.

# BNCC launches weekly waste management phone-In

*Transforming Bengaluru North's streets, BNCC launches weekly phone-in sessions to tackle neighborhood garbage issues directly with residents.*

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Bengaluru North City Corporation has introduced detailed block-wise micro-plans to overhaul solid waste management across all seven of its divisions. To ensure smooth execution and address local complaints, the corporation is launching a dedicated weekly phone-in session for residents every Tuesday from 7:30 AM to 9:30 AM. Following the initial launch, the next session is set for October 20.

Guided by Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar, the Solid Waste Management Department designed these customized plans to cover every neighborhood's specific needs. The strategy maps out households, shops, population density, waste volumes, auto tipper routes, and cleaning staff assignments. It also targets key facilities such as transfer stations, public markets, parks, commercial hubs, restaurants, and notorious garbage black spots.

The weekly phone-in programme, led by Zonal Joint Commissioners alongside the Deputy General Manager, offers citizens a direct line to report waste-related issues. Residents can share concerns about irregular garbage truck schedules, street cleaning services, local collection systems, or improper waste disposal. Officials emphasize that this line is strictly reserved for solid waste matters to ensure quick resolutions.

In addition, the framework focuses on managing Bulk Waste Generators and streamlining daily door-to-door pickups. The corporation aims to build a cleaner, better-coordinated urban environment by actively involving the public in monitoring neighborhood cleanliness.

Citizens can reach the control room during the Tuesday sessions or throughout the week via WhatsApp at 9480685705 or by calling landline numbers 080-22975936 and 080-23636671. City authorities strongly encourage all residents to use these channels to help maintain clean streets and efficient waste disposal across Bengaluru North.

# ENCROACHMENTS CHOKE SHIVAJINAGAR PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Pedestrians navigating the bustling commercial lanes of Shivajinagar are facing severe safety risks as local shopkeepers, commercial establishments, and vendors aggressively encroach upon public footpaths and roads. Despite mounting public frustration and repeated complaints, municipal enforcement agencies have failed to curb rampant sidewalk occupations, forcing citizens to walk directly alongside moving vehicular traffic.

The crisis is starkly visible across prominent stretches such as Meenakshi Koil Street, OPH Road, and Ibrahim Sahib Street, where permanent shop owners routinely spill their merchandise, display boards, mannequins, and business operations onto public pavements. On Meenakshi Koil Street, where footpaths are already absent on one side, commercial extensions leave virtually no room for pedestrians or vehicles, leading to chaotic bottlenecks. Commuters note that while roadside street vendors are frequently blamed for blocking walkways, permanent storefront owners are the primary culprits in these areas, operating with apparent impunity.

Public frustration has also been directed at institutional encroachments. Residents point out that local religious structures, including the Sri Sugreeva Anjaneya Swamy Sametha Sree Venugopala Swamy Sannidhi on OPH Road, occupy vital pedestrian space. Furthermore, even properties managed by government bodies face defiance; Muzrai Department officials admitted helplessness as tenants of shops attached to the Meenakshi Amman Koil continue to occupy pavements despite repeated official warnings.

**WHERE WALKERS LOSE THE FOOTPATH**

**MEENAKSHI KOIL STREET**
No footpath on one side; shop extensions take the rest

**OPH ROAD**
A religious structure occupies pedestrian space

**IBRAHIM SAHIB STREET**
Merchandise, boards and mannequins on the pavement

**BOWRING HOSPITAL**
Walkway barricaded since a wall collapsed in April

Adding to commuter woes, the pavement alongside Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital remains heavily restricted. Authorities had barricaded sections of the walkway following the collapse of a compound wall back in April. Six months later, reconstruction work remains incomplete, leaving narrow, congested passages vulnerable to vendor takeover.




Local citizens have urged the Bengaluru Central City Corporation and city police to take decisive action. Residents suggest that authorities should relocate roadside vendors into vacant makeshift sheds nearby—which currently sit abandoned and misused as unauthorized parking lots—while strictly compelling merchants to keep their business activities within their physical premises. Until proactive enforcement begins, pedestrians will continue risking their safety on crowded, dangerous roads.

**CLEARING THE PATH AHEAD**

# *Cement debris, slabs peril Kasturba Road*

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Residents and motorists traveling along the prominent Kasturba Road stretch are facing mounting safety risks due to unauthorized construction barriers and uncleaned municipal debris blocking active travel lanes. Local commuters have expressed deep frustration over permanent hazards that squeeze the already narrow thoroughfare near Shantala Nagar, urging immediate civic intervention before a serious accident occurs.

The latest controversy centers near the main entrance of Kingfisher Towers at the Kasturba Road and Shantala Nagar Cross intersection, where a local homeowner has permanently cemented heavy concrete slabs and fixed barriers on both sides of a private gate. Local motorists report that these structural blocks—standing roughly eight to ten inches high—pose a severe hazard, particularly during peak hours when drivers must swerve to accommodate oncoming traffic. Several drivers have narrowly avoided high-impact collisions after discovering that the curbside obstacles are rigidly fixed to the pavement rather than being loose, movable stones.



**RESIDENTS' DEMAND**

**Remove the rigid barriers**

- GBA engineers to inspect the site
- Clear the drain silt and cement debris
- Cones or removable bollards instead of fixed slabs

While residents acknowledge that homeowners frequently struggle with unauthorized daytime vehicle parking blocking residential gates, they strongly criticized the installation of permanent, rigid roadside structures on public right-of-way. Commuters suggested that safer, flexible alternatives—such as temporary traffic cones, removable plastic bollards, or warning signs—could easily prevent parking issues without endangering passing traffic or forcing pedestrians off narrow walkways.

Adding to the commuter nightmare, locals pointed out that uncleared construction material and hardened cement debris left behind by maintenance crews following a stormwater drain desilting operation two months ago continue to litter the roadside. This accumulated rubble further narrows the effective width of the road, forcing pedestrians and two-wheeler riders to navigate dangerous, congested paths, especially after dark when poor lighting obscures the hazards.

Frustrated citizens reported that although local beat police officers inspected the illegal concrete slabs at night and agreed that the permanent barriers violated safety norms, formal complaints submitted to Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officials have faced prolonged bureaucratic delays. Local neighborhood associations have demanded that GBA engineering squads inspect the site immediately, clear the uncleared drain silt, and remove the rigid barriers. When contacted by media representatives, the GBA Assistant Engineer for Ashok Nagar assured the public that the department would examine the formal grievances and rectify the dangerous situation shortly.

Quick Read

## Belagavi bans animal sacrifice during Bishtadevi Fair

**CH NEWS,** BELAGAVI

The Belagavi district administration has banned animal sacrifice during the Kakkari Sri Bishtadevi Fair in Khanapur taluk from Monday to Wednesday, coinciding with Ayudha Puja and Vijayadasami celebrations. The decision follows an application submitted by Sri Dayanand Swamiji, president of the World Animal Welfare Council and the Animal Sacrifice Eradication Awareness Maha Sangha. Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Roshan has directed the concerned officials to take necessary steps to ensure strict implementation of the order, according to an official release. The administration aims to ensure compliance with the ban during the religious festivities.

**BAN IN FORCE MONDAY TO WEDNESDAY**

## Environmental awareness is essential today

**CH NEWS,** BIDAR

Retired professor C.B. Paratapure stressed the need to promote environmental awareness and include agriculture and environmental issues in literary works. He was speaking while inaugurating the Basavakalyana Readers' Club at the Government First Grade College on Sunday. He highlighted the importance of protecting soil fertility and said reading literature, science, technology and environmental studies broadens knowledge and supports personal growth. Lecturer Dr. Bhimashankar Biradar said reading encourages independent thinking, while S.G. Huded urged students to develop rational thinking through quality literature. Several educators attended the programme. Chandrakant Akkanna compered the event.

**CLUB OPENED ON SUNDAY**

## Khandre predicts Namoshi's victory in Council polls

**CH NEWS,** BHALKI

Former MLA Prakash Khandre expressed confidence that BJP candidate Shashil Namoshi would win the North-East Teachers' Constituency Legislative Council election scheduled for October 23. Speaking at a press conference, Khandre predicted that Namoshi would secure 80 per cent of votes from around 1,500 teacher-voters. He praised Namoshi's three consecutive terms, efforts to address teachers' concerns, implementation of Article 371(J) and support for local youth in recruitment. He appealed to teachers to vote for Namoshi. Former BJP district president Shivaraj Gandage and other party leaders attended the press conference.

**POLLING ON OCTOBER 23**

# Shashil Namoshi is a politician of integrity, says Kashempur

Kashempur reported strong NDA campaigning during Dasara, noting that Bidar district has more than 7,000 votes in the constituency

**CH NEWS,** BIDAR

Former minister and senior JD(S) leader Bandeppa Kashempur has described Shashil Namoshi as a politician of integrity and appealed to teachers to ensure his victory in the North-East Teachers' Constituency Legislative Council election.

Speaking at a press conference at the Bidar Press Club on Sunday, Kashempur expressed support for Namoshi, the NDA alliance candidate, who has won the constituency four times.

"Shashil Namoshi is well known to everyone and has accomplished significant work. I appeal to all teachers to unite and ensure his victory by a huge margin," he said.

Kashempur said campaigning was progressing well, with NDA leaders visiting voters' homes during the Dasara holidays. He noted that Bidar district had more than 7,000 votes in the constituency.



At the press conference at the Bidar Press Club.

### Government has neglected education, he alleges

Criticising the Congress government, Kashempur alleged that its focus on guarantee schemes had resulted in the neglect of the Education Department. He pointed to delays in teacher recruitment and other pending educational initiatives.

He recalled that around 500 high schools were established during H.D. Kumaraswamy's tenure as Chief Minister and that the previous government had introduced approximately 1,000 English-medium schools.

### Farmers' distress and election appeal

Kashempur predicted that Congress would lose all four Legislative Council constituencies where elections were underway. He also expressed concern over drought conditions affecting 210 taluks in North Karnataka and the financial difficulties faced by farmers.

**At a glance**

- **Support:** Kashempur backs four-time winner Namoshi
- **Education:** guarantee schemes sidelined it, he says
- **Farmers:** drought in 210 taluks; loan waiver sought
- **Forecast:** Congress to lose all four seats

Questioning the government's borrowing practices, he urged it to consider additional financial assistance for farmers and implement a farm loan waiver similar to those introduced during the tenures of B.S. Yediyurappa and H.D. Kumaraswamy.

Emphasising that many teachers come from farming backgrounds, Kashempur urged them to use their votes to hold the government accountable and support NDA candidates.

# Congress government filling 72,000 vacant posts: Rudrappa Lamani



At the Congress campaign meeting at Gangaparameshwari Community Hall in Hangal.

**CH NEWS,** HANGAL

Minister in-charge of Haveri district Rudrappa Lamani said the Congress government was fulfilling its promises by addressing the concerns of graduates and government employees and initiating recruitment to more than 72,000 vacant posts.

He was speaking at a campaign meeting held at Gangaparameshwari Community Hall in support of Mohan Limbikai, the Congress candidate for the Karnataka West Graduates' Constituency Legislative Council election.

Lamani expressed confidence that Limbikai, a legal expert and lecturer familiar with the problems faced by unemployed graduates, would effectively represent the interests of graduates and teachers. He appealed to voters to unite and ensure the candidate's victory.

MLA and Karnataka Housing Board Chairman Srinivas Mane said Congress members of the Legislative Council actively raised graduates' concerns, unlike BJP representatives. He expressed confidence that Limbikai would become a strong voice for graduates and teachers, following the example of H.K. Patil. Mane also criticised the Centre over the NEET examination, alleging injustice to Karnataka's students.

Congress candidate Mohan Limbikai questioned BJP candidate S.V. Sankanur's claim that his pressure had prompted recruitment to more than 72,000 posts. He asked why Sankanur had not exerted similar pressure when the BJP was in power. Limbikai said graduates were well-informed and capable of making the right choice, and sought an opportunity to work sincerely towards resolving their problems.

District Congress President Sanjeevkumar Neeralagi criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and accused the BJP of mismanagement in the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC). He described Limbikai as a capable leader who could secure justice for graduates and teachers.

Other Congress leaders urged graduates to support Limbikai, highlighting the importance of representation in the Legislative Council.

Several leaders, including Chandrappa Jalagara, Takanagowda Patil, Hanumantappa Maragadi, Khwajamohiddin Jamadar, Veeresh Bailawala, Vasanta Bagur, Ningappa Pujara, Raghavendra Basur, Mahadevappa Bagasara and Yasir Arafat Makanadar, attended the meeting and expressed support for the Congress candidate.

**72,000+**

**vacant posts: recruitment has begun, says Minister Rudrappa Lamani**

# SSK community celebrates Dasara with unity and devotion

**CH NEWS,** GADAG

The SSK community organised 'Nammura Dasara 2026' at Bhaskarsa Pawar Hall in Sahasrarjuna Community Bhavan, Sri Jagadamba Temple, Old Saraf Bazaar, Gadag, celebrating cultural traditions and community unity.

Sharan Patil, founder-president of the Usiru Foundation and former NWKRTC director, said the SSK community was known for its hard work, self-respect, unity and patience. Speaking as chief guest, he prayed for good rainfall, a rich harvest, peace and prosperity, and highlighted the importance of Dasara celebrations.

Another chief guest, Renuka Sharan Patil, praised the community for preserving Hindu culture and traditions. She said women played an important role in managing families and community affairs.

She also urged parents to provide children with quality education and help them become responsible, educated individuals.

Earlier, Gadag MLA Dr. H.K. Patil offered prayers to Goddess Sri Jagadamba and conveyed Dasara greetings. The programme was presided over by Pakirasa Bandage, president of the SSK Samaj Pancha Committee.

Vice-president Raju Badi, honorary secretary Vinod Shidlinga, joint secretary Ravi Shidlinga, Dasara Committee chairman Prakash Bakale and vice-chairman Balarama Basava attended the event. Committee members, Mahila Mandala representatives and other community members were also present.



At 'Nammura Dasara 2026' in Gadag.

**The SSK community is known for its hard work, self-respect, unity and patience**

G.N. Habiba compered the programme, while Rekha Khatavate offered salutations.

# SC throws out poll plea against Beldale

**CH NEWS,** BIDAR

The Supreme Court has dismissed an election petition challenging the election of Dr. Shailendra Beldale, BJP MLA from Bidar South, in the 2023 Karnataka Assembly elections. The verdict, delivered on October 16, marks another legal victory for the MLA after earlier favourable rulings by the High Court and the special court for elected representatives.

The petition was filed by Rajkumar Madaki, an associate of defeated Congress candidate Ashok Kheny. He alleged that Beldale had provided false information in his election affidavit regarding his residence and property ownership in Chittawadi village.

The Karnataka High Court had dismissed the petition on March 7, 2025. Madaki subsequently challenged the order in the Supreme Court. After examining the documents and hearing the arguments, the apex court dismissed the appeal, observing that the petition lacked merit.

Advocates Sanjay Nooli and Gaurisha Khashempura, representing Beldale, argued that the allegations were baseless and politically motivated. They maintained that Beldale was a resident of Chittawadi and owned property there. They also pointed out that the election authorities had verified his nomination documents before accepting his candidature.



Special prayers at the Sri Veerabhadreshwara Temple in Changalera after the verdict.

Beldale had previously contested and won a Zilla Panchayat election. He contested the Assembly elections twice before his successful third attempt in 2023.

High Court advocate Gaurisha Khashempura said: "It has been proven that the petition filed by one Rajkumar Madaki in this case is entirely false. From the outset, the defeated candidate did not file the complaint petition directly; instead, it was submitted through a third party. The High Court, viewing this matter seriously, dismissed the petition. Now, the Supreme Court has also dismissed the petition, upholding the High Court's order."

> **"In a democracy, the mandate of the people is paramount. ... The people themselves will teach such individuals a fitting lesson."**
>
> — **Dr. Shailendra Beldale,** MLA, Bidar South

### 'A victory for truth'

Following the verdict, Beldale offered special prayers at the Sri Veerabhadreshwara Temple in Changalera on Sunday, coinciding with Durgashtami during Navaratri.

Expressing happiness over the Supreme Court's decision, he described the verdict as a victory for the people of his constituency and for the truth.

Beldale alleged that his political opponents had filed the petition to harass him mentally and divert his attention from constituency-related work by forcing him to attend court proceedings.

He said he had full faith in the judiciary and welcomed the dismissal of the petition, concluding with the words, "Satyameva Jayate" (Truth alone triumphs).

# Seers seek an alcohol-free Karnataka

**CH NEWS,** CHITRADURGA

Dr. Panditaradhya Shivacharya Swamiji of Sanehalli Taralabalu Matha has called for a collective movement to make Karnataka alcohol-free, stating that Sarvodaya, or universal welfare, is possible only in a society free from alcohol addiction.

He was speaking at a round-table consultation on "Alcohol Control for Sarvodaya," organised at Murugha Rajendra Brihanmatha in Chitradurga as part of the Sharana Samskruti Utsava, in collaboration with the Karnataka State Temperance Board.

The consultation brought together religious leaders, heads of monasteries, social activists and intellectuals to discuss measures to control alcohol consumption and protect families from its harmful effects.

Dr. Panditaradhya Shivacharya Swamiji expressed concern over the growing impact of alcohol addiction across society and said a delegation of religious leaders and members of the public would soon meet the Chief Minister to press for appropriate action.

Dr. Tontada Siddarama Mahaswamiji stressed the need to prohibit liquor shops in villages, while Guru Mahanta Mahaswamiji called for empowering Gram Panchayats to take binding decisions against liquor sales within their jurisdictions.



Seers at the round-table consultation on alcohol control in Chitradurga.

Other religious leaders, including Nishchalanandanatha Mahaswamiji and Immidi Siddarameshwara Swamiji, urged the government to prioritise public welfare over excise revenue. They also called for awareness campaigns and collective efforts involving women, community organisations and religious institutions.

Karnataka State Temperance Board Chairman Sharanappa Saladapura said voluntary abstinence through awareness was essential for lasting change. He cited more than 13 villages in Koppal district that had initiated efforts to become free from alcohol and other addictions.

The consultation adopted several resolutions, including phased prohibition, strict enforcement of excise laws, addiction-awareness programmes in educational institutions, affordable rehabilitation facilities and the formation of addiction-free village committees. Religious institutions were also urged to counsel devotees and oppose alcohol consumption at social and religious functions.

Participants called for coordinated action by the government and civil society to build a healthier, peaceful and alcohol-free Karnataka.

**Resolutions adopted**

1. Phased prohibition
2. Strict excise enforcement
3. Awareness drives in educational institutions
4. Affordable rehabilitation
5. Addiction-free village committees

SOCIAL HARMONY

# *Lakkundi temple holds mass Seemanta ceremony for 16 women*

**MALINGARAYA PUJAR,** LAKKUNDI

A mass Seemanta ceremony was organised for 16 pregnant women at the Durga Devi temple in historic Lakkundi village of Gadag district on the sixth day of the 26th annual Devi Purana Mahotsav during Navaratri.

Organised by the Durga Devi Seva Samiti, the programme promoted social harmony and unity among villagers. People from different castes and communities participated in the ceremony, making it a special occasion for the village.



The women at the mass Seemanta ceremony at the Durga Devi temple in Lakkundi.

### Traditional rituals mark the ceremony

The 16 pregnant women wore green sarees, blouses, green bangles and flower garlands. Elders applied saffron tilak and performed aarti as part of the traditional rituals. The women were also presented with betel leaves, areca nuts, turmeric cones and coconut bowls during the ceremony.

> *People from different castes and communities took part in the ceremony*

The event brought together villagers and elders, who witnessed the traditional celebrations and took part in the programme.

### Traditional North Karnataka feast

A special meal featuring traditional North Karnataka dishes was served to the pregnant women and other attendees. The menu included holige with ghee, fried chillies, sandige, happala, different varieties of chutney, khara, brinjal palya, kalu palya and rice.

### Donors and organisations support event

Mahantesh Kumbara donated green sarees to the 16 women, while members of the Mallikarjuna Multipurpose Women's Association contributed other items required for the ceremony. The temple committee felicitated Mahantesh Kumbara and his wife for their support.

Religious and cultural programmes were also held. Virupakshayya Shastri Hiremath delivered a Purana discourse, Manappa Badigera recited Puranas, and Manjunatha Garjappa presented a musical programme.

Members of the Durga Devi Seva Samiti, local Anganwadi workers and villagers attended the event and contributed to its success. The ceremony highlighted the values of devotion, equality and community support during Navaratri.

Quick Read

## NSS camp collects 10 quintals of plastic waste in Kapu

**CH NEWS,** KAPU

The National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of Government Pre-University College, Kapu, collected and disposed of approximately 10 quintals of plastic waste from Kapu Beach and its surrounding areas during its seven-day annual special camp. The camp, held at Mahadevi High School, was inaugurated by Kapu MLA Gurme Suresh Shetty. Around 50 students participated under the leadership of camp officer Parameshwara M. Mogaveera. Various programmes on personality development, yoga, legal awareness and environmental protection were organised. Former minister Vinay Kumar Sorake delivered the valedictory address. College principal Nagaraja, lecturers, local representatives and camp participants attended the programme.

## Appeal to minister to resolve delays in Waqf institutions

**CH NEWS,** UDUPI

M.P. Moyidinabba, former vice-president of the Udupi District Waqf Advisory Committee, has urged Waqf Minister U.T. Khader to address administrative delays affecting registered Waqf institutions in the district. He said proposals seeking approval for administrative committees of mosques and dargahs, along with institutional bylaws, had remained pending at the Karnataka State Waqf Board's central office for years. Delays in releasing sanctioned grants have further affected these institutions. Moyidinabba also highlighted the long-standing vacancy in the district Waqf Officer's post, urging the minister to appoint a full-time officer to resolve these issues.

## Workshop for skill training institutions on Oct 22

**CH NEWS,** MANGALURU

An information workshop for skill training institutions will be held on October 22 at 11 a.m. under the Chief Minister's Kaushalya Karnataka Yojana 2.0. The initiative aims to promote apprenticeship training in Dakshina Kannada district, prepare employers and strengthen the implementation of the scheme. The workshop will take place at the District Skill Development Office in the Urwa Market building, Mangaluru. Representatives of skill training institutions interested in providing training across various job roles have been invited to participate. The District Skill Development Officer urged interested institutions to attend and contribute to effective planning and implementation of the programme.

# HDK to raise cane farmers' demands with Centre

Kumaraswamy noted North Karnataka farmers' protests for better prices and said the Centre would decide after an expert committee's report

**CH NEWS,** HASSAN

Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy on Sunday said he would discuss the demands of Karnataka's sugarcane farmers with Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi.

Speaking to reporters in Hassan, Kumaraswamy said farmers, particularly in North Karnataka, were protesting for better prices and financial assistance. He said the Centre would take a decision after receiving the report of an expert committee examining their demands.

Farmers have sought an additional ₹1,000 per tonne of sugarcane from the Karnataka government. Kumaraswamy appealed to them to remain peaceful and urged the state government to provide financial support.

He said the Chief Minister had promised to discuss the issue with farmer leaders and sugar factory owners after Vijayadashami. Kumaraswamy urged farmers to wait for the promised decision.

Recalling his tenure as Chief Minister in 2006–07, he said his government had provided ₹25,000 per hectare in assistance to sugarcane farmers, with ₹248 crore released at the time. He said farmers were now seeking ₹50,000 per hectare due to declining yields and drought conditions.

Kumaraswamy said the state government should support farmers, considering Karnataka's increased budget and



the difficulties faced by agricultural communities.

In a separate allegation, Kumaraswamy accused Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar of conspiring to take over the NICE infrastructure project. He also alleged irregularities in the project and questioned toll collection and land ownership.

Kumaraswamy said his party would continue raising issues affecting farmers and the public, regardless of its strength in the legislature.

MLAs A. Manju and Swaroop Prakash, along with other JD(S) leaders, attended the press conference.

**₹50,000**
**per hectare now sought by farmers, against the ₹25,000 his government gave in 2006-07**

# Hospet farmers march for sugar factory

**CH NEWS,** HOSPET

Hundreds of farmers staged a march from Madakari Circle to the residence of Hospet MLA Gaviyappa in Vijayanagara district, demanding the establishment of a sugar factory in the region.

The protest aims to draw the state government's attention to the long-pending demand and fulfilment of promises made to sugarcane growers.

The agitation comes amid ongoing protests by farmers demanding better prices for sugarcane, including a padayatra from Belagavi to Hubballi. In Hospet, farmers have intensified their campaign for a local sugar factory, saying the absence of one has increased transportation costs and financial pressure on growers.

Farmers said former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and MLA Gaviyappa had promised to establish a sugar factory during the elections. However, they expressed disappointment that even after three years, the foundation-stone ceremony, or bhoomi pujan, had not taken place.

According to the protesters, farmers in and around Hospet produce approximately five to six lakh tonnes of sugarcane annually. In the absence of a nearby factory, they are forced to transport their produce to distant sugar mills, including Mylara Sugars, Duggathi and Gangapur factories in Mundargi taluk.

The long-distance transportation adds to cultivation expenses and reduces farmers' returns. They believe that establishing a sugar factory in Hospet would benefit thousands of sugarcane growers by reducing transportation costs and providing easier access to processing facilities.

Demanding immediate action, farmers have urged the government to initiate the process of setting up the proposed factory and conduct the bhoomi pujan without further delay.

Meanwhile, more than 35 organisations have reportedly launched a hunger strike in front of MLA Gaviyappa's residence to press for the demand. Hundreds of protesters were marching from Madakari Circle towards the MLA's house as part of the agitation.

The farmers have called on elected representatives and the state government to honour their commitments and take concrete steps to address the concerns of sugarcane growers in the region.



**5-6 lakh** tonnes of cane grown a year around Hospet

**35+** organisations on hunger strike

**3** years since the poll promise

## 'Yakshagana benefits language, health and future prospects'

**CH NEWS,** UDUPI

Yakshagana is a unique art form that combines dance, elaborate costumes, music and dialogue, offering significant benefits for physical and mental health, Kannada language skills and future career opportunities, said former Yakshagana Academy president M.L. Samaga.

He was speaking after inaugurating the 'Yakshapatha – Chinnara Yaksha Hejje' children's Yakshagana training camp at Kodavuru Viprashri Kalabhavana in Udupi. The camp was organised as part of the silver jubilee celebrations of the Sumanasa Kodavuru organisation, in collaboration with the Department of Kannada and Culture, in memory of the late Jayanth Kumar Tonse, a versatile personality associated with the Yakshagana stage.

*Practising Yakshagana helps children develop clear, fluent and expressive Kannada speaking skills*

Samaga said Yakshagana troupes perform across the world, and learning the traditional art could open up opportunities even abroad. He added that practising Yakshagana helps children develop clear, fluent and expressive Kannada speaking skills while improving their physical fitness and mental abilities.

Encouraging students to pursue the art with dedication, he advised them to practise lessons from previous sessions independently and seek guidance from their teachers whenever they faced difficulties.

He noted that learning Yakshagana also introduces children to a wide range of traditional stories, helping them develop cultural awareness and an appreciation of their heritage.

Samaga cautioned students against treating a single performance or photographs as the completion of their learning. Instead, he urged them to continue practising consistently and observe other performers to improve their skills.

Camp instructor Shailesh Teerthahalli, Sumanasa Kodavuru president Prakash G. Kodavoor, honorary president M.S. Bhat, convener Bhaskar Palan, camp coordinator Akshath Amin and secretary Chandrakanth Kundar attended the programme.

AWARD-WINNING CURIOSITY

## *Two Gadag students reach national science exhibition*

**MALINGARAYA PUJAR**
**CH NEWS**

Two talented Class 9 students from PM Shri Government Model Higher Primary School No. 12 in S. M. Krishna Nagar, Gadag, have brought pride to the district by being selected to represent Karnataka at the national-level exhibition of the INSPIRE Awards-MANAK competition.

Akash Patil and Daval Saab earned national recognition for their innovative science models addressing food safety and road safety. Guided by their science teacher, Manjunath Huilagol, the students developed practical, socially beneficial ideas despite the limited facilities available to them.

Akash Patil's School Zone Safety Model

Akash Patil developed the School Zone Automatic Speed Breaker, an innovative system designed to prevent accidents near schools. Sensors installed on the road detect children or pedestrians attempting to cross. The system then activates a red signal for approaching motorists and automatically raises a speed breaker to slow down vehicles. Once pedestrians have crossed safely and movement is no longer detected, the speed breaker returns to its normal position.

The model aims to improve road safety and protect schoolchildren from speeding vehicles.

Daval Saab's Food Safety Innovation

Daval Saab designed the Mid-Day Meal Safety Check for School, a system intended to improve the safety of meals served to students. Special sensors detect methane gas that may be released by spoiled food ingredients, including vegetables, fruits and grains. The machine then generates a warning, helping staff identify potentially unsafe ingredients before they are used in cooking.



The innovation seeks to reduce the risk of food contamination and protect children's health.

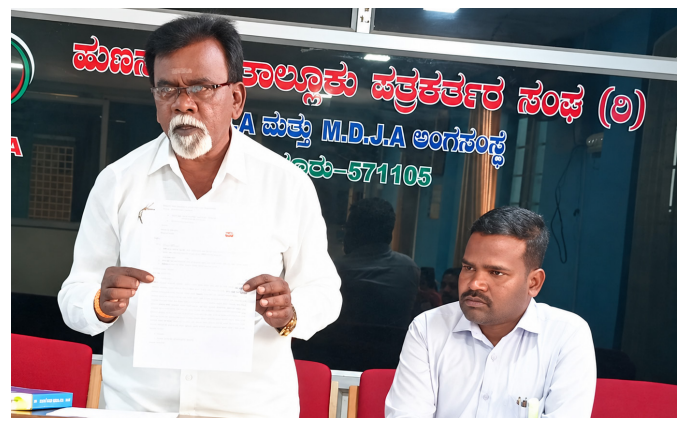
National Recognition for Young Innovators

The INSPIRE Awards-MANAK programme, jointly organised by the Union Department of Science and Technology and the National Innovation Foundation, encourages scientific creativity and innovation among school students across India.

After successfully progressing through the selection stages, the two students participated in the national-level exhibition in Delhi on the 12th, 13th and 14th.

Their achievement sparked celebrations at the school, where the principal, teachers and residents of S. M. Krishna Nagar congratulated and felicitated them. Their success demonstrates the remarkable scientific potential of students in government schools and serves as an inspiration to young innovators across Karnataka.

# Hunsur civic body faces ₹4.70 crore loss allegations



**CH NEWS,** HUNSUR

Intek Raju, president of the Mysore District Right to Information and Human Rights Protection Forum, has alleged that Hunsur City Municipal Council Commissioner Manasa caused a loss of ₹4.70 crore to the government by failing to collect required charges from 60 layouts. He has demanded action against her within 15 days.

Speaking at a press conference at Journalists' Bhavan, Raju alleged irregularities during Manasa's four-year tenure as commissioner. He claimed that the municipal council accepted layouts without collecting the required handover and pro-rata charges from developers.

Raju also alleged that services, including e-Swathu property records and khata transfers, were provided to these layouts despite the pending payments.

Citing a five-acre, 18-gunta layout belonging to Shantilal Jain, he said the Executive Engineer had directed on February 23, 2022, that approval and a No Objection Certificate be obtained only after paying ₹16 lakh to the municipal council.

However, Raju alleged that on November 24, 2022, Manasa accepted the layout without collecting the prescribed charges after obtaining an undertaking from its owners. He claimed that similar cases involving 60 layouts resulted in an estimated loss of ₹4.70 crore.

Raju said a complaint was submitted to the Development Department Secretary on July 21, 2026, but no action had been taken. He warned that the organisation would file a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) if the government failed to act within 15 days.

Meanwhile, the organisation's general secretary, Satish, raised concerns over delays in providing information under the Right to Information (RTI) Act about rent collected from a cinema hall owned by the municipal council.

He said the matter had reached the Information Commission, which had reprimanded municipal officials. A final order is expected in November.

**The allegation**

| | |
|---|---|
| LOSS | ₹4.70 crore across 60 layouts |
| UNPAID | Handover and pro-rata charges |
| FILED | July 21, with the Development Department Secretary |
| DEADLINE | 15 days, or a PIL |

# Karnataka introduces new rules to improve public services

**CH NEWS,** KARWAR

**Rejected applications will qualify for automatic fee refunds**

The Karnataka government has introduced new rules to make public services faster, more transparent and accessible to citizens. The measures cover online government services, Right to Information (RTI) applications, employee attendance, service deadlines and penalties for delays.

Approved by the Chief Minister, the measures follow recommendations of the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2. Principal Secretary Harsha Gupta said departments must follow the new rules and regularly submit compliance reports.

Under the revised guidelines, government licences and certificates will be brought online and integrated with the Karnataka Sakala Services Act. Digital payments, Aadhaar or mobile verification, DigiLocker certificates and SMS and WhatsApp updates will help citizens track applications. Forms currently available only in English must also be provided in Kannada. Rejected applications will qualify for automatic fee refunds.

Government offices must provide seating and drinking water, introduce token systems and allow appointments for meetings with officials. Mobile applications will be used to improve transparency during field inspections.

**Time limits**

- **RTI upload:** within two working days of receipt
- **First appeal:** resolved within seven working days
- **Employee services:** deadlines of three to 90 working days
- **Delays:** officials may pay citizens up to ₹1,500
- **False complaints:** a fine of ₹1,500 per application

### RTI applications registered in two days

Physical RTI applications received by post or in person must be uploaded to the online portal within two working days. The service has been brought under the Sakala framework, allowing applicants to track their applications online and seek relief in case of delays.

Online RTI services will also be available at Bangalore One, Karnataka One and Gram One centres. First appeals must be resolved within seven working days, while second appeals will follow the prescribed timeline.

### Time limits and penalties

Several employee services, including salary certificates, leave approvals, medical reimbursements, pension-related work and official permissions, have been brought under Sakala with prescribed deadlines ranging from three to 90 working days.

Under the 2026 amendment, officials responsible for delays may face compensation payments of up to ₹1,500 to affected citizens. Officials may also be penalised for deficient services or wrongful rejection of applications. Citizens found to have filed malicious complaints may face a fine of ₹1,500 per application after being given an opportunity to explain their case.

The government said the measures aim to reduce delays, improve accountability and ensure citizens receive public services within fixed timelines.

Quick Read

## India's services trade surplus faces pressure as imports rise

**NEW DELHI**

India's services trade surplus is facing pressure as imports grow faster than exports, potentially weakening its role in offsetting the country's merchandise trade deficit, according to an ICICI Bank research report. Net services exports fell 10 per cent year-on-year to USD 16.9 billion in September 2026. Gross services exports declined 0.9 per cent to around USD 36 billion, while imports rose 8.9 per cent to approximately USD 19 billion. However, net services exports grew 4 per cent to USD 103 billion during April-September 2026, indicating continued support for India's external trade position.



## Markets eye Q2 results, FII flows after strong weekly rally

**MUMBAI**

Indian stock markets are expected to take direction from September-quarter earnings, foreign institutional investor (FII) flows, global bond yields and crude oil prices in the coming week. Investors will assess whether the recent recovery can continue after a strong weekly rally.

The Nifty gained 2.77 per cent during the week, while the Sensex rose 3.11 per cent.

Crude oil prices and geopolitical developments could add to market volatility.

## JLR India expands retail network across Delhi, Gurugram

**NEW DELHI**

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) India is expanding its retail presence in the National Capital Region by relocating to a larger integrated facility in Delhi and opening a new outlet in Gurugram. The Tata Group-owned luxury carmaker sees the region as a key growth market. JLR India Managing Director Rajan Amba said the expansion would strengthen the company's retail network and improve customer services. He said Delhi remained an important market for the company, adding that the new integrated facility reflected its focus on providing world-class retail and after-sales services in key growth markets.

## NCLAT revives Walchandnagar insolvency appeal against Swaraj India

**NEW DELHI**

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has restored Walchandnagar Industries' appeal against the dismissal of its insolvency petition against Swaraj India Agro and issued a notice. The move follows a July 28 Supreme Court order that set aside the earlier dismissal and restored the appeal, subject to payment of Rs 2 lakh. On May 11, NCLAT had rejected Walchandnagar's appeal, refusing to excuse a 193-day delay in refiling it. The tribunal said the company had failed to provide sufficient reasons for the delay.

# 'AI can improve healthcare access and clinical decisions'

Krishnan urged integrating AI education across disciplines, combining technology and medical research to solve healthcare challenges

**NEW DELHI**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) can make healthcare more accessible, affordable and effective by improving disease screening, medical diagnosis, remote intensive care monitoring and surgical planning, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Secretary S. Krishnan said on Sunday.

He was speaking at the Tech Conclave on "AI for Health and Assistive Technologies" in Varanasi. The event was jointly organised by Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) and the Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE), IIT BHU.

The conclave brought together policymakers, academics, healthcare professionals and startup founders to discuss how AI can improve healthcare services, accessibility and public well-being.

In his keynote address, Krishnan stressed the need to include AI education across various fields. He said combining technology, medical sciences and research could help develop practical solutions to the challenges of healthcare.

He also called for stronger cooperation among IIT BHU, STPI, industries and startups to develop healthcare and assistive technology solutions that can benefit more people.

Krishnan highlighted support available through the IndiaAI Mission and other government initiatives to encourage innovation. He also pointed to STPI's role in connecting startups with investors, venture capital networks and market opportunities.

STPI Director General Arvind Kumar said India could build on its success in IT services by promoting homegrown AI innovation and entrepreneurship.



S. Krishnan
Secretary, MeitY

He noted that the startup ecosystem had helped young innovators become job creators. He also stressed the importance of research, intellectual property development and market access.

Kumar highlighted STPI's network of 27 Centres of Entrepreneurship and called for stronger cooperation among educational institutions, industries and the government to support startups beyond major technology hubs.

The discussions highlighted the growing role of AI in developing practical healthcare solutions and expanding access to medical services across India.

**SNAPSHOT FROM THE CONCLAVE**

- **AI** for disease screening, diagnosis, remote ICU monitoring and surgical planning
- **Education:** AI across disciplines, with medical research
- **Support:** the IndiaAI Mission and STPI's 27 Centres of Entrepreneurship

# K.V. Subramanian questions Pakistan's global financial leadership claim

**NEW DELHI**

Former Indian executive director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Krishnamurthy V. Subramanian, on Sunday rejected Pakistan's claim of returning to global financial leadership, saying the chairmanship of the IMF and World Bank Boards of Governors was ceremonial and rotated annually among member countries.

In a post on social media platform X, Subramanian said the position was a matter of protocol rather than power.

Pakistan has been named the incoming chair of the Boards of Governors of the IMF and the World Bank Group for 2027. The country will hold the position for the first time since 1953, according to its Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Pakistan's Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Khan Cheema, who also serves as the country's governor to the World Bank, was formally announced as the incoming chair during the 2026 annual meetings in Bangkok.

The Pakistani ministry described the development as a historic milestone, saying it would offer the country an opportunity to contribute to global economic and development discussions.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

The chair of the IMF and World Bank Boards of Governors rotates every year among member countries. Pakistan holds it in 2027, for the first time since 1953.

Meanwhile, Pakistan continues to depend on financial assistance from the IMF to address economic challenges. The country is currently engaged with the institution under a USD 7 billion Extended Fund Facility and a USD 1.4 billion Resilience and Sustainability Facility.

Pakistan is also expected to receive around USD 1.2 billion, subject to approval by the IMF Executive Board, following an agreement between IMF staff and Pakistani authorities on the latest programme reviews.

# India-EFTA pact lifts Norwegian investment prospects

**NEW DELHI**

India's economic growth and the implementation of the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) are creating new opportunities for Norwegian investors across several key sectors, including manufacturing, renewable energy, infrastructure, financial services and the digital economy, according to industry experts.

An EY India report projects that India's economy will grow by around 6.5 per cent annually through 2030. The country is also expected to become the world's third-largest economy by the end of the decade. Strong domestic consumption, rising investments, infrastructure development and business-friendly reforms are supporting this growth.

The India-EFTA agreement came into effect in October 2025 and marks an important step in strengthening economic relations between India and Norway. It aims to promote trade, encourage investments and improve cooperation in innovation, sustainability and advanced technologies. The agreement includes investment commitments worth $100 billion over 15 years and is expected to help create one million direct jobs in India.



Industry experts believe the agreement will help Norwegian companies expand their operations in India. Norway's expertise in technology, sustainable solutions and capital-intensive industries could complement India's large market and its growing economic ambitions. Manufacturing, renewable energy, oil and gas, maritime services, seafood processing, information and communication technology, fintech and financial services have been identified as important areas for cooperation between the two countries.

# Delhi protests put daily business worth Rs 400 crore at risk

**NEW DELHI**

Protests in Delhi could put business transactions worth over Rs 400 crore at risk every day, with the total exposure potentially reaching Rs 4,000 crore over ten days if disruptions continue, Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal said on Sunday.

Khandelwal expressed concern that traffic problems, transport delays, reduced customer movement and limited market access could affect business activities, especially during the important festive and wedding season.

He clarified that the figures were estimates of business activity at risk and did not represent verified actual losses.

According to Khandelwal, Delhi's average daily business turnover is around Rs 2,200 crore. A 10 per cent decline in business activity could put transactions worth Rs 220 crore at risk daily. A 15 per cent decline could raise the figure to Rs 330 crore, while a 20 per cent fall could put Rs 440 crore at risk each day.

| Rs 220cr | Rs 330cr | Rs 440cr |
|---|---|---|
| at risk a day if trade falls 10% | if it falls 15% | if it falls 20% |

If disruptions continue at the higher end of these estimates, the total business exposure could approach Rs 4,000 crore over ten days.

Khandelwal said the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. However, traders must also be able to run their businesses and earn their livelihoods without unnecessary disruptions.

He noted that Delhi is a major centre for wholesale distribution, retail trade and commercial activity, connecting manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers across India. Prolonged disruptions could therefore affect supply chains, transactions and livelihoods beyond the capital.

Khandelwal stressed that the right to protest and the right to trade were both important in a democracy. He called for a responsible approach that respects democratic expression, the rule of law, economic activity and the livelihoods of millions of people.

# Economist says India's growth deserves recognition

**NEW DELHI**

India's economic progress over the past decade deserves recognition, with steady growth and improving economic strength offering reasons for optimism, economist Kyunghoon Kim said on Sunday.

In a post on social media platform X, Kim said India continued to face several challenges, but its economic progress and positive medium-term growth outlook were important achievements for a country of 1.4 billion people.

His remarks came a day after he highlighted that major global institutions, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and World Bank, had raised their growth forecasts for India to above 7 per cent for the current year and the next.

*India's 7.83% average growth in 2021-2025 is the second-highest five-year average since 1960*

Kim said India's economy had shown strong resilience since the Covid-19 pandemic. After contracting by 5.8 per cent during the pandemic, the economy grew by 9.7 per cent in 2021 and recorded growth of more than 7 per cent in each of the following four years.

He added that economists, including himself, had repeatedly revised their forecasts upwards as quarterly gross domestic product (GDP) figures exceeded expectations.

India recorded five consecutive years of growth above 7 per cent, matching its performance between 2003 and 2007, when it emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing major economies.

Kim also noted that India's average annual growth rate stood at 7.83 per cent between 2021 and 2025, the second-highest five-year average since 1960. This was slightly below the 7.89 per cent recorded between 2003 and 2007.

He said India's economy had changed significantly over two decades, with its GDP rising from just over $1 trillion in 2007 to nearly $4 trillion, making similar growth rates translate into much larger economic expansion.

# State-run oil firms sell diesel with biodiesel blends

**NEW DELHI**

State-owned oil marketing companies are selling diesel blended with up to 5 per cent biodiesel at selected retail outlets, as tensions in West Asia push international fuel prices higher.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) are supplying blended diesel in certain locations, an industry executive said. The biodiesel content ranges from 0.5 per cent to 5 per cent, depending on availability.

India's National Policy on Biofuels, released in 2018 and amended in 2022, set a target of 5 per cent biodiesel blending in diesel by 2030. However, the IOC website reported average biodiesel blending of 0.57 per cent, based on procurement during April 2024 to February 2025.

A survey of fuel stations in Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh found that outlets did not publicly display the biodiesel content. Some dealers, however, showed invoices mentioning B2 and B5 diesel blends.

Uttar Pradesh-based dealer Hemant Sirohi questioned how retailers could independently verify blending levels when the process takes place upstream at supply facilities.

Industry experts said biodiesel blends of B5 or lower were likely to have minimal impact on diesel engine performance. However, some dealers raised concerns about the actual blending levels and the source of the biodiesel.

**At a glance**

- **Blending:** up to 5% at select outlets
- **Prices:** state-run firms hold rates despite costlier crude
- **Target:** 5% biodiesel in diesel by 2030
- **Contrast:** private retailers have raised prices

Meanwhile, state-run oil companies continue to hold petrol and diesel prices despite rising crude oil costs. India imports more than 88 per cent of the crude oil it processes, increasing its exposure to international price changes.

Private fuel retailers have recently raised petrol and diesel prices, while public-sector companies have continued to maintain their rates.

CRUDE TRADE

# *India's Russian oil imports fall as prices rise*

**NEW DELHI**

India's imports of Russian crude oil fell 13 per cent in September, the second monthly decline in a row and the lowest level since April.

Rising prices linked to the Middle East conflict and disruptions to key shipping routes contributed to the fall, according to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

Imports at Reliance's Jamnagar refinery dropped 27 per cent, while Indian Oil Corporation's Paradip refinery saw a 21 per cent decline.

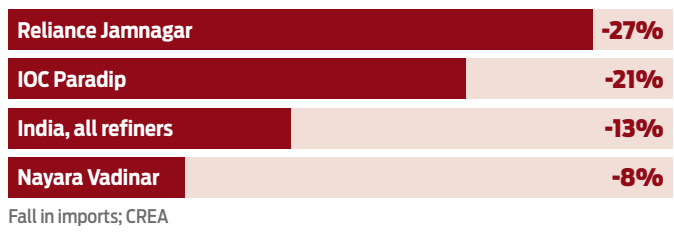
Despite the decline, India remained Russia's second-largest buyer of fossil fuels in September, purchasing Russian hydrocarbons worth 4.1 billion euros. Crude oil accounted for 88 per cent of these imports. China remained the largest buyer. Since December 2022, India has received 37 per cent of Russia's crude exports, compared with China's 50 per cent.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump issued an executive order waiving several sanctions and tariffs linked to Russian oil exports. He said the decision was in the national interest of the United States, allowing India and China to continue importing Russian oil at current levels.

Russia's Urals crude price rose 32 per cent in September to USD 90.7 per barrel, its highest monthly average since April. The price was more than double the European Union and United Kingdom price cap of USD 44.1 per barrel.

CREA estimated that higher oil and gas prices increased Russia's seaborne export earnings by USD 35.9 billion over six months following the US-Israel strikes on Iran, highlighting the conflict's impact on global energy markets.

**Russian crude imports, September**




Fall in imports; CREA

# WALKING IS GOOD, BUT IS IT ENOUGH?



DR. VIJAY GARG

Walking is one of the simplest and most accessible forms of physical activity. It requires no expensive equipment, special training or complicated instructions. A pair of comfortable shoes and a little time can turn an ordinary journey into an opportunity for movement. Regular walking can support cardiovascular health, mobility, mood and general well-being.

But an important question remains: Is walking alone enough to provide complete physical fitness?

The answer depends on what we mean by "enough." Walking can be an excellent foundation for an active lifestyle, but complete fitness involves more than simply accumulating steps.

### Walking has many benefits

Walking regularly can help people remain physically active and reduce the amount of time spent sitting. Brisk walking increases the heart rate and can contribute to cardiovascular fitness. It also engages the muscles of the legs and improves everyday mobility. For many people, walking is a practical way to begin exercising. Someone who has been inactive may find a daily walk much easier to maintain than an intense workout. Consistency matters, and an activity that people enjoy and can perform regularly is more likely to become a lasting habit. Walking outdoors can also provide psychological benefits. Exposure to natural surroundings, daylight and a change from routine may help people feel refreshed and mentally relaxed.

### But fitness has several dimensions

Human fitness is not a single quality. It includes cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, balance, coordination and the ability to perform everyday activities efficiently. Walking primarily challenges the cardiovascular system and the muscles involved in locomotion. However, it may not provide sufficient training for every aspect of physical fitness. For example, a person may walk several kilometres every day but still have relatively weak upper-body muscles. Another person may have good walking endurance but limited flexibility or balance. This is why a broader exercise routine can be useful.

> **"A daily walk can open the door to better health. The next step is to keep moving through that door."**
>
> **— Dr. Vijay Garg**

### The importance of strength

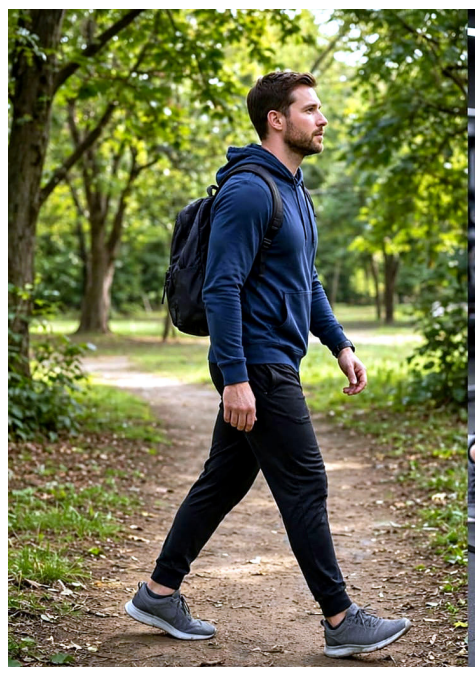
As people grow older, maintaining muscle strength becomes increasingly important. Muscle helps us climb stairs, rise from a chair, carry groceries, maintain posture and perform countless daily activities. Walking strengthens the legs to some extent, particularly when performed briskly or on inclines, but it does not fully replace resistance exercise. Simple strength exercises such as squats or chair stands, wall push-ups, resistance-band exercises and appropriately selected weight exercises can complement walking. Strength training does not necessarily mean lifting heavy weights. The objective is to challenge the muscles progressively and safely.

### What about balance and flexibility?

Balance becomes particularly important with advancing age. Good balance can help people move confidently and may reduce the risk associated with falls. Walking involves balance, but ordinary walking on a flat surface does not challenge all aspects of balance. Appropriate balance exercises can therefore provide additional benefits. Flexibility is another component of physical fitness. Regular movement through a comfortable range of motion can help maintain mobility. Gentle stretching and mobility exercises may complement a walking routine.

### Intensity matters too

Not every walk provides the same physiological stimulus. A slow stroll and a brisk walk are both forms of physical activity, but they place different demands on the body. Increasing pace, walking uphill or incorporating varied terrain can make walking more challenging. However, exercise intensity should be appropriate for an individual's age, fitness level and health circumstances. More intense exercise is not automatically better for everyone. The important principle is progressive and sustainable activity.





### Sitting less also matters

A common mistake is to think that a daily walk completely compensates for spending the rest of the day sitting. Someone may walk for thirty minutes in the morning and then remain seated for many hours at work or at home. Regular movement throughout the day is therefore valuable. Standing up periodically, walking during breaks, using stairs when appropriate and performing routine household activities can all contribute to a more active lifestyle. Fitness is not created only during a formal exercise session. It is also influenced by what we do during the other hours of the day.

### Walking can be the foundation, not the finish line

For someone who currently does little physical activity, walking may be an excellent starting point. The goal does not have to be an ambitious exercise programme from the first day. A person might begin with comfortable walks, gradually increase duration or pace and eventually add strength, mobility and balance exercises. This approach can make physical activity more manageable and sustainable. The idea is not to replace walking. Rather, it is to build upon it.

### A balanced approach to fitness

A well-rounded routine can include several forms of movement:

- Walking or other aerobic activity for cardiovascular fitness.
- Strength exercises to maintain muscles and functional capacity.
- Balance exercises to improve stability and coordination.
- Mobility and flexibility exercises to maintain comfortable movement.
- Regular movement throughout the day to reduce prolonged sitting.

The exact combination should be adapted to individual circumstances. People with medical conditions, significant pain, recent injuries or long periods of inactivity may benefit from professional advice before beginning vigorous exercise.

### The real goal is lifelong movement

Exercise should not be viewed merely as a way to achieve a particular appearance or number on a weighing scale. Its broader purpose is to preserve the body's ability to move, work, play and participate in everyday life. Walking is powerful precisely because it is simple. It can be incorporated into ordinary routines and maintained throughout much of life. But the human body is designed for more than one kind of movement. Walking is good, but for complete fitness, it may be only one piece of the puzzle. Combining walking with appropriate strength, balance, mobility and other physical activities can create a more comprehensive approach to health and functional fitness. The best exercise programme is not necessarily the most complicated one. It is one that is appropriate, progressive, consistent and sustainable.

# INDIA'S ECONOMIC LIGHT IN A WORLD PASSING THROUGH DARK TIMES



LALIT GARGG

The world today is passing through a period of extraordinary economic and strategic challenges. The repercussions of the Russia-Ukraine war, tensions in West Asia, growing rivalry between the United States and China, uncertainty in global trade, disruptions in supply chains, and fluctuations in crude oil prices have posed difficult questions for the world's major economies. At such a time, the resilience demonstrated by the Indian economy is not merely an economic statistic; it is a powerful testament to the strength of a changing India.

India's 7.8 per cent real Gross Domestic Product growth in the first quarter of the financial year 2026-27 has projected the country as a beacon of hope in the global economic landscape – one that the world is watching with both surprise and confidence. This growth rate has strengthened India's economic power and self-confidence and spread a new ray of optimism amid global uncertainties.

The achievement becomes even more significant because this growth has been recorded at a time when conditions have been far from normal. Despite inflationary pressures, energy challenges, geopolitical tensions and fluctuations in international trade, the Indian economy has maintained a strong growth trajectory. The growth rate stood at 6.9 per cent in the corresponding quarter of the previous year, indicating a significant improvement in the pace of economic expansion within a year. Strong domestic demand, government capital expenditure, manufacturing, construction and exports have all contributed substantially to this performance.

The true significance of economic growth can be understood only when it is viewed in its global context. Today, economies are being shaped not merely by economic policies but also by wars, diplomatic tensions, energy security and international trade relations. The economic and strategic rivalry between the United States and China is affecting the entire world. Tensions in West Asia continue to raise concerns over energy markets and global supply networks. Against this backdrop, India's relatively rapid economic growth signals that the country has built strong domestic foundations capable of absorbing external shocks. This



is the transformation that is taking India beyond being merely a large economy and moving it towards becoming a major global economic power.

India's greatest economic strength is its vast domestic market. The demand generated by hundreds of millions of consumers, the expanding middle class, the growth of the digital economy, investment in infrastructure and changing patterns of consumption have provided the economy with strong internal momentum. When global markets are uncertain, robust domestic demand acts as a protective shield for an economy. Therefore, the strength of domestic demand deserves special recognition in assessing India's current growth performance.

Another important feature of India's economic performance is that growth is no longer dependent on a single sector. A 9.2 per cent expansion in the manufacturing sector indicates that India is gradually moving towards a more production-oriented economy. For a long time, India was primarily viewed as a services-driven economy. However, sustained efforts to expand domestic production, encourage indigenous industries and strengthen infrastructure are creating new opportunities for the industrial sector.

The construction sector, too, is playing a vital role in generating employment and stimulating economic activity. Investments in roads, railways, ports, airports, housing, industrial corridors and digital infrastructure are not merely reflected in economic growth figures; they are also creating the foundations of India's future economic capacity.

India's present economic journey cannot be discussed without acknowledging the role of the policies pursued under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Over the past several years, the government has consistently focused on infrastructure development, digital payments, financial inclusion, manufacturing, entrepreneurship, self-reliance, energy security and the formalisation of the economy. From Jan Dhan bank accounts to digital payments, and from highways to railway modernisation, a broad economic ecosystem has been steadily developed.

The Goods and Services Tax has contributed towards creating a more integrated national market, while the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code has sought to make the business environment more orderly and efficient. Production-linked incentive schemes have encouraged domestic manufacturing and investment across several sectors. The real value of these policies, however, must be assessed not merely through announcements but through their outcomes. The latest GDP figures certainly offer a positive indication in this direction.

> **True measure of a developed India in 2047 and the real pathway through which economic strength can ultimately be transformed into people's power.**

For the common citizen, economic growth becomes meaningful only when it translates into greater employment opportunities, rising incomes, controlled inflation, better education and healthcare, and an overall improvement in quality of life. GDP tells us about the pace of an economy, but it does not reveal how the benefits of growth are reaching different sections of society. Therefore, India's next challenge is to move beyond rapid growth and ensure that development is both high-quality and inclusive.

Employment remains one of the most important measures of economic development. The expansion of manufacturing and construction is encouraging because both sectors have the potential to generate employment on a large scale. India, however, will need industries capable of providing millions of young people with dignified, stable and sustainable livelihoods. India's youthful population is its greatest strength. If young Indians are equipped with quality education, skills, technology and meaningful employment opportunities, this demographic strength can become the most powerful source of energy for transforming India into a developed nation by 2047.

India's ambition should not be limited to becoming self-reliant; it should aspire to play a leading role in the global economy. Self-reliance does not mean isolating oneself from the world. It means strengthening national capabilities to such an extent that India becomes an indispensable part of global supply chains. The world is increasingly looking for alternative production centres and seeking to diversify beyond dependence on China. India possesses distinctive advantages: a vast domestic market, a young workforce, technological capabilities and a democratic system.

If India continues to strengthen its capabilities in manufacturing, semiconductors, electronics, defence production, renewable energy, artificial intelligence, space technology and high-value services, it can assume a far more influential position in the emerging global economic order. The vision of a developed India by 2047 is not merely a government resolution; it is a collective aspiration of the people of India.

> *"The light rising on India's economic horizon will become a lasting illumination only when its radiance reaches the life of the last person in the country."*
>
> **LALIT GARGG**

The 7.8 per cent growth rate is certainly an encouraging milestone on this journey, but it is not the destination. India will have to sustain a high growth trajectory, strengthen its financial system and maintain a stable economic environment while giving equal attention to education, healthcare, agricultural productivity, skill development, employment and social security.

India's economic story is no longer merely a story of numbers. It is becoming a story of confidence, self-reliance and global leadership. While the world searches for direction under the shadow of war and economic instability, India's strong economic performance is establishing it as a reliable and promising global power. A growth rate of 7.8 per cent is undoubtedly a matter of pride for India. More important, however, is the message it conveys: even amid global crises, India's economic foundations remain strong. The economic policies and initiatives pursued under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership must now enter their next phase – one focused more intensely on employment, investment, production and equal opportunity. The light rising on India's economic horizon will become a lasting illumination only when its radiance reaches the life of the last person in the country.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Fix Bengaluru's Footpaths Now**
Walking in Indiranagar has become a hurdle race. Footpaths are broken, occupied by bikes and vendors, forcing pedestrians onto busy roads. Senior citizens and schoolchildren suffer the most. The BBMP must clear encroachments and repair slabs immediately. A walkable city is a livable city. We request urgent action.
**– Shanthu Kutty**

**Parks Need Better Maintenance**
Cubbon Park and local parks are losing charm due to litter, broken benches and dry lawns. Morning walkers notice garbage bins overflowing and stray dogs increasing. Parks are Bengaluru's lungs. The horticulture department should increase staff and ensure regular cleaning and watering. Citizens must also cooperate to keep them green.
**– Manjamma**

**Hostels Need Inspection**
I am a student living in a PG in Koramangala. For months we have suffered severe bed bug bites and sleepless nights. Despite complaints, owners ignore hygiene. We pay high rent but get unhygienic cots and mattresses. I request BBMP to make regular inspection of PGs and hostels mandatory and punish negligent owners. Our health and studies are affected.
**– R. Sharma**

**A Silent Health Crisis**
Through your columns, I want to highlight the rising bed bug menace in Bengaluru apartments. It is not just about itching. My 5-year-old daughter developed skin infections due to repeated bites. Pest control is expensive and temporary. Citizens need awareness on prevention and affordable treatment. The health department must treat this as a public health issue, not just a household problem.
**– Anitha Kumar**

**Wake Up, BBMP**
Bed bugs are spreading fast due to second-hand furniture markets and dense living. People throw infested mattresses on footpaths, spreading them further. BBMP focuses only on mosquitoes. Why not a campaign for bed bugs? We need helplines, subsidised pest control for low-income families, and strict rules for hotels and lodges. Please act before it becomes an epidemic.
**– Mohammed Ali**

# REMEMBERING ROOTS: THE SACRED MEANING OF MAHALAYA

In the rush of modern life, we celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and festivals for the living, but we rarely pause for those who made our living possible. Mahalaya Amavasya, the final day of Pitru Paksha, is that pause. It is not a day of mourning, but a day of profound gratitude.

For sixteen days, according to the Hindu calendar in the month of Bhadrapada, the veil between our world and the world of our ancestors is said to be thin. This period is Pitru Paksha. It ends on Mahalaya Amavasya, also called Sarva Pitru Amavasya. On this day, millions of people across India, from the ghats of Varanasi to the banks of the Cauvery in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, offer Tarpanam — water, black sesame seeds and prayers — to their departed forefathers.

To an outsider, it may look like a simple ritual. But its meaning is deep and deeply relevant today.

First, Mahalaya is about acknowledging debt. Indian philosophy speaks of three debts we are born with — to the gods, to the sages, and to our ancestors, Pitru Rina. We repay the gods through devotion, the sages through knowledge, and our ancestors by remembering them and by living a life that honors their struggles. Our parents and grandparents may have lived through partition, poverty, hard labour, and limited opportunities so that we could have education, choices and comfort. Mahalaya is our annual reminder that our success is not entirely ours. We stand on their shoulders.



**"This Mahalaya, whether you believe in the ritual or not, take a minute to remember a grandparent's name, a story they told you, a value they lived by. That remembrance is the true Tarpanam."**

**— SURESH KUMAR E.**

Second, it is a lesson in continuity. In a time when families are scattered across cities and continents, and nuclear families are becoming the norm, Pitru Paksha brings the entire lineage together in thought. When a father shows his son how to cup water in his hands and chant his own father's name, he is doing more than a ritual. He is telling a story. He is saying, "You came from someone. You belong to a line. You are not alone." In an age of identity crisis and anxiety, that sense of belonging is healing.

Third, it is ecologically beautiful. The ritual asks for very little — water, til, rice, a piece of banana leaf. It is done at sunrise, near a water body, in silence. There is no noise, no pomp, no expense. It teaches us that remembrance does not need extravagance. It needs intention.

Some modern minds question it — why do rituals for the dead? Will the water reach them? This is a misunderstanding. Tarpanam is not logistics; it is psychology and spirituality. It is an act of letting go and holding on at the same time. By offering water, we symbolically say, "I release you with love, and I hold your values with me." It gives closure to grief that many families carry unspoken for years.

In West Bengal, Mahalaya also marks the beginning of Devi Paksha and Durga Puja, the invocation of the Goddess. That is not a coincidence. One chapter closes with gratitude to ancestors, and the next opens with celebration of divine feminine power. It is the cycle of life and death beautifully placed side by side.

In Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, many people fast or cook simple sattvic food on this day and feed crows, cows and Brahmins, believing our ancestors accept offerings through them. Feeding another being in memory of your own is perhaps the most humane form of prayer.

Mahalaya Amavasya is not about superstition. It is about memory. In a world that is obsessed with the future, it forces us to look back with respect. If we forget our roots, the tree will not stand for long.

**— SURESH KUMAR E.**

# EDUCATION IS FREEDOM, NOT JUST EMPLOYMENT



If you ask most parents in India what education is for, the answer is quick: to get a good job. It is a practical answer, but it is also a dangerously small one. We have reduced education to employment, marks to meaning, degree to destiny. And in doing so, we have forgotten what education truly is for. Education is not just the need of the hour, it is the need for a lifetime, because it is the only thing that gives a human being real freedom.

The freedom education gives is freedom from ignorance. An uneducated person is not just someone who cannot read, he is someone who cannot question. He will believe a WhatsApp forward over a doctor, a superstition over science, a loud politician over his own common sense. We saw this during Covid, when educated people washed hands and wore masks, while others crowded around cow dung remedies and fake cures. Education is what lets you tell the difference between information and manipulation. In a democracy like India, where every vote counts equally, that ability to think is not a luxury, it is survival.

Education gives freedom from inequality. I grew up seeing two kinds of kids in my lane in Bengaluru. One set went to a private English-medium school. The other dropped out after Class 8 to work in a garage. At age 10, they were equals. At age 25, one was interviewing the other for a delivery boy job. Education is the only escalator we have that can move a child from a slum in Ejipura to an office in Electronic City. It does not guarantee equality, but without it, inequality becomes permanent. This is why the Right to Education Act is not charity, it is justice. When we educate a girl, we do not just educate one person, we educate the family she will raise, the income she will earn, and the domestic violence she will be able to walk out of.

Education gives freedom from poverty of the mind. Employment gives you money. Education gives you purpose. A merely literate person can operate a machine. An educated person can ask, should this machine be built? Should it replace 100 workers? What will happen to them? Our country does not just need coders and engineers who can work for global companies, it needs thinkers, artists, teachers and citizens who can decide what kind of country we want to be. Today, we have millions of degree holders who are unemployable not because there are no jobs, but because they were never taught to think, only to memorize. That is not education; that is schooling.

The real crisis in India is not that children are out of school, but that many in school are not learning. ASER reports show that half of Class 5 students cannot read a Class 2 text. We are building huge school buildings with no teachers, giving tablets with no internet, conducting exams where copying is normal. We celebrate 95% marks but ignore that the child cannot write a leave application without ChatGPT.

We need to reclaim the true meaning of need. We need education not to just fill forms, but to fill minds. Not to just get jobs, but to create jobs, to question jobs, to find dignity even without a job. We need vocational education to be respected as much as a B.Tech. We need moral education, financial education, health education, climate education, not as extra subjects, but as core.

A job can be taken away by a recession or by AI. Education, once truly attained, no one can take away. It stays with you when you are unemployed, when you are alone, when you are old.

*"Education is why it is a need, not a want."*

**— STEFFI SUSAN MELQUIRE**

# YOUR FINGER, YOUR FUTURE: WHY VOTE MATTERS

Every election, the same line is repeated: your vote is your power. We nod, forward the message, and then on voting day, many of us do something else. We plan a brunch. We go to Nandi Hills. We complain that there is an ink shortage for selfies. In Bengaluru, in the 2023 Assembly polls, nearly 46% of registered voters in the city did not vote. Almost one in two people decided that their future was not worth a 30-minute walk to the polling booth. That is not apathy, that is surrender.

The first reason you must vote is brutally simple: if you don't vote, you have no right to complain. We love complaining. About potholes, about water, about BBMP, about corruption, about garbage, about traffic. But who hires the people responsible for fixing these? We do. The corporator, the MLA, the MP. When you skip voting, you are effectively saying, "I am okay with whoever others choose for me." And then when the road outside your house floods, you cannot blame the system. You opted out of the system.

Voting is not about choosing the perfect candidate. There is no perfect candidate. Voting is about choosing the direction. India is a country of 1.4 billion aspirations. Every vote pushes the country a millimetre in one direction — towards better schools or better temples, towards jobs or towards freebies, towards secularism or towards majoritarianism, towards the environment or towards unchecked construction. Your single vote will not decide the election, but it is a compass needle. And when crores of compass needles point together, the country changes course.

This is most important: people have died for this right. We forget how rare universal adult franchise is. In 1947, when India adopted one person, one vote, even highly developed countries like Switzerland had not given women the right to vote. Our Constitution gave every adult, rich or poor, Brahmin or Dalit, man or woman, the right to vote from day one. That right was earned by the freedom struggle. Bhagat Singh did not die so you could get an extra hour of sleep on a public holiday.



Many educated urban Indians say, "My one vote won't matter." It does. Ask anyone in Karnataka who remembers 2018. The JD(S)-Congress and BJP were separated by just a few thousand votes in many constituencies. In one seat in 2023, the margin was 16 votes. Sixteen. That is one family in an apartment. Your building's WhatsApp group has more people than that. When you say your vote doesn't matter, you are mathematically wrong.

Others say, "All politicians are the same." Even if that were true, not voting is not a protest, it is invisibility. The system does not notice you didn't vote out of principle. It only notices who did vote, and it makes policies for them. If young people don't vote, no manifesto will talk about jobs, climate or startups. If the middle class doesn't vote, no budget will care about honest taxpayers. Politicians are rational. They work for their voters.

So on voting day, please go. Check your name on the electoral roll today, not on the morning of the election. Take your parents, your house help, your auto driver. Make it a festival, not a chore. The ink on your finger is not just ink. It is proof that you still believe you can shape this country.

*"Because if you don't decide your future, someone else will."*

**— MOEN**

# TINY PESTS, BIG PROBLEMS: THE BED BUG NIGHTMARE



We worry about big threats — pollution, traffic, viruses. We ignore the tiny one that lives in our mattress and drinks our blood while we sleep. Bed bugs. Just the name makes you itch. And in crowded cities like Bengaluru, Delhi and Mumbai, they are making a quiet, irritating comeback.

Bed bugs, or Cimex lectularius, are small, flat, reddish-brown insects the size of an apple seed. They do not fly, they do not jump, but they are expert hitchhikers. They travel in suitcases, hostel beds, second-hand furniture, office bags and even in the seams of your clothes after a metro ride. A single pregnant female can start an infestation of hundreds in weeks.

The problem they cause is physical. Their bite is not just a bite. At night, they crawl out and pierce your skin to feed for 5–10 minutes. You may not feel it then because their saliva has an anesthetic. By morning, you have red, swollen, intensely itchy welts in a straight line or zigzag pattern, usually on the neck, arms and back. For some people, it is just itching. For others, it is an allergic reaction, blisters, secondary infection from scratching, and in children, even anemia from repeated bites. Try explaining to your boss that you could not sleep because bugs were eating you.

The problem is psychological, and it is bigger than the physical one. Sleep becomes anxiety. You start dreading your own bed. You keep lights on. You check corners obsessively. Dermatologists call it bed bug induced insomnia and paranoia. I have spoken to students in PGs who sleep on plastic chairs for weeks. Working couples who fight because one brings bugs from office travel. The shame is real too. People do not talk about it because they fear being called dirty. But bed bugs have nothing to do with dirt. They love five-star hotels as much as hostels. They love cleanliness, because clean sheets mean easy access to blood.

The economic and social cost. Once they enter a house, getting rid of them is a war. Regular sprays do not work because they hide deep inside wooden cots, mattress piping, wall cracks and switchboards. Professional pest control costs Rs 3,000 to Rs 8,000 for one treatment, and often needs two or three rounds. In between, you have to wash all clothes in hot water, sun-dry mattresses, throw away infested furniture. For a middle-class family, it is a sudden, unwanted expense of Rs 15,000 or more. In hostels and low-income housing, people just live with them because they cannot afford treatment, so the infestation spreads building to building.

Public health negligence. BBMP and other municipal bodies focus on mosquitoes and dengue, which is important, but bed bugs are ignored as a household issue. Yet in urban India, with dense living, shared cots in hostels, second-hand markets and heavy travel post-Covid, their spread is rapid. There is no public awareness campaign on how to check for them — tiny rust spots on sheets, sweet musty smell, eggs in corners.

We need to stop treating bed bugs as a joke. They are a serious urban hygiene issue. Landlords should be made to certify beds in PGs and hostels. Hotels should have mandatory mattress checks. Pest control should be subsidised. And we should talk openly, without stigma.

*"A good day starts with a good night's sleep. And you cannot have that if your bed, your safest place, is feeding on you."*

**VIKRAM SARKI**

Prevention is still best. Inspect second-hand furniture. Wash travel clothes separately. Vacuum cots weekly. Use mattress encasements. And if you have them, act early. Do not spray Hit.

**— VIKRAM SARKI**

# LOGOS OVER VALUE: THE BRAND OBSESSION TRAP

Walk into any college campus in Bengaluru today and you will see it. The same small tick on shoes, the same three stripes on T-shirts, the same two letters on a belt. We are not wearing clothes anymore, we are wearing price tags. The craze for branded clothes has become a quiet epidemic among India's youth, and it is costing us more than just money.

There was a time when clothes meant comfort, durability and maybe style. My father owned three good shirts and wore them for years. Now a 19-year-old feels ashamed to repeat an outfit on Instagram. Brands have brilliantly sold us an idea: you are what you wear. If you wear Zara, Nike or Gucci, you are successful, modern and worthy. If you don't, you are somehow less. This is not fashion, this is insecurity marketing.

The casualty is our wallet. A plain white T-shirt costs Rs 400 at a local shop. Add a famous logo, and the same cotton becomes Rs 4,000. We know this, yet we pay. Why? Because we are buying confidence, not cotton. A recent survey found that Indian Gen Z spends nearly 30% of their monthly pocket money on branded apparel. Many students pressure parents earning Rs 40,000 a month to buy a Rs 15,000 jacket just to fit in with friends. In middle-class families, this creates silent financial stress and guilt.



It kills individuality. Ironically, we buy brands to look unique, but end up looking like everyone else. Fifty students in the same college wearing the same H&M hoodie is not style, it is uniformity. Real style is about how you carry yourself, how you mix and match, not how big your logo is. The most stylish people I know often shop from thrift stores, Commercial Street or FabIndia. They have a sense of self. The brand-crazy crowd just has a sense of label.

It fuels a dangerous social divide. In schools and colleges, clothes have become a caste system. Branded kids vs non-branded kids. I have seen teenagers get bullied for wearing non-branded shoes. This creates low self-esteem at an age when confidence should be built. We are teaching our kids that respect comes from a logo, not from character, knowledge or kindness. That is a poor lesson.

Let's also talk about sustainability. Fast fashion brands change collections every two weeks. They want you to feel outdated quickly so you buy again. The result? India generates over 7.7 million tonnes of textile waste every year. That Rs 800 T-shirt you wore twice before throwing away goes to a landfill in Ghazipur. Branded does not mean quality anymore. Most high-street brands use the same factories in Bangladesh as non-branded ones. You are paying for marketing, showroom rent and celebrity endorsements, not better stitching.

I am not saying don't buy brands. Buy them if you can truly afford them, if you love their design and quality. But don't buy them for validation. A brand should be a choice, not a compulsion.

We need a mindset reset. Parents should talk to children about value over logo. Colleges should stop judging by appearance. And we as consumers should ask one simple question before buying: Would I buy this same shirt if the logo was removed? If the answer is no, leave it on the rack.

*"True status is not in what you wear, but in how little your self-worth depends on it."*

**— ANNA B.**

## Quick Read

### 5 killed as car crashes into state transport bus in Beed

**BEED**

Five people were killed after a car reportedly swerved to avoid a pot-hole and collided with a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation bus in Beed district, Maharashtra. The deceased were identified as Omkar Mahadev Giri (24), Gajanan Mahadev Namdas (38), his son Samarth (11), Somnath Bade (23) and Anil Achar. The accident occurred when the car driver attempted to avoid a pot-hole, leading to the collision with the bus. The incident has once again raised concerns over road conditions and the risks faced by motorists.

### Police file FIR against Army officer's wife for espionage

**JAMMU**

Jammu and Kashmir Police have registered an FIR against the wife of an Army officer for allegedly collecting and sharing sensitive information with foreign intelligence operatives, official sources said on Sunday. The accused, who hails from Telangana, currently resides in Jammu with her husband. She was questioned by a Deputy Superintendent of Police-rank officer following the registration of the FIR. Police are investigating the nature of her activities and examining whether any information or material was communicated to foreign intelligence operatives.

### Heavy rains lash Chennai as NE monsoon gets active

**CHENNAI**

Heavy rainfall lashed Chennai as the northeast monsoon became active across Tamil Nadu, bringing downpours and causing difficulties for people travelling through the city. Rainfall is expected to continue across the state until October 23.

The intensified monsoon activity has brought significant rain to parts of Tamil Nadu, with Chennai among the areas experiencing heavy showers. Waterlogged roads have made movement difficult in some locations, forcing commuters and pedestrians to navigate rain-affected streets.

The northeast monsoon is an important source of rainfall for Tamil Nadu, particularly during the October-December period. Its arrival brings much-needed precipitation to the region, but intense spells can also lead to urban flooding, traffic disruption and difficulties for residents.

With heavy rainfall forecast to continue over the coming days, residents are likely to face further wet weather. People travelling through low-lying areas and roads prone to waterlogging are advised to remain cautious during intense showers.

Civic authorities and emergency services generally monitor vulnerable locations during periods of heavy rain and take steps to manage waterlogging and other weather-related problems. Residents should follow official weather alerts and local administration advisories, particularly when rainfall becomes intense. The continuing monsoon activity is expected to keep several parts of Tamil Nadu under wet conditions through October 23.

# Sabarimala preparations fall short: Devaswom Minister

High hygiene and quality standards are vital for producing Aravana payasam, a key Sabarimala pilgrimage offering for millions of devotees.

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

Keralam Devaswom Minister K. Muraleedharan has expressed dissatisfaction with the Travancore Devaswom Board's (TDB) preparations for the upcoming Sabarimala pilgrimage season, raising concerns over delays in completing essential repair and renovation work.

The minister highlighted the incomplete renovation of the facility used to manufacture aravana payasam, the popular sweet prasadam distributed to devotees visiting the Sabarimala Lord Ayyappa temple.

Speaking to a television channel on Sunday, the minister reportedly said that repair and renovation work at the production facility had not yet been completed. The delay has raised concerns



about the board's preparedness to meet the requirements of the upcoming pilgrimage season, when large numbers of devotees are expected to visit the hill shrine.

Aravana payasam is one of the most sought-after offerings at Sabarimala. Ensuring adequate production and maintaining hygiene and quality standards are important aspects of managing the annual pilgrimage, which attracts devotees from Keralam and neighbouring states.

**Key highlights**

- → Aravana payasam is a key Sabarimala offering
- → The Travancore Devaswom Board administers temple arrangements
- → Renovation work must be completed on time
- → The prasadam production unit's readiness is critical

The Travancore Devaswom Board is responsible for administering the Sabarimala temple and overseeing several arrangements connected with the pilgrimage. Preparations generally involve infrastructure maintenance, facilities for devotees, prasadam production and other essential services.

The minister's remarks have brought attention to the need for timely completion of renovation work and effective coordination among the authorities responsible for managing the pilgrimage.

With the pilgrimage season approaching, the progress of repair work and the readiness of the prasadam production unit are likely to remain important concerns for the board and the state government.

Devotees depend on the authorities to ensure that essential facilities are operational before the annual rush begins. Completing the pending work in time will be important to ensure the smooth distribution of prasadam and the efficient management of the pilgrimage.



# Keralam faces building material crunch amid Tamil Nadu curbs

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

**30**
**million metric tonnes of sand: what Keralam needs a year, at the most, for construction**

Keralam continues to face challenges in meeting its demand for construction materials despite having substantial sand deposits within the state. The issue has gained attention as the state expresses concern over Tamil Nadu's restrictions on the supply of rocks used to manufacture sand.

Keralam requires up to 30 million metric tonnes of sand annually to meet construction needs. The state has been highly dependent on Tamil Nadu for rocks that are processed into manufactured sand, an important material used in building and infrastructure projects.

Restrictions on the movement or supply of these materials from Tamil Nadu have raised concerns in Keralam over the availability of construction resources. Any disruption in supplies could affect builders, infrastructure projects and other sectors that depend on a steady flow of sand and aggregates.

At the same time, large sand deposits in Keralam reportedly remain underutilised, raising questions about the state's efforts to identify and develop local sources. Better assessment and sustainable use of available resources could help reduce dependence on supplies from neighbouring states.

However, making use of local deposits requires careful consideration of environmental impacts, regulatory requirements and the long-term sustainability of extraction. Unregulated sand mining can damage river systems, affect groundwater levels and harm local ecosystems. Authorities therefore face the challenge of balancing construction demand with environmental protection.

The situation highlights the importance of a long-term strategy to ensure a reliable supply of construction materials.

This could include exploring permitted local resources, improving the production and use of manufactured sand, and strengthening coordination between government departments.

Keralam's dependence on Tamil Nadu also underlines the need for cooperation between neighbouring states over the movement of essential construction materials.

# Foreign nationals protesting in India a grave concern: Chirag

**PATNA**

Union Minister and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan has described actor Imran Khan's protest as "unacceptable" and backed the government's decision to ask the foreign national actor to leave the country.

According to a report published on Sunday, Paswan supported the government's decision and expressed his disagreement with the actor's protest. His remarks came amid a controversy surrounding the government's directive and the actor's response to the order.

Paswan's statement reflects his support for the government's action in the matter. The Union Minister indicated that the decision taken by the authorities should be respected, while describing the protest as inappropriate.

The issue has drawn attention to the relationship between government decisions concerning foreign nationals and the right of individuals to express disagreement.

Such cases can generate public debate, particularly when they involve actors or other





well-known personalities.

Paswan, who heads the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), has been active in national politics and serves as a Union Minister in the Central Government.

His comments add a political dimension to the controversy, with his public support signalling agreement with the government's position.

# Lucknow hoardings depict Rahul, Akhilesh as Ravana

*"Ravana, Enemies of Sanatan Bharat": the headline the hoardings carried*

**LUCKNOW**

Hoardings depicting Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and billionaire Elon Musk as the heads of Ravana have been installed in Uttar Pradesh's capital, drawing attention to their political and religious messaging.

The hoardings were put up by the Sanatan Raksha Sangathan and carried the headline, "Ravana, Enemies of Sanatan Bharat". The displays portrayed the three personalities as Ravana's heads, using the imagery associated with the demon king from the Hindu epic Ramayana.

The installation comes amid continuing political debates over Sanatan Dharma and the positions taken by political leaders on religious and cultural issues. Rahul Gandhi is a prominent Congress leader, while Akhilesh Yadav heads the Samajwadi Party, a major political outfit in Uttar Pradesh. Elon Musk, the technology entrepreneur, was also featured in the hoardings.

The organisation's choice of imagery and headline presents the figures as opponents of what it describes as Sanatan Bharat.




# MP CM removes Gwalior SP after temple tragedy

**GWALIOR**

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has ordered the removal of the Gwalior Superintendent of Police (SP) and the suspension of eight other police personnel following a tragedy at a temple in the district.

Yadav said he had directed the district administration to conduct a fact-based inquiry into the incident and submit a detailed report. The action comes amid scrutiny of the circumstances surrounding the tragedy and the arrangements made by the authorities.

The decision to remove the district police chief and suspend eight personnel signals disciplinary action against members of the police force in connection with the incident.

The Chief Minister has asked the district administration to establish the facts surrounding the incident. The inquiry is expected to examine the circumstances that led to the tragedy and the role of the authorities concerned.

**Action in Gwalior**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | SP REMOVED |
| 8 | POLICE PERSONNEL SUSPENDED |

Temple gatherings can attract large numbers of devotees, particularly during religious events and festivals. Crowd management, security arrangements and coordination between police and local administration are important to prevent accidents and respond quickly to emergencies.

The incident has brought attention to the responsibilities of officials in managing public gatherings and ensuring the safety of devotees. The findings of the inquiry are expected to provide further clarity on the circumstances of the tragedy and whether any lapses occurred.

# Kangana slams Oppn over 'regime change' remark

**NEW DELHI**

**? WHAT IS THE SIR?**
The Special Intensive Revision is a process undertaken by election authorities to review and update electoral rolls.

Actor and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut has criticised opposition parties over their actions and statements amid the ongoing controversy surrounding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, saying such conduct reinforces the need for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

The remarks came amid political criticism following senior advocate Prashant Bhushan's reported "regime change" comment and protests against the SIR process. The issue has triggered a political exchange between the ruling BJP and opposition parties over the revision of electoral rolls and its implications.

Ranaut described the opposition's actions as "low-level acts" and argued that they strengthened the case for Modi's leadership.

The exercise has become a contentious political issue, with opposition parties raising concerns about its implementation and possible effects on voters. Supporters of the process maintain that reviewing electoral rolls is necessary to ensure their accuracy.

Prashant Bhushan's reported remarks have added another dimension to the dispute, drawing criticism from political figures. The controversy highlights the continuing disagreement between the BJP and opposition parties over the conduct of the electoral revision exercise and the political statements surrounding it.

The debate over SIR is expected to remain a significant issue in the political discourse, with both sides pre-

**THE COCKROACH CONTROVERSY**

# *Cockroach effigy at Ramlila event triggers queries*

**NEW DELHI**

Organisers of a Ramlila event in Delhi have defended the display of a cockroach effigy, saying it was intended to promote cleanliness and not to target any political party or individual.

Committee president and BJP MLA Ashok Goel told reporters that the decision to include the effigy was not politically motivated.

He maintained that the initiative was connected to the message of cleanliness rather than political considerations.

The display attracted attention during the Ramlila celebrations, which feature performances depicting episodes from the Hindu epic Ramayana. The use of the cockroach effigy prompted questions about its significance and whether it carried any political message.

Goel rejected the suggestion that the decision was driven by political motives, reiterating that the purpose was to spread awareness about cleanliness.

The organisers maintained that the display should be viewed in the context of their stated objective.

Ramlila performances are traditionally staged during the Navratri and Dussehra period in several parts of India.

Along with dramatic presentations of the Ramayana, many events include public gatherings and activities organised by local committees.

**THE EFFIGY**

| | |
|---|---|
| EVENT: Ramlila, Delhi | EFFIGY: A cockroach |
| STATED AIM: Cleanliness | PRESIDENT: Ashok Goel, BJP MLA |

The controversy over the effigy has drawn attention to how symbolic displays at public religious and cultural events can be interpreted differently by audiences.

The organisers, however, have insisted that their intention was to convey a cleanliness message.



# Kolkata pandal stampede gives TMC a 'bhaipo' in BJP to target

The TMC has demanded accountability and called for CM Adhikari's resignation, alleging administrative failure.

**KOLKATA**

The stampede at a Durga Puja pandal in north Kolkata has triggered a political confrontation between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the All India Trinamool Congress (TMC), with the opposition party questioning accountability for the deaths.

At least 19 people died and 25 others were injured in the stampede at the Chorbagan Sarbojanin Durga Puja pandal on Saturday evening.



The incident occurred amid a heavy rush of devotees and rain.

**Chorbagan stampede**

| | |
|---|---|
| 19 | DEAD, AT LEAST |
| 25 | INJURED |
| 2 | COMMITTEE OFFICE-BEARERS AMONG THOSE ARRESTED |

The TMC targeted West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari over the alleged association of his nephew, Debdeep Adhikari, BJP MLA as chairman of the organising committee and questioned who should be held responsible for the tragedy. These are allegations made by the TMC and have not been established as findings of the investigation.

The term "bhaipo", meaning nephew, featured prominently in the party's criticism of the Chief Minister. The TMC questioned whether political connections would affect accountability and called for answers over the arrangements at the crowded pandal.

Police arrested people linked to the organisation of the event, crowd management and private security. Those arrested included organising committee secretary Raj Kumar Sewda and vice-president Santanu Dubey. Police have launched an investigation into the circumstances that led to the stampede.

The tragedy has therefore become both a public safety concern and a political flashpoint, as questions continue over crowd control, security arrangements and responsibility for the deaths. The investigation is expected to establish the circumstances surrounding the incident.

## Quick Read

### CJP alleges delays and surety rejections for leaders

**NEW DELHI**

The CJP has alleged delays in the release of its leaders, claiming that authorities have rejected four sureties on what it described as vague grounds. Expressing concern over the development, the organisation said individuals facing FIRs linked to their participation in protests were being treated as criminals. The allegations have raised concerns over the process of accepting sureties and implementing release orders. CJP has questioned the reasons behind the repeated rejections and called attention to the difficulties faced by those seeking the leaders' release. Further details about the individuals and the grounds for rejection were not immediately available.

### Court issues non-bailable warrant against Rakhi Sawant

**JHANSI**

A court in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, has issued a non-bailable warrant against actor Rakhi Sawant in connection with a 2010 suicide case after she failed to appear before the court. The warrant follows her non-appearance during the legal proceedings. The case relates to a suicide incident reported in 2010. The court issued the warrant to secure her appearance in the matter. Further details regarding the next hearing and the circumstances of the case were not immediately available.

### Conjoined twins die at Berhampur hospital

**BERHAMPUR**

Conjoined male twins born at Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati (MKCG) Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur, Odisha, died on Sunday after battling multiple medical complications since birth on Oct 1. The babies were born to a 22-year-old woman from Kandhamal district. They had two heads but shared a single body, heart and several vital organs, making treatment extremely challenging. Doctors diagnosed the rare condition as dicephalic parapagus. The newborns were kept in the neonatal intensive care unit under specialist supervision. Their complex anatomical abnormalities and critical condition severely limited treatment options, including separation surgery.

## Bahujans pin high hopes on Akash Anand: Mayawati

**LUCKNOW**

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati has said the Bahujan community has high expectations from Akash Anand, underlining his importance to the party's future. She also ruled out the possibility of taking Siddharth back into the BSP.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister's remarks highlight the party's focus on its leadership and organisational direction.

Akash Anand, Mayawati's nephew, has been a prominent figure in the BSP's political activities and is seen as an important member of its leadership.




**She says the Bahujan community expects much from Anand as the BSP works to maintain its Dalit support base.**

In a separate remark, Mayawati made it clear that Siddharth would not be taken back into the party.

The BSP has traditionally drawn support from Dalits, backward classes and other marginalised sections, with its political agenda centred on social justice and representation. Mayawati, who has served as Uttar Pradesh chief minister, continues to lead the BSP and shape its political strategy.

## IIT-B students say police used excessive force at protest

**MUMBAI**

Students protesting the death of Sahil Wakode at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay have alleged that police detained protesters and used excessive force during the demonstration.

According to the protesting students, 22 students were detained and taken to the Powai police station. The protesters raised concerns over the police response and the handling of the demonstration following Wakode's death.

The incident has drawn attention to the students' demand for answers surrounding Wakode's death and their concerns about the treatment of those participating in the protest. The students alleged that the police action was excessive and questioned the decision to detain demonstrators.

**22**
**students detained and taken to the Powai police station, according to the protesters**

The protest reflects the concerns among sections of the student community following the death. Students participating in such demonstrations often seek clarity on the circumstances of an incident and accountability from the authorities concerned.

The reported detentions have added another dimension to the situation, with attention now focused on both the circumstances surrounding Wakode's death and the police response to the demonstration.

However, the allegations of excessive force and the circumstances of the detentions would need to be assessed alongside the police account.

Further information from the authorities and the institute is awaited to establish the sequence of events and clarify the issues raised by the protesters.

## Rajnath to represent India at SCO meet in Dushanbe

**NEW DELHI**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will represent India at the 25th meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of Government in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on Oct 19 and 20, the government announced on Sunday.

According to the Defence Ministry, the meeting will focus on strengthening cooperation among SCO member states in key areas, including trade, economic relations, investment, connectivity, innovation and cultural and humanitarian exchanges.

India remains actively involved in various SCO initiatives and continues to contribute to regional cooperation through programmes related to start-ups, innovation, digital public infrastructure and people-to-people exchanges, the ministry said in a statement.

The meeting is expected to review progress on ongoing cooperation initiatives and consider decisions concerning the organisation's financial and institutional functioning.

It will also provide an opportunity for India to exchange views with other member countries on expanding practical and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Its meetings help member states assess existing initiatives and explore opportunities for further collaboration in areas of shared interest.

The previous meeting of the Council of Heads of Government was held in Moscow on November 18, 2025. India was represented at that meeting by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

Established in 2001, the SCO has developed into a major regional organisation with a focus on economic, political and security cooperation.

Its founding members were China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

India and Pakistan became permanent members in 2017.

Iran and Belarus are also members of the organisation.

Singh's visit to Dushanbe follows his participation in the SCO defence ministers' meeting held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in April.

## Fadnavis blasts Uddhav over regime change remarks

**NAGPUR**

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday criticised Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray over his remarks on "regime change", saying that governments in India can be changed only through elections and constitutional processes.

Responding to Thackeray, Fadnavis said the former chief minister had failed to prevent a split in his own party and questioned his comments about changing the government. He alleged that the Shiv Sena split after Thackeray moved away from the Hindutva ideology associated with the party's founder, Balasaheb Thackeray.

Fadnavis said those seeking a change of government must contest elections, win public support and secure an electoral victory.

"Governments are decided through elections," Fadnavis said, adding that the Constitution framed under the leadership of Dr B.R. Ambedkar would protect India's democratic system. He also asserted that attempts to bring about political change by disregarding the Constitution would not succeed.

The remarks came after Thackeray, speaking at an award ceremony in Mumbai on Saturday, backed calls for regime change. He said that if people were denied the right to express their views through elections and protests, they would have no option but to seek a change of government.



**"Governments are decided through elections."**
**— Devendra Fadnavis,** Maharashtra Chief Minister

The controversy has intensified amid protests against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had also accused the Congress and its allies of attempting to create political unrest similar to developments in Bangladesh, a charge disputed by opposition leaders.

## CISF revamp to take effect from November 1

**NEW DELHI**

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is set to introduce a major overhaul of its administrative and operational structure from November 1 to strengthen specialised security management across critical infrastructure facilities and strategic establishments under its protection.

The revised arrangements have been approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the force said in an official statement. The restructuring aims to align the CISF's supervisory framework more closely with the specific security requirements of different sectors.

The changes are intended to improve the way security responsibilities are organised and managed across establishments protected by the force.

Critical infrastructure and strategic establishments require security arrangements suited to their individual operational requirements. The proposed reorganisation is aimed at creating a structure that can respond more effectively to these varying needs while strengthening the overall management of security duties.

The CISF provides security at important installations and infrastructure facilities across India. Its responsibilities include protecting establishments that are essential to the country's industrial and strategic interests.

**The CISF revamp**

| | |
|---|---|
| FROM | November 1 |
| CLEARED BY | Union Home Ministry |
| COVERS | critical infrastructure and strategic establishments |
| AIM | supervision matched to each sector's security needs |

The planned overhaul represents an organisational change intended to make the force's administrative and operational framework more closely aligned with its security responsibilities. The revised structure is expected to guide the deployment and supervision of resources according to the requirements of different sectors.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has approved the new arrangements, which will formally come into effect on November 1, 2026. The announcement marks a step in the CISF's efforts to strengthen its approach to specialised security management.

## Aamir meets Raj Thackeray amid nephew Imran's exit notice

**MUMBAI**

Bollywood actor Aamir Khan met Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray amid the controversy surrounding an exit notice issued to Aamir's nephew, actor Imran Khan, by the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO).

The meeting took place days after Imran Khan was served a notice directing him to leave India by Oct 28. The development has drawn attention because of the actor's family connection to Aamir Khan and the political context surrounding the matter.

**Who's who**

- **Imran Khan:** actor, Aamir's nephew; FRRO notice to leave India by Oct 28
- **Aamir Khan:** actor; met the MNS chief
- **Raj Thackeray:** Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief

Aamir Khan's meeting with Raj Thackeray comes as the issue has attracted public attention.

Raj Thackeray, who heads the MNS, is known for his involvement in Maharashtra's political affairs. Aamir Khan is one of Hindi cinema's prominent actors, while Imran Khan, known for films such as Jaane Tu… Ya Jaane Na, has maintained a relatively low public profile in recent years.

The October 28 deadline mentioned in the notice has placed the matter in focus, with further developments likely to depend on the response from Imran Khan and the concerned authorities.

**STUDENT INTERACTION**

## *Rahul calls education system an 'exclusion' plan*

**NEW DELHI**

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has alleged that India's education system functions as an "exclusion" plan that keeps young people out of educational opportunities, raising concerns about access to education and the challenges faced by students.

Gandhi made the remarks during a recent interaction with students. He criticised the existing system and argued that it does not provide equal opportunities for all young people to pursue their educational goals.

**Rahul's charge**

India's education system works as an "exclusion" plan that keeps young people out of educational opportunities, the Congress leader alleged.

His comments focused attention on issues of educational access, affordability and inequality. Students from different economic and social backgrounds often face varying challenges in accessing quality education, including the cost of schooling, coaching and higher education.

Gandhi's remarks reflect the Congress leader's criticism of the education system and its ability to provide opportunities to young people. His statement also brings the wider debate over educational inclusion and equal access to the forefront.

Access to education remains an important issue in India, where policymakers face the challenge of improving learning outcomes while ensuring that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are not left behind. Affordability, availability of institutions and access to educational resources are among the factors that influence students' opportunities.

The Congress leader's comments are likely to add to the political debate over education policy and the responsibilities of the government in expanding opportunities for young people.

# Tiger Reserves in India:

## *The Landscapes That Saved a Species*

*In 1973, the country's tiger population had fallen so low that extinction was a realistic prospect. Today, the national estimate stands at more than 3,000 tigers spread across a network of more than 50 tiger reserves. That recovery counts among the biggest conservation turnarounds in history. It also comes with real tensions around people, development and the limits of space.*



### FROM HUNTING TROPHY TO NATIONAL SYMBOL

For much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, tigers were treated as vermin and sport. Colonial bounties and princely hunting parties took a heavy toll. By the mid-20th century, the tiger's range had shrunk dramatically. Estimates from the early 1970s suggested only around 1,800 tigers remained, down from tens of thousands a century earlier.

India's response came in stages. Hunting was restricted, the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 created a legal framework, and in April 1973 the government launched Project Tiger. It began with just nine reserves, among them Jim Corbett in Uttarakhand, Ranthambore in Rajasthan, Kanha in Madhya Pradesh, Manas in Assam, Bandipur in Karnataka, Palamau in Jharkhand, Simlipal in Odisha, Melghat in Maharashtra and the Sundarbans in West Bengal.

The idea was simple but ambitious: carve out inviolate breeding grounds, protect the prey base, and let the apex predator recover on its own terms.

**1,800** tigers estimated in the early 1970s

**9** reserves when Project Tiger began in April 1973

**3,000+** tigers today, the national estimate

**50+** tiger reserves in the network today

## What Exactly Is a Tiger Reserve?

A tiger reserve is not the same as a national park or wildlife sanctuary, though it often contains one. Since the 2006 amendment to the Wildlife (Protection) Act, tiger reserves have followed a defined structure:

The same amendment created the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), a statutory body that sets standards, approves tiger conservation plans, funds states and monitors performance. Reserves are managed by state forest departments but operate within this central framework.

**CORE** (critical tiger habitat)
Areas with legal protection meant to be kept free from human disturbance and resource extraction. Relocation of villages from these zones is voluntary and compensated.

**BUFFER ZONE**
The surrounding landscape where people live and work alongside wildlife. Regulated, compatible land use is allowed, and the zone serves as additional habitat and a movement corridor.

NTCA also runs a Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of reserves, scoring them on factors such as habitat management, protection, community engagement and research. Reserves are rated from "poor" to "excellent," which creates a form of public accountability that few conservation systems have.

## The Numbers: A Recovery Story in Data



India counts tigers through a nationwide census conducted every four years, using camera traps, sign surveys and statistical modeling.

Between 2006 and 2022, the estimate more than doubled. India reached the St. Petersburg Declaration's goal of doubling tiger numbers (the "TX2" target set in 2010 for 2022) years ahead of schedule, with the 2018 survey already crossing the mark.

The 2022 estimate, announced in 2023 during the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger, showed annual growth of roughly 6 percent. Madhya Pradesh led with around 785 tigers, followed by Karnataka, Uttarakhand and Maharashtra. Tigers in the Shivalik hills and Gangetic plains, the Central Indian highlands and the Western Ghats made up the bulk of the population.

Note one caveat: the census methodology has improved, so comparisons across decades should be read as trends rather than exact counts. Still, the direction is unambiguous.

## Landscapes, Not Just Parks

India's tigers live in several distinct ecological regions, each with its own challenges.

**The Shivalik–Gangetic plains.** Reserves like Jim Corbett and Rajaji in Uttarakhand, and Dudhwa and Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh, sit along the Himalayan foothills. Corbett, India's oldest national park (established in 1936), is among the highest-density tiger habitats in the world and holds one of the largest tiger populations of any reserve.

**Central India and the Eastern Ghats.** This is the country's tiger heartland. Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Satpura and Panna in Madhya Pradesh, Tadoba-Andhari in Maharashtra, and Achanakmar in Chhattisgarh form interlinked forests where tigers move across large landscapes. Kanha's sal and grassland mosaic inspired Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book. Bandhavgarh is famous for some of the highest tiger sighting rates in the country.

**The Western Ghats.** The Nagarhole–Bandipur–Mudumalai–Wayanad complex forms one of the largest contiguous tiger populations in the world. Periyar in Kerala and Anamalai and Parambikulam in the south add to this biodiverse belt.

**The Northeast and Brahmaputra floodplains.** Kaziranga, better known for rhinos, is also a tiger reserve with some of the highest tiger densities recorded anywhere. Manas, Nameri, Orang and Pakke contribute smaller but important populations.

**The Sundarbans.** The mangrove delta shared with Bangladesh hosts the world's only mangrove-dwelling tiger population. These tigers swim between islands, tolerate salt water, and face conflict with fishermen and honey collectors in one of the most challenging habitats on the planet.

**The mangrove delta shared with Bangladesh hosts the world's only mangrove-dwelling tiger population.**



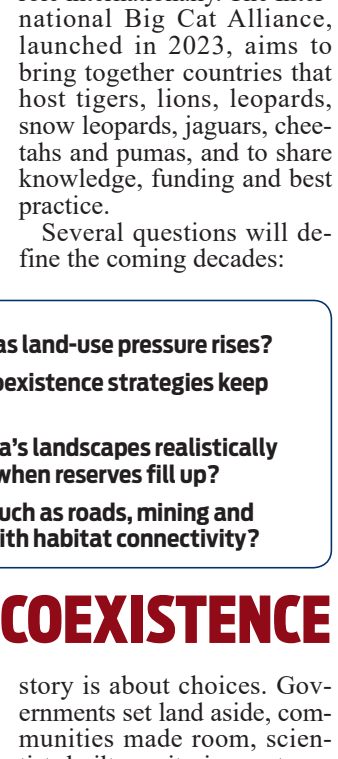
**The semi-arid west.** Ranthambore and Sariska in Rajasthan show how landscape can be restored. Ranthambore's tigers, famously visible around ancient lakes and a 10th-century fort, became icons of Indian wildlife tourism.

## Comeback Stories: Sariska and Panna

Two reserves stand out as proof that local extinctions are not final.

In 2004, Sariska in Rajasthan was found to have lost every one of its tigers, mainly to poaching. The finding triggered a national crisis and a high-level task force. Beginning in 2008, tigers were translocated from Ranthambore to Sariska, in what was among the first tiger reintroductions in the world. The population has since recovered to a double-digit count and continues to be supplemented.

Panna in Madhya Pradesh faced a similar collapse, reporting zero tigers in 2009. After tigresses and a male were brought in from Kanha, Bandhavgarh and Pench, the reserve rebuilt itself, and the population grew into the dozens within several years. It remains a model for what intensive protection, translocation and monitoring can achieve. More recently, newer reserves like Ramgarh Vishdhari in Rajasthan and Rani Durgavati in Madhya Pradesh have been declared to expand tiger habitat and connect fragmented populations.



**Panna: back from zero**

**2009**
**0** tigers reported

▸ WITHIN SEVERAL YEARS
**Dozens** after tigresses and a male came in from Kanha, Bandhavgarh and Pench

## THE HARD PROBLEMS

Success has created new pressures. The same recovery that thrills conservationists also exposes the limits of the current system.

**Space is running out.** Many reserves are nearing or at carrying capacity. Young tigers disperse in search of territory and often end up outside protected areas, where they come into contact with farms, villages and highways. Dispersing animals can travel hundreds of kilometers, and the corridors they need are shrinking.

**Human–wildlife conflict.** Livestock killings and, in some areas, human fatalities generate anger and fear. Regions around Tadoba-Andhari in Maharashtra, Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh and the Sundarbans have seen recurring incidents. Compensation schemes exist but are often slow, and public tolerance for tigers depends heavily on whether people feel protected too.

**Linear infrastructure.** Roads, railways, canals and power lines cut through corridors. Highways through tiger habitat cause roadkill and fragment populations. Mitigation measures such as underpasses and overpasses, including on routes through central India, have been built, but gaps remain.



**Poaching and illegal trade.** Despite improvements, poaching hasn't vanished. Tiger body parts remain in demand in illegal markets, and tiger deaths from poaching, electrocution and poisoning are still recorded every year. Organized wildlife crime networks adapt quickly, and enforcement needs constant investment.

**Relocation and rights.** Moving villages out of core zones can reduce conflict and free up habitat, but it raises hard questions about consent, livelihoods and the rights of forest-dependent communities under laws like the Forest Rights Act. Conservation that ignores people tends to face resistance and fail over time.

**Tourism pressure.** Poorly regulated tourism can disturb breeding and hunting behavior. Debates continue over vehicle numbers, safari timings, construction in buffer zones and whether commercial infrastructure inside forests, such as tiger safaris, helps or harms conservation. Courts have intervened in several such cases.

## Why Reserves Matter Beyond Tigers

A tiger needs a large territory, often tens to hundreds of square kilometers depending on prey density. Protecting a tiger means protecting everything beneath it in the food chain: deer, gaur, wild boar, and the forests and grasslands they depend on.

**That makes the tiger an umbrella species.** Tiger reserves safeguard catchments of rivers and reservoirs, store large amounts of carbon, and maintain biodiversity that includes leopards, sloth bears, dholes, elephants and thousands of plant and bird species. Many of India's major watersheds originate in or pass through tiger landscapes, so forest protection translates directly into water security for downstream communities.

The tourism economy matters too. Safari-driven visitation supports lodges, guides, drivers and craftspeople around reserves such as Ranthambore, Corbett, Kanha and Bandhavgarh. When managed well, wildlife tourism gives local communities a financial reason to value living tigers over timber, poaching or encroachment.



## The Road Ahead

The next phase of tiger conservation will look different from the first. Rather than creating isolated pockets, the focus is shifting to connecting them. Landscape-level planning, which means protecting corridors between reserves and managing buffer zones as functioning habitat, is increasingly the priority.

India is also expanding its role internationally. The International Big Cat Alliance, launched in 2023, aims to bring together countries that host tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, jaguars, cheetahs and pumas, and to share knowledge, funding and best practice.

Several questions will define the coming decades:

1. Can corridors be secured as land-use pressure rises?
2. Can compensation and coexistence strategies keep local support strong?
3. How many tigers can India's landscapes realistically hold, and what happens when reserves fill up?
4. Can development goals such as roads, mining and irrigation be reconciled with habitat connectivity?

## What Is Working

**✓ Legal backing and funding**
A dedicated statutory authority and a centrally sponsored scheme give tiger conservation institutional stability.

**✓ Science-based monitoring**
Camera-trap surveys, the M-STrIPES monitoring system and independent population estimation make the data credible and allow adaptive management.

**✓ Protection of prey**
Habitat restoration, grassland management and water source development help sustain the deer and other herbivores tigers rely on.

**✓ Community involvement**
Eco-development committees, local employment in tourism and conservation, and benefit-sharing models reduce hostility and build local stakes in protection.

**✓ Translocation**
Moving tigers into depleted reserves has proven viable when habitat and protection are in place.

**✓ Political and public visibility**
The tiger is a national symbol, and public attention keeps conservation on the agenda.

## Visiting a Tiger Reserve Responsibly

For travelers, tiger reserves offer one of the world's great wildlife experiences, but how you visit matters. Choose operators who follow forest department rules, stay in locally owned lodges where possible, keep to designated safari routes, avoid crowding sightings, and never pressure guides to get closer to animals. Remember that a tiger sighting is never guaranteed, and the forest itself, with its birds, deer, langurs and landscapes, is worth the trip.

**Time of year matters as well.**

| J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

- **Best sightings:** March to June, the dry, hot months, as animals gather at waterholes
- **Most reserves close** during the monsoon, usually from July through September or October

## A MODEL FOR COEXISTENCE

India's tiger reserves are proof that conservation can work at scale, even in one of the most densely populated countries on the planet. The numbers tell part of the story: from fewer than 2,000 animals in the 1970s to more than 3,000 today. The deeper story is about choices. Governments set land aside, communities made room, scientists built monitoring systems, and forest staff patrolled difficult terrain. Tigers in turn became a guardian for forests, rivers and countless other species.



But the work is far from finished. A larger population needs larger, connected habitat, and a lasting future for the tiger depends on whether the people living around it share in the benefits of protecting it. If India can answer that challenge, its tiger reserves will remain not just refuges for a magnificent predator, but a model for coexistence between wildlife and people.

## Quick Read

### Pope Leo pledges gradual return to duties after cancer surgery

**VATICAN CITY**

Pope Leo said on Sunday that he would ease back into his duties gradually, five days after undergoing lung cancer surgery. Making his first public appearance since the operation, the 71-year-old pontiff greeted pilgrims in St. Peter's Square from a window of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace. Tuesday's surgery removed the lower lobe of his right lung, and he left Rome's Gemelli hospital on Saturday. Speaking in a clear voice, he thanked people around the world for their prayers and said that, with God's help and their continued prayers, he would slowly return to his usual schedule. He also called on pilgrims to put aside selfish ambitions and serve God without compromise.

### Pakistan extends airspace ban on Indian aircraft till Nov 24

**ISLAMABAD**

Pakistan has extended its airspace ban on Indian-registered aircraft and planes owned, operated or leased by Indian airlines until November 24, according to the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA). The restriction, which also covers military flights, was initially imposed on April 24, 2025, and has been extended periodically amid strained relations between the two neighbouring countries. The PAA announced the latest extension in a post on social media platform X, confirming that the ban would remain in force for another month.

### Taiwan detects Chinese aircraft and 5 naval vessels nearby

**TAIPEI**

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence said on Sunday that it detected two Chinese military aircraft, five naval vessels and nine official ships operating around the island. The ministry reported that both aircraft crossed the Taiwan Strait's median line and entered Taiwan's northern and central Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ). Taiwan responded with combat air patrols, naval vessels and land-based missile systems to track and answer the activity. A day earlier, it had counted nine Chinese military aircraft, six naval vessels and eight official ships around the island, a sign of continued military activity in the region.

### Japan PM Takaichi's approval rating falls below 50 per cent

**TOKYO**

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's approval rating has dropped to 49.1 per cent, the lowest since she became prime minister in October last year, Kyodo News Agency reported on Sunday. The poll, conducted on October 17 and 18, indicated that public dissatisfaction may have been influenced by Takaichi's delayed response to the resignation of Farm Minister Kazuo Yana. According to Kyodo, 57.7 per cent of respondents felt Takaichi had taken too long to replace him, while 81.5 per cent said Yana's resignation was justified.

# Vance defends H-1B remarks, admits rhetoric imperfect

Vance defended his criticism of the foreign hiring system, while India called his terminology deeply offensive because of its historical and colonial associations

**WASHINGTON**

US Vice President JD Vance has defended his description of H-1B visa workers as "indentured servants", admitting that his choice of words was imperfect.

He clarified that his criticism targeted the visa system and employers, not foreign professionals.

Speaking at town hall on Saturday, Vance said the system could give companies excessive control over foreign workers because their visas are closely tied to their employment.

He explained that workers could face the risk of returning to their home countries if they lost their jobs, making them vulnerable to unfair treatment by employers.

Vance said his remarks were intended to criticise companies that bring foreign professionals to the United States and the system that allows such dependence. India had strongly objected to the terminology, calling it deeply offensive because of its historical and colonial associations.

**70%+**
**of approved H-1B petitions every year go to Indian professionals**

During the discussion, Vance also mentioned his South Indian in-laws and expressed affection for his wife, Usha Vance, whose parents immigrated from India. He said his aim was not to dehumanise immigrants and stressed the need to balance welcoming foreign professionals with protecting American workers.

Earlier this month, Vance announced the suspension of several firms, including Indian IT companies, from a programme allowing foreign workers to seek green cards. The administration argued that the practice had disadvantaged American workers.



Indian professionals account for more than 70 per cent of approved H-1B petitions annually. The visa programme has remained a subject of debate over employment opportunities, immigration policy and the treatment of foreign workers in the United States.

**At a Glance**

- **Rhetoric Walkback:** Vance acknowledges imperfect phrasing following strong objections from India.
- **Systemic Critique:** Targets employers' control over workers whose visas are tied to their jobs.
- **Policy Actions:** Several firms, including Indian IT companies, suspended from a green-card programme.
- **Social Balance:** Balancing a welcome for foreign professionals with protecting American workers.

# India urges nationals in Saudi Arabia to follow safety directives

**DUBAI**

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh on Sunday urged Indian nationals living in Saudi Arabia to follow updated safety instructions issued by local authorities amid heightened security concerns following attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels.

The advisory covers people who get emergency alerts through Saudi Arabia's National Early Warning Platform for Emergencies.

People have been told to remain indoors until the threat passes, avoid open areas, stay away from glass windows and doors, and refrain from standing on balconies or rooftops.

Those outdoors have been advised to enter the nearest building or shelter behind a solid barrier. The instructions also warn people to avoid crowds and dangerous areas and not to take photographs of ongoing incidents.

Anyone driving when an alert arrives should stop safely at the roadside, clear of bridges and tall buildings.

The advisory states that emergency assistance can be reached by calling 911 in the Makkah, Madinah, Riyadh and Eastern Province regions, while 998 is available in other parts of Saudi Arabia. Residents have been asked to follow updates issued through official channels.

| Emergency numbers | |
|---|---|
| 911 | MAKKAH, MADINAH, RIYADH AND EASTERN PROVINCE |
| 998 | OTHER PARTS OF SAUDI ARABIA |

The latest warning follows drone and missile attacks on Saudi Arabia by Yemen's Houthi rebels, among them a deadly strike near Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport on October 10. An Indian national was killed in that attack and several other people were injured.

Following that incident, the Indian Embassy had urged its citizens to remain indoors during aerial attacks and avoid filming or sharing photographs and videos related to the situation.

# Zelenskyy says Russia attacked Ukraine's energy sector 76 times

**KYIV**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has accused Russia of carrying out 76 attacks on Ukraine's energy, oil and gas sectors over the past week, despite an announcement of a temporary halt to such strikes.

In a post on social media platform X, Zelenskyy said the attacks occurred after the US President announced an energy ceasefire a week earlier. He added that recent strikes damaged electrical installations in the Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Khmelnytskyi and Odesa regions.

Zelenskyy also criticised Washington's decision to ease certain sanctions and tariffs linked to Russia, warning that the move could encourage further military action by Moscow.

"The decision to undo all of this, to block all of it, seems wrong to me," he wrote, arguing that the decision benefited Russia.



> **"The decision to undo all of this, to block all of it, seems wrong to me."**
> — Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukrainian President

The US President signed an executive order rolling back some Russia-related sanctions and tariffs that were due to come into force under the newly enacted Graham Act.

US administration officials said the temporary relief was needed to protect national security interests.

The law was meant to tighten economic pressure on Moscow after the conflict escalated in 2022.

Zelenskyy said easing the restrictions would not help reduce hostilities, and he asked whether the decision would encourage Russia to continue its military operations.

The Ukrainian President maintained that such measures would not bring peace and could instead strengthen Russia's willingness to continue fighting.

His remarks highlight continuing differences over diplomatic and economic measures meant to address the conflict, as attacks on Ukraine's critical infrastructure remain a major concern for the country.

# Bangladesh PM urges the armed forces to uphold discipline and public trust

**SAVAR**

Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has urged members of the armed forces to uphold the Constitution, laws, military regulations and humanitarian values, stressing that discipline, professionalism and public trust are essential to their strength.

Speaking at a ceremony at Savar Cantonment on Sunday, where several Bangladesh Army battalions and regiments received the National Standard, he called for modernisation, stronger domestic defence production and improved technological capabilities.

Rahman said modern warfare increasingly involved drones, artificial intelligence, cyberspace, electronic warfare and other advanced technologies. He stressed the need to strengthen cooperation among the Army, Navy and Air Force to address changing security challenges.



**Pay and allowances for the armed forces up 100 to 138 per cent under the National Pay Scale, the PM said**

He said the government was prioritising domestic production of weapons, ammunition and other defence equipment while improving military personnel's welfare through housing, healthcare, education, training and retirement benefits.

According to the prime minister, the salaries and allowances of armed forces members had gone up by 100 to 138 per cent under the National Pay Scale. The government was also implementing the "One Rank, One Pension" system.

The Army's 9th Infantry Division hosted the ceremony, which was attended by ministers, the Army chief, military officers, diplomats and other personnel.

# Sri Lanka seeks police probe into tusker's death

**COLOMBO**

Sri Lanka's Environment Ministry has asked the police to launch an immediate and thorough investigation into the death of Kavanthissa, a widely respected wild tusker, and suspected organised activities targeting elephants across the country.

Kavanthissa, a huge elephant more than 10 feet tall with tusks longer than six feet, was found collapsed on Friday in the Siyambalangamuwa area of North Western Province. He had a gunshot wound to his right front leg and died later while being treated.

Officials said dehydration contributed to his death as he struggled to recover from the injury. His death has triggered widespread public concern and grief across Sri Lanka.

**? KAVANTHISSA**
**The tusker stood over 10 feet tall, with tusks of more than six feet, and ranged across the Galgamuwa area.**

In a formal written request, the ministry urged the police to determine whether an organised group was involved in the killing of wild elephants, including Kavanthissa. It also called for those responsible to be identified and brought to justice.

The ministry stressed the need for a transparent investigation and requested regular updates on its progress and legal action against suspects.

It said deliberate elephant killings through shootings and other methods posed a serious threat to the country's biodiversity and wildlife heritage.

# Tugboat hit by projectiles off UAE's Khor Fakkan

**PORTSMOUTH**

A tugboat travelling southbound near Khor Fakkan port in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was struck by two unknown projectiles, sustaining damage and leaving one person with minor injuries, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said on Sunday.

In a statement posted on social media platform X, UKMTO said the tugboat continued its journey despite the damage. It advised vessels operating in the area to proceed with caution and report any suspicious activity while authorities investigate the incident.

The incident follows another reported attack on a vessel near Saudi Arabia. On Saturday, UKMTO received a delayed report that a tanker had been struck by an unknown projectile about 68 nautical miles northeast of Al Jubail.

The incidents come amid the ongoing conflict between the United States and Iran, with tensions affecting maritime security around the Strait of Hormuz, a key route for global oil and gas supplies.

US Vice President JD Vance recently acknowledged the impact of the conflict on fuel prices and said the US Navy was helping maintain energy shipments through the strategic waterway. He also accused Iran of trying to disrupt global energy supplies.

Meanwhile, the US military has claimed that 97 per cent of ships trying to cross the Strait of Hormuz have got through without being hit by Iranian projectiles.

The latest incidents have raised fresh concerns over the safety of commercial shipping in the region as authorities continue to monitor maritime activity and investigate reported attacks.

# LITHUANIA URGES SHELTER OVER SUSPECTED DRONE

**VILNIUS**

Lithuania told residents of its central and northern regions on Sunday to take shelter for about an hour after an unidentified flying object entered its airspace, according to the army and the national crisis management centre.

Defence Minister Robertas Kaunas said the object was likely a drone that entered from Poland. He proposed a joint investigation with his Polish counterpart to establish the circumstances.

NATO fighter jets were sent to the area during the red alert, and Kaunas Airport was closed for a time. Because of cloud cover, however, the pilots could not see the object and made no attempt to shoot it down.

Lithuanian troops began examining possible drone debris near the northern village of Juodzionys. Defence Minister Kaunas said some debris had hit a civilian vehicle. A NATO official said two Italian Eurofighter jets had been scrambled in response. The alliance said an investigation had begun and that it was in close contact with the Lithuanian authorities.



Neighbouring Latvia also put out a brief yellow air warning in some areas along its border with Lithuania, citing a possible threat. The incident follows repeated reports of Ukrainian drones straying into NATO airspace in the Baltic region.

**IRAN REJECTS US COERCION**

# *Iran ready for talks with guarantees: Araghchi*

**BAGHDAD**

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said Tehran remains ready for dialogue based on credible guarantees but will not accept coercion, threats or intimidation amid the ongoing conflict with the United States.

Speaking at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers meeting, Araghchi accused Washington of choosing aggression, threats, assassinations and economic pressure instead of diplomacy. He said Iran would not give up its sovereign rights under pressure and called for mutual respect in any negotiations.

Araghchi also met Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi on the sidelines of the meeting, Iran's IRNA news agency reported.

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian said separately that Tehran would not give in to what he called the excesses of aggressor countries.

Meanwhile, Deputy Foreign Minister Saeed Khatibzadeh said lasting peace in the region needed an end to hostilities on all fronts. He warned that continued fighting would drag out the wider conflict.

Khatibzadeh named an end to the Israeli war on Lebanon as an important objective and referred to the Islamabad memorandum of understanding that Iran and the United States signed in June. He said Lebanon was also among the key issues the two countries had discussed.

Separately, Iran's parliament voted to approve Mehrdad Akhlaghi Ketabchi as the new defence minister.



At a campaign rally in Kentucky on Saturday, US President Donald Trump expressed confidence that the conflict with Iran would end quickly. He also predicted that fuel prices in the United States would fall below previous levels once hostilities ended.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- → Araghchi: ready for dialogue with credible guarantees
- → Tehran rejects US coercion and economic pressure
- → Parliament approves Mehrdad Akhlaghi as defence minister
- → Deputy minister calls for an end to hostilities on all fronts
- → OIC foreign ministers meet in Baghdad
- → Trump predicts the conflict will end quickly

The statements came amid continuing tensions and differing positions on diplomacy, regional security and efforts to end the conflict.

CITY HILIGHTS
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# SHREYAS IYER WINS T20I IMPACT MEDAL

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Indian cricket captain Shreyas Iyer has been officially awarded the prestigious Impact Player of the Series medal following a fiercely contested multi-match international series against the West Indies. The five-match Twenty20 international series concluded in a tense two-all draw after persistent rain forced the series-deciding final match at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru to be completely washed out.

The celebratory medal presentation took place inside the team dressing room and was captured in an exclusive behind-the-scenes video released by the Board of Control for Cricket in India. Team training assistant Nuwan Seneviratne presented the accolade to the skipper, praising his phenomenal leadership and stellar athletic contributions throughout the campaign. Seneviratne highlighted Iyer's remarkable milestone of scoring his maiden T20I century, noting that he is now part of an elite group of Indian batsmen who have recorded centuries across all three major international formats.

Iyer delivered a series of extraordinary performances with the bat, finishing as one of the leading run-scorers with 181 runs across five innings at an impressive batting average of 45.25 and an explosive strike rate exceeding 200. His standout knock came during the opening fixture in Lucknow, where his brilliant century anchored the team's victory. Although India secured wins in the first and third matches, the resilient West Indies squad bounced back strongly to claim victories in the second and fourth games. With the score tied, the final showdown was abandoned due to heavy downpours, resulting in both national teams sharing the championship trophy.

Following the conclusion of the home series, the Indian squad prepares for an upcoming overseas tour to New Zealand for another five-match T20I series. The action kicks off with back-to-back encounters at the Hagley Oval in Christchurch later this week, followed by matches in Wellington, Auckland, and Hamilton. Team management hopes Iyer's stellar form will continue as the squad shifts its focus to international challenges abroad.




Indian cricket captain Shreyas Iyer won the Impact Player award following a drawn T20I series against West Indies.

# SAMSON'S MATCH-WINNING KNOCKS KEEP SOORYAVANSHI WAITING: NAYAR

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Former Indian assistant coach Abhishek Nayar has weighed in on intense national selection debates, asserting that experienced wicketkeeper-batsman Sanju Samson's ability to deliver crucial match-winning innings under immense pressure will likely keep teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi waiting for a place in the playing XI during the upcoming Twenty20 series against New Zealand.

Samson's fluctuating form has frequently sparked widespread public debate regarding his long-term viability in the national setup, with many pundits and fans championing young batting prodigy Sooryavanshi as a ready-made replacement.

However, analyzing the delicate psychological dynamics of modern cricket management, Nayar emphasized that Samson possesses a unique knack for silencing his harshest critics just in the nick of time.

> *Samson possesses a unique knack for silencing his harshest critics just in the nick of time*

Speaking in a detailed interview on broadcaster JioStar, Nayar explained that Samson plays with the emotions of fans and analysts alike.

Just when collective calls grow loudest for his exclusion following a string of low scores, the dynamic Kerala batsman invariably responds with an explosive knock, justifying his place in the playing eleven.

Beyond individual scorecards, Nayar stressed that selection committees must weigh broader tactical considerations, specifically highlighting the critical strategic importance of maintaining a balanced left-right batting combination at the crease.

Keeping a right-handed anchor in the middle-order is vital to prevent opposition spin bowlers, such as New Zealand's clever operators, from dominating the crucial powerplay overs.

Disrupting team harmony with erratic changes could damage overall squad culture, meaning young talents must be introduced carefully when conditions and rotational rests permit.

Looking ahead to the upcoming overseas bilateral contest in New Zealand, Nayar also issued a strong warning regarding explosive Kiwi opening batsman Finn Allen. Given the notoriously compact boundaries and favorable batting pitches across New Zealand venues, Allen's aggressive power-hitting style poses a severe threat.

His capacity to clear the ropes with ease rather than settling for standard boundaries could test Indian bowling attacks to their absolute limits.







# PUJARA PRAISES DHIR'S INNINGS PREPARATION

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

**Dismissing such performances as mere luck ignores the intense dedication needed**

Former Indian batsman Cheteshwar Pujara has heaped high praise on emerging utility player Naman Dhir following his sensational and explosive cameo during India's rain-shortened Twenty20 international series decider against the West Indies at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru.

Dhir delivered a breathtaking exhibition of power-hitting in the match, which was reduced to a nine-over sprint due to heavy rain. Coming in late under immense pressure, the dynamic batsman hammered an unbeaten twenty-four runs off just six deliveries, maintaining an astronomical strike rate of four hundred with one four, three sixes and two singles.

Analyzing the stunning knock, Pujara emphasized that making boundary-hitting look effortless against international bowling attacks requires an enormous amount of mental focus, hard work, and rigorous behind-the-scenes preparation. When a specialist finisher walks out with zero time to settle in, they must rely entirely on muscle memory and tactical clarity to make an immediate impact. Pujara noted that dismissing such performances as mere luck ignores the intense dedication needed to succeed in high-pressure finishing roles.

Beyond individual batting brilliance, Pujara also turned his attention to broader strategic questions facing the national selection committee, specifically regarding spin bowling combinations in the shortest format. In modern Twenty20 cricket, where small boundaries and aggressive batting can easily punish slow bowlers, maintaining player confidence is crucial. A single expensive spell yielding forty to fifty runs can severely dent a spinner's morale, an issue that has affected frontline wrist-spinners in the past.

Pujara urged the team management to clearly identify their preferred spin options for the upcoming years and offer them unconditional backing within the larger squad framework. While mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy has cemented his status, selectors must carefully evaluate whether to invest long-term trust in established stars like Kuldeep Yadav or explore alternative prospects like Ravi Bishnoi if form fluctuates.

Giving players definitive communication regarding their standing in the squad, even when rotational conditions bench them, helps build psychological resilience.

As India prepares to embark on upcoming overseas bilateral tours, striking the right balance between explosive lower-order depth and a confident, settled spin attack will remain central to the team's ongoing white-ball success.

**Pujara's spin question**

1. Varun Chakravarthy has cemented his status
2. Long-term trust in Kuldeep Yadav?
3. Or Ravi Bishnoi, if form fluctuates



**24 NOT OUT OFF SIX BALLS**

NAMAN DHIR: ONE FOUR, THREE SIXES AND TWO SINGLES




# India obsessed with Hardik successor, says Gavaskar

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Legendary Indian opening batsman Sunil Gavaskar has offered a sharp critique of the team's tactical strategy following the conclusion of India's hard-fought, rain-marred five-match Twenty20 international series against the West Indies, which ended in a 2-2 deadlock.

Reflecting on lessons learned from the home campaign, Gavaskar cautioned national selectors and team management against becoming overly obsessed with the elusive search for a direct, carbon-copy replacement for star seam-bowling all-rounder Hardik Pandya.

In his expert view, Pandya possesses a rare, elite combination of pace bowling and explosive lower-order finishing that makes him fundamentally irreplaceable in modern international cricket.

Rather than chasing an impossible replica, Gavaskar urged the selection committee to adjust their tactical blueprint by utilizing players who can fulfill the team's balance requirements through alternative skill sets.

Rain cut the series finale at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru to nine overs a side, and the match was finally abandoned with India on 118 for five after 7.4 overs.

Short as the action was, the series let the selectors look closely at new players. Young fast bowlers Mayank Yadav and Prince Yadav did well with the ball, but all-rounder Naman Dhir was the find of the tour.

In Bengaluru he struck three huge sixes in a six-ball cameo, to go with the tidy off-spin he had bowled in the earlier games.

Analyzing India's overarching team composition, Gavaskar stressed the vital importance of maintaining a conventional bowling core.

He argued that the national side must always field at least four specialized, frontline bowlers, utilizing all-rounders strictly as the fifth and sixth bowling options rather than compromising bowling depth for extra batting cushion.

"We sometimes get a little bit carried away with trying to find a replacement for Hardik Pandya.

# *Tejaswini wins gold with record throw*

A talented young athlete from the region has brought immense pride to her university by delivering a stellar performance on the track and field. Kum. Tejaswini C. secured a prestigious gold medal and shattered a long-standing athletic record during a major regional sports competition held earlier this month.

The remarkable achievement took place at the 97th University Annual Inter-collegiate Athletics Championship, hosted at the Ovals ground on October eighth.

Competing against top student athletes from various colleges, Tejaswini dominated the discus throw event with an incredible display of strength and technique. She threw the discus an astounding distance of 42.14 meters, easily outpacing her competitors and setting a brand new meet record that will be remembered for years to come.

Her phenomenal victory is the result of years of dedicated training and expert guidance.

University athletics coach and assistant director Ravi T.S., who also serves as her basic fitness mentor, praised her relentless hard work.

Additionally, her specialized throwing coach, national-level shot putter and former university record holder Mohankumar, alongside international veteran athlete M.P. Chandrashekar, played a crucial role in sharpening her athletic skills.






Academic leaders and sports department officials, including Department of Physical Education Director Professor Revanasiddappa and Manasagangothri Education Department lecturer Dr. Kumar S.K., extended their heartfelt congratulations to the champion. They commended her discipline and determination, wishing her even greater success in upcoming state and national sporting competitions.

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