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J&K BELONGS TO INDIA: US

US envoy Sergio Gor visits Srinagar; hails improving security situation in valley, says US will reconsider downgrading its highest-level travel warning for J&K.

SRINAGAR

In a strong endorsement of India's longstanding position on Jammu and Kashmir, US Ambassador Sergio Gor on Wednesday called the Union Territory "an important part of India" during his first visit to Srinagar.

Gor's remark came after he met J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, marking the first standalone trip by a US envoy to the Union Territory since the abrogation of Article 370 and after the Pahalgam attack.

"It is a pleasure to be here... This is an important part of India. I am here, visiting for the first time. It is an incredibly beautiful place. I am thrilled to be here, thrilled to see this place," Gor said. His statement will be seen globally as a big shout-out to India's position that J&K is an inalienable and integral part of the country amid Pakistan's repeated misadventures in the region.

Hints at reducing J&K travel advisory

The envoy also indicated that the US could reconsider its travel warning for J&K, which currently carries a Level 4 "Do Not Travel" advisory because of terrorism and civil unrest.

Eastern Ladakh and Leh are excluded from the advisory.

"Every so often we re-evaluate those travel warnings. I cannot make any big announcements here today, but it is something we're going to look at," Gor said.

"I think a lot of Americans would enjoy coming here and



'Washington won't solve our problems'

Earlier in the day, Omar Abdullah refused to hype up the visit, saying he would not be raising any complaints about Kashmir with the US envoy. Since his National Conference (NC) came to power in J&K, Abdullah has been persistently demanding the restoration of J&K's statehood, which was. "Washington won't solve our problems; the Centre will. I would rather listen to him instead of complaining," Abdullah told reporters. He said it was not his habit to complain about the country's problems to the envoy of another country. "Our problems are not his concern," he added.

seeing the beauty and opportunity that exists here," he added.

He said the J&K government had taken "incredible steps" towards improving security and making the region safer, adding that Washington would examine whether the existing warning should be downgraded.

Prior to Gor's visit, former chief minister and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti had urged Gor to review and withdraw it, saying it was affecting families dependent on tourism.

Gor-Omar meet

The US envoy, widely credited for the turnaround in US-India ties following last year's strain, also held bilateral talks with Abdullah. In an X post, Gor said the talks focused on Abdullah's "priorities" for Kashmir and ways to deepen economic collaboration.

Gor, who is also US President Donald Trump's Special Envoy for South and Central Asia, tweeted, "We discussed ways to deepen economic collaboration and create opportunities that would mutually benefit both of our nations."

Abdullah, on his part, said the discussions centred on deepening engagement with the US on tourism, horticulture and the new economy.

"It was a very good meeting... There are obviously certain legacy issues that over time we will be working to resolve. We are hopeful that the engagement between the US and J&K will both widen and deepen in the years ahead," the Chief Minister underscored.

Next stop Ladakh

On Thursday, Gor will travel to Ladakh, which will again be a

Visit highlights

DIPLOMATIC STANCE

Ambassador Gor affirmed India's position while speaking to reporters in Srinagar.

TRAVEL ADVISORY REVIEW

He indicated that Washington plans to re-evaluate and potentially review its highest-level Level 4 travel advisory for the region.

SECURITY RECOGNITION

He acknowledged the steps taken by the central and regional governments to improve safety and foster local stability.

first visit by a US envoy to the region following the 2020 Galwan clashes and the border standoff with China. It also comes at a time when the neighbouring Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir is on the boil amid violent protests by residents over excesses by the army. There is also speculation that Gor could interact with representatives of trade bodies and members of civil society during his stay in Srinagar. However, there is no official confirmation yet.

Why Gor's Kashmir visit is important?

The visit comes against the backdrop of a deepening India-US strategic tie and follows recent interactions between Gor and Home Minister Amit Shah on counter-terrorism. The visit of the US envoy is historic on several counts. Significantly, this will be the first meeting between a serving US ambassador and a sitting J&K CM in more than 15 years. The last such meeting was in 2011, when then US envoy Timothy Roemer met Abdullah.

CWC meet: 'Modi govt 'ruined' future of youth'

It's time for Cong to prepare roadmap for youth: Kharge

NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday accused the Modi government of "destroying" the future of students and asserted that the time has come for the Congress to formulate a comprehensive 'Education-to-Employment Roadmap' for the youth.

In his opening remarks at the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting at the Indira Bhawan here, Kharge also questioned the "silence" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the alleged theft of Ram temple donations and demanded that the PM apologise for it and answer to the people.

"Over the last 12 years, the Modi government has devastated the future of the youth. Instead of new schools opening, 94,000 schools have closed in recent years. Driven by the race for privatisation, higher education is becoming increasingly expensive and out of reach for ordinary families." He alleged that educational institutions are increasingly being taken over by RSS people.

"Even after studying, our young people face paper leaks, irregularities in recruitment examinations and delays in appointments. The worst affected in this are children from poor backgrounds. That is why the anger rising among the youth across the country is not a one-day affair. This government has never had the time to listen



India is one of the youngest countries in the world, yet our young people are struggling to find quality education and meaningful employment. In the last 12 years, the Modi government has ruined the future of the youth.

-Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress president

LS strength should be fixed at 543 for next 25 years: Cong

New Delhi: Congress on Wednesday made it clear that it is not for any increase in the number of Lok Sabha seats from the existing 543 for the next 25 years, as the Modi government insists on amending the Constitution for a new delimitation regime in which the number rises up to 850. The party's stand came at a nearly four-hour-long meeting of the Congress Working Committee chaired by party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and attended by senior leaders like Sonia, Rahul, KC Venugopal, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra among others. Congress General Secretary (Organisation) Venugopal told a press conference that there was a "detailed" discussion on delimitation and the party is for a "freeze" on 543 seats for the next 25 years and implementation of the 33% women's quota in the existing strength of Lok Sabha. He also referred to a resolution recently passed by Tamil Nadu Assembly on similar lines. The Modi government had attempted to pass the Bill to amend the Constitution to increase the number of seats to 850 in Lok Sabha in April but it could not muster two-third majority then.

Miscreants blow up several anti-poaching camps in K'taka

8 anti-poaching camps have been blown up so far in the Cauvery wildlife sanctuary.

MYSURU/BENGALURU

Unidentified miscreants allegedly blew up several anti-poaching camps in the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) in Chamarajanagar using explosives, Forest department sources said on Wednesday.

The attacks come amid continuing anger against the Forest Department following the killing of three 'poachers' in an exchange of fire on August 15.

The Minchinarehalla anti-poaching camp in the Kothanur zone was reportedly destroyed using dynamite and gelatin sticks. The intensity of the blast damaged the camp walls and burnt materials kept inside, sources added.

Several other anti-poaching camps in the Kothanur zone Minchinahalli, Bheemeshwari, Ollamarada Hatti, Budikere, Bandahalli and Kalidoddi were also targeted in the intervening night of August 18-19. There were no injuries to anyone.

The three men - Anthony Samy, John Rose Peter and Kumar from villages in Hanur taluk of Chamarajanagar district, were shot dead by forest personnel CWS area.

According to Karnataka authorities, forest personnel conducting an anti-poaching operation after receiving information about suspected wildlife poaching came under fire from the group, following which the personnel allegedly fired in self-defence.

The issue has echoed in neighbouring Tamil Nadu, with political parties claiming



the victims were Tamils and had questioned the Karnataka officials' explanation over the firing incident.

Following the incident, Tamil Nadu CM Vijay strongly condemned the alleged killings and said the explanation given by the Karnataka Forest Department regarding the incident is unacceptable.

A fair probe should be conducted by a high-level committee on the heinous incident, he had said in a social media post late on Sunday. The issue also came up in the TN Assembly on Tuesday, with members moving a call attention motion demanding a high-level probe into the forest department firing incident.

Incident overview
Location: Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary (Hanur and Kothanur ranges, near the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border).
Timeline: Blasts and ransacking began around Aug 15, 2026, coming to light over subsequent days as authorities inspected remote forest outposts.
Target: At least 6 anti-poaching camps (including those at Minchinarehalla, Minchanahalli and Ollamaradahatti) were damaged or blown up using gelatin sticks.
Casualties: No forest personnel were hurt, as camps were vacant during the aftermath of the initial shootout.
Response and probe
Suspected motive Officials believe local villagers and associates of poachers, who were killed in forest encounter, carried out the retaliatory strikes.
Official action Chief Minister DK Shivakumar confirmed that a comprehensive investigation is underway, with Forest Minister Ramalinga Reddy closely overseeing the security situation and field inspections.

DKS: Hanur shootout case under detailed probe

BENGALURU: Reacting to the developments, Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday said the August 15 Hanur shootout case is being investigated thoroughly and the government will respond only after the inquiry is completed.

Speaking to reporters near his Sadashivanagar residence, the CM said he would not comment on the incident until the investigation report is received.

When asked whether the recent gelatin blast at anti-poaching camps in the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary could

be linked to poachers from Tamil Nadu, Shivakumar said he also received some information, but declined to speculate.

"We are not going to speak about it now. They are giving various pieces of information, but an investigation is underway. We are going very deep into the matter. Let the report come after the investigation, and then I will speak about it," he said.

"Our Forest Minister is also already conducting a very detailed inquiry into the matter. We will share the details after the report is submitted," he said," he added.



9 charred to death in Kolkata hotel fire

Kolkata: At least nine people, including five Bangladeshi nationals, were killed and six injured after a massive fire broke out at a hotel in Kolkata in an early Wednesday fire at a dingy five-storey building housing hotels on Mirza Galib Street in central Kolkata.

A child was among those killed in the blaze. Four out of the five Bangladeshi victims belonged to the same family. They had travelled to Kolkata for medical treatment. An official said 80 people have been rescued from the five-storey building. Fire Department Minister Kaushik Chowdhury after visiting the site said the deceased include both Indians and Bangladeshi nationals.

CM orders SIT probe

West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari ordered the formation of a five-member special investigation team (SIT) immediately to conduct a comprehensive inquiry into this incident.

'Want to protest? Come to the well': Speaker Patil to Oppn

BENGALURU

Assembly Speaker GS Patil on Wednesday asked the BJP and JD(S) MLAs to stage their protest in the well of the House, and not from allotted seats, drawing a sharp response from the Opposition benches.

The Opposition has been protesting in the Assembly since Monday seeking the dismissal of Planning and Statistics Minister B Nagendra, who is facing corruption charges. However, BJP legislators have so far been staging their protest from near their allotted seats instead of entering the well of the House.

Amid a verbal duel between the Treasury and Opposition benches, Patil stood up from his chair in an attempt to restore order. The House soon fell silent and members returned to their seats. "We respect you. If you stand, all of us will sit. You are an independent member. We will listen to you. But we won't listen to Congress," LoP Ashoka said, addressing the Speaker.

Patil then told the House that, being a new Speaker, he had refrained from strictly enforcing the rule book during the first two days while allowing the Opposition to protest over its demand. "But you cannot protest by standing and shouting from your seats. If you want to protest, come to the well of the House," he said. In reply, BJP MLA V Sunil Kumar said, "You are the first Speaker inviting the Opposition to the well. No other Speaker has extended such an invitation."

Home Minister Priyank Kharge, jumping to defend the Speaker, asked the opposition, "under which rule are you standing near allotted seats and shouting slogans. If you want to protest, come to the well." To this few BJP members including CN Ashwath Narayan said, "Let Priyank Kharge say, how did Rahul Gandhi and Congress protest in the Parliament recently? They too protested from allotted seats and did not allow the House to function."

Shah to chair meeting of southern CMs in TN today

CHENNAI: Home Minister Amit Shah will chair the two-day South Zone Chief Ministers' Conference to be held at a private hotel in Mamallapuram starting Thursday.

Karnataka CM DK Shivakumar, Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu, Telangana CM A Revanth Reddy, Kerala CM VD Satheesan, Puducherry CM N Rangasamy and Tamil Nadu CM Vijay will attend.

Issues related to the southern states will be taken up for discussion. The conference aims at ironing out differences among the states and finding amicable solutions to inter-state issues for collective growth across various spheres.

The meet gains significance due to the decades-old Cauvery water and Mokedatu row, as the Karnataka govt is aggressively pushing to build a reservoir across the Cauvery at Mokedatu while failing to comply with Supreme Court orders to release Tamil Nadu's due share of water.

'PLUG NEET LOOPHOLES'

SC seeks Centre report on NTA reform update

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Centre to inform it about the steps taken to implement the recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Committee and the Nandan Nilekani-led task force, observing that reforms in the National Testing Agency (NTA) need to be institutionalised.

A bench of Justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe said the NTA must be equipped with adequate infrastructure, manpower and technological capabilities to conduct entrance examinations smoothly and securely. The seven-member Radhakrishnan Committee was constituted by the Ministry of



Education following the NEET-UG paper leak allegations to recommend reforms in the examination process, strengthen data security protocols and review the structure and functioning of the NTA.

The government had also constituted a high-powered task force headed by Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani to recommend structural reforms in competitive examinations.

"The Radhakrishnan Committee has correctly said it is a

systemic problem which needs institutionalisation, which is the most important part of it," the bench observed.

The court noted that while processes may appear robust on paper, their effectiveness can change from one examination to another without proper institutionalisation.

The bench was informed that the committee constituted for reforms had considered various recommendations, including the use of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain to strengthen the security and integrity of examinations.

The court directed the Secretary concerned to file an affidavit detailing the steps taken to

Radhakrishnan panel

The seven-member Radhakrishnan Committee was set up by the Union education ministry in the wake of the NEET-UG paper leak to recommend reforms in the examination process, improvement in data security protocols and changes in the structure and functioning of the NTA. The Centre had also constituted a high-powered task force led by Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani for structural reforms in competitive examinations.

implement the recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Committee, as further refined by the Nandan Nilekani committee. The affidavit, along with indicative timelines, has to be filed within three weeks.

Quick Read



Couple rescued from lift in Indiranagar

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A couple trapped inside a lift at Vishal Mega Mart on Thippasandra Main Road was rescued swiftly by Indiranagar police. The couple, trapped due to a technical malfunction around 11.53 pm, alerted the Namma-112 emergency helpline. The information was relayed to ASI Guruswamy N. and Head Constable Muthanna K., who were patrolling in Hoysala-30. The officers reached the spot within six minutes and found the lift stalled on the fourth floor with its doors locked. Coordinating with mall staff and security personnel, they rectified the problem and opened the doors. The couple was rescued safely without injuries, highlighting the prompt and coordinated response of Bengaluru City Police and Namma-112.

18.6% of Bengaluru sites inaccessible to PwDs

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Nearly one in five locations assessed in Bengaluru were found inaccessible to persons with disabilities (PwDs), according to 16,265 assessments under the Association for People with Disability's (APD) 'Yes To Access' initiative. The community-powered platform found gaps including inaccessible parking at 11,530 locations, lack of approach signage at 6,106, tactile pathways at 4,819, ramps at 3,740 and accessible toilets at 3,068. Educational and research institutes recorded the highest inaccessibility at 20%, followed by hotels at 19.6% and retail and commercial spaces at 19.5%. APD said accessibility must be planned from the design stage, with mandatory audits, better enforcement, accessible footpaths and crossings, and greater representation of PwDs in infrastructure planning.

North City Corporation launches weekly phone-in

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar has launched the weekly initiative to improve citizen services and provide residents with direct access to the civic administration. The first programme will be held on Friday, August 21, from 7 am to 9 am. Citizens can raise issues concerning potholes and road repairs, streetlight maintenance, door-to-door garbage collection, hazardous trees and branches, mosquito control, stray dogs, parks, unauthorised

B'luru-Chennai Expressway faces legal roadblock

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A legal dispute over a stalled Tamil Nadu package is delaying the Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway, though most of the corridor is nearing completion. Work on the Arakkonam-Kanchipuram stretch in Tamil Nadu has remained stalled at 53% since May 2025 after the concessionaire stopped construction, citing financial constraints. The National Highways Authority of India subsequently initiated termination proceedings against the contractor. However, the Madras High Court directed NHAI to maintain status quo on termination, leaving the matter sub judice with orders reserved.



Nagendra seeks resignations of 126 BJP ministers

Nagendra challenges BJP demands, citing criminal cases against ministers and accusing Opposition of politically targeting him.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Minister B Nagendra hit back at the Opposition on Wednesday, demanding resignations of BJP ministers facing criminal cases across the country. Planning, Monitoring and Statistics Minister B Nagendra launched a sharp counter-attack against the BJP and JD(S), which have been demanding his resignation and disrupting the Monsoon Session over his re-induction into the Karnataka Cabinet. Nagendra claimed that 126 of the 326 BJP ministers across the country had criminal cases against them, including serious charges such as murder, rape and kidnapping. He questioned why the Opposition was targeting him while allegedly ignoring ministers facing criminal cases. Nagendra was dropped from the Siddaramaiah Cabinet in 2024 following allegations of irregularities in the

NAGENDRA HITS BACK

326: BJP ministers cited by Nagendra

126: BJP ministers he claimed face criminal cases

26: NDA Union ministers he claimed have charges

Aug 3: Nagendra re-inducted into K'taka Cabinet

2024: Nagendra dropped from Cabinet

"If the court rules I am convict and says I have wronged, I am ready to accept any punishment."

-B Nagendra, Planning, Monitoring & Statistics Minister

Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation. Though the Karnataka SIT cleared him, the ED and CBI have chargesheeted him in connection with the case. He is currently out on bail. The BJP and JD(S) combine has strongly opposed his

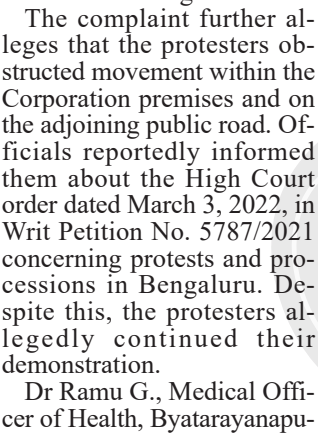
re-induction into the Cabinet on August 3 and has disrupted proceedings, insisting that he be removed before allowing normal legislative business. Nagendra, who belongs to the Valmiki Scheduled Tribe community, accused the BJP of using Central investigative agencies to level politically

Hotel licence protest leads to FIR

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A protest over rejection of a hotel licence outside the Bengaluru North City Corporation office has led to an FIR. A police case has been registered after a protest was held outside the Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) office over rejection of permission for a proposed hotel business in a residential area. M Y Basappa, a Kodigehalli resident, had applied on June 24 for permission to operate R.P. Restaurant. Following verification, the Corporation issued an endorsement on August 11 stating that the premises falls in a residential area and the road is only 7.2 metres wide. Earlier, Basappa had applied on October 27, 2025, for a licence for R.P. Bar and Restaurant and Boarding and Lodging (CL-7). Residents and the local residents' association objected to the proposal. The application was subsequently rejected on November 14, 2025, under provisions of the BBMP Act, 2020, citing the residential zoning of the

premises. According to the police complaint, Santosh and others, allegedly representing Basappa, staged a protest near the gate of the BNCC Commissioner's Office on August 18 between noon and 2.30 pm. The protesters allegedly raised slogans against the Corporation Commissioner, officials and the government. The complaint further alleges that the protesters obstructed movement within the Corporation premises and on the adjoining public road. Officials reportedly informed them about the High Court order dated March 3, 2022, in Writ Petition No. 5787/2021 concerning protests and processions in Bengaluru. Despite this, the protesters allegedly continued their demonstration. Dr Ramu G., Medical Officer of Health, Byatarayanapu-



Why was the licence rejected?

The proposed premises is located in a residential area, while the connecting road is 7.2 metres wide. The Corporation had earlier rejected an application for an R.P. Bar and Restaurant and Boarding and Lodging licence after residents and their association raised objections. The latest application for R.P. Restaurant was also denied based on applicable regulations. A protest against the decision subsequently resulted in a police complaint and FIR.

Hotel licence protest

- June 24: Application submitted for hotel business
- August 11: Corporation rejected permission
- 7.2 metres: Road width at the proposed site
- 12 noon-2.30 pm: Duration of August 18 protest
- 5-6: Others named in the complaint

ra Division, lodged a complaint at Amruthahalli Police Station seeking action against Santosh and around five to six others. Police have registered a case at Amruthahalli Police Station and launched an investigation.

Speaker assures support for K'taka's bioenergy initiatives



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

S. E. Sudheendra, Chairman of the Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board, met Karnataka Assembly Speaker G. S. Patil and congratulated him on assuming office as the newly elected Speaker. During the meeting, Sudheendra briefed him on the Board's ongoing bioenergy programmes and sought his cooperation for their implementation, as well as for the proposed new Bioenergy Policy. He said Karnataka has abundant bio-resources that can be used to produce bio-briquettes, bio-pellets, biodiesel, biochar, biocoal, green hydrogen and compressed biogas (CBG). Sudheendra stressed the need for a comprehensive policy to attract investors and establish high-capacity bioenergy production units in Karnataka. He also said the proposed policy would facilitate access to grants available under the Union Government's CBG initiatives and expressed hope that it would receive speedy approval. The Speaker congratulated Sudheendra on his efforts to promote sustainable bioenergy and assured him of full cooperation for the Board's programmes. Patil also expressed hope that Karnataka would emerge as a model for the country in developing a clean-energy ecosystem and wished the Board success in expanding the State's bioenergy sector.

Karnataka to form SIT to probe spurious drug racket

Karnataka plans an SIT probe after authorities uncovered a Rs 5-crore spurious drug racket near Bengaluru.



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka government plans an SIT probe into a suspected spurious drug network uncovered during a raid near Bengaluru on Wednesday. The Karnataka government is likely to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT), comprising police officers and health officials, to investigate the supply chain of spurious drugs seized at Bidadi near Bengaluru. The Food and Drugs Administration (FDA), acting on a tip-off, raided a farmhouse at Kurubarakeranahalli and uncovered an unlicensed pharmaceutical repacking and re-labelling operation. Officials seized drugs worth around Rs 5 crore. According to the department, the spurious drugs were supplied from Himachal Pradesh and Telangana. At the farmhouse, the drugs were allegedly filled into new vials and re-labelled to resemble expensive multinational brands, including Pfizer, Eucratia Healthcare Private Ltd and Welcure Remedies. Officials said the seized drugs either contained no active medicinal ingredients, wrong ingredients or potentially harmful substances. The scanning codes printed on the labels were also found to be non-functional.

- Rs 5 crore:** Approximate value of drugs seized
- 2 states:** Himachal Pradesh and Telangana linked to supply
- 1:** Worker arrested so far
- Bidadi:** Location of the farmhouse raid
- SIT:** Proposed team to probe the supply chain

The farmhouse is owned by Siddaiah and was reportedly leased to Prashanth, who resides in Dubai. The operation was allegedly run by Tejas, while police have arrested Prabhu Dev Gowda, one of the workers at the facility. However, officials are yet to identify the pharmacies, hospitals and other establishments where the counterfeit drugs may have been supplied. Health and Family Welfare Minister U T Khader said he had spoken to the Home Minister about setting up the SIT. He said the investigation would examine the logistics, middlemen and entire supply chain and that other states would also be alerted. Khader said similar operations could be taking place elsewhere in Karnataka and assured that the matter would be thoroughly investigated.

Tough punishment for spurious drugs

Under Section 17B of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, spurious drugs attract stringent punishment. Manufacturing, selling, stocking or distributing such drugs can invite imprisonment ranging from a minimum of 10 years to life. The seized stock will be produced before the JMFC court in Bengaluru South. Officials are also investigating where the counterfeit medicines were supplied and whether similar operations are active elsewhere in Karnataka.

Gym essential for urban youth: Somasekhar

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Exercise is essential for urban youth to maintain physical fitness and address lifestyle-related health concerns caused by work pressure, said Yeshwanthpur MLA S.T. Somasekhar. Speaking after inaugurating the newly opened S Class Fitness gym at Sir M. Visvesvaraya Layout in the Yeshwanthpur Assembly constituency, Somasekhar said the fast-paced lifestyle in Bengaluru had made regular exercise increasingly important for young people. He said urban youth often face long working hours, stress and lifestyle-related health problems. Regular physical activity and exercise can help them maintain a healthy body and improve their overall well-being, he added. Somasekhar urged youngsters to make fitness a regular part of their daily routine and use gym facilities to stay healthy and physically active. He said maintaining good health was important not only

for physical fitness but also for leading a productive and balanced life. He encouraged young people to pay greater attention to their health while managing work and other responsibilities. Former Ramohalli Gram Panchayat president B.H. Prabhu said regular gym workouts can contribute to better physical health and mental concentration. However, he cautioned youngsters against excessive exercise, stressing the importance of working out according to individual fitness levels and health requirements. He advised young people to use gym facilities responsibly and focus on maintaining long-term health rather than pursuing excessive physical exertion. The programme was attended by S Class Fitness gym owner Shivanna, Kengowda Ward GBA probable candidate Hanumanthagowda, Kengal Hanumanthiah Ward GBA probable candidate Chetan Gowda and Nagadevanahalli Ward GBA probable candidate Pushpa Devaraj, besides several others.

NAGESH REMEMBERED FONDLY Shivakumar pays tribute to B.C. Nagesh

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Wednesday paid tribute to former BJP minister and Tiptur MLA B.C. Nagesh, who died aged 67. Shivakumar visited the Karnataka BJP headquarters in Bengaluru to pay his last respects to Nagesh, who passed away on Tuesday following a brief illness. Describing Nagesh as an honest and simple politician, Shivakumar recalled his contributions as Education Minister. "He was an honest individual who performed excellently as Education Minister. He made significant efforts to bring discipline to the education sector," Shivakumar said.

"It is my duty to honour him, and the state will accord him full respect. This is a huge loss for his family and his party as well."

-DK Shivakumar, Karnataka CM



Nagesh served as Minister for School Education and Literacy from 2021 to 2023 in the Basavaraj Bommai-led government. He was elected twice from Tiptur Assembly constituency. Shivakumar said Nagesh had been known to him for many years and had worked closely with him on programmes at the Nonavinakere Math. The Chief Minister said it was his duty to honour Nagesh's contributions and assured that the State govern-

ment would accord him full honours. He also expressed condolences to Nagesh's family, party colleagues and admirers. Meanwhile, several BJP leaders, dignitaries and officials paid homage to Nagesh at the party headquarters. Mysuru MP Yaduveer Wadiyar

expressed grief over the veteran leader's death, recalling his contribution to public life and the BJP. Nagesh's funeral is expected to be conducted with full State honours. Shivakumar prayed for peace for the departed soul and strength for his family to bear the loss.



Nagendra must quit until cleared by ED, CBI: Ashoka

Opposition Leader R. Ashoka stepped up pressure on Minister B. Nagendra, demanding his resignation over the Valmiki Corporation case.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Opposition Leader R. Ashoka demanded Nagendra's resignation, alleging serious irregularities in Valmiki Corporation funds and questioning his reinstatement.

Ashoka said Minister B. Nagendra had not received a clean chit from either the Enforcement Directorate or the CBI and should step down until the investigations are concluded. He rejected Nagendra's claim that the Central agencies' actions were politically motivated.

Referring to the alleged Rs 187-crore Valmiki Development Corporation scam, Ashoka claimed Rs 1.2 crore was directly credited to Nagendra's bank account, while money was allegedly transferred to accounts linked to his relatives and assistant Nagaraj. He said the CBI had filed three chargesheets and described Nagendra as a key



"This is a case of directly dipping hands into the treasury and stealing. This is not just a question of one Nagendra."
-R Ashoka, Leader of Opposition

accused.

Ashoka said the funds belonged to Scheduled Castes and urged the government to appoint other Scheduled Caste legislators instead of Nagendra. He recalled that former BJP minister K.S. Es-hwarappa was not reinducted despite obtaining a clean chit after allegations against him.

He questioned how a 9,000-page chargesheet could have been filed without a detailed investigation and said the Opposition would continue demanding Nagendra's resignation.

Ashoka also criticised Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's claim of a corruption-free government, saying Nagendra's resignation would enable discussion on issues including drought, Bidadi Township, NICE and the Cauvery dispute.

Nagendra resignation demand

- Rs 187 crore: Alleged Valmiki Corporation scam
- Rs 1.2 crore: Amount Ashoka claimed was credited to Nagendra
- 9,000 pages: CBI chargesheet cited by Ashoka
- SC funds: Ashoka said the money must be protected

Narayanaswamy demands Nagendra's exit

Opposition Leader Chalavadi Narayanaswamy demanded Minister B. Nagendra's resignation, saying he should not continue while the Valmiki Corporation case remains pending. He rejected Nagendra's claim of being targeted because of his community and questioned the use of caste to defend alleged financial wrongdoing.



Dy CM urges Opposition to allow House discussions

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara urged the Opposition to cooperate in discussing Karnataka's pressing issues, including drought, drinking water shortages and people's problems, instead of disrupting proceedings.

Speaking in the Legislative Council, Parameshwara said the people were watching the proceedings and expected legislators to debate issues affecting the State. He noted that no discussions had taken place for two days because of disruptions.

"There is a drought situation in the State. In rural areas, there is no drinking water in several places, and we are supplying water through tankers. Fodder for livestock is also becoming scarce," he said.

Responding to the Opposition's objections over B. Nagendra's re-induction into the Cabinet, Parameshwara said members were free to question the decision by giving notice and raising it in the



House debate urged

- 2 days: No discussions in the House
- 75 years: Severe drought situation cited
- Key concerns: Drinking water, fodder & drought
- Next step: District reports to be compiled
- Centre: Memorandum to be submitted for drought relief

House.

He appealed to Opposition members to submit notices, raise questions and present the information they possessed, assuring them that the government would respond.

Parameshwara also said Karnataka was witnessing a severe drought after 75 years and that the government was assessing the situation across districts.

Rectify defects before handing over civic works: Lokhande

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Additional Commissioner Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar reviewed the progress and quality of road and infrastructure works being executed by B-SMILE under Bengaluru East City Corporation.

He instructed officials to rectify all defects in roads, footpaths, drainage systems and utility chambers before handing over projects to the Corporation. Works should be handed over only after achieving 100% completion and ensuring public safety.

Officials were also asked to explore utility ducts to prevent roads from being dug up again for cable and other utility works.

On drainage, the Additional Commissioner directed officials to consider future rain-fall patterns, low-lying areas and water-flow directions while designing systems. New drainage works must be properly connected to existing networks to prevent waterlogging.

Footpath projects between Varthur Kodi-HAL and Hoodi-ITPL were also reviewed.

Cong protests Kumaraswamy remarks on Sonia Gandhi

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Congress workers staged a protest in Bengaluru on Wednesday condemning Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy's alleged derogatory remarks against Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, demanding that he withdraw his comments and apologise publicly.

The protest was led by KPCC General Secretary S. Manohar, who accused Kumaraswamy of resorting to "low-level politics" by allegedly making personal re-

marks about Sonia Gandhi's background and family.

"Political differences should be criticised politically. But questioning the personal background, family and origins of a respected woman is extremely low-level politics. The Congress strongly condemns such statements," Manohar said.

He said Sonia Gandhi had served in public life for decades and alleged that Kumaraswamy's remarks reflected his political standards. Referring to Kumaraswamy's

earlier criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP, Manohar said the Union Minister should first explain his change in political position before criticising Congress leaders.

Protesters also called for respect for women in public and political discourse.

"Kumaraswamy should immediately withdraw his remarks and publicly apologise to Sonia Gandhi. Otherwise, the Congress party will continue its fight against such low-level politics," Manohar warned.



ORR road project faces industry opposition

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Industry body ORRCA has urged authorities to defer Bengaluru's Rs 450-crore ORR road project until the Blue Line becomes operational. The Outer Ring Road Companies' Association (ORRCA), representing around 500 companies and nearly 10 lakh employees, has opposed proposed white-topping and other works on the 17.1-km Central Silk Board-KR Pura

stretch. The association said simultaneous Metro construction and roadwork could worsen congestion and disrupt businesses.

It also rejected civic authorities' suggestion that companies adopt work-from-home arrangements during construction.

ORRCA said officials had assured it on August 4 that roadwork would follow consultations and Metro completion would remain the priority.



ಶ್ರೀ ಡಿ.ಕೆ. ಶಿವಕುಮಾರ್
ಸನ್ಮಾನ್ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು



ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ

ಶ್ರೀ ನಾರಾಯಣ ಗುರು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ನಿಗಮ



ಡಾ. ಜಿ. ಪರಮೇಶ್ವರ
ಮಾನ್ಯ ಉಪ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು

ಪ್ರಗತಿಪರ ಸಾಧನೆಗಳ ಸರದಾರ, ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಪರಿವರ್ತನೆಯ ಹರಿಕಾರ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಮಾಜಿ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳಾದ

ಡಿ. ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸು ಅವರ 111ನೇ ಜನ್ಮ ದಿನಾಚರಣೆ
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ಡಿ. ದೇವರಾಜ ಅರಸು ರವರ ಪ್ರತಿಮೆಗೆ ಮಾಲಾರ್ಪಣೆ

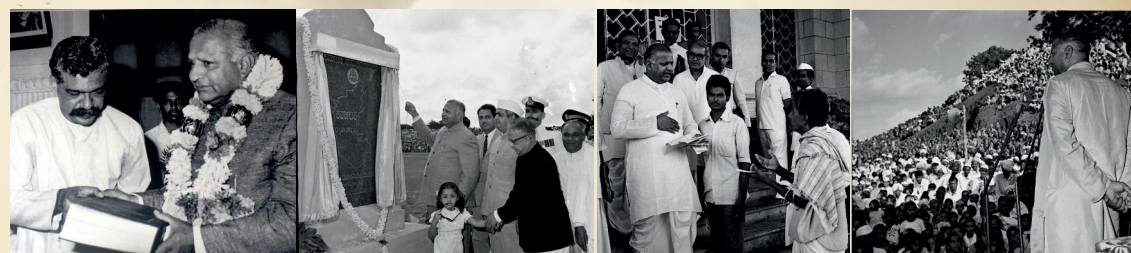
ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20.08.2026, ಗುರುವಾರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ: 10:30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ | ಸ್ಥಳ: ವಿಧಾನಸೌಧ ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ ದ್ವಾರ

ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಮಾರಂಭ

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ಮಾನ್ಯ ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಹಾಗೂ ಕನ್ನಡ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಸಚಿವರಾದ ಶ್ರೀ ಶಿವರಾಜ್ ಎಸ್.ತಂಗಡಗಿ ಅವರು ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಪ್ರಗತಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲನಾ ಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿರುವುದು.



ಸರ್ವರಿಗೂ ಅದರದ ಸುಸ್ವಾಗತ



"ನಮ್ಮ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಗೌರವಿಸುವುದು ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಪಾಡುವುದು"
- ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಬ್ಬ ಭಾರತೀಯನ ಸಂವಿಧಾನಬದ್ಧ ಮೂಲಭೂತ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯ

ಡಾ.ರಾಜೀವ್ ಎನ್.ಕೂಲೇರ
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ಶ್ರೀ ನಾರಾಯಣ ಗುರು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ನಿಗಮ

ಡಾ. ಎನ್.ವಿ.ಪ್ರಸಾದ್, ಭಾ.ಆ.ಸೇ.
ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಗಳು,
ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ

ಮಂಜುನಾಥ್ ಮೋಜಾರಿ
ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು
ಶ್ರೀ ನಾರಾಯಣ ಗುರು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ನಿಗಮ

Quick Read

Photographers Host Charity Events On Special Day

HUBBALLI
The Hubballi Photo and Videographers Association celebrated the 187th World Photography Day on Wednesday by organizing impactful community welfare programs across the city. The celebrations commenced with an energetic morning health walk titled “Walk of Smiles,” starting from the Sangolli Rayanna Circle. City photographers participated in large numbers to promote physical fitness and mental wellness among busy professionals. Later in the afternoon, association members visited the Manovikas School for Specialy-Abled Children in Gopankoppa to celebrate with the students. Member Ramesh generously sponsored a wholesome midday meal for the children. Members spent meaningful time interacting with the students and served lunch personally.

Bidar dalit group seeks land for Ambedkar Community Hall

Bidar
Karnataka Dalit Sangharsh Samiti state organising co-ordinator Maruti Boudde has demanded that the authorities allot land in Survey No. 51/1 of Kumbawada Layout for construction of an Ambedkar Community Hall. He warned that residents may intensify their protest if the demand is not addressed. Speaking at a press conference at Patrika Bhavan, Boudde said around 25 acres of government land is available in the survey area. He noted that buildings serving different communities, including temples, churches, houses and community halls, have been constructed there, but land has not been provided for an Ambedkar Bhavan.

Authorities Plan To Cancel Defunct Cooperative Societies

GADAG
The Cooperative Societies Department in Gadag has officially initiated steps to cancel the registration of eleven defunct cooperative bodies currently placed under liquidation. Officials confirmed that these defunct organizations have remained completely inactive for nearly a decade without conducting mandatory financial audits, official board elections, or statutory annual general meetings. Moreover, untraceable board executives and general members have shown no interest in reviving these local operations. Authorities have now issued a strict seven-day deadline for citizens and members to submit legitimate claims regarding pending deposits, Pigmy collections, or outstanding receivables.

Gadag residents disappointed by Ambari service shutdown

CH NEWS, Malingaraya Pujar
The much-awaited Ambari double-decker bus service in Gadag has been discontinued, leaving residents disappointed and ending hopes of offering tourists a different view of the city. The service was introduced with the aim of promoting local tourism and allowing visitors to see important places from an open rooftop. However, the ambitious plan could not continue for long. The bus has now been sent back to Mysuru, turning what was seen as a promising tourism initiative into a project that

“Dr Veerendra Heggade has empowered poor to live with dignity”

Rajeev defended the Dharmadhikari, questioning personal attacks and urging people to judge service programmes by their impact, not unsupported allegations

MYSURU

Former Mysuru Urban Development Authority chairman H.V. Rajeev has praised Dharmadhikari Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade for his selfless service and efforts to help poor people live with dignity and self-respect. Speaking at a Seva Dharma workshop organised by the Shri Kshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project B.C. Trust on Wednesday, Rajeev said the initiatives had reached people across different sections of society. He said the government had introduced several welfare schemes, including guarantee programmes, but it could not handle every social need alone. The trust, he said, had taken up work that was beyond the government’s reach. Its humane programmes include tree planting, lake and temple rejuvenation, de-addiction camps and doorstep pension services for needy people. Rajeev said visitors from other States had seen these rural development activities and asked Dr. Heggade to introduce similar programmes there. However, he said Dr. Heggade had maintained that State governments should take responsibility for



such programmes and had continued his service in Karnataka. Rajeev also questioned criticism directed at the Dharmadhikari and asked whether he should be blamed for every incident reported from Dharmasthala. He said such allegations could deeply hurt a person who had spent years working for public welfare. He stressed that service programmes should be judged by their impact on ordinary families and communities, rather than by unsupported claims or personal attacks. Inaugurating the workshop, Mysuru District Superintendent of Police Mallikarjun Baladandi urged people to give children’s education top priority and work towards a drug-free nation. He also called for public action against social problems

such as child marriage. Baladandi said women’s self-help groups in villages had valuable knowledge about local developments. If they informed the police about illegal activities, authorities could respond quickly and prevent such incidents. He encouraged people to cooperate with officials and help create safer communities for everyone. The workshop also brought together SKDRDP B.C. Trust CEO S.S. Anil Kumar, retired School Education Department director B.K. Basavaraju, former Karnataka Vishwakarma Development Corporation chairman Nandkumar, senior journalist Anshi Prasannakumar, Akhila Karnataka District Jana Jagruthi Vedike founder-president Handanahalli Somashekar and former Mayor Purushotham.

31,780 SELF-HELP GROUPS IN MYSURU DISTRICT

The Rural Development Project was launched in Mysuru district 15 years ago and currently has 31,780 self-help groups with 3,06,050 partner members. The organisation is implementing several community-oriented initiatives, including lake development, Sujnana Nidhi, scholarships, appointment of Jnanadeepa teachers, monthly financial assistance for the destitute, construction of Vatsalya homes, de-addiction camps, financial assistance and community development programmes.

District Director Vijayakumar Naganala welcomed the gathering, while Regional Director Yogesh explained the organisation’s programmes. Hundreds of participants from across Mysuru district attended the workshop, highlighting importance of service and collective action.

Global Impact Forum Links Culture With Global Growth

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The second edition of the Global Impact Forum, titled “Civilisational Legacy,” will be held in Mumbai on September 5 and 6, bringing together representatives from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Hosted by AP Globale at The Taj Mahal Palace, the two-day event will focus on culture, heritage, knowledge and creative traditions, while exploring how these shared connections can strengthen international relationships beyond politics and economics. The forum is expected to welcome around 500 delegates each day, including diplomats, business leaders, scholars, entrepreneurs, investors, cultural personalities and family offices. Discussions and workshops will highlight connections between traditions such as Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine, Kalaripayattu and Kung Fu, classical dance and Capoeira, as well as cinema, music, sports and indigenous cultures. Organisers said the programme aims to show how



knowledge and artistic traditions have crossed borders and continue to influence modern societies. South Africa’s Consul General H.E.G Labane said India and South Africa share a strong civilisational relationship that can support deeper economic cooperation. He highlighted South Africa’s critical minerals, including platinum, manganese and chrome, and India’s strengths in technology and pharmaceuticals. He said the relationship between the two countries needs faster economic action and stronger supply chains. More than 20 South African business leaders and cultural representatives are expected to participate in the Mumbai event. AP Globale Director

Janhavi Pawar said the forum would focus on similarities among BRICS nations and encourage collaboration instead of competition. The event will include an evening Gala featuring Capoeira and percussion performances, followed by Founders’ Night on the second day, where entrepreneurs, investors and family offices will connect. Venture Catalysts and VC Grid will also present six early-stage and six late-stage startups working in sectors such as electric mobility, sustainability, logistics, deep technology and rural finance. The organisers said the forum is designed to connect civilisational heritage with modern innovation and business opportunities.

“UNEMPLOYMENT IS A PROBLEM FOR THOSE WHO THINKS ITS ONLY PURPOSE OF LIFE”

MYSURU

Unemployment is considered a problem only by those who believe that having a job is the sole purpose of life. This is an illusion, said Prof. M. Krishnegowda, a retired professor. Presiding over the valedictory function of the 50-day free training camp for the K-SET and UGC-NET examinations organised by

Jnanabutti here, he said conventional degree courses offered by universities today had failed to inculcate a spirit of activity and initiative among students, leaving many of them lethargic. There were students who studied for hours with determination and dedication, almost like performing penance, but their number was small. A larger section had become accustomed to laziness and inactivity.



Protecting Bengaluru’s water bodies from pollution and disease

CH NEWS, Sanjeevini,

Once known as the “City of Lakes,” faces increasing water pollution due to rapid urbanisation and industrial growth. This study examines the major causes and consequences of water pollution, public awareness, water-borne diseases, and community-based suggestions to protect and restore the city’s water bodies. Bengaluru’s industrial growth has contributed to water pollution. Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) stated in 2021.

Affiliation between water pollution and water-borne diseases

Water pollution in Bengaluru is becoming a serious concern, with untreated industrial waste, sewage and improper disposal of household and commercial waste affecting the quality of water bodies. Industrial discharge can introduce toxic chemicals and heavy metals into rivers, lakes and other sources, creating health risks for nearby communities. Untreated sewage contains harmful microorganisms that can cause diseases such as cholera, typhoid and diarrhoea. Improper waste disposal can further contaminate surface water and create unhygienic surroundings. Groundwater is also at risk from leaking septic tanks and poor waste management, particularly in areas that depend on groundwater for drinking and household needs. Agricultural runoff containing fertilisers and pesticides can enter nearby water sources and reduce water quality. Polluted and stagnant water can become breeding grounds for mosquitoes, increasing the spread of diseases such as dengue and malaria. Poor water quality can also

contribute to gastrointestinal infections, skin problems and other health concerns. Experts stress that stronger sewage treatment, scientific waste management, effective pollution control and public awareness are essential. Protecting Bengaluru’s water resources requires coordinated action from authorities, industries, communities and residents to prevent further contamination and safeguard public health.

Stages of Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)

A Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) treats wastewater through several stages to remove solid waste, harmful microorganisms and other pollutants before the treated water is reused or discharged.

Primary Treatment

Floating and large solid materials such as plastic, leaves, paper and other debris are removed from the raw sewage through screening and settling processes.

Secondary Treatment

Air or oxygen is supplied to the wastewater to support beneficial microorganisms. These microbes break down organic matter and convert it into biological sludge. The sludge is separated, dewatered and may be used as manure where appropriate. The remaining water is transferred to a clarifier.

Tertiary Treatment

The clarified water undergoes further filtration to remove fine suspended particles and impurities. It is then disinfected using methods such as chlorination, ozonation or ultraviolet (UV) treatment to reduce harmful microorganisms. The treated water can then be stored, reused or safely discharged.

St. Philomena’s College hosts ‘Techno Expo 4.0’

MYSURU

The two-day ‘Techno Expo 4.0’, a technology exhibition organised by the BCA Department of St. Philomena’s College, was inaugurated at the college’s indoor stadium on Wednesday. The exhibition, being held on August 19 and 20, features more than 75 technological models and innovative projects developed by students. Prof. P. Nagabhushan, a senior academic in the fields of Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence and Professor Emeritus at JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research, inaugurated the expo by cutting the ribbon as the chief guest. Appreciating the discipline, enthusiasm for learning and eagerness among students to acquire new knowledge, he advised them to evaluate themselves and understand the importance of time. He

called upon students to cultivate an attitude of continuous learning and gain new experiences throughout their lives. Students from various educational institutions, including SDM College and Amrita Vidyalayam, are participating in the expo along with students of St. Philomena’s College. The event provided a platform for knowledge exchange, creativity and showcasing technical skills among students from different colleges. Rev. Dr. Lourd Prasad, Rector; Dr. Ravi J.D. Saldanha, Principal; Dr. Suresh Narayan Rao, AICTE Director; Dr. Noor Mubashir, Coordinator of the Postgraduate Studies and Research Centre; A. Thomas Gunaseelan, Co-ordinator of the Department of Physics and IQAC, along with other dignitaries, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and media representatives were present.

BHIO leads fresh push for tobacco-free Mysuru

MYSURU

In an innovative push to strengthen the campaign for a tobacco-free Mysuru, Bharat Hospital and Institute of Oncology (BHIO), under the leadership of renowned cancer specialist and BHIO President Dr. B.S. Ajay Kumar, has launched an awareness initiative titled ‘Meter On, Tobacco Off’. Going beyond cancer treatment, Dr. Ajay Kumar has consistently focused on disease prevention, early detection and community-based health awareness. The latest campaign seeks to encourage people to embrace healthier lifestyles and sends out a simple but powerful message: “Meter On, Tobacco Off.” BHIO has called upon Mysuru residents to join hands in building a healthier, tobacco-free future.



Quick Read

Experts urge greater awareness of biofuel benefits

CHITRADURGA
Producing biofuel from non-edible oilseeds can support environmental protection and national development, Professor B.K. Sunil Kumar of SJM Technical College said. He was speaking at a biofuel awareness programme held at Koonabevu Government High School in Thuruvarur hobli. Kumar said biofuel could be produced from around 150 non-edible oilseed varieties, including honge, neem, hippe and jatropa. Used cooking oil from homes and hotels can also be collected for production, providing an income opportunity. He added that oil extraction by-products can be converted into useful organic manure. Headmaster S. Hanumanthappa highlighted biofuel's environmental benefits and potential support for farmers and the economy.

Koppal invites applications for free artisan equipment

KOPPAL
The Rural Industries Department has invited applications from eligible rural artisans in Koppal district for free advanced equipment under the 2026-27 Professional Artisans Equipment Supply Scheme. Artisans working in electric sewing, carpentry, barbering and washing professions can apply for the required equipment. Interested applicants must submit their applications online by September 30 through the link available on the official Koppal district website. The scheme aims to support rural workers by providing modern tools that can improve their work and income. For further details, applicants can contact the Deputy Director, Rural Industries Department, Zilla Panchayat, Koppal, or call 08539-230980.

Free certificates reach thousands across Uttara Kannada

Digital certificates are prepared using revenue, caste census and Aadhaar data, then delivered with GPS verification across all taluks

UTTARA KANNADA

Uttara Kannada district has distributed 9,60,218 caste and income certificates free of cost directly to people's homes, marking a major step in taking government services closer to citizens. Officials said the programme has achieved 85.76 percent progress so far.

Earlier, residents had to visit taluk offices, submit applications and wait for verification and signatures. Rural families often faced difficulties travelling to offices, while staff shortages and server problems caused delays lasting weeks or months. Some students reportedly missed scholarships and admission opportunities because certificates were not issued on time. Under the new system, de-



partments use existing revenue records, caste census details and Aadhaar-linked information to prepare digital certificates for eligible beneficiaries. Officials then deliver them directly to families. A GPS photograph is also taken during delivery to ensure the certificates reach the correct beneficiaries. The initiative covers all taluks, with Kumta recording 1,65,025 certificates and Ankola 1,22,805, among the highest numbers.

At a glance

- 9.60 lakh certificates distributed across Uttara Kannada
- Distribution achieved 85.76% of targeted beneficiaries
- Certificates delivered free directly to doorsteps
- Government uses digitized revenue and Aadhaar records
- GPS photos ensure doorstep delivery to families
- Collector targets complete 100% distribution soon

The certificates are important for school and college reservations, scholarships, hostel admissions, fee exemptions

and government recruitment benefits. They are also needed for age relaxation in competitive examinations, reserved-seat elections and several welfare schemes, including housing, agricultural loans and subsidies. The certificates may also help citizens provide supporting documents during the 2026 voter-list revision process.

District Collector K. Lakshmi Priya said distribution was slow initially, but officials later gave it special priority and increased the pace.

The district administration expects to complete distribution to all eligible beneficiaries soon. The initiative is aimed at reducing travel, delays and paperwork while ensuring essential documents reach citizens without extra cost.

Srinivas Mane takes charge of KHB

HANAGAL

Hanagal MLA Srinivas Mane took charge as the new chairman of the Karnataka Housing Board in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

He said he would work towards fulfilling Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's goal of providing housing facilities to 50,000 landless families in every district. Mane thanked party leaders and the government for entrusting him with the responsibility.

Speaking after assuming office, Mane said providing affordable and quality homes to poor and middle-class families would be his main priority. He said the Housing Board should become more people-friendly, transparent and effective. He also expressed confidence that the government's housing target could be achieved through cooperation from officials, elected representatives and the public.



"Providing affordable and quality homes to poor and middle-class families will be my main priority. The Housing Board should become more people-friendly, transparent and effective"

-Srinivas Mane, Chairman of the Karnataka Housing Board

Mane said he would treat the new position as another opportunity to serve people and promised to discharge his responsibilities honestly. He stressed the need to help families who dream of owning a home. Haveri District In-charge Minister Rudrapa Lamani, MLAs Basavaraj Shivannavara, U.B. Bankara, Prakash Koliwada and Yasir Khan Pathana, along with Congress Lok Sabha candidate Anandaswamy Gaddadevaramath, were present during the occasion and extended their support.

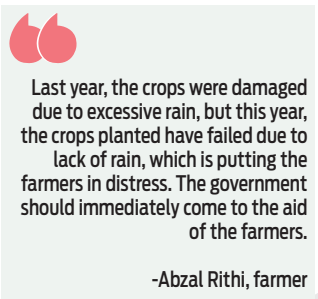
Monsoon Failure Leaves Gadag Farmers Struggling

Malingaraya Pujar CH NEWS

Failure of monsoon rains has left farmers across Gadag district worried, with crops wilting due to moisture shortage and growing attacks by monkeys and deer adding to their difficulties.

Farmers who spent ₹20,000-₹30,000 per acre on credit, hoping for a good monsoon, are now facing crop losses. Although harvesting is approaching, inadequate rainfall has stunted crop growth and is expected to reduce yields.

Good pre-monsoon showers initially encouraged farmers to begin sowing. Crops including groundnut, cotton, maize and other major crops were planted after the soil received sufficient moisture. However, rainfall has re-



-Abzal Ritthi, farmer

mained inadequate since sowing, leaving many crops struggling to survive.

Farmers said intermittent showers have not provided enough moisture. Alternating cloudy and sunny weather has also increased the risk of diseases in crops that have managed to grow. With little or no significant rain for two to three months after sowing, several fields are now showing signs of severe moisture stress.

Monkey menace adds to farmers' worries

In Lakshmeshwar taluk, monkeys have become a major threat to groundnut and yam crops. Large groups are entering fields and damaging crops, worsening the losses already caused by drought-like conditions.

Farmers said monkeys are even uprooting groundnuts that have not developed properly and eating them. As a result, growers are being forced to remain in their fields from morning until evening to protect what little crop remains.

With rainfall uncertainty, declining crop prospects and increasing wildlife damage, farmers are facing mounting financial pressure and are seeking relief and effective measures to protect their crops.

Farmers demand Chitradurga representation in Bhadra CADA

CHITRADURGA

The Irrigation Implementation Struggle Committee has urged the State Government to include Chitradurga district in the Command Area Development Authority (CADA) of the Bhadra reservoir, saying the district's farmers need proper representation in decisions on water distribution.

Committee working president B.A. Lingareddy said the Upper Bhadra Project was planned to irrigate dry areas of central Karnataka. Under the project, 2,25,515 hectares across Chitradurga, Tumakuru, Chikkamagaluru and Davanagere districts are expected to receive micro-irrigation facilities. Water has also been allo-

cated to fill hundreds of lakes. Although Chitradurga is part of the Bhadra command area, its representatives and farmer leaders are not included in the CADA committee, he said.

Lingareddy said recent discussions on releasing Bhadra water highlighted the need for Chitradurga's participation. He said ministers, legislators and farmer leaders from Davanagere and Shivamogga attended the Irrigation Consultative Committee meeting on August 18. The meeting considered releasing water to various areas, but differences over the proposal left the final decision with the Chief Minister.

The committee said Chitradurga has a legitimate share in Bhadra water and

should have representatives at CADA and irrigation advisory meetings. Without representation, farmers could face difficulties in protecting their water rights. The committee also noted that water has already reached Vani Vilas Sagar under the Upper Bhadra project.

The government should immediately include all Chitradurga representatives in the Bhadra CADA, the committee demanded. It also sought release of Bhadra water within a week and supply to lakes in Holalkere taluk, including Gonur Lake. B.A. Lingareddy, K.R. Dayanand, Chickappanahalli Shanmukha, Hampayanamalige Dhananjaya and G. Suresh Babu supported the demand.

SOCIETY MUST SUPPORT FARMERS' WELFARE, SAYS MALLIKARJUNA

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

No one should be indifferent to the farmers' program. Farmers have immense experience in life. It is the duty of society to take care of the well-being of farmers, said Mallikarjuna Murugarajendra of Bekkina Kalmath.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the memorial program of Dr HS Rudrappa, the founder of the Farmers' Association, on behalf of the Karnataka State Farmers' Association and the Hasiru Sene, at the city's Ambedkar Bhavan.

HS Rudrappa always thought for the farmers. When the new APMC market was built in Shivamogga, no trader was ready to go there. Then Rudrappa held a meeting of farmers and traders there and called for everyone to come to the APMC.

Then everyone came there and started trading. They paid attention to his words that day. He said that today the APMC is functioning successfully, which is the quality of his leadership. When we remember the initial movement of the farmers' union, we are reminded of the freedom struggle. The movement that showed that a farmer can become a ruler in a democracy was the farmer's movement of that time.

When a farmer is organized, he can earn a life of self-respect. The farmer's union gave newness to the movements. Now the farmer's organizations and movements have taken different paths. He said that no matter what field there is setback, it should not be setback only in the agricultural field. The root field of everything is the agricultural field. The

mental state of today is that wealth without work is pleasure against self-evidence. People want ethics, farmers, commerce, business but are not ready to practice it. There are those who are happy to see propaganda and intelligence in animals.

A panel discussion was held by Professor BM Kumaraswamy, a retired professor, on the dangers of nuclear power plants, environmental expert Akhilesh Chipli on the dangers of new power generation projects on Sharavati backwaters, and Dr Sarpa Raja Chandragutti on the issue of drought in the state.

Farmer leader Kodihalli Chandrashekhar. Manjunath Gaudru, Byre Gowda, Umesh Patel, Vasanth Kumar, Manjunath Harekappa, Renukamma and others participated.

Sports build leadership and confidence in students



MAGADI

Active participation in sports helps students develop leadership skills, confidence and discipline, said Bamul Director H.N. Ashok. He was speaking after inaugurating the taluk-level group games for pre-university college students at the BGS College campus in Magadi on Wednesday.

Ashok said India hosts many sporting events but has not achieved the expected results at the Olympics.

He urged the Central and State Governments to give

greater importance to sports and consider establishing special sports colleges named after freedom fighters. Better facilities and training, he said, could help athletes win more medals for the country.

Recalling American athlete Wilma Rudolph, who overcame childhood polio and poverty before winning three Olympic gold medals, Ashok encouraged students to face difficulties with determination.

He urged young athletes to participate actively in competitions and work towards achieving success at higher levels.

Contractors get four days to seek Jal work extension

CHITRADURGA

Contractors working on Har Ghar Jal projects in Chitradurga district have been given four days to submit requests seeking additional time to complete pending works, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Dr. Akash S. said on Wednesday.

Speaking at the District Water and Sanitation Mission Committee meeting at the Zilla Panchayat Neer Lab, Dr. Akash said contractors had earlier received work orders under the Jal Jeevan Mission with deadlines for completion. However, delays occurred in declaring villages as Har Ghar Jal villages even after some contractors completed their assigned works.

He said the committee had earlier decided to consider requests from contractors who had worked sincerely but faced delays, including relief from penalties in eligible cases. Contractors must now submit their requests in Form-1 to the concerned Assistant Executive Engineer of the Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Sub-Division, explaining the reasons for the delay.

Following this, the Panchayat Development Officer, Administrative Officer, Branch Officer and Executive Officer of the concerned Gram Panchayat must submit a confirmation report in Form-2.

Assistant Executive Engineers should prepare proposal reports in Form-3 and forward them to the Executive Engineer within seven days.

Dr. Akash directed the Executive Engineer to consolidate all proposals



Highlights

- Contractors can seek time extension proposals
- Applications must be submitted within 4 days
- Delay reasons required in prescribed Form-1
- Engineers must submit proposals within 7 days
- Consolidated proposals due at division office September 4
- Water flow meters planned for 1,000 RO plants

and submit them to the divisional office by September 4.

The CEO said technology is being used to monitor water supply and collect data to ensure 55 litres of water per person daily across district villages.

A Neer Lab has already been established for this purpose.

Technology-based water flow meters are also being considered for around 1,000 RO plants to monitor their operational status automatically. Deputy Secretary Babu, Executive Engineer Amarnath Jain, Assistant Conservator Vasant, District Scheduled Castes Welfare Officer Diwakar, water expert Devaraja Reddy and other officials attended the meeting.

Journalists Likely To Get Land Soon, Says Srinivas Nayak

MANGALURU

Journalists are likely to receive land soon, as efforts are underway to secure revenue land on the outskirts of Mangaluru, said Srinivas Nayak Indaje, president of the Journalists' Planet Building Cooperative Society.

He was speaking at the society's annual general meeting at Mangaluru Patrika Bhavan.

Indaje said a proposal had already been submitted to the State Government seeking land for the society. He said the efforts of Legislative Council member Ivan



D'Souza had helped move the proposal forward, with former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah directing officials to process the file.

He said Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister G. Paramesh-

wara and Dakshina Kannada Deputy Commissioner Darshan had extended cooperation.

Indaje expressed confidence that the land would be sanctioned soon and said priority would be given to

society members who hold shares while allotting sites.

He added that some private companies had also offered premises for journalists. The society would examine those proposals and explore the possibility of providing suitable premises to members on a priority basis. Indaje also said the cooperative society recorded a net profit of Rs. 36,000 during the last financial year.

Society Chief Executive Officer S. Panduranga Acharya was honoured during the meeting. Vice-president Bhaskar Rai Katta presented the annual report, while

Dakshina Kannada District Working Journalists' Association president and society director Pushparaj B.N. proposed the vote of thanks.

Society directors and members, Patrika Bhavan Trust president Annu Mangaluru, Mangaluru Press Club president Anand Shetty, Journalists' Association district general secretary Rajesh Poojary and former president Jagannath Shetty Bal, among others, attended the meeting. The society said it would continue efforts to secure suitable land and housing facilities for journalists.



Quick Read

Udupi to mark Devaraja Urs birth anniversary

CH NEWS, UDUPI

The Udupi district administration will celebrate the 111th birth anniversary of former Karnataka Chief Minister D. Devaraja Urs on August 20. The programme will begin at 10 am at Jagannath Sabha Bhavan of Badagabettu Credit Cooperative Society in Mission Compound. Food and Civil Supplies Minister and district in-charge Rizwad Arshad will inaugurate the event, while MLA Yashpal A. Suvarna will preside. Several ministers, MPs, legislators and senior officials are expected to attend. Udupi Taluk Government Pre-University College Principal Nagaraj will speak about Urs's life, achievements and contribution to social transformation, particularly for backward communities.

Udupi firm to hold direct interviews today

CH NEWS, UDUPI

Omion Premedia Pvt. Ltd. will conduct direct interviews for various positions on August 20 (today) from 10 am at its office near Ambalapady Karavali Bypass in Udupi. The interviews will be held for 3D and Photoshop, CSR and accountancy positions. Candidates who have completed PUC, M. Com or other degree courses can attend. Applicants must carry their marksheets, updated resume or CV and a copy of their Aadhaar card. The District Employment Exchange Office said interested candidates can contact its office at Rajatadri, Manipal, for further details. Officials provided four contact numbers for applicants seeking additional information about the recruitment process.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ

ಯುವ ಸಬಲೀಕರಣ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.

ಸಹಾಯಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕ್ರೀಡಾಂಗಣ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ-577004

ದೂರವಾರ್ತೆ : 08192-237480 ಇ-ಮೇಲ್ : adyssdv@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಸನಿ/ಯುಸಕ್ರೀಇ/ದಾ/ಸಿಆರ್/33/ಉ.ಪೂ.ಇ.ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು/2026-27/call-2

ದಿನಾಂಕ: 19-08-2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಮರು ಇ-ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಯುವ ಸಬಲೀಕರಣ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಅಧೀನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ವಸತಿ ಶಾಲೆ/ನಿಲಯದ ಕ್ರೀಡಾಪಟುಗಳಿಗೆ ಉಚಿತವಾಗಿ ಪೂರೈಕೆಗಾಗಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ (KTTP) 1999 ಮತ್ತು ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳು 2000 ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ E-Procurement Portal (www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in) ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಪೂರೈಕೆಗಾಗಿರುವ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಮರು ಇ-ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಅನ್ವಯಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಇ-ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಪ್ರಮುಖಾಂಶಗಳು:- ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಸನಿ/ಯುಸಕ್ರೀಇ/ದಾ/ಸಿಆರ್/33/ಉ.ಪೂ.ಇ.ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು/2026-27/call-2. ದಿನಾಂಕ: 19-08-2026

(1) ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಗೆ ಇಬ್ಬು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.1,51,12,500-00 ಗಳು (2) ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಫಂಡ್ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಪ್ರಾರಂಭಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 19-08-2026 (3) ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಪ್ರೀ ಬಿಡ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 24-08-2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಸ್ಥಳ:- ಸಹಾಯಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಯುವ ಸಬಲೀಕರಣ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕ್ರೀಡಾಂಗಣ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ (4) ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ / ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟೀಕರಣ ಕೇಳುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25-08-2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5:30 ರ ವರೆಗೆ (5) ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಫಂಡ್ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 29-08-2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5:30 ರ ವರೆಗೆ (6) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲೋಟರಿ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 31-08-2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ (ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತದೆ) ಸ್ಥಳ:- ಸಹಾಯಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಯುವ ಸಬಲೀಕರಣ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕ್ರೀಡಾಂಗಣ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ (7) ಬೆಂಚರ್ ನೋಂದಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ.ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.3,02,250-00 (8) ಪ್ರವಹಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿಳಾಸ:- ಸಹಾಯಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಯುವ ಸಬಲೀಕರಣ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕ್ರೀಡಾಂಗಣ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ. ದೂರವಾರ್ತೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08912-237480

ವಾಸಾಇ/ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ/000/ ಸಹಿ/-ಸಹಾಯಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಯುವ ಸಬಲೀಕರಣ ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026-27 ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರೀಡಾ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.

Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests

Bangalore Urban Division, Jarakabande kaval, kammagondanahalli jalahalli west, Bangalore-560015

Ph. 080-23343464, Email- dcfurban82@yahoo.co.in

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಎ9/ಮರ ಕತಾವಣೆ/ಸಿಆರ್/54/2026-27.

ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12.08.2026

Public Notice

This is to bring to the notice of all citizens of Bengaluru that the Secretary, Fruit, Flower and Vegetable (Special) Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Binnipet, Bangalore has submitted a request for the removal of 535 different species of trees obstructing the development work on a total of 42.31 acres of private land in Anekal Taluk, Sarjapur Hobli, Goolimangala Survey No. 69, 106/1, 106/2, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, the details of which are as follows-

Name of the project	construction of a market of fruits, flowers and vegetables in these lands, Anekal Taluk, Gulimangala village.sy.No. 69, 106/1, 106/2, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146 A total of 42.31 acres Bengaluru						
Name of the Agency.	Anekal Taluk, Sarjapur hobali, Gulimangala village.sy.No. 69, 106/1, 106/2, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146 A total of 42.31 acres						
Purpose for removal of trees.	Improvement in construction of a market of fruits, flowers and vegetables						
Description of the area with clear demarcation of boundaries or with GPS readings	<table><tr><td>GPS Reading</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>N-12°50'44.92"</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>E-77°41'30.81"</td><td></td></tr></table>	GPS Reading		N-12°50'44.92"		E-77°41'30.81"	
GPS Reading							
N-12°50'44.92"							
E-77°41'30.81"							
Enumeration of trees. • Total no. of trees standing in the project area	535 (Annexure-I) Description of Trees, Species, location, Area Map etc are uploaded in the website of Karnataka Forest Department for information of all. (www.aranya.gov.in)						
Mode of communication. (Public can send their comments either by E- mail/ Post / Hand	Adress: The Deputy Conservator of Forests, Bangalore Urban Division, Jarakabande Forest campus, Kammagondanahalli Jalalahalli west, Bangalore-560015 E-mail ID-dcfurban82@yahoo.co.in						
Deadline for filing objections	Ten(10) days from the date of Publication of this notification *Comments should be relevant and specific to the project						

In this background suggestions and objections invited from all citizens in terms of section 8 (3) (vii) of The Karnataka Preservation of Tree Act 1976.

Sd/- Deputy Conservator of Forests,
Bangalore Urban Division, Bangalore.

DIPRI/CP/NPL/2220/2026-27

MLAs seek halt to BSSK auction, factory revival

MLAs urged reopening the BSSK factory to provide sugarcane growers a nearby market, reduce transport costs, and restore livelihoods for thousands of families

CH NEWS, Bidar

Bidar South MLA Dr. Shailendra Beldale and Humnabad MLA Dr. Siddu Patil have urged the Karnataka government to stop the proposed auction of BSSK Sugar Factory and revive it by leasing it to a suitable organisation. The MLAs made the appeal during a meeting with Sugar and Textiles Minister Rudrapa Manappa Lamani in Bengaluru. The BSSK factory has remained closed for several years, creating difficulties for sugarcane growers in Bidar and nearby areas. The MLAs said reopening the unit would provide farmers with a nearby market and help reduce trans-

portation costs. They also highlighted the factory's importance to workers and thousands of families whose livelihoods depend directly or indirectly on its operations. The representatives argued that leasing the factory, instead of auctioning it, would be more beneficial to farmers and workers. They urged the government to give the matter special attention and take steps to revive the unit

through a scientifically and economically sustainable plan. Responding to the appeal, Minister Lamani reportedly assured the MLAs that a stay order on the auction process would be issued the following day. He also said a meeting of elected representatives from Bidar district would be held on Monday or Tuesday to discuss the issue and arrive at an appropriate decision. The MLAs said reopening BSSK could strengthen the district's economy by improving sugarcane marketing and creating direct and indirect employment. They added that increased activity could benefit transport, trade and small industries. They appealed to the government to take an early

HIGHLIGHTS

- MLAs demand immediate halt to BSSK auction
- Seek leasing factory to suitable organisation
- Reopening would reduce farmers' transport costs
- Revival could support thousands of dependent families
- Minister assured stay order against auction
- District representatives meeting planned for early decision

decision in favour of farmers, workers and the wider economic interests of the region.

Chikkaballapura plans 203 Youth Associations across district

CH NEWS, Chikkaballapura

The district administration is taking steps to establish 203 Bharat Jodo Youth Associations to promote sports, culture, scientific thinking and social harmony among young people. Deputy Commissioner G. Prabhu appealed to youth to join the membership drive in large numbers. The district has 154 Gram Panchayats, with one association planned for each. Another 49 associations will be formed in urban areas according to population. The plan includes nine associations in Chikkaballapura, seven in Gauribidanur, 10 in Chintamani, nine in Shidlaghat, five in Bagelipalli, two in Gudibande, three in Alipur and four

in Kaiwara. Each association must have at least 100 members, creating a district target of 20,300 members. As of August 18, 1,054 young people had registered, including 986 from rural areas and 68 from urban areas. Those aged 16 to 35 can join by completing Aadhaar-based registration and paying a Rs. 10 fee. Applications can be submitted through the BJYS portal, mobile application, Gram One, Karnataka One or Civil Service Centres. Applicants must normally reside in the concerned village or ward and can join only one association. Each association will have a 15-member executive committee with representation for women and different social groups.

Job Card Mela targets drought-hit rural families

CH NEWS, Haveri

A month-long Job Card Mela is being held across Haveri district from August 15 to September 15, following government directions. The campaign aims to create more local employment for rural families affected by drought and reduce migration to cities in search of work, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Daljit Kumar said. During a visit to a worksite in Kulenur village, Haveri taluk, Kumar interacted with 175 workers and said the new employment programme would provide continuous wage work. He assured work-

ers that wages would be paid within the prescribed period. The campaign is part of the Developed India Guarantee for Employment and Livelihood Mission (Gramin), launched on July 1, 2026. Under the programme, registered workers who have completed the required electronic process can receive unskilled employment. Officials aim to increase participation and create five lakh person-days of work daily, contributing towards a target of 1.50 crore person-days each month. The Job Card Mela will spread awareness about available work and benefits, particularly among vulnerable rural families.

DC seeks better opportunities through My Bharat

CH NEWS, Udupi

District Collector Swaroopa T.K. has directed officials to work together to make the My Bharat programme successful and create better opportunities for young people. She was speaking while chairing a meeting of the My Bharat District Level Advisory Committee at the District Collector's office. The My Bharat initiative, run by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, aims to build leadership, skills and social responsibility among young people. It also seeks to involve youth in community activities and make them active partners in achieving the national goal of Developed India by 2047. The Collector said all departments must coordinate closely to ensure the programme reaches young people effectively across the district. She stressed the need for joint efforts to organise activities that can improve leadership abilities, practical skills and participation in social

development. District Youth Officer Ullas explained that My Bharat is a digital platform designed for young people aged 15 to 29. Through the platform, registered youth can take part in programmes such as Border Village Programme camps, Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament and the National Youth Festival. Volunteers can also gain practical learning experience in different fields. The meeting discussed organising skill training programmes, leadership camps and entrepreneurship workshops to improve employment opportunities for youth in both rural and urban areas. Additional District Collector Abid Gadyal, Information Officer Manjunath B., Dr. G. Shankar, principal of Government Women's First Grade College, committee members, district officers and college principals attended the meeting. Officials were asked to strengthen coordination so that more youth can benefit from the programme and contribute meaningfully to society.

Maruti Omni catches fire near Hunsur petrol station

CH NEWS, HUNSUR

A Maruti Omni car caught fire after a suspected short circuit near a petrol station on Tipu Circle Bypass Road in Hunsur city. The vehicle reportedly caught fire while it was being taken from a garage for water servicing. The sudden incident caused concern among motorists and nearby residents. The car was reportedly travelling at high speed before the fire started. The occupants quickly got out after noticing

the flames, avoiding injuries. Although the vehicle caught fire close to a petrol station, officials said there was no danger to the public or passing motorists. The car was completely damaged in the incident. The vehicle owner was identified as Manoranjan M.S. of Mangaluru in Dakshina Kannada district. Local residents immediately informed the authorities after noticing the fire. Firefighters reached the spot and secured the area around the main road and highway.

Haveri youth urged to donate blood and save lives

CH NEWS, HAVERI

Swami Vivekananda Seva Samiti President K.M. Vijapura urged young people to come forward and donate blood regularly to help save lives. He was speaking at a voluntary blood donation camp organized in Haveri by the Seva Samiti, Indian Red Cross Society District Branch and KIMS Hubballi. The camp was held in connection with the installation of the statue of Sri Shaktimat Chowdeshwari Devi and the inauguration of her temple in C Block of Basaveshwara Nagar. Vijapura said blood donation was among the most valuable forms of service and encouraged healthy youth to participate. He thanked devotees and others who supported the initiative. KIMS doctor Dr. Kavita said the demand for blood is increasing

and stressed the need for greater public awareness. She suggested that blood donation camps should become part of religious and community programmes. She also encouraged healthy people to develop the habit of donating blood regularly. Swami Vivekananda Seva Samiti Secretary Basavaraj Kori, Indian Red Cross District Honorary Secretary Ningappa Arera, Treasurer Prabhu Hitnalli and other office-bearers attended the event. Representatives of KIMS Hubballi Blood Bank, dignitaries, devotees and donors also participated. Organizers said the camp combined religious devotion with community service and encouraged more people, particularly young adults, to support blood donation efforts. They said regular voluntary donation can help maintain adequate supplies and provide timely support to patients in need.

Villagers catch two suspects in Hunsur temple theft

CH NEWS, HUNSUR

Villagers caught two of four people suspected of attempting to rob temples in the middle of the night and handed them over to police. The incident took place on Tuesday night in Neralakuppe village of Hanagodu hobli in Hunsur taluk. According to the information provided, the suspects, including Mohammed Anas and Adil Daniel from Kesare in Mysuru, first allegedly entered the Omkareshwara temple in nearby Hebbal village. They reportedly stole money from the hundi and puja materials before moving towards the Mahalakshmi temple in Neralakuppe. The suspects allegedly tried to break open the Mahalakshmi temple when youths living nearby heard the noise and rushed to the spot. Two suspects reportedly fled into a nearby garden, while the other two attempted to escape in a Swift car bearing registration number KA-51-MB-9556. Villagers blocked the vehicle using a tractor and caught the two men along with the car and suspected stolen property. The villagers informed the emergency service and Hunsur Rural Police at around 2.30 am. Around 4 am, they handed the suspects, vehicle and recovered property to police. A case has been registered, and an investigation is underway to trace the two suspects who allegedly escaped. Police personnel later visited the temples and conducted a mahazar. The prompt action and courage shown by the villagers in stopping the suspected theft and assisting police have received appreciation from local residents. Further investigation is expected to establish the full circumstances of the incident.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ

ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ

ಮಲ್ಲಿಕಾರ್ಜುನ ಹಾಲ್, 1ನೇ ಮಹಡಿ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಡಳಿತ ಭವನ, ಬಿ.ಎ.ಚಯ್ಯ ದಬಲ್ ರೋಡ್, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ-571313.

ದೂರವಾರ್ತೆ: 08226-224370 ಇ-ಮೇಲ್ : domcnagar@gmail.com

SI NO: MWDC/OUT SOURCE TENDER/CR-16/2026-27 Date: 14.08.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Minority welfare department, Chamarajanagar invites tender to supply manpower such as group D, cooks, sweeper, night watchman, cleaning staff and staff nurse for the Dr. APJ Abdul kalam Residential School/College, Minority Morarji Desai Residential School, Minority Girls P U college, Moulana Azad English Medium school and Minority Post Metric Hostels and Group D, Driver for District office, Data Entry Operator & group D for Minority Information Center

1. Estimated tender amount Rs. 136.56 lakhs

2. EMD amount 2.73 lakhs.

3. Bid form available from: 14.08.2026

4. Last date for bid submission: 15.09.2026

For more information log on website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 14.08.2026 to 15.09.2026 OR contact District officer, Minority welfare Department, District Administrative Building Multipurpose Hall, 1st Floor, Chamarajanagar District- 571313 (ph no-08226-224370)

District Officer, Minority Welfare Department, Chamarajanagara

NO: DIPR: CHANAGAR : 299: 202627

SILK GROWERS RECEIVE PRACTICAL TIPS ON PEST CONTROL

CH NEWS, MANDYA

A special awareness and demonstration programme was held for silk growers at the Taluk Technical Service Centre in Madahalli village, Malavalli, under the 'Mera Resham Mera' campaign. The programme was organized with support from the Central Sericulture Board to help farmers improve mulberry cultivation and silk production. Farmers received technical guidance on maintaining soil fertility and controlling pests and diseases affecting mulberry plants. Experts explained ways to manage thrips, mites, leaf curl insects, stem borers, May-June beetles and other pests. Information was also provided on preventing leaf spot, leaf rust and root rot diseases. A practical demonstration showed farmers suitable pest control methods in their gardens. Deputy Director of Sericulture Dr. Sundar Raj and Central Sericulture Board scientist Dr. Shivakumar provided technical and practical guidance. Farmers discussed difficulties they face in silk production and received suggestions on crop management and disease control. Assistant Director Ravi A.B., along with sericulture extension officers and inspectors from Malavalli, attended the programme.

CABINET NOD FOR ₹13,041 CR RAIL-ROAD PROJECTS

Under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, projects prioritize integrated planning, multimodal cnnectivity, and enhanced logistics efficiency

NEW DELHI

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved four multi-tracking railway projects involving an investment of Rs 9,450 crore. The projects, scheduled for completion by 2030-31, will add about 410 km to the Indian Railways network across West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The approved projects include the 173-km Kharagpur-Bhadrak (Ranital) fourth line covering West Bengal and Odisha, the 75-km Bhadrak-Haridaspur fourth line in Odisha, and the 90-km Gummidipundi-Gudur third and fourth lines covering Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The fourth project involves 72 km of third and fourth lines between Cuttack and Paradeep (Badabandha) in Odisha. According to the Cabinet, the additional railway lines will increase capacity, reduce congestion and improve operational efficiency and service reliability. The projects have

GOVT APPROVED RAILWAY INFRA PROJECTS

Kharagpur-Bhadrak (Ranital) 4th line: 173-km stretch covering West Bengal and Odisha (cost: ₹3,352 crore)

Bhadrak-Haridaspur 4th line: 75-km stretch in Odisha (Cost: ₹1,583 crore).

Gummidipundi-Gudur 3rd & 4th lines: 90-km stretch covering Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu (cost: ₹2,229 crore).

Cuttack-Paradeep (Badabandha) 3rd & 4th lines: 72-km stretch in Odisha (Cost: ₹2,286 crore)

PM Gati Shakti alignment: Planned under the National Master Plan focusing on integrated multimodal connectivity and logistics efficiency.

Capacity & efficiency: Designed to eliminate bottlenecks, reduce network congestion, and enhance service reliability across key main lines (including segments of the Howrah-Chennai route).

been planned under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, with emphasis on integrated planning, multimodal connectivity and improved logistics efficiency. They are expected to provide smoother movement of passengers, goods and essential services. The four projects will cover eight districts and improve rail connectivity to around 6,448 villages with a com-

bined population of nearly 60 lakh. They will also strengthen access to several tourist destinations, including Bhitarkanika National Park, Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Pulicat Lake, Chandipur Beach, Tal-sari-Udaypur, Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary, Lalitgiri and several prominent temples. The projects are also expected to support freight movement of coal, iron ore,

cement, steel, containers, automobiles and food grains. Railway officials estimate additional freight capacity of 76 million tonnes annually. As an energy-efficient transport mode, railways are expected to help reduce logistics costs, oil imports by around 13 crore litres and carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 65 crore kg, equivalent to planting about 2.60 crore trees.

Quick Read

SEBI warns strict action over CAS manipulation

Mumbai Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey has warned that strict and immediate action will be taken against attempts to manipulate the newly introduced Closing Auction Session (CAS). Pandey said the regulator has stronger capabilities to detect suspicious activity under CAS than under the earlier volume-weighted average price (VWAP) system. He said the new mechanism was introduced to improve transparency and make stock closing prices more reliable. The 20-minute CAS determines closing prices by matching buy and sell orders and identifying the price at which maximum trading volume can be executed. SEBI, he said, would closely monitor trading activity and respond firmly to any irregularities. The comments come amid concerns from some traders about the new closing mechanism, which replaced the earlier VWAP-based method.

IndiGo website outage disrupts ticket bookings

New Delhi IndiGo's website faced a technical outage on Wednesday, preventing some customers from booking flight tickets and completing online check-in. Users searching for flights reportedly received a "no data available" message. The disruption appeared to affect customers across multiple locations. Reuters journalists in at least three Indian cities were unable to make bookings through the airline's website. A third-party travel platform also confirmed that IndiGo's systems were experiencing technical problems. Several customers took to social media platform X to complain about difficulties with ticket bookings and online check-in. The outage caused inconvenience for passengers relying on IndiGo's digital services. IndiGo, India's largest airline, holds more than 65 per cent of the country's domestic aviation market. The airline had not immediately responded to requests for comment on the technical issue.

‘AI, tax certainty, global reforms will shape India’s next tax era’

‘Over 220 bilateral agreements offer businesses greater clarity on international tax matters while minimizing potential disputes’

NEW DELHI

India needs to protect its tax base while ensuring policy stability, predictability and certainty for global investors, Monica Bhatia, Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (International Tax), said on Wednesday. She was speaking at the 23rd International Tax Conference organised by ASSOCHAM in New Delhi. Bhatia said India's international tax framework is undergoing a major transformation, influenced by the Supreme

Court's Tiger Global judgment, the new Income-tax Act, changing dispute-resolution mechanisms and rapid technological developments. She stressed that stable tax policies are essential for maintaining investor confidence. She also highlighted government measures introduced after the Tiger Global judgment to provide greater certainty to genuine legacy investments. She said artificial intelligence is rapidly changing business models as well as tax administration. This is creating new questions about permanent establishment, profit attribution and where economic value is actually created. As technology develops faster than existing tax rules, Bhatia stressed that stronger

international cooperation and consensus-based global rule-making will become increasingly important. Rakesh Nangia, Chairman of ASSOCHAM's Task Force on International Taxes, said international taxation has entered a period of fundamental transition, with the Tiger Global ruling, new legislation, global minimum tax measures and AI influencing future policies. Sandeep Chaufla, Chairman of ASSOCHAM's National Council on Direct Taxes, said governments want to protect their tax bases while taxpayers seek certainty and predictability. The conference also discussed BEPS 2.0, treaty changes, APAs, safe harbours and cross-border dispute resolution.

Agentic AI plans surge, production adoption lags

NEW DELHI

A new report highlights a major gap between corporate interest in Agentic AI and its actual deployment. While 99% of companies are planning to adopt Agentic AI, only 9-14% have moved these systems into production, largely because businesses are yet to see clear and measurable changes from their investments. The findings suggest that many organisations are still experimenting with AI agents rather than deploying them at scale. Companies are increasingly exploring autonomous AI systems that can perform tasks, make decisions and coordinate workflows with limited human intervention.

However, concerns over measurable business value, integration, governance and reliability are slowing wider adoption. The report indicates that organisations are looking beyond AI demonstrations and seeking tangible improvements in productivity, revenue, customer experience and operational efficiency before committing to large-scale deployments. The gap also reflects the difficulty of moving Agentic AI projects from pilot programmes into real-world business environments. Companies need appropriate data infrastructure, strong security measures and clear accountability frameworks to ensure that AI agents can operate safely and effectively.

Meta ex-engineer resumes testimony in landmark trial

OAKLAND

Former Meta engineering director Arturo Bejar resumed testimony on Wednesday in a landmark federal trial examining allegations that the company's social media platforms harm young users. The case, being heard in Oakland, California, could lead to changes in how Facebook and Instagram operate. Bejar, who worked at Meta from 2009 to 2015 and later returned as an independent contractor from 2019 to 2021, is the first witness in the six-week trial. A coalition of 29 states alleges that Meta designed its platforms to keep children engaged, misled the public about their safety and improperly collected personal data from users under 13. Bejar helped conduct surveys examining teenagers' ex-

periences and wellbeing on Instagram between 2019 and 2021. He told jurors that he raised concerns with Meta leadership about the impact of the company's platforms on young people. He also argued that Meta's internal monitoring did not adequately measure harm because it focused mainly on content violating company policies rather than the extent of harm experienced by users. During his testimony, Bejar referred to an email he had sent to Meta Chief Product Officer Chris Cox, highlighting what he described as a significant difference between the levels of harm reported internally and the actual experiences reported by users. California, Colorado, Kentucky and New Jersey are among the states accusing Meta of designing Facebook and Instagram to attract young

users and contributing to problems including anxiety, depression and suicide. The wider case also involves claims that Meta violated federal law by collecting and using children's personal data. Meta has denied the allegations and defended its efforts to protect teenagers. The company had sought to prevent Bejar from testifying, arguing that he had deleted communications with former Meta employees on Signal. However, US District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers rejected the request. Bejar has previously testified against Meta in several similar cases and appeared before a US Senate committee in 2023. One New Mexico case involving his testimony resulted in \$942 million in damages and penalties, along with an order requiring Meta to make changes to its platforms in the state.

India GCC industry revenue reaches \$98.4 billion

NEW DELHI

India's global capability centre (GCC) industry recorded an estimated revenue of \$98.4 billion in FY26, highlighting the country's growing importance as a hub for technology, research and innovation, according to a joint report by Awfis Space Solutions and Zinnov. The report said India currently hosts 2,117 GCCs operating across 3,728 units and employing more than 2.36 million professionals. The number of GCCs has increased by nearly 32 per cent since FY21. As many as 506 Global 2000 companies now operate GCCs in India, while private equity-backed businesses, mid-sized enterprises and digital-native companies are also increasingly establishing centres in the country. Awfis Chairman and Managing Director Amit Ramani said Indian GCCs are taking greater ownership of products, platforms and artificial intelligence-led operations. Zinnov CMO and Managing Partner Nitika Goel said the rapid adoption of AI is changing workforce requirements, with companies seeking professionals who combine technical skills with industry knowledge and business understanding. Nearly half of India's GCCs now undertake an equal or larger share of frontier work compared with their global headquarters.

CURRENCY DEPRECIATION

Rupee falls 2 paise to settle at 95.76 against US dollar

MUMBAI

The Indian rupee weakened by two paise to close at 95.76 against the US dollar on Wednesday, extending pressure on the currency amid movements in global markets. The rupee had ended at 95.74 against the dollar in the previous session after depreciating 13 paise. Traders said the domestic currency remained under pressure as market participants closely monitored global economic developments and movements in the US dollar.

The rupee's performance has remained sensitive to changes in global financial conditions, particularly expectations surrounding US monetary policy, foreign fund flows and international crude oil prices. A stronger dollar in overseas markets can also put pressure on emerging-market currencies, including the Indian rupee. Market participants are expected to track upcoming economic data and signals from major central banks for further direction. Developments in global trade and geopoliti-

cal conditions could also influence currency movements in the near term. The rupee's latest decline comes as importers and other market participants continue to monitor foreign exchange volatility. Persistent weakness in the domestic currency can increase the cost of imports, particularly crude oil and other commodities, while exporters may benefit from improved realisations. The currency closed at 95.76 against the US dollar, down two paise from its previous close. Analysts said the

rupee could remain sensitive to global dollar movements and foreign capital flows in the coming sessions, with traders continuing to watch market developments for signs of further direction.

Rupee slips amid global pressures

The Indian rupee closed lower at 95.76 against the US dollar, driven by foreign capital flows and global market volatility. Persistent weakness increases import costs, particularly for crude oil, while exporters benefit from improved realisations.

SK Hynix plans \$28.6 billion share buyback

SEOUL

South Korean chipmaker SK Hynix said on Wednesday it will buy back and cancel treasury shares worth 40 trillion won (\$28.61 billion), as it seeks to strengthen shareholder returns following a decline in its share price. The company also plans to return more than 50 per cent of free cash flow generated between 2025 and 2027 to shareholders. SK Hynix shares fell nearly 10 per cent during Wednesday's trading session before recovering some losses in post-market trading. The stock had reached record highs in June but has declined since then, partly due to investor concerns about whether strong artificial intelligence spending by US technology companies can continue at the current pace. The company said it will repurchase and cancel up to 24 million treasury shares between August 20 and November 19. Analysts said the large-scale buyback could reassure investors about the

The stock peaked in June but has since fallen due to investor doubts about sustainable AI spending by US tech firms

company's outlook for memory chip prices and future earnings. SK Hynix previously planned to use up to 50 per cent of its cumulative free cash flow between 2025 and 2027 for shareholder returns through dividends and share repurchases. The company said it will now expand its overall shareholder-return target, with further details expected alongside its third-quarter results. The move comes as SK Hynix and Samsung Electronics face increasing pressure from investors to distribute more cash after record profits driven by strong demand for memory chips used in artificial intelligence systems. US chipmaker Micron has also pledged to return all of its ex-

PLAN IN A NUTSHELL

• SK Hynix to buy back and cancel 40 trillion won of shares.

• Plans to return over 50% of free cash flow to shareholders.

• Shares slide but trim losses in post-market trading.

cess cash to shareholders. At the end of the second quarter, SK Hynix reported net cash of around 69 trillion won. The company is simultaneously making heavy investments to expand chip manufacturing capacity and meet rising demand for high-bandwidth memory used in AI processors, particularly those supplied to Nvidia. SK Hynix is therefore seeking to balance substantial investment requirements with shareholder expectations. The company has committed hundreds of billions of dollars towards new chip factories in South Korea. It is also finalising a preliminary wage agreement with its labour union, under which part of employee bonuses could be paid in shares.

BoA reshuffles Asia Pacific industrials leadership

NEW DELHI

Bank of America has appointed Yuta Komori as chair of its Asia Pacific Global Industrials Investment Banking group, while naming Meng Gao and Masashi Toda as co-heads, according to an internal memo reviewed by Reuters on Wednesday. Komori will provide strategic guidance to the industrials banking business and support the expansion of the firm's industrials franchise across the Asia Pacific region. He will continue to serve as co-head of Japan Investment Banking alongside his new responsibilities. Gao and Toda will be responsible for driving growth across the industrials business in the region. They will work with country, sector and product teams to strengthen client relationships and improve connectivity across Bank of America's global banking platform. The leadership changes come as the US banking giant continues to adjust its invest-

ment banking structure across major markets and sectors. The firm is seeking to strengthen client coverage and take advantage of a potential recovery in global dealmaking activity. Komori will report to Peter Guenthardt, head of Asia Pacific Global Commercial and Investment Banking. Gao and Toda will report to Guenthardt on a regional basis and also to Loli Wu and Justin Anstee, co-heads of Global Industrials Investment Banking, as well as Japan Investment Banking Strategy officer. The appointments follow other changes within Bank of America's investment banking operations. Earlier this year, the lender hired nine senior investment bankers across the United States to strengthen its regional presence and capture increasing demand from middle-market companies. A Bank of America spokesperson declined to comment on the latest appointments.

its industrials business and deepen relationships with corporate clients across Asia. Toda will retain his existing positions as head of Japan Industrials and Natural Resources & Energy Transition Investment Banking, as well as Japan Investment Banking Strategy officer. The appointments follow other changes within Bank of America's investment banking operations. Earlier this year, the lender hired nine senior investment bankers across the United States to strengthen its regional presence and capture increasing demand from middle-market companies. A Bank of America spokesperson declined to comment on the latest appointments.

RESTORE TRUST IN EXAMINATIONS: PRALHAD JOSHI’S TIMELY CLEAN-UP OF THE NTA

The integrity of a nation’s education system rests not merely on classrooms and universities, but on the credibility of its examinations. For millions of students, competitive tests such as NEET, JEE and other national-level entrance examinations are gateways to higher education, careers and dreams. Any compromise in the fairness or secrecy of these examinations strikes at the very foundation of meritocracy and public trust.

It is in this context that Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi’s decisive intervention to overhaul the National Testing Agency (NTA) deserves appreciation. His directive for a comprehensive revamp of examination procedures, confidential operations and security architecture comes at a crucial juncture, particularly after controversies and irregularities surrounding major entrance examinations had caused widespread anxiety among students, parents and educational institutions across the country.

The Minister’s actions indicate that the Government has

recognised the gravity of the problem and is determined to restore confidence in the examination system. The removal of more than 50 staff members, replacement of nearly 600 experts, induction of new professionals and creation of top-level positions such as Chief Technology Officer, Chief Information Security Officer and General Manager for Test Security reflect a serious attempt to rebuild the institution from within.

Equally significant is the decision to strengthen confidential operations through air-gapped systems, secluded rooms and stringent security protocols. The introduction of a four-tier question-paper verification system and the deployment of CISF personnel for securing NTA premises indicate that the Government is moving beyond cosmetic changes and addressing structural weaknesses.

This is not merely administrative reform; it is an effort to protect the aspirations of millions of young Indians.

The NEET controversy and other examination-related issues had shaken public confidence. Students spend years

preparing for these examinations, often sacrificing personal comforts and investing enormous emotional and financial resources. Any leak, manipulation or malpractice not only destroys individual

come. The emphasis on technology, cyber-security, psychometrics and professional expertise is in tune with the requirements of modern examination systems. India conducts some

structure and technology can reduce vulnerabilities, the human factor remains the biggest challenge.

Every institution, however strong, can be weakened by a few dishonest individuals.



dreams but also erodes faith in institutions. A transparent and fool proof examination process is therefore not just an educational necessity but a moral obligation.

Pralhad Joshi’s “war-footing” approach to reform is, therefore, timely and wel-

come. The emphasis on technology, cyber-security, psychometrics and professional expertise is in tune with the requirements of modern examination systems. India conducts some

Experience shows that “black sheep” or moles often operate within systems, leaking information, manipulating processes or colluding with external elements for personal gain. These internal threats can undermine even the most sophisticated



- SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM

security mechanisms.

Therefore, while modernising the NTA, equal emphasis must be placed on identifying and eliminating such elements. Strict background verification, periodic audits, accountability mechanisms and exemplary punishment for those found guilty of malpractice are essential. The message must be loud and clear: there will be zero tolerance for any attempt to compromise the sanctity of examinations.

Transparency should also become an integral part of the reform process. Periodic public disclosures on corrective measures, independent audits and stronger grievance redressal mechanisms can further strengthen trust among students and parents.

India’s youth deserve an examination system that rewards talent, hard work and

merit alone. No student should feel that success depends on unfair practices or systemic loopholes. The nation cannot afford a situation where uncertainty and suspicion overshadow the dreams of aspiring doctors, engineers and professionals.

The reforms initiated by Pralhad Joshi offer a ray of hope. Yet, this must not remain a one-time clean-up exercise. It should evolve into a sustained mission to create a robust, transparent and incorruptible examination ecosystem.

The credibility of India’s competitive examinations is too precious to be compromised. Protecting it requires not only better technology and stronger security but also constant vigilance against those who seek to exploit the system from within.

If the present reforms are implemented with sincerity and firmness, India can once again assure every student that merit alone will triumph, and that the nation’s examination system remains fair, secure and worthy of public trust.

EUROPE’S HEAT IS NO LONGER JUST A HOT SUMMER

A summer heat wave can sound almost ordinary. It can mean hot afternoons, dry fields and people searching for shade. But there is nothing ordinary about people dying because the air around them has become too hot to survive. Europe has always experienced hot summers, droughts and wildfires. What is becoming harder to ignore is the scale, frequency and consequences of the extreme heat now affecting the continent. Across Europe, prolonged high temperatures are putting pressure on people, agriculture, water supplies, forests and infrastructure. Rivers are falling to unusually low levels, soils are drying out, wildfire conditions are worsening, and extreme heat is contributing to loss of life. And behind every number is a person. A heat-related death is not simply a statistic. It is a family losing someone, a life ending because the human body could no longer cope with the conditions around it. That is what makes extreme heat so deeply tragic. Unlike a flood or wildfire, heat can be almost invisible.

There may be no dramatic moment when disaster arrives. Instead, the danger builds quietly, day after day and night after night, until the body can no longer regulate its temperature. So, are these events simply natural variations in European weather, or are they connected to the enormous changes humanity has made to the climate? The answer is both. Heat waves are natural weather events. The atmosphere has always produced periods of exceptional heat, just as it has produced cold spells, heavy rain and droughts. But the climate in which these events occur has

changed. Decades of burning coal, oil and gas have increased greenhouse-gas concentrations in the atmosphere, trapping additional heat and raising global temperatures. Climate change does not create every heat wave from nothing. Instead, it changes the conditions in which heat waves develop. A weather pattern that might once have



produced a very hot period is now operating on top of a warmer climate, making extreme temperatures more likely and, in many cases, more intense. Weather determines what happens on a particular day. Climate determines the conditions in which that weather occurs. Europe is now the fastest-warming continent, and that changing baseline matters. As average temperatures rise, extreme heat becomes easier to reach. Conditions once considered exceptional can become increasingly familiar. The effects do not stop at the thermometer. When soil contains moisture, some of the Sun’s energy is used to evaporate water, providing a natural cooling ef-

fect. But prolonged heat and a lack of rainfall dry the soil and weaken this process. More energy is then available to heat the land and the air above it.

This can create a dangerous cycle: heat dries the land, dry conditions reduce cooling, and weaker cooling can contribute to further warming. Water demand rises, crops suffer and vegetation be-

come. The emphasis on technology, cyber-security, psychometrics and professional expertise is in tune with the requirements of modern examination systems. India conducts some

do not address the underlying trend. Europe must do two things at once: reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and adapt to the warming that is already taking place. That



- PRADIVYA NAMBIAR

comes more vulnerable to fire. A heat wave, therefore, is rarely just a temperature problem. It can become a crisis for an entire society. Farmers can lose crops. Water supplies can come under pressure. Electricity demand can rise as people try to cool their homes. Outdoor workers can face dangerous conditions. Older people and others vulnerable to extreme temperatures face greater health risks. This is why Europe cannot treat every heat wave as an isolated summer event. Warnings, emergency services, cooling measures and protection for vulnerable people are essential when extreme heat arrives. They can save lives. But they

means cooler cities, better water management, stronger infrastructure, improved early warning systems and effective protection for vulnerable people. It also means recognizing that heat deaths deserve the same seriousness as other climate-related disasters. None of this means every summer will be hotter than the last. Natural variability will continue to produce cooler years as well as hotter ones. But the background is changing.

Europe is warming, and that warmer background is changing the consequences of the weather it has always experienced. The heat will eventually break. But the consequences do not always disappear with it.

A CRISIS OF EXAMS, JOBS AND JUSTICE: JHARKHAND MUST FIND THE RIGHT BALANCE

The student agitation over government recruitment examinations in Jharkhand, which has continued for the past twenty-five days, has now entered a new and more complex phase. Amid mounting pressure from protesting students, allegations of irregularities in recruitment examinations, and serious questions over the credibility of the examination system, the Hemant Soren government has announced the cancellation of the JSSC-CGL, the 14th JPSC examination, and several other recruitment examinations, including those associated with TDPL. The government has also announced that examinations conducted since 2014 will be investigated and that steps will be taken to reform the recruitment system. While this decision has brought considerable relief to protesting students, it has simultaneously created a serious crisis of employment and future prospects for thousands of young people who have already been selected and were serving in government jobs. This contradiction makes Jharkhand’s current recruitment controversy much more than a case of examination malpractice; it has become a serious question of justice, administrative accountability, and human sensitivity.

The student agitation, which began at Jaipal Singh Munda Stadium in Ranchi on July 25, 2026, was against alleged paper leaks, irregularities, and lack of transparency in JPSC and JSSC recruitment examinations.

The students demanded a fair investigation into the examinations, cancellation of processes found to be compromised, and stringent action against those responsible. Student leader Devendra Nath Mahto undertook a sixteen-day hunger strike. Following the government’s an-

nouncement, he ended his fast, although some students continue to demand an investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The government has issued a list of 44 examinations to be cancelled through eight separate notifications.

If a question paper has been leaked, organized malpractice has taken place, or serious irregularities have been proven to have compromised the selection process, an investigation and, where necessary, cancellation of the examination is undoubtedly justified. The confidence of millions of young people competing for government jobs can be sustained only when they are assured that their hard work will not be rendered futile by brokers, corrupt officials, examination authorities, or candidates using unfair means. Therefore, the students’ demand for a transparent and impartial recruitment system is entirely legitimate.

However, the situation becomes far more serious when a collective irregularity in an examination results in the removal of candidates who have been selected and appointed, even though there is no evidence of individual wrongdoing on their part. This is the fundamental question being raised by the employees selected through the JSSC-CGL examination. The examination was conducted in December 2023. Following allegations of a paper leak, it was conducted again in September 2024.

The matter reached the courts, and after the judicial process, the results were declared. Successful candidates were issued appointment letters, and many of them joined government service. Now, with the entire process being cancelled, nearly 2,000 selected employees have been directly affected. According to available information, around 1,975 appointments have been impacted by the decision.



- LALIT GARGG

These employees maintain that they appeared for the examination through the prescribed procedure, qualified on merit, received appointment letters, and joined government service. If corruption occurred at any level, it must certainly be investigated. But treating every selected candidate as guilty and terminating their employment cannot be considered just.

After securing government jobs, many young people took loans, assumed financial responsibilities for housing and other necessities, and gave up other employment opportunities. Their lives and financial plans became dependent on the stability of regular government salaries. The anguish and grievances of these employees must be heard with the same seriousness with which the concerns of protesting students were addressed.

The fundamental issue is how to distinguish between irregularities in an examination system and the individual involvement of a candidate in malpractice.

If a candidate purchased a leaked paper, cheated, used unfair means, or obtained an undue advantage through a broker, the strictest possible action should be taken against that individual. But if a candidate appeared for the examination without any proven misconduct, succeeded on the basis of the declared result, and subsequently entered government service, then penalising that person merely because the examination system itself was flawed raises serious questions of justice. Protecting the guilty is injustice, but punishing the innocent is equally unjust.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fix the Exam System

Restoring Trust in Examinations, repeated question paper leaks and scheduling delays have shattered student trust in competitive exams. When years of hard work are rendered meaningless by corruption, youth lose faith in the system. The government must implement strict cybersecurity, secure printing, and independent oversight immediately. Rebuilding credibility in our examination process is essential to secure the future and morale of our nation’s youth.

- Fakiyan Firdouse

Climate Action Now

Europe’s Extreme Heat Warning, record-breaking temperatures across Europe are no longer just an uncomfortable summer—they represent a severe ecological crisis. Prolonged heatwaves, droughts, and wildfires threaten public health, agriculture, and infrastructure. Governments must move beyond temporary relief measures and enact aggressive, long-term climate policies. We must accelerate the transition to renewable energy and build climate-resilient cities before these extreme weather events become permanent.

- Rahul Prakash

Youth Needs Employment

Addressing Jharkhand’s Job Crisis, Jharkhand urgently needs to resolve its ongoing employment and recruitment crisis. Thousands of educated youth face uncertainty due to delayed examinations, legal hurdles, and policy instability. The state government must ensure transparent hiring practices, timely exam schedules, and fair reservation policies. Balancing social justice with merit-based opportunities is critical to restore stability, reduce frustration, and empower the state’s young workforce effectively.

- Rajan Johnson A.



THE FIRST LANGUAGE OF BOUNDARIES—NO

In a world where people are often encouraged to please others, maintain relationships and avoid disagreement, saying “No” can feel surprisingly difficult. Many people hesitate before refusing a request because they fear disappointing someone, appearing rude, losing a friendship or being misunderstood. Yet “No” is not a negative word. It is one of the clearest expressions of personal boundaries, consent, self-respect and individual choice. A healthy society must learn an important lesson: when someone says No, No means No. A boundary is a line that tells others where our comfort, privacy, time, values and personal choices begin and end. Saying No is often the first and simplest language through which we communicate that boundary.

Why Is Saying No So Difficult?

From childhood, many of us are taught to be obedient, helpful and accommodating. We are praised when we agree and sometimes criticized when we refuse. As a result, some people grow up believing that saying No is selfish or disrespectful.

A student may agree to something simply because friends insist. An employee may accept every additional responsibility because they are afraid of disappointing a senior. A family member may repeatedly sacrifice personal time because saying No feels uncomfortable. The problem is not kindness. Kindness becomes unhealthy when it requires us to constantly ignore our own boundaries. We can be caring without always saying yes.

No Is Not an Insult

A refusal does not necessarily contain anger, rejection or hostility. Sometimes it simply means: “I am not comfortable with this.” “I cannot do this.” “I do not want to participate.” “I need some personal space.”

“I have other priorities.” These are legitimate statements. We do not need to manufacture complicated explanations every time we decline something. A respectful No can be complete in itself. Of course, politeness matters. But politeness should not mean surrendering our right to make personal choices.

Consent Begins With Respecting No

One of the most important places where the meaning of “No” must be understood clearly is consent. Consent must be voluntary and free from pressure. If a person says No, becomes uncomfortable, withdraws agree-

ment or asks someone to stop, that choice deserves respect.

This principle applies to friendships, relationships, personal space, conversations, photographs, online interactions and many other situations. Nobody should be pressured into agreeing simply because someone else wants a particular answer. A healthy relationship does not depend on forcing agreement. It depends on mutual respect and freedom of choice.

Pressure Does Not Turn No into Yes

Sometimes people try to negotiate another person's boundary repeatedly. “Come on, just once.” “Why are you being difficult?”

“Everyone else is doing it.” “If you were really my friend, you would agree.” Such statements may appear harmless, but repeated pressure can make people feel that their boundaries are not being respected.

A person's No should not become an invitation to continue persuading them. There is a profound difference between asking once and pressuring repeatedly. Respect means accepting the answer. Children Must Be Taught That Their No Matters, learning to respect boundaries should begin early.

Children should understand that they can speak up when something makes them uncomfortable. At the same time, they should also learn to respect the boundaries of others. Parents and teachers can help children understand simple principles: Your body and personal space deserve respect. You can say No when something makes you uncomfortable. You should respect another person's No. You should seek permission before crossing someone's personal boundary. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness. Teaching these ideas does not make children disrespectful. It helps them develop confidence, empathy and responsible social behaviour.

The Digital World Needs the Same Lesson

Boundaries do not disappear when we enter the digital world. Someone may not want their photograph shared. Someone may not want to answer personal questions. Someone may not want to join a particular group, conversation or online activity. The ease of digital communication can sometimes create a false sense that everything is public or available for everyone. It is not. Digital citizenship must include respect for privacy and personal choice. A message that receives no response is not necessarily an invitation to send twenty more messages. A person who does not want to share some-



thing should not be repeatedly pressured. Online boundaries are real boundaries.

Saying No Does Not Make You Selfish

There is a difference between selfishness and self-respect.

Selfishness means ignoring the legitimate needs and rights of others for personal benefit. Self-respect means recognizing that your own time, comfort, safety and choices also matter. If a person always says yes to everyone, they may eventually become exhausted, frustrated or resentful. Learning to say No can protect relationships because honest boundaries are often healthier than reluctant agreement. A forced Yes may create hidden resentment. A respectful No creates clarity. We Also Need to Learn How to Hear No, much attention is given to teaching people how to say no. Equally important is teaching people how to hear no.

When someone refuses, we should not immediately ask: “Why?”, “Are you angry with me?”, “Don't you trust me?”, “Can't you do this just for me?” Sometimes the most respectful response is simply: “I understand.” Hearing No without becoming angry, manipulative or insulting is an important sign of emotional maturity.

Boundaries Are Not Walls

Some people worry that setting boundaries will make them distant from others. Healthy boundaries are not walls designed

to keep everyone away. They are more like doors we decide when they open and when they remain closed. Good relationships require boundaries because people are individuals, not possessions. Friends can have different opinions. Family members can have different needs. Colleagues can have different priorities. Two people can care deeply about each other and still disagree. Respect does not require complete agreement.

The Courage to Say No

Saying No can require courage, particularly when there is a power imbalance or when social pressure is strong. But courage does not always look dramatic. Sometimes courage is simply saying: “No, I am not comfortable with that.” “No, I cannot take this responsibility right now.” “No, I don't want to share that information.” “No, please don't do that.” These simple sentences can protect dignity and personal autonomy. A person does not need to shout to establish a boundary. A calm No can be powerful.

But No Should Also Be Used Responsibly

Respecting No does not mean that every disagreement should become a confrontation. We should learn to communicate boundaries clearly and respectfully. Instead of blaming others, we can use simple statements about our own position. For exam-

ple: “I am not comfortable discussing this.” “I won't be able to participate.” “I need some time before deciding.” “I would prefer not to share that.”

Clear communication reduces misunderstanding.

The objective is not to say No to everything. The objective is to have the freedom to say Yes when we genuinely mean Yes and No when we genuinely mean No. A Culture That Respects Boundaries Is a Healthier Culture, imagine a society in which people do not have to justify every personal choice. A society where children can speak up. Where young people can refuse unwanted pressure. Where adults can establish healthy boundaries. Where colleagues respect one another's time. Where friends understand that friendship does not mean unlimited access. Where families allow individual choices. Where disagreement does not automatically become disrespect. Such a society would be more respectful, safer and emotionally healthier. The quality of a relationship should not be measured by how often someone agrees with us. It should be measured by how safely people can disagree with us.

No Is a Complete Sentence—but Respect Makes It Better

There are situations where a simple No is enough. In others, a brief explanation may help maintain clarity and courtesy. What matters is that the person remains free to make the decision. And what matters equally is how we respond when someone else makes theirs. We should stop teaching people that being “good” means always being agreeable. Goodness is not endless compliance. Kindness is not surrender. Love is not ownership. Friendship is not entitlement. Respect is not obedience. And consent is not something that can be obtained through pressure.

The first language of boundaries is often a small word with enormous meaning: No.

When someone says No, we should listen. When we need to say No, we should not be ashamed. When another person sets a boundary, we should respect it. Because a healthy society is not one in which everyone always says yes. It is one in which everyone has the freedom to say No and everyone understands that No deserves respect.

DR. VIJAY GARG

PRESERVING RAJASTHAN'S HIDDEN HERITAGE



Rural India holds countless architectural treasures that remain tucked away from public attention and formal conservation lists. Historic villages, like Barwa in Haryana or the painted settlements of Rajasthan, showcase extraordinary mural art, grand havelis, and traditional water structures that tell rich stories of regional culture. However, without timely intervention, these silent witnesses of history face rapid decay from weather, urban expansion, and neglect.

Preserving rural heritage requires more than just passive admiration; it demands active, community-driven conservation strategies. Developing structured heritage walks, creating digital archives, and engaging local youth can turn overlooked historical sites into hubs for sustainable cultural tourism. Furthermore, university researchers and local historians play a critical role by documenting these sites before they are lost forever. Protecting our regional heritage ensures that future generations remain connected to their cultural roots and the vibrant history woven into our rural landscapes.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

BARWA: HARYANA'S LIVING HERITAGE VILLAGE OF MURALS

The village of Barwa in south-west Haryana transcends a simple rural settlement, becoming a living heritage site with its havelis, murals, ponds, and folk memories. Its architectural tradition reflects layers of folk art, social history, Rajasthani influences, and rural prosperity, giving it a unique place on Haryana's cultural map.

Barwa village, nestled in the dry, scorching land of south-west Haryana, is not just a rural settlement but a living document of memories, architecture, folk art and social history, preserved even today by its mansions, ponds, wells, umbrellas and murals. Located in the Siwani area of Bhiwani district, this village, with its historical buildings and painted walls, can be counted among those rare heritage settlements where the buildings are not just structures of brick and stone but become silent witnesses telling the story of time.

Barwa's most prominent landmark is its old mansions. Nearly a dozen historic mansions are considered particularly noteworthy, though local estimates suggest even higher numbers. The mansions associated with Seth Parshuram, Seth Hukumchand, Lala Sohanlal, and Seth Lakshmi-chand hold particular architectural and mural significance. These buildings showcase the use of lakhori bricks, lime, wood, heavy and sturdy doors, carved windows, interior courtyards, and chhatris. Their architectural language reflects the shared cultural traditions of Haryana and Rajasthan.

The Thakur's Garhi, also known as Bransa Bhawan, is considered a key center of Barwa's historical identity. According to local tradition, the ancestors of Thakur Bagh Singh, belonging to the Tanwar Rajput clan, migrated from the Jeetpura region of Rajputana approximately six centuries ago and established their social roots in the region. Local accounts place the construction of the current Garhi around 1938. According to a popular local legend, construction was initiated during a period of rainfall shortage and agricultural crisis, providing employment to the villagers. In this sense, the Garhi may have been not only a symbol of power, prosperity, and social prestige, but also a structure integral to the

local economy of the time.

The fort's massive main gate, sturdy iron plates, wooden structures, large living quarters, storage spaces, and elephant stables reflect its grandeur. Despite the ravages of time, its structure still offers glimpses of Barwa's past architectural prowess and feudal lifestyle.

The true uniqueness of these mansions is reflected in the murals adorning their walls and ceilings. These paintings depict the Radha-Krishna Rasleela, Vishnu-Lakshmi, Sherawali Mata, kings and queens, horsemen, elephants, chariots, soldiers, animals, birds, and numerous scenes from folk life. Some exhibit Shekhawati-style decoration, others Rajasthani and Kota influences, while others reflect Mughal and Nathdwara traditions. The blend of these styles points to the cultural exchange that occurred within the region.

The paintings in Seth Parashuram's mansion are particularly noteworthy. According to local accounts, artisans were brought from Pilani to decorate it. Along with religious narratives, scenes depicting kings and queens, chariot processions, music, animals, birds, and social life are also found here. The red, yellow, blue, and green colors used in these paintings reveal the color sensibility and aesthetic sense of the artists of the time. These paintings are not merely decorative elements, but visual documents of the religious consciousness, social structure, and cultural imagination of that era.

The depiction of an elephant, a king, and a queen at the main entrance of Seth Hukumchand-Lala Sohanlal's mansion is a particular attraction. The elephant is depicted in a decorated state, and scenes from royal life are engraved on it. Paintings depicting Vishnu-Lakshmi, Sherawali Mata, and Radha-Krishna are also found in the mansion. These paintings reflect influences of Rajasthani, Mughal, and Kota styles.

Lakshmi-chand's paintings at Kathare are also significant for their breadth of subject matter. They depict scenes of chariot processions, maids, horsemen, and gods and goddesses. One depicts Lord Krishna



braiding Radha's hair. This scene connects religious narratives with human empathy, love, and folk beauty. The paintings display a blend of Rajasthani and Mughal influences in the depiction of clothing, jewelry, crowns, and vehicles.

An important aspect of Barwa's pictorial language is its time-sensitivity. Not only are gods and goddesses and mythological events depicted, but scenes from the British era, including trains, postmen, soldiers, and the British era, also appear on the walls. The train's depiction includes the engine, coaches, passengers, and even a signalman. This suggests that local artists were also documenting the changing technology and social order around them through their paintings. Thus, Barwa's mural tradition also documents the dialogue between tradition and modernity.

Kesar Talab is an important center of Barwa's cultural heritage. According to local folklore, social circumstances surrounding Seth Parshuram's sister Kesar inspired the pond to be paved and made available for public use. Over time, the pond became more than just a water source, but also a part of local memory and community life. The umbrellas and painted structures surrounding the pond clearly illustrate the connection between water culture and folk life. The paintings depicting Rad-

ha-Krishna's Raasleela, musical instruments, peacocks, parrots, and other birds reflect the rich tradition of folk art.

Barwa's cultural identity has also been linked to Haryanvi folk cinema. According to available accounts, some scenes from the famous Haryanvi films "Chandrawal" and "Bairi" were filmed in the village's ponds, wells, and traditional surroundings. This reveals the visual uniqueness of Barwa's architecture and rural surroundings. Cinema also indirectly played a role in bringing this heritage to wider recognition.

The contributions of Dr. Satyawan Saurabh and Dr. Priyanka Saurabh, a renowned researcher and literary couple, to the study and documentation of Barwa's heritage are noteworthy. For the past two decades, they have been continuously writing and collecting information on the village's mansions, murals, ponds, wells, architectural remains, and folk memories. They have not only viewed these structures as old buildings, but have also attempted to understand the social, cultural, and economic history hidden within them.

Dr. Satyawan Saurabh and Dr. Priyanka Saurabh's articles on Barwa's mansions and cultural heritage are also cited as reference material by several PhD researchers. This indicates that their writings on local his-

tory and folk heritage are providing useful material for academic study. The significance of their efforts is further enhanced by their efforts in not limiting Barwa's heritage to mere local memory but embedding it within literary, cultural, and research discourse.

Today, Barwa's greatest challenge is the preservation of these historic structures. Due to humidity, smoke, weather, neglect, and the ravages of time, many murals are fading. Some havelis are falling into disrepair. If scientific surveys, photodocumentation, and digital archiving are not undertaken in a timely manner, future generations may lose a significant portion of this visible history. Conservation efforts should involve the assistance of experts, while preserving traditional construction techniques, local materials, and original architectural forms.

Barwa also has vast potential for heritage tourism. A systematic heritage walk could be developed, connecting the havelis, Thakur's fort, Kesar Talab, wells, and murals. Information boards, local guides, a digital museum, cultural maps, and research-based tourism materials could be developed. New employment opportunities could also be created by engaging local youth in heritage conservation and tourism.

The havelis of Barwa remind us that history doesn't reside solely in palaces, forts, and large cities. It also breathes in the walls, wells, ponds, umbrellas, and courtyards of villages. The paintings here are the visual language of a bygone society, and the havelis bear witness to the labor, art, faith, social relationships, and changing times of many generations.

If the administration, universities, heritage experts, local communities, and the heirs of the havelis jointly take concrete steps toward conservation, Barwa could be developed into an important rural heritage site in Haryana. The long-standing writings and documentation of local researchers like Dr. Satyawan Saurabh and Dr. Priyanka Saurabh can serve as the foundation for this effort. Saving the havelis of Barwa is not just about preserving old buildings; it is about preserving a collective memory, folk art, and history that must be passed on to future generations.

Quick Read



Officer's CPR saves teenager's life

kerala
A police officer's timely CPR helped save a 17-year-old girl who was found unconscious after an alleged suicide attempt at her home in Kollam, Kerala. Police said the family sought help after the teenager locked herself in her room following a dispute over mobile phone use. A patrol team led by Sub-Inspector S Manoj and home guard Jyothi P S forced open the door and brought her down. Manoj performed CPR for more than five minutes, restoring her heartbeat. She was rushed to hospital and is recovering. Kerala police chief Ravada Chandrasekhar gave Manoj and Jyothi commendation certificates on Wednesday.

Eight held for child abuse in Raipur

Raipur
A major child abuse and alleged newborn trafficking case has emerged in Raipur, where police have arrested eight people, including relatives and medical staff. A 16-year-old girl alleged that her father repeatedly raped her and used forged documents to arrange her delivery at a private hospital. Officials said she was falsely shown as an adult and married. Her newborn son was allegedly sold. The survivor later contacted her mother through social media, leading to a complaint on Monday. Police have invoked provisions under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, POCSO Act and Juvenile Justice Act. The investigation is continuing.

Man found dead after alleged assault

BEGUSARAI
A 24-year-old man was found dead in a garden in Bihar's Begusarai district after he was allegedly tied up and beaten, police said. Investigators suspect his younger brother may be involved following a reported dispute, but said the motive and sequence of events have not been established. The body of Rahul Kumar, 24, was found on Tuesday night after local residents alerted police. Officers said his hands and legs were tied and that deep injury marks were visible on his back and other parts of his body. Police suspect Kumar was restrained and assaulted with sticks and possibly a whip before his death. However, they said the cause of death will be confirmed only after the post-mortem examination and further evidence is examined.

NMC Chief stresses medical education quality

India's medical education expansion must prioritise competent, ethical doctors, NMC chief Abhijat Sheth said

NEW DELHI

National Medical Commission chairperson Abhijat Sheth has urged India to protect quality and training standards as it rapidly increases medical colleges and MBBS seats. Speaking at the Indian Chamber of Commerce's Medical Education Forum in Delhi, he said expansion should strengthen the healthcare workforce without weakening competence or accountability. India now has more than 800 medical colleges, he said, calling the growth a planned national effort to improve healthcare access and reduce regional gaps. Official figures show medical colleges rose from 387 in 2014 to 844 in 2026. MBBS seats increased from 51,348 to 139,489 over the same period. Sheth said the number of doctors alone cannot define success. Medical graduates must have strong clinical skills, ethical grounding and the ability to serve communities, he said. He called for competency-based teaching,



"Expansion must not compromise quality."
Abhijat Sheth, NMC chairperson

better faculty development, simulation-based training and continued research throughout a doctor's career. Technology and artificial intelligence will increasingly support diagnosis, data analysis and clinical decisions, Sheth said. However, he stressed that AI cannot replace doctors' professional responsibility or accountability. Students must understand algorithmic bias, data privacy, cybersecurity, informed consent and the limits of AI-generated information, he said. He urged institutions to

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- India has 844 medical colleges in 2026.
- MBBS seats have risen to 139,489.
- Sheth stressed competency-based medical education.
- AI must support, not replace, doctors.
- Students must understand AI risks and limits.

build AI tools suited to Indian patients, local health needs and available data. India's medical education system must combine wider access with rigorous standards, he said. The aim should be to prepare capable, ethical doctors who can respond to changing health challenges and help shape the future of medicine. He said expansion must remain purposeful, inclusive and focused on patients, not merely rising college numbers. That balance, he added, will determine the system's lasting value.

AISA launches Gen-Z yatra across Uttar Pradesh

NEW DELHI

The All-India Students' Association on Tuesday announced its "GEN-Z Mahajutan Yatra" across Uttar Pradesh, as part of its GenZ Rising campaign focused on education reform, entrance examination policies and unemployment. The student group said the initiative aims to bring together young people and students around these concerns. The yatra will begin in Prayagraj on September 9. It will travel to Rae Bareilly on September 10, Varanasi on September 12, Azamgarh on September 13, and Gorakhpur on September 14. The programme will then move to Lucknow on September 17 and Meerut on September 18. AISA leaders said the journey will be led by the organisation's president, Neha Bora, and Uttar Pradesh state chief Manish. Representatives of the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union are also expected to support the campaign. AISA said it wanted to

AISA's Gen-Z Mahajutan Yatra will cross seven Uttar Pradesh cities from September 9, rallying students around education reform, entrance exams and unemployment across the state

"carry the Jantar Mantar momentum forward" through the state-wide campaign. The organisation described the yatra as an effort to raise concerns about higher education, entrance tests and employment opportunities. The campaign is named GenZ Rising and is aimed at students and young people in the state. AISA said the scheduled visits would provide a platform to discuss education and jobs issues. The group has also called attention to entrance examination policies, which it has listed among its main concerns. The proposed route covers cities in different parts of Uttar Pradesh over ten days. AISA has not announced further programme details in the statement.

SP MLA congress MP clash in Saharanpur

SAHARANPUR

Samajwadi Party MLA Ashu Malik and Congress MP Imran Masood exchanged sharp words over speaking time during a District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee, or Disha, meeting in Saharanpur. A video of the exchange later circulated widely on social media. The meeting was held on August 18 at Vikas Bhawan auditorium on Delhi Road. Malik raised issues related to his assembly constituency and sought answers from officials. The disagreement reportedly began over the order and time allotted to members for raising questions. In the video, Malik said many questions came from the public and asked who would raise them if elected representatives did not. Masood asked him to let other members speak, saying everyone would receive a turn. Malik also asked officials not to drop his questions and sought written replies. After the video spread, both leaders downplayed the incident and said it was a discussion over meeting rules. Malik said the session lasted about five hours and that he was seeking solutions, not a dispute.

CABINET CLEARS BIHAR NH-22 WIDENING

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a ₹3,590.73-crore project to widen the Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa section of National Highway 22 in Bihar to four lanes. The scheme is intended to improve connectivity with the Nepal border and support trade, tourism and economic activity in the region.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the route would become a major transport artery linking Sonbarsa, Sitamarhi and Muzaffarpur. He said the project would benefit Bihar for years and serve as an important economic corridor. Construction is scheduled for completion within 30 months using flexible, black-top pavement. The work will include seven major bridges, three road overbridges and six underpasses. A 340-metre bridge over the Bagmati River is also planned. Officials said bridge designs will consider flooding in the river. The project will connect important economic, social and logistics centres across Bihar, according to the Press Information Bureau. These include four industrial estates, a mega food park, the Baba Garibnath Temple, Mata Janki Temple and Punaura Dham. Muzaf-

Details of highway plan
The project will cost 3,590.73 crore.
NH-22 will be widened to four lanes.
Construction is planned within 30 months.
The project includes seven major bridges.

farpur and Sitamarhi railway stations are also among the logistics nodes expected to benefit. The expanded highway is expected to speed up travel for passengers and improve goods movement in north Bihar.

It will also provide better road links for communities near the international border, officials said. The government said the corridor would support development in Sitamarhi and Muzaffarpur districts and improve access to tourism sites.

The project forms part of wider efforts to upgrade national highways and strengthen regional transport networks. With construction planned over thirty months, authorities will focus on safe bridge design and uninterrupted connectivity during the work. Work will proceed as scheduled

CBI arrests I&B officer in bribery case

NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation has arrested Sandeep, a Deputy Controller of Accounts with the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in an alleged ₹10-lakh bribery case. The agency said he was caught while allegedly accepting money through his wife.

A CBI spokesperson said the case was registered on August 18 after a complaint alleged that Sandeep, an Indian Civil Accounts Service officer of the 2020 batch, demanded ₹15 lakh to quickly clear a pending file.

The file concerned renewal of a private company's contract, the agency said. Sandeep was posted as Deputy Controller of Accounts and Internal Financial Adviser in the ministry, according to the CBI. Following negotiations, he allegedly agreed to accept ₹10 lakh from the complainant.

Bengal court issues warrant against Mahua Moitra

KOLKATA

A court in West Bengal's Nadia district on Wednesday ordered an arrest warrant against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra after she allegedly failed to appear in an alleged hate speech case. The Krishnanagar court directed police to submit an execution report by August 28, PTI reported.

The case alleges that Moitra insulted women and made hate speech. A senior Krishnanagar police district official said the complaint invokes provisions concerning insulting a woman's modesty, promoting enmity, hurting religious feelings, criminal intimidation and hate speech.

The third judicial magistrate said Moitra did not attend despite repeated pre-cognisance summonses. The court noted that she was directed on Tuesday to appear

AT A GLANCE
■ 1: Arrest warrant issued against Mahua Moitra.
■ 1: Hate speech complaint case before the Krishnanagar court.
■ Several: Summonses allegedly missed by Moitra.
■ August 28: Deadline for police to submit the warrant-execution report.
■ October 5: Interim protection date in a separate Calcutta High Court case.

the following day but did not do so. It said her continued non-compliance left it with no option but to issue a warrant.

Moitra's lawyer told the court she would not appear and raised concern that she

could be heckled outside the courthouse, according to the order. The judge said this showed a lack of respect for the court.

Separately, the Supreme Court earlier this month declined to intervene in Moitra's challenge to a Calcutta High Court order requiring her to appear before police in another hate speech case. Her lawyer had sought virtual appearance, citing past security concerns and an egg attack.

On July 21, the High Court granted Moitra interim protection from coercive action in that separate case until October 5, subject to cooperation with investigators. Moitra has reportedly said the allegations were fabricated.

The present warrant concerns a complaint case before the Krishnanagar court, officials said, and its execution remains pending. Police must report by August 28.

Jharkhand cancels 44 recruitment exams

RANCHI

The Jharkhand government on Tuesday released a list of 44 recruitment examinations conducted by the Jharkhand Public Service Commission and Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission that were cancelled following alleged irregularities. The move came amid student protests over recruitment examination concerns. The cancelled tests include recruitment examinations for drug inspectors, assistant professors, deputy collectors, dental doctors, assistant engineers, civil judges, additional public prosecutors and forest range officers. Examinations for polytechnic

lecturers, senior scientific officers, assistant conservators of forests and other administrative and technical posts are also on the list.

The government said the cancellations followed complaints about irregularities in ongoing examinations conducted by the commissions and handled through TSR Data Processing Private Limited, or TDPL. It cited facts brought before the government during a Criminal Investigation Department inquiry.

To address the issue, the government said it would ask the High Court to establish a fast-track court for cases concerning alleged irregularities and misconduct in JPSC and



JSSC examinations. It also plans to create an internal monitoring cell within both commissions. A committee chaired by IAS officer Amitabh Kaushal will examine reforms in the JPSC and JSSC examination system, the government said. The panel will

include other officials and the director of a reputed institution. It must submit its report within two months. Meanwhile, Jharkhand CID arrested the wife and brother of Abhay Tiwari, described as a suspected key figure in the case.

RESERVATION SYSTEM GLITCH

IndiGo website outage disrupts online flight bookings

NEW DELHI



"We are currently experiencing intermittent issues with our core reservation platform," IndiGo

access online services. Its teams were working with a partner to resolve the problem as soon as possible, it said.

Several customers posted on X that they were unable to book tickets or finish check-in online. Reports indicated that

passengers in at least three Indian cities were affected. Another travel website displayed a notice asking users to try again later, Reuters reported.

IndiGo advised passengers needing immediate travel assistance to contact its customer support centre. Those travelling later were asked to try the website or mobile application again after some time. The airline apologised for the inconvenience and thanked customers for their patience.

This follows other recent operational concerns involving the airline, including a technical snag on a Kolk-

ata-to-Chennai flight and flight cancellations linked to a pilot shortage last year. However, Wednesday's disruption involved its online reservation services.

The airline did not give a timeline for full restoration of the platform. It said it was prioritising a solution and urged customers with later travel plans to wait before trying again. The outage underlined the importance of reliable digital systems for passengers seeking to book or manage their journeys. IndiGo said it would share updates as work continued on repairs.

Hospital faces probe over c-section negligence claims

BEED

A 19-year-old woman is in critical condition after her family alleged that surgical gloves and paper napkins were left inside her abdomen during a Caesarean section at the Beed district hospital in Maharashtra. Authorities have begun an inquiry and issued show-cause notices to the doctor and health workers concerned.

Sandhya Suraj Gaikwad was admitted to the hospital on August 1 for delivery and underwent the surgery. She was discharged four days later but developed severe abdominal pain after returning home, her family said.

As her condition worsened, relatives took her to a private hospital, where doctors reportedly detected an unknown object in her abdomen. She was later taken to Sassoon Hospital in Pune for further treatment. Her family alleged that doctors at Sassoon Hospital performed another operation and removed surgical gloves and paper napkins from her abdomen. Her husband, Suraj Gaikwad, blamed negligence during the first surgery and sought strict action against those responsible.

Her mother said Sandhya had vomited after the C-section and that she informed a nurse at the Beed hospital. The family said her condition

deteriorated after she was taken home. Beed District Surgeon Dr Satishkumar Solanke said the matter was under investigation. He said legal and administrative action would follow if anyone was found responsible. The inquiry will examine how the alleged material was found inside the patient and whether procedures were followed during the surgery. The woman remains under treatment in Pune, her family said. Officials have not yet released the findings of the investigation. The case has raised questions about patient safety and post-operative care at the district hospital. Further official action is awaited.



Quick Read

Man tied, beaten to death; brother suspected

Begusarai

A 24-year-old man was found dead in a garden with his hands and legs tied, police said. The victim, Rahul Kumar, had injuries on his body suggesting a violent as-sault.

Police suspect his younger brother after reports of an argument before the incident. The brother was missing from home, officials said. However, investi-gators have not con-firmed the motive or the sequence of events.

The body was sent for post-mortem examina-tion. Police are collect-ing evidence and ques-tioning people to de-termine whether others were involved.

Further action will de-pend on medical and in-vestigative findings.

600 students leave 'haunted' in hostel

AMRAVATI

Nearly 600 tribal stu-dents left a government residential school in Maharashtra's Amravati district after four girls reportedly cried and laughed uncontrollably, triggering rumours of "possession" and spirits on campus. The inci-dent on July 22 caused fear among students and families.

Authorities said the girls' hostel had been overcrowded for a long time. To restore confi-dence and safety, girl students will begin shifting to a newly con-structed hostel on the school premises from September 1. Officials are working to bring stu-dents back and resume normal schooling.

Tamil Nadu engineering admissions falter

Chennai

selected 74,658 seats after two rounds, below the 79,894 chosen at the same stage last year. Officials and education experts expect 40,000 to 50,000 seats to remain vacant after coun-selling ends. Nearly 46 per cent of applicants did not attend the second round, possibly choosing manage-ment quota colleges, deemed universities or other courses. They said afforda-bility and location could also shape student decisions.

Career consultant Jayaprakash Gandhi said students are increasingly fa-vouring urban colleges, where they believe intern-ships, technology exposure and jobs are easier to se-cure. He linked the prefer-ence to concerns about an information technology slowdown and preparation for careers after graduation.

Educationist Prince Gajen-dra Babu said many private colleges had failed to mod-ernise infrastructure despite charging high fees.

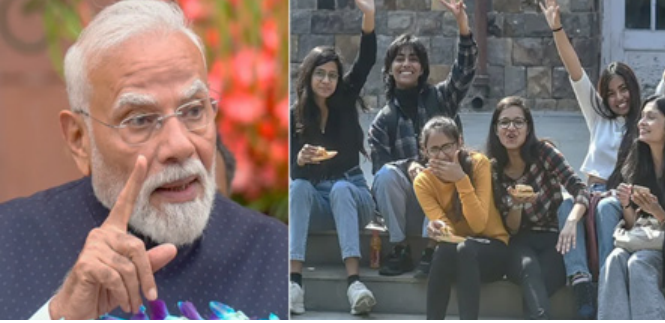
Government plans university visits by Union Ministers

The Union government is considering One Day, One University, a programme that would send ministers to campuses daily to hear students directly

NEW DELHI

The Union government is preparing a proposed nation-wide outreach programme under which a minister would visit one university each day to meet students and hear their concerns, sources said. Called One Day, One University, the initiative is intended to deepen direct contact between the government and young people across higher education institutions.

During the visits, ministers are expected to discuss issues affecting students, listen to their views and explain gov-ernment schemes related to education, skills and employ-ment. Education Minister Pralhad Joshi and Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya have reportedly been asked to coordinate with universities and other minis-ters. Sources said the proposal



was discussed at a Union Cab-inet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The ministry has not issued an of-ficial statement on its final structure, timetable or selec-tion of campuses.India has about 1,300 universities, ac-cording to University Grants Commission data, including 57 central universities and 522 state universities. The rest are deemed-to-be or private insti-tutions. The plan would there-fore involve an extensive

schedule if implemented na-tionally. It comes as the gov-ernment seeks to increase en-gagement with students fol-lowing protests over the NEET paper leak controversy, which also became a major political issue. Students would be able to raise local concerns and ask questions about poli-cies during the proposed meetings.The government has recently highlighted pro-grammes for youth, including free online coaching, artificial

University outreach at a glance

- 1,300 universities nationwide.
- 57 central universities.
- 522 state universities
- One ministerial visit proposed.

intelligence skills training, a sports talent hunt and ex-panded civil defence opportunities. In his Independence Day ad-dress, Modi also pointed to possible jobs in manufactur-ing, space, nuclear energy and semiconductor production. Supporters say the university visits could offer direct access to ministers, while the pro-gramme's details and launch date remain unannounced. Of-ficials hope the initiative will create a regular channel for feedback from campuses in different regions and academ-ic backgrounds across India each working day.

Rajasthan announces civic poll schedule

JAIPUR

Rajasthan will hold elections for its urban local bodies in two phases on September 9 and 11, the State Election Commission announced on Wednesday. Counting will be completed and results de-clared on September 14. The Model Code of Conduct took effect immediately in all mu-nicipal areas covered by the poll programme.

State Election Commis-sioner Rajeshwar Singh said vot-ing will cover 10,245 council-lor posts in 309 urban bodies, including 10 municipal cor-porations, 51 councils and 248 municipalities. The election notification will be issued on August 27. Candidates may submit nomination papers un-til August 31, with scrutiny and withdrawals scheduled before polling.

The deadline for candidates to withdraw nominations is September 3. Once councilor elections are over, the process

Rajasthan will elect councillors in 309 urban bodies on September 9 and 11, with results due September 14. The schedule has triggered the Model Code of Conduct across municipal areas statewide.

to select mayors, chairpersons and municipal presidents will begin. These posts will be elected on September 21. Elections for deputy mayors, deputy chairpersons and vice-chairpersons, along with general meetings, are sched-uled for September 22.

The Commission said the code will remain in place un-til the election process ends, restricting official decisions, fresh announcements and de-velopment work that could influence voters. The state's Autonomous Government De-partment has completed reser-vation and delimitation work.

Gujarat campaign cuts mosquito-borne cases

GANDHINAGAR

Gujarat's mosquito-borne disease control campaign has produced sharp reductions in malaria, dengue and chikun-gunya cases, according to state health department fig-ures released on World Mos-quito Day. The government said its focus on prevention, early testing, treatment and mosquito control helped curb infections.

Data up to Week 33 showed malaria cases falling 45 per cent from 1,407 last year to 774 this year, despite more blood tests. Dengue cases declined 39.1 per cent, from 1,293 to 788, while chikungunya infections dropped 48.1 per cent, from 154 to 80. No malaria or dengue deaths were reported during the period.

Officials said testing facil-ities at 42 medical col-lege-linked hospitals exam-ined more than 83,000 den-gue serum samples and over 12,000 chikungunya samples by Week 33.

House-to-house drives were expanded in two phases, with 19,558 teams

Mosquito-borne cases

■ Malaria cases fell from 1,407 to 774.

■ Dengue infections de-clined from 1,293 to 788.

■ Chikungunya cases dropped from 154 to 80.

■ Over 95,000 dengue and chikungunya samples were tested.

■ 19,558 teams covered 6.51 crore people

covering more than 6.51 crore people during the July campaign. They collected over 257,000 blood samples and treated 28 malaria pa-tients detected

The campaign also re-moved more than 29.63 lakh mosquito breeding sites and fogged over 321,000 houses. Vector control teams remain active during the monsoon, while larvivorous fish were released at 5,024 waterlog-ging sites.

The state said medicines, larvicides and equipment are available, and disease trends are being monitored regular-ly.

Government plans wider drug testing

NEW DELHI

The civil aviation ministry is likely to raise the annual random drug-testing require-ment for flight crew from 10 per cent to more than 25 per cent, sources said. The move follows a recent Air India Phuket-Delhi flight incident in which the pilot reportedly tested positive for cannabis.

The aircraft encountered heavy turbulence and report-edly lost about 300 feet of altitude, injuring 24 passen-gers. Following the episode, Air India said it would screen all group pilots for prohibited psychoactive substances. Air India Express is also expected to undertake broader screen-

ing as regulators consider stricter action against aviation personnel who fail drug tests.

Existing DGCA rules re-quire random testing of at least 10 per cent of flight crew and air traffic controllers every year. The rules also cover maintenance engineers, certifying staff, trainee pilots, instructors and examiners in specified situations. Tests are conducted during recruit-ment, after safety-related events and as follow-up checks, depend-ing on the category of em-ployee.

The 2021 Civil Aviation Requirement prescribes urine tests for amphetamines, opi-ates, cannabis, cocaine, barbi-turates and benzodiazepines.

Chugh Defends RSS Freedom Role

New Delhi

BJP national general secretary and MP Tarun Chugh on Wednesday criticised Con-gress president Mallikarjun Kharge over the Vande Mataram dispute, saying the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh played a "monumental role" in India's freedom movement and nation-build-ing.

Speaking to ANI, Chugh said Congress leaders give credit for independence main-ly to the Gandhi-Nehru fami-ly, overlooking countless free-dom fighters and revolution-aries. He also accused Kharge of showing excessive loyalty to Congress leadership, but

The RSS has played a monumental role in the nation's construction and its struggle for independence.

Tarun Chugh, MP

said political disagreement should not diminish the sacri-fices made by people across the country.

Kharge had defended his conduct after a video from Congress headquarters showed him and Sonia Gandhi talking while Vande Mataram was being sung during Independence Day events. The BJP called the e-pisode disrespectful and de-

Centre prepares free online competitive exam coaching

NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi held a high-lev-el meeting with senior minis-try officials to discuss the rollout of free online coaching for competitive examinations, a scheme announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address. The proposed pro-gramme aims to widen access to structured preparation for students across the country.

Joshi reviewed implementa-



tion options with Higher Education Department officials and said the plan could reduce the financial burden on candi-dates and their families. He said free digital coaching would provide "quality learn-

ing content, expert guidance and structured preparation" nationwide. No launch date, eligibility criteria or list of ex-aminations has yet been an-nounced.The proposal is part of the government's wider youth-focused agenda, which includes efforts related to edu-cation, skills and employment. Supporters say online coach-ing could assist students who cannot afford private classes or live far from established coaching centres. Its useful-ness, however, will depend on

reliable internet access, quality teaching, language support and a clear system for helping learners with doubts.The min-ister described the measure as a step that could improve higher education and adminis-trative preparation. Officials are expected to work on the programme's design, delivery platform and coordination with institutions. If introduced effectively, it may give stu-dents a free additional re-source, but it will need regular monitoring.

Cong plans 'Chanda Chori' stir across India

NEW DELHI

Vowing to corner the Modi government that is "already on the backfoot", Congress on Wednesday chalked out agitations on multiple fronts by ex-panding the ongoing 'Ch-hatron Ki Goonj' pro-gramme to 800 towns and cities and a nationwide protest on the donation theft at Ayodhya's Ram Temple.

Gujarat minister orders missing tank probe in hospital

GANDHINAGAR

Gujarat Health Minister Praful Pansheriya has ordered a police complaint and disci-plinary action after an ap-proved underground water tank was found missing at a hospital in Palitana, Bhavnagar district. A bill for Rs 50.43 lakh had been sent for approval, although work had not started.

The 2.55 lakh-litre tank had been approved for the hospi-

tal, but the minister found no construction at the designated site during a recent visit. The Health Department said the bill had been forwarded to se-nior authorities despite no work being carried out. Pan-sheriya later reviewed the matter through a video con-ference with hospital and Project Implementation Unit officials.He directed officials to file a complaint against In-Charge Executive Engineer Mehul Dave and Deputy Ex-

ecutive Engineer N.V. Kaliya, who submitted the bill. The minister also asked the PIU to begin blacklisting Surat-based Dharmanandan Construction, the contractor linked to the project. Proceedings to re-move, suspend or dismiss the two engineers will be started, where applicable.

Pansheriya said, "No negli-gence, malpractice or irregu-larity" involving public mon-ey for healthcare services would be accepted.

MISLEADING PRASAD LISTINGS

Amazon fined for misleading Ayodhya prasad

NEW DELHI

Amazon has been fined Rs 1 lakh for allowing ordinary sweets to be marketed online as "Shri Ram Mandir Ayodhya Prasad", a claim the Central Consumer Protection Author-ity found misleading. The con-sumer watchdog said the e-commerce platform could not avoid responsibility by de-scribing itself only as an inter-mediatary when listings use a major religious institution's name without verified permis-sion.

The CCPA directed Amazon to deposit the penalty within 15 days. It said sweets sold



under the Bihari Brothers brand by Chandu Trading Company were listed as Ayod-hya Ram temple prasad with-out authenticated permission from the Shri Ram Janmab-hoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust. The products included ghee



laddoos, khoya laddoos, boon-di laddoos and cow's milk peda.

According to the order, product descriptions referred to "Lord Ram's blessings" and presented the items in a way that suggested an official con-

nection with the temple. The authority held that this could mislead consumers who be-lieved they were buying genu-ine prasad. It said platforms must ensure that sellers do not make unverified claims that exploit faith, religious identity or the reputation of important institutions.

The decision expands scru-tiny of online marketplaces that use the names of promi-nent religious bodies in prod-uct advertisements. Amazon has been asked to comply with the order within the specified time. The case also signals that digital platforms may face ac-tion when third-party listings

create a false impression of endorsement, certification or association, especially in mat-ters involving public trust and religious sentiment. The regu-lator said such marketing prac-tices fall within the scope of deceptive trade and consumer protection violations. Custom-ers may rely on names, images and descriptions while decid-ing whether an item has been officially offered or approved. Authorities have increasingly examined online claims that appear to borrow credibility directly from respected orga-nisations or public institutions without proper documentation or consent.

Congress reaffirms Vande Mataram policy

NEW DELHI

The Congress Working Committee has reaffirmed the party's long-standing position that only the first two stanzas of Vande Mataram will be sung at its programmes. The decision, based on a resolu-tion adopted in 1937, has re-turned to attention amid BJP criticism of Congress presi-dent Mallikarjun Kharge.

Sources said the matter was discussed at a CWC meeting on Wednesday, where several leaders repeated the position taken by the party nearly nine decades ago. The 1937 res-olution set the first two stanzas as the version for national gatherings. Congress leaders

say the practice has continued consistently at party events since then.

The issue gained fresh po-litical attention after video footage from Independence Day celebrations at the AICC headquarters showed Kharge and former Congress presi-dent Sonia Gandhi talking while the song was being ren-dered. The BJP alleged disre-spect and called for an apolo-gy. Kharge defended the ren-dition, saying it followed the version sung by earlier Con-gress leaders. Kharge has said the party was following a practice established before Independence and questioned whether changing it could be imposed by any government.





McLaren's Piastri eyes F1 wins

McLaren driver Oscar Piastri outlines his goals to bounce back and fight at the front of the grid

LONDON

McLaren driver Oscar Piastri has laid out his main goals for the remainder of the 2026 Formula One season, sharing a strong belief that his team can bounce back and fight at the front of the grid.

The current campaign has brought plenty of ups and downs for the young Australian star. After launching an intense battle for the Drivers' Championship title last year, he faced a nightmare start to 2026 by failing to even begin the opening two Grands Prix in Australia and China. He bounced back nicely with impressive podium finishes in Japan and Miami, but struggled to maintain that momentum in subsequent rounds, slipping outside the points on multiple occasions.

Just before the summer break, his luck appeared to shift during the Hungarian Grand Prix when he bravely snatched the lead away from teammate Lando Norris. Unfortunately, a sudden gearbox mechanical failure combined with an unfortunate on-track collision with Williams driver Carlos Sainz forced Piastri into retirement, leaving Norris to take McLaren's maiden victory of the season.

Despite those frustrations, Piastri remains upbeat about the months ahead. Speaking in a recent team question-and-answer session, he emphasized that his personal focus centers on continuous learning and getting the absolute maximum performance out of both himself and his machine every single weekend. He noted that if the engineering group provides a competitive car, challenging for regular race victories becomes a realistic objective once again.

McLaren currently holds third place in the constructor standings with 220 points, though they initially struggled to match the blistering pace of Mercedes under the fresh technical regulations introduced this year. Nevertheless, Piastri draws immense confidence from the team's historical resilience, pointing out how McLaren successfully engineered major mid-season turnarounds in both 2023 and 2024 to catch up to the front-runners. With strong collaborative teamwork alongside Norris, Piastri trusts that the Woking squad possesses the necessary talent to repeat past heroics.

Sainz stays to finish what he started

Carlos Sainz has chosen to keep driving for the Williams Formula 1 team into the 2027 season, showing deep trust in team principal James Vowles and the long-term vision of the iconic British outfit. Despite a difficult current campaign marked by production delays, a heavy car, and fewer points than expected, the four-time race winner firmly believes that this year's struggles are merely a temporary setback rather than a permanent decline.

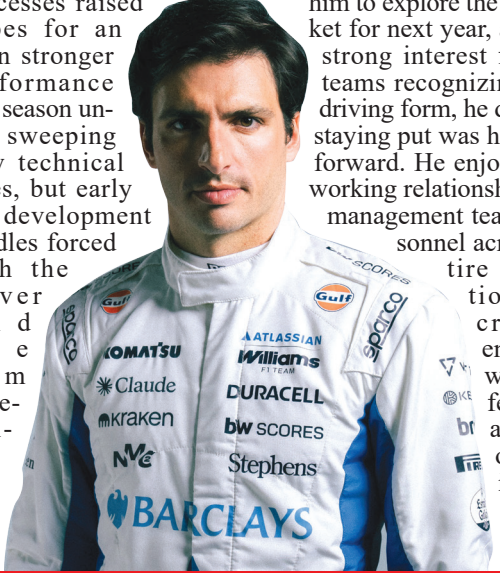
Sainz initially joined Williams ahead of the 2025 season after losing his seat at Ferrari to Lewis Hamilton, choosing the squad over rival offers from Sauber/Audi and Alpine. He made an immediate impact, driving the team to a surprising fifth-place finish in the Constructors' Championship last year by securing two remarkable podium finishes. Those successes raised hopes for an even stronger performance this season under sweeping new technical rules, but early car development hurdles forced both the driver and the team to recalibrate their timeline for fighting at the front of the grid.

Although Sainz possessed an exit clause in his multi-year contract that allowed him to explore the driver market for next year, and despite strong interest from other teams recognizing his elite driving form, he decided that staying put was his best path forward. He enjoys a strong working relationship with the management team and personnel across the entire organization, which creates an environment where he feels valued and capable of delivering his best work.

Team -

Carlos Sainz committed to Williams for the 2027 season, trusting James Vowles and the team's long-term vision despite ongoing car development struggles this year

mate Alex Albon has similarly committed his future to the Grove-based team, securing a stable and experienced driver lineup for 2027. While Sainz's new contract provides flexibility for future years depending on the team's developmental progress, his immediate priority is helping Williams finish the current season strongly and laying the groundwork for a competitive resurgence next year.



CONTRACTS, CLAUSES AND CHAOS

2027 F1 DRIVER MARKET HEATS UP

AMSTERDAM

Formula One teams are getting ready to race again after the summer break, but the big talk is all about next year's driver lineup. Even though many seats are still open, most teams are choosing stability over big changes.

The biggest question marks are Max Verstappen and Fernando Alonso. Verstappen has a long contract with Red Bull, but talks about a massive new 5 year deal are floating around. People are waiting to see if he will keep his special escape clause. Meanwhile, veteran driver Alonso is taking time during the break to decide if he wants to keep racing. His choice may depend on how well his team performs this weekend.

Other teams are also looking in their drivers. Williams recently confirmed that Alex Albon is staying for another year. They are also trying hard to keep Carlos Sainz with a much bigger paycheck, even though the team is having a tough season. Over at Haas, Esteban Ocon is feeling the pressure to keep his seat because his teammate is performing very well.

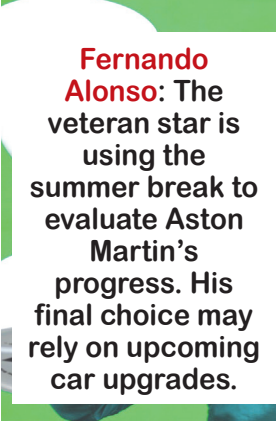
Newcomers like Cadillac have already locked in experienced drivers Sergio Perez and Valtteri Bottas for their debut year. Most other teams are waiting for the top drivers to make their final moves before they fill their remaining spots.

DRIVER STATUS OVERVIEW				
Team	Retained / Confirmed		Driver Market Status	
McLaren	Lando Norris	Oscar Piastri		Fully secure line-up
Ferrari	Charles Leclerc	Lewis Hamilton		Locked down for 2027
WILLIAMS	Alex Albon	Carlos Sainz		Both drivers contract extended and signed
CADILLAC	Sergio Perez	Valtteri Bottas		Multi-year contracts signed
ALPINE	Pierre Gasly	Franco Colapinto		Expected to keep Franco Colapinto

Big names weighing their futures



Max Verstappen: Red Bull has reportedly offered a massive five-year contract. However, his future depends on whether he keeps his performance-related exit clause.



Fernando Alonso: The veteran star is using the summer break to evaluate Aston Martin's progress. His final choice may rely on upcoming car upgrades.

PV Sindhu shares Virat Kohli's wise advice

NEW DELHI

Ace Indian badminton player PV Sindhu has revealed how a simple yet powerful piece of advice from star cricketer Virat Kohli helped her navigate one of the toughest phases of her illustrious athletic career. Speaking candidly on a popular podcast, the 2 time Olympic medalist shared that Kohli taught her the true value of simply showing up and trusting her rigorous preparation when nothing seemed to be going right.

Sindhu explained that she had approached Kohli during a major low point when she felt completely stuck. Instead of offering complicated technical fixes, the cricketer gave her straightforward guidance. He told her to stop stressing over outcomes, walk out onto the court, and simply play her game. He reminded her that she had nothing to lose because her hard work and training were already proven, encouraging her to step up and show the world her true capabilities.

The champion shuttler admitted that this conversation completely transformed her mental outlook. She noted that she still regularly stays in touch with Kohli, sharing her victories with him and deeply admiring his unmatched drive and ability to handle immense pressure on the field.

Carrying that renewed positive mindset onto the court, Sindhu made a brilliant and confident start to her campaign at the BWF World Championships, which are currently being hosted at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi. The former world champion delivered a dominant performance in her opening women's singles match, easily defeating Ireland's Sophia Noble with straight-game scores of 21-7, 21-11 in just 29 minutes to comfortably advance into the Round of 32.



Indian duo exits BWF World Championships

NEW DELHI

India's men's doubles campaign at the BWF World Championships 2026 came to an end on Wednesday after M.R. Arjun and Hariharan Amsakarunan suffered a straight-game defeat against South Korea's M.H. Kang and D. Ki in the Round of 32 at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

The home pair fought hard but ultimately fell 21-17, 21-14 to the experienced Korean duo. Reflecting on the match, Amsakarunan admitted that things were going well during a tight, neck-and-neck battle at 15-all in the opening game. However, simple unforced errors at crucial junctures shifted momentum away from them. He added that the second set proved more difficult because the slower court conditions hindered their attacking smashes, making it tough to close out rallies.

Arjun echoed similar thoughts, noting that pace itself wasn't the main issue. The Indian pair successfully executed their initial tactical plan to use fast-paced rallies and push the defensively strong Koreans from side to side. Unfortunately, failing to capitalize on the tight moments late in the first set cost them the frame and the match.

Moving to the slower side of the court in the second set further hurt their attack, allowing the Korean players to exert continuous pressure with low, sharp returns. Despite the disappointing exit, the duo acknowledged the positives from their journey, having previously advanced past the opening round following their opponents' retirement. The pair aims to fix these tactical mistakes and look forward to competing in upcoming international tournaments.



Emery adds Suzuki, Ruggeri to Aston Villa

LONDON

Aston Villa have officially fortified their squad ahead of a demanding Premier League and European campaign by completing permanent transfers for Japanese goalkeeper Zion Suzuki and Italian defender Matteo Ruggeri. Manager Unai Emery continues to inject youth, depth, and high-level international experience into the West Midlands club as they prepare for another thrilling season of top-flight English football.

The acquisition of 23-year-old Zion Suzuki represents a major coup for Villa's



goalkeeping department. Arriving from Serie A side Parma, Suzuki has already carved out an impressive reputation as one of Asia's finest young talents between the posts. Having represented Japan at the FIFA World Cup and amassed over twenty senior international caps, his journey began remarkably early when he debuted for the Urawa Red Diamonds at just 16 years of age. Following developmental stints in Belgium with Sint-Truiden and consistent performances in Italy, Suzuki now brings his exceptional shot-stopping abilities and composure to Villa Park.

Unnati Hooda bows out at BWF World Championship

NEW DELHI

Young Indian badminton star Unnati Hooda fought hard but lost a close match at the BWF World Championships. The 18-year-old player was very close to winning against her experienced opponent, Michelle Li from Canada, at the Indira Gandhi Sports Complex.

Unnati started the game with high energy. She played smart shots and won the first set easily with a score of 21-11. However, Li bounced back strongly in the second set. Unnati made a few mistakes, and the Canadian player took full advantage, winning the second set 21-9 to level the score.

The final set was very exciting and kept fans on the edge of their seats. Both players fought for every single point. Unnati played some brilliant shots and even had a match point at 20-19. Sadly, she could not finish it. Li kept her cool under pressure and won the final set 23-21, ending the match in just under one hour.

Even though she lost, Unnati showed great skill and talent on the big stage. This was her first time playing in the World Championships.



Shohradova edges Pratitee for Asian Crown

MUMBAI

India and Turkmenistan shared the top honors at the Asian Junior Rapid Chess Championship 2026, held at the ITC Maratha Sheraton in Mumbai. After a day of dramatic twists and turns, Vivaan Vishal of India and Shohradova Lala of Turkmenistan emerged as the deserving champions in the Open and Girls' sections respectively, displaying brilliant focus under immense pressure.

The Open category witnessed a massive shake-up during the concluding rounds as overnight leaders Akhilbay Imangali and Madhavendra Pratap Sharma stumbled with crucial defeats. Seizing the golden chance, India's Vivaan Vishal orchestrated a stunning late surge, stringing together a flawless hat-trick of victories in his final three games. Rated 2149, the young Indian talent finished with an impressive score of 6 points from 7 rounds, outperforming a competitive field filled with seasoned International Masters to claim the gold medal outright.

Fellow Indian International Masters Akshay Borgaonkar and Apoorv Kamble also finished strongly, tying on 5



points each. Better tie-break scores ultimately helped Akshay secure the silver medal, leaving Apoorv to happily take home the bronze.

Meanwhile, the Girls' Rapid Championship went down to the wire in a thrilling battle between Shohradova Lala and India's Pratitee Bordoloi. Both players demonstrated remarkable consistency throughout the event, finishing level with matching scores of 6 points from 7 rounds. With the championship tied, the final standings were decided on tie-breaks, where Shohradova edged slightly ahead to capture the prestigious Asian Junior Girls crown. Pratitee earned a well-deserved silver medal, while her compatriot Prishita Gupta claimed the bronze.

Quick Read

Philippines verifies 27 acute weather deaths

Manila

Philippine authorities are verifying reports of 27 deaths linked to severe weather as tropical cyclones and southwest monsoon rains continue to affect nearly 5.4 million people, the Office of Civil Defence said Wednesday. Authorities reported 17 injuries and one person missing. The extreme rainfall has destroyed 206 houses and damaged 1,787 others, while 461 evacuation centres are sheltering more than 12,000 families. Assistance to affected communities has reached 797 million pesos. At least 50 cities and towns have declared a state of calamity, including all municipalities in Pampanga and Cavite. Flooding and landslides have disrupted daily life, prompting suspension of in-person classes in Metro Manila and 12 provinces. Officials said frontline government services continue despite alternative work arrangements.

Congo Ebola outbreak crosses 5,000 cases

Bunia

Congo's Ebola outbreak has crossed 5,000 cases, with health officials warning that the disease is spreading at an unprecedented pace and overwhelming response efforts in the country's remote eastern region. Data from the Ministry of Health showed 5,021 cases, including 2,378 deaths, as of August 16. The outbreak has been worsened by insecurity, displacement and intense population movements, making it difficult for health teams to contain transmission. Responders are facing major challenges in reaching affected communities and providing timely treatment and prevention measures. Eastern Congo's difficult terrain and ongoing insecurity have further complicated operations. Health workers continue carrying out disinfection, surveillance, treatment and safe burials. Authorities and responders are working to strengthen containment efforts as the outbreak continues to spread.

Quake aftershocks rattle Spain's Granada overnight

Madrid

At least 10 earthquakes struck Granada in southern Spain overnight, authorities said on Wednesday, continuing a series of tremors that has shaken the region for several days and caused injuries and damage to buildings. The strongest earthquake recorded overnight measured 3.4 magnitude and struck at 10:35 p.m. on Tuesday, with its epicentre near Ogíjares, around seven kilometres south of Granada city, according to Spain's National Geographic Institute. Nine additional tremors measuring between 1.5 and 2.5 magnitude followed, along with dozens of smaller aftershocks. The continuing seismic activity has prompted authorities to take precautionary measures across Granada. Several shops, churches and museums were closed, while local government offices were temporarily shut. Some residents reportedly left the area for the coast, while others chose to remain outdoors because of concerns about possible building collapses. Health services treated 14 people, most of whom suffered panic or anxiety attacks following the tremors. Emergency services received more than 500 calls from residents seeking assistance or information.

India reaffirms support for 2 state solution in Palestine

Ranganathan reaffirmed India's backing for Palestinians while reviewing bilateral political engagement and development cooperation

RAMALLAH

India and Palestine discussed ways to expand their longstanding development partnership and strengthen cooperation in health, education and skills development during meetings in Ramallah on Wednesday.

Ministry of External Affairs Secretary Sripriya Ranganathan met Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa and Diplomatic Advisor to President Mahmoud Abbas, Majdi Al-Khalidi.

During the meetings, Ranganathan reaffirmed India's continued support for the Palestinian people and reviewed bilateral political engagement and development cooperation. The two sides discussed new initiatives being launched during her visit, including programmes in healthcare, education and capacity building.

Ranganathan also met Palestinian Health Minister Majed Abu Ramadan and discussed ways to further strengthen India's support for the Palestinian healthcare sector. India has provided essential medicines and anti-cancer drugs, supported an artificial limb fitment camp and deployed an Indi-



BILATERAL ENGAGEMENTS & POLITICAL SUPPORT	
Reaffirmation of ties:	Secretary Sripriya Ranganathan met with Palestinian Foreign Minister Varsen Aghabekian Shahin to review bilateral political engagement, development cooperation, and the overall India-Palestine relationship..
Peace and solution:	India reiterated its steadfast, longstanding support for the Palestinian people and a negotiated two-state solution to achieve lasting peace and stability through diplomacy.
Gaza concerns:	Deep concern was voiced regarding the severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza, emphasizing the necessity for safe, sustained, and unhindered delivery of aid to civilians.
Ministerial talks:	Ranganathan met with Palestinian Health Minister Majed Abu Ramadan to explore ways to further bolster cooperation in the healthcare sector.
Direct aid handover:	Handed over a fresh official consignment of essential medicines and anti-cancer drugs from the Government of India to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.
Ongoing medical relief:	Reviewed past and active medical interventions, which include supporting an artificial limb fitment camp and deploying an Indian field hospital to aid medical recovery in Gaza.

an field hospital in Gaza. During the meeting, she handed over a consignment

of medicines from the Government of India to the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

The Indian diplomat also visited a health centre operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). She was briefed on healthcare services being provided to Palestinians. India reiterated its strong support for UNRWA's efforts in delivering health, education and other essential services.

Earlier, Ranganathan met Palestinian Foreign Minister Varsen Aghabekian Shahin and discussed the overall India-Palestine relationship, developments in Gaza and humanitarian needs. India expressed concern over the humanitarian situation and stressed the importance of safe, sustained and unhindered humanitarian assistance to civilians.

The discussions also reviewed India-funded development programmes, scholarships, capacity-building initiatives and institutional support. Both sides discussed progress on the Palestinian Institute of Diplomacy, funded by India, and expected cooperation with the Sushma Swaraj Foreign Service Institute. Ranganathan is visiting Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon from August 16 to 21.



Gujarat CM heads to Washington after tech meetings

WASHINGTON

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel has left San Francisco for Washington, D.C., after concluding a series of meetings with technology companies, investors and industry leaders as part of the state's overseas outreach ahead of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2027.

Before departing San Francisco, Patel and the Gujarat delegation visited the Consulate General of India, where Consul General Dr K. Srikar Reddy received them. The delegation's San Francisco engagements included meetings with members of the Gujarati diaspora and representatives from technology and investment sectors.

During the visit, Patel held round-table discussions and one-to-one meetings with more than 100 leaders from the semiconductor and technology industries, along with representatives from artificial intelligence, DeepTech, EdTech, HealthTech and gaming sectors. Discussions focused on investment, research, innovation, skills development and business partnerships.

Patel urged global companies to view Gujarat as a long-term strategic partner for technology development, innovation and supply-chain expansion rather than only an investment destination. He also invited companies to participate in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2027, scheduled for January, and explore business-to-business and government opportunities.

The delegation's San Francisco visit featured meetings with Gujarati diaspora members and technology and investment representatives

The Chief Minister highlighted the potential to combine Silicon Valley's technological capabilities with Gujarat's industrial strengths. He said the state aims to create an ecosystem supporting research, development, innovation, manufacturing and global expansion, while providing infrastructure, electricity, connectivity, capital, talent and policy stability.

The meetings also covered generative AI, robotics, large language models, education technology, healthcare technology and gaming. Discussions on gaming included opportunities linked to the Commonwealth Games and development of a supporting ecosystem through policy and industry participation.

The delegation will continue its US outreach in Washington, followed by planned meetings in New York and Toronto, Canada. Chief Secretary M.K. Das, Additional Chief Secretary Mamta Verma and other senior officials are accompanying Patel. The delegation is expected to meet investors, technology leaders and members of the Gujarati community during the remaining overseas engagements.

South Korea considers limited housing at Yongsan Park

SEOUL

South Korea is considering using limited parts of Yongsan Park in central Seoul for housing development, Land Minister Kim Yun-duk said on Wednesday, as the government seeks to increase housing supply in the capital region.

Kim clarified that the government does not plan to remove major green areas or transform Yongsan Park into a large-scale public housing site. He said authorities are examining areas within or around the

park that have already been developed or have lost some of their original function as green spaces.

Yongsan Park, largely located on land returned after the closure of a former US military garrison, covers around three million square metres, equivalent to about 420 football fields. The site has been earmarked for development as a major public park in central Seoul.

Speaking at a parliamentary committee meeting at the National Assembly, Kim rejected concerns that the government

would destroy protected green areas to build homes. He said possible sites include former officers' residences, military housing and the former location of the Defence Acquisition Program Administration.

Kim is scheduled to discuss the proposal with Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon on Thursday. Oh has previously opposed using green areas in central Seoul for housing development, making the planned discussions important for determining the scope of any development.

The government's broader

housing strategy aims to add more than 230,000 homes across the Seoul metropolitan area. Authorities plan to accelerate development on public land, ease certain restrictions on greenbelt areas and encourage private-sector housing projects.

The proposal comes amid pressure to expand housing supply in Seoul and surrounding areas. Officials are attempting to balance the need for additional homes with concerns over environmental protection and preservation of the capital's limited green spaces.

SL TO EASE IMMIGRATION FOR RETURNING REFUGEES

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka will take steps to simplify immigration procedures to help accelerate the return of refugees living in India, the government told Parliament on Wednesday. The move is aimed at making it easier for Sri Lankan refugees who wish to return to their home country.

According to the information presented to Parliament, around 18,000 Sri Lankan refugees returned home between 2002 and 2022. However, approximately 90,000 refugees continue to live in Tamil Nadu, where many have stayed for several years after fleeing Sri Lanka during periods of conflict and instability.

The government said simplifying immigration procedures would help remove administrative difficulties faced by refugees seeking to return. Authorities are expected to work towards making the process more efficient while



facilitating the necessary documentation and clearances required for repatriation. The issue of refugee return has remained an important part of discussions between Sri Lanka and India. The two countries have continued to cooperate on humanitarian and development matters concerning Sri Lankan nationals who have been living in India.

Many refugees have expressed interest in returning when suitable conditions, livelihood opportunities and basic facilities are available. An easier immigration process could help those who are willing to go back complete the required formalities

without lengthy delays.

The Sri Lankan government's announcement comes as authorities seek to encourage voluntary repatriation while ensuring that returning families can settle safely and rebuild their lives. Cooperation between the two governments will remain important in coordinating travel, documentation and other arrangements.

The large number of Sri Lankan refugees still residing in India reflects the long-term impact of the country's past conflict. While thousands have already returned over the past two decades, the government's latest initiative is expected to provide a more streamlined pathway for others who choose to return. Officials are expected to continue discussions on practical arrangements and support mechanisms as Sri Lanka works to facilitate the voluntary return of refugees from India.

Lula seeks Trump call amid US-Brazil tensions

BRASILIA

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva is seeking a telephone conversation with US President Donald Trump as tensions between the two countries continue to grow over trade, tariffs and political issues.

Lula has repeatedly said Brazil is open to dialogue with Washington while defending the country's sovereignty and economic interests. The latest effort to establish direct communication comes amid heightened disagreements between the two governments.

Relations have deteriorated following the United States' decision to impose tariffs on Brazilian goods. Brazil has rejected

the measures as unjustified and has initiated a process under its Reciprocity Law that could allow it to take countermeasures. The country has also sought consultations with the World Trade Organization over US tariffs.

The dispute has also acquired a political dimension ahead of Brazil's October presidential election. Lula has accused Washington of interfering in Brazil's internal affairs, while Trump has expressed support for political figures aligned with former President Jair Bolsonaro. Lula has stressed that Brazil's electoral process is a domestic matter.

The two presidents have previously held talks aimed at easing tensions. Their May meeting in Washington focused on trade,

tariffs, security and critical minerals, with both sides describing the discussions positively at the time.

However, disagreements have continued over tariffs and diplomatic issues. Brazil has sought negotiations rather than an escalation of the dispute, while also preparing possible reciprocal measures to protect its economy.

Lula's latest attempt to speak with Trump is therefore being viewed as an effort to reopen direct dialogue and prevent further deterioration in bilateral relations. The outcome of any conversation could influence discussions on trade, tariffs and broader diplomatic ties between the two largest economies in the Americas.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the public that my client, V. Ravi son of Late Venkatachala, aged about 42 years, residing at: Kurubarahalli Doddai Village, Kailancha Hobli, Averaahalli Post, Ramanagara Taluk, Bangalore South District, on 04-05-2015, has acquired a plot of land measuring 0-08-08 gunta in old survey no. 196/1, new survey no. 196/8, Situated at: Chikamuduwadi village, Kasaba Hobli, Kanakapura Taluk, Bangalore South District, Bangalore, currently residing in Pushpanjali Nilayam, Kanakapura Town, Basaveshwara Nagar, B.D. Chinnigiriappa son of Late. G. Dasappa his wife K.T. Pushpalatha, and their children J.C. Kumuda and It is correct that the purchase agreement was registered by J.C. Balaraju, the said unclaimed purchase agreement is available in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Kanakapura under registration number K.N.K-1-01140-2015-16, CD No. K.N.K.D-360 as on date: 04-05-2015. The original document dated 04-05-2015, which was to be given to the lawyer on date: 23-07-2026, was lost by my client while he was coming from Ramanagara to Kanakapura on a two wheeler. A complaint will be filed with Cyber Police Station to locate and return the said original document which my client has lost. As per the said complaint, dated: 27/07/2026, Serial No.: 2330802, Report No.: 2330802/2026, If anyone has the original purchase agreement described above, he/she should bring it from the following. SCHEDULE PROPERTY DETAILS Bangalore South District, Kanakapura Taluk, Kasaba Hobli, Chikka muduwadi Village, Old Survey No. 196/1, New Survey No. 196/8, Area 0-08-08 Gunte Land, Bounded on: East By: J.D. Melappa's Land, West By: J.D. Ramaswamy's Land, North By: Land belonging to the Masjid, South By: Honnaraju's Land. CONTACT ADDRESS: 1) Shashidhar P., Advocate, Channamanahalli Village, Anjanapura Post, Kailancha Hobli, Ramnagar Taluk, Bangalore South District. Mobile: 9482981543, 2) V. Ravi Son of Late Venkatachala, Kurubarahalli Doddai Village Averaahalli Post, Kailancha Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bangalore South District, Mobile: 9731140194

PUBLICATION

I, Madaiah, (Adhar card No. 7236 3488 7675) aged about 72 years, son of Late Madaiah, residing at Ward No. 4, Kenchanakuppe village, Bidadi Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bengaluru South District hereby confirm that my name is Madaiah and not Madappa.

Document Lost

I, Manak Ashok Kumar Jain, residing at: Plot No. 131, Ranka Nest Apartments, No. 35-1, K.K.S. Road, Okalipuram, Bangalore. Further, the purchase deed bearing number 1-00968-2009-10 relating to the land situated in Survey No. 59, Lakksandra Village, Kasaba Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk, Bangalore South District, has been lost on 20-04-2025.

In this regard, I have filed a complaint with the Karnataka State Police on 16-06-2026 and obtained Lost Report No. 2258075/2026. I hereby certify that all the above-mentioned facts are true and confirm it through a certificate dated 08-07-2026.

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, DEVANAHALLI C.Mis. NO 532/2026 Between: Sri. Shivaraju.K.RPetitioner And: The register of Birth and death, Rep. by Tahsildar, Devanahalli Taluk and anotherRespondent PUBLIC NOTICE I, the undersigned advocate on behalf of my clients Sri. I. Shivaraju.K.R, S/o late Ramaiah, Aged about 56 years, R/rt: Koira Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, have filed the above petition for the death certificate of his mother i.e one Ramakka W/o late Ramaiah, who died on 10.12.2023 at Koira Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk and Bangalore Rural District if any 3rd parties who have objections may dispute regarding the same can appear before the Hon'ble II Addl. Civil Judge and J.M.F.C at Devanahalli and the date hearing on 07.10.2026 at 11.00 A.M in C.Mis.No. 532/2026. By the order of this Hon'ble court Chief Ministerial Officer, Civil Judge & JMFC Court, Devanahalli Advocate for Petitioner: Aruna Kumari.C.A, Advocate, Office at No.374, Chiguru Nilaya, Manjunatha Layout, Bychapura Road, Near Akash College, Devanahalli Town, Bangalore Rural District.

NAME CHANGE

I, FAIROZ ABDUL WAHAB S/o. Abdul Wahab, resident of No 35 Netaji Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru-560053, have changed my name to **ABDUL FAIROZ**. Vide affidavit dated: 19.08.2026 before notary MEER HASSAN, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, BHAGYA M D/o MUSAMAPPA, W/o MAHADEVAPPA, R/o 10, Doddabele Colony, Bangalore, Karnataka-560060, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as **SOWBHAGYA M.**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ASHWINI alias ASHWINI KUNWAR PARMAR D/o BHOPAL SINGH, R/o No. 4, 4th Cross Road, Lakshmiddevamma Block, Gangavathi, R T Nagar, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560032, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as **ASHWINI KANWAR.**

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDL. CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, DEVANAHALLI C.Mis. NO 532/2026 Between: Sri. Shivaraju.K.RPetitioner And: The register of Birth and death, Rep. by Tahsildar, Devanahalli Taluk and anotherRespondent PUBLIC NOTICE I, the undersigned advocate on behalf of my clients Sri. I. Shivaraju.K.R, S/o late Ramaiah, Aged about 56 years, R/rt: Koira Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, have filed the above petition for the death certificate of his grand mother i.e one Kempakka W/o late Munishami, who died on 14.03.1996 at Koira Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk and Bangalore Rural District if any 3rd parties who have objections may dispute regarding the same can appear before the Hon'ble II Addl. Civil Judge and J.M.F.C at Devanahalli and the date hearing on 07.10.2026 at 11.00 A.M in C.Mis.No. 532/2026. By the order of this Hon'ble court Chief Ministerial Officer, Civil Judge & JMFC Court, Devanahalli Advocate for Petitioner: Aruna Kumari.C.A, Advocate, Office at No.374, Chiguru Nilaya, Manjunatha Layout, Bychapura Road, Near Akash College, Devanahalli Town, Bangalore Rural District.

CH

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Nick Kyrgios suspended after positive cocaine test

LONDON

Australian tennis star Nick Kyrgios has been handed a provisional suspension after testing positive for a cocaine metabolite during a tournament in Spain. The International Tennis Integrity Agency announced that the 31-year-old provided a sample in June that tested positive for benzoylecgonine. Because cocaine is classified as a prohibited substance, the mandatory ban went into effect on August 4. The suspension bars him from playing, coaching, or attending any sanctioned tennis events globally. Taking full accountability, Kyrgios admitted to making a massive error in a public statement. He noted that persistent physical injuries and mental struggles over recent years heavily impacted him. The former Wimbledon finalist announced he will step away from social media and public life for 28 days to reset. He has not appealed the decision and faces further disciplinary review.



Devdutt Padikkal highlights adaptability after win

GALLE

Star Indian batter Devdutt Padikkal believes that quick adaptability across contrasting venues is the main secret to success in international red-ball cricket. Fresh off a brilliant Player of the Match performance, Padikkal stated he could not have asked for a better start to his career after steering India to a comprehensive 165-run victory over Sri Lanka in the opening Test match at Galle.

His marathon knock of 167 runs in the first innings, followed by a fluent 44 in the second essay, laid the solid foundation for this dominant win. This historic fixture marked Galle's milestone 50th Test match and added another special chapter to India's 600th appearance in the traditional format, giving the touring squad plenty of reasons to celebrate proudly.

Reflecting on his journey, Padikkal noted that he has already experienced vastly different conditions, starting his career at challenging venues like Dharamshala and Perth before starring on this slow, turning subcontinental track.



He praised the pitch quality, mentioning that it held up nicely over all 5 days despite natural wear and tear. According to the talented left-hander, the true deciding factor on such tracks always comes down to who executes their skill sets better under pressure.

Analyzing the batting conditions further, Padikkal explained that because the surface lacked sharp and sudden bite, left-handed batters found it much easier to negotiate the heavy volume of spin. With a 1-0 lead now secured in the two-match series, the team will travel to Colombo for the next game.

Neetu David joins UP Warriorz

NEW DELHI

Former India spin legend and national selector Neetu David has been named the head of scouting for the UP Warriorz ahead of the 2027 Women's Premier League season. The franchise announced the appointment to revamp its talent identification process following consecutive disappointing campaigns. David recently joined the team's off-season camp in Bengaluru alongside head coach Abhishek Nayar and mentor Lisa Shalekar.

UP Warriorz have struggled for consistency, recording only 12 wins in 33 matches and finishing at the bottom of the points table in the 2025 and 2026 seasons. David will leverage her vast experience having chaired the national selection committee and claimed 182 international wickets during her stellar playing career to discover and nurture emerging domestic talent for the team.



Gill's men conquer Galle with ease

NEW DELHI

The Indian national cricket team secured a massive and much-needed 165-run victory over Sri Lanka in the opening Test match held in Galle, significantly strengthening their ongoing chances of reaching the World Test Championship final. Led smartly by Captain Shubman Gill, the visiting team captured 12 vital championship points, which successfully pushed their overall point's percentage up from 48.15 to 53.33. Even with this impressive jump in the standings, India currently stays in 5th place, sitting just behind a strong 4th placed Bangladesh side.

Young left-arm spinner Manav Suthar played the absolute starring role on a slow and turning pitch. Playing in only his 2nd career Test match, Suthar



grabbed an incredible 6 wickets for 55 runs in the 2nd innings to finish with brilliant match figures of 10-101, marking his very first 10 wicket haul in international cricket. Chasing a tough target of 372 runs to win, the home hosts folded completely for 206 despite fighting individual

India defeated Sri Lanka by 165 runs in Galle, fueled by Manav Suthar's ten-wicket haul and Devdutt Padikkal's century, boosting their Test Championship hopes.

knocks from Sonal Dinusha and experienced player Dhananjaya de Silva. Earlier in the contest, talented batter Devdutt Padikkal put India firmly in command by scoring a stunning 167-run knock during the first innings. Wicket-keeper batter Rishabh Pant then added a valuable 66 runs in the second stint to build a solid target. With this crucial win now safely under their belt, India aims to keep their winning momentum rolling as they quickly head to Colombo for the second Test starting on August 23. Following that series, they face more matches ahead.

South Africa names young squad for Zimbabwe tour

JOHANNESBURG

The South African women's cricket team has chosen a fresh, youth-focused group for their upcoming historic series against neighboring Zimbabwe next month. Experienced captain Laura Wolvaardt will guide the side through 5 exciting matches. Because several veteran players are busy playing in global franchise leagues, selectors decided to give a golden chance to rising talent.

The 15-player lineup features three exciting newcomers who earned their very first national call-ups. Fast bowlers Caitlin Wyngaard and Nthabiseng Nini, alongside off-spinner Luyanda Nzuzza, successfully impressed coaches during recent developmental tours. Head coach Mandla Mashimbyi noted that watching these young athletes step up on the international stage will be thrilling.



The roster also brings back several standout performers who missed the recent World Cup. Domestic star Faye Tunnicliffe joins alongside players like Anneke

Bosch, Eliz-Mari Marx, and Seshnie Naidu. Experienced names such as wicketkeeper Sinalo Jafta and all-rounder Annerie Derksen will help anchor the lineup. This landmark tour holds massive value for the squad. Coach Mashimbyi pointed out that these games act as vital preparation blocks ahead of the ICC Women's Champions Trophy early next year. Team members will gather for a quick training camp starting September 2 before traveling across the border for the opening clash on September 11 in Bulawayo.

Full Squad: Laura Wolvaardt (c), Anneke Bosch, Annerie Derksen, Ayanda Hlubi, Sinalo Jafta, Eliz-Mari Marx, Karabo Meso, Seshnie Naidu, Nthabiseng Nini, Luyanda Nzuzza, Kayla Reyneke, Nondumiso Shangase, Miané Smit, Faye Tunnicliffe, Caitlin Wyngaard.

Rahul praises pitch, relief win

GALLE

Indian vice-captain KL Rahul has admitted that the urgent threat of an impending rainstorm forced the visiting side to adopt a fiercely aggressive approach to quickly wrap up their 165-run victory again st Sri Lanka on the final day of the opening Test at the Galle International Stadium.

Chasing a challenging target of 372 runs, the home team was eventually

bowled out for 206. Young left-arm spinner Manav Suthar triggered a rapid lower-order collapse after lunch, claiming crucial wickets to seal the game just moments before a heavy downpour forced the post-match presentation indoors.

Speaking to broadcasters after the win, Rahul expressed pure relief while explaining how the team managed the pressure from the skies. He noted that the squad kept a close eye on

dark clouds overhead and knew a massive shower was approaching fast, meaning they could not afford any delays. Once they successfully broke a stubborn partnership, the bowling attack quickly targeted the tailenders to secure the result. Reflecting on the pitch conditions, Rahul praised the local ground staff for preparing a sporting track that offered a fair balance between bat and ball across all five days.



Karan Sharma leads Kashi Rudras to victory



LUCKNOW

Defending champions Kashi Rudras secured a brilliant 15-run victory over the Gorakhpur Lions in the ongoing UPT20 League at the Ekana Cricket Stadium. Powered by an exceptional, unbeaten captain's knock from Karan Sharma, the Rudras claimed their 2nd win in 3 matches to strengthen their title defense.

Asked to bat first, Kashi found themselves in a spot of trouble after

slipping to 88/5 by the 10th over. Stepping up under pressure, captain Karan unleashed a stunning counter-attack, smashing an unbeaten 92 off just 48 deliveries. His explosive innings featured 4 boundaries and 9 massive sixes, pushing his team to a competitive total of 194/6. Opener Sahab Yuvraj Singh also chipped in earlier with a brisk 41 runs. Chasing 195, the Gorakhpur Lions fought hard but failed to keep up with the required run rate as disciplined bowling kept them to 179/7. Vaibhav Chaudhary, Vijay Yadav, and Sunil Kumar grabbed two wickets each, while Karan capped off his all-around brilliance by picking up a crucial wicket during the chase.

Harry Brook reclaims top test spot

DUBAI

English cricket star Harry Brook is back at the very top of the official ICC Men's Test batting rankings. Brook takes over the number one spot from Australia opener Travis Head.

Head slipped down the rankings following a tough outing against Bangladesh, where he managed scores of just 22 and 17 in Darwin.

Taking advantage of the shift, Joe Root climbs to second place, while Australia veteran Steve Smith moves up to third after steady scores of 71 and 44.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh is celebrating a historic nine-wicket win over Australia in the first Test match. Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto played a key role with a brilliant knock of 84 runs in the first innings.

His stellar performance pushed him up 9 spots to a career-high 20th place in the rankings, reaching 659 rating points. Other players making notable



English cricket star Harry Brook claims the number one ICC Test batting spot, leading a dynamic shift in the rankings.

Hasan Mahmud, who jumped 26 spots to 38th following a brilliant 6 wicket haul.

In the ODI rankings, Afghanistan left-hander Sediqlah Atal made the biggest leap of the week. Strong scores of 143 and 98 against Ireland propelled him up 37 places to 33rd position. With only a narrow 33-point gap separating the top four Test batters, cricket fans can expect more changes at the top as England prepares to face Pakistan and Australia looks to bounce back in the second match of their series.

jumps include Australia all-rounder Cameron Green, who climbed to 30th after hitting a 2nd innings century, and Bangladesh bowler

Manav Suthar shines as India wins

GALLE

Young left-arm spinner Manav Suthar delivered a masterclass performance, claiming 10 wickets in the match to steer India to a commanding 165-run victory over Sri Lanka on the final day of the opening Test at the Galle International Stadium.

Playing in just his 2nd career Test, Suthar ripped through the opposition lineup in the 2nd innings with a brilliant spell of 6-55. His stellar efforts brought his total match figures to 10-101, sealing an emphatic win for the visitors in what marked Galle's milestone 50th Test match and India's 600th appearance in the format.

Resuming on day 5, Sri Lankan batters Dhananjaya de Silva and Sonal Dinusha put up a stubborn fight during a valuable 95-run partnership. De Silva reached 50th by cutting Ravindra Jadeja, while Dinusha played positively to anchor the innings. However, the game turned after lunch when Suthar unleashed a devastating triple-wicket over, dismissing the well-set Dinusha for 84 and removing the

Can Suthar spearhead India's spin future?

GALLE

India secured a brilliant 165-run win over Sri Lanka in the first Test. Young spinner Manav Suthar played a starring role, claiming 6 wickets for 55 runs. This brought his match total to 10 wickets, dismantling the hosts on the final day. Earlier, Devdutt Padikkal scored a crucial century to set up a massive lead. Rishabh Pant added vital runs with a sharp 50. Sri Lanka fought hard through Sonal Dinusha, who made eighty-four, but Suthar struck decisively after lunch. The victory gives India a one-nil lead in the series.



lower order in quick succession. Earlier in the match, Devdutt Padikkal laid the foundation with a magnificent 167-run knock in the first innings, while wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant added a crucial 66 runs in the second essay to set a massive target of 372. Though the home team fought hard through the morning session, Suthar's phenomenal bowling brilliance eventually bowled them out for 206, earning India 12 vital World Test Championship points and an early 1-0 lead in the two-match series.