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P7 Telangana targets $3 trillion economy by 2047

P10 Odisha evacuates 1.05 lakh people before cyclone



P12 Ram Pothineni Reveals Lone Wolf Pre-Look



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MEKEDATU: K'TAKA PREPARES GROUND TO MOVE AHEAD

CM asserts state's resolve to take up the Mekedatu Project within legal framework.

BENGALURU

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Thursday said Karnataka would move ahead with the Mekedatu Project across the Cauvery River in accordance with the law, despite opposition from Tamil Nadu.

He told reporters here that the state had secured justice through the legal process.

The CM said Karnataka had prepared the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and was making arrangements to provide alternative land for the forest area needed for the project.

"Nobody can stop it. Under the country's legal system, the Supreme Court has said that Karnataka can build a reservoir within its territory and release water to Tamil Nadu. We will abide by the court's direction," Shivakumar said.

"They (Tamil Nadu) are undertaking many downstream projects. We have not created any nuisance about it until today. We do not even need to do that. When the DMK government was in power (in Tamil Nadu), an order came from the Supreme Court regarding this. Subsequently, they filed a review petition. The review petition was rejected," he said.

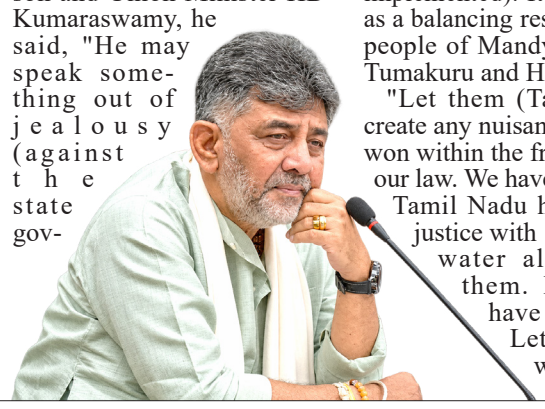
"Now, we have only uploaded the DPR. We have to provide alternative land for the forest area. We are already making preparations for that," he said, adding that the entire state was backing the project, putting aside political differences.

"The entire state is united. Forgetting party differences, we have all stood together in support of it. Maybe one or two people are speaking out of jealousy. That is all."

He said the proposed balancing reservoir would benefit Mandya, Hassan, Tumakuru and Mysuru districts, apart from meeting Bengaluru's drinking water needs.

"Everyone in the state is speaking in one voice. Even leaders from other parties have extended and are extending their cooperation to us. Former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said.

Referring to Deve Gowda's son and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, he said, "He may speak something out of jealousy (against the state government), but let us leave that aside. We should not take it seriously. He, too, has said that this project should be implemented.



"He (Kumaraswamy) had even said that he would get it done in a single day. I am confident that perhaps he will do that work," the CM said, taking a dig at the JD(S) leader.

Shivakumar said he had raised the matter with the Prime Minister, adding, "This is not my issue; it concerns the entire state."

"People from across the world are coming to Bengaluru. We will use this water for drinking purposes," he said.

On the role of the balancing reservoir, he said it would help meet the water requirements of people in Cauvery basin districts during shortages.

"Sixty-six TMC of water can be released during difficult times (from Mekedatu once implemented). It will remain as a balancing reserve for the people of Mandya, Mysuru, Tumakuru and Hassan."

"Let them (Tamil Nadu) create any nuisance. We have won within the framework of our law. We have got justice. Tamil Nadu has also got justice with 177 TMC of water allocated to them. Both sides have got justice. Let us comply with that."

CM'S STATEMENT IN A NUTSHELL

- Karnataka will go ahead with the Mekedatu project despite Tamil Nadu's opposition.
- The state has prepared the DPR and is arranging alternative land for the forest area required.
- Cites Supreme Court directions, saying Karnataka has the legal right to build a reservoir within its territory.
- The proposed reservoir will benefit Bengaluru and the Cauvery basin districts of Mandya, Mysuru, Tumakuru and Hassan.
- It will have the capacity to release 66 TMC of water during shortages.
- Tamil Nadu has been allocated 177 TMC of Cauvery water.
- Political leaders across Karnataka, including HD Deve Gowda, have extended support to the project.
- The multi-purpose project near Kanakapura aims to provide drinking water and generate electricity.

What's Mekedatu project?

Mekedatu is a proposed multi-purpose project aimed at supplying drinking water and generating power. It involves building a balancing reservoir across the Cauvery River near Kanakapura in Bengaluru South district. Tamil Nadu has opposed the project, expressing concern that its implementation could affect the state's share of Cauvery waters.

Trump-Xi-Putin make joint pitch for global peace

Leaders hailed the unprecedented trilateral summit as historic, with discussions spanning nuclear risks to energy flows.

SHENZHEN

Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump on Thursday issued a joint declaration titled China-Russia-US Heads of State Declaration toward Peace following their first-ever trilateral summit in Shenzhen on November 19, 2026.

The declaration outlined commitments by the three countries to maintaining strategic stability and international security, reforming the United Nations, strengthening energy cooperation and reducing nuclear risks.

The three leaders held an in-depth exchange of views on the current international situation. Putin and Trump also expressed appreciation to China for hosting what the declaration described as a historic trilateral summit.

As permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, China, Russia and the United States committed to reforming the UN to help it respond more effectively to global challenges and better fulfil its fundamental mission of maintaining international peace and security.

Stable energy flows

On energy cooperation, the three countries said they planned to increase the production and supply of refined petroleum products for the benefit of all nations. They also reaffirmed the importance of maintaining stable energy flows.

The declaration also addressed the jurisdiction of international legal institutions. The three leaders recognised the importance of the principle of state consent and respect for the immunities of state officials. They agreed that the International Criminal Court and other similar bodies must not abuse their jurisdiction.

Nuclear talks

On nuclear security, Xi, Putin and Trump reaffirmed that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. They committed to holding a dialogue on reducing nuclear risks and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The declaration followed a high-profile meeting between Trump, Xi and Putin, which could mark a turning point in international relations or become a largely symbolic diplomatic event.

Trump had promoted the first-ever three-way meeting with Xi and Putin, two of Washington's leading rivals, as an opportunity to discuss rules for controlling nuclear arms and explore ways to begin resolving the wars in Ukraine and Iran. However, experts had kept expectations low for major breakthroughs.

"We are really making history," Trump said, adding that the US, Russia and China were uniquely positioned to discuss reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the world and lowering the risk of their use.

As per agencies, Xi told his counterparts that nuclear weapons should be prohibited and destroyed. He also called for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Putin, meanwhile, referred to the three countries' shared history as victors in World War II and highlighted their responsibility towards global security. "We hold joint responsibility for maintaining international peace," the Russian President said.



CHINA-RUSSIA-US TRILATERAL SUMMIT: KEY POINTS

- Xi Jinping, Putin and Donald Trump held their first-ever trilateral summit in Shenzhen on November 19, 2026.
- Issued a joint declaration committing to global peace, strategic stability and international security.
- Agreed to reform the United Nations to strengthen its role in maintaining global peace.
- Pledged to strengthen energy cooperation and ensure stable global energy supplies.
- Called for respect for state sovereignty and immunity of state officials.
- Reaffirmed that nuclear war must never be fought and committed to reducing nuclear risks.
- Xi called for the elimination of nuclear weapons and a nuclear-free world.
- Trump proposed discussions on nuclear arms reduction and resolving the Ukraine and Iran conflicts.
- Putin stressed the three nations' shared responsibility for maintaining international peace.

CM calls for closer watch on Indira Canteen food quality

BENGALURU

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Thursday said the government plans to expand the number of Indira Canteens from the existing 300 to 383 and directed ministers, MLAs and officials to ensure that poor people receive good-quality food at affordable prices every day.

Inaugurating 16 Indira Canteens on the birth anniversary of former prime minister Indira Gandhi, Shivakumar said the initiative was aimed at creating a hunger-free society in keeping with Congress ideology.

The canteens serve breakfast at Rs 5 and meals at Rs 10 per plate. He said the Anna Bhagya scheme, one of the five pre-poll guarantees, also upholds the right to food.

The CM said the Indira Canteens were helping ordinary people and economically weaker sections of society. "I have personally visited three or four canteens to see how they function. Our MLAs and all of you (officers) must also visit these canteens. You should conduct surprise inspections once every 15 days," he said.

He assured food contractors that they would receive all payments due to them but stressed that food quality must not be compromised. "The quality of food must be maintained. You (officers and MLAs) should visit the canteens with a sense of commitment and concern," he said.



India now a side player in global affairs: Rahul

Washington: India always had a sophisticated understanding of geopolitics, but has become a side player in global affairs, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said, citing the role Pakistan played in negotiating peace between the US and Iran.

"India, by its size, naturally has a global voice and India should be actively involved in global conversations. But frankly, India has become a side player," the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha said during an interaction with students at the University of Chicago on Thursday.

Cyclone Akvan: ECoR cancels 39 trains, reschedules 28

BHUBANESWAR

The East Coast Railway (ECoR) on Thursday cancelled 39 trains scheduled to run on November 19, 20 and 21 as a precautionary measure in view of Cyclone Akvan, an official said.

The cancellations include several long-distance express trains, Vande Bharat services, passenger trains and MEMU services connecting Odisha with neighbouring states. Train services to and from Puri, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Brahmapur have also been affected.

Apart from the cancellations, 28 other trains have been rescheduled, with changes to their departure timings, the official said. The cancelled services include the Bhubaneswar-Visakhapatnam Vande Bharat Express (20841/20842), Howrah-Puri Vande Bharat Express (22895/22896), Tatanagar-Brahmapur Vande Bharat Express (20891/20892) and Puri-Yesvantpur Garib Rath Express (22883/22884).

The ECoR has asked passengers to take note of the cancellations and plan their journeys accordingly. Passengers have also been advised to check the latest train timings and other information through the National Train Enquiry System (NTES) or other official railway enquiry channels before starting their journeys.

ONE ROOF, MULTIPLE SERVICES

K'taka sets up one-stop Praja Seva Ayuktalaya

BENGALURU

The state government has issued an order establishing a new Praja Seva Ayuktalaya under the Praja Seva Department to improve administrative efficiency and ensure faster redressal of public grievances under one roof.

As part of the restructuring, the existing post of Additional Director, Sakala Mission, has been renamed Commissioner, Praja Seva Department, and the officer will head the new commissionerate.

A new post of Special Commissioner, Praja Seva Ayuktalaya, has also been created to oversee the department's functioning. An IAS officer of junior scale or a KAS officer of senior scale will be appointed to the post.

Of the four existing KAS posts, two will remain with the Praja Seva Department, while the other two have been transferred to the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (e-Governance). The four posts are Project Director, e-Office; Integrated Public Grievance Redressal System (IPGRS); Court Case Monitoring System (CCMS); and Administrative Officer, Sakala.

Two additional junior-scale KAS posts have also been created to strengthen the department's administrative setup.

Established on June 24, 2026, the Praja Seva Department is responsible for ensuring the delivery of services under Sakala, IPGRS, the online Right to Information (RTI) system, Business Process Re-engineering and the implementation of recommendations made by the Administrative Reforms Commission.

The department will also handle key citizen services and administrative reforms, including the Secretariat Office Manual, e-Office, CCMS, Electronic Delivery of Citizen Services (EDCS), training and the Praja Seva campaign.

The government expects the new commissionerate to make public services more transparent and ensure their delivery within the prescribed timelines.

The order was issued by Praja Seva Department Principal Secretary Harsh Gupta with the approval of the Chief Minister and the consent of the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and the Finance Department, an official release said.

Praja Seva Ayuktalaya at a glance

- K'taka govt establishes Praja Seva Ayuktalaya under the Praja Seva Department.
- Aims to streamline administration and ensure faster public grievance redressal.
- Additional Director, Sakala Mission, renamed Commissioner, Praja Seva Department.
- New post of Special Commissioner, Praja Seva Ayuktalaya, created.
- Special Commissioner to be an IAS (junior scale) or KAS (senior scale) officer.
- Two of the four existing KAS posts retained; two transferred to DPAR (e-Governance).
- Two additional junior-scale KAS posts created.
- Department established on June 24, 2026.
- Oversees Sakala, IPGRS, online RTI, e-Office, CCMS and EDCS.
- Focus on transparent service delivery and time-bound grievance redressal.

State rebrands citizen service centres as Praja Seva Kendras

BENGALURU: The Karnataka government has ordered the immediate renaming of citizen service centres operating under different names across the state as 'Praja Seva Kendras'.

The centres currently provide government services to the public under the names 'BengaluruOne' in Bengaluru, 'KarnatakaOne' in other cities and towns, and 'GramaOne' in rural areas. They function under the Directorate of Electronic Delivery of Citizen Services (EDCS) of the Praja Seva Department.

As the centres were known by different names across the state, the government decided to rename them on the Chief Minister's directions to bring uniformity in service delivery.

The government has directed that the new name be used in official correspondence, signboards, web portals, software, receipts and publicity materials.

The Director of the Directorate of Electronic Delivery of Citizen Services has also been instructed to prepare a uniform branding system, including signboard designs, logos and colour schemes, for all Praja Seva Kendras across the state and obtain government approval.

The Department has further directed that the new name be incorporated into agreements with centre operators and franchisees.

Quick Read

Karnataka air quality shifts amid winter fog

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Winter fog and shifting winds are driving air quality changes across Karnataka. Chikkamagaluru and Hassan recorded the cleanest air in the state, while Madikeri saw higher pollution levels above 150. Bengaluru, Davangere, Raichur, Chikkaballapur, and Hubballi-Dharwad are experiencing moderate to poor air quality with elevated fine dust particles. Health experts warn people with asthma or breathing trouble to wear masks during early morning hours. In districts where pollution crosses 100, older adults and young kids should avoid smoke and dust. Residents are urged to check local readings and stay safe outdoors.

Court slams police over civil dispute interference

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The High Court has sharply criticized police forces for repeatedly stepping into civil disputes despite clear court orders against doing so. Hearing a petition from a private construction firm, a bench led by Justice C.M. Poonacha paused a notice issued by the Central Crime Branch over an apartment building dispute. Judges lamented that officers often take on contractor and repair roles instead of focusing on their actual duties. Despite past warnings to top police brass, similar complaints keep reaching the court. The bench issued an interim stay on the notice and put off further hearing on the plea.

Marathahalli hit-and-run sparks police manhunt

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A motorcyclist had a close call on Marathahalli Outer Ring Road after a speeding car hit him from the side and fled. The crash threw the rider toward the front wheels of an approaching BMTC Volvo bus, but sharp reflexes by the bus driver prevented a worse tragedy. Witnesses were stunned by the reckless behavior of the car driver, who sped away without stopping to help. Traffic police are reviewing local CCTV footage and running a quick search to track down the missing vehicle. Commuters praised the bus driver for keeping the rider safe.

Tangadagi condemns attempts to distort Basavanna history

Shivaraj Tangadagi pledged cabinet talks with D.K. Shivakumar over action against the book Basava Mantapa and videos deemed derogatory to Basavanna.



Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi has announced that the state government will hold detailed discussions with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar during the cabinet meeting on taking strict action against those responsible for writing a book and circulating videos deemed derogatory toward 12th-century social reformer Basavanna.

Speaking at Vidhana Soudha amid mounting public anger, Tangadagi strongly condemned baseless remarks made against Basavanna, describing him as a revered cultural icon of the nation. The minister accused individuals lacking proper historical understanding of twisting facts for narrow self-interest, warning that deliberate attempts to distort history and hurt public sentiment will not be tolerated. His remarks come alongside growing pressure from community leaders and fellow ministers, including All India Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha national president Eshwar B. Khandre, who has demanded the confiscation of Ravi Hanj's book 'Basava Mantapa' and the removal of related social media videos.

Tangadagi stated that cabinet members would deliberate at length with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on the legal and administrative steps warranted against those behind the offending publication and online clips. He noted that the cabinet meeting is expected to reach a decisive conclusion on whether to confiscate the book outright or impose a complete ban on its circulation.

The book

TITLE	Basava Mantapa – Veerashaiva Lingayata Satyadarshan
AUTHOR	Ravi Hanj
LENGTH	About 600 pages
LAUNCH	November 15, FKCCI Hall, Bengaluru

The row has intensified across Karnataka, drawing sharp reactions from Lingayat organizations, devotees, and political leaders who view the portrayals as an affront to social harmony and the egalitarian legacy of the Sharana movement. Tangadagi's assurance signals that the administration intends to address the controversy formally at the highest executive level rather than leave responses confined to public statements.

As devotees and cultural bodies await the outcome of cabinet deliberations, the dispute highlights heightened sensitivities around historical interpretation, online content, and safeguarding respected figures in Karnataka's social and cultural heritage. Authorities are expected to outline concrete measures once leadership completes its review of the complaints and legal options.

Who wants what

Eshwar B. Khandre
Confiscate the book, take down the videos and register a suo motu case

B.Y. Vijayendra
Seize the book and hold the writer legally accountable

Basava Samithi
Criminal cases against the author and the publisher

The cabinet
To decide whether to confiscate the book or ban its circulation

Khandre seeks ban on Basava Mantapa book

Eshwar Khandre demanded seizing Ravi Hanj's book Basava Mantapa and removing videos over alleged insults to Basavanna and Lingayats, sparking protests across Karnataka.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Expressing sharp outrage over alleged derogatory remarks against 12th-century social reformer Basavanna and the Lingayat community, Karnataka minister and All India Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha national president Eshwar B. Khandre has demanded the immediate confiscation of author Ravi Hanj's book titled Basava Mantapa and the removal of related videos from social media platforms.



In a video statement on November 19, Khandre acknowledged that as a sitting cabinet minister he ordinarily should not publicly call for seizing a literary work. However, he argued that Hanj's writings contain baseless accusations that harm social harmony and deeply wound followers of Vishwaguru Basavanna as well as members of the broader Lingayat community across the world. Khandre pledged to formally urge Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and the Home Minister to confiscate the publication without delay.

While stating that he respects freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under the Constitution, Khandre declared that writings and remarks portraying Basavanna as a murderer or dacoit, or alleging that he misused King Bijjala's treasury to conduct Sharana Dasoha, are completely unacceptable. He called for the immediate takedown of social media clips spreading these claims.

The minister also condemned references describing Lingayats as "Lingahatas," calling the phrasing provocative and painful to devotees. Describing Hanj as a self-styled researcher who spoke without proper study on sensitive historical and religious subjects, Khandre urged police to register a suo motu case and take strict legal action.

The controversy has sparked widespread anger among Lingayat leaders and community groups across Karnataka. Fellow minister M.B. Patil and Congress legislator B.R. Patil have likewise condemned the book and called for firm action, while members of Basava Samithi staged protests in Bengaluru, burned copies of the book, announced plans for a police complaint, and warned of statewide demonstrations starting today (Friday).

BJP's Vijayendra urges strict action against author Ravi Hanj

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra has demanded that the Karnataka government confiscate a controversial book written by Ravi Hanj and initiate strict legal action against the author over claims that it harms the dignity and teachings of 12th-century social reformer Basavanna.

Reacting on social media to the book 'Basava Mantapa', linked to Veerashaiva-Lingayat Satyadarshan, Vijayendra stated that Jagajyoti Basavanna stands at the heart of Veerashaiva Lingayat identity. He described Basavanna as one of the world's greatest philosophers whose vision sought a society free from casteism, gender inequality, and class divisions. According to Vijayendra, his life and teachings remain timeless, and members of the Veerashaiva Lingayat community will not tolerate any writing or remark that tarnishes Basavanna's honor.

Vijayendra accused author Ravi Hanj of presenting material across works under public discussion in a manner that undermines Basavanna's ideals and reputation. Urging prompt enforcement of the law, he called on the state administration to seize the contentious publication without delay and hold the writer legally accountable. He emphasized that Basavanna's message of peace and spiritual equality serves as a guiding light for future generations and should be protected from distortion.



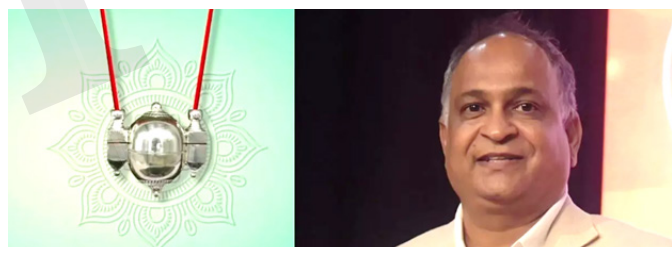
BJP state president B.Y. Vijayendra.

The BJP leader also argued that merely labeling Basavanna a cultural figure is not enough unless authorities genuinely uphold and practice his principles in governance and public life. He pressed the state government to state its official position clearly and act decisively rather than allowing disputes over sensitive historical and religious themes to fester.

His demand adds to growing political and community pressure across Karnataka after fellow leaders, including ministers Eshwar B. Khandre and Shivaraj Tangadagi, called for tough action, book confiscation, or a ban amid protests and heated debate over the book and related online videos. As controversy widens around authorship, social media clips, and cultural sensitivities, citizens and community groups are watching closely to see how the state government responds and what legal steps authorities decide to take next.

> *Basavanna's message of peace and spiritual equality is a guiding light for future generations, says Vijayendra*

Author Ravi Hanj leaves for America amid arrest demands



The book Basava Mantapa and its author, Ravi Hanj.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Amid mounting demands for his arrest over the controversial book 'Basava Mantapa', author Ravi Hanj has reportedly traveled to America as anger over the publication continues to build across Karnataka.

Leaders and members of the Lingayat community have filed police complaints in several districts, including Bengaluru's High Grounds police station, pressing authorities to arrest the writer over the book and related video statements. Reports indicate Hanj departed for the United States a day earlier, while also posting satirical remarks on Facebook regarding calls to ban the work and arrest him, commenting that he would have remained abroad had he anticipated the backlash.

The dispute centers on 'Basava Mantapa – Veerashaiva Lingayata Satyadarshan', a roughly 600-page volume launched at FKCCI Hall in Bengaluru on November 15. In the book, Hanj argues that Veerashaiva and Lingayat traditions are identical rather than separate, maintaining that every line is backed by historical records and evidence. Remarks from interviews suggesting Basavanna was not opposed to Sanatan Dharma have also drawn sharp pushback. Critics and scholars of Basavanna's philosophy accuse the author of distorting his teachings and claiming Basavanna misappropriated King Bijjala's treasury or played a role in Bijjala's death.

Demonstrations and effigy burnings have erupted in cities and towns including Bengaluru, Bidar, Mysuru, and Aland, with protesters demanding both a ban on the book and criminal action against its author.



Protests: effigies burnt in Bengaluru, Bidar, Mysuru and Aland.

At a press conference in Bengaluru, ministers M.B. Patil and Sharanprakash Patil appealed to the state leadership for urgent legal action as controversy over the publication intensifies. Community groups continue to press police and government officials for swift steps in response to their complaints, while debates over historical interpretation, religious identity, and public order remain heated across the state.

Nandini Layout traders blend festivity with charity

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Members of the Nandini Layout Food Street Trade Association marked their fifth anniversary and Kannada Rajyotsava celebrations by presenting a cheque for Rs 2 lakh to the Jayaprakash Narayan Dialysis Center, earning praise from Mahalakshmi Layout MLA K. Gopalaiah.

Held in the Nandini Layout ward within the Mahalakshmi Layout constituency, the gathering featured flag hoisting for Kannada Rajyotsava, sweet distribution, and a community meal attended by traders, families, children, and local residents. Gopalaiah, a former minister, joined former corporator K.V. Rajendra Kumar and Bengaluru North district BJP secretary H.S. Raghavendra Shetty at the ceremony, where association members felicitated the MLA with a shawl, garland, flowers, and fruit.



Nandini Layout traders mark their fifth anniversary and Rajyotsava.

Addressing the gathering, Gopalaiah said the trade body gave the state formation celebration real meaning by coming together around love for Karnataka's land, water, and language. Traders decorated the area with festive leaf festoons and rangoli patterns, turning the milestone into a neighborhood celebration.

Gopalaiah singled out the Rs 2 lakh donation to the dialysis center as a model for others, praising traders for stepping beyond everyday commerce to support patients needing regular treatment. He urged members to keep up such charitable outreach, maintain clean surroundings around the food street, and offer wholesome food and refreshments at fair prices that win appreciation across the state.

Association president Satish, office-bearers Yogeesh and Jagadeesh, ward leaders Bhaskar, Anand, Sampath, Kunigal Nagaraj, Srinivas, and Boregowdru, along with members Vinod, Nagaraj, and Chandru, took part in the event. For neighborhood residents and patients, community-backed medical support and clean local eateries make a noticeable everyday difference in ward life.

BOOK ROW ESCALATES

Basava Samithi seeks action against author

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Demands to confiscate Ravi Hanj's book 'Basava Mantapa' and register criminal cases against both the author and publisher intensified in Bengaluru as the Basava Samithi held a press conference and submitted a police complaint over alleged insults to twelfth-century reformer Basavanna.

Basava Samithi president Aravinda Jatti addressed reporters at Basava Bhavan, accusing Hanj of maligning Basavanna's ideals of equality, a casteless society, and the Kayaka work ethic under the guise of research while hurting Lingayat devotees and disturbing public peace. Jatti also targeted publisher Vishweshwar Bhat and announced that the committee had filed a formal police complaint against both men. Rejecting apologies or attempts to make amends after protests erupted, Jatti argued that the gentle nature of the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community is being mistaken for weakness and warned against misuse of freedom of expression. He called on seers, writers, youth, and communities at home and abroad to condemn what he termed an ideological conspiracy following Basavanna's recognition as Karnataka's cultural icon.

The row so far

NOV 15
Basava Mantapa launched at FKCCI Hall, Bengaluru

NOV 19
Khandre seeks the book's confiscation in a video statement

TODAY
Statewide demonstrations due to begin, Basava Samithi warns

B.R. Patil joins in

Aland MLA B.R. Patil joined the criticism, linking attacks on Basavanna's legacy to wider intolerance toward historical icons like Mahatma Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar and warning of street protests if such writings continue. Thinkers and community figures, including J.S. Patil and Neeraj Patil in Britain, likewise urged firm legal action, while Minister Dr. Sharanprakash Patil and former civic leaders attended the briefing after earlier consultations involving Minister Basavaraja Rayareddy.



Ministers and community leaders at a press conference on the book row.

Separately, Industries Minister M.B. Patil warned of fierce protests across Karnataka and neighboring Maharashtra, stating that he, Sharanprakash Patil, and other ministers would press Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar for strict legal action. Patil criticized Shankar Bidari and former Kannada Sahitya Parishad chief Manu Baligar for attending the book launch, while pointing to seers from Sirigere, Bhalki, Gadag, and Sattur speaking out against interference in religious matters. Comparing the row to past disputes over Kempegowda, Patil called for community unity around Basavanna and noted he is recording previously untold details in his upcoming autobiography.

Quick Read

Khader defends Ganga name for CM residence

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Minister U.T. Khader has pushed back against critics questioning the renaming of the old Kumarakrupa guest house, now the Chief Minister's official residence, as Ganga. Speaking at Vidhana Soudha, Khader argued that people across the state support the move and asked what harm lies in using a sacred river's name. Pointing out that names like Kaveri and Ganga are already widely cherished, he questioned why critics are objecting now and asked about the history behind the Kumarakrupa name itself. Khader defended the change as completely harmless and stood firm against opposition voices inside the state assembly complex.

Mandya hospital land drive and cancer centre

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Minister N. Chaluvarayaswamy ordered steps to clear encroached land belonging to Mandya Institute of Medical Sciences while arranging housing for Tamil Colony residents. Officials discussed finding plots within 5 km of the city, upgrading existing slum board homes, and lifting court stays so families can relocate smoothly. The minister also announced that Mandya's new cancer hospital should open within a month, starting with 100 beds before expanding to 200. Additionally, the government plans to allot five acres for a Jayadeva heart hospital and fund emergency upgrades. Officials were told to push these healthcare plans forward quickly.

ASHA workers' protest enters third day

ASHA workers braved chilly Bengaluru nights on day three of their Freedom Park strike, demanding cabinet orders on pay.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Braving chilly night temperatures in the city, accredited social health activists continued their round-the-clock sit-in protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Thursday, November 19, pressing the Karnataka government to meet their long-standing demands.

SINCE NOV 17 DAY 3 FREEDOM PARK

Organised under the banner of the Karnataka Rajya State ASHA Karyakarteyara Sangha, the indefinite agitation entered its third day after beginning on November 17. Hundreds of health activists, including women accompanied by young children, remained at the protest site through Wednesday night despite cold weather and growing physical strain. Several protesters have reported health issues such as fever and chills during the demonstration, underscoring the difficult conditions under which they are camping out in the open.



ASHA workers camp overnight at Freedom Park in Bengaluru.

At the center of the agitation is the demand for a fixed monthly honorarium of ₹15,000, replacing the current low honorarium and largely incentive-based pay structure. Protesters also seek timely monthly payments, release of pending central and state incentives, reinstatement of ASHA facilitators whose services were withdrawn in February 2025, payment of 2024-25 arrears, ₹5 lakh retirement benefits, medical support during serious illnesses, and an end to compulsory mobile-app work unless proper devices, training, and data allowances are provided.

Union leaders and activists recalled earlier assurances made during past agitations, stating that verbal promises are no longer enough and that they will not lift the stir until the state cabinet takes a concrete decision and issues a formal order. Although officials have visited the site and appealed to protesters to call off the demonstration, activists refused to back down.

Many protesters voiced frustration that frontline health workers were praised during the COVID-19 crisis yet face neglect when seeking fair pay for their daily household surveys, maternal and infant care, and community health duties. The stir has also drawn sharp political reactions from opposition leaders criticizing the administration's response as the protesters await word from the cabinet.

Must increase ASHA honorarium, says Khader

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Amid an intense overnight protest by Accredited Social Health Activists at Freedom Park, Karnataka Minister U.T. Khader has indicated that the state government cannot immediately fulfill their steep pay demands on its own, urging the central government instead to step up and raise the monthly honorarium for health workers.

Speaking at Vidhana Soudha, Khader emphasized that ASHA activists operate under the National Health Mission framework initiated at the national level. Tracing the history of state-centre responsibilities, he noted that during his earlier tenure as a minister in 2014, authorities introduced a policy principle linking state contributions to central commitments, yet contended that matching central grants did not materialize as expected. Khader stated that the state is providing ₹5,000, while pointing to ₹2,000 from the centre and ₹1,000 in incentives, arguing that primary responsibility for raising the base pay rests with New Delhi. While acknowledging that ASHA workers perform vital grassroots duties for low compensation and deserve better pay, Khader said the state government and Chief Minister stand with the activists and promised to take up their concerns with central authorities. He added that the question of whether the state should raise its share before the centre acts remains a subject for discussion, pledging to advocate for the workers' interests in talks with central ministers.



Khader also pushed back sharply against opposition criticism alleging that the state treasury is strained. Questioning opposition leaders who hold power at the centre, he asked why they had not secured higher central allocations or increased pay during their own time in office, arguing that a scheme launched centrally requires stronger backing from the central leadership.

Meanwhile, hundreds of protesting ASHA workers including mothers with young children braving chilly nights at Freedom Park continue to press for a ₹15,000 fixed monthly honorarium, timely dues, and written cabinet assurances, keeping pressure on both state and central leaders over fair wages for essential community healthcare staff across Karnataka.

Khader's remarks

Central Scope & 2014 Law
Khader noted ASHA workers were initiated under NHM and recalled a 2014 state measure linking state parity to central increases, while claiming the Centre did not raise grants accordingly.

Payout & Incentive Figures
He cited a ₹5,000 state share alongside ₹2,000 from the Centre and a ₹1,000 incentive, adding he would press central leaders for higher incentives.

Pushback On Opposition
Rejecting criticism over state finances, Khader asked why the opposition with its party in power at the Centre had not pressed New Delhi to initiate a hike first.

Vijayendra questions manifesto promise on honorarium


B.Y. Vijayendra; ASHA workers at the Freedom Park sit-in.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Sharpening political pressure on the state administration as accredited social health activists enter the third day of their round-the-clock sit-in at Freedom Park, Karnataka BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra has strongly criticized the Congress government over its slow response to the protesters' demands.

Protesters, including mothers with young children, have been spending nights in the open despite biting cold and scarce basic amenities while demanding higher fixed pay. Vijayendra accused the government of turning a blind eye and deaf ear to health workers who form the backbone of public healthcare. He noted that these workers travel door to door across villages and cities to deliver vaccinations, support maternal and child health, and help curb infectious diseases despite difficult working conditions.

Targeting the ruling party's record, Vijayendra pointed out that the Congress manifesto before the 2023 elections had promised raising the fixed monthly honorarium from ₹5,000 to ₹8,000. He also recalled that then chief minister Siddaramaiah had announced a ₹10,000 monthly payment in January 2025, slated to take effect from April. Challenging remarks by Minister U.T. Khader regarding a ₹2,000 central contribution, Vijayendra called the claim inaccurate and stated that the central government raised the fixed monthly incentive from ₹2,000 to ₹3,500 in March 2025.

Vijayendra urged the state leadership to honor its own manifesto commitments and earlier announcements first before pointing fingers at central assistance. He called on authorities to set aside political blame and take a firm decision to ensure financial security and dignity for health workers.

B.Y. Vijayendra slammed the Congress government over the third-day ASHA strike, urging fulfillment of pay promises and relief for cold-braving health workers.

With activists refusing to leave Freedom Park until a cabinet decision and written order are issued, pressure on the government continues to mount over fair compensation, pending dues, and working conditions for frontline staff who served tirelessly during the pandemic and continue supporting everyday community health across Karnataka. As cold nights test the endurance of demonstrators, public attention remains focused on whether officials will step forward with concrete relief to resolve the standoff quickly and peacefully.



CH Observer

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From garbage piling up outside a busy hospital opposite BMJH to waste-choked heaps beside an open roadside drain near the Karnataka State Khadi and Village Industries Board and a foul transformer compound opposite the Karnataka Journalist Cooperative Society, dangerous civic hazards are testing locals daily. Unprotected drains, blocked walkways, and mounting refuse threaten public health and safety, turning everyday streets into urgent hazards that demand swift municipal action.

+91 80730 57594



Near the Karnataka State Khadi and Village Industries Board: an unprotected drain right next to the main road, with heaps of garbage around it. One wrong step could lead to a disaster.





Left: Opposite BMJH, garbage is dumped right next to a well-known hospital with a high footfall. The authorities are requested to fix this as soon as possible. **Right:** Opposite the Karnataka Journalist Cooperative Society, garbage is dumped all around the transformer compound, making the place uncomfortable and unhygienic to walk around.

Amenities, cleanliness prioritised for Jaathre drive



At the review of the Bengaluru Jaathre arrangements.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar has called on civic teams to organize Bengaluru Jaathre as a lively people's festival built around strong citizen involvement, cleanliness, and comfortable public facilities.

Reviewing festival arrangements, Sunil Kumar held talks with officials on event planning, amenities, decorations, sanitation, and community activities. He instructed teams to keep parks and lakefront venues clean throughout the celebrations and make sure visitors have plenty of drinking water and toilet facilities. Officials were also told to stagger event timings so programmes do not clash, and executive engineers must submit details of events planned across their zones.

Maintaining litter-free festival spaces is a top priority, with vendors allowed at venues required to follow solid waste management rules strictly. Rather than treating residents simply as spectators, Sunil Kumar stressed designing Bengaluru Jaathre so families and people of all ages can actively join in. Plans discussed include music shows with local talent, dance acts, games, rangoli contests, and interactive fun on a shared stage.

To give streets a festive feel, officials were asked to introduce color themes for roadside shops and commercial outlets. Decorative lighting and road or venue beautification across corporation limits are slated to move forward within budget limits and with corporate social responsibility backing.

Sunil Kumar urged teams to create a welcoming atmosphere where families can gather, join activities, and enjoy the celebrations together by pairing active public participation with solid upkeep, sound infrastructure, and varied entertainment.

Additional Commissioner for Development Mona Roat, Additional Commissioner for Revenue Satish Kumar, Joint Commissioners Pallavi and Mohammed Naeem Momin, Deputy Commissioners Amaregowda Malipatil, Somasekhar, and Mangalagowri, along with superintending engineers, executive engineers, a deputy general manager, and other staff attended the review.

On the stage

Music shows with local talent, dance acts, games, rangoli contests and interactive fun

As preparations pick up across Bengaluru North, residents can look forward to cleaner lake and park spaces, coordinated cultural events, and festive street touches designed to bring neighborhoods together for a welcoming community celebration across the city.

Health officials urge curbs on antibiotic misuse

Bengaluru health officials urged careful antibiotic use on Thursday as rising drug resistance threatens future generations and public health.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Health officials in Bengaluru have called on doctors and medical shops to curb unnecessary antibiotic use as drug resistance rises, with Greater Bengaluru Authority chief health officer Dr. Syed Sirajuddin Madani urging careful prescriptions only after proper examinations and lab confirmation.



At the World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week programme in Bengaluru.

60-70%

of cases involve viral illnesses, where antibiotics do not work

Speaking at a World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week programme organized by the health department's metropolitan surveillance unit and AMRSense Union for GBA and urban primary health centre medical officers on Thursday, November 19, Madani warned that overusing strong drugs like levofloxacin and cefixime even for ordinary fevers threatens future generations. He noted that 60 to 70% of cases involve viral illnesses where antibiotics do not work, directing doctors at GBA clinics, hospitals, and primary health centres to prescribe them strictly after medical check-ups and tests such as blood cultures when needed. He also warned of action against pharmacies selling medicines without prescriptions and against antibiotic use in alternative systems.

State nodal officer Dr. Chandramohan stressed that public awareness is vital to fight antimicrobial resistance, urging people not to seek antibiotics for common colds, coughs, or viral fevers while maintaining strict hospital hygiene and infection control. He called for following the Access, Watch, and Reserve antibiotic guide, using Access drugs for routine infections, Watch drugs cautiously and Reserve medicines only in emergencies, and urged coordinated action across human health, farming, livestock, and fisheries under a One Health approach.

District nodal officer Dr. Venkatesh warned that deaths linked to antimicrobial resistance could worsen sharply over the next decade without disciplined prescribing. He said GBA is working to set up a metropolitan surveillance unit and central laboratory while partnering with institutions including ICMR and Tata 1mg on pilot projects that rely on active participation from medical officers.

The antibiotic guide

Access
For routine infections

Watch
To be used cautiously

Reserve
Only in emergencies

Health officials including Dr. Chandrasekhar B., Dr. Savita, Dr. Sachin Gupte of PATH, and Nachiketu Gudi also attended the session as authorities push for safer medicine habits across Bengaluru.

GBA to deploy jetting machines across corporations

Krishna Byre Gowda ordered jetting machines using treated water to clean Bengaluru spaces ahead of the November 21 Ward One drive and Konanakunte upgrades

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Aiming to give public spaces a fresher, cleaner look across the city, Greater Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda has ordered all five city corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority to deploy jetting machines for deep-cleaning roads, footpaths, bus shelters, roadside walls, junctions, and flyover pillars.

Leading an online review of the Ward One drive, the minister instructed officials to use high-pressure washing so everyday streets and shared public corners look visibly cleaner and better cared for. Calling cleanliness essential to keeping Bengaluru welcoming and liveable, he asked every corporation to arrange the machines right away and carry out steady, organized cleaning across their areas.

To protect drinking water supplies, the minister directed teams to draw treated wastewater from nearby Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board treatment plants instead of potable water. Officials were asked to coordinate closely with plant operators, locate suitable nearby facilities, and begin washing operations without delay.

Gowda also called for stronger teamwork across departments to make the Ward One campaign, which began on November 1, deliver real results in local neighborhoods. Cleanliness cannot rest on one agency alone, he noted, urging departments to pull together ahead of the next Ward One drive set for Saturday, November 21, and make civic upkeep a clear priority.

At the same time, he asked Bengaluru South City Corporation to roll out wider upgrades at Konanakunte Cross to ease traffic bottlenecks and fix local road gaps. Working alongside Metro authorities, officials are expected to upgrade the traffic island, build out pedestrian footpaths, paint clearer lane markings, and study a free-left turn to keep vehicles moving smoothly while matching road and metro spaces.

Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao joined the meeting along with corporation commissioners D.S. Ramesh, Pommala Sunil Kumar, Shilpa Nag, K.N. Ramesh and Jagadish G., plus additional commissioners and engineers. With water-wise washing, coordinated weekend drives, and junction fixes lined up, residents are watching to see cleaner streets take shape soon.

BNCC reviews voter roll revision plan

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Aiming to make voter list updates smoother and more convenient for residents, Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner and Additional District Election Officer Pommala Sunil Kumar chaired a meeting with political party representatives to review rules and plans for the Special Summary Revision of electoral rolls for 2027.



At the meeting on the Special Summary Revision of electoral rolls.

Participants raised practical concerns about family members sometimes being assigned to different polling booths, prompting discussions on grouping voters from the same household at a single polling station whenever feasible. Officials noted that keeping families together reduces travel hassle and saves residents from heading to booths far from their homes.

The session also covered booth arrangements for apartment communities, polling station assignments, and broader steps for running elections smoothly. Sunil Kumar stressed thorough checking and careful scrutiny throughout the revision drive so voter rolls remain accurate, legitimate voters are properly covered, and ineligible names are kept off the lists.

Officials walked attendees through key election forms used for voter updates, including Form 6 for adding names, Form 7 for removing entries, and Form 8 for updating or correcting voter information, sharing that required updates have already been added to Form 8. Sunil Kumar appealed to party leaders for full cooperation so the revision exercise moves ahead cleanly, openly, and without avoidable friction.

The forms

- **Form 6:** adding names
- **Form 7:** removing entries
- **Form 8:** updating or correcting voter information

Additional Commissioner for Revenue Satish Kumar, Joint Commissioner Pallavi, revenue officers, electoral registration and assistant electoral registration officers, civic staff, and representatives from multiple political parties took part in the meeting.

With voter roll accuracy and neighborhood booth convenience in focus, election teams and party representatives are preparing for the upcoming revision steps across Bengaluru North. Residents looking to verify their details, update addresses, or check booth assignments will soon see roll revision procedures unfold under these guidelines, helping ensure cleaner records and smoother voting arrangements ahead of future polls across the corporation limits.

Samiti honors ADGP Harishekaran for lifetime award

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Additional Director General of Police P. Harishekaran has been warmly felicitated in Bengaluru following his selection for a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Veera Kannadiga Award-2026 ceremony, with the honors event held at the Lalit Ashok Hotel in the city.

The felicitation was led by M. Murthy, state president of the Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Dalit Seva Samiti, who joined committee office-bearers to celebrate the senior police officer's recognition. Speakers extended heartfelt congratulations to Harishekaran, noting that the honor reflects his meaningful service to both public life and the police department over a long career.

Members of the committee praised his steady commitment to duty and public welfare, highlighting his accomplishments across policing roles and his willingness to engage with communities. Leaders K. Basavaraj, Pranesh, and Baiju Balakrishnan, along with other office-bearers from the organization, took part in the gathering to mark the occasion and offer their best wishes to the officer.

For members of the samiti and onlookers, celebrating a seasoned administrator's milestone offers a moment to recognize public servants whose work shapes law enforcement, civic trust, and everyday safety across Karnataka. Colleagues and well-wishers have also noted how honors of this kind draw attention to years of administrative effort behind the scenes, often carried out far from public headlines.

As Harishekaran continues his service in the state police force, the recognition from both the media awards platform and community leaders underscores appreciation for steady leadership and public service. Those present at the felicitation wished him continued health, strength, and success as he carries forward his duties in Bengaluru and across the state.



HSR LAYOUT CRACKDOWN

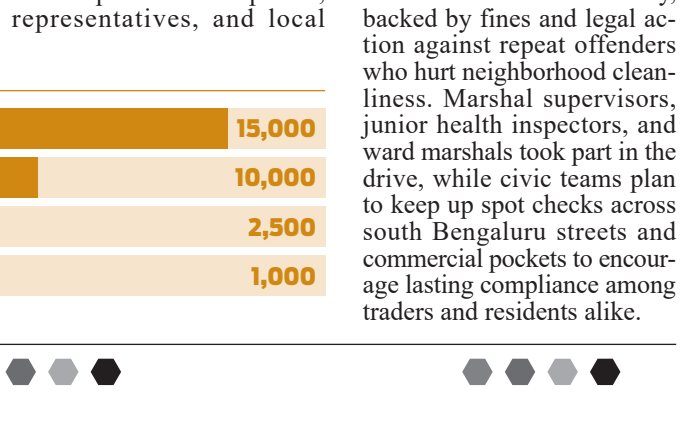
BSCC marshals fine violators over waste rules

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Civic marshals in Bengaluru South have collected ₹28,500 in fines from commercial outlets and illegal dumpers during cleanliness checks led by Bengaluru South City Corporation Commissioner K.N. Ramesh.

The enforcement drive falls under the ongoing 'Freedom from Waste' campaign pushed by Greater Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, which targets improper waste handling by bulk generators and shops, unsegregated garbage, illegal dumping on open plots, and banned single-use plastics.

During inspections in HSR Layout, marshals found two businesses in Sector 6 of Muneshwara Nagar, Curefood and Canvas no5, not separating wet and dry waste and handling garbage improperly. Officials fined Curefood ₹15,000 and Canvas no5 ₹10,000 for breaking solid waste rules and bulk generator norms. At Meena Fruits and Vegetables on 25th Cross Road in HSR Layout Sector 3, inspectors spotted banned single-use plastic carry bags and fined shopkeeper Sridhar Yadav ₹1,000, bringing fines in the HSR Layout stretch to ₹26,000.



During the cleanliness checks in Bengaluru South.

Elsewhere in the corporation limits, marshals caught people dumping waste unlawfully on an open plot in BDA Layout within Arakere ward of the Bommanahalli constituency, imposing a ₹2,500 penalty and taking the day's total fines to ₹28,500.

After issuing penalties, officials spoke with shop staff, representatives, and local residents to explain proper waste practices. Teams instructed businesses and households to separate wet, dry, and sanitary waste right at the source, hand it over to collection vehicles, stop dumping mixed garbage on vacant plots or streets, and drop banned plastic items completely.

Commissioner Ramesh warned that hotels, eateries, produce stalls, other businesses, and citizens must follow waste and plastic rules strictly. He said regular inspections will continue without leniency, backed by fines and legal action against repeat offenders who hurt neighborhood cleanliness. Marshal supervisors, junior health inspectors, and ward marshals took part in the drive, while civic teams plan to keep up spot checks across south Bengaluru streets and commercial pockets to encourage lasting compliance among traders and residents alike.

The day's fines (₹)

Curefood	15,000
Canvas no5	10,000
Dumping, Arakere	2,500
Plastic bags	1,000

Total: ₹28,500

Quick Read

KKRTC to track buses for safety

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

KKRTC plans to install a Vehicle Tracking and Monitoring System in 4,063 buses to improve passenger safety and services. Installation is complete in 1,213 buses, while procurement for the remaining 2,850 is nearing completion. The system uses dual SIM GPRS devices to track buses. Passengers can check bus locations through an app and access departure and expected arrival times. It will also send immediate alerts about untoward incidents. The Transport Department's command centre in Bengaluru will monitor the information.

Textbook shortage leaves Chitradurga PUC students worried

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

PUC students are struggling to prepare for examinations as textbooks promised under the government's free distribution scheme remain unavailable. First PUC students await Chemistry and Mathematics books. Second PUC students lack Mathematics, Biology, Kannada, English and Business Studies textbooks. The required books are also unavailable at private bookstores, leaving students unable to purchase copies. Students have expressed frustration over the delay as examinations approach.

Grandson arrested over grandmother's death in Belagavi

CH NEWS, BELAGAVI

Yamakanamaradi police have arrested Bheemappa Ramappa Sanadi, 20, in connection with the death of his grandmother, Hammavva Balappa Sanadi, 78, from Aralikatti village in Hukkeri taluk. The killing is allegedly linked to money received under the Gruhalakshmi scheme. Hammavva left home on November 10, telling her family that she was going to the market in Pashapur. She subsequently went missing. Her body was discovered on November 15 in the backwaters of the Ghataprabha River dam near Jinarala village. It had been placed inside two gunny bags and weighed down with stones. Following a complaint from Hammavva's daughter, police registered a case of murder and destruction of evidence and began an investigation.

Ashoka seeks Hiriyur ticket, rules out dispute

R. Ashoka said the BJP would seek the Hiriyur ticket without clashing with ally JD(S), stressing that NDA victory comes first.

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Leader of the Opposition R. Ashoka said the BJP would request the chance to contest the upcoming Hiriyur Assembly by-election but would accept the national leadership's decision.

Speaking at Mangaluru International Airport on Thursday, he said the BJP had won the constituency once and finished second once during the past ten years. Its recent extended Core Committee meeting favoured contesting the seat, he added.

Ashoka said there was no rivalry with the JD(S) over the ticket. He described Union



Leader of the Opposition R. Ashoka

Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy as a close friend and said they would discuss the by-election, the Assembly session scheduled for December 2 and the pending alliance coordination committee.

He said the BJP would give up the seat if Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah or the party's national president asked it to do so.

On Puttur, Ashoka blamed the previous defeat on poor local coordination. He said district leaders had held joint discussions and expressed confidence that the BJP would win the next election.

He claimed voters would not be misled again, referring to a rival's Hindutva appeal during the previous election in Puttur.

He stressed that both alliance partners should work together for the chosen candidate.

Claims about Congress

Ashoka alleged that Siddaramaiah had been sidelined within Congress and humiliated by his seating arrangement at a Delhi event. He also claimed that Congress was divided and that discussions were underway to remove D.K. Shivakumar. He suggested Karnataka could soon see a third chief minister.

Missing man's body found in trunks; four held



The victim (left), the recovery at the well, and the accused with police

CH NEWS, BAGALKOT

Ashok Angadi, 65, who had been missing from Hoovanuru village in Hungund taluk since March 12, was found dead.

His remains were recovered from two trunks dumped in a well in Vijayapura city. A missing person's complaint had been lodged at Hungund police station on March 14.

Angadi was allegedly killed after demanding repayment of money he had lent to the accused. The amount borrowed was approximately ₹1.5 lakh.

The body of missing Ashok Angadi was found in two trunks; his alleged murder is linked to a debt.

Debt and rent demands

He had also reportedly asked the accused to pay hospital expenses and house rent. These demands allegedly led to a dispute that ended in his killing.

Sudeep, 24, his brother Sandeep, 25, Ramesh and Sanganagowda are among those accused of conspiring against Angadi. He was allegedly attacked with a metal rod.

Thrown into a well

His body was subsequently dismembered and placed in two trunks. Stones were attached to the trunks before they were thrown into the well.

The case

- **MARCH 12** Angadi goes missing from Hoovanuru
- **MARCH 14** Missing complaint at Hungund police station
- **NOW** Remains found in a well in Vijayapura; four arrested

The discovery changed the course of a case initially reported as a disappearance. Angadi may have been killed on the day he went missing.

Four people, including a 24-year-old RMP doctor, have been arrested. The breakthrough came after police traced a suspicious transaction of ₹150 made using the victim's mobile phone.

Balakrishna calls Union Minister Kumaraswamy a Bhasmasura

CH NEWS, RAMANAGARA

Municipal Administration Minister H.C. Balakrishna launched a sharp attack on Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, comparing him to the mythological character Bhasmasura and accusing him of making promises without delivering development.

Speaking to reporters in Ramanagara, Balakrishna was responding to Kumaraswamy's statement that an NDA government would come to power in the state. Rejecting the claim, Balakrishna expressed confidence in the return of the present government and said the people would ultimately decide the political outcome. "Our former boss Kumaraswamy is like Bhasmasura. Wherever he goes, he places his hand on someone's head," Balakrishna remarked.

He said that around one-and-a-half years remained before the next Assembly elections and added that opposition leaders would rarely acknowledge the achievements of the ruling government. Taking a dig at Kumaraswamy, the minister challenged him to seek support from the Centre for social justice initiatives. He also invited him to establish an industry in Magadi, promising that the state government would provide 150 acres of land for the project.

The minister further criticised Kumaraswamy over the Mekedatu drinking water project, alleging that he had failed to secure the necessary approval. He also accused the former Chief Minister of failing to bring major industries to Karnataka during his tenure.

Balakrishna alleged that Kumaraswamy was making repeated promises to people without translating them into concrete development initiatives.

His remarks have added another dimension to the ongoing political exchanges between leaders of the Congress and the BJP-JD(S) alliance in Karnataka.

Ten writers selected for annual Amma Awards

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

Ten writers from across Karnataka have been selected for the 26th annual Amma Awards, organised by the Mathoshree Mahadevamma Nagappa Munnoor Foundation, Sedam. Award coordinator Ratnakala Mahipal Reddy Munnoor announced that two works each were chosen in poetry, short stories, novels, drama and essay collections.

The poetry selections are Ilidu Baruvudilla Taayi by Bengaluru's Pratibha Nandakumar and Draupadiya Washing Machine by Davanagere's Santhebennur Faiztraraj.

In short stories, Preetili Bidda Paapaskalli by Bengaluru's Jayaramachari and Rarachi by Kalaburagi's Dr. Sharanamma Patil were selected. The novels chosen are Animishayogi by Dharwad's Mahadev Hadapad and L.B.W. by Padmalatha Mohan of Dakshina Kannada. Drama awards will recognise Goodu Serida Hakkigalu by Hassan's Mamatha Arsikere and Sharmishte by Bengaluru's Belur Raghunandan. The essay collections selected are Bhaashe Mattu Baduku by Haveri's Dr. Santosh Hanagal and Priya Gandhi by Mysuru's Chi. Ja. Rajeev.

Journalist and writer Mahipal Reddy Munnoor established the awards in memory of his mother. The foundation has maintained the tradition of holding the ceremony at the same venue and on the same date every year. Writers, poets, publishers and readers have supported it. Ratnakala said the foundation aimed to make the awards a prominent literary honour in Karnataka.

Ceremony and prize details

The awards ceremony will be held on November 26 at 5.30 pm at Shambhavi Rangamantapa, Sri Panchalingeshwara Temple, Sedam. Each award includes Rs. 5,000, a memento, a certificate and felicitation. Winners will also receive a special gift of tur dal, a major agricultural product of the region. The awards mark their 26th year.

Village committees to get funds directly for water works

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Village Water and Sanitation Committees will handle minor rural drinking water and sanitation works under an initiative described by Zilla Panchayat CEO Dr. S. Akash as Karnataka's first such experiment.

Chairing the District Water and Sanitation Mission Committee meeting at Neer Lab on Thursday, he said the district had received Rs. 6 crore under a project supported by the World Bank. Of this, Rs. 5.50 crore is being used for various works.

Akash said district tenders for works costing below Rs. 1 lakh often attract no bidders, forcing repeated tender calls and delaying repairs for months.

Funds in joint accounts

Under the pilot, village committees will procure and install electrofusion machines and bulk flow meters. Funds will go directly into joint accounts held by committee chairpersons and Panchayat Development Officers.

Committees have been instructed to obtain quotations under procurement rules and complete the work within one week.

Engineers currently handle overhead tank repairs requiring technical skills. Akash directed Section Officers to attend committee meetings and help prepare estimates.

Committees must also take responsibility for repairing and maintaining rural water purification units.

Training for committee members and Panchayat Development Officers will be organised at taluk level with technical assistance from J-PAL.

Revised project costs questioned

Akash questioned rising costs for a Jal Jeevan Mission project in Lakshmisagara Gram Panchayat. The contract was awarded for Rs. 91.89 lakh, excluding GST, while the revised total reached Rs. 1.25 crore. He sought an explanation for additional expenses. Officials said the revision included GST, borewell charges and payments to BESCOM.

Raichur farmers turn to horticulture amid drought

CH NEWS, RAICHUR

Horticulture is expanding in Raichur as farmers seek alternatives to traditional crops amid repeated droughts and uncertain rainfall. According to the Horticulture Department, the area under horticultural crops has increased from 22,653 hectares in 2020-21 to around 26,000 hectares.

Farmers are turning to perennial fruit crops in areas irrigated by the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers and in suitable areas dependent on rainfall. Mango, lemon, sweet lime, pomegranate and papaya are grown alongside chilli, onion and tomato.

Experts say ber, custard apple, amla, tamarind, fig and guava can suit areas receiving little rain. Pomegranate can be cultivated with drip irrigation and proper crop management. Drip irrigation and mulching also help reduce water use in guava cultivation. Agricultural scientists advise farmers to select crops based on soil conditions and available water. Guava, sapota and banana occupy smaller areas than several other major fruit crops. Water availability remains a key factor in planning crop choices.

Horticulture Deputy Director Mohammed Ali said inadequate rainfall had encouraged farmers to adopt perennial crops. He urged them to use government support for drip irrigation and reduce reliance on crops requiring more water.

Separately, NABARD's District Development Report for 2026-27 lists horticulture on 10,253 hectares, with estimated annual production of 2.26 lakh tonnes. Mulberry cultivation covers over 870 hectares. Across 140 villages, 806 farmers practise sericulture, producing around 288 tonnes of cocoons annually.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Vishal Kapoor S/o Virender Kapoor R/o Flat No 5112, 11th Floor, Tower 5, Prestige Sunrise Park, Birchwood, Neotown Road, Phase -1, Electronics City, Bengaluru, State: Karnataka-560100,have changed my minor Son's name Rudraaryan Kapoor to Rudraryan Kapoor aged 10 years

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MINNA MALLIKA NAIR alias MALLIKA NAIR D/o KRISHNA MOHAN NAIR, R/o C-401, Mantri Epsana Apartments, Marathahalli Outer Ring Road, Near Sakra World Hospital, Kariyammana Agrahara, Bellandur, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560103, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MINNA NAIR.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHARMISTHA DUTTA D/o SUBHAS CHANORA DUTTA, W/o JASWINDER SINGH VIRDEE, R/o Lotus 1104, Adarsh Palm Retreat Flats, Bellandur, Bangalore, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560103, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHARMISTHA DUTTA VIRDEE.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MOHAMMED SHAHID PARVEEZ**, S/o Noorulla Basha Peerathi, resident of No. 11/4, 1st Floor, Cassuriana Street, Bharathi Nagar, Bengaluru-560051, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED SHAHID PEERATHI**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 18.11.2026 before notary MEER HASSAN, Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME

I, UDAY KIRAN CHAKA S/o RANGAIAH CHAKA R/o 19, Gokula, Sri Rama Mandir Road, Trinity Hospital, Basavanagudi, Bangalore South, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560004, have changed the name of my minor son ANISH CHAKA aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as ANISH KIRAN.

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080-41209042

Bengaluru South Zilla Panchayat
Office of the Executive Engineer
PANCHAYATHRAJ ENGINEERING DIVISION
Ramanagara, Bangalore South Dist.

No.EE/PRED/RMG/JE/TEND-19/2026-27 Date: 18.11.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Only through KPP Portal system)

The Government of Karnataka invites applications from eligible organizations and government registered companies through the e-procurement website in the jurisdiction of this office in Bangalore South District, Head of Account: Grama Panchayath **Varga-01 Grant 31 Nos** to purchase rover for conducting property surveys of Gram Panchayats within the district. Last Date for submission of Tender **Dated: 26.11.2026 by 4.00 PM.** Opening of the Tender **Dated: 30.11.2026 at 4.30 PM.** Opening of the Financical Bid Tender **Dated: 02.12.2026 at 4.30 PM onwards.** For details & further information visit the website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Or contact this office in office hours.

Sd/- **Executive Engineer**
Panchayathraj Engineering Division
Ramanagara

DIPR/BSD/400/SA/2026-27

CHANGE OF NAME

I, PURUSHOTHAM.N.V S/o VASUDEV KRISHNA REDDY NEKKUNDI, R/o Plot No.1, Sy. No. 86/1, Sri Maheshwari Nivas, Alpine Eco Road, Behind Ganesh Medicals, Doddanekkundi Extn, Doddanekkundi, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560037, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PURUSHOTAMAA.N.V. REDDY.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MOHAMMED ARFATH PASHA**, S/o. Nayeem Pasha Anwar, resident of No. 2/7, 3rd Floor, Azeeza Enclave, Near Zenith Foundation, Spencer Road, Frazer Town, Bangalore- 560005, have changed my name to **ARFATH PASHA**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 05.11.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME

It is for general information that I, DEEPA ANIL KUMAR D/o MACHANI RAMANNA RAMESH, Ex. W/o ANIL KUMAR BABU, R/o 33, Sai Enclave, 1st Cross, M S Ramaiah City Road, Arekere, Bangalore South, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore, Karnataka-560076, declare that I got divorced from my husband vide Court Decree M.C.No.575/2025 dated 13/02/2025. I have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as DEEPA VARI.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, UDAY KIRAN CHAKA S/o RANGAIAH CHAKA R/o 19, Gokula, Sri Rama Mandir Road, Trinity Hospital, Basavanagudi, Bangalore South, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560004, have changed the name of my minor daughter AHANA CHAKA aged 12 years and she shall hereafter be known as AHANA KIRAN

CHAMUNDESHWARI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Corporate Office, procurement Section, CESC, Mysuru-570017.
Ph: 9448994705, Email ID: gmpurc@cescmysore.org Website: www.cescmysore.org

CESC/GM(P)/DGM(P)/AGM(P-2)/2026-27/25477 Date: 17.11.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (E-Procurement Portal Only)

CESC, Mysore invites Short Term Tenders from eligible bidders for Supply of Material as mentioned below:

Sl.No	Tender Name	Tender No
1	Supply of Rubber Hand gloves, SEAMLESS Confirming to ISS to CESC jurisdiction	CESCOM/2026-27/ IND0282/CALL-2
2	Supply of Safety Shoes with pair of socks to CESC jurisdiction	CESCOM/2026-27/ IND0283
3	Supply of Note counting Machine & Fake Note Detector to CESC jurisdiction	CESCOM/2026-27/ IND0285
4	Supply of C-Type Wedge Connector of Various Types & Sizes as per specification to CESC jurisdiction	CESCOM/2026-27/ IND0286
5	Supply of RCC Pole - 9 Mtr Long, 145 Kg WL to CESC jurisdiction	
6	Supply of PSCC Pole-9 Mtr Long,200Kg WL to CESC jurisdiction	

The details regarding participation in the tender can be obtained through e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **21.11.2026** For clarification contact help desk +91-8046010000, +91-8068948777 or e-mail address **support@eprochelpdesk.com.**

For Electricity related complaints Call: 1912

Sd/-
General Manager (Procurement),CESC, Mysuru.

DIPR/MYSORE/969/SHIRDI SAI/2026-27

Quick Read

Court rejects state control over HOPCOMS

CH NEWS, DHARWAD

The Karnataka High Court's Dharwad bench dismissed the state government's appeal against a ruling protecting U.K. Hopcoms from government control by horticulture officials. The court held that the Sirsi cooperative had received no government assistance and that officials lacked authority to take over its daily financial management.

It also said a 2025 amendment could not retrospectively validate the unlawful 2011 order. The decision upheld the November 2022 ruling, leaving Hopcoms in control of its internal operations and finances under the applicable cooperative law.

YOGESHWAR TARGETS HDK, BACKS CM

CH NEWS, RAMANAGARA

Channapatna MLA C.P. Yogeshwar has returned to active political engagement after a period of silence, launching a sharp attack on Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy while openly expressing support for Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar.

Speaking to reporters in Ramanagara, Yogeshwar criticised Kumaraswamy for targeting Shivakumar and questioned his approach towards the Congress leader. He recalled that when Kumaraswamy was Chief Minister, Shivakumar had extended strong support to him, with the two leaders often described as a team working together. Yogeshwar questioned why Kumaraswamy was now criticising Shivakumar.

He advised the Union Minister to avoid making personal and unnecessary remarks





against Shivakumar and instead concentrate on national-level political responsibilities. Yogeshwar said that even if Kumaraswamy did not wish to cooperate with the state government, he should refrain from making statements that could affect development.

Continuing his criticism, Yogeshwar questioned Kumaraswamy's contribution to the development of Channapatna during his seven-year tenure as its MLA and his period as Chief Minister.

He particularly raised the issue of the long-pending private bus stand project, alleging that Kumaraswamy had failed to address the demand despite holding important positions. He questioned what significant and lasting development works had been undertaken for the constituency during Kumaraswamy's tenure.

Yogeshwar also acknowledged that he had differences with Shivakumar in the past. However, he said personal disagreements should not come in the way of development. Since Shivakumar is now leading the state government, everyone should work together under his leadership for the progress of Channapatna, he added.

Personal disagreements should not come in the way of development

He observed that continuing personal rivalries would ultimately harm the constituency rather than benefit anyone.

Yogeshwar's renewed political activity and his open support for Shivakumar, coupled with his criticism of Kumaraswamy, have triggered fresh political discussions in Channapatna and Ramanagara district.

Gadag faces severe drinking water shortage early



Gadag draws its drinking water from the Malaprabha and Tungabhadra rivers.

MALINGARAYA PUJAR
CH NEWS, GADAG

Gadag district is facing a severe drinking water crisis even before the onset of summer, following the failure of monsoon and post-monsoon rains. With lakes, streams, ponds and other water bodies drying up and groundwater levels declining sharply, residents and livestock are struggling to access drinking water. The situation has become particularly worrying in the Gadag-Betageri twin cities and several rural areas across the district. The administration is concerned about the possibility of the crisis worsening during the peak summer months of March, April and May.

The inflow of water into the Malaprabha and Tungabhadra rivers, which serve as major water sources for the district, has reportedly come to a standstill. Water storage in riverbeds has fallen considerably, affecting multi-village drinking water projects and urban water supply systems dependent on these rivers.

Several villages in Mundargi, Ron, Nargund, Shirahatti, Gajendragad, Lakshmeshwar and Gadag taluks are experiencing disruptions in drinking water supply.

The prolonged rainfall deficit has also caused a significant decline in groundwater levels. Hundreds of borewells across the district have reportedly dried up. Even newly drilled borewells reaching depths of 600 to 800 feet have failed to yield water in several locations.

As a result, rural residents and farmers who depend on borewells are facing mounting difficulties. In some villages and urban wards, drinking water is being supplied only once every 10 to 15 days, forcing residents to depend on water tankers.

Administration steps up measures

District authorities have instructed officials to give top priority to drinking water supply. Measures include hiring private borewells, repairing leaking pipelines and arranging tanker supplies in affected areas.

The administration has appealed to residents to use water carefully and avoid wastage. People have also been urged not to install motors on public water taps or use drinking water for washing vehicles.

With livestock also facing shortages of drinking water and fodder, authorities have stressed the need for collective efforts to manage the available water resources until rainfall improves.



Tarikere irrigation scheme helps farmers tackle drought

CH NEWS, CHIKKAMAGALURU

The Tarikere Lift Irrigation Scheme has helped farmers sustain crops during severe water shortages, according to details shared by the project partners.

Netafim, Orbia's precision agriculture business, implemented the network with Megha Engineering & Infrastructures Limited. The project is designed to cover 13,594 hectares across 46 villages in Tarikere taluk.

Vishweshwaraiah Jala Nigam Limited supported the initiative by releasing water through the Chitradurga Branch Canal. The supply helped farmers grow onion, chilli, ragi and vegetables during water stress linked to El Niño and rainfall below normal levels. The network uses automated water distribution in shifts, matching supply to crop needs. Project partners said this controlled delivery also reduces labour and fertiliser use.

Netafim India Chief Operating Officer Vikas Sonawane said the experience showed the importance of combining precise irrigation methods with reliable infrastructure and local management.

He stressed that cooperation among technology providers, government agencies and farming communities was needed to help agriculture withstand changing weather while using resources efficiently. Other lift and drip irrigation projects are being implemented or prepared for operation across Karnataka. Authorities and project partners aim to expand access before the upcoming Kharif season.

Farmers report crop gains

Bankadakatte farmer Manjunath said canal water saved his 1.81-hectare onion crop after his borewell dried up. He reported harvesting about 480 quintals, fetching around ₹4,000 per quintal. Fellow farmer B. Rudrappa grew onion with chilli on 0.5 hectares and reported a 75-quintal harvest. He credited timely water releases for sustaining his crops. Both farmers cultivated crops despite drought conditions.

BJP-JD(S) ALLIANCE TARGETS STRONG ELECTORAL VICTORY

CH NEWS, MAGADI

BJP District Vice-President Veerabhadraiah said the BJP and JD(S) would work together to strengthen their alliance and achieve electoral success in the upcoming local body and Assembly elections.

He was speaking after former MLA A. Manjunath, the NDA leader for the Magadi Assembly constituency, met him at his residence in a cordial atmosphere. The two leaders discussed the prevailing political situation and preparations for the forthcoming Gram Panchayat and Taluk Panchayat elections.

Manjunath said senior leaders of both parties at the state and national levels had decided to contest elections together. A coordination committee comprising workers from the BJP and JD(S) would be formed to discuss and finalise the list of candidates, he added.

Criticising the Congress government, Manjunath alleged that its failures across various sectors would become the biggest advantage for the opposition alliance. He accused the government of repeatedly increasing the prices of essential commodities, particularly milk, whose price had reportedly been revised four times during its tenure. He also alleged that pension payments meant for senior citizens, widows and persons with disabilities were not reaching beneficiaries properly. Raising concerns over road safety, he claimed that 554 people had died due to pothole-related incidents in Bengaluru and that 10 people had lost their lives on the Magadi-Bengaluru KSHIP road.

Referring to protests by teachers, he said employees and the public were increasingly expressing dissatisfaction with the government's functioning and demanded its resignation. The leaders expressed confidence that the BJP-JD(S) alliance would create a new political history in Karnataka by winning 178 Assembly seats in the 2028 elections under the leadership of BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra, former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy and Nikhil Kumaraswamy.

They also pledged to repeat the success of the 2018 elections in Magadi and ensure a decisive victory through coordinated efforts by party workers.

Several district and local leaders from both parties attended the meeting.

Registered youth associations promised annual grants

CH NEWS, UDUPI: Deputy Commissioner Swaroopa T.K. said Bharat Jodo Yuva Sanghas registered according to the rules would receive annual government grants of Rs. 10 lakh each.She urged associations to use the funds for social service, environmental protection, water conservation, healthcare, sanitation and youth empowerment, to support youth participation in society. She was addressing a training workshop for association mentors on Thursday at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Hall in the Deputy Commissioner's office complex in Manipal. The Udupi district administration and Zilla Panchayat organised the workshop.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Department of Health & Family Welfare
Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society
Arogya Soudha, 4th Floor, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560023.
Tel: 080-29557021, email: pdksaps@gmail.com

No.KSAPS/ADM/12/2026-27 **Dated: 13.11.2026**

Invitation for tenders through e-Procurement

Tenders are invited for Hiring of Vehicles (cars) on Monthly Basis under E-Procurement System. Details are available at e-procurement website: https://kppp.karnataka. gov.in. Last date for submission of tender on 10/12/2026 at 5.30pm.

Sd/- Project Director
Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/3795/NR/2026-27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
RURAL DRINKING WATER & SANITATION DEPARMENT Office of The Executive Engineer, R.D.W & S, Division, Haveri
Sl.No.RDW&SD/Haveri/PB-4&5/Tender:16/2026-27/1773
Date : 19-11-2026.

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(1) Last Date for Tender queries/ Clarifications : **23-11-2026** at 11:00 hours (2) Last Date for Submission of Technical & Financial Bid through e-procurement : **30-11-2026** at 17:00 hours (3) Date of Bid Opening (If possible) : **01-12-2026** at 17:00 hours

Inviting tenders of Water Supply works of Haveri, Rattihalli & Hirekerur Taluks.

Indent No :- (1) RWSSD/2026-27/WS/WORK_INDENT11271 (2) RWSSD/2026-27/WS/WORK_INDENT11272 (3) RWSSD/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT11274 (SC Contractor)

The blank tender documents can be downloaded through website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from the date of hosting the tender.

DIPR/HVR/427/KSMCA/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer, R.D.W&S Division, Haveri

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DIVISION, CHITRADURGA

No.EE:PWD:CTA:AE-1:Tender-40:2026-27 Dated:- 19.11.2026

SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited from registered Contractors in KPWD for the following works through KPPP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.

Name of work :- Head of Account 8443 Deposit Contribution:-
(1) Construction of New Commercial Tax office building in Chitradurga Town (PWD/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT45366)
Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:-350.00
Head of Account 3054-04-337-1-10-200 MDR Maintainance :-
(2) Construction of C C road in selected reaches from ch 0.00 to 1.00 km of link road of the road connecting kalkere to mallenahalli cross via ballalasamudra, alaghatta, mallenahalli and alaghatta to vaddarahatti(Kadur taluk border)link road in Hosadurga taluk (PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT45769)
Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:-130.00

Sl.No. 1 Tender dates are as mentioned below: Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 03-12-2026 Time: 17.30
Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 04-12-2026 Time: 16.00
Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 05-12-2026 Time: 16.15
Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 07-12-2026 Time: 11.00
Sl.No. 2 Tender dates are as mentioned below: Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 26-11-2026 Time: 17.30
Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 30-11-2026 Time: 16.00
Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 01-12-2026 Time: 16.15
Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 03-12-2026 Time: 11.00
Further details can be obtained from this office and H.P. Company helpline Numbers 91 9240214000 and 91 9240214001. The tender details published in the KPP portal are Final.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/425/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD, Chitradurga.

Government of Karnataka
Karnataka Public Works, Department Sirasi Division(U.K), Karnataka
Telephone: 08384- 223164 Fax: 08384- 224100.
No. PWD/SR./Dn/AE/IFT/3054 SH/2026-27/2588 **Date: 12.11.2026**

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT) (SHORT TERM) KW-3

e-TENDER NOTIFICATION (2nd Call)

(1) **The Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Sirasi** invites tenders from eligible tenderers, for the construction of works detailed in the Table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for any or all of the works given in the Table. The price tender which will be opened only if the Tenderer is found to be qualified to execute the tendered works. The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. **(26.03.2021).** (2) Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka e-Procurement website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/eportal/index.seam** under login for Contractors: (3) Tenders must be accompanied by EMD Declaration form Proforma attached. (4) Tenders must be electronically submitted (on-line through internet) with in the date and time published in e-procurement portal. The technical bid will be opened after prescribed time and date in the eprocurement portal, in the presence of the Tenderers who wish to attend at the Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Department, SIRSI Division. (5) Other details can be seen in the tender documents.

(Total 1 Work)

(1) Last date and time for Tender Queries/Clarifications : **23-11-2026 up to 16.00.00**
(2) Last Date and Time for receipt of tenders : **24-11-2026 up to 16.00.00**
(3) Date and Time for opening of Technical Bid : **25-11-2026 @ 16.30.00**
(4) Date and Time for opening of Financial Bid : **26-11-2026 @ 16.00.00**

DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/577/26-27
dt. 17.11.2026

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Public work Department Division
Sirsi (Uttara Kannada)

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DAVANAGERE DIVISION, DAVANAGERE.

No.EE:PWD:Dvg/JE:IFT-28:2026-27/2596 Dated:18.11.2026

SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref : This office tender notification No. IFT-28/2026-27
Dated : 18.11.2026.

The works under Head of Account 4059-80-051-0-29-386 Dept Building 1 Work Rs.300.00 lakhs Head of Account 2059-80-053-4-00-200 Dept Building maintenance 1 Work Rs. 7.00 lakhs, Head of Account 3054-03-337-0-05-200 SH Maintenance 1 Work 10.00 lakhs, Head of Account 3054-04-337-1-10-200 MDR Maintenance 1 work 10.00 lakhs pertaining to Channagiri, Harihara and Davanagere sub divisions under the Jurisdiction of PWD, Davanagere division, has been called for the tenders from registered Contractors in KPWD for the above works through KPP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.

Tender dates are as mentioned below:

Details of dates	W.I. 45082-Call-2	W.I. 44330 - Call-2, 45553 & 44589
Last Date & time for tender queries	**Date 18.11.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.**	**Date 18.11.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.**
Prebid meeting held: office of Executive PWD division, Dvg.	**Date : 20.11.2026 Timing 11.00 A.M.**	-
Last Date & time for receipt of tenders	**Date : 25.11.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.**	**Date : 25.11.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.**
Date & time for opening of Technical Bid:	**Date : 26.11.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.**	**Date : 26.11.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.**
Date & time for opening of Financial Bid:	**Date : 30.11.2026 Timing 11.00 A.M.**	-

Further details can be obtained from this office in office hours.

DIPR/DVG/KSMCA/459/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD Division, Davanagere.

4 Class 10 students flee residential school hostel

CH NEWS, RAMANAGARA

Four Class 10 students allegedly fled their hostel after being reprimanded by teachers at a Morarji Desai Residential School near Kempegowda Circle in Ramanagara, Bengaluru South district. The students reportedly climbed over the school compound wall and escaped from the hostel after feeling distressed over the teachers' scolding. Following their disappearance, the school principal lodged a complaint at Ijoor Police Station. Police have taken note of the complaint and initiated steps to trace the missing students. Further details are awaited.

ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪನ್ನ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಸಮಿತಿ, ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ.
ತಾಲೂಕ : ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ, ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ : ಗದಗ, ದೂರವಾಣಿ : 08487–273380,
ಇ–ಮೇಲ್ : apmclaxmeshwar@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಕೃ.ಮಾ.ಇ./ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ.(ಲ)./ಅ.ವಿ/284/2026–27 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 18–11–2026

ಇ-ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪನ್ನ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಸಮಿತಿ ವತಿಯಿಂದ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ "ಕ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ–3" ರಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಹೊಸ ಆವೃತಿಯ **kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ **APMC/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT1080** ದ್ವಿ–ಲಕೋಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಸರು	ಟೆಂಡರಿಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)	ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರೋಸೆಸ್ಸಿಂಗ್ ಶುಲ್ಕ	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಕಾಲಾವಧಿ (ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿ)
ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ ಸಮಿತಿಯ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ಪ್ರಾಂಗಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ – ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ ರಸ್ತೆಯಿಂದ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆಗೆ ಕೂಡು ರಸ್ತೆಯ ಡಾಂಬರೀಕರಣ ಮತ್ತು ಚರಂಡಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ.	82.61 (ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ)	1,65,500–00	ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ	5.5 ತಿಂಗಳು

1) ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟೀಕರಣಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 25–11–2026 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, 2) ಪ್ರೀ ಬಿಡ್ ಮೀಟಿಂಗ್ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 26–11–2026 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, 3) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು (ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್) ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 07–12–2026 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, 4) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 09–12–2026 ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ, 5) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ (ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾದಲ್ಲಿ) ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 11–12–2026 ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ, 6) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ಸ್ಥಳ : ಎ.ಪಿ.ಎಂ.ಸಿ., ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ.

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಸಮಿತಿಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಯವರನ್ನು ಮತ್ತು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಹೊಸ ಆವೃತಿಯ **kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು. ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ / ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸುವ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ರದ್ದುಪಡಿಸುವ ಅಧಿಕಾರವನ್ನು ಸಮಿತಿಯು ಕಾಯ್ದಿರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಎಂ. ಎಸ್. ಹಳೇಮನಿ,
(ಪ್ರ) ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ,
ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ., ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ. ಎಸ್. ಆರ್. ಭಂಡಿ,
ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು,
ಕೃ.ಉ.ಮಾ.ಸ., ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೇಶ್ವರ.

ಡಿಐಪಿಆರ್/ಗದಗ/331/ಮಣಿಪಾಲ್/2026–27

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Quick Read

China tries tech-research ties to expand influence in Central Asia

NEW DELHI

China is increasingly using technology, higher education, scientific research and digital infrastructure partnerships to expand its influence in Central Asia, moving beyond the infrastructure-led projects under its Belt and Road Initiative, a new report has said. The report from Myanmar-based Mizzima said Beijing is increasingly investing in universities, research centres, artificial intelligence, agricultural biotechnology, data infrastructure, and digital partnerships to build long-term relationships with future scientists, researchers, policymakers and technology leaders across Central Asia, especially Uzbekistan.



NHAI assures toll users SMS alerts are advisory, not punitive

NEW DELHI

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has clarified that SMS notifications being received by some highway users regarding the renewal of vehicle insurance policies are part of a testing exercise for a proposed public awareness initiative and are not linked to any enforcement action, an official statement said on Thursday. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the initiative is purely informational and aimed at reminding vehicle owners about upcoming insurance policy expiry dates.

NHAI said there is no provision to issue challans or impose penalties at toll plazas on the basis of these alerts and assured highway users that the system is not connected to any punitive measures. NHAI said the reminder mechanism is being tested as part of efforts to improve awareness of statutory requirements related to vehicle ownership and road safety.



Adani Energy Solutions wins Bihar transmission project

AHMEDABAD

Adani Energy Solutions Limited (AESL) on Thursday said it has won a transmission project for evacuation of power from the upcoming 2,400 MW power plant in Pirpainti town in Bhagalpur district, Bihar.

Once commissioned, the project, won through the Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) mechanism, will provide annual tariff of Rs 500 crore, said India's leading private sector power transmission and distribution company in a statement. The project will be implemented through the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) Vikramshila Power Transmission Ltd, and will be delivered by the last quarter of 2028.

Upon completion, the project will add 881 circuit kilometres (ckm) of transmission lines and 3,160 MVA of transformation capacity to AESL's portfolio, taking it to 30,683 ckm and 146,585 MVA.

Telangana targets $3 trillion economy by 2047

CM Revanth Reddy unveiled an ambitious roadmap to achieve the target, focusing on 3 economic zones, infrastructure expansion & attracting global investments.

HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Thursday announced an ambitious economic growth target of transforming the state into a $3-trillion economy by 2047, outlining a development strategy centred on three distinct economic zones.

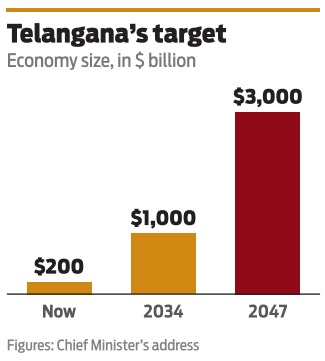
Addressing the inaugural programme of the 85th Indian Road Congress (IRC) at the HITEX Exhibition Centre in Hyderabad, the Chief Minister said the state aims to grow from its present $200-billion economy to $1 trillion by 2034 and eventually reach $3 trillion by 2047.

Explaining the government's regional development strategy, Revanth Reddy highlighted the creation of three economic zones – CURE, PURE and RARE.

The CURE region, located within the Outer Ring Road (ORR), will focus on expanding the service sector.



Telangana's target
Economy size, in $ billion



Figures: Chief Minister's address

PURE, situated between the ORR and the Regional Ring Road (RRR), is planned as a manufacturing hub. Meanwhile, RARE, beyond the RRR, will concentrate on agriculture and agro-based industries.

The Chief Minister also highlighted several road development initiatives undertaken by the state government, adding that other essential infrastructure projects were progressing at a rapid pace. He said the upcoming Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026, scheduled from December 7 to 9 at Bharat Future City, would help attract substantial domestic and international investments across technology, manufacturing, research and development.

Revanth Reddy invited IRC delegates to participate in the summit, emphasising that national interests and security must remain priorities.

He also called for political rhetoric to remain confined to election campaigns while the country pursues ambitious development targets.

The roadmap

- **CURE:** service sector within the Outer Ring Road
- **PURE:** manufacturing hub between the ORR and the Regional Ring Road
- **RARE:** agriculture and agro-based industries beyond the RRR
- **Summit:** Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026, December 7-9, Bharat Future City

Gwalior telecom zone attracts Rs 3,611 cr

BHOPAL



The first phase of the Gwalior Telecom Manufacturing Zone (TMZ) in Madhya Pradesh has received investment proposals worth Rs 3,611 crore, with the proposed investments expected to generate more than 15,000 employment opportunities.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the first phase of the project at an investors' meet in Bhopal on Thursday.

The first phase covers 170 acres, and Yadav handed over allotment letters to 25 investors. The project will be jointly developed by the Central and state governments, with respective participation of 49 per cent and 51 per cent.

Addressing investors, Yadav said the government was prioritising the implementation of industrial projects rather than restricting itself to announcements. He noted that an agreement with the Union Telecom Ministry was signed in July 2026, and allotment letters for the first phase were issued within four to five months.

Scindia said India's telecom sector had expanded significantly over the past decade, with broadband subscribers increasing from six crore in 2014 to 102 crore. Internet connections also rose from 25 crore to 110 crore, while approximately 50 crore people now use 5G services.

He said Gwalior's transport connectivity, including its international airport and the upcoming Gwalior-Agra Expressway, would support industrial growth.

> **"With the strength of the double-engine government, Madhya Pradesh is not limited to announcements but is taking development projects to the ground at a rapid pace."**
>
> **– Mohan Yadav**
> Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister

WOMEN DRONE PILOTS TRANSFORM INDIA'S AGRI SECTOR



NEW DELHI

Women trained under India's Namo Drone Didi initiative are increasingly using agricultural drones to modernise farming practices, improve productivity and generate additional income, while challenging traditional gender roles in rural communities, according to a recent report.

The initiative is creating a new group of rural women drone pilots, popularly known as 'Drone Didis'.

These women provide agricultural services, including spraying fertilisers, pesticides and liquid nutrients through drones, reducing the physical labour traditionally associated with crop management.

A report by Tanzania-based IPP Media's The Guardian highlighted how the programme is changing farming practices by introducing technology into rural agriculture while creating new economic opportunities for women.

Earlier, farmers had to walk through dense agricultural fields carrying heavy spraying tanks. The process required considerable physical effort and large quantities of water.

The report also highlighted the social transformation associated with the initiative.

Sabina Khatoon from Bihar and Rekha Devi from Agra are among the women challenging these established perceptions. Their experiences reflect how access to technology and specialised training can help women take up new professional roles in agriculture.

Namo Drone Didi

- **Who:** women trained to operate agricultural drones
- **Services:** spraying fertilisers, pesticides and liquid nutrients
- **Benefits:** less physical labour, faster spraying, better use of resources
- **Impact:** challenging old ideas of women's role in technology and farming

PM Modi tells India Inc. to create more jobs, raise wages

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday questioned India Inc. on whether it had created more employment and raised the incomes of employees following corporate tax reductions and other economic reforms undertaken by the government to boost industry and facilitate the ease of doing business.

Addressing the FICCI Annual General Meeting and Annual Convention here, the Prime Minister said the government had reduced corporate tax rates, provided income tax relief, simplified compliance and signed trade agreements to improve opportunities for Indian businesses. However, industry also needed to demonstrate that it has passed on these benefits in the form of more jobs in the economy and higher wages for employees.



The Prime Minister pointed out that businesses should not expect the government alone to drive the country's development and need to be partners in the growth process.

PM Modi also urged the captains of industry to develop concrete strategies to take advantage of India's expanding network of free trade agreements, instead of relying on the government to identify opportunities.

The Prime Minister said Indian consumers deserved the same quality of products that companies offered in overseas markets, and businesses should not take India's large domestic consumer base for granted.

Questioning the practice of marketing products as being of export quality which are considered superior, PM Modi said, "My countrymen deserve quality goods."

The Prime Minister also called for greater investment in domestic manufacturing capabilities, particularly in sectors where India remains dependent on imports.

Cyberattack hits key European Commission services

NEW DELHI

The European Commission is investigating a cyberattack that disrupted several of its internal systems for more than a week and raised concerns about the security of staff records, Politico reported. Officials are still trying to establish whether anyone gained access to employees' personal information or took a copy of it.

A Commission spokesperson said the institution acted after detecting what it described as a cyber campaign. It took steps to contain the incident and secure the systems involved. The spokesperson said the Commission also followed its procedures for notifying affected parties. The extent of the disruption and any possible loss of data remain under investigation.

The Commission temporarily took some services offline as a precaution and later began bringing them back online in stages.

Several platforms used in its operations were affected, according to the report. Uncertainty over the scale of the incident has limited what officials have shared internally while investigators continue their forensic assessment.

Senior EU officials have been monitoring the disruption. Politico reported that the incident came up at meetings involving the Commission's top management and the teams responsible for its digital services. Officials have yet to establish how far the attackers reached across the affected systems or whether the attack exposed sensitive personnel data.

One question for investigators is whether the methods used in the attack resemble those previously detected by CERT-EU, the European Union's cybersecurity response body. According to Politico, CERT-EU had found that malicious actors were using a publicly available tool that uses artificial intelligence to look for vulnerabilities in computer systems.

That earlier finding has given investigators a technique to examine as they piece together how the attack on the Commission unfolded. Whether the tool played any part in this incident remains an open question. The Commission has not publicly identified the attackers or released details about who may have been behind the campaign.

Systems disrupted

- Human resources
- Payroll administration
- Leave management
- Medical reimbursements





'FTAs expand export opportunity, world is India's market now'

NEW DELHI

India Inc is poised to benefit from a growing network of free trade agreements (FTAs) and rising export momentum, with FICCI President Anant Goenka on Thursday saying that the opportunities for Indian businesses are becoming significantly larger as new trade pacts come into force.

Reacting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address at the FICCI Annual General Meeting and Annual Convention here, Goenka said India has already achieved a major milestone in exports and now needs to build on that momentum by focusing on quality and competitiveness.

"With FTAs coming into effect, the opportunity is even larger. We have a strong cost advantage, we must continuously focus on quality, and I believe the world is our market now," he said.

Goenka noted that India's exports touched $50 billion in October, which he described as the highest level seen so far, reflecting the country's growing presence in global markets.

The FICCI President also described the Prime Minister's address as encouraging and motivating for industry, saying businesses are committed to supporting the government's vision of quality manufacturing, self-reliance and export-led growth.

RETIREMENT SAVINGS REFORM

EPFO raises withdrawal limit to 90%

NEW DELHI

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has increased the withdrawal limit from provident fund accounts to 90% of the accumulated corpus for members up to 55 years of age, raising the earlier ceiling of 75%. The reform is expected to provide greater financial flexibility to subscribers facing urgent monetary requirements.

In another significant change, the EPFO has reduced the waiting period for withdrawing provident fund savings following job loss from 12 months to just two months. The move is aimed at easing financial difficulties for members who become unemployed.



> **"The initiative will enhance retirement financial security by providing members with a flexible, regular and reliable income stream, while safeguarding their families' interests."**
>
> **— Employees' Provident Fund Organisation**

The EPFO's Central Board of Trustees (CBT) has also approved the introduction of a Systematic Withdrawal Plan (SWP), allowing retiring members to receive their accumulated provident fund savings through monthly instalments instead of withdrawing the entire amount at once.

Under the proposed arrangement, members can retain their accumulated corpus while receiving periodic payments after retirement.

The initiative is also designed to protect the financial interests of family members. In the event of a subscriber's death during the payout period, the nominee or dependent will have the option of withdrawing the remaining balance or continuing to receive periodic payments.

PF withdrawal limit

EARLIER	NOW
75% of the corpus	90% of the corpus

A FAILED OPPOSITION: BJP HAS FAILED TO RISE TO THE OCCASION

An opposition that limits itself to press conferences and symbolic protests cannot hold the government accountable



SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM

In a parliamentary democracy, the Opposition has a crucial responsibility to keep the government on its toes. It must act as the eyes and ears of the people, expose the shortcomings and alleged misdeeds of the ruling dispensation, and relentlessly pursue public issues until they reach their logical conclusion. Ultimately, it is the electorate that decides whether an incumbent government deserves another term or should make way for a new one.

Unfortunately, Karnataka's principal Opposition party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), appears to have reduced itself to a political outfit that is more comfortable holding press conferences, issuing press releases and giving sound bites to television channels than taking up people's issues on the streets.

The recent hikes in Nandini milk and milk product prices and Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) bus fares are glaring examples. The BJP's response to these decisions was limited largely to symbolic protests and photo opportunities. There was little evidence of a sustained agitation aimed at forcing the government to reconsider its decisions or provide meaningful relief to the public. The protests fizzled out almost as soon as they began, leaving ordinary citizens to bear the additional financial burden.

This raises an uncomfortable question: has the BJP become an Opposition party merely in name? Its failure to sustain public campaigns has created an impression among sections of the public that the ruling party has little to fear from the principal Opposition. Allegations of political understanding between rival leaders may be difficult to establish, but the absence of sustained resistance has certainly fuelled such perceptions.

The contrast with the previous Assembly term is striking. When Basavaraj Bommai was Chief Minister, the Congress, then in Opposition, functioned with considerably greater political aggression. Its leaders appeared more united in taking on the BJP government, questioning its decisions and repeatedly highlighting alleged irregularities and administrative failures. Whether through protests, public campaigns or political mobilisation, the Congress ensured that the government faced sustained pressure on several fronts.

There was a time when ruling parties feared an active Opposition almost as much as they feared dissent within their own ranks. That kind of political pressure appears to have weakened in Karnataka. An effective Opposition should not be content with issuing strongly worded statements or staging demonstrations for the cameras. It must follow up, mobilise public opinion, demand answers and ensure that the government is compelled to respond.

The BJP's performance is particularly disappointing given that the Congress government has faced several allegations of scams and administrative irregularities. Many issues have surfaced in the public domain, providing the Opposition with opportunities to demand investigations and



accountability. Yet, barring occasional statements and accusations, the BJP has failed to take several of these controversies to their logical conclusion. Political allegations alone are not enough; they must be backed by evidence, sustained scrutiny and institutional follow-up.

A committed Opposition does not go into political hibernation after losing an election. Instead, electoral defeat should serve as a wake-up call to rebuild its organisation, reconnect with voters and emerge stronger by consistently championing public causes. With the next Assembly election approaching in roughly 18 months, the BJP leadership should be using this period to demonstrate why it deserves another opportunity to govern.

Instead, the party appears to be banking heavily on anti-incumbency against the Congress government, seemingly assuming that public dissatisfaction with the ruling dispensation will automatically translate into electoral gains for the BJP. Such complacency could prove costly. Voters expect an Opposition to perform its constitutional and democratic responsibilities, not merely wait for the ruling party to make mistakes.

The marginalisation of several senior and loyal leaders has further weakened the party's public presence. Many leaders who once played an active role in strengthening the organisation appear to have been pushed to the sidelines, with little space to articulate their concerns or contribute to the party's political strategy. An Opposition that does not utilise the experience and energy of its own leaders cannot expect to build a broad-based campaign against the government.

Interestingly, the Janata Dal (Secular), despite having fewer legislators in the Assembly, has managed to keep several controversies alive through its political interventions. Union Minister and JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy has repeatedly taken up allegations against the Congress government and attempted to put the ruling dispensation on the defensive. His interventions have, on several occasions, attracted greater public attention than those of the BJP, the officially recognised principal Opposition party.

This is an uncomfortable reality that the BJP leadership can no longer afford to ignore. The principal Opposition's responsibility cannot be outsourced to a smaller political party.

The BJP must urgently introspect, put its organisational house in order and rediscover the purpose of being in Opposition. It needs to move beyond press statements and token demonstrations, take up issues affecting ordinary citizens, give its sidelined leaders a meaningful role and pursue allegations against the government with facts and consistency.

Democracy needs a strong government, but it equally needs a strong and vigilant Opposition. When the Opposition fails to discharge its responsibilities, it is ultimately the people who suffer. The BJP must pull up its socks before it is too late. The electorate may forgive an Opposition for losing an election, but it may not be so forgiving of a party that fails to fight for the people after being entrusted with the responsibility of holding the government accountable.

MAN, MACHINE AND MATHEMATICS: EXPLORING THE NEXT FRONTIER OF INTELLIGENCE



DR. VIJAY GARG

Mathematics has always been one of humanity's greatest intellectual achievements. From counting simple objects to exploring distant galaxies, from constructing bridges to developing artificial intelligence, mathematics has shaped the progress of civilisation. For centuries, human intelligence has been the driving force behind mathematical discoveries. Today, however, machines are transforming the way mathematics is understood, taught and applied. The meeting of human intelligence, machines and mathematics is opening an exciting new frontier of knowledge.

In ancient times, mathematics developed through human observation, logical reasoning and practical needs. Great mathematicians such as Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, Euclid, Newton and Ramanujan expanded the boundaries of mathematical thinking. Their discoveries helped humanity understand numbers, geometry, algebra, calculus and the laws governing the natural world. Mathematics was primarily a product of human curiosity, creativity and intellectual effort.

The invention of mechanical calculating devices and later computers brought a major transformation. Machines could perform complicated calculations much faster and more accurately than humans. Tasks that once required hours or even months could be completed within seconds. Computers made it possible to process enormous quantities of data, solve complex equations and develop mathematical models for science, engineering, economics and medicine.

Today, artificial intelligence has taken this relationship to another level. Modern AI systems can recognise mathematical patterns, solve equations, analyse statistical data, assist in mathematical proofs and generate computer-based models. Machine learning algorithms use mathematical principles to identify relationships in data and make predictions. Mathematics is not merely a tool used by machines; it is also the foundation upon which intelligent machines are built.

Artificial Intelligence and the Changing Nature of Mathematics

Artificial intelligence is changing the traditional approach to mathematical problem-solving. Earlier, students and researchers spent considerable time performing calculations and following established procedures. Today, AI-powered tools can complete many routine operations quickly, allowing humans to concentrate on deeper reasoning, interpretation and creativity. For example, AI can assist in solving complex algebraic equations, visualising geometrical structures, analysing large datasets and exploring mathematical relationships. In scientific research, computational mathematics helps researchers simulate climate change, predict disease patterns, design new materials and understand complex biological systems.

However, the ability of a machine to produce an answer does not automatically mean that it understands the mathematical concept in the same way a human does. Human beings can connect mathematics with experience, intuition, imagination and broader social realities. These qualities remain essential in evaluating the meaning and usefulness of mathematical results.

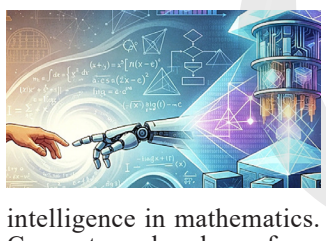
The Future of Mathematics Education

The classroom of the future will be very different from the traditional classroom. Instead of focusing mainly on memorising formulas and solving repetitive exercises, mathematics education will increasingly emphasise conceptual understanding, logical reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. AI-based learning platforms can provide personalised education according to the learning speed and ability of individual students. A student struggling with algebra can receive additional explanations, interactive examples and practice questions. Another student who understands the basics can explore advanced mathematical concepts.

Teachers will continue to play a central role, but their responsibilities will evolve. They will become facilitators, mentors and guides who help students develop curiosity, confidence and independent thinking. Technology can provide information and solutions, but teachers inspire students to ask meaningful questions and understand the world.

Human Intelligence Versus Machine Intelligence

A major question of the modern age is whether machines will eventually surpass human



intelligence in mathematics. Computers already perform calculations at extraordinary speeds, and AI systems can solve many problems that once required advanced human expertise. Nevertheless, mathematical intelligence involves much more than speed and computational power. Human mathematicians possess intuition, imagination and the ability to identify meaningful questions. They can challenge established assumptions, develop new perspectives and connect seemingly unrelated ideas. Machines are increasingly capable of assisting in these processes, but human judgment remains important in determining which problems deserve attention and whether proposed solutions are meaningful. The future is therefore more likely to involve cooperation between humans and machines rather than complete competition.

New Opportunities and Emerging Challenges

The integration of mathematics and intelligent machines will create opportunities in robotics, quantum computing, financial modelling, space exploration, biotechnology, cybersecurity and climate science. Advanced mathematical algorithms will help industries improve efficiency, reduce waste and develop innovative technologies.

At the same time, this transformation raises important concerns. Overdependence on AI may weaken basic mathematical skills if students stop practising independent reasoning. Incorrect AI-generated solutions can mislead learners and researchers. Data privacy, algorithmic bias, unequal access to technology and the digital divide are additional challenges that society must address. Therefore, technological progress must be accompanied by ethical responsibility, scientific understanding and strong educational foundations.

What Lies Beyond the Present?

The next frontier may involve intelligent systems capable of assisting in the discovery of new mathematical theories, exploring complex mathematical structures and contributing to scientific breakthroughs. Quantum computers may transform the way certain computational problems are approached. Human researchers and AI systems may work together to investigate questions that are currently beyond our practical capabilities.

Yet, mathematics will remain rooted in curiosity and the desire to understand the universe. Whether calculations are performed by a human mind, a supercomputer or an advanced AI system, the fundamental principles of logic, patterns and relationships will continue to guide discovery. Ultimately, the future does not belong to machines alone or to humans working without technology. It belongs to intelligent cooperation between human creativity and machine capability.

Conclusion

Man, machine and mathematics represent three powerful forces shaping the future of knowledge. Human intelligence provides imagination and purpose, machines offer speed and computational strength, while mathematics provides the language and framework connecting them. The real challenge is not to make machines replace human thinking but to use them to expand human potential. Students must learn mathematics not merely to calculate answers but to develop the ability to question, analyse, innovate and solve real-world problems. The future will belong to those who can think mathematically, use technology intelligently and retain the human qualities of creativity, wisdom and responsibility. The next mathematical revolution has already begun, and its possibilities are limited only by the questions we dare to ask.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reducing Urban Plastic Waste

Single-use plastics continue to choke our waterways and threaten local ecosystems. While recycling programs exist, they fail to address the root problem of excessive packaging. We need immediate municipal action to ban non-essential plastic bags and utensils in local retail establishments. Furthermore, businesses should be incentivized to adopt biodegradable alternatives and refill stations. Individual consumers also play a vital role by carrying reusable bags and containers. Protecting our environment requires collective accountability before our landfills reach irreversible capacity. Let us prioritize sustainable practices today to ensure a cleaner, healthier planet for future generations.

– Syed Shanawaz

Expanding Mental Health Support

Mental health challenges are rising rapidly, yet accessible care remains out of reach for far too many individuals. Long waitlists, high costs, and lingering social stigma prevent people from seeking timely help. Local governments and healthcare providers must collaborate to expand community-based counseling services and integrate mental wellness education into public schools. Treating psychological well-being with the same urgency as physical health is not a luxury; it is a fundamental necessity. By investing in preventative care and affordable therapy options now, we can build stronger, more resilient communities where no one suffers in silence.

– Shiva

CASH REMAINS ATTRACTIVE AMID THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH



Ten years of demonetisation

On the night of November 8, 2016, a momentous decision was made in the history of the Indian economy that profoundly impacted the country's economic, social, and commercial life. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement to demonetize old 500 and 1,000 rupee notes was not merely a currency change, but was presented as a blow to black money, counterfeit notes, corruption, and terrorist financing. At that time, these two notes accounted for approximately 86 percent of the total value of currency in circulation. Ten years later, as this decision is evaluated, an important paradox emerges. While digital payments have expanded unprecedentedly in the country, cash circulation has also steadily increased. This paradox holds the key to understanding the true achievements and limitations of demonetization.

The most significant change following demonetization was in the area of digital payments. Although the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) had already been launched before demonetization in April 2016, the sudden shortage of currency prompted people to adopt digital payment options. Mobile wallets, internet banking, debit cards, and QR code-based payments gradually became a part of everyday life. In fiscal year 2025-26, over 241 billion transactions were recorded through UPI. Its acceptance among small shopkeepers, street vendors, service providers, and general consumers represented a major shift in the Indian payment system. It would be fair to say that demonetization accelerated the adoption of digital payments.

Another consequence of this decision was a temporary increase in deposits in the banking system. The deposit of old notes into banks increased liquidity in the banking system and provided financial institutions with the opportunity to identify unusual transactions. Details of many cash deposits previously outside the banking system became available. This helped the Income Tax Department investigate suspicious transactions, detect tax evasion, and enhance financial transparency. Furthermore, counterfeit notes of old denominations were immediately invalidated, dealing a blow to existing counterfeit currency networks. Demonetization also encouraged the expansion of banking services, electronic payments, and financial awareness.

However, despite these achievements, the economic consequences of demonetization raise several important questions. The biggest question concerns the return of black money and its actual prevention. According to the Reserve Bank of India, approximately 99.3 percent of the demonetized currency returned to the banking system. Of the approximately ₹15.41 lakh crore of demonetized currency, approximately ₹15.31 lakh crore returned to banks. This figure was contrary to expectations that a large amount of black money, being in cash, would automatically disappear. While it is true that not all of the money deposited in banks can be considered legitimate, it clearly demonstrates that the cash permanently eliminated through demonetization was relatively small.



The root cause is that black money isn't just held in cash. A significant portion of it is invested in real estate, gold, benami properties, money stashed abroad, shell companies, and other financial assets. Therefore, simply demonetizing high-value currency notes will not fully address the black money problem. Transparency in the tax system, monitoring of property transactions, and effective action against corruption are essential.

The continued reliance on cash also highlights the limitations of demonetization. Around November 2016, currency in circulation was approximately ₹17.77 lakh crore, while by October 2026, it had risen to approximately ₹43.16 lakh crore. This increase indicates that despite the expansion of digital payments, cash remains a vital medium of the Indian economy. Cash remains essential for rural areas, small businesses, daily wage laborers, and those with limited internet access. This does not mean that digital payments have failed, but rather, it makes clear that both cash and digital channels have their own utility in India's economy.

The unorganized sector was most severely affected by demonetization. Small shopkeepers, street vendors, agricultural laborers, construction workers, and micro-enterprises faced a sudden cash shortage. Many businesses experienced reduced sales, production was affected, and some establishments were forced to temporarily close. Incomes of those dependent on daily wages declined. Normal economic activity in rural markets was disrupted. Given the vital role of small enterprises and the unorganized sector in the country's economy, this disruption was not a temporary problem but had widespread social and economic consequences.

Furthermore, the presence of counterfeit notes in the new currency was also revealed. This made it clear that the problem of counterfeit currency cannot be eliminated simply by demonetizing old notes. It requires improved security features, intelligence, border surveillance, and effective legal action. Similarly, sudden economic decisions also put pressure on consumption, production, and short-term economic growth.

Today, the need is greater to prevent tax evasion by not limiting the fight against black money to cash. Technology-based surveillance, action against benami properties, transparency in property transactions, and improved coordination among various investigative agencies are essential to prevent tax evasion. Along with promoting digital payments, affordable internet access, secure banking services, cybersecurity, and financial literacy must be ensured in rural areas. Small businesses and micro, small, and medium enterprises should be integrated into the formal economy through a simplified tax system, easy access to credit, and reduced compliance burdens.

Ten years after demonetization, it must be acknowledged that while the decision accelerated digital payments and transparency in banking transactions in India, it did not fully achieve its broader objectives of eliminating black money and reducing dependence on cash. Its biggest lesson is that economic change cannot come simply from changing the nature of currency. It requires strong institutions, accountable governance, an effective tax system, financial inclusion, and continuous reform. India's digital revolution is certainly significant, but its true success should be measured not just by the number of transactions, but by the economic transparency, social inclusion, and positive changes it brings to the lives of ordinary citizens.

> **"Its biggest lesson is that economic change cannot come simply from changing the nature of currency."**
>
> **— Dr. Priyanka Saurabh**

KINDNESS IS THE TRUE STRENGTH OF SOCIETY

Kindness is often misunderstood as softness. In a society that celebrates power, speed and competition, kindness is seen as a weakness that slows a person down. This understanding is incomplete and harmful. Kindness is not the absence of strength. It is the presence of strength used with awareness. It requires more courage to be gentle in a harsh world than to be harsh in a harsh world. When a person chooses patience over anger, understanding over judgment, and help over indifference, that person is not being weak. That person is exercising a higher form of control.

The value of kindness lies in its effect on human relationships. Every society depends on trust. Laws can create order, but they cannot create trust. Trust is created when people believe that others will act with fairness and care even when no one is watching. Kindness builds this belief. A kind word, a respectful tone, a willingness to listen, all contribute to a sense of safety. When people feel safe, they cooperate more, share more, and contribute more. When people feel threatened, they withdraw, defend and compete. Therefore, kindness is not only a moral virtue, it is a social necessity.



A second reason for the importance of kindness is its influence on mental health. Modern life creates constant pressure. The pressure to perform, to earn, to compare, to succeed, creates anxiety and isolation. In such an environment, an unkind word can deepen despair, while a kind word can restore hope. Kindness does not solve all problems, but it changes how problems are experienced. It reminds a person that difficulty is not the same as abandonment. This feeling of being seen and supported has a direct impact on emotional well-being. A society that practises kindness is therefore a society that protects mental health without needing formal intervention at every stage.

Kindness also shapes the character of future generations. Children learn more from behaviour than from instruction. When they grow up in an environment where adults speak with respect, resolve differences without humiliation, and help without expectation, they internalise those values. They learn that success is not measured only by personal achievement but also by the quality of one's contribution to others. On the other hand, when children grow up in an environment of constant criticism, anger and selfishness, they learn to protect themselves by becoming hard and distrustful. The future of a society is therefore decided not only in classrooms and offices but also in everyday interactions at home and in public life.

Some argue that kindness cannot survive in a competitive world. This argument confuses kindness with surrender. Kindness does not mean accepting injustice. It does not mean avoiding difficult decisions. It means making decisions with humanity. A person can be firm and kind at the same time. A system can be efficient and kind at the same time. Discipline with kindness creates respect. Discipline without kindness creates fear. Respect lasts longer than fear and produces better results.

It is also important to understand that kindness must begin with oneself. A person who is constantly harsh towards oneself will find it difficult to be genuinely kind to others. Self-kindness means acknowledging one's limitations without self-hatred, resting without guilt, and accepting imperfection as part of being human. From this inner stability, kindness towards others becomes natural rather than forced. Forced kindness, done for appreciation or recognition, fades quickly. Natural kindness, arising from understanding, remains even when no one notices.

In conclusion, kindness should be treated as a public value, not merely a private virtue. It should be encouraged in families, in educational institutions, in workplaces, and in governance. Policies that consider human dignity, workplaces that respect emotional well-being, and public discourse that avoids humiliation are all forms of kindness at a larger scale. If a society wishes to be truly strong, it must not only build structures and systems but also build a culture of kindness. Strength without kindness leads to domination. Kindness without strength leads to helplessness. Together, they create a society that is both capable and humane. That is the society we must aim to build.

— SYED SHANAWAZ

LONELINESS HAS BECOME A SILENT PUBLIC CRISIS

Loneliness is one of the most misunderstood experiences of modern life. It is often confused with being alone. Being alone can be a choice, a peaceful state that allows reflection and rest. Loneliness is different. It is the feeling of being disconnected even when surrounded by people. It is the sense that no one truly understands or cares. This feeling has become increasingly common, and it deserves to be treated as a serious public issue rather than a private weakness.

One of the main reasons for rising loneliness is the change in the nature of relationships. Earlier, relationships were built over long periods through shared living, shared work and shared community life. Today, relationships are often formed quickly and maintained through digital communication. Digital communication is useful for information, but it lacks the depth of face-to-face presence. A message can convey words, but it cannot convey tone, touch, silence and attention in the same way. As a result, people have many contacts but few connections. The number of interactions has increased, while the quality of intimacy has decreased.

Another reason is the growing pressure of individual success. When life is defined primarily by personal achievement, people begin to see others as competitors rather than companions. Time for friendship, family conversation and community participation is treated as a distraction from work and ambition. Social bonds require time, patience and vulnerability. When these are sacrificed for productivity, loneliness follows. A person may achieve professional success and still feel emotionally empty, because success without connection does not provide meaning.

Loneliness also has serious consequences for health. It affects sleep, increases stress, weakens immunity and increases the risk of depression. It can make a person withdraw further, creating a cycle where isolation leads to more isolation. This cycle is difficult to break alone because loneliness reduces the motivation to reach out. Therefore, addressing loneliness requires collective effort, not just individual willpower. Communities, institutions and families must create spaces where connection can happen naturally and without judgment.

The solution begins with recognising that connection is a basic human need, as important as food and shelter. Educational institutions should teach emotional communication, not only academic skills. Workplaces should value collaboration and human well-being, not only output. Neighbourhoods should create common spaces for interaction, where people can meet without a specific purpose. Families should protect time for undistracted conversation, where listening is more important than advising.

> *"A society that measures progress only by economic growth will continue to produce loneliness. A society that measures progress by the quality of human connection will produce belonging. The choice is ours."*
>
> **SHIVA**

It is also necessary to change the attitude towards loneliness. People often hide loneliness because they fear being seen as uninteresting or unsuccessful. This silence makes the problem worse. If loneliness is discussed openly, as a normal human experience, people will feel less shame in seeking connection. Asking for companionship should not be seen as dependence. It should be seen as honesty.

In the end, the fight against loneliness is not about increasing social activity but about increasing social depth. One deep conversation is more valuable than many superficial interactions. One relationship built on trust is more valuable than many relationships built on convenience.

— SHIVA

EDUCATION MUST NURTURE MINDS, NOT JUST MARKS

Education is meant to develop a human being in fullness. It should develop intellect, character, creativity, empathy and the ability to think independently. However, in many places, education has been reduced to a system of marks, ranks and examinations. Learning has become a race to memorise and reproduce, rather than a process to understand and question. This reduction harms both students and society.

The problem begins with how success is defined. When success is defined only by marks, students learn to value the result more than the process. They learn to fear mistakes instead of learning from them. They learn to compare themselves constantly with others instead of understanding their own strengths. This creates anxiety, not curiosity. A student who is curious asks questions even when there is no examination. A student who is trained only for marks stops asking questions once the examination is over. The difference between these two attitudes decides the future of learning.

Another problem is the neglect of emotional and moral development. A person can be highly educated in technical knowledge and still lack empathy, honesty and responsibility. Education that ignores values produces skilled individuals who may use their skills without considering their impact on others. True education must teach a person to think about consequences, to respect different perspectives, and to act with integrity. Knowledge without character is incomplete. Character without knowledge is limited. Both must grow together.

The role of teachers is central in this transformation. A teacher is not merely a provider of information. Information is now available everywhere. A teacher is a guide who helps a student develop judgment, confidence and curiosity. A teacher who encourages questions, who allows discussion, who treats failure as part of learning, creates a classroom where education becomes alive. A teacher who only punishes mistakes creates a classroom where learning becomes fear. Therefore, teacher training should focus not only on subject knowledge but also on human understanding and communication.

Parents also have a responsibility. Parental love is often expressed through pressure, because parents want the best for their children. But pressure without understanding can damage a child's confidence. Parents should understand that every child has a different pace and different talents. Comparing one child with another does not motivate, it demoralises. Supporting a child's interests, listening to fears, and celebrating effort rather than only outcome, creates a healthy attitude towards learning.

The system itself needs reform. Examinations should test understanding, not memory. Curricula should include art, sports, social service and practical life skills, not as extra subjects but as essential parts of education. Schools should provide counselling and emotional support, not only for problems but for normal growth. Learning should be connected to real life, so that students understand why they are learning, not just what they are learning.

In conclusion, education must return to its original purpose. It is not a factory to produce marks. It is a garden to nurture minds. A mind that is nurtured with curiosity, kindness and confidence will learn throughout life. A mind that is trained only for examinations will stop learning when examinations stop.

If we want a thoughtful, responsible and creative society, we must build an education system that values minds over marks.

— GAUTHAM

TECHNOLOGY SHOULD CONNECT HEARTS, NOT DIVIDE THEM

Technology has transformed human life in remarkable ways. It has made communication faster, knowledge more accessible, and services more convenient. It has allowed people to learn, work and connect across great distances. These achievements are real and should be acknowledged. However, it is equally important to examine how technology is changing the quality of human relationships and the nature of attention.

One of the most significant changes is the shift from presence to distraction. Earlier, when people met, their attention was focused on each other. Now, attention is often divided between the person present and the device in hand. A conversation is interrupted by notifications, a meal is interrupted by scrolling, a moment of rest is interrupted by the urge to check updates. This divided attention weakens the feeling of being heard. Listening requires full presence. When presence is divided, relationships become shallow, even if communication becomes frequent.

Another change is the rise of comparison. Technology allows people to see curated versions of other lives continuously. This creates a feeling that one's own life is less interesting, less successful, less happy. Comparison replaces gratitude. Instead of appreciating what one has, a person constantly measures against what others appear to have.



This leads to dissatisfaction, envy and low self-esteem. The problem is not technology itself, but the habit of using it without awareness.

Technology also affects the ability to be alone with one's thoughts. Earlier, moments of waiting, travelling or resting were moments of reflection. Now, every empty moment is filled with a screen. The mind rarely gets time to pause, to daydream, to process emotions. Without such pauses, creativity decreases and stress increases. A mind that is constantly stimulated cannot rest. Rest is not wasted time. It is essential for clarity and emotional balance.

The solution is not to reject technology. Rejection is neither possible nor desirable. The solution is to develop a balanced relationship with technology. This balance requires conscious choices. Setting boundaries on use, creating device-free times for family and personal reflection, and using technology for purposeful learning rather than mindless consumption, are practical steps. Awareness is more important than rules. When a person understands why constant use harms attention and relationships, discipline becomes easier.

Institutions also have a role. Educational institutions should teach digital literacy, not only technical skills but also emotional awareness about technology use. Workplaces should respect boundaries and avoid creating a culture where constant availability is expected. Families should model balanced use, because children learn from observation more than instruction.

Ultimately, technology is a tool. A tool should serve human purpose, not control human behaviour. If technology increases knowledge but decreases wisdom, increases connection but decreases intimacy, increases speed but decreases peace, then its use needs rethinking. The goal should be to use technology to enhance human life, not to replace human experience. Technology should connect hearts, not divide them.

— DEEKSHA

CONSUMERISM IS STEALING PEACE AND PURPOSE TODAY

Modern society often equates happiness with possession. The message is repeated in various forms that a better life means more things, newer things and bigger things. This message has created a culture of consumerism, where buying has become a way to define identity, status and success. While material needs are real and must be met, the endless pursuit of more has serious consequences for individuals and for society.

The first consequence is psychological. When happiness is linked to possession, it becomes temporary. The excitement of a new purchase fades quickly, and the desire for the next purchase appears. This creates a cycle of wanting that never ends. A person in this cycle is always dissatisfied, always comparing, always feeling that something is missing. Peace becomes impossible because peace requires contentment, and contentment is the opposite of endless wanting. The more a person chases possessions, the further peace moves away.

> **"We must learn to value enough. In enough, we may discover a richness that no amount of buying can provide."**
>
> **— KEVIN**

The second consequence is social. Consumerism encourages comparison. People begin to judge themselves and others based on what they own, wear or display. This creates division between those who have more and those who have less. It creates pressure to spend beyond one's means to maintain an image. It makes relationships transactional, where value is measured by appearance rather than character. A society that values possession over personality loses its ability to appreciate qualities like kindness, honesty and wisdom, which cannot be bought.

The third consequence is environmental. Endless consumption requires endless production, which uses natural resources and creates waste. Clothes, devices, packaging and other goods are discarded quickly, creating pollution and depleting resources. The environmental cost of consumerism is paid not only by the present generation but also by future generations. A lifestyle based on excess is therefore not only personally unsatisfying but also socially irresponsible.

The alternative to consumerism is not poverty or rejection of comfort. It is simplicity and sufficiency. Simplicity means knowing the difference between need and want. It means choosing quality over quantity, durability over fashion, and usefulness over display. Sufficiency means recognising when enough is enough. A person who practises sufficiency does not stop growing. Growth shifts from material accumulation to personal development, relationships, learning and contribution.

Practising simplicity also creates time. When a person spends less time earning to buy, maintaining possessions, and comparing with others, more time becomes available for family, health, hobbies, reflection and community service. These are the sources of lasting happiness. Happiness that comes from experiences and relationships lasts longer than happiness that comes from objects.

In conclusion, consumerism promises happiness but delivers restlessness. It promises identity but delivers comparison. It promises freedom but creates dependence on buying. True freedom lies in the ability to be happy with less, to appreciate what one has, and to find purpose beyond possession. If we wish to build a peaceful and sustainable society, we must question the idea that more is always better.

— KEVIN

Quick Read

Fire at Hyderabad's Pacifica Hill Crest apartments

HYDERABAD

A major fire broke out at the Pacifica Hill Crest residential complex in Nanakramguda, near Hyderabad's Financial District, on Thursday afternoon, triggering evacuation and rescue operations. The fire reportedly started around the fifth floor of a 22-storey tower before spreading to the upper levels. Thick smoke and flames were seen between the 12th and 18th floors, according to preliminary reports. Firefighters and rescue personnel began efforts to control the blaze and evacuate residents from the affected building. No casualties were reported in the initial information. The cause of the fire and the extent of property damage remain unknown.

Two die, five fall ill after herbal drink in MP

BETUL

Two men died and five others were hospitalised after consuming a red-coloured herbal concoction offered to help people quit alcohol in Pathakheda village, Madhya Pradesh, on Wednesday. The victims had approached a self-styled healer for treatment.
Police arrested three people, including the main accused, and registered a case. Betul Additional SP Kamlesh Kharpuse said the preparation was reportedly made using tree bark and had been distributed in the village for years. The deceased were identified as Ramkishore Jhaade and Sanjay Uike. Five others are undergoing treatment and their condition is stable.

Nine held for killing woman over witchcraft suspicion

PATNA

Nine people have been arrested for allegedly abducting and murdering a 58-year-old woman in Bihar's Jamui district over suspicions of witchcraft, police said on Thursday. The victim, identified as Daya Devi alias Kusum, was accused of causing the death of a nine-year-old boy who had been suffering from an illness. Police said she was abducted from Dhammhan village on November 17 and killed. Her body was later found buried in sand near the Barhi River. The arrests include Tinku Sharma and eight others. Police also seized a blood-stained shirt and a cricket bat allegedly used in the crime.

Odisha evacuates 1.05 lakh people before cyclone

Odisha evacuated over 1.05 lakh people and deployed 295 rescue teams as Cyclone Akvan approaches the coast, prompting intensified safety preparations.

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha has evacuated more than 1.05 lakh people and deployed 295 rescue teams ahead of Cyclone Akvan, which is expected to make landfall near Gopalpur in Ganjam district by Friday noon. Chief Secretary Anu Garg said the state was intensifying preparations to minimise casualties, while evacuation operations continued across vulnerable areas before the storm reaches the coast.

Garg said 60 Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force teams, 14 National Disaster Response Force teams and 221 fire service teams had been deployed for rescue and relief work in advance. More than 1.05 lakh people had been moved to 1,224 shelters. Ganjam recorded the highest evacuation figure at 45,364, followed by Gajapati with 18,000 people.

Authorities identified 6,109 vulnerable locations and shifted residents from landslide-prone foothill villages in Gajapati and Kandhamal to safer places.

The administration urged districts to prepare for the worst.

The India Meteorological Department forecast winds of 90-100 kmph, gusting to 110 kmph, during landfall. IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said the cyclone was moving towards Odisha at around 15 kmph, faster than its earlier speed of three kmph. He said dry, cold air could limit further intensification, but warned that heavy rainfall would remain dangerous.



Odisha has moved more than 1.05 lakh people to 1,224 shelters ahead of Cyclone Akvan

"The goal is zero casualty and whatever is required to achieve it will be done. District collectors have been asked to err on the side of caution."
— Anu Garg, Odisha Chief Secretary



Gopalpur: the expected landfall, in Ganjam district

Cyclone Akvan: rescue in focus

people evacuated
1.05 lakh+
rescue teams deployed
295
relief shelters
1,224
vulnerable locations identified
6,109
maximum expected wind gusts
110 kmph

Isolated areas could receive 20-30 cm of rain, raising concerns about flash floods, rising river levels and urban waterlogging.

Several districts, including Ganjam, Gajapati, Balasore and Mayurbhanj, were expected to face heavy rainfall.

Authorities restricted access to beaches, Konark Sun Temple and coastal tourist sites, while boating and ferry services were suspended in affected areas.

Delhi launches EHSAAS policy for student mental health

NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday launched EHSAAS 2026, a mental health and well-being policy aimed at supporting students in schools and educational institutions across the national capital. The initiative is intended to help children manage emotional difficulties and move forward with greater confidence, with teachers and the government providing support.

Speaking at the launch, Gupta said the policy would be implemented across schools and institutions in Delhi. She described teachers and the government as guardians who would stand beside students as they faced mental and emotional challenges. The support, she said, would be available at every stage when young people needed help to continue their lives with confidence.

The Chief Minister said the programme would benefit millions of students studying in schools and colleges. She expressed concern that frustration and sadness had become part of many children's experiences in today's world. Through EHSAAS, the government wants students to approach their activities with happiness and confidence, while knowing that teachers would remain beside them as guardians.

Gupta said the initiative was designed to ensure that students did not have to face difficult emotional stages without support. She added that the government would stand by them as they worked towards their goals.

The Chief Minister also congratulated the Education Department for taking the initiative forward. She acknowledged Ravi Shankar's support in helping extend the policy to schools across the national capital.


Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta

Delhi launched EHSAAS 2026 to strengthen student mental health, address emotional challenges and ensure supportive learning environments across educational institutions.

TVK MLA V.S. Babu passes away after long illness


V.S. Babu

CHENNAI

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) MLA V.S. Babu died at MGM Healthcare in Chennai on Thursday following a prolonged respiratory illness. He was admitted to the hospital on September 9, 2026, and had been receiving intensive care. According to the hospital, he suffered a cardiac arrest and was declared dead at 2.24 pm.

The hospital's Director of Medical Services said Babu's condition continued to deteriorate despite comprehensive medical treatment and efforts by a multidisciplinary team of doctors.

Babu came into political prominence after defeating DMK president and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in the 2026 Assembly elections. Contesting from Kolathur, he secured 82,997 votes against Stalin's 74,202, winning by a margin of 8,795 votes.

Before joining the electoral contest, Babu had been associated with the DMK and served as its North Chennai district secretary. He had also represented the Purasawalkam Assembly constituency after winning the 2006 elections on a DMK ticket.

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Office expressed grief over his death and described it as an irreplaceable loss. In a statement posted on X, the office said, "I am deeply saddened and distressed to learn of the passing of Mr. V. S. Babu, MLA for the Kolathur constituency, following an illness."

Shimla's outsourced workers demand delayed wage hike

SHIMLA

Outsourced workers from government departments and institutions across Himachal Pradesh protested in Shimla on Thursday, demanding implementation of the state's announced Rs 25 daily minimum wage increase.
The hike was announced in the March budget and scheduled to take effect from April 1. Protesters said the required notification had not been issued across all worker categories.

Led by the Centre of Trade Unions (CITU), workers also sought timely salaries and faster trade union registration. CITU Himachal Pradesh president Vijender Mehra said the increase would provide an additional Rs 750 monthly. He alleged that eight to nine months had passed without implementation, with authorities citing financial constraints and labour codes, and alleged favouritism.

Mehra criticised the delayed increase in the monthly honorarium for Anganwadi workers and helpers. He said a Rs 1,000 hike announced from April was implemented only in November, leaving seven months of arrears unpaid.

Protesters submitted a memorandum to the Labour Commissioner and sought discussions. Nisha, an outsourced worker at Indira Gandhi Medical College in Shimla, said delayed wage revision and irregular salary payments were causing financial difficulties.

Nisha said salaries often arrived after the seventh day of the month, sometimes on the 10th, 12th or 15th.


Outsourced workers protest in Shimla on Thursday

BJP strengthens grassroots network ahead of UP polls

LUCKNOW

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has prepared an extensive organisational strategy ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, focusing on strengthening booth-level networks, expanding social outreach and identifying influential individuals across constituencies. The plan aims to improve its grassroots presence and build an organised electoral network throughout the state.

According to the party's strategy, two-session meetings will be organised with former office-bearers. The first session will gather feedback from workers on the political situation and organisational challenges, while the second will discuss election strategies.

The BJP plans to identify 100 active women and 50 social media influencers in each constituency. At the Mandal level, 25 active workers will be identified, while every booth will have five active and senior workers. The party also plans to deploy 11 motorcycle-riding workers at each booth and organise weekly motorcycle outreach programmes.

Special attention will be given to Dalit outreach, with plans to identify 10 new members at every booth and encourage voter enrolment among Scheduled Caste communities.

The exercise will also identify dissatisfied BJP leaders and workers, along with unhappy members of other political parties. Workers from Mahila Morcha, Yuva Morcha, SC Morcha and OBC Morcha will participate in the campaign. Beneficiaries of government schemes will receive home visits, with workers interacting over tea or water.

Delhi LG envisions capital's transformation by 2047

NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu has outlined a vision for the capital by 2047, calling for a city that attracts investment, creates opportunities, improves infrastructure and protects its heritage. He made the remarks at Delhi Connects 2026, a conclave organised by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).

Sandhu said Delhi's development was linked to India's growth ambitions. He called for the National Capital Region to become competitive, inclusive and liveable, noting that decisions today would shape opportunities and residents' quality of life. He cited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's observation: "Urban planning will determine the fate of our cities in Amrit Kaal, and it is only well-planned cities that will determine the fate of India".

Referring to the Delhi Economic Survey 2025-26, Sandhu said the city's Gross State Domestic Product was estimated at Rs 13.27 lakh crore, with projected growth of 9.42 per cent. The services sector contributes more than 86 per cent of the economy, providing a foundation for investment, innovation and employment.

Sandhu stressed that Delhi could not plan its future separately from the wider NCR, as people travel across administrative boundaries. He called for coordinated planning in transport, housing, water management and economic development.

He highlighted digital systems, data-driven planning and artificial intelligence as tools to improve public services. Delhi, he said, could expand its role in services, finance, education, healthcare, technology and entrepreneurship by encouraging investment, start-ups and business growth.



At Delhi Connects 2026, the ASSOCHAM conclave

POLLUTION CRACKDOWN DRIVE

Yadav asks Delhi-NCR civic bodies for zero tolerance on pollution

NEW DELHI

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav has directed Delhi-NCR civic bodies to adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards air pollution violations and strengthen winter control measures. He chaired a virtual review meeting from Antalya, Türkiye, with officials from Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, Gurugram and Faridabad to assess their Winter Action Plans.

Yadav called for strict enforcement, daily monitoring and accountability during the crucial winter season, and citizen-friendly measures. He directed municipal corporations to act against open burning of municipal waste, dry leaves and biomass, deploy Quick Response Teams in every ward and address complaints within hours. Officers will be held accountable for failures, while daily waste processing and remediation at Bhalswa and Okhla dumpsites must be accelerated.

To improve coordination, the Minister urged mayors to hold ward-level reviews and establish WhatsApp groups with nodal officers to resolve grievances.

He asked civic bodies to replicate initiatives such as Delhi's Malba App, Faridabad's Pothole Ambulance, Gurugram's sanitation-worker survey and Ghaziabad's portal for construction and demolition waste.

On road dust, Yadav called for faster repairs, greater use of mechanical road-sweeping machines, including double shifts, and GPS-based monitoring. Authorities were asked to remove roadside dust, silt and debris daily, enforce dust-control rules at construction sites and operate wheel-washing facilities. Seriously non-compliant sites could face closure. The Minister said the aim should be "No Visible Dust" around construction areas.

Yadav also directed officials to prepare action plans for pollution hotspots and implement measures under the prevailing stage of the Graded Response Action Plan.


Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav

WINTER ORDERS

- **Every ward:** Quick Response Teams, complaints addressed within hours
- **Open burning:** action against burning of waste, leaves and biomass
- **Road dust:** mechanical sweeping in double shifts, GPS monitoring
- **Building sites:** "No Visible Dust"; non-compliant sites may be shut

Quick Read

DRI seizes 71 kg heroin in Chennai

CHENNAI

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) seized 71.24 kg of heroin in Chennai on November 17 and 18, foiling an attempt to smuggle the drugs to Sri Lanka. Two people were arrested under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, and remanded to judicial custody. Acting on intelligence, officers intercepted a vehicle and an escort two-wheeler. They recovered 69 packets containing an off-white powder, weighing 71.24 kg. Investigators said the consignment was to travel through Tiruchirappalli, with Chennai as the transit point. Both vehicles were seized.The seizure follows a recent 137 kg methamphetamine recovery near Nagapattinam in October.

Kanpur man alleges son murdered, files FIR

KANPUR

A murder case has been registered against a 22-year-old man's female friend, her uncle and family members following his death in a fall from a sixth-floor apartment in Kanpur on November 14. Sambhav Khandelwal's father, Vishal, alleged that his son was murdered and the incident staged as an accident. The post-mortem report recorded 13 injuries. He also claimed his son had earlier been threatened by the uncle following a dispute. Police initially suspected an accident based on CCTV footage showing Sambhav falling nearly 70 feet. Following the father's complaint, police registered a murder case and began investigating.

21-year-old arrested for raping minor

GREATER NOIDA

A 21-year-old man was arrested for allegedly raping and assaulting a 13-year-old girl in a village in Greater Noida, police said on Thursday. The accused allegedly took the girl to an agricultural field on Wednesday night on the pretext of some work and sexually assaulted her. When she resisted, he reportedly attacked her. Police located the girl and sent her for a medical examination. Her condition was reported to be stable. The accused was arrested within two hours following an exchange of fire with police. He sustained a bullet injury to his leg. A case was registered under relevant Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita provisions.

Delhi receives record Rs 2,711 crore railway allocation

Delhi has received a record Rs 2,711 crore railway allocation for 2026-27, with ongoing projects worth Rs 8,976 crore aimed at modernising infrastructure and passenger facilities.

NEW DELHI

Delhi has received a record allocation of Rs 2,711 crore for railway development during the financial year 2026-27, with projects worth approximately Rs 8,976 crore currently underway to modernise stations, expand infrastructure and improve passenger facilities. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for supporting the capital's railway development.

Gupta said the allocation would strengthen railway infrastructure and improve travel facilities for millions of passengers. She highlighted the recently launched New Delhi-Varanasi Vande Bharat Sleeper train, which connects the capital with Varanasi through Prayagraj, Kanpur, Aligarh and Ghaziabad. Equipped with automatic doors, the Kavach safety system and comfortable berths, the service is expected to support tourism, business and religious travel.

Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, 13 Delhi stations are being redeveloped, including New Delhi, Old Delhi, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Anand Vihar Terminal, Delhi Cantt, Delhi Sarai Rohilla, Narela, Safdarjung, Bijwasan, Sabzi Mandi and Tilak Bridge. Planned upgrades include modern buildings, improved entrances, waiting rooms, toilets, drinking water, platform shelters, foot overbridges, lifts, escalators, parking and facilities for passengers with disabilities.

Work is progressing at several stations. At New Delhi, a holding area on the Ajmeri Gate side has been completed, while foundation work for a double basement and elevated road has begun. Hazrat Nizamuddin is receiving a redesigned second entrance. At Delhi Cantt, work includes a new station building, arrival and departure areas, an elevated road and platform improvements. Building structures at Safdarjung and Bijwasan have been completed.

Redevelopment is also underway at Narela, Sabzi Mandi and Tilak Bridge, including new platforms, toilets, parking and accessibility facilities.



Rs 2,711	Rs 8,976	13
crore railway allocation for Delhi, 2026-27	crore of railway projects under way	stations being redeveloped

TN farmers bury themselves in sand over Cauvery water dispute

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI



Farmers buried themselves in Cauvery River sand, protesting Karnataka's delayed water release and proposed Mekedatu dam amid an ongoing interstate dispute.

Farmers in Tamil Nadu staged an unusual protest by burying themselves in the sand of the Cauvery River in Tiruchirappalli on Wednesday, opposing Karnataka's delay in releasing water and its proposed Mekedatu dam project.

The demonstration was organised by the National South Indian Rivers Interlinking Farmers Association amid continuing tensions between the neighbouring states over sharing Cauvery water.

The protesters condemned the Karnataka government for not releasing Tamil Nadu's allocated share of river water and objected to repeated statements by Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar that the Mekedatu dam would be constructed across the river. Farmers expressed concern that the proposed project could affect the flow of water into Tamil Nadu, particularly its agricultural regions.

The Cauvery is a major source of irrigation for Tamil Nadu's delta districts, where thousands of farmers depend on the river for cultivation. The release of the state's allocated water has remained a longstanding demand among farming communities.

The proposed Mekedatu project has further intensified concerns among Tamil Nadu farmers. Karnataka has been pursuing plans to build a dam across the Cauvery at Mekedatu, while farmers in Tamil Nadu have consistently opposed the proposal, fearing it could reduce the water reaching their state. Shivakumar's repeated remarks supporting the construction have triggered fresh protests.

Election officials from 21 UP districts called in for poll review

LUCKNOW

Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Manish Garg was scheduled to meet election officials from 21 Uttar Pradesh districts in Agra on Thursday to review election-related preparations. The meeting was scheduled for 11 am at Fatehabad Road. Chief Electoral Officer Navdeep Rinwa was also to attend, along with divisional commissioners, police commissioners, district magistrates and other officials from five divisions.

Officials from Agra, Firozabad, Mathura, Mainpuri, Banda, Chitrakoot, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Jhansi and Lalitpur were to take part. Representatives from Jalaun, Bareilly, Badaun, Pilibhit, Shahjahanpur, Kanpur, Kanpur Dehat, Auraiya, Etawah, Farrukhabad and Kannauj were expected. The meeting was to bring election and police authorities together from across the state.



The meeting comes as Uttar Pradesh conducts its Special Summary Revision (SSR) of electoral rolls. Rinwa recently urged voters to check whether their names appear on the current list, warning that possessing an Elector's Photo Identity Card does not automatically confirm registration. He said omissions could result from lack of awareness, expenses or the belief that registration was unnecessary.

The roll timetable

- **NOV 17-DEC 16** Claims and objections
- **DEC 28** Forms processed
- **JAN 4, 2027** Electoral roll published

Rinwa said forms submitted between November 17 and December 16 would be processed by December 28, ahead of publication of the electoral roll on January 4, 2027. Applications received after December 16 would not appear in the January 4 list and would be dealt with later. "The period for filing claims and objections is one month; we are accepting them starting today, with the deadline set for December 16," he said.

Sukhu promises higher income through natural farming

SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has said agriculture will become a profitable venture in the coming years, with the state government focusing on increasing farmers' income and promoting natural farming. He urged farmers not to sell their land and encouraged them to adopt sustainable agricultural practices to strengthen the rural economy.

During an interaction with beneficiaries of the Rajiv Gandhi Prakritik Kheti Khushal Kisan Yojana at Dr Rajendra Prasad Government Medical College in Tanda, Kangra, Sukhu sought suggestions on improving agriculture. He assured farmers and horticulturists of financial support, stating that the government aimed to raise their monthly income to Rs 40,000–50,000. He said farmers' prosperity was essential for the state's self-reliance.



Sukhu said the government had introduced minimum support prices (MSP) for naturally grown produce and milk to protect farmers from market fluctuations. He announced that the MSP for turmeric would rise from Rs 150 to Rs 170 per kg, while wheat MSP would increase from Rs 80 to Rs 90 per kg next year.

The government is constructing a milk processing plant at Dhagwar at an estimated cost of Rs 300 crore. The facility is expected to procure 1.50 lakh litres of milk daily, and the government will cover transportation costs for milk brought by farmers. The initiative aims to create jobs and reduce migration.

Agriculture Minister Chander Kumar said suggestions received during the interaction would be considered in policymaking. He highlighted agriculture's importance to the national economy and said natural farming was necessary to protect soil fertility from excessive chemical use.

Teacher, assistant accused of tying up 3-year-old student

THIRUTHURAIPOONDI

A three-year-old Pre-KG student was allegedly tied with a nylon rope and assaulted by a teacher at a private school in Tamil Nadu's Tiruvarur district.

The incident came to light after the child's parents noticed injuries on his body and checked classroom CCTV footage, which later circulated widely on social media.

The incident reportedly took place at the school in Thiruthuraipoondi. The boy's parents noticed injuries when he returned home on Tuesday. On questioning him, the child reportedly said that his teacher and a female school assistant had beaten him.

The CCTV footage allegedly showed the teacher tying the boy's hands with a nylon rope

Suspecting physical abuse, the parents approached the school seeking an explanation. The child's father later examined the classroom CCTV footage and allegedly found visuals of the teacher tying the boy's hands with a nylon rope. The footage also reportedly showed a female assistant pressing the child against a screen inside the school.

The father recorded the CCTV visuals on his mobile phone and lodged a complaint at the Thiruthuraipoondi police station. He sought action against the school management and those allegedly involved in the incident.

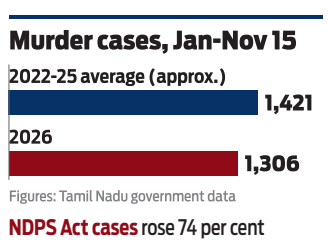
Following the complaint, police launched an investigation against teacher Bhagyalakshmi, 26, and school assistant Selvi, 55, who resides in Anna Nagar, Thiruthuraipoondi. The footage has triggered concern over the alleged treatment of young children inside educational institutions. Police are examining the complaint and available evidence as part of the investigation.

TN murder cases hit 5-year low as drug offences rise

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu recorded a decline in murder cases during 2026, reaching a five-year low, even as drug-related offences increased significantly under Chief Minister Vijay's government. State government data showed 1,306 murder cases between January and November 15, while cases registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and offences involving possession of tablets witnessed sharp rises. The figures have emerged amid a political debate over law and order, with the opposition DMK alleging that crime has increased under the present government.

According to the data released by the Tamil Nadu government, the 1,306 murder cases recorded during the period were fewer than the corresponding figures in each of the previous four years. During those years, the state was governed by the DMK.



The average number of murders recorded between January and November from 2022 to 2025 stood at approximately 1,421. In comparison, the state reported 1,306 cases during the corresponding period in 2026. This represents a reduction of around 115 cases from the four-year average.

However, the data also highlighted concerns over the increase in narcotics-related offences. Cases registered under the NDPS Act reportedly rose by 74 per cent. Offences involving the possession of tablets also recorded a sharp increase, raising questions about the spread of drug-related activities across the state.

India-US ties at a historic high, says US diplomat

NEW DELHI

India and the United States are enjoying ties at a historic high, with both governments working towards a fair, reciprocal and mutually beneficial trade relationship, US Deputy Chief of Mission Jason Meeks said on Thursday. Addressing the 23rd Indo-US Economic Summit in New Delhi, he called for reducing trade barriers, improving market access and strengthening supply chains.

Meeks said the countries had made progress beyond goods trade and were expanding cooperation in energy, pharmaceuticals, critical minerals, advanced technology and manufacturing. He stressed that American suppliers should reach Indian consumers, while Indian companies should receive fair opportunities in US markets. "When trade is fair and reciprocal, workers and companies on both sides win," he said.

Referring to Pax Silica, Meeks said the United States, India and other countries had signed the San Francisco Declaration to strengthen their partnership and build resilient supply chains. Launched by Washington in December 2025, the initiative focuses on secure supplies of artificial intelligence, semiconductors and critical minerals among trusted partners.

He described Indian manufacturers as reliable participants in global supply chains, particularly in automotive components.

CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM

Amit Shah opens two-day conference on counter-terrorism

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday inaugurated a two-day national anti-terrorism conference, with discussions on cross-border terrorism, emerging security threats and strategies to strengthen the country's counter-terrorism capabilities. The annual conference aims to improve coordination among law enforcement agencies and develop effective responses to evolving national security challenges.



Organised by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the conference brings together senior police officers from states and Union Territories, central agency representatives and experts from legal, forensic and technological fields. It provides a platform for security agencies to examine terrorism-related threats, share operational experiences and discuss measures to strengthen cooperation. The event follows a whole-of-government approach, encouraging coordinated action among different institutions.

On the agenda

- Evidence from foreign jurisdictions
- Digital forensics and data analysis
- Managing terror trials
- Disrupting terror financing

According to the Home Ministry, sessions will examine several aspects of terrorism investigations, including obtaining evidence from foreign jurisdictions, digital forensics and data analysis. Participants will also discuss the effective management of trials, counter radicalisation and addressing emerging hybrid threats. Discussions will further cover methods to disrupt terror financing networks and the development of future-ready strategies to tackle security challenges.

The conference also aims to strengthen institutional capacities by sharing practical experiences and identifying effective investigative practices. Officials will examine tools and techniques used in counter-terrorism operations, alongside challenges faced by investigating agencies. The deliberations are expected to provide inputs for future policy decisions and improve the country's collective response to terrorist activities.

A capacity-building training programme has also been arranged for state police personnel and practising professionals. It will cover the application of new criminal laws in terror investigations, the use of digital evidence during prosecution, trial strategies and witness protection.

Brindavihari's Emotional Story Drives Producer's Vision



The film, starring Ganesh and directed by Srinivas Raju, marks Manjunath's first production venture in Kannada cinema under his banner, Virat Sai Creations LLP. Although the combination of the actor and director attracted his attention, he says the story played the biggest role in his decision.

I am always looking for good content. The combination may have contributed about 10% to 15% to my decision, but content matters most to me. I loved the character arc written for Madhava, played by Ganesh, he said. Manjunath said he had earlier appreciated films from Telugu and Malayalam cinema, but this was the first Kannada story that deeply impressed him. He believes Brindavihari has the potential to connect with people from different backgrounds because of its family-focused narrative and emotional appeal.

He said he was convinced after the final changes were made to the script. For him, the most important measure of a film's success is how audiences feel after watching it.

He acknowledged the financial risks involved in filmmaking and expressed hope that the film would receive a positive response. He was also keen to bring music director Hesham Abdul Wahab on board. The film marks the composer's Kannada debut. An industrialist and gold retailer with interests in banking and politics, Manjunath said his team and family help him manage his responsibilities. He added that he gives his full commitment to every venture. Brindavihari is scheduled for theatrical release on November 20.

Hesham Abdul Wahab Makes Kannada Debut

Music director Hesham Abdul Wahab makes his Kannada cinema debut with Brindavihari. Producer Samruddhi V Manjunath said he was keen to have the composer on board because of his successful work in other languages. He is looking forward to the audience's response to the music. The film stars Ganesh and is directed by Srinivas Raju.

Bollywood Celebrities Attend Sheesha Sky Lounge Launch

The event, organised in association with the Mumbai Port Authority, marked the opening of a new hospitality destination in South Mumbai. The evening was attended by several well-known personalities, including Javed Jaffery, Diana Penty, Meezaan Jafri, Munawar Faruqui, Johnny Lever, Jamie Lever, Naved Jaffery, Alaviaa Jaffrey, Zain Imam, Geeta Kapur, Muzammil Ibrahim, Aalim Hakim, Chhaya Momaya, Gulfam Khan and Abhinay Deo.

The event was hosted by the lounge's owners, Ali Reza Abdi and Sakina Abdi. Speaking at the launch, Ali Reza said they were happy to introduce the Garden Restaurant & Café as a new step in their hospitality journey. He said the project was special as it came five years after their previous opening. He also thanked the Mumbai Port Authority for its support and cooperation.

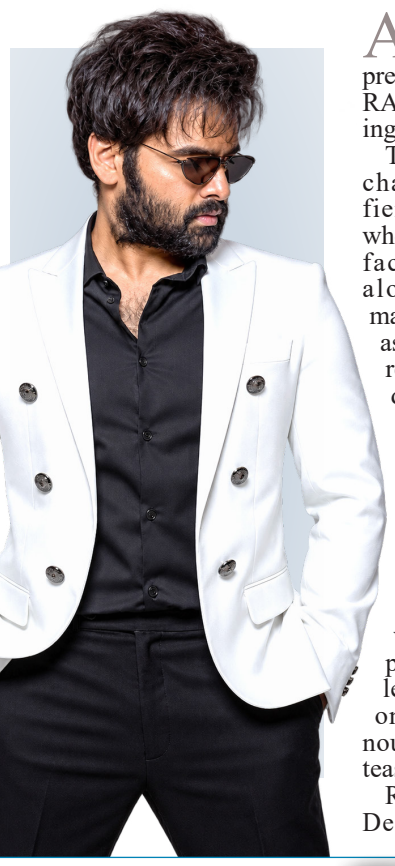
Sakina Abdi said the restaurant was created with love and dedication. One of its main attractions is Bustan Laila, an open-air garden designed as a peaceful space for visitors.



She explained that Bustan means garden and Laila means night, together meaning 'The Garden of the Night'. The name is inspired by their daughter, Laila.

The owners said their aim was to offer good food, pleasant surroundings and warm hospitality. The launch marked a new chapter for Sheesha Sky Lounge, which hopes to attract food lovers and people seeking a venue for social gatherings and celebrations in South Mumbai.

RaPo Reveals Lone Wolf Pre-Look



Actor Ram Pothineni unveiled the 'Lone Wolf' pre-look of his upcoming film RAPO 23 on Thursday, marking International Men's Day.

The pre-look introduces a character described as a fiercely independent man who follows his own path and faces the world alone. The film marks Ram's debut as a writer and director. It is being developed as a psychological action thriller set in a neo-noir world.



Sharing the pre-look, the makers described the character as a lone wolf who chooses to live independently and face challenges without depending on others. They also announced that the film's title teaser will be released soon.

RAPO 23 features Riteish Deshmukh and Samyuktha Menon alongside Ram Pothineni. The project is produced by Krishna Pothineni under the banner of RAPO Cinematics.

S. Thirunavukkarasu is handling the cinematography, while Sam C.S. is composing the music. The makers have confirmed that the title teaser and first look will be unveiled soon, raising expectations among fans. Ram had announced his directorial debut in May this year while introducing a character poster from the film. He is expected to play a character named Veera in the psychological thriller.

The latest pre-look has created interest among fans, particularly as the actor takes on writing and directing responsibilities for the first time. The film's title teaser is expected to offer more details about its story, characters and overall theme.

John Doe: Arjun Das Uncovers Dark Child Trafficking Network

Arjun Das plays a police officer investigating missing children in Madhumitha's Tamil psychological crime thriller John Doe.

Arjun Das plays Chandru, a police sub-inspector posted in Kadampuzha, Kerala. His investigation begins after an unidentified boy is found dead when a car plunges into a lake. Since the boy's identity is unknown, the police register him as John Doe.

Meanwhile, Darshana, played by Srishti, moves from Dubai to Tamil Nadu with her two children, Lucky and Hridhay. Their lives take a shocking turn when Hridhay suddenly goes missing.

As Chandru investigates the disappearance, he discovers links to several other missing children across the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border. The case gradually leads him towards a disturbing network involving children.

During the investigation, Chandru also faces painful memories from his childhood. These experiences bring back his personal fears and insecurities, making the case emotionally difficult. He must deal with both professional challenges and personal struggles while trying to uncover the truth. Directed by Madhumitha, John Doe is a psychological crime thriller that combines suspense, mystery and emotional drama. The film was released in theatres on November 13, 2026.

The digital streaming rights of the film have been acquired by Netflix. However, the streaming platform and the makers have not announced the official OTT premiere date as of November 19, 2026.

Viewers will have to wait for an official announcement regarding its digital release. The film is expected to reach a wider audience through its Netflix release.



Actor Larry Poindexter Dies At 66 After Accident

American actor Larry Poindexter, best known for playing Captain Tom Fuller in the 2003 action film S.W.A.T., died on November 18 at the age of 66, days after being hit by a car in Los Angeles.

According to reports, Poindexter was crossing a road in his Studio City neighbourhood on Friday night to collect food when a vehicle struck him.

He was rushed to hospital with broken ribs. He had been receiving treatment for four and a half days and was scheduled to undergo surgery on November 18. However, he died suddenly that morning.

Poindexter had a career spanning more than four decades and appeared in nearly 200 films and television productions.

He gained recognition for his role as LAPD Captain Tom Fuller in S.W.A.T., starring Samuel L. Jackson. In the film, his character is a strict police officer who clashes with Hondo, played by Jackson.

The actor also appeared in several popular television shows, including Friends, How I Met Your Mother, NCIS, Will & Grace, Scandal, NYPD Blue and Quantum Leap.

Allu Aravind Plans Big Film With Mammootty Dulquer

Telugu producer Allu Aravind has expressed his interest in making a big-budget film featuring Malayalam stars Mammootty and his son Dulquer Salmaan.

The possibility of seeing the father-son duo together on screen has excited fans for years.

During a recent promotional interaction with Dulquer, Allu Aravind shared his wish to bring both actors together for a major project.

According to a report by Deccan Chronicle, the producer told Dulquer that he wanted to make a big-ticket film with him and his father, Mammootty.

Dulquer responded positively to the proposal and said he was ready to take up the project immediately.

However, he jokingly added that the producer would have to speak to his father first. Allu Aravind assured him that he would approach Mammootty and try to convince him.

Dulquer once again expressed his willingness to be part of the film. A project featuring the two popular actors could attract audiences across different film industries, particularly in Malayalam and Telugu cinema, where both have a strong fan following.

Meanwhile, Dulquer is preparing for the release of his upcoming Telugu film Aakasamlo Oka Tara, which is scheduled to hit theatres on November 20.

He plays Krishna in the film, which follows a young woman from a remote village who dreams of becoming an astronaut.



Interestingly, Mammootty's Tamil film O.M, featuring Dhanush, is also scheduled for release on November 20. Although the proposed father-son project is yet to be officially announced, Dulquer's response has added to fans' excitement.



Dhanush's O.M Set For Worldwide Theatrical Release

Dhanush, Mammootty and Sai Pallavi come together in O.M, an upcoming action thriller directed by Rajkumar Periasamy of Amaran fame. The film is scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on November 20, 2026.

Titled O.M: Operation Mole, the film is written and directed by Rajkumar Periasamy. Set against the illegal red sandalwood trade in Andhra Pradesh's Seshachalam forests, the story follows a joint operation by the Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu police to break a major smuggling network.

Dhanush plays an undercover officer from Tamil Nadu's Organised Crime Intelligence Unit. Disguised as a woodcutter, he enters the smuggling network to identify the people behind the illegal business. His biggest challenge is to gain their trust while keeping his real identity secret. Sai Pallavi plays IPS officer Nithya Reddy, who leads the police operation. Mammootty appears as Siya, a powerful person connected to the smuggling network. Sreeleela, Naseeruddin Shah and Indrans also play important roles. The recently released trailer gives a glimpse of the forest setting and the intense conflict between the police and the smugglers. The film has received a U/A certificate and has a reported runtime of two hours and 58 minutes.

SHARVARI PRAISES ALIA BHATT'S Multitasking Skills On Alpha

Actress Sharvari Wagh has praised Alia Bhatt for managing her acting career, motherhood and other professional responsibilities while working on Alpha.

Sharvari recently shared her experience of working with Alia during an appearance on the television show Kon Honar Crorepati, hosted by Madhuri Dixit. She spoke about her admiration for the actress and how the experience gave her an opportunity to learn.

Calling Alia her favourite actress, Sharvari said she had always been inspired by her films, stories and performances. She added that she was extremely happy when she learned that they would be working together in Alpha.

Sharvari said she initially looked forward to observing Alia closely and learning from her on the sets.

She described Alia as an outstanding person and praised the way she managed her responsibilities. According to Sharvari, Alia remained fully focused during film shoots while also managing her daughter, household responsibilities and brand commitments. She said the actress planned her activities even between shots but gave her complete attention to every scene during filming.

Sharvari described Alia as a remarkable multitasker who handled both her personal and professional life efficiently. Madhuri Dixit was also impressed by Sharvari's observations. She said Alia was not only a talented actress but also someone who paid attention to every aspect of her life. Alpha is an action thriller directed by Shiv Rawail and produced by Yash Raj Films.

The film features Alia Bhatt and Sharvari in leading roles and is part of the production house's popular spy universe. The project marks Sharvari's entry into the expanding franchise.



Quick Read

Indian, Japanese ministers discuss climate cooperation

ANTALYA

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav met Japanese Environment Minister Hiroyoshi Sasakawa on the sidelines of the COP31 climate conference to discuss key environmental issues. Their talks focused on circular economy, critical mineral supply chains, early warning systems and ongoing climate negotiations. Yadav stressed that global climate commitments must lead to practical action. He highlighted the need for stronger international cooperation, especially in climate adaptation, disaster resilience and technology sharing. He also called for greater support to developing countries through technical expertise and capacity building. Yadav reaffirmed India's commitment to constructive discussions with international partners to achieve meaningful climate solutions.



India, Czech Republic moot stronger defence ties

PRAGUE

Indian Army Chief General Dhiraj Seth met Czech Deputy Foreign Minister Marie Chatardova during his official visit to discuss ways to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation. India's Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Raveesh Kumar, also attended the meeting. Discussions covered shared interests and opportunities to deepen the long-standing partnership. General Seth also met Czech military leaders to explore defence cooperation, professional military exchanges and modernisation. He visited the Czech Armed Forces General Staff Headquarters and paid tribute to fallen soldiers by laying a wreath. The visit highlighted both countries' commitment to expanding defence ties, military training and cooperation in defence education and technology.



Yemen airstrikes kill 11, tensions escalate

YEMEN

Houthi-run media reported that Saudi airstrikes killed 11 people and injured 36 others across five Yemeni provinces over the past 24 hours. The reported strikes affected Taiz, Hodeidah, Saada, Hajjah and Ibb, while further attacks were reported in the capital, Sanaa. Meanwhile, the Saudi-led coalition said it intercepted and destroyed four ballistic missiles launched by Houthi forces towards southern Saudi Arabia. The coalition also reported destroying two missile launch platforms in Yemen. Tensions have increased following reported attacks involving Riyadh and central Yemen, with both sides accusing each other of escalating the conflict.

GTA VI SALES CROSS $1.65 BN AS SHARES RISE

The highly anticipated game has drawn millions of players worldwide, boosting investor confidence and increasing attention on the gaming industry's biggest companies.



Grand Theft Auto games on sale, with GTA VI for PlayStation 5 in front

NEW YORK

Grand Theft Auto VI (GTA VI) has sold more than 17 million copies worldwide and generated around $1.65 billion in sales since its release, according to market research firm Sensor Tower. The strong performance has increased investor interest in Take-Two Interactive, Microsoft and Sony.

Take-Two Interactive, the company behind the GTA franchise, saw its shares rise 1% in premarket trading on Thursday after gaining more than 6% in the previous trading session. Microsoft shares climbed 1.6%, while Sony shares closed nearly 3% higher in Tokyo.

17 mn+ copies sold

$1.65 bn in sales

PlayStation leads

GTA VI is available on Microsoft's Xbox Series X|S and Sony's PlayStation 5 consoles. According to Sensor Tower, the PlayStation 5 accounted for around 75% of the game's total sales, while the remaining sales came from the Xbox version. These figures show that Sony's console has attracted most of the demand so far.

Shares of chipmaker Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) rose 3% in premarket trading on Thursday. The game's team highlighted its use of an AMD system to improve image scaling during gameplay on the Xbox version.

The game has also received strong reactions from players on social media platforms X and Reddit.

The previous game in the franchise, Grand Theft Auto V (GTA V), has sold more than 230 million copies worldwide since its launch in 2013, according to Yahoo Finance.

However, Take-Two shares remained down 15.4% so far in 2026, according to Yahoo Finance. Some investors advised caution and said traders should wait for official sales figures and the launch of the game's online mode before making further judgments.

India, Japan unveil logo marking 75 years of ties



The logo for 75 years of India-Japan diplomatic relations

TOKYO

India and Japan have unveiled a special logo to mark 75 years of diplomatic relations, which will be celebrated in 2027. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi jointly presented the logo in Tokyo during their official meetings.

The logo celebrates the long friendship between the two countries and reflects their shared hopes for the future. It was selected from more than 850 entries submitted after both governments invited people to take part in the design process. The submissions were received between August 17 and September 15, 2026.

The selected design was created by Indian designer Akhil Cleatus. It brings together important cultural symbols from both countries in the number 75, showing how their identities and traditions can come together.

The number includes an Indian ornamental pattern in the figure seven, while the figure five features Japan's rising sun above traditional Seigaiha waves. An Indian lamp, known as a diya, forms the curved base beneath the sun. The design also includes a lotus, representing India, and two flowing ribbons that create the idea of a shared horizon.

The words "Shared Horizons" form the theme of the anniversary logo. The design uses saffron, green, red and navy colours to represent the identities of both nations.

The logo was unveiled during a period of active diplomatic engagement between the two countries.

The selected logo will be used for events marking the 75th anniversary throughout 2027.

India and Japan celebrate decades of friendship with a special design highlighting cultural traditions, diplomatic cooperation, and hopes for stronger future relations.

Peshawar traffic crisis demands urgent govt action

PESHAWAR

Traffic congestion in Peshawar has become a serious problem, making daily travel difficult for residents. The growing number of vehicles, illegal parking, roadside encroachments and weak enforcement of traffic rules have added to the pressure on the city's roads. The situation requires immediate government attention and long-term planning.

The proposed legislation against illegal rickshaws in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa highlights only one part of the wider traffic problem. Several other issues also need attention to improve traffic movement across the provincial capital.



Security personnel beside Pakistan's national flag (file photo)

Major roads, including Charsadda Road, University Road, Warsak Road, Kohat Road, GT Road and Ring Road, often face heavy congestion. Busy commercial areas such as Saddar, Qissa Khwani Bazaar and Board Bazaar also experience traffic problems because of roadside shops, pushcarts, vehicle workshops and double parking.

Illegal transport stands are another major concern. Buses, vans and rickshaws often pick up and drop off passengers on busy roads, blocking traffic near intersections. Authorities need to provide proper terminals and ensure that all vehicles meet registration, licensing and fitness requirements.

Parking arrangements also require improvement near hospitals, courts and government offices. Dedicated parking spaces and separate pick-up and drop-off points could help reduce traffic pressure. Schools should work with traffic police to manage vehicles during morning and afternoon hours.

Traffic rules must be enforced fairly and consistently. Complaints of corruption or misuse of authority should be investigated transparently.

In focus

- Illegal parking, roadside encroachments and increasing vehicles are causing serious traffic problems across Peshawar.
- Proper parking spaces, legal transport terminals and stricter enforcement of traffic rules are urgently needed.
- Coordination among traffic police, transport departments and municipal authorities can improve road safety, reduce pollution and ensure smoother travel.

Baloch group urges investors to leave resource deals

PAKISTAN

Baloch Voice for Justice has urged foreign governments and international investors to withdraw from resource agreements in Balochistan, raising concerns about local rights, control over natural resources, and the benefits received by the region's people.

The organisation said decisions involving Balochistan's natural wealth should consider the needs and interests of local communities. It called on foreign partners to review their business agreements and avoid supporting projects that, according to the group, could harm the local population.

> *Decisions on Balochistan's natural wealth should consider the needs of local communities, the group says*

Balochistan is rich in natural resources, including minerals, gas and other valuable deposits. These resources have attracted interest from domestic and foreign companies. However, questions about resource ownership, economic development and the fair distribution of benefits have remained important issues in the region.

Baloch Voice for Justice argued that local communities should have a greater role in decisions about projects taking place in their areas. It also called for greater transparency in agreements between authorities and foreign companies.

The organisation urged investors to consider the possible social and political effects of their business activities before continuing with resource-related projects.

The appeal also brings attention to wider debates about development, employment opportunities and the use of natural resources in Balochistan.

However, the organisation's demands do not necessarily reflect the position of every community or stakeholder in the province. The impact of individual projects depends on their terms, implementation and the involvement of local people.

Philip Morris shifts focus toward smoke-free alternatives

DUBAI

Philip Morris International (PMI), the company widely known for its Marlboro cigarette brand, is changing its business strategy by investing heavily in smoke-free alternatives. The company announced its vision for a smoke-free future in 2016 and has since increased its focus on research, technology and new products.

Speaking at the Technovation event in Dubai, Gijs de Best, president of PMI's South Asia, Indochina, CIS and Middle East and Africa region, described the shift as a major change in the company's traditional business model.

According to de Best, PMI has invested more than $16 billion in smoke-free products. These products are now available in 110 countries and have more than 43 million users worldwide, according to company figures. He also said that over 40 per cent of the company's net revenue came from this business segment.

Smoke-free in numbers

- $16 bn+ invested
- Sold in 110 countries
- 43 million+ users
- 40%+ of net revenue

PMI's smoke-free range includes heated tobacco products, electronic vaping devices and nicotine pouches. The company says these products offer alternatives to traditional cigarettes for adults who continue to smoke.

De Best also highlighted the role of scientific research in developing these products.

The company aims to expand access to these products while continuing its shift away from conventional cigarettes. However, health experts stress that smoke-free products are not risk-free, and nicotine remains addictive.

The transformation marks a significant change for a business historically associated with cigarette sales.

Yokohama brings youth together for sustainable cities

YOKOHAMA

Yokohama City has brought together young people from across the Asia-Pacific region to discuss environmental challenges and explore ways to build cleaner, safer and more sustainable cities.

The student programme was organised as part of the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, a United Nations initiative that promotes sustainable urban development. A total of 36 students, including those joining online, took part in the programme's opening meeting.

The initiative aims to give young people a chance to share their views on urban problems, exchange ideas and suggest practical solutions.

Noriaki Yokouchi of Yokohama City highlighted the importance of international partnerships in the city's development. He said cooperation with other cities had played an important role in Yokohama's growth and would remain valuable in the future.

Akio Onishi of Yokohama City University explained that the programme encourages students to identify problems affecting their communities and discuss possible solutions with others.

Plastic to clothing

Environmental protection was among the key topics raised during the discussions. Students from Indonesia, for example, expressed concern about pollution in Bandung and explored ways to collect plastic bottles and recycle them into clothing and other useful products.

Other participants discussed challenges in Cambodia, including gaps in infrastructure, education and urban development. Students also examined environmental concerns and urban issues across Southeast Asia, showing that many communities face similar difficulties.

Programme adviser Hitomi Yokoyama encouraged students to think freely, test ideas and learn from mistakes rather than rush towards immediate answers.

Bangladesh reports 111 cases over freedom of expression

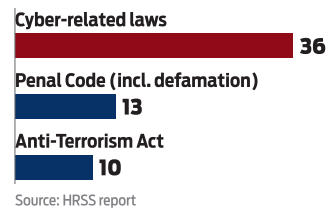
DHAKA

At least 111 people in Bangladesh faced legal cases, arrests, physical attacks or other forms of harassment for expressing their views between January and October 2026, according to a report by the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS).

The Dhaka-based organisation recorded 86 incidents across 38 districts.

The report found that 62 people, or 55.9 per cent of those affected, faced action after criticising the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Prime Minister and other party leaders.

Legal action, by law
Cases, Jan-Oct 2026



Source: HRSS report

Of the 111 people identified, 66 were arrested or detained, including 63 men and three women. Cases were filed against 47 people, while 19 others were detained without formal cases being registered against them.

The organisation documented 66 instances of legal action. These included 36 cases under cyber-related laws, 13 under defamation and other sections of the Penal Code, and 10 under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

The report also recorded 23 cases involving criticism of religion or religious figures, 22 linked to comments about the Prime Minister, and 10 related to remarks about the July 2024 mass uprising.

Journalists targeted

Journalists were among those affected. Of the 84 people whose professions were identified, 25 were journalists. Cases were filed against 23 journalists, and four were arrested. HRSS linked cases against 14 journalists to BNP leaders or members of affiliated organisations.

The report also recorded four physical assaults, two deaths following beatings, and eight cases of people losing their jobs or being expelled from educational institutions.

HRSS Executive Director Ijajul Islam said cyber laws had been used against journalists, human rights defenders and others expressing their opinions.

RIGHTS CRISIS

ETGE calls for sanctions over Uyghur rights abuses

WASHINGTON

The East Turkistan Government-in-Exile (ETGE) has urged world leaders attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Shenzhen, China, to raise concerns about alleged human rights abuses against Uyghurs and other Turkic communities directly with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The organisation has called for stronger international action, including targeted sanctions, trade restrictions and support for East Turkistan's independence. It said economic interests should not prevent governments from addressing serious human rights concerns.

According to the ETGE, Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and other Turkic communities have faced mass detention, forced labour and restrictions on their cultural identity. The organisation described these actions as genocide and urged participating governments to demand an end to the alleged abuses.

ETGE President Dr Mamtimin Ala said trade agreements and diplomatic partnerships should not come before the rights and safety of affected communities. He called on world leaders to hold those responsible accountable and take practical steps to protect the people of East Turkistan.

Sanctions sought

The group also urged governments to impose sanctions on officials, security agencies and organisations it accused of involvement in persecution. It called for tighter controls on goods allegedly produced through forced labour and stronger checks on international supply chains.

Families abroad

Another key demand was the protection of East Turkistanis living abroad. The organisation asked governments to investigate alleged threats, surveillance and pressure against members of these communities and their families.

Detainees

The ETGE also called for the release of people it says have been detained without proper legal grounds.

South Africa crush Bangladesh by 9 wickets

South Africa secured a convincing victory over Bangladesh, strengthening their World Test Championship final hopes after a dominant performance with bat and ball.

JOHANNESBURG



South Africa registered a comprehensive nine-wicket victory over Bangladesh in the first Test at the Wanderers on Thursday, taking a 1-0 lead in the two-match series and strengthening their chances of securing a place in next year's World Test Championship (WTC) final in London.

The hosts needed just 12 runs to complete the victory after dismissing Bangladesh for 168 in their second innings. Off-spinner Simon Harmer starred with the ball, claiming six wickets, while fast bowler Kagiso Rabada provided valuable support with three dismissals.

South Africa completed the chase just a minute before lunch, although the victory came after an early setback. Opening batter Marques Ackerman, who had played a crucial role with a magnificent 157 in the first innings, was dismissed off the first ball of the innings.

Aiden Markram scored eight runs, while four additional runs came through extras. Zubayr Hamza did not need to face a delivery as South Africa reached the modest target in just nine balls.

Bangladesh had resumed the fourth day's play at 100-5, still trailing South Africa by 57 runs. The visitors needed a substantial partnership to put pressure on the hosts, but their hopes quickly faded as the South African bowling attack-maintained control.

Bangladesh added 34 runs to their overnight total before Rabada struck again, dismissing Litton Das for 39 off 38 deliveries. The batter attempted to play a delivery that he misjudged, with the ball taking an edge before crashing into his stumps.

The dismissal triggered another collapse in the Bangladesh batting order. Harmer then took charge, claiming the final four wickets to wrap up the innings and finish with six wickets.

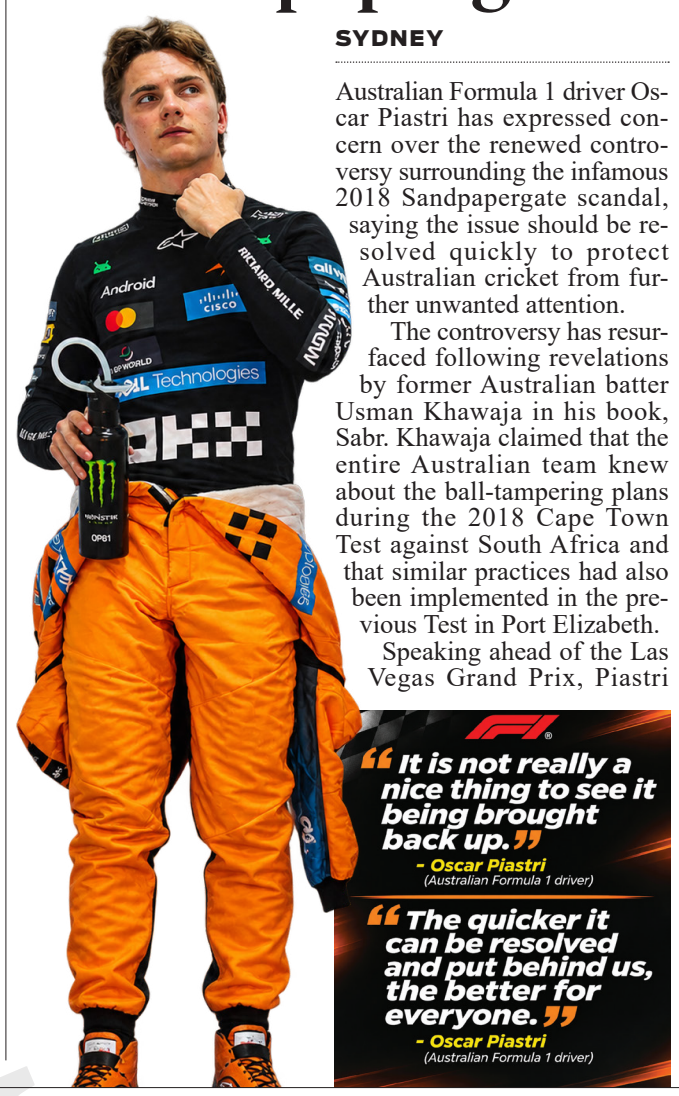
Nicholls hails Bumrah's exceptional bowling

New Zealand batter Henry Nicholls praised India's Jasprit Bumrah for his impressive bowling on the opening day of the first Test, highlighting his ability to swing the ball in both directions. Bumrah claimed three wickets for 52 runs, reducing New Zealand to 70/5.

However, Nicholls and Glenn Phillips staged a strong recovery through an unbeaten 173-run partnership for the sixth wicket, taking New Zealand to 243/5 at stumps.

"Bumrah was swinging it both ways and putting guys under some serious pressure. It's a great challenge," Nicholls said. He remained unbeaten on 113 off 221 deliveries.

Piastri urges swift resolution of Sandpapergate controversy



SYDNEY

Australian Formula 1 driver Oscar Piastri has expressed concern over the renewed controversy surrounding the infamous 2018 Sandpapergate scandal, saying the issue should be resolved quickly to protect Australian cricket from further unwanted attention.

The controversy has resurfaced following revelations by former Australian batter Usman Khawaja in his book, Sabr. Khawaja claimed that the entire Australian team knew about the ball-tampering plans during the 2018 Cape Town Test against South Africa and that similar practices had also been implemented in the previous Test in Port Elizabeth.

Speaking ahead of the Las Vegas Grand Prix, Piastri said the developments had been difficult to watch, particularly because he personally knew several players involved in the controversy.

"It has obviously been an interesting couple of weeks, that is for sure with what has been unfolding. I know quite a few of the guys involved personally, so it is not really a nice thing to see it being brought back up necessarily." - Oscar Piastri (Australian Formula 1 driver)

Piastri, a passionate cricket follower, recalled the original scandal and said he hoped the matter could be addressed without prolonged public debate. He added that the ongoing attention surrounding the controversy would not benefit Australian sport.

"I know myself as a sports person that the noise around certainly is not going to be helpful, so the quicker it can be resolved and put behind us, the better for everyone." - Oscar Piastri (Australian Formula 1 driver)

Piastri has maintained a close connection with Australian cricket. He has previously worn former Australian fast bowler Brett Lee's ODI jersey in the Formula 1 paddock and also met legendary batter Ricky Ponting during his childhood.



Rakshita stuns Olympic champion, reaches open quarterfinals

HONG KONG

Indian shuttler Rakshita Ramraj pulled off a major upset at the Hong Kong Open on Thursday, defeating former Olympic champion and world number four Chen Yu Fei of China in straight games to enter the women's singles quarterfinals.

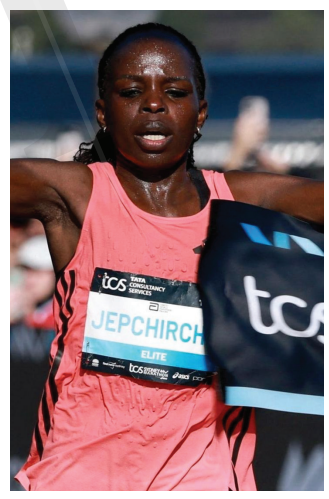
Rakshita won 21-18, 24-22, according to the Badminton Association of India. The victory followed another impressive result on Wednesday, when she defeated Denmark's world number 20 Mia Blichfeldt 21-18, 21-18 in 36 minutes to secure a place in the pre-quarterfinals. Her latest win over Chen marked one of the tournament's biggest surprises.

India also recorded encouraging results in men's singles. Former world number one Kidambi Srikanth defeated Japan's Koki Watanabe, ranked 15th, 21-16, 16-21, 21-9 in a 51-minute opening-round match. Srikanth recovered after losing the second game and dominated the decider with a nine-point winning streak. He will next face South Korea's Yoo Tae-bin.

Lakshya Sen advanced after overcoming France's Arnaud Merkle 14-21, 21-16, 25-23 in a closely contested three-game encounter. The world number 11 showed composure in the deciding game to complete the comeback. He is currently sixth in the Race to the BWF World Tour Finals standings, with the top eight players qualifying for the season-ending event in Hangzhou, China, from December 9 to 13. Lakshya will next meet Denmark's Rasmus Gemke. The results strengthened India's presence in the tournament, with Rakshita's victory over a leading international player providing a major highlight. Srikanth and Lakshya also moved forward in the competition, keeping India's challenge alive across the singles events overall.

World marathon champion Jepchirchir banned for 3years

PARIS



Kenya's world marathon champion Peres Jepchirchir has been banned for three years for the use of blood booster EPO, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) said on Thursday, adding that she admitted to breaching anti-doping rules. One of the most decorated women in the sport, the 33-year-old has won gold at the Tokyo Games in 2021 and claimed major marathon victories in New York (2021), Boston (2022), London (2024) and Sydney.

The breaches related to the "presence of a prohibited substance or its metabolites or markers in an athlete's sample" and the "use or attempted use by an athlete of a prohibited substance or a prohibited method", the AIU said.

Jepchirchir was given a provisional suspension last month, after testing positive for the banned substance in a sample taken before her Sydney Marathon victory in August.

The AIU said the sample returned an adverse analytical finding (AAF) on September 17.

"In an interview on that same date, the athlete denied using EPO and said she had no knowledge of how the AAF had occurred," the AIU added.

"Despite her explanations in the interview, the former world record-holder in the half-marathon subsequently signed an admission of anti-doping rule violations and acceptance of consequences form," it added.

In the form, she accepted disqualification of all her competitive results since 17 July 2026, including her victory in the Sydney Marathon, it said. On Thursday, Sydney marathon authorities said Irine Cheptai would be crowned the 2026 women's champion after Jepchirchir's disqualification.



Atiqa Mir secures third-place finish in Italy

FRANCIACORTA

Indian racing prodigy Atiqa Mir ended her Champions of the Future Academy (COTFA) karting campaign with a podium finish in Italy, completing an impressive rookie season marked by several records. She secured third place in the final of Round 5.2 despite facing kart and engine problems earlier in the weekend.

Atiqa also recorded the fastest lap in the final, adding another achievement to her debut season in the 12-14 age category. She became the youngest driver in the championship's history to win a feature race, secure pole position, set the fastest lap and complete a clean sweep of an entire round in Greece.

Her performance in Greece was followed by another strong showing in Viterbo, Italy, where she secured pole position ahead of Mercedes Formula One junior Niccolo Perico. She also claimed her first podium of the season in Valencia.

Despite competing for most of the championship as an 11-year-old before turning 12 last week, Atiqa finished fifth among 53 drivers. She races for Kart Republic, a team known for developing several Formula One drivers. She is also the first Indian driver to receive backing from the Formula 1 Academy.

Reflecting on her campaign, Atiqa said the final weekend had provided valuable lessons despite difficulties with pace.

"The weekend taught me a lot. We struggled with pace but fought through it. But I didn't give up and kept fighting, and a podium felt really sweet and a good way to end the championship," she said.

HEALY QUESTIONS PAT CUMMINS' CREDIBILITY

SYDNEY

Former Australian wicketkeeper Ian Healy has questioned Pat Cummins' credibility following renewed allegations about the 2018 ball-tampering scandal, but said the Test captain need not resign.

The controversy resurfaced after Cameron Bancroft alleged that Australian players knew about the plan to use sandpaper during the Cape Town Test against South Africa. Bancroft claimed he had accepted responsibility for the group. Cummins had previously maintained that players were unaware of the plan.



Healy said the claims could make it difficult for Cummins to lead Australia. "No, he doesn't need to stand down. I would feel without refuting Cameron Bancroft's words again; he will struggle to captain the team. You've had a big part of your credibility taken away with that press conference now that it's been proven to be not as complete as Pat made it out to be," he said.

Healy criticised the investigation after the scandal, calling it rushed and inadequate. He said the episode could affect legacies of Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc and Nathan Lyon, while distinguishing their reputations from their performances. "I would say it taints their personal legacies. I don't think it's going to taint their performance legacies," Healy said.

Montoya returns as Argentina make seven changes

DUBLIN



Argentina captain Julian Montoya will return to the starting lineup for Saturday's Nations Championship clash against France in Paris, as head coach Felipe Contepomi announced seven changes to his side on Thursday. Montoya missed Argentina's 19-14 victory over Italy last weekend after suffering a concussion during the team's 45-12 defeat against Ireland in Dublin. The hooker has recovered sufficiently to reclaim his place in the starting XV, replacing Bautista Bernasconi, who sustained an injury in Genoa and has since returned to his club.

The captain's return provides a significant boost to Argentina as they prepare for a challenging encounter against France. His experience and leadership will be important as the South American side look to build on their victory over Italy and maintain their position in the competition standings.

Contepomi has also made considerable changes to the forward pack, particularly in the loose-forward positions. Juan Martin Gonzalez returns to the starting lineup, replacing veteran Pablo Matera at blindside flanker. Juan Martin Scelzo moves from the back of the scrum to the open-side position, while Facundo Isa comes into the side as the starting No. 8.

In the second row, Tomas Lavanini has been included in place of Pedro Rubiolo, who drops to the replacements' bench. The changes indicate Contepomi's intention to bring a different combination of experience and physicality into the forward pack for the Paris encounter. Argentina have also reshuffled their backline. Ignacio Mendy will start on the left wing, replacing Mateo Carreras, while Lucio Cinti comes into the outside-centre position in place of Justo Piccardo.

Bautista Delguy returns to the starting XV on the right wing, with Rodrigo Isgro moving to the substitutes' bench. This adjustment allows Geronimo Prisciantelli to take up the fullback position.

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