

**Goyal Pushes Stronger India-Singapore Ties**

**BJP hits back at Congress over 'back foot' remark**

**Japanese rise against Takaichi's rapid militarisation**

**Will Smith Reportedly Joins Allu Arjun's 'Raaka'**



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## 31ST SOUTHERN ZONAL COUNCIL MEET

# Shah turns southern power table

Hails South India's role in India's development journey; cites 3 pillars - high literacy rate, trained manpower and technical expertise - behind the progress of these states.

### MAHABALIPURAM

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday hailed the development journey of the southern states, saying "high literacy rate, trained manpower and technical expertise in the utilisation of deep seas" have been the three pillars behind the progress of these states.

Chairing the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council in Tamil Nadu's Mahabalipuram, the Shah said: "The people of South India and the governments have also established many excellent traditions in the fields of innovation and revenue generation." He said that "the whole of India should learn from South India in these two areas," as per the home ministry's statement.

TN CM Vijay, who serves as the council's vice-chairman, personally welcomed Shah upon his arrival. The two leaders also held a brief interaction before the meeting began. During the proceedings, Vijay was seated alongside Karnataka CM DK Shivakumar.

Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu, Kerala CM VD Satheesan and Telangana Deputy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka were among those who attended. Puducherry CM N Rangasamy was absent from



### Southern Zonal Council Meet in nutshell

Chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the high-level session focused on cooperative federalism, regional infrastructure, security, and healthcare funding among southern states and union territories.

#### Attendees

**Chairperson:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah

**Host:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Joseph Vijay (delivered the welcome address)

**State leaders:** Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, Kerala Chief Minister Satheesan, and Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka.

**UT representatives:** Lieutenant Governors of Puducherry and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, alongside the Administrator of Lakshadweep

#### Agenda and discussions

**Cooperative federalism:** Emphasized joint approaches to regional governance and development.

**Key sectors:** Addressed policy frameworks and resource distribution for healthcare funding, infrastructure projects, and environmental protection.

**Security:** Reviewed regional security measures and inter-state coordination.

the meeting, with lieutenant governor K Kailashnathan representing the Union Territory.

The meeting comes amid several political and inter-state issues involving the southern states.

The regional forum focused on resolving inter-state dis-

putes, water sharing, infrastructure, and security matters among southern states and union territories. The Council comprises AP, Karnataka, Kerala, TN and Telangana, along with the UTs of Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.

## Give south its due: DKS

**Karnataka moves resolution to freeze Lok Sabha seats at Southern Zonal Council meet**

### MAHABALIPURAM

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar told Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday that the federal government must "give the South its due" with fair funding, and called for a freeze on the existing number of Lok Sabha seats and women's reservation be accommodated within the current number of seats.

**'Maintain 1971 census for seats'**

In his address at the 31st Southern Zonal Council (SZC) meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah near Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu, Shivakumar urged the council to adopt a resolution asking the Union Government to use the 1971 Census as the basis for delimitation, retain the Lok Sabha's existing strength of 543 seats for the next 25 years and accommodate women's reservation within those seats.

He argued that southern states should not be penalised for successfully implementing population-control measures. "We welcome the assurance that no southern state will lose seats. But representation is not only about numbers. It is about weight, and about voice."

Shivakumar said the southern states had responded to the country's call for population stabilisation and should not lose political representation because of that. "I am confident that all the chief ministers here will support me in what I say. Let the 1971 basis be honoured, and let the strength of our voice be protected," he said. He also linked delimitation to the implementation of women's reservation, saying it should not be delayed because of a fresh exercise to redraw constituencies. Shivakumar called for the Lok Sabha's strength to remain fixed at 543 seats for 25 years, with women's reservation accommodated within the existing number.

He expressed strong objections to public sector undertakings (PSU) auctioning lands allotted by the state government, calling it "a misuse of resources".

**Except 5 TMC for drinking, Mekedatu dam water from will be for TN: DKS**

**Mahabalipuram:** DK Shivakumar, flanked by his Tamil Nadu counterpart Vijay, on Thursday said the proposed Mekedatu dam across River Cauvery would benefit both the states by storing water for use during periods of scarcity and asserted that "Water should unite us and not divide us", stressing on the need for greater cooperation among states in managing river water issues.

"Help us to help you," he said, adding, every drop of water from the project would benefit farmers in the neighbouring states. "Except 5 TMC for drinking water, the rest of the stored water in the proposed dam would be released to Tamil Nadu," he added.

He said the proposed Mekedatu reservoir was crucial not only for Karnataka, but also for Tamil Nadu as it would help conserve water that otherwise flows into the sea as surplus during periods of heavy inflow.

He maintained that his state's legal share of water must be respected, saying Karnataka had not attended the conference to complain but as a partner in India's development.

It is time to move from a mindset of river water sharing to one of river water cooperation.  
-DK Shivakumar, Karnataka CM

**Legitimate rights of lower riparian states should be protected: Vijay**

**Mahabalipuram:** With his Karnataka counterpart D K Shivakumar by his side, Tamil Nadu CM Vijay on Thursday stressed that the "legitimate rights" of lower riparian states must be fully protected and pushed for the timely implementation of the Supreme Court verdict and decisions of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) on sharing of Cauvery River water.

He said no agenda for Southern cooperation is complete without addressing our shared rivers, while stressing that water was fundamental to the lives, and livelihoods of millions. His remarks on inter-state water sharing carry significant weight, coming on the heels of a recently cancelled bilateral meeting between him and Shivakumar over the Cauvery dispute.

Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have locked horns over Cauvery water sharing for decades. Tamil Nadu continues to press Karnataka to strictly implement CWMA orders and adhere to the monthly release schedules stipulated by the SC.

Our rivers, coasts, infrastructure and markets should unite us in a common purpose and shared prosperity. Strong states make for a stronger India.  
-C Joseph Vijay, Tamil Nadu CM

## BNP's Alamgir elected as Bangladesh prez

### DHAKA

Bangladesh has elected senior Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir as its 23rd president, marking a significant shift for a politician who until recently held one of the party's top organisational posts.

Alamgir secured 255 votes in Thursday's presidential election held at the Jatiya Sangsad, Bangladesh's Parliament. His rival, Oli Ahmed, the candidate backed by an 11-party opposition alliance led by Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and the National Citizen Party (NCP), received 88 votes.

The voting took place between 2 pm and 5 pm local time under the supervision of chief election commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin. Of the 349 MPs eligible to vote, 343 cast their ballots. The chief election commissioner later announced Alamgir as the winner.

**A contested presidential poll after 35 years**

Thursday's poll was notable because it was the first time in 35 years that more than one candidate contested Bangladesh's presidential election. The previous presidential election involv-



### From BNP leadership to the presidency

Alamgir's election marks a major change in his political role. He had served as BNP secretary general before stepping down to contest the presidential poll. The result also comes at a significant point in Bangladesh's political transition, with the BNP now holding power after years of opposition politics. Alamgir's move from the party's organisational leadership to the country's highest constitutional office places a senior BNP figure at the head of state. The President's role here is largely constitutional and ceremonial, while executive authority rests with the PM.

ing a parliamentary vote was held in 1991. Alamgir had been nominated as the BNP's presidential candidate last week. After receiving the nomination, he stepped down as BNP Secretary General and resigned from the party's National Standing Committee.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi announced his nomination following a meeting of the party's National Standing Committee near the Bangladesh Prime Minister's Office at the Secretariat. Rizvi said the decision followed discussions with Prime Minister and BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman.

### ROUTE TO JUSTICE

## 5-member panel to probe NEET stir police action

### NEW DELHI

A day after the Supreme Court announced it will be setting up a committee to examine allegations of excessive use of force by security personnel against students during the July 20 student march over the NEET paper leak, the top court on Thursday said that a five-member panel will be headed by former SC judge Justice R Subhash Reddy.

Other members of the panel include former Punjab and Haryana high court Chief Justice Ravi Shankar Jha, former Delhi high court judge Justice Shalinder Kaur, former CBI director Rishi Kumar Shukla and retired Meghalaya Director General of Police Dr LR Bishnoi.

The committee will examine allegations of excessive use of pellet

guns, electric batons, lathi charges and tear gas, along with alleged violence against women protesters. It will also look into police surveillance, the proportionality of crowd-control measures, and the provision of medical assistance and compensation to victims.

It will also consider allegations by authorities of violence against police personnel and damage to public property. This comes as the apex court is hearing a batch of petitions alleging excessive police action against students who participated in protests at Jantar Mantar and other locations across the country over alleged NEET paper leaks and broader concerns over the exam system.

The proceedings come against the backdrop of weeks of student stir led by the CJP at Jantar Mantar.

## 10 acres of Ch'nagar reserve gutted amid shootout row

**Chamarajanagar:** A fire allegedly set by miscreants has gutted around 10 acres in the Shilubepura forest area here, days after a poaching prevention camp was blown up, Forest Department sources said on Thursday. Forest officials suspect the miscreants set it on fire to avenge the killing of three suspected poachers. The fire spread across the Shilubepura forest and damaged around 10 acres, and poaching prevention camp near Jageri was also destroyed.

## Ex-Cong MP Sajjan Kumar dies in Tihar

**NEW DELHI:** Former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar, who was serving a life sentence in connection with the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, died on Thursday, the day the Supreme Court was scheduled to hear his plea seeking three-week parole on medical grounds concerning his ailing wife. The jailed former parliamentarian had approached the top court seeking parole for three weeks, citing the medical condition of his ailing wife. The plea was listed for hearing on Thursday. Kumar had been in jail since 2018.

### Scope of the probe

The high-powered panel is tasked with factual inquiries into the events surrounding the protests:

**POLICE CONDUCT AND USE OF FORCE:** Examining claims of disproportionate force, including the use of tear gas, lathi charges, electric batons, and pellet guns without proper warnings.

**TARGETED HARASSMENT:** Prioritizing complaints of molestation, harassment, and targeted violence against women protesters.

**PROTESTER ACTIONS:** Investigating reciprocal violence and injuries sustained by police and security personnel during the unrest.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Identifying who ordered the use of force, assessing whether protocols and laws were violated, and verifying if security personnel wore clear nameplates and uniforms.

**EVIDENCE SCRUTINY:** Reviewing official video footage and CCTV recordings from the protest sites.

**Shri D.K. Shivakumar**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister  
Government of Karnataka

Government of Karnataka

**Bengaluru City Corporations**  
• North • South • East • West • Central

**Shri Krishna Byre Gowda**  
Hon'ble Minister for Greater  
Bengaluru Development

**Dr. G. Parameshwara**  
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister  
Government of Karnataka

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Quick Read

SIR duty leaves  
Karnataka govt  
schools short-staffed

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Government school students across Karnataka are facing learning disruptions as teachers remain engaged in Special Intensive Revision (SIR) duties. Teachers in Bengaluru and other parts of the State have been handling additional subjects, while headmasters are being forced to take classes amid the staff shortage. Booth Level Officers (BLOs), including teachers and anganwadi workers, were initially expected to complete the exercise earlier but were retained through extensions. The Election Commission said the active role of BLOs will continue until October 22, when the final stage of claims and objections concludes. Educationist Prof. Sabiha Bhoomigowda warned that students from marginalised communities would bear the greatest impact. She said the educational loss over several months could be significant and difficult to recover.

Hebbal-airport Metro  
link may miss June  
2027 deadline

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Slow progress beyond Yelahanka threatens Bengaluru's planned June 2027 opening of the Hebbal-airport Metro link. The 27.44-km Hebbal-Kempegowda International Airport section of Phase 2B is unlikely to meet its June 2027 deadline, with construction beyond Yelahanka progressing slowly. NCC Ltd, executing the IAF Yelahanka-Airport Terminal package, has sought another extension until March 2027. The 15.01-km section is currently around 80% complete. After civil works, at least six months of trial runs and commissioning are required, making an opening before September 2027 unlikely. The corridor is divided into three packages: Hebbal-Bagalur Cross, IAF Yelahanka-Airport Terminal and works inside the airport premises. BMRL is also coordinating with traffic police to minimise construction-related disruptions.

Revised schedule for Okalipuram corridor  
works: Maheshwar Rao

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Greater Bengaluru Authority Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao has directed officials to prepare a revised schedule for completing pending works of the Okalipuram Eight-Lane Corridor and ensure timely execution. Inspecting ongoing and pending works in Gandhinagar under Bengaluru Central City Corporation, Rao said the approach road towards the railway station was under construction. He directed officials to expedite retaining wall works and complete all pending works according to the revised schedule.



BNCC steps up flu surveillance  
at Clarence High School

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) continued active health surveillance at Clarence High School in Richards Town following reports of flu infection among students. A health team from New Bagalur Layout Primary Health Centre reviewed attendance and students' health status on Thursday. Of 1,868 students and staff, 1,599 were present and 269 absent. The school reported mild flu-related symptoms

Devaraj Urs championed  
social justice: Parameshwara

Devaraj Urs pioneered social justice reforms, empowering farmers, youth and marginalised communities across Karnataka, Parameshwara said.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Revenue and Sports Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara on Thursday described former Chief Minister D. Devaraj Urs as one of the foremost leaders who fought for social justice, the poor and the downtrodden. Speaking to reporters after garlanding Urs's statue near the western entrance of Vidhana Soudha on the occasion of his 111th birth anniversary, Parameshwara said Urs had brought about historic changes during his long tenure as Chief Minister. "Devaraj Urs was among the first leaders in the country to fight for social justice, the poor and the deprived. Our government is continuing on the path shown by him," Parameshwara said. He recalled Urs's landmark land reforms, particularly the principle of 'Land to the tiller', which ensured that those who cultivated agricultural



"Devaraj Urs was among the first leaders in the country to fight for social justice, the poor and the downtrodden. Our government is continuing on the path shown by him."  
—Dr. G. Parameshwara, Deputy CM

land could gain ownership. The reform, he said, brought a major transformation and provided justice to farming communities. Urs also played a significant role in improving opportunities for young people by establishing educational insti-

tutions, hostels and other support systems, Parameshwara said. His initiatives helped provide greater opportunities to communities that had remained neglected and disadvantaged. The Deputy Chief Minister said the Congress government was continuing several programmes and policies inspired by Urs's ideals and social vision. "We are following his ide-

Urs' key contributions

- **Land reforms:** 'Land to the tiller'
- **Social justice:** Focus on oppressed communities
- **Education:** Institutions and hostels
- **Youth:** Greater opportunities & support
- **Governance:** Welfare-oriented reforms

Sadbhavana Day  
pledge

Deputy Chief Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara administered the Sadbhavana Day pledge to officers and staff of the State Secretariat at the Vikas Soudha conference hall. Legislative Assembly Speaker G.S. Patil and Legislative Council Chairman Salim Ahmed were present. The pledge reaffirmed the commitment to promoting peace, harmony, unity and brotherhood, while upholding the values of secularism and strengthening national integration among citizens.

als and continuing the programmes he introduced. We will carry them forward in the years ahead," he said.

Varamahalakshmi festival sends  
flower, fruit prices soaring

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Festival demand has pushed up flower and fruit prices at KR Market, leaving shoppers paying sharply higher rates. With Varamahalakshmi festival preparations, Bengaluru's KR Market has witnessed a surge in shoppers purchasing flowers, garlands and fruits for puja and decorations. The increased demand has resulted in steep price rises compared with last week. Among flowers, chrysanthemum prices have jumped from Rs 150 to Rs 450 per kg, while jasmine has increased from Rs 500 to Rs 1,200. Kanakambar, earlier priced at Rs 2,000, is now selling for around Rs 5,000-Rs 6,000. Garland prices have also climbed substantially. Lotus garlands have risen from Rs

500 to Rs 2,500, while rose garlands have increased from Rs 200 to Rs 500. Jasmine garlands are now priced at Rs 1,500 compared with Rs 500 earlier. Fruit prices have similarly risen. Apples have increased from Rs 110 to Rs 270 per kg, pomegranates from Rs 120 to Rs 260 and oranges from Rs 80 to Rs 180. Grapes have risen from Rs 70 to Rs 170, while pineapples have increased from Rs 60 to Rs 150. Cardamom bananas and regular bananas have doubled to Rs 100 per kg, while mosambi has risen to Rs 150 from Rs 100. Despite the higher prices, shoppers continued to throng KR Market to complete festival purchases. The increased footfall also contributed to traffic congestion around the busy market area.

Festival price surge



| Item          | Earlier     | Now            |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| Chrysanthemum | Rs 150/kg   | Rs 450         |
| Jasmine       | Rs 500/kg   | Rs 1,200       |
| Kanakambar    | Rs 2,000/kg | Rs 5,000-6,000 |
| Lotus garland | Rs 500      | Rs 2,500       |
| Apple         | Rs 110/kg   | Rs 270         |
| Pomegranate   | Rs 120/kg   | Rs 260         |
| Grapes        | Rs 70/kg    | Rs 170         |
| Pineapple     | Rs 60/kg    | Rs 150         |

Bengaluru to host India International  
Coffee Festival in February 2027

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru will host the third India International Coffee Festival from February 26 to 28, 2027, bringing together the country's coffee community on a farm-to-cup platform. Organised by the Coffee Board of India in association with the Specialty Coffee Association of India (SCAI), the festival will bring together coffee growers, roasters, café brands, baristas, equipment manufacturers and consumers. The three-day event comes as coffee consumption expands beyond its traditional southern markets. While cities account for nearly 70% of India's coffee consumption, southern In-

dia contributes around 75-80% of overall consumption. Coffee is also gaining popularity in northern, western and eastern parts of the country. Despite the growing café culture, India's per-capita coffee consumption remains low at 0.07 kg annually, compared with the global average of 1.3 kg, highlighting considerable potential for growth in the domestic market. Coffee Board of India CEO and Secretary Kurma Rao M. said the festival had become an important platform for India's coffee community at a time of significant growth. SCAI president and IICF organiser Ham-sini Appadurai said India had been producing high-quality

coffee for generations and was now seeing a growing domestic appreciation for it. A major attraction at the festival will be the National Coffee Championships. The competitions will include the 26th National Barista Championship, Brewers Cup, Indian Filter Coffee Championship, Latte Art Championship and, for the first time, Coffee in Good Spirits. Winners of the national competitions will represent India at the corresponding World Coffee Championships. Qualifiers for the championships will be held in Bengaluru, Delhi and Navi Mumbai between August and October 2026, before the national finals are conducted in Bengaluru.

Missing four-year-old girl  
traced, reunited with parents

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Swift action by Shivajinagar and Pulakeshinagar police led to the safe tracing of a four-year-old girl who went missing from outside her home in Fraser Town on Wednesday. The incident occurred around 1.55 pm on August 19 near Farooq Masjid on Moore Road, where the girl, the daughter of a security guard, was playing outside her house. Members of the public alerted the Namma-112 emergency helpline after noticing that she was missing. Namma-112 personnel immediately alerted ASI Rizwan Pasha and PC Rajashekhara, who were on duty in Hoysala-41 of Shivajinagar Police Station. The policemen reached the spot within six minutes and began inquiries. Police learnt that an unidentified person had allegedly taken the child away by offering her chocolate. Her mother had searched nearby areas but

could not find her. Pulakeshinagar Police Inspector Anand Naik and PSI Priyanka joined the search operation. Police examined CCTV footage from surrounding areas and circulated information about the missing girl through WhatsApp groups to facilitate her identification. The efforts yielded results when police received information that the child had been spotted near Coles Park. A police team immediately rushed to the location, traced the girl safely and brought her to the police station. After completing the required verification, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Pulakeshinagar Sub-Division, K. Basavaraju, along with the police team, handed over the child safely to her parents. The prompt response by the emergency helpline and coordinated efforts of the police teams helped ensure the child's safe return to her family.

Karnataka  
records second-highest  
pesticide residue cases

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka has recorded the country's second-highest number of fruit and vegetable samples exceeding permissible pesticide residue limits, raising concerns over food safety. Between 2023 and 2026, authorities tested 9,176 samples in the state, of which 334 contained residues above the Maximum Residue Limit prescribed by FSSAI. Telangana topped the list with 486 such samples, followed by Karnataka and Maharashtra with 260. Nationally, 2,223 of 70,652 samples tested across 23 states and Union Territories exceeded permissible limits. The Centre is promoting Integrated Pest Management, approved pesticides and recommended dosages. Consumers are advised to wash produce thoroughly under running water and remove outer leaves of leafy vegetables before consumption.

INDUSTRY RULING UPHELD

SC upholds 1978 Bangalore Water Supply judgment

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Supreme Court on Thursday upheld its landmark 1978 Bangalore Water Supply judgment defining what constitutes an "industry" under Section 2(j) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. A nine-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant ruled by a 6:3 majority that the reference seeking reconsideration of the nearly five-decade-old judgment was valid. However, the Bench retained the essential framework of the original Triple Test, while ac-

knowledging that some aspects could require refinement. The court clarified that pending disputes will continue to be governed by the framework laid down in the Bangalore Water Supply judgment. Matters already decided will also remain undisturbed. For future disputes, however, the court said the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 will apply. The new Code, the court stressed, will have to be interpreted independently on the basis of its own provisions. Justice B.V. Nagarathna,

joined by Justices Ujjwal Bhuyan and Deepankar Datta, dissented. They held that reopening the settled interpretation after nearly 50 years was unnecessary and could create uncertainty in pending industrial disputes. Justice Nagarathna also held that government departments cannot automatically be excluded from the definition of "industry" merely because they perform statutory functions, saying the nature of the activity is more important than the identity of the organisation. The original 1978 seven-judge Bench, led by then



Chief Justice M.H. Beg, had established the Triple Test and complementary Dominant Nature Test. The issue was later referred to larger Benches following concerns over its impact on labour courts.

What is the Triple Test?

The 1978 Bangalore Water Supply judgment evolved a broad test to determine whether an activity qualifies as an "industry" under labour law. It focused on organised activity involving cooperation between employers and employees to produce goods or provide services. The judgment also recognised the Dominant Nature Test for mixed activities. The Supreme Court has now retained the core framework for pending disputes while leaving future interpretation to the Industrial Relations Code.

Quick Read



232.85 km of footpaths cleared in BNCC limits

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
The Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) has cleared 232.85 km of footpaths of encroachments between July 1 and August 20, as part of its ongoing drive to ensure safe pedestrian movement. On Thursday, officials cleared 4 km of footpaths in Vidyanarayana and Pulakeshinagar divisions. The operation involved 2 JCBs, 8 tractors and 24 personnel. Two petty shops, eight push carts, eight canopies, 15 steps and ramps, and six advertisement boards were removed. Around 41 tonnes of construction debris and soil were cleared. Overall, the drive has removed 586 shops, 788 push carts, 1,729 canopies, 1,565 steps and ramps, and 1,598 advertisement boards.

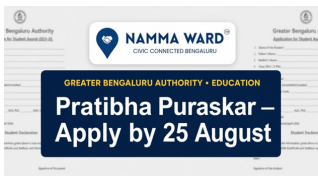
Couple held for stealing luxury cars

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**  
Parappana Agrahara police have arrested a couple allegedly involved in stealing high-end cars across five states. The accused, Satyendra Singh Shekhawat and his girlfriend Pramila Thakur, reportedly have 61 cases registered against them. Police said the duo targeted vehicles such as Toyota Innova and Fortuner. Shekhawat allegedly installed GPS trackers on cars and monitored their movements before stealing them with duplicate keys when parked in isolated locations. The couple reportedly stole a Fortuner near Singasandra and fled. Shekhawat allegedly dropped Pramila on the Pune highway before escaping. She was later arrested and released on bail. Police monitored her movements for three days and traced Shekhawat to Maharashtra, where he was arrested.

GBA invites applications for ‘Pratibha Puraskar’ for meritorious students

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has invited applications from meritorious students who secured outstanding marks in the SSLC and II PUC examinations conducted during March-April 2026 for the “Pratibha Puraskar” awards.  
For the first time, the GBA is extending the programme to students from government, aided, unaided and residential institutions, besides CBSE, ICSE, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and GBA schools and colleges functioning within Bengaluru Urban district.



Students who secured 621 marks or above out of 625 in SSLC, equivalent to 99% and above, are eligible to apply. For II PUC, students must have secured 596 marks or above out of 600.  
CBSE and ICSE students scoring 496 marks or above out of 500 in the respective examinations are also eligible. Students must fill out the



Minister's interaction with telecommunications technologist Sam Pitroda on biofuels could help shape future development programmes. He suggested cooperation between the US and Karnataka to upgrade and commercialise biofuel initiatives.  
The Minister also discussed the Board's proposed new Biofuel Policy and sought details on its implementation and funding requirements. He assured Sudheendra that the policy proposal would be accorded priority before the government and that necessary directions would be issued.

SIR finds no foreigners with Indian documents: Govt

The government told the Assembly that SIR detected no such cases involving Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Iranian nationals.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



“During the SIR process currently underway in the state, no cases have been registered of Pakistanis, Bangladeshis or Iranians obtaining Aadhaar cards, ration cards or other government benefits.”  
-Priyank Kharge, Home Minister



**Illegal Bangladeshi migrants**  
• Identified: 771  
• Arrested: 57  
• Deported: 572  
• Bengaluru Urban: 700  
• SIR enumeration ended: August 17  
• Draft electoral rolls: August 24

**MONITORING AND DEPORTATION**  
The government said illegal Bangladeshi nationals are kept at Foreigners Restriction Centres until their cases are disposed of by competent courts and Exit Permits are obtained. They are then deported. A Special Task Force has been formed to detect illegal migrants, while police have been directed to monitor areas with high concentrations of foreign nationals and conduct operations under ‘Operation Mukta’.

question from expelled BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatal on whether the government was aware of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Iranian nationals becoming voters after obtaining Aadhaar cards, ration cards and other documents.  
In a separate written reply, Kharge said 771 illegal Ban-

gladeshi immigrants had been identified in Karnataka over the past three years. Of them, 57 were arrested and 572 deported.  
Bengaluru Urban accounted for the largest number, with 700 cases, followed by Mangaluru City with 23, Shivamogga and Kolar with 12 each, Udupi with 10, Chitra-

durga with six, Chikkamagaluru with five, Dharwad with two and Raichur with one.  
Kharge said most illegal Bangladeshi immigrants were engaged in rag-picking and police had been instructed to monitor their movements. A Special Task Force has also been constituted to detect illegal migrants.



Rajiv Gandhi, Devaraj Urs ideals must reach youth: Siddaramaiah

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah urged Congress workers to familiarise the younger generation with the ideals and contributions of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and former Karnataka Chief Minister D. Devaraj Urs.  
Speaking at a programme at Freedom Park to mark their birth anniversaries, Siddaramaiah said both leaders had made memorable contributions to social justice and the creation of an egalitarian society. He noted that their birthdays falling on the same day was significant.  
Siddaramaiah recalled Rajiv Gandhi's emphasis on youth, saying he believed young people were the future of the country.

Former CM highlights both leaders' contributions to social justice, democracy, reforms, technology and empowerment of disadvantaged communities.

“Their ideals should be introduced more and more to today's younger generation.”  
-Siddaramaiah, Former CM

opportunities and social justice. Urs implemented land reforms, abolished manual scavenging and introduced debt-relief measures. He also implemented the Havanur Commission recommendations to expand educational and employment opportunities for backward communities.  
Siddaramaiah also recalled his own political journey after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991, saying the postponement of the election in which he was contesting from Koppal affected his political career. He urged Congress workers to spread awareness about the two leaders' contributions to democracy, social justice and dignity for disadvantaged sections.

Quarry-crusher owners stage massive protest in Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

More than 5,000 quarry and crusher owners, workers and industry representatives gathered at Freedom Park on Thursday, demanding an end to what they termed the government's “dual policy” and immediate withdrawal of double capital collection.

The protest was organised by the Karnataka State Quarry and Crusher Owners' Union, which sought relief from several measures affecting the industry. Former Deputy Chief Minister C.N. Ashwath Narayan, former minister Gopalaiiah, Congress MLA Ivan D'Souza and more than 10 MLAs met the protesters.  
Mines and Earth Sciences Minister S.S. Mallikarjun, who received the protesters' appeal, assured them that the government would examine their demands and take appropriate action.  
“We will discuss the issue of collecting capital from both sides and take an appropriate decision. The government is committed to finding a solution to all the problems,” Mallikarjun said.  
He said he would discuss the second notice issued to quarry and crusher owners with departmental and Chief Secretaries and also take up the matter with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar.  
Mallikarjun said the previous government had imposed five times the tax on the quarry sector, but the present government had constituted a committee and reduced the tax.



**Opposition's allegations**  
R. Ashoka accused the Congress high command of shielding Minister B. Nagendra and alleged financial dealings linked to Cabinet formation. He said the government was avoiding discussions on drought, Bidadi Township, the KPSC scam, the NICE dispute and ration-card cuts. Ashoka warned that the Opposition would intensify its agitation, beginning with a programme at the Valmiki statue on Friday, until its demands are addressed.

ment had failed to declare drought or provide adequate relief despite the passage of considerable time. He warned that public anger would eventually affect the Congress.  
He said the Opposition would intensify its agitation and would continue raising issues concerning corruption and governance in the Assembly. As part of the protest, the Opposition plans to offer a garland to the Valmiki statue on Friday and launch a major agitation. Ashoka said the Opposition would continue its campaign until the government addressed its demands.

Two leaders, lasting legacies

| Rajiv Gandhi                            | D. Devaraj Urs                     |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Voting age reduced to 18                | Land reforms                       |
| Focus on youth empowerment              | Havanur Commission                 |
| Push for science and technology         | Opportunities for backward classes |
| Telecommunications expansion            | Abolition of manual scavenging     |
| Strengthening grassroots representation | Debt relief measures               |

Education must go hand in hand with values: Prakashanatha Swamiji

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Education plays an important role in a person's development, but values and good conduct are equally essential, said Dr. Prakashanatha Swamiji, Managing Director of BGS and SJB Group of Institutions.  
Speaking at Yugma 2K26, the Freshers' Day programme held at BGS PU College on Kengeri-Uttarahalli Main Road, he said education without wisdom could lead to decline. He urged students to complement their academic pursuits by developing good qualities, discipline and proper conduct.  
Bengaluru University Vice-Chancellor Dr. Shivaraj said the youth were the strength of the nation and called upon students to pursue

their goals with determination and contribute to the country's progress.  
Actor and singer Shashidhar Kote said BGS institutions had made significant contributions to education while promoting values and cultural harmony. He urged students to respect all languages and develop a special love for Kannada.  
DD, All India Radio and playback singer Bhagyashree appreciated the institution's efforts to promote cultural and spiritual activities along with academics. She said such initiatives helped students develop their personalities beyond the classroom.  
Actor and model Kavya Shah said friends and one's immediate surroundings played an important role in shaping an individual's future.

Biofuel policy gets fresh push from Karnataka

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The 82nd birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was observed as Urja Diwas and Sadbhavana Diwas, at the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister's office. Tributes were also paid to former Karnataka Chief Minister D Devaraj Urs.  
Marking International Biofuel Day, Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board Chairman S E Sudheendra submitted a report to Minister Es-hwar Khandre on his 10-day US visit. He briefed the Minister on meetings with Maryland Governor Wes Moore, Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, Indian officials and the diaspora on skill development and start-ups. Khandre said Sud-

Expired dairy, unhygienic food found at 36 rly stations

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A special food safety inspection across Karnataka railway stations has uncovered several violations, including suspected use of non-permitted food colours, expired dairy products, unhygienic kitchens and improper food storage.  
The inspection was conducted on Thursday to assess food quality, hygiene, storage, labelling and handling practices at hotels, railway pantries and food outlets operating on railway premises. Officials inspected 112 food establishments across 36 railway stations.  
The stations covered included KSR Bengaluru, Yeswanthpura, KR Puram, Yelahanka, Kolar, Mysuru, Haveri, Udupi, Hubballi and

Mangaluru.  
The inspection also covered food served aboard trains, including Vande Bharat Express services operating between Mangaluru and Kerala and between Hubballi and Bengaluru. Officials said these trains were being maintained in clean and hygienic conditions.  
However, several violations were detected at railway food establishments. Inspectors found suspected use of non-permitted colours, including yellow colouring allegedly used in jalebis and pink colouring in khoa peda.  
At a railway station in Haveri district, officials recovered expired Nandini curd and Doodla standardised milk packets. An inspection at a hotel inside KR Puram Rail-

RAILWAY FOOD SAFETY



way Station revealed unhygienic conditions.  
At Mysuru Railway Station, inspectors found idlis being prepared using plastic material. Expired food items were also recovered from the kitchen.  
The inspection further revealed fungal growth on onions and other vegetables at some establishments. Chutney was found stored in plastic

buckets unsuitable for food storage, raising additional concerns over hygiene and food safety.  
Officials said the findings would be communicated to railway authorities and the concerned Designated Officers. Legal proceedings will be initiated against food business operators found violating prescribed food safety norms.  
The drive is part of continu-

**Food safety violations**  
• Stations inspected: 36  
• Food establishments: 112  
• Expired items: Curd & milk  
• Suspected colours: Jalebi, khoa peda  
• Other violations: Fungal vegetables  
• Mysuru: Women & Child Development; Kannada & Culture  
• Action: Legal proceedings

ing efforts to strengthen food safety standards at railway stations and onboard catering services and ensure safer food for passengers.

Quick Read

Mandya extends cultural funding application deadline

**CH NEWS, MANDYA**  
Kannada and Culture Department has extended the deadline for cultural funding applications by 15 days. Registered associations and institutions promoting language, art, literature, music, folklore and dance can apply under the General, Special Unit and Scheduled Tribe Sub-Plan for 2026-27. Unorganized artists can seek financial support to buy musical instruments and costumes or display paintings and sculptures. Applications, earlier accepted until August 20, can now be submitted from August 21 to September 4. Interested applicants must apply online through Seva Sindhu. For further information, they can contact the department at 080-24410574, 080-22213530, 9986837037 or 080-22241325.

Chintamani Ambedkar Bhavan inauguration set for Aug 22

**CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPURA**  
Chintamani will host the inauguration of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Bhavan on August 22 at 10 am. Deputy Chief Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara will inaugurate the building and unveil Baba Saheb's bronze statue. Social Welfare Minister K.H. Muniyappa will open the new Social Welfare Department office. Transport Minister B.S. Suresh will inaugurate the digital study centre, while Minister Ishwar Khandre will unveil the "Sadhaney Hadi" paintings. Dr. H.C. Mahadevappa will unveil the Gautam Buddha marble statue. MLA Dr. M.C. Sudhakar will preside over the event, which will be attended by elected representatives and citizens.

Free training for teacher recruitment exams

**Mysuru**  
Jnanabuthi, a Mysuru-based organisation, has decided to provide free coaching for competitive examinations to be conducted by the Karnataka School Education and Literacy Department for recruitment to various vacant teacher posts in government primary and high schools. Interested candidates can register their names at the Jnanabuthi office located on the premises of the Government High School and Pre-University College at Lakshmi-puram, Mysuru, by August 25, 2026. Registration will be open from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. In a press release, Jnanabuthi Secretary H. Balakrishna (9448117455) appealed to eligible and interested candidates to make use of the free training programme.

Mysuru decks up in festive splendor for Vara Mahalakshmi

**MYSURU**  
Mysuru was filled with festive energy on Thursday as residents prepared to celebrate Vara Mahalakshmi. Markets across the city, including the historic Devaraja Market, witnessed a steady rush of shoppers buying flowers, fruits, bangles, coconuts, turmeric, kumkum and other puja items. Women, families and elderly residents moved through crowded stalls, choosing everything needed to welcome Goddess Lakshmi into their homes. Streets near temples and residential areas also looked colourful, with tempo-



Koppal Set To Get Electric Buses Soon

Patil inspected KKRTC's five-acre site near Koppal divisional office and directed officials to establish an electric bus unit promptly

**CH NEWS, KOPPAL**

Kalyan Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC) Chairman Arun Kumar Patil said 400 new buses have been sanctioned for the corporation and eco-friendly electric buses will soon be introduced in Koppal under the PM E-Bus Seva scheme. He made the announcement during his visit to Koppal district on Thursday.

Patil inspected transport facilities and development works in the city. He met Koppal MP Rajashekar Hitnal and discussed the need for better bus services, particularly for people living in rural areas. The MP requested additional transport facilities to improve connectivity for residents across the district.

At the Koppal Central Bus Station, Patil inspected basic



facilities, two-wheeler parking, toilets and urinals. He also visited the bus pass counter to check whether students and passengers were receiving passes properly. He directed officials to maintain cleanliness and ensure passengers receive essential services without difficulty.

Patil also inspected a five-acre vacant site allotted to KKRTC with the approval of the District Collector. He visited the area near the Koppal

divisional office, where old residential buildings had been removed, and instructed officials to take steps to establish an electric bus unit there at the earliest.

Later, Patil reviewed the physical and financial progress of the Koppal division with divisional controllers, branch heads and unit managers. He appreciated the work of officials and urged employees to remain committed to providing safe, reliable and

AT A GLANCE

- KKRTC receives sanction for 400 new buses
- Electric buses planned under PM E-Bus Seva
- Officials instructed to build electric bus unit
- Koppal Central Bus Station facilities inspected
- MP seeks improved rural transport facilities
- Division reviewed for physical, financial progress

quality transport services. The visit also included a programme commemorating former Chief Minister D.

Devaraja Urs. KKRTC officials and staff, including divisional and unit managers, attended the meetings and inspections.

Six child labourers rescued in Ballari raid

**CH NEWS, Ballari**

Six child and adolescent labourers were rescued during a joint inspection conducted by the district administration and Labour Department in Moka Hobli of Ballari district on Thursday.

The operation was carried out under the 'Pan-India Rescue and Rehabilitation Campaign' aimed at identifying and rescuing children and adolescents engaged in labour. The action followed a meeting of the Child and Adolescent Labour Task Force Committee held in the presence of the Deputy Tahsildar, as directed by the Deputy Commissioner.

After the meeting, the task force team conducted surprise inspections at various establishments and shops across

Moka Hobli. During the inspections, officials found children being employed in violation of labour regulations. Six child and adolescent workers were immediately rescued and taken into protective custody.

Officials recorded the statements of the rescued children at the spot before producing them before the Child Welfare Committee for further action. The authorities also distributed pamphlets and displayed awareness posters at establishments in the area, informing owners and employers about the harmful effects of child labour and the legal consequences of employing children.

The rescue operation involved officials and personnel from several departments. Deputy Tahsildar Pandurang,

Labour Inspector Ramesh, District Child Labour Project Director Mounesh, Education Coordinator Prasanna, District Tobacco Control Cell Consultant Prashanth Kumar and Health Department official Govindappa participated in the operation.

Personnel from the District Child Protection Unit, including Sudha, Child Helpline 1098 representative Chandrakala, REACH organisation coordinator Basamma and para-legal volunteer Lakshmi were also part of the team.

Officials said such inspections and awareness programmes would continue to prevent child labour and ensure that children are protected from exploitation and provided opportunities for education and rehabilitation.

Nandini awareness programme held for students

**CH NEWS, Ballari**

A Nandini awareness programme and drawing competition were organised for school students at Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Vidya Kendra in Ballari on Thursday to highlight the importance of milk, dairy products and nutrition.

The programme was jointly organised by the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) and the Raichur-Ballari-Koppal District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union (RABAKOVI). Addressing the gathering, Union Managing Director S. Sudarshan Reddy said milk is an essential nutritious food in daily life.

JK Tyre hands over advanced fluoride testing kit to Health Dept

**MYSURU**

JK Tyre and Industries Limited on Thursday handed over an advanced Thermo Scientific Ion Meter Fluoride Kit to the District Health and Family Welfare Department under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.

The equipment has been provided to support the department's fluorosis control and prevention programme being implemented under the National Health Mission, with the objective of strengthening community-level healthcare activities and protecting public health. The advanced fluoride-ion meter is designed to accurately detect fluoride levels in drinking water and help ensure the safety of water consumed by the public. The equipment was handed over to the District Health and Family Welfare Officer.

District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr. Mohan K. said the equipment would help detect fluoride

levels in drinking water in rural and urban areas quickly. Excessive fluoride in drinking water can lead to fluorosis, which affects the teeth and bones. The advanced kit would enable the department to rapidly test water quality and urine samples of suspected cases, helping authorities take timely preventive measures and ensure access to safe drinking water, he said.

The Health Department thanked senior officials of JK Tyre for the company's public-oriented initiative and its concern for community health. District RCH Officer Dr. Mohammed Siraj Ahmed, District Family Welfare Officer Dr. Gopinath, District Surveillance Officer Dr. Nagaraj, medical officer of the District Cholera Control Team Dr. Puttathayamma, Fluorosis Programme Consultant Dr. Yakuth Naveen, JK Tyre Chief Manager Jagadish R., Deputy Chief Manager Anil A.V., Deputy Manager Nagaraj and health department staff were present.

"Cancel all illegal MDA 50:50 site allotments made between 2019 and 2023"

**MYSURU**

Welcoming the cancellation of 1,100 illegal site allotments made under the Mysuru Urban Development Authority's (MUDA) 50:50 scheme, former minister and senior Janata Dal (Secular) leader Sa Ra Mahesh demanded that all illegal allotments made between 2019 and 2023 also be cancelled.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, Mahesh alleged that a ₹5,000-crore scam had taken place in the allotment of sites under MUDA's 50:50 ratio scheme. Urban Development and Mysuru District-In-Charge Minister Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah had cancelled 1,100 sites allotted from 2023 onwards, but alleged that sites allotted between 2019 and 2023 had not been cancelled. All illegal sites allotted during this period be cancelled and that sites be allotted to the genuine landowners as per the agreement.

MITF begins first round of discussions ahead of major Dasara initiative

**MYSURU**

The first round of discussions for the Mysore Integrated Task Force (MITF), an initiative through the Anita Humanitarian Foundation, commenced on Thursday with a committed group of citizens, social leaders and professionals coming together with a shared vision for a stronger, more inclusive and progressive Mysuru.

The meeting brought together Mimicry Dayanand, Mahendra Singh, Suresh Babu, Dr. Shyam Prasad Shetty, Besina Maharshi, Jayaprakash, Triveni, Shweta, Gurudutt, Dr. Anita Prasad, Ashwini and Saraswati.

The Task Force has already begun planning its first major public initiative, a large-scale Mysuru event to be held ahead of Dasara. The proposed programme will bring together initiatives focused on women's empowerment, social impact, community development and recognition of individuals who are making a meaningful difference to society.

The event will also feature an awards ceremony honour-

Gadag youth raise voice over water crisis

**CH NEWS, Malingaraya pujar**

Residents of Gadag-Betageri have continued to face drinking water shortages for decades, with some households reportedly waiting 20 to 25 days for regular supply.

The Gadag Youth Voters and Citizens Forum has now stepped up its campaign, calling the situation a serious violation of citizens' constitutional rights. The group has accused the municipal administration and state government of failing to provide a dependable drinking water system despite years of promises and spending on various projects.

The forum has pointed to a Karnataka High Court order dated May 28, 2025, in the case of Ramesh Nayak L. versus State of Karnataka. According to the forum, the court observed that access to safe and clean drinking water is connected with the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution. Youth leaders argue that the continuing shortage in Gadag raises serious questions about whether authorities are fulfilling their responsibility to residents. They say people should not have to struggle for basic drinking water in a developing city.

Residents have also expressed frustration over repeated election promises. The forum alleges that large projects and pipeline works are

Action should be taken to solve the drinking water problem of Gadag city. Access to drinking water is a civil right. Gen Z voters have started a signature campaign with their blood for water

Anil Menasinakayi is a BJP leader

announced during elections, but many people continue to depend on tankers and other uncertain sources. It has demanded accountability from municipal officials and called for action against those responsible for prolonged supply failures. The group has also sought a permanent, scientific plan to ensure clean drinking water reaches households regularly, preferably at least once every two days.

Another major demand is the release of a white paper showing how much public money has been spent on drinking water projects in Gadag during the past decade. The forum has given the authorities 15 days to announce a clear action plan for a lasting solution. If no satisfactory response comes, its leaders have warned that they will mobilise residents and consider approaching the High Court through a Public Interest Litigation.

For Gadag's residents, the issue is no longer about promises, but about securing a reliable supply of a basic necessity and ensuring that decades of waiting finally come to an end.

Exam centres in Ballari Get 200-metre curbs

**BALLARI**

The Ballari district administration has imposed prohibitory orders within a 200-metre radius of examination centres for the Karnataka Open School (KOS) supplementary examinations. The exams will be held from August 24 to September 3 at the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) centre. Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate K. Nagendra Prasad issued the order under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, to ensure smooth conduct of the examinations.



ing individuals and organisations whose contributions are creating positive social change and inspiring communities through action.

Speaking about the initiative, Dr. Anita Prasad said that MITF is envisioned as a platform that brings citizens, organisations, corporates and social-impact leaders together to identify challenges facing Mysuru and work collectively towards practical solutions. The Task Force believes that meaningful change is possible when citizens, corporates, civil society organisations and institutions work together beyond traditional boundaries. MITF will therefore seek to create opportunities for collaboration, participation and

community-led action across Mysuru.

The first meeting marks only the beginning of a broader initiative. The team will shortly announce further details about the upcoming event, partnership opportunities, participation and avenues through which corporates, organisations and citizens can contribute.

Mysuru is a city with a remarkable heritage. MITF seeks to help build an equally remarkable future, through participation, responsibility, compassion and collective action. For further information and partnership opportunities: Anita Humanitarian Foundation, Mysore Integrated Task Force (MITF).

STATE-LEVEL RETIRED EMPLOYEES MEET HELD IN BALLARI

**CH NEWS, Ballari**

The Karnataka State Government Retired Employees Association, Ballari district unit, organised a state-level council meeting at Dr. Joladarashi Doddana Gowda Rangamandira in Ballari on Tuesday, with more than 500 retired employees participating. The programme was inaugurated by Principal District and Sessions Judge and District Legal Services Authority Chairman Siddalinga Prabhu. He extended his best wishes to retired employees and expressed hope that they would lead a peaceful and happy retired life.

Association State President

Dr. L. Byrappa, who presided over the programme, said efforts would be made to implement the Sandhya Suraksha scheme, secure a 10 per cent pension increase for pensioners who have completed 70 years and establish association buildings at all district and taluk headquarters.

As part of the government's Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan, participants took an anti-drug pledge during the event. The meeting also resolved to promote sports activities in schools and colleges, conduct tree-planting programmes and organise pledge-taking activities across the district to create awareness about the dangers of drug abuse.



# Chitradurga hosts training for minority cooperatives

Thippeswamy stressed cooperatives’ social, educational and economic role, urging officials to follow laws and noting leadership reservation amendments

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

A one-day state-level training program for office bearers, directors and chief executive officers of selected minority cooperative societies in Bengaluru division was held in Chitradurga on Thursday.

The program was jointly organized by the Cooperation Department, Karnataka State Cooperative Federation and Chitradurga District Cooperative Union at Aishwarya Naveen Hotel Auditorium on NH 4.

Cooperative Ratna awardee R. Malleshappa said the federation and district cooperative unions play an important role in strengthening cooperatives through training. Participants from Chitradurga, Bengaluru, Davanagere, Chikkaballapur, Tumakuru and Shivamogga districts attended the program. He urged them to understand cooperative laws and make proper use of facilities offered by the Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation.



opment Corporation.

Cooperative Ratna awardee G.E. Ajjappa said training was essential for societies seeking growth. He urged co-operatives to maintain transparent financial dealings without discrimination based on caste, religion or community. Director H.M. Majunathappa said elected presidents must take greater responsibility and use such training to improve the functioning of their societies.

Union President H.N. Thip-

peswamy, who presided over the event, said the cooperative sector plays an important role in providing economic, educational and social benefits. He urged secretaries and board members to perform their duties responsibly and strictly follow legal provisions. He also referred to recent amendments providing reservation for cooperative society presidents and vice-presidents.

Additional Registrar H.S. Nagarajaiah explained recent

| HIGHLIGHTS                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • One-day state-level training held in Chitradurga.                    |
| • Six districts participated in minority cooperative training.         |
| • Training covered amended cooperative laws and regulations.           |
| • Minority Corporation facilities explained to participants.           |
| • Leaders urged responsible, legally compliant cooperative management. |
| • Financial transactions urged beyond caste, creed divisions.          |

amendments and important provisions of cooperative law. Senior journalist H.B. Manjunath spoke about time management and stress management, while Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation District Manager Maheshub Ali explained available facilities. The program began with the national song and concluded with a vote of thanks by District Cooperative Union Manager Soumya.

## Quick Read

**PM Kisan farmers urged to complete e-KYC**

**Chitradurga**  
Farmers under PM Kisan must complete biometric or face-based e-KYC to receive installment, officials said. The 24th installment is expected in September with farmers receiving Rs. 2,000 every four months. The scheme provides Rs. 6,000 through three direct bank transfers. The rule aims to prevent fake claims and stop payments to deceased beneficiaries. OTP-based e-KYC is no longer accepted. In Chitradurga district, 1,51,498 of 1,51,693 beneficiaries have pending e-KYC. Farmers can complete it at Common Service Centers, Grama One, Karnataka One, Raitha Sampark Kendras or through the PM Kisan app.

**Gadag invites applications for community auditor posts**

**Gadag**  
Sanjeevini-KSRPLPS has invited applications for 13 community auditor positions in Gadag district. Women from self-help groups or their daughters will receive first priority. Selected candidates will conduct internal audits of self-help groups and gram panchayat-level unions. Applicants must hold a B. Com, M. Com, BBA or MBA in Finance. The last date to apply is August 31. Application forms can be collected and submitted in person at the NRLM section of the Taluk Campaign Management Unit. Interested candidates can contact their respective Taluk Panchayat offices for further details. The Gadag Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer announced the recruitment through an official release.

# Voter revision notices issued across Mandya constituency

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Mandya Sub-Divisional Officer Shivamurthy said the draft voter list for the Mandya Assembly constituency will include 1,93,788 voters after the special revision process.

He said the exercise aims to improve accuracy and protect every eligible citizen's voting rights. During verification, officials identified about 37,981 ASG voter names for removal, while notices are being issued.

About 25,000 voters have received notices for different reasons, including 7,042 cases involving no mapping and around 18,000 cases involving logical errors. Booth Level Officers are delivering notices to voters. Following Election Commission directions, 20 inquiry officers have been appointed to examine cases. Ten officers will work in rural areas and ten in urban



areas.

Voters who receive notices should attend the inquiry at the date, time and place mentioned in their notice, without fear. Shivamurthy appealed to them to bring any two documents from the 12 accepted documents available to establish their eligibility. Officials will verify the documents and take action to include eligible names in the final list. He said

the revision is intended to make the electoral roll accurate, transparent and reliable. The final voter list is scheduled for publication on Octo-

ber 27, 2026. He clarified that voters who fail to attend the hearing or submit required documents may face action according to election rules. He urged citizens to respond and use the opportunity to correct any errors in their records.

He stressed that the revision process is not meant to trouble voters, but to ensure that eligible names remain on the electoral roll. Tehsildar Vishwanath, Municipal Commissioner Pampashree and representatives of political parties attended the press conference.

# Urs remembered as courageous champion of social justice

CH NEWS, HAVERI

Former Chief Minister D. Devaraja Urs was remembered as a courageous leader who worked to build an equal society during his 111th birth anniversary celebration in Haveri.

Urban Development Authority President S.F.N. Ghazi Gowdra said Urs left a lasting mark through his progressive vision and efforts to uplift backward classes, Dalits, poor, landless and exploited communities.

The programme was jointly organized by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Backward Classes Welfare Department, D. Devaraja Urs Backward Classes Develop-

ment Corporation and Kannada and Culture Department at District Guru Bhavan. Ghazi Gowdra said the Land Reforms Act and measures against bonded labour were among Urs's historic achievements. He urged young people to study Urs's life and follow his ideals of equality, justice and human dignity.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Vijayamahanthesh Danamma- vara said Urs became a strong voice for disadvantaged communities through several progressive measures. He highlighted land reforms, minimum wages, rural employment initiatives, welfare schemes for senior citizens

and persons with disabilities, and efforts to end manual scavenging. Urs also promoted Kannada as an administrative language, renamed Mysore State as Karnataka and supported literature, arts, theatre and cultural institutions.

The speakers recalled Urs's decision to establish the L.G. Havanur Commission and introduce reservation for backward classes based on its findings. They said he also encouraged political participation among backward, Dalit and minority communities. Minister Rudrappa Manappa Lamani sent a message recalling Urs's political journey and ideals.

# Boat service resumes, but bridge dream remains

MALINGARAYA PUJAR CH NEWS

The boat service between Magala and Vithalapur across the Tungabhadra River has resumed after remaining closed for nearly eight months.

The service was stopped after the boat, locally known as Nadadoni, developed a hole and became unsafe for travel. Following repairs, the boat is now operating again, bringing temporary relief to residents of border areas in Gadag, Haveri and Vijayanagar districts. People living along the river, including farmers, students and daily commuters, have welcomed the return of the service.

The boat is an important link between Magala village in Huvinahadagali taluk of Vijayanagar district and Vithalapur in Mundaragi taluk of Gadag district. For many residents, crossing the river by boat is part of their daily routine. The suspension had created serious difficulties, forcing people to take longer routes and spend more time and money on travel. The resumption has eased these problems for now, but locals say the boat cannot be considered a safe and lasting answer to their transportation needs.

The demand for a permanent bridge across the Tungabhadra is decades old. Resi-



**The boat reconnects Magala and Vithalapur, easing travel hardships, but residents say regular crossings remain unsafe and demand a permanent transportation solution across the river**

dents have been seeking a proper bridge since 1972, but their demand remains unfulfilled despite several governments coming to power.

A Detailed Project Report has reportedly been prepared, yet progress on the project has remained slow. Differences among elected representatives over the proposed location have added to the delay. Some Gadag leaders support a bridge between Itagi and Belahunasi, while Shirahatti

MLA Chandru Lamani has said a site near Kallaganur would be more useful for people.

Residents believe political differences should not stand in the way of a project that affects thousands of people. They want district ministers and elected representatives from the concerned areas to work together, set aside personal differences and find a common solution. MLA Dr Chandru Lamani has urged the government to respond quickly and release funds for construction. The renewed boat service may have brought a sigh of relief, but people say their real hope lies in a permanent bridge that can provide safer, faster and more reliable travel throughout the year. Until that happens, the river will continue to separate communities that are waiting for a lasting connection.

# Students urged to embrace Urs's educational vision

CHITRADURGA

Additional Deputy Commissioner B.T. Kumaraswamy on Thursday remembered former Chief Minister D. Devaraja Urs as a great leader who opened educational opportunities for Karnataka's backward classes.

He said Urs lit a lamp of knowledge by establishing hostels that helped poor students continue their studies instead of remaining tied to traditional occupations.

Speaking at Tarasu Theatre during Urs's 111th birth anniversary, Kumaraswamy said the former chief minister's land reforms also changed rural society. The "tiller is the owner" principle ended the zamindari system and gave land rights to farmers who worked on it. He said these measures strengthened poor and disadvantaged families.

He urged students to see education as a path to knowledge, values and self-reliance, not only government employment. He advised them to avoid wasting time on mobile phones and social media, and instead focus on regular

study, concentration, skills and preparation for competitive examinations. He also reminded students that parents make sacrifices and expect them to succeed.

SJM College lecturer S. Laxmikant said Urs remained a symbol of social justice because he worked to extend constitutional rights to weaker sections. He praised Urs as a leader who promoted equality, supported farmers and encouraged self-employment. Educationist R.A. Chetan Ram also spoke about value-based education, creativity and personal growth, urging young people to develop their own thinking and writing habits.

The event, organized by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat and Backward Classes Welfare Department, included floral tributes and recognition of talented students. Winners of essay and debate contests, along with high-scoring hostel students, received awards. Speakers urged the younger generation to carry Urs's ideals forward and build a fairer society together.

**Gadag Police seek help finding missing student**

**GADAG:** Gadag Rural Police have launched an investigation after an 12-year-old boy went missing from Kurtakoti village in Gadag taluk on August 10.

Police said the boy, identified as Niti, is the son of Lakshman Bhajantri. He is studying in eighth standard and was reportedly missing from a relative's house at about 1 p.m. His family searched nearby places and contacted relatives before approaching police and filing a complaint. According to the police description, Niti is about four feet tall, has a slender face, average build, wheatish complexion and brown hair. He was last seen wearing a brown T-shirt and brown shorts. He can read, write and speak Kannada.

Gadag Rural Police Station registered case number 207/2026 and began efforts to trace him. Police have appealed to the public to share any information that could help locate the missing child.

People who find the boy or have relevant information can contact Gadag Rural Police Station or the Gadag Control Room through the numbers provided by police.

# PRESCILLA MONTEIRO DIES AFTER BRIEF ILLNESS IN MANGALURU



MANGALURU

Prescilla Monteiro, 81, of Moodu- jeppu, Kelarai, died at a private hospital on August 19 following a brief illness. She was the wife of the late Gilbert Monteiro and was known as a progressive farmer and philanthropist. Prescilla maintained warm relationships with neigh-

bours and acquaintances. She was the mother of Rohan Monteiro, Managing Director of Rohan Corporation, and is survived by three sons, three daughters and 14 grandchildren. Her mortal remains will be kept at St. Anna's Church, Kelarai, on August 21 from 10.30 am. The Holy Eucharist will be held at 11 am, followed by funeral rites.

# BJP protest demands Minister Nagendra's immediate resignation

CH NEWS, GADAG

Bharatiya Janata Party leaders and workers from Shirahatti and Mundaragi mandals staged a protest outside the Gadag District Collector's office, demanding the resignation of Minister B. Nagendra over the alleged irregularities in the Maharishi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation.

Hundreds of party workers took part in the demonstration and raised slogans against the Congress government.

The protesters accused the government of failing to act firmly despite the seriousness of the alleged multi-crore scam. They said it was unacceptable for a minister facing allegations



linked to the controversy to continue in office. The demonstrators demanded that Nagendra step down immediately and that the government order a fair and impartial investigation.

The protest was organized by BJP leaders from the Shirahatti Assembly constituency, Shirahatti mandal and Mundaragi mandal. Addressing the gathering, party representatives said

public money must be protected and those responsible for financial irregularities should face appropriate action. They urged the authorities to ensure that the investigation is conducted without political influence.

The protesters later submitted their demands through the district administration, seeking immediate government intervention. They said people deserve

transparency and accountability in the handling of funds meant for the welfare of Scheduled Tribe communities. The demonstration also highlighted the BJP's criticism of the Congress government's handling of the controversy. Mandal president Sunil Mahantashetty, Kumaraswamy Hiremath, district general secretary Pakkireswari Rattihalli, Lingaraj Patil, Gangadhar Menasinakai, Basavaraj Bilimaggada, Pramod Shah Gunda, M.S. Karigowda, Hemagiriish Havinal and several other BJP leaders and workers participated. The protesters said they would continue raising the issue until their demand for accountability and a transparent probe is addressed.

| AT A GLANCE                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • BJP workers staged protest outside Gadag Collector's office                   |
| • Protesters demanded Minister B. Nagendra's immediate resignation              |
| • Hundreds participated, raising slogans against Congress government            |
| • BJP alleged multi-crore irregularities in corporation funds                   |
| • Protesters demanded fair, impartial investigation without political influence |
| • Leaders sought transparency, accountability in welfare fund handling          |



**BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560 020

No: BDA/EE/HPD-1/TEN/T-229/2026-27Date: 20.08.2026

**INVITATION FOR SHORT-TERM TENDER (IFT)**  
(Through GoK e-Procurement platform <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/>)

Short-Term Tender is invited for Housing Project work by Bangalore Development Authority (Indent Number: BDA/2026-27/BD/WORK\_INDENT275)

**Tender Schedule:** (1) Date of availability of Tender Documents in e-portal: **20.08.2026** (2) Last date and time for submission of Tender Pre-Bid Enquiries: **22.08.2026, 11.00 A.M.** (3) Date and time of Tender Pre-Bid Meeting: **24.08.2026, 3.00 P.M.** (4) Last date and time for submission of Tender: **16.09.2026, 4.00 P.M.** (5) Date of opening Technical Bid of Tender: **17.09.2026 after 4.30 P.M.**

Interested contractors can view further details on <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> and for more details it is requested to contact the Housing Project Division-1 of BDA during office hours. Helpline / Whatsapp: 9483166622 (24x7) ✉ @BDAOfficialGoK

**Note:** For any reason if there is delay in uploading the Tender Documents in e-portal, the revised/modified Tender Schedule will only be published in e-portal.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer, HPD-1 Division, BDA, Bengaluru**

# E-KYC DRIVE SUPPORTS WIDER ACCESS TO RURAL JOBS

Srinivas said digital systems would track workers and progress, while gram panchayats would assist families with job cards, e-KYC and work demands

CH NEWS, GUDIBANDE

A special awareness campaign under the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Employment and Livelihood Mission (Rural) scheme is being conducted across Gudibande taluk from August 15 to September 15. As part of the campaign, a job card fair was held at Varlakonda village on Thursday to help rural families access employment opportunities.

Assistant Director A.R. Srinivas said job card fairs would be organized in all gram panchayats of the taluk. He said officials were planning works to create more employment days for rural families. The campaign also focuses on visiting households, issuing new job cards to eligible families, renewing existing cards and completing e-KYC procedures.

Srinivas said workers' attendance, work progress and related records would increasingly be managed through



digital systems. The main aim, he said, was to bring employment opportunities directly to deserving families. People seeking information about job cards, e-KYC or submitting work demands were advised to approach their respective gram panchayats.

The scheme is also expected to reduce migration from villages to cities by creating work locally. Officials urged eligible unskilled workers to

make full use of the programme and strengthen their livelihoods. Information Education Coordinator Ramanji said special efforts were being made to identify families with inactive job cards through door-to-door visits and inform them about employment and individual benefit schemes.

He said the campaign would particularly encourage participation among weaker sections and improve eco-

| HIGHLIGHTS                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Special awareness campaign runs till September 15.            |
| • Job card fair held at Varlakonda village.                     |
| • House-to-house visits target needy rural families.            |
| • New cards, renewals and e-KYC prioritized.                    |
| • Campaign aims to reduce rural-urban migration.                |
| • Water conservation works prioritized for livelihood security. |

omic security through job creation. During drought conditions, priority would be given to works related to water conservation, groundwater recharge and activities supporting long-term livelihoods. Panchayat Development Officers Narasimhamurthy and Sathyaprasad, labour organizer Naveen, technical staff member Narasimappa and gram panchayat employees attended the programme.

## Belagavi division targets improved SSLC results through FLN

CH NEWS, HUBBALLI

Dr. Eshwar Ullagaddi, Additional Commissioner of the School Education Department, urged teachers and education officials to work together to strengthen Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) and Lesson-Based Assessment (LBA) programmes to improve SSLC results.

He was speaking at a Belagavi division-level consultative meeting held at Deshpande Foundation Sabha Bhavan on the BVB campus in Hubballi on Thursday.

Ullagaddi congratulated teachers and officials after the Belagavi division secured first place in the state in the latest SSLC results. He said the achievement was the result of continuous efforts by school staff and education officers. However, he urged them not to become complacent and instead aim for better performance during the current academic year through planned preparation.

He said the department's target should not be limited to achieving 100 percent results. Teachers must focus on im-



Ullagaddi praised Belagavi division's SSLC success, urging teachers to improve learning quality, strengthen preparation, implement 60 Plus, and address gaps through LBA reviews

proving learning quality and helping students achieve strong marks. He highlighted the 60 Plus programme and urged officials to ensure its effective implementation. LBA questions, he said, can help identify learning gaps, while regular reviews of student answers and progress can guide additional teaching.

Ullagaddi said FLN must receive special attention at the primary level. Students should gradually develop reading skills at word, sentence and paragraph levels, along with basic mathematical abilities such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Monthly learning standards will be re-

viewed, and students who fall behind should receive additional support.

He stressed that FLN should become a regular classroom practice rather than remain only a departmental programme. Strong foundational skills, he said, would help students perform better in higher classes and ultimately improve SSLC results. School Education Department Director Mamata Nayak, Joint Director Jayashree Karekar and other officials participated in the meeting.

## Lingapura villagers seek ANM quarters construction

HONNALI

Residents of Lingapura have demanded that the new Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) quarters be constructed on the government-approved site, alleging that influential individuals are preventing the work.

Villagers said the quarters are important for ensuring healthcare workers remain available and public medical services continue smoothly.

According to residents, an old ANM quarters had stood on a 45×75-foot government site under Lingapura Gramthana Survey No. 18, Panchayat Record Form No. 15 and Khata No. 304. The building became unsafe and was demolished. The Health Department later approved funds and other formalities to construct a new quarters at the same location.

Villagers alleged that some influential people were pressuring officials to shift the project elsewhere, resulting in the construction being stopped. They also claimed that threats had created fear among residents, making people hesitant to openly raise the issue before officials. The villagers said the lack of accommodation for healthcare staff was affecting local health services.

A memorandum submitted to the Panchayat Development Officer and secretary stated that residents would not accept construction at any site other than Khata No. 304. They urged taluk and district officials to visit the location, examine the technical report and resolve the dispute quickly so the sanctioned project can proceed.

The villagers warned that returning or cancelling government funds because of administrative confusion or negligence would make responsible officials accountable. They also said they would approach the Lokayukta seeking a detailed investigation if the issue remained unresolved. Copies of the memorandum were submitted to the Honnali Taluk Executive Officer, Taluk Health Officer, Davanagere District Health Officer, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer and Lokayukta office.

## Devaraja Urs remembered as champion of backward classes

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Karnataka State Seed Corporation President N. Anjinappa described former Chief Minister D. Devaraja Urs as a champion of backward classes who helped disadvantaged communities gain economic and political strength. He was speaking at Urs's 111th birth anniversary programme held at Kannada Bhavan on Thursday, organized by the district administration and other departments.

Anjinappa said many backward communities faced poverty, illiteracy and limited access to government benefits. He credited Urs with introducing several welfare measures that helped bring these communities into the mainstream. Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr. N. Bhaskar highlighted the Land Reforms Act, which gave land rights to cultivators, and said Urs also established hostels and supported reservation for backward classes through the Havanur Commission.

District Guarantee Scheme Implementation Authority Chairman Yaluvalli N. Ramesh said Urs's land reforms provided social justice to tenants and challenged the influence of powerful landlords. He urged students to study Urs's life and apply his principles. He also said the former leader's unemployment assistance scheme had similarities with the present Yuvanidhi programme. Resource person B.V. Prakash said Urs was born on August 20, 1915, at Kallahalli in Hunsur taluk and entered the state Assembly in 1952. He recalled Urs's contributions to social justice, including measures against bonded labour, child labour and manual scavenging. He also credited Urs with supporting the development of Electronic City in Bengaluru.

## Bidar BJP demands public disclosure of financial transactions

BIDAR

The Bidar South unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party staged a protest in the city on Thursday, demanding the resignation of Minister B. Nagendra over the alleged ₹187 crore irregularities in the Valmiki Corporation.

BJP leaders, office-bearers and workers participated in the demonstration near the office of the district in-charge minister and raised slogans against the state government.

Addressing the protesters, BJP district president Somnath Patil described the alleged financial irregularities as a serious issue involving public money. He questioned the government's decision to reinstate Nagendra after his earlier resignation in connection with the controversy. Patil said the government should explain its position clearly and ensure transparency in the administration.

Patil demanded a comprehensive investigation into the alleged misuse of funds and called for the details of financial

transactions to be made public. He said anyone found responsible should face legal action, regardless of their position. He also urged Nagendra to accept moral responsibility and resign from the ministerial post.

The BJP leader said the government's claims of taking strong action against corruption would be questioned if serious allegations were not addressed properly. He stressed that protecting taxpayers' money should be a priority and that any misused public funds should be recovered

after due investigation.

BJP Bidar South Mandal president Gurunath Rajgir said the party would continue its democratic campaign against corruption and alleged irregularities. He said the movement would focus on protecting public money and the interests of citizens. BJP mandal office-bearers, leaders of various party fronts, elected representatives and workers attended the protest. The demonstrators reiterated their demand for accountability and Nagendra's resignation.

**Public Works Department,**  
Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, PAMC,  
PWD Bengaluru-560001

No.EIC/PWD/10/PRAMC/2026-27/747 Date: 20.08.2026

**Short-Term Tender Notification**

The Executive Engineer, PRAMC, KPWD on behalf of Governor of Karnataka, invites Short Term Tender for Ten Building work in Chikkamagaluru District. Further details can be obtained from Karnataka KPP Portal ([www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in)) from 20.08.2026, 5.30 p.m.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer , PRAMC, KPWD, Bengaluru.**

DIPR/DD-CP/2350/KSMCA/2026-27

**BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Rajajinagar Division,  
BWCC Building, #161, 1st Floor, 19th Main, 2nd Block,  
Near Old Navarang Bus Stop, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru- 560 010.

No.:BWCC/EE/KPPP/RNR/TN/05/2026-27 Date:19.08.2026

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER**  
(Through KPP Portal Only) (Single Cover System)

The Executive Engineer, Rajajinagar Division, invites tenders from eligible tenderers for work detailed in the table below.

| Sl.No. | Name of the work                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Supply of Labour and tipper for the immersion of Ganesha Idols in Ward No. 63, 64, 65, 66, 67 & 68 in Rajajinagar Sub Division. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 5.06 Lakhs. EMD : Rs. 12,700/-</b> |
| 2.     | Supply of Labour and tipper for the immersion of Ganesha Idols in Ward No. 58, 59, 60, 61 & 62 in Sriramamandira Sub Division. Amount put to tender: <b>Rs. 4.22 Lakhs. EMD : Rs. 10,600/-</b>  |

1)Tender documents can be downloaded from KPP portal <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from 24.08.2026, 4.00 p.m. onwards. 2) Last date for submission queries : 27.08.2026 upto 3.00 p.m. 3) Last Date for receipt of tenders: 01.09.2026 upto 4.00 p.m. 4) Opening of bids: 02.09.2026 at 4.00 p.m. Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer, Rajajinagar Division, BWCC.**

**Government of Karnataka**  
**Department Of Archaeology, Museums And Heritage, Mysore**  
Karnataka Exhibition Authority Premises, Mysuru-570010,  
Tel : 0821-2424673/74, Fax No.0821-2424665,  
Email- commr\_amh@yahoo.in, Web : <https://archaeology.karnataka.gov.in>,  
<https://nammakarnataka.in>

Notification No.:DAMH/CW/T-10/2026-27 Date: 14.08.2026

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**

On behalf of the Governor, Government of Karnataka, the department of Archaeology, Museum and Heritage, Mysuru has invited the item wise tender for the 01 Conservation Works (DAMH/2025-26/OW/WORK\_INDENT/220) The amount **Rs.158.00 lakhs** as per the tender documents KW-4 under the tender documents. The Tender documents can be obtained through ([https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in](http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)) e-portal onwards

|                                              |                       |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Last date and time of any Queries for tender | 27.08.2026, 17.00 hrs |
| Last date and time of tender submission      | 02.09.2026, 16.00 hrs |
| Opening of Date and Time of Technical bid    | 04.09.2026, 16.30 hrs |
| Opening of Date and Time of Financial bid    | 05.09.2026, 11.00 hrs |

**Sd/- Commissioner**  
Department of Archaeology,  
Museums And Heritage, Mysore.

DIPR/MYSORE/SHIRDI SAI/594/2026-27

**HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE SERVICES**  
**GENERAL HOSPITAL, KANAKAPURA**  
Bengaluru South Dist., Ph No: 080-27522485, Email: [ghkanakapura@gmail.com](mailto:ghkanakapura@gmail.com)

No.: GHK & M Hospital K/Tender/01/2026-27 Date: 20.08.2026

**TENDER NOTIFICATION**  
(e-Procurement Tender Notification)

General Hospital, Kanakapura, Bangalore South District, Tender for the year 2026-27, to get services from various cadres for **Human resource through, ARS posts (including non-medical posts of various cadres in the state sector)** with an annual cost of Rs. 1,00,00,000/-, purchase of cleaning materials with an annual cost of Rs. 18,00,000/-, purchase of stationery with an annual cost of Rs. 20,00,000/-, purchase of pharmaceutical materials with an annual cost of Rs. 24,00,000/-, purchase of laboratory chemicals with an annual cost of Rs. 24,00,000/-, tender for Diet food with an annual cost of Rs. 34,00,000/-, tender has been invited from eligible tenderers through e-procurement under transparent rules. Authorized tenderers who wish to submit tenders may obtain details of online submission as per tender terms and conditions at <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>.

|                                                      |                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Date for downloading tender forms online           | Date: 21.08.2026 to Date: 05.09.2026  |
| 2 Last date for uploading and submitting in e-tender | Date: 05.09.2026 till Evening 4:00 PM |
| 3 Date of opening of technical bid                   | Date: 07.09.2026                      |
| 4 Verification by the tender committee               | Date: 08.09.2026                      |
| 5 Date of Opening of Financial Bid                   | Date: 10.09.2026                      |
| 6 E.M.D                                              | Maximum 2.5 percent                   |
| 7 Total annual cost of the tender                    | 2,20,00,000/-                         |

**Sd/- Chief Medical Officer**  
General Hospital, Kanakapura

DIPR/BSD/260/SA/2026-27

**Government of Karnataka**  
**Office of the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department Division, Haveri**  
This office letter No.033/PB/Tnd/5054-4059TSP/2026-27/2126/ Dated:19-08-2026

**E-Tender Notification**

On 19-08-2026 through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal tender notification has been issued for the following Work Indent No. 38858 Last date for submission of tender receipt is assigned on Dated : **07-09-2026** (upto 4:00 PM) and Work Indent No. 33292/Call-2 & 34485/Call-2 Last date for submission of tender receipt is assigned on Dated: **28-08-2026** (upto 4:00 PM). For further additional information, any changes & queries visit <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>.

**Sd/ (N.N.Patil)**  
**Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Haveri**

DIPR/Haveri/299/KSMCA/2026-27

**CH**

**CLASSIFIEDS**

To place a classified ad contact:  
**080-41209042**

**BANGALORE RURAL ZILLA PANCHAYATH**  
Office of Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division,  
Bangalore Rural, Anand Rao Circle, Bangalore - 560009.

No: EE/PRED/BNG(R)/TND No-07/TS/2026-27 Date: 13.08.2026

**TENDER NOTIFICATION No.07/2026-27**  
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Tender is invited through KPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D, Bangalore Rural, under Zilla Panchayat Various Head of Accounts. The work details can be obtained from the KPP Portal ([https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in](http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)). The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before **05.09.2026 upto 5.30 P.M.** Further details contact this office during office working hours.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer,**  
**Panchayat Raj Engineering Division,**  
**Bangalore Rural Dist. Bangalore**

DIPR/CP/2345/SMCL/2026-27

**Chikkamagaluru Urban Development Authority**  
Hiremagaluru Residential Layout, First Phase  
Hiremagaluru -Kadur Bypass Road, Kalyana Nagara,  
Chikkamagaluru-577102. [www.chikkamagaluru.uda.gov.in](http://www.chikkamagaluru.uda.gov.in)  
Tel: 08262-295712 Email: [cmr\\_cudackm@yahoo.in](mailto:cmr_cudackm@yahoo.in)

No.: CUDA/Indent12/CALL-2/2026-27 Date: 18.08.2026

**e-Procurement Re Tender Notice**

Re Tender is invited through e-procurement in two cover system subject to conditions from eligible contractors registered with PWD regarding implementation of works with details mentioned below in the limits of Chikkamagaluru Urban Development Authority.

**Sl.No. 1. Details:** Work of development of Hiremagaluru Kenchanakatte Lake in the limits of Chikkamagaluru Urban Development Authority. Indent No. CKMUDA/2026-27/OW/WORK\_INDENT12/CALL-2 **Approx. Amount (Rs. In lakhs) : 320.00 E.M.D.** As mentioned in e-portal Tender Form Fee as per e-procurement portal.

**\*)** Date and time of Pre-bid Meeting: 10.09.2026 at 16.00 Hrs. **\*)** Last date and time for submission of objections in e-procurement portal: 10.09.2026 up to 12.00 Hrs. **\*)** Last date and time for submission of Tender Forms in e-procurement portal: 19.09.2026 up to 17.00 Hrs. **\*)** Date and time of opening Technical Bid: 21.09.2026 at 11.00 Hrs. **\*)** Date and time of opening Financial Bid: 28.09.2026 at 11.00 Hrs.

Further details can be obtained during working hours of the office and from e-portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> Corrigendum, if any, will be published only in e-portal.

**Sd/- Commissioner** **Sd/- President**  
**Chikkamagaluru Urban Development Authority,**  
**Chikkamagaluru.**

DIPR/ckm/ksmca/26-27/95679

**GULBARGA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED**  
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)  
Corporate Office, GESCOM, Kalaburagi, Pin Code.585 102.  
CIN: U04101KA2002SGC030436, E-mail: [seeprojectsgescom@gmail.com](mailto:seeprojectsgescom@gmail.com)

No.GESCOM/CEE(O)/SEE(Proj)/EEE(Proj)/AEE/AE-2/2026-27/46456-71 Date: 20-08-2026

**:: TENDER NOTIFICATION ::**

**(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)**

Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited, Kalaburagi invites tender for the work of "Establishing new 2x5MVA, 33/11kV Sub-Stations at 1) **Ujalamba Village** in Basavakalyan Taluk, Bidar District, 2) **Shadhipur Village** in Chincholli Taluk, Kalaburagi District and 3) **Ballur Village** in Aurad Taluk, Bidar District **on Total Turnkey Basis**" including supply of all equipment's/materials, erection, Civil, testing and commissioning under competitive bidding from eligible bidders through **Karnataka Public Procurement Portal**.

The project cost (excluding GST) & the bid documents will be available in <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> on or after **28.08.2026**, the prospective bidders can obtain further details from the office of the undersigned.

**Sd/- Chief Engineer Electy., (Operations),**  
**Corporate Office, GESCOM, Kalaburagi.**

DIPR/Kalaburagi/450/KSMC&A/2026-27

Quick Read

**India's passenger EV market surges 102 pc in Q2**

**New Delhi**

India's Electric Passenger Vehicle (EPV) market surged an impressive 102 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in Q2 2026, significantly outpacing the broader passenger vehicle market's 26 per cent growth, a report said on Thursday. The report from CyberMedia Research (CMR) said sharp acceleration was driven by an expanded product portfolio, improved vehicle availability, and compelling total-cost-of-ownership economics. The firm forecasted that EVs will make up 7–8 per cent of India's PV market by end-2026, while connected vehicles are projected to capture 40–45 per cent of market share.

**Mutual Fund NAV glitch on HDFC Securities'**

**New Delhi**

HDFC Securities customers on Thursday reported discrepancies in NAVs displayed on the InvestRight platform, with portfolio value of investors showing a decrease of up to 70 per cent. Mutual fund portfolio showed a loss of around 30 per cent, amounting to nearly Rs 1 lakh, despite the portfolio being in profit, an investor told IANS. The investor said one of the two mutual funds in the portfolio was showing a normal NAV, while the other displayed a decline of around 50 per cent.

**Gains in AI company stakes juice second-quarter earnings for S&P 500**

**NEW YORK**

S&P 500 companies are winding up a banner quarterly earnings season, fuelled in large part by surging profits at AI-related companies. The S&P 500 is on track for a 52% surge in aggregate second-quarter earnings from the year before, helped by a 74% profit jump in the technology sector. The figures include big mark-to-market boosts at Alphabet and Amazon, both of which recognized large gains in the period on investments in AI highfliers such as Anthropic.

Excluding those gains, the latest estimate for S&P 500 second-quarter profit growth would be 33%, according to Tajinder Dhillion, head of earnings research at LSEG. That is still the strongest quarter since 2021, in the wake of the pandemic's start, but the gap is worth considering because many investors view mark-to-market profit gains with caution as they can accentuate the impact of market swings on a company's performance.

# Goyal Pushes Stronger India-Singapore Ties

Goyal's Singapore engagements sought stronger trade, investment and technology ties, with government and business leaders.

**NEW DELHI**

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal held a series of high-level meetings in Singapore on Thursday, seeking to deepen India-Singapore economic cooperation across trade, investment, technology and business.

Goyal began the visit with a call on Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong at the Istana. He then participated in the fourth India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable and the fourth India-Singapore Business Roundtable at Hotel Shangri-La. The discussions examined ways to strengthen bilateral economic engagement and identify new areas for cooperation, followed by an MoU signing ceremony. Later, Goyal held Government-to-Business meetings with senior representatives from the Global Finance & Technology Network and Keppel Infrastructure. The talks explored opportunities in agri-exports,



GCC-based commercial parks, fintech and sustainable infrastructure, with a focus on creating stronger opportunities for businesses and investors. Goyal also jointly visited an APEDA-FairPrice initiative at City Square Mall with Singapore Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Trade & Industry Gan Siow Huang. The initiative showcased Indian agricultural products and highlighted expanding trade and market linkages.

In the evening, Goyal addressed the India-Singapore Business Forum organised by FICCI at the INSEAD Asia Campus. He participated in a fireside chat on India's role in the new global growth equa-

**Goyal Meets Singapore PM Wong:**

- Goyal meets Singapore PM Lawrence Wong,
- Fourth India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable held,
- Business talks focus on investment opportunities,
- Fintech and sustainable infrastructure discussed,
- Indian agricultural products showcased,
- FICCI Business Forum held in Singapore.

tion before engaging with business community members. The engagements underline efforts by India and Singapore to strengthen their longstanding economic partnership amid changing global conditions, with emphasis on trade, investment, technology and business-to-business ties.

# Gujarat, Walmart Chart MSME Global Roadmap

**WASHINGTON**

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Walmart Executive Vice-President Dan Bryant have discussed a roadmap to expand global market opportunities for the state's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and small artisans.

The discussion took place during Patel's one-to-one meeting with Bryant, Walmart's Executive Vice-President for Global Public Policy and Government Affairs, in Washington, D.C.. Patel is on a week-long visit to the US and Canada to engage global investors and businesses ahead of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2027.

With Gujarat having a large MSME base, the discussions focused on making local enterprises more export-oriented by improving product quality

**Walmart's MSME push**

**More than 1.15 lakh MSMEs trained since 2019,**

**Target of 1.70 lakh MSMEs by 2028,**

**Focus on export readiness and product quality,**

**Roadmap may be announced at Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2027.**

and strengthening their access to international markets.

Patel proposed joint workshops involving Walmart and relevant state government departments to assess the sectoral potential of MSMEs and identify areas where they could be positioned more effectively for global trade.

Bryant informed Patel that more than 1.15 lakh MSMEs have been trained since 2019

under Walmart's Vriddhi programme. The company has set a target of training 1.70 lakh MSMEs by 2028.

The two sides also discussed identifying potential opportunities for Gujarat's MSMEs and artisans over the next three to four months.

The objective is to develop a practical roadmap for connecting state-based enterprises with international markets.

Patel, Bryant and members of the Gujarat delegation discussed the possibility of announcing the collaboration's roadmap at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2027.

Patel arrived in Washington after completing the San Francisco leg of his visit, where he held meetings with technology and business leaders as Gujarat seeks stronger international partnerships and investment.

# India's core industries clock 5.4 per cent growth

**NEW DELHI**

India's Index of Core Industries (ICI) recorded a 5.4 per cent growth in July this year compared to the same month of the previous year, driven by the strong performance of the iron ore, cement, and electricity sectors, according to figures released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Thursday.

The cement sector clocked a robust growth of 13.1 per cent during the month as demand stayed buoyant due to large government investments in big-ticket infrastructure projects such as highways, ports, and railways.

The production of iron ore surged by as much as 29.5 per cent in July. Owing to intensive use of iron ore in the

production process, and its contribution to industrial development, it has been included in the list of core industries as a new item in the revised series of ICI. Accordingly, the number of core industries has increased from eight to nine in the new series, which kicked in for the first time from last month.

Electricity generation grew by 9 per cent during July while coal production went up by 7.6 per cent. The output of steel and refinery products during the month increased by 2.9 per cent and 2.7 per cent respectively, the data showed.

However, natural gas, crude oil, and fertilisers witnessed negative growth in July this year.

The final index for the month of June 2026 has been



revised from 119.6 (Provisional Estimate) to 120.7. Accordingly, the year-on-year growth rate has been revised from 5.0 per cent to 6.0 per cent, according to the official statement. The cumulative growth rate of ICI during April-July 2026 now works out to 4.3 per cent compared to 1.5 per cent in the corresponding period of the previ-

# Alibaba Profit Plunges Amid AI Spending

**NEW DELHI**

Alibaba Group Holding Ltd has reported a sharp profit decline as the Chinese giant increases spending on artificial intelligence and computing infrastructure while its core e-commerce business faces weaker consumer demand.

The company reported a 9 per cent rise in revenue, broadly matching market expectations. Growth was supported partly by demand for computing capacity from its cloud business. However, net income fell more than 75 per cent to 10.5 billion yuan, or about \$1.6 billion.

Alibaba also reported a free-cash outflow exceeding \$6.6 billion, highlighting the financial pressure created by its investment in AI infrastructure and projects. The company has committed tens of billions of dollars to chips, data centres and AI-agent development as it seeks to strengthen its position in the AI race.

The results sent Alibaba's US-listed shares down about 4

**Alibaba's profits have plunged as AI spending collides with weaker Chinese consumer demand and pressure on its traditional e-commerce business.**

per cent in pre-market trading. The company has emerged as a Chinese AI player, with its Qwen family of models attracting global attention.

Under Chief Executive Officer Eddie Wu, Alibaba has accelerated its AI strategy by bringing most AI-related research and product teams under Alibaba Token Hub, a new business unit directly overseen by Wu.

At the same time, Alibaba is restructuring its business and selling non-core assets. Earlier this month, it disposed of its gaming unit Lingxi Games.

The company's challenge is to balance AI investment with profitability as subdued Chinese consumer spending continues to pressure its online retail operations.

# SAIL welcomes Mines and Minerals Amendment Act

**NEW DELHI**

Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) on Thursday welcomed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2026, notified by the Central Government on August 17, saying the reform will bring greater predictability to the fiscal regime and provide long-term policy certainty to the mineral sector.

SAIL said the amendment provides greater clarity and uniformity in mineral taxation and levies while addressing pending retrospective levies. The move is expected to provide greater certainty and confidence to the mining industry and encourage investment in the sector.

It also addresses pending retrospective levies, thereby providing greater certainty and confidence to the mining industry, it said. For SAIL, which operates substantial captive iron ore and coal mines, the reform is expected to improve the viability of its mining operations and facilitate investment and development of mines.

# US weekly jobless claims dip in latest week

**WASHINGTON**

The number of Americans filing claims for unemployment benefits slipped last week, suggesting that the labor market remains stable despite a surprise drop in employment in July.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits fell 6,000 to a seasonally adjusted 206,000 for the week ended August 15, the Labor Department said on Thursday. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast 210,000 claims for the latest week.

Claims are hovering in the lower end of their 189,000-230,000 range for this year, indicating that layoffs remain low even if hiring is soft. The U.S. jobless rate ticked down again last month to 4.1%, a historically low level.

# China's Baidu revenue falls for fifth straight quarter in Q2

**NEW DELHI**

Chinese technology company Baidu reported a fifth consecutive quarterly decline in revenue as weakness in its online marketing business continued to weigh on performance despite strong growth in artificial intelligence-related operations, according to a report.

According to an analysis of Japan Today, the search engine company posted second-quarter revenue of 31.3 billion yuan (\$4.6 billion), down 4 per cent from a year earlier, according to its unaudited financial results.

Meanwhile, operating income fell to 3 billion yuan in the three months ended June 30 from 3.3 billion yuan a year earlier, it said. Baidu has invested heavily in artificial intelligence in recent years, recruiting leading researchers and launching its Ernie chatbot, one of the country's earliest generative AI products.

Revenue from Baidu's AI business which includes AI applications and infrastructure services rose 25 per cent year-on-year to 12.5 billion yuan during the quarter. By contrast, revenue from online marketing services, historical-

ly the company's main source of cash flow, declined 19% from a year earlier to 13.1 billion yuan.

While our online marketing business remains under pressure, the growing momentum in our core AI-powered Business reaffirms Baidu's transition from an internet-centric company to an AI-first company, Chief Executive Robin Li said in a statement.

That AI momentum strengthens our confidence in our long-term growth potential, Li added.

Baidu's advertising business has come under pressure amid sluggish consumer spending in China, as companies cut marketing budgets in response to a slowing economy. Signs of weak consumption persisted in recent economic data. China's retail sales growth slowed in July, according to official figures released this week.

Additionally, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed retail sales up 0.6 per cent in July from a year earlier, below the 1.5 per cent growth forecast and slower than the 1 per cent increase recorded in June, according to the report.

# GOVT LAUNCHES MISSION KARMAYOGI CONFERENCE TO BOOST CAPACITY BUILDING

**NEW DELHI**

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) on Thursday commenced a two day National Conference on Mission Karmayogi for Mission Karmayogi Development Officers (MDOs) to strengthen institutional capacity building mechanisms and their effectiveness across the health sector.

The conference aims to equip MDOs to plan, implement and sustain capacity-building initiatives under Mission Karmayogi, the MoHFW said. The event provided a platform for institutional collaboration, peer learning and knowledge exchange among MDOs and stakeholders engaged in capacity building.

The conference held in collaboration with the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare (NIHFW), Capacity Building Commission (CBC) and Karmayogi Bharat (KB) focused its first day on aligning learning interventions with organisational needs, promoting competency based professional development and sharing best practices in im-

plementation.

Rakesh Kumar, Director (Training), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, highlighted that Mission Karmayogi represents a significant shift from the traditional rule-based approach towards a role-based, competency-driven and capacity-building-oriented approach to civil service development.

He emphasised that MDOs have a critical role in translating this vision into measurable institutional outcomes by identifying capacity-building requirements, facilitating appropriate learning interventions and strengthening a culture of continuous professional development within their respective organisations.

Highlighting the progress made under the Mission, Rakesh Kumar said that 21,627 course enrolments and 17,960 course completions had been recorded, reflecting the growing adoption of structured and technology-enabled learning across the Ministry.

He emphasised that the focus of capacity building should extend beyond completion of courses to enhancing competencies, improving workplace performance.

# India, Singapore Deepen Strategic Economic Partnership

**SINGAPORE**

India and Singapore have concluded a very productive Ministerial Roundtable meeting, with both sides discussing ways to expand their strategic partnership across advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, connectivity, digital technologies, fintech, skilling, green economy and clean energy.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said the fourth India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable brought together senior Indian and Singaporean ministers to explore new areas of cooperation and



strengthen existing economic and strategic ties.

Jaishankar participated in the meeting alongside Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and Elec-

tronics and Information Technology Jitin Prasada.

The Indian delegation also interacted with participants of the India-Singapore Business Roundtable, highlighting the importance of stronger government-to-business and business-to-business engagement.

“Our discussions explored deeper ties in advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, connectivity, digital, fintech, skilling, green economy and clean energy domains.— S Jaishankar

Earlier, the ministers called on Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong and discussed progress across various dimensions of bilateral relations. The discussions covered economic cooperation, digitalisation, connectivity, skills development and sustainability.

Jaishankar thanked Singapore Deputy Prime Minister

# HANUR SHOOTOUT: LET THE INQUIRY ESTABLISH THE TRUTH

The death of three persons in a shootout involving Forest Department personnel in the Hanur range of Chamara-janagar district recently has snowballed into a major political controversy, with the ruling Congress and Opposition BJP trading serious allegations during the ongoing session of the State Legislature. Amid the competing claims and counter-claims, the State Government has ordered a magisterial inquiry into the incident to establish what actually happened.

The inquiry is now crucial because several questions surrounding the shootout remain unanswered. The statements attributed to Forest Department officials and the account of the lone survivor appear to have raised more questions than they have answered. While the Forest Department has strongly defended the action of its personnel, maintaining that they opened fire after en-

countering allegedly armed poachers, the families of the deceased have rejected the claim and described the incident as a cold-blooded killing of innocent persons.

The Opposition BJP has seized upon the controversy and sought explanations from the government and the Forest Department. Questions have been raised over the circumstances leading to the firing, including why the personnel allegedly resorted to firing and whether the use of force could have been avoided or minimised. The demand to know why the firing was not aimed below the knees has also become part of the political debate.

However, political rhetoric cannot substitute for a proper investigation.

The fundamental question that remains is: what were the three persons doing deep inside the forest at that particular hour? What prompted the confrontation between them and the Forest

Department personnel? Were they actually carrying deer meat and sharp weapons, including country-made firearms, as alleged by the Forest Department? Were they involved in hunting

poachers and thereby justify the firing. The Forest Department, on the other hand, has stood by its personnel and maintained that they acted in the course of their duty. Both sides have pre-

the Forest Department team encountered the three persons, whether weapons and wildlife meat were actually recovered, whether there was an exchange of fire, and whether the use of lethal force was justified under the circumstances.

Until these facts emerge, it would be premature for anyone whether from the ruling party or the Opposition to pronounce a verdict.

Unfortunately, the incident has already become another battlefield for political mudslinging. The ruling party has defended the Forest Department personnel, while the Opposition has sought to turn the episode into a larger political controversy, even raising conspiracy theories before the facts have been conclusively established. Such statements only deepen public confusion and risk prejudicing the inquiry.

Elected representatives certainly have a duty to raise issues of public importance. But they also have a

greater responsibility to ensure that their statements do not interfere with or undermine an ongoing inquiry. When lives have been lost, the priority should be truth and justice not political mileage.

The intervention by neighbouring Tamil Nadu has added another dimension to the controversy. The Tamil Nadu Government has demanded a CBI probe and announced an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh each to the families of the three deceased. While humanitarian sympathy for the bereaved families is understandable, Karnataka should make it clear that matters concerning an incident within its territory and involving its officials are primarily for the State Government and its

investigative mechanisms to deal with.

Tamil Nadu would do well to respect Karnataka's jurisdiction rather than attempting to influence the course of an investigation.

At this stage, neither the Forest Department's version nor the allegations of the families and villagers can be accepted as the final truth. The only credible way forward is a transparent, impartial and time-bound inquiry.

Three lives have been lost. Their families deserve justice, and Forest Department personnel who were performing their duty also deserve protection if their actions are found to have been lawful and justified.

The truth must therefore emerge from evidence, not from political speeches. Until the preliminary report is placed before the public, political leaders would do well to exercise restraint. The people deserve answers, but they deserve facts not more confusion.



- SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM



wildlife, or were they innocent persons who happened to be in the forest for some other reason?

These are not questions that can be settled through political statements.

The villagers and relatives of the deceased have alleged that evidence was deliberately created or planted to portray the victims as

sented sharply contrasting versions of the same incident.

This is precisely why an impartial inquiry assumes significance.

The preliminary findings of the magisterial inquiry are expected to place at least some facts before the public. They could help establish the circumstances in which

## VARALAKSHMI: THE DIVINE MOTHER OF LOVE AND ABUNDANCE, AND THE SACREDNESS OF SHRAVAN

As the sacred month of Shravan arrives, homes and communities across India begin to take on a distinct rhythm—one defined by fragrance, color, prayer, and deep devotion. At the center of this seasonal transformation is the Varamahalakshmi festival, a time-honored tradition that brings the spiritual realm into the heart of everyday domestic life. On the surface, the festival is a vibrant celebration featuring rich silk sarees, decorated kalashas representing the Divine Mother, fragrant flowers, lamps, and families gathering to seek blessings. They pray for Lakshmi's grace in her many forms to attain wealth, health, nourishment, prosperity, and overall well-being. Beneath the physical elegance of these rituals, however, lies a far deeper understanding of who Lakshmi is, why she is welcomed into the home, and why Varalakshmi holds such profound significance during Shravan.

To fully appreciate Varalakshmi, one must first understand Lakshmi herself. In the Hindu tradition, Lakshmi is the Divine Mother associated with prosperity, beauty, nourishment, and auspiciousness. While she is widely recognized as the goddess of wealth, that singular description fails to capture the full breadth of her place in Hindu philosophy. Lakshmi represents all the elements that help a family and a community live well: food, health, knowledge, security, love, and the capacity to flourish. She is intrinsically linked to the resources that sustain physical existence and the general well-being that allows individuals to grow.

This multidimensional understanding is formally articulated in the traditional concept of the Ashta Lakshmis, or the eight forms of Lakshmi. Each form governs a distinct dimension of human experience, ranging from material wealth and food to knowledge, courage, progeny, success, and spiritual strength. The underlying philosophy is straightforward: a prosperous life cannot rely on money alone. While financial security is undeniably important, it must be accompanied by physical health, intellectual growth, emotional courage, physical nourishment, and meaningful relationships. Lakshmi, therefore, is not merely a deity who bestows currency; she embodies a holistic state of existence where all necessary components of human well-being are present and balanced.

This comprehensive view illuminates the specific significance of the name Varalakshmi. The word "Vara" signifies a boon or a divine blessing. Varalakshmi is Lakshmi in her aspect as the benevolent giver of blessings, and observing the Varamahalakshmi Vratam serves as an intentional prayer for family well-being, longevity, happiness, and peace. The ritual functions simultaneously as a request and an act of recognition. It asks for future grace while expressing deep gratitude for the blessings already present within the household.

This spiritual practice is elevated by its timing within Shravan, one of the most sacred months in the Hindu lunar calendar. Falling during the monsoon season, Shravan arrives just as rain replenishes the earth, causes vegetation to flourish, restores water sources, and reinvigorates agricultural activity. Historically, these natural shifts were directly tied to food security, economic livelihood, and domestic stability. Within Hindu cosmology, the rhythms of nature and the rhythms of spiritual life are deeply interconnected. Seasons carry their own spiritual character, establishing ideal conditions for prayer, fasting, reflection, and celebration.

The spiritual depth of Shravan is further enriched by its association with the grand narrative of the Samudra Manthan, or the churning of the cosmic ocean. According to tradition, the Devas and Asuras churned the ocean to obtain Amrita, the nectar of immortality. During this process, extraordinary treasures and divine beings emerged from the depths—including Lakshmi herself. However, before the ocean yielded its ultimate blessings, it released Halahala, a deadly poison capable of

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tual fullness. Water holds supreme significance during the monsoon, as it breathes life into the soil and sustains agriculture. Placing water at the core of a ritual dedicated to prosperity acknowledges the primary element that makes physical life possible. Similarly, offerings of rice, grains, fresh fruits, and cooked food represent the tangible fruits of human labor and natural generosity. Offering these everyday necessities transforms standard commodities into objects of sacred gratitude.

Crucially, this worship takes place within the domestic sphere rather than exclusively in public temples. The home itself is thoroughly cleaned, decorated, and converted into a sacred sanctuary. This underscores a foundational principle of Hindu philosophy: spirituality is not compartmentalized or distant from daily living. The divine can enter the kitchen, the dining table, and the quiet routines of family care. Cooking becomes an offering, sharing a meal becomes an act of community, and maintaining a household becomes a quiet form of spiritual service.

For generations, women have been the primary custodians of this tradition, passing its nuances down through direct participation rather than formal text. Daughters and granddaughters learn the prayers, recipes, and arrangements by watching their mothers and grandmothers. In doing so, they preserve not only a religious observance, but also family history, culinary heritage, artistic skills, and cultural memory. Varalakshmi serves as an enduring bridge between generations, honoring the maternal principle of nurturing and protecting life.

In a modern world that increasingly measures success solely through financial metrics, balance sheets, and material accumulation, the Varamahalakshmi festival offers a necessary recalibration.

destroying all creation. To save the universe, Lord Shiva stepped forward, consumed the poison, and held it safely in his throat. This act turned his neck blue, earning him the name Neelkanth and cementing Shravan's association with Shiva worship.

The convergence of these two elements within the same story provides a profound metaphor for human existence. Before abundance can emerge, toxicity and difficulty must be confronted. Before the nectar of prosperity is reached, the ocean of life must be churned through effort and patience. While Shiva absorbs the destructive forces to protect life, Lakshmi arises to nurture, adorn, and sustain it. Celebrating Varalakshmi during Shravan connects domestic prayers for prosperity directly to this cosmic story of protection, sacrifice, transformation, and preservation. This symbolism comes alive within the physical rituals of the Varalakshmi puja. At the center of the altar sits the sacred kalasha a vessel filled with clean water, adorned with mango leaves, and topped with a coconut. Far from being a simple decorative prop, the kalasha symbolizes life, potential, and spiri-



- PRADIVYA NAMBIAR

For millions of people living with advanced kidney disease, conventional dialysis remains an essential, life-sustaining treatment. When the kidneys lose their ability to filter blood adequately, this process takes over the critical responsibility of removing metabolic waste products and excess fluid from the body. Although effective, conventional hemodialysis presents significant physical and emotional hurdles for patients. Most notably, it relies on repeated needle access to the bloodstream via a fistula, graft, or catheter. For many individuals undergoing treatment multiple times a week, these recurrent needle pricks cause physical discomfort, heightened anxiety, and significant lifestyle disruption.

Driven by these challenges, biomedical engineering is pioneering an alternative paradigm: the implantable artificial kidney. Rather than viewing kidney care through the lens of external machines, researchers are exploring whether an implanted device could perform continuous filtration directly inside the body without relying on repeated vascular needle access. This vision represents a major milestone in nephrology research. The goal extends beyond the simple convenience of removing needles; it seeks to closely replicate the natural, uninterrupted function of human kidneys.

**The Mechanics of Natural Kidneys vs. Conventional Dialysis**

To understand the promise of an implantable device, one must appreciate the sheer sophistication of natural kidney function. Healthy kidneys work continuously 24 hours a day to filter blood, manage fluid volume, regulate essential electrolyte balances, and produce vital hormones.

By contrast, conventional hemodialysis operates intermittently. Patients typically attend scheduled sessions where blood is drawn from the body, routed through an external dialyzer to extract waste and fluid, and subsequently pumped back into circulation. Because this process happens over discrete sessions rather than continuously, patients experience fluctuating concentrations of toxins and flu-

## NEEDLE-FREE DIALYSIS: A NEW HOPE FOR KIDNEY PATIENTS



-DR. VIJAY GARG

ids between treatments. This fundamental difference has spurred intense research into bioengineered, wearable, and implantable kidney technologies that can provide seamless, round-the-clock support.

### How an Implantable Artificial Kidney Works?

An implantable artificial kidney



aims to integrate advanced filtration membranes with the body's natural cardiovascular system. Placed surgically inside the patient, the device utilizes the body's own blood pressure to drive circulation through tiny, highly specialized membranes. These micro-architectures are engineered to selectively allow waste molecules and excess water to pass through into an outlet system while safely retaining blood cells, vital proteins, and useful nutrients in circulation.

Understanding the term "needle-free" requires realistic expectations. It does not imply that conventional dialysis will vanish overnight or that current medical protocols are immediately obsolete. Instead, it outlines a future where dependence on invasive vascular pricks is significantly minimized. By shifting treatment from stationary, high-maintenance equipment to an internal, continuous support network, the overall burden of care drops dramatically, elevating the patient's daily quality of life.

### The Interdisciplinary Challenge: Materials and Engineering

Replicating an organ as complex as the human kidney requires deep interdisciplinary collaboration. Biomedical engineers, material scientists, nanotechnologists, and clinicians are uniting to address formidable obstacles:

Microscopic Membrane Selectivity, filtration membranes must operate at a nanometer scale to distinguish waste products from critical blood proteins. Biocompatibility, every material implanted within the bloodstream must prevent ad-

verse immune responses, inflammation, and cellular damage.

Thrombosis and Infection Prevention, blood flowing through artificial channels carries a risk of clotting or infection, demanding advanced anti-clogging surface coatings.

Power and Energy Constraints, unlike external dialysis units connected to wall outlets, an implanted system must operate efficiently with minimal internal power or rely entirely on natural blood flow mechanics.

Because an implantable kidney operates under such strict biological and mechanical constraints, early success in laboratory settings must undergo rigorous testing. Rigorously designed clinical trials are essential to verify that these compact devices remain durable, safe, and effective over long spans of time inside the human body.

### A Vision of Hope Grounded in Realism

News regarding artificial kidney breakthroughs understandably generates tremendous enthusiasm among patients and their families. The prospect of breaking free from rigid dialysis schedules and painful needle access is deeply meaningful. However, scientific progress is inherently deliberate. Translating a successful laboratory prototype into a standardized clinical intervention requires patient, evidence-based research. The appropriate perspective is one of measured optimism—celebrating scientific strides while acknowledging that routine adoption takes time. Ultimately, the measure of success for next-generation kidney care will not be defined merely by technological novelty. It will be defined by safety, reliability, and human impact. Conventional hemodialysis remains a life-saving foundation for current patients, and any adjustments to treatment plans should always be made in consultation with a qualified nephrologist. Yet, the trajectory of kidney replacement therapy is undeniably shifting.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Revolutionizing Kidney Care

A Breakthrough in Dialysis, the development of needle-free dialysis technology offers immense hope to thousands of kidney disease patients. Traditional treatment is often painful, invasive, and physically exhausting. This innovative, non-invasive alternative promises a significantly better quality of life and reduced infection risks. Healthcare authorities and private investors should support the clinical adoption and affordability of this ground-breaking technology to make it accessible to all.

- Hemalatha D.

### Protect Urban Greens

Save Our City Trees, Uncontrolled urban development is rapidly destroying our city's remaining green cover. Concrete pavements and frequent tree felling increase local temperatures and worsen air quality. Local municipalities must strictly enforce urban forestry laws and integrate green spaces into infrastructure planning. Preserving existing trees is not an aesthetic luxury; it is a vital necessity for public health and sustainable urban living.

- Ashley Sharan R.



# YOUTH AND AIR: SYMBOLS OF MOVEMENT, ENERGY AND FREEDOM

Youth is that stage of life when energy, enthusiasm, dreams and an intense desire to do something new are at their peak. Being young is not merely a matter of age; it is a mind set the willingness to think differently, move forward, embrace change and create new paths. In this sense, youth can be compared with air. Air is dynamic and free, and it cannot be confined within boundaries for long. Air cannot be seen, but its presence and impact can be felt everywhere. It moves the leaves of trees, carries clouds across the sky and helps sustain life in the environment. In much the same way, the power of youth may not always be visible, but when young people move forward with their ideas, talent and determination, the winds of change become clearly visible in society.

**Youth and the Power of Movement**  
Youth represents movement rather than stagnation. Young people question old methods and have the courage to search for new solutions. In technology, science, education, sports, art, entrepreneurship and social service, youthful energy opens the doors to new possibilities. However, speed alone is not enough. When air remains balanced, it is life-giving, but excessive force can also become destructive. Similarly, youthful energy needs direction, discipline and wisdom. The greater the energy, the greater the impor-

tance of giving it the right direction.

**Freedom Also Means Responsibility**  
Air cannot be permanently stopped. It finds its own path. In the same way, the young mind seeks freedom of thought. Young people want to ask questions, make their own choices and shape their own future. Such freedom is essential for the progress of society. But freedom does not mean irresponsibility. True freedom means understanding responsibilities along with rights. When young people combine independent thinking with discipline, sensitivity and social responsibility, their energy can become a powerful force for constructive change.

**Why Does Youthful Energy Need Direction?**  
Every young person possesses talent and potential, but talent does not automatically turn into success. Education, guidance, opportunities and a positive environment are essential. Families should not simply impose their expectations on young people; they should understand their interests and abilities. Schools and educational institutions should also move beyond examinations and marks and give greater importance to creativity, problem-solving, communication and life skills. If young people limit their energy only to entertainment or short-term achievements, much of their potential may re-



main unexplored. On the other hand, if they invest their energy in knowledge, skills, health, creativity and social service, they can transform not only their own lives but also the future of society.

**Youth Are the Winds of Change**  
History shows that major social and scientific changes have often been advanced by people who had the courage to challenge established ways of thinking. Even today,

the world needs young people who do more than seek employment; they should generate new ideas. They should not merely discuss problems but search for solutions. They should not think only about their own future but also care about the future of society and nature. Today's youth are deeply connected with the digital world and have access to enormous sources of information. But information and knowledge are not the same. Young people must learn to use tech-

nology for their growth rather than allowing technology to control their lives.

**Be Like the Air, Not Like a Storm**  
Young people can learn an important lesson from air. Air is dynamic, but it is also essential for life. It finds its own path while remaining part of nature's balance. Youthful energy should be similar—fast, independent and transformative, but at the same time sensitive and responsible. Young people are among the greatest sources of potential in any society. If they receive the right education, opportunities and trust, they can look at even seemingly impossible challenges from a new perspective. This is the most beautiful similarity between youth and air: both are symbols of movement, energy and freedom. Air cannot be imprisoned, and genuine youthful ideas cannot be restricted for long. What they need is not confinement, but the right direction.

Because when youthful energy flows in a positive direction, it does not merely become a breeze of change it can become a powerful force that shakes the inertia of society and creates new pathways for the future.

- DR. VIJAY GARG

## POLITICAL ETHICS MUST BE STRENGTHENED TO PRESERVE THE DIGNITY OF DEMOCRACY



India's democracy is one of the world's largest and most significant democratic systems. Through the constitutional right to vote, millions of citizens elect representatives to speak for their interests. From gram panchayats and municipalities to state legislatures and Parliament, elected representatives carry the responsibility of serving the people and upholding democratic values. The success of democracy, however, does not lie merely in conducting elections. It also depends on respecting the mandate of voters, prioritising public interest and maintaining transparency and accountability while in office. In recent years, instances of political realignment and changes in political loyalties among some elected representatives have generated public debate. Respect for the Voters' Mandate, voters often consider not only an individual candidate but also the political party, its policies, ideology and programmes while casting their ballots. Therefore, when an elected representative makes a significant political shift after an election, it is natural for voters to ask whether their electoral mandate is being respected. Political circumstances can be complex, and every change in political allegiance may have its own legal and political reasons. However, the impact of such changes on public trust deserves serious democratic discussion. Similar concerns sometimes arise during elections for presidents and vice-presidents of local bodies, where allegations of political pressure, influence or inducements may emerge. Such allegations should never be treated as established facts without verification. The relevant documents, evidence and legal procedures must be examined before reaching any conclusion. At the same time, raising questions about public affairs and encouraging democratic debate is an essential part of a healthy democracy. Criticism must remain responsible, evidence-based and respectful of the principle that an allegation is not the same as a proven offence. Understanding the Anti-Defection Law, India introduced the Anti-Defection Law to address political defections. The 52nd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1985 introduced the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution. The provisions primarily apply to members of Parliament and state legislatures. Under specified circumstances, a legislator may face disqualification for voluntarily giving up membership of a political party or voting contrary to the party's direction, subject to the provisions and exceptions contained in the law. The 91st Constitutional Amendment Act of 2003 further strengthened the anti-defection framework. The present provisions

provide for disqualification in specified circumstances, while also recognising certain constitutionally defined exceptions. It is important, however, not to generalise these provisions to local bodies. The anti-defection provisions under the Tenth Schedule directly concern Parliament and state legislatures. The rules governing disqualification and political changes among members of gram panchayats, town panchayats, municipalities and municipal corporations are governed by the relevant state laws and election regulations. Law Must Be Accompanied by Political Ethics, legal safeguards are important, but laws alone cannot preserve democratic morality. Political parties and elected representatives also have a responsibility to uphold transparency, accountability and ethical conduct. If an elected representative develops serious differences with the policies or leadership of their party, explaining their position clearly to the public is consistent with democratic principles. Whenever there is a fundamental change in political position, the trust placed by voters should remain an important consideration. Likewise, if allegations of corruption, financial wrongdoing or other illegal activities arise against a public representative, the matter should be examined by the appropriate legal authorities based on evidence. Public debate must always distinguish between an allegation and a proven offence. Voters Are the Real Strength of Democracy, in future elections, voters should exercise their democratic power responsibly. Personal influence or temporary promises should not be the sole basis for electoral decisions. Public service, integrity, responsiveness to people's problems, transparency and commitment to public welfare are equally important factors. Elected representatives receive their authority from the people and must therefore remain accountable to them. The vote is not merely a right exercised on election day, it is also a reminder of the public responsibility entrusted to a representative for the entire term of office. Governments and political parties may change in a democracy. Political differences are also inevitable. But respect for the people's trust, constitutional values and public interest should remain constant. Therefore, along with legal measures to address political defection, India needs stronger political ethics, greater transparency and greater accountability to citizens. Such a combination can strengthen public confidence and further uphold the dignity of Indian democracy.

- SHABBIR AHMED

## BJP'S NEW TEAM: A BLEND OF FRESH ENERGY, EXPERIENCE AND STRATEGIC BALANCE

With the announcement of his new national team, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National President Nitin Nabin has signaled that the party is moving towards reshaping its organization in accordance with the requirements of the emerging political landscape, rather than merely rearranging positions. The new team, announced on August 17, 2026, includes 13 National Vice Presidents, 8 National General Secretaries and 16 National Secretaries, along with wide-ranging changes at various levels of the organization. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also described the new team as a blend of organizational experience, energy and grassroots connect. To understand this team, it would not be enough to view it merely through the lens of "who has come and who has gone." It is more important to understand the long-term organizational strategy of the BJP, its reading of social equations and the political challenges it is likely to face in the elections ahead. The biggest message of Nitin Nabin's team is that youthful energy has not been brought in at the cost of experience; rather, new energy has been combined with experience. Such a balance is what makes a large political organization dynamic and resilient. The return of Ram Madhav as National Vice President is particularly significant in this context. His understanding of organization-building, ideological dialogue and strategic politics could prove valuable for the BJP. By assigning important responsibilities to senior leaders such as Vasundhara Raje Scindia, D. Purandeshwari, Baijayant Panda, Tirth Singh Rawat and others, it is clear that Nitin Nabin has not sidelined seniority and experience. This reflects an organizational approach that seeks to utilize accumulated experience in tune with changing circumstances.

On the other hand, assigning Smriti Irani the responsibility of National General Secretary is not merely a matter of bringing back an individual leader. Smriti Irani's political persona has been associated with an assertive style of communication, strong outreach to women voters and effective political communication at the national level. Her return is significant both as a political message and from the standpoint of organizational utility. Alongside her, leaders with considerable organizational experience, such as Vinod Tawde and Sunil Bansal, have been given the responsibility of General Secretaries. This points towards an effort to establish better coordination between organizational functioning and electoral management. The appointment of Piush Goyal as National Treasurer is also noteworthy. It indicates that, alongside political experience, the organization is giving importance to administrative, economic and professional competence. The continuation of B. L. Santosh as National General Secretary (Organization) ensures organizational continuity. In other words, Nitin Nabin has not adopted a simplistic policy of "remove the old and bring in the new." Wherever continuity was essential, it has been retained, while sufficient space has been created for change.

Another important aspect of the new team is social and regional representation. For the BJP, politics is no longer limited merely to winning elections; expanding the organization's acceptance and reach among different sections of society is equally important. The new team gives representation to women and various social communities, as well as regions ranging from North India to the Northeast and South India. According to reports, women and representatives of minority communities have also received significant representation. Another important signal can be seen here: the BJP is now seeking to reach beyond its traditional support base and establish dialogue with newer groups of voters. Young people, first-time voters, urban professionals, technology-oriented sections and women with growing political aspirations are increasingly influencing electoral outcomes. The organization therefore needs leaders who do not merely deliver political speeches but understand the language and aspirations of a changing society. This direction is clearly visible in



the BJP's new team. The changes made particularly at the levels of the Yuva Morcha and Mahila Morcha indicate that the organization wants to engage with the voters of the future from today itself. It would be a mistake to view Generation Z merely as a social-media generation. This generation has distinct expectations regarding employment, technology, entrepreneurship, transparency, nationalism, individual freedom and opportunities. If the BJP succeeds in establishing a genuine dialogue with this generation, the benefits may extend far beyond the next election and influence the political landscape of the 2030s and 2040s as well. The biggest political test for the new team, however, will come in Uttar Pradesh and other electoral states. The strength of the organization in a large state like Uttar Pradesh has a direct bearing on national politics. With the forthcoming elections in view, the BJP faces not only the challenge of countering anti-incumbency sentiments but also the need to navigate changing opposition alliances, caste equations, aspirations of young people and local issues. Therefore, giving adequate representation to Uttar Pradesh and various other states in the national team is a natural electoral strategy. It is also important to note that the purpose of the new team cannot be confined to the elections of 2026-27. The BJP's vision certainly extends to the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and beyond. The goal of Viksit Bharat 2047, a developed India by 2047, can acquire a sustainable political and social foundation only when the par-

ty organization continues to bring successive generations into its fold. From this perspective, Nitin Nabin's team can also be viewed as part of the preparation for 2029 and as an organizational and political foundation for the journey towards 2047. At the level of the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speculation about a possible reshuffle or expansion is also natural, particularly as the government has to balance the political equations of upcoming states with its administrative priorities. However, it would not be appropriate to treat the appointment of any particular individual as certain in the absence of an official decision. Political circles may discuss the possible future role of experienced leaders such as Anurag Thakur, but the final decision will rest with the Prime Minister and the BJP leadership. In Narendra Modi's political approach, generating fresh energy through the allocation of new responsibilities between the organization and the government has been a recurring feature. Therefore, if any significant change takes place in the future, it should be viewed not as a surprise but as part of a broader strategic approach. In reality, the biggest message of Nitin Nabin's new team is not a "reset" but a "recalibration", that is, not completely transforming the organization, but rebalancing its direction and momentum according to the changing political environment. The effort appears to be to bring together the experience of senior leaders, the energy of youth, the growing role of women, regional representation, social diversity and professional competence on a common platform. The fact that a large number of new faces have reportedly been given responsibilities among the 65 office-bearers also reflects the pace of generational transition within the organization. The real challenge now is not for those who have received positions, but for those who can deliver results. The new team will ultimately be judged on how effectively it strengthens the organization at the grassroots, how robustly it builds communication between workers and leadership, how deeply it understands people's real concerns beyond the noise of social media, and how successfully it earns the trust of new social groups, including young people and women. Overall, the team presents a picture of a BJP that seeks to make experience its legacy, youthful energy its future and social diversity a means of expanding its reach. If Nitin Nabin succeeds in transforming the capabilities of this team into a shared organizational mission, the change will go beyond merely altering the list of BJP office-bearers. It could translate into visible changes in the party's working style, public outreach and electoral strategy. The forthcoming elections will be the first test of this experiment, while 2029 will provide a much larger assessment. For now, it can be said that the BJP has attempted to give a new direction to its organization. The responsibility of transforming that direction into public trust now rests on the shoulders of Nitin Nabin and his new team.

- LALIT GARGG

Quick Read



Jalpaiguri Teacher arrested for making drugs in school

**CH NEWS, KOLKATA**  
Jalpaiguri District Police arrested government high school teacher Ranjit Sikdar and suspected buyer Dheeraj Mahato after raiding Sikdar's rented house near Chhochhariya petrol pump in Nagrakata late on Wednesday. Police recovered about 67 grams of raw material for making the banned drug brown sugar, along with special white cloth, packing plastic and other manufacturing items. Around ₹8.39 lakh in cash, including some fake notes, was seized. Sikdar, from Bamangola in Malda, has a past drug-related jail record and was under surveillance after STF and internal tips. Both accused will be produced in court, with police seeking remand to probe possible links to a larger gang.

Maharashtra drivers failing Marathi test gets deadline

**CH NEWS, MAHARASHTRA**  
Maharashtra's transport department began on-ground checks on Thursday, targeting taxi and autorickshaw drivers unable to show working knowledge of Marathi. Flying squads of the Mumbai RTO acted outside Dadar railway station, issuing show-cause notices and giving non-compliant drivers one month to learn the language and explain why further action should not be taken. Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik said drivers who still fail after the notice could face three-month suspension of licence and badge, with repeated non-compliance leading to cancellation. Around 1.25–1.65 lakh drivers have completed Marathi training and received certificates, but distribution has caused long queues and chaos at RTOs.

ICICI Banker kills wife, sister and then shot himself

**CH NEWS, LUCKNOW**  
ICICI bank relationship manager Divya Mishra was shot dead by her husband, Manas Vajpayee, outside her Gomti Nagar branch on Thursday. Police said Vajpayee waited in an auto, fired as she stepped out of a car, then fled to Husaria, where he shot his sister Sheeba Bajpai and killed himself. Before the killings, he posted a WhatsApp status claiming his wife cheated, saying he would kill her, himself and his sister. ADCP Amol Murkut said the couple had issues and divorce proceedings were underway. Five police teams are investigating, checking CCTV and other evidence.

SATHEESAN SEEKS CENTRE SUPPORT

# Kerala CM seeks fairer Centre-State relations

**KERALA**  
At the 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting in Chennai, chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Kerala raised critical demands for greater central financial support and an equitable federal framework across healthcare, infrastructure, and environmental defense. Highlighting a stark fiscal gap in healthcare, Kerala revealed that it spent ₹1,493 crore under Ayushman Bharat during the last policy year but received only ₹151 crore from the National Health Authority—leaving the state to shoulder nearly 90 per cent of the total costs. In response, Kerala advocated for state-specific premiums, alignment with the National Food Security Act database, and central support recalibrated to actual state expenditure. The state also pressed for immediate operational relief for public transport, asking for complete toll exemptions or concessional rates for Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) buses, which incurred over ₹2.16 crore in toll expenses in a single

# BJP hits back at Congress over ‘back foot’ remark

BJP rejected Congress claims, said Opposition blocked Parliament debate on exam leaks and student protests during Monsoon Session.

HYDERABAD

The party's response came after Congress General Secretary K.C. Venugopal, following a Congress Working Committee meeting, claimed the government was under significant pressure from the Opposition over major national issues, including examination paper leaks and student agitations. "The agitation carried out by the students of this country and the way in which the Government of India has dealt with that agitation, the Congress Working Committee unanimously opined that the sessions held in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were 100 per cent successful for the Opposition parties, and the government was totally on the back foot on that issue. Basically, these educational issues," Venugopal said at a press conference. BJP spokesperson T.R. Srinivas strongly rejected the remarks, accusing Venugopal of being out of touch with the government's actions on education. "K.C. Venugopal, in



"If we were out of sync, why ask our former Education Minister to step down, revamp NTA and ensure accountability?"  
- T.R. Srinivas, BJP leader

his CWC meeting, said that the government is on the back foot with respect to the students' issue. Oh my God, Venugopal, you are so out of touch with the government's policies and decisions," Srinivas told IANS. He pointed to

steps such as seeking accountability, mid-course correction and revamping the National Testing Agency (NTA), and asked, "If we were so out of sync, then why would we request our honourable former Education Minister to step down, undertake a mid-course correction, revamp the entire NTA, and ensure accountability? Please talk with facts before saying anything." Srinivas argued that students need practical solutions, not political exploitation of

their distress. "Students need solutions and not political misappropriation in times of distress. We don't do distress politics, but listen to the students and find solutions," he said. He also accused the Opposition of failing to use the Monsoon Session to raise student-related issues in Parliament. "We wanted to debate this issue in the Parliament. Where were you then?" he questioned. Launching a sharp personal attack, the BJP leader referred to a protest by Opposition MPs led by Congress's Pawan Khara outside Parliament, where they carried toy monkeys, carrying two other monkeys, were dancing outside the Parliament. Instead of blaming us, think about what you did," he said. The BJP maintained it was willing to discuss student concerns and examine shortcomings in the examination system, but alleged the Opposition chose confrontation and demonstrations instead of allowing a substantive parliamentary debate.



# Bihar board plans ₹112 crore Modi temple

BIHAR

A devotional event featuring the recitation of "Modi Chalisa" and the worship of a cutout of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was held at the Press Club of India in New Delhi, sparking controversy after videos went viral on social media. The footage showed participants chanting hymns and treating the PM's image in a god-like manner, prompting questions about the nature and approval of the gathering. The Press Club of India swiftly clarified that it had not organised the programme. In a statement posted on X, the club said the hall had been rented out for a press conference by an external organisation. However, when the organisers violated the terms of the rental agreement, club authorities intervened and stopped the event. The function was organised by Rajan Singh, vice-president of the Bihar State Transgender

Welfare Board. Speaking to reporters, Singh defended the event, saying it was an expression of gratitude toward PM Modi for policies benefiting the transgender community. He claimed that for the first time, the community had received rights and employment opportunities under the current government. Singh also announced plans to construct a temple dedicated to "Lord Shri Narendra Modi ji" in Bihar. He said the project would cost ₹112 crore and spread over five acres of land. When asked about criticism over deifying a political leader, he said, "Nobody should criticise it... This government, for the first time, provided rights to transgender people; they are getting employment." He further addressed controversy around the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Act, alleging that opposition parties, not the transgender community, were criticising the law.

# CM can't dismiss ED charges as political: Ravneet Singh

CHANDIGARH

BJP leader Ravneet Singh Bittu on Thursday said Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann cannot brush aside serious allegations by simply calling them politically motivated, after the CM's remarks on a communication from the Enforcement Directorate (ED). "These are not allegations made by a political party or an individual sitting outside the system. The Enforcement Directorate is a premier investigative agency of the country. If the agency has sought information from the Punjab Police or raised specific issues, the Chief Minister should allow the competent authorities to examine them instead of attempting to settle the matter through political statements," Bittu said in a statement. He said the CM's repeated

claim that every investigation involving his government or its political associates is politically motivated raises more questions than it answers. "If everything is false, then put the facts and documents in the public domain. If there is nothing to hide, there should be no fear of an investigation. The people of Punjab deserve answers, not accusations against investigating agencies," Bittu said. Bittu added that holding constitutional office comes with greater responsibility to answer questions about government functioning. "You are the Chief Minister of Punjab. You cannot selectively demand accountability from others while refusing to answer questions raised about your own government. The office demands accountability before the public." He said



investigating agencies must be allowed to discharge their statutory duties independently, with outcomes decided on evidence and law. "If the Chief Minister believes that the allegations are baseless, let the investigation proceed and let the evidence establish the truth. Political rhetoric cannot substitute for an answer to an official investigation," he said. Bittu further stressed that public office cannot be used as a shield against scrutiny. "Resignation is not a substitute for an investigation, but neither is the Chief Minister's chair a licence to evade questions. If you want to give opinions on accountability and investigations, first place the relevant facts before the people and the competent authorities. Punjab has the right to know the truth," he added.

# Massive search underway for 7 missing Andhra fishermen

AMARAVATI,

A large search operation is underway in the Bay of Bengal for seven fishermen from Andhra Pradesh who went missing after their boat ran into trouble earlier this month, officials said on Thursday. Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu said the effort involves two Dornier aircraft, a helicopter, and seven boats of the Navy and the Coast Guard, with continuous sorties over potential areas. Navy boats have been deployed for an extensive search from Visakhapatnam towards Paradip, while a Navy vessel is also scanning the port area. Dornier aircraft from Vi-



- AT A GLANCE**
- Seven fishermen missing since August 3.
  - Navy, Coast Guard search with aircraft, boats.
  - Operation covers Visakhapatnam–Paradip, port areas.
  - Accident 12 nautical miles off coast.
  - CM seeks regular family updates, monitoring.

sakhapatnam, Kolkata and Chennai, along with a Navy helicopter from Kolkata, are being used in the operation. "We are using all available resources to search for the missing fishermen with constant coordination between the Navy, Coast Guard, and the Fisheries Department," the minister said, adding that the search will continue until the fishermen are brought back safely. Home and Disaster Management Minister V. Anitha earlier directed officials to intensify the search for missing fishermen from Dr B. R. Ambedkar Konaseema district. Officials told her the boat met with an accident about 12 nautical miles off the coast, after which

one fisherman, Appanna, went missing. She said all resources must be used to locate him safely and reunite him with his family, and stressed greater vigilance for fishermen venturing out to sea. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday reviewed the operation and asked officials to step up efforts to trace the missing fishermen. The boat, carrying fishermen from Odalarevu, Dummalapeta and Vasalathippa villages in Alavaram mandal, had left on August 3 and was due back on August 12. Fishing boats from Kakinada, Bhairavapalem, Visakhapatnam and Paradip have been alerted to help gather information.

# Kerala to move SC against highway curbs



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala will approach the Supreme Court against its recent order restricting construction along national highways, Public Works Minister P.K. Basheer said on Thursday, arguing the directive is impractical in a densely populated state with scarce land and could affect thousands of homes and businesses. The Supreme Court, in a suo motu case triggered by a fatal road accident in North India, directed that residential construction should not be permitted within 40 metres and commercial establishments within 75 metres on either side of the centre line of national highways. The order also envisages keeping additional land vacant for service roads and adjoining areas to regulate access and improve road safety. Basheer said Kerala's circumstances are fundamentally different from those that led to the court's intervention. He noted that in the original case, vehicles could enter the highway from various points

along the service road, a risk that has since been addressed by restricting entry and exit to designated points, including in Kerala. "Given Kerala's special circumstances, it is not possible to leave such large stretches of land free for construction. It is not practical. Kerala will directly place its concerns before the Supreme Court. The state government will take a clear and firm stand on the matter," he said. The government is expected to highlight Kerala's unusually high population density and limited land availability compared with most other states. Basheer warned that if the directive remains unchanged, hundreds of acres of private land and thousands of houses and commercial establishments from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram could be affected. The issue gains added importance as six-laning work on National Highway 66 progresses and several new projects recommended by the National Highways Authority of India could be impacted.

Quick Read

seven-Year-Old dies, neck trapped in bus door accident

**CH NEWS,** Vadodara  
A seven-year-old boy died after his neck became trapped in the hydraulic door of a luxury bus at a repair garage near Suryanagar-Tarsali bypass. CCTV captured the child hanging from the door, but crucial footage before the incident was missing, raising questions. Police have begun investigating all possibilities. DCP Abhishek Gupta said preliminary findings suggest the boy may have become trapped while trying to open the door.

Class 10 student alleges abduction, assault

**CH NEWS,** Bhagalpur  
A Class 10 student in Sultanganj, Bhagalpur, alleged that Kamlesh abducted her at gunpoint while she was going to coaching on Wednesday afternoon. She said he took her to Kathara, attempted rape and assaulted her. Police detained Kamlesh and his brother Durgesh after the complaint. The accused's father, Uday Yadav, is a sub-inspector in Samastipur. Police said an FIR will be registered and legal action taken. Investigation into the brothers' criminal background is underway.

10 Schools shut after stray dog attacks Children

**CH NEWS,** Chamoli  
Panic has spread in Naryanbagar after stray dogs reportedly attacked children, residents and animals. Authorities have ordered 10 schools to remain closed for two days as a safety measure. Students will attend classes online during the closure. Teams have been deployed to catch the dogs, control the situation. The attacks have raised concern among local residents, with officials taking precautionary steps to protect children, prevent further incidents.

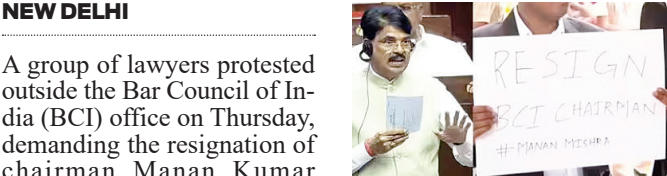
## Lawyers protest against BCI Chief over NALSAR row

**NEW DELHI**  
A group of lawyers protested outside the Bar Council of India (BCI) office on Thursday, demanding the resignation of chairman Manan Kumar Mishra. The protest followed criticism of the council's now-withdrawn order targeting the enrolment of NALSAR University's 2026 graduating batch. Heavy police deployment was seen near the office as lawyers raised slogans and held placards seeking accountability. The demonstration was organised by the All-India Young Advocates Association and supported by the Cockroach Janta Party. Advocate Raman Sharma said the protest was being led by lawyers to highlight concerns within their own professional body. Protesters questioned Mishra's long tenure and demanded greater attention to the welfare and concerns of lawyers and law students. The controversy began after the BCI directed State Bar Councils not to enrol NALSAR's graduating students following a campaign over the invitation of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant to the university's convocation. The order was later withdrawn after criticism, with the BCI saying that the vast majority of students were innocent. Lawyers at Thursday's protest also raised wider issues, including lawyer welfare, stipends, chambers, the Advocates Act and regulation of law colleges. Advocate Umesh Kumar alleged that professional concerns were being neglected while political issues received greater attention. The Bombay Bar Association has separately demanded Mishra's resignation over the NALSAR episode. Mishra later apologised, saying, "If anything connected with the present controversy, any of my words, or letter, has hurt the feelings of our law students, I sincerely regret and apologise for the same." Chief Justice Surya Kant had also criticised the BCI order as unnecessary and supported students' right to protest. The issue has now widened into a debate over accountability, student rights and the functioning of the legal regulator.

MAHARASHTRA LOOSE OIL WARNING

## Maharashtra Warns Consumers Against Buying Loose Oil

**MUMBAI**  
Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe has urged people not to buy loose or unsealed edible oil, calling it unsafe. The warning came as the FDA issued a compliance order for the edible oil sector after finding several violations, including adulteration, poor packaging and improper storage and transport. The order applies to oil producers, processors, packers, importers, supermarkets, online sellers and retailers. It covers commonly used oils such as groundnut, mustard, sunflower, rice bran, palm, coconut and maize. Mundhe said consumers buying packed oil should check the label, manufacturing and expiry dates, and make sure the package is sealed properly. Old or reused packaging should be avoided by consumers. During 2025-26, the FDA collected 1,247 edible oil samples and analysed 1,142. Inspections found 77 substandard samples and 15 cases of misbranding. The department also seized 3.20 lakh kg of stock worth Rs 5.31 crore. Officials found violations including unlicensed businesses, adulteration, high acidic value and high trans-fat levels across the edible oil industry statewide. Mundhe said mustard oil cannot be mixed with other edible oils, and retailers should reject unsealed products. He also warned against using old or rusted tins and transporting edible oil in tankers previously used for non-edible oil or hazardous materials. Oil should be protected from direct sunlight and strong odours during storage and transport. Repeated heating and reuse can also form harmful compounds. The commissioner said food safety violations can bring strict penalties, while operating without a licence can attract a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh. He said the campaign aims to improve safety across Maharashtra.



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| Major Takeaways                            |                                         |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| ■ FDA warns against loose edible oil.      | ■ 77 samples were found sub-standard.   |
| ■ 1,247 samples were collected in 2025-26. | ■ Stock worth Rs 5.31 crore was seized. |

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## Delhi launches programme to strengthen MSMEs

Delhi launches a major MSME training programme, targeting over 30,000 businesses with modern skills, technology, finance and wider market access

**NEW DELHI**  
Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday launched a Mega Capacity Building Programme aimed at helping micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) gain modern skills, technology, finance and wider markets. The programme took place at Anuvrat Bhawan under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance scheme today. Gupta said the training drive supports the government's four-pillar reform plan covering policy, process, performance and partnership. She said stronger cooperation between the government and entrepreneurs could give momentum to Delhi's economy.



| IN FOCUS                                    |  |
|---------------------------------------------|--|
| ■ 30,000+ MSMEs to get training.            |  |
| ■ ₹49.74 crore approved for Delhi.          |  |
| ■ 10,000+ firms to join digital platforms.  |  |
| ■ ₹4,806 crore in loan guarantees approved. |  |

## Tharoor panel seeks update to old passport law

**NEW DELHI**  
A Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs has discussed ways to modernise India's passport system, including e-passports and police verification. The panel, headed by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, also considered whether the Passports Act, 1967, needs to be updated to match present-day needs and technology. Speaking after the meeting, Tharoor said the discussions were detailed and covered several issues related to passport services, citizenship and travel documents. He said around 15 MPs attended the meeting and examined different aspects of the existing system. The committee was briefed by officials from the Ministry of External Affairs on passport issuance and the use of e-passports. Several members reportedly felt that the 1967 law is now outdated and requires revision after more than five decades. Tharoor described the need for



"It was a very thorough, comprehensive and detailed discussion on the passport system."  
- Shashi Tharoor, MP

changes as overdue, but made it clear that the committee has not reached a final conclusion. He said the Ministry of External Affairs would have further work to do before any decision is taken. The committee also looked at police verification, which is an important part of the passport application process. Tharoor said members had earlier spoken with passport officials during visits to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. These interactions helped the panel identify problems and areas that may require further attention. The meeting is part of the committee's continuing review of India's passport system. Its recommendations could help improve services, reduce delays and make passport procedures more suited to modern technology. The discussions on e-passports and possible changes to the old law are expected to continue as the panel gathers more information before preparing its final recommendations.



## Amit shah announces high court bench in Ladakh

**LADAKH**  
Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday announced that the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the establishment of a bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir in Ladakh. Shah said the decision is aimed at improving access to justice for people living in the remote areas of the Union Territory by reducing the time and distance involved in accessing legal services. In a post on X, Shah said the government is committed to the all-round development of Ladakh and to ensuring constitutional safeguards for the Union Territory. He said the new High Court bench would significantly enhance access to justice for citizens who are entitled to legal services. Ladakh became a separate Union Territory without a legis-



lature after the Centre abrogated Articles 370 and 35A on August 5, 2019, and reorganised the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories. Jammu and Kashmir was created as a Union Territory with a legislature, while Ladakh was formed without a legislature. The announcement comes amid the Centre's focus on strengthening infrastructure and connectivity in the Union Territory. The decision to establish a High Court bench is expected to make it easier for residents to pursue legal matters without having to undertake long journeys outside the region. Meanwhile, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved several major infrastructure projects. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs cleared four railway multi-tracking projects in West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu at an estimated cost of Rs 9,450 crore. The Cabinet also approved the upgradation of the Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa section of NH-22 in Bihar to four-lane standards, involving a capital investment of Rs 3,590.73 crore. The Ladakh High Court bench decision is being viewed as another step towards improving public services and strengthening access to justice for residents of the strategically important Union Territory.

## Manipur naga protest turns violent

**IMPHAL**  
A protest demanding justice for six Naga civilians allegedly killed during the ongoing Manipur conflict turned tense in Kanglatongbi on Thursday. Security forces, including Rapid Action Force personnel, reportedly fired tear gas shells to disperse protesters, leaving four people injured. The wounded were taken to hospitals in Imphal for treatment. The sit-in was organised by the United Naga Council (UNC), with members of indigenous communities demanding action against those responsible for the killings. Protesters also called for an impartial investigation into the deaths and questioned the use of force during the demonstration. The six civilians were allegedly abducted from Kangpokpi district on May 13. Their bodies were recovered on June 10 near a Kuki-Zo vil-

lage. The recovery came a day after 14 Kuki individuals, who were allegedly abducted by armed groups in Senapati district nearly a month earlier, were released. The latest confrontation has added to tensions in the violence-hit state, where communities continue to demand justice and accountability. Protesters maintained that the deaths of the six civilians must be properly investigated and that those responsible should face action. The use of tear gas during Thursday's demonstration has further intensified concerns over the handling of protests in the region. The incident also highlights the continuing mistrust among communities affected by the conflict. With four protesters injured, calls for an impartial probe into the civilian deaths and the security response are expected to remain at the centre of the dispute.

lature after the Centre abrogated Articles 370 and 35A on August 5, 2019, and reorganised the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories. Jammu and Kashmir was created as a Union Territory with a legislature, while Ladakh was formed without a legislature. The announcement comes amid the Centre's focus on strengthening infrastructure and connectivity in the Union Territory. The decision to establish a High Court bench is expected to make it easier for residents to pursue legal matters without having to undertake long journeys outside the region. Meanwhile, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved several major infrastructure projects. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs cleared four railway multi-tracking projects in West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu at an estimated cost of Rs 9,450 crore. The Cabinet also approved the upgradation of the Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa section of NH-22 in Bihar to four-lane standards, involving a capital investment of Rs 3,590.73 crore. The Ladakh High Court bench decision is being viewed as another step towards improving public services and strengthening access to justice for residents of the strategically important Union Territory.

| Major Takeaways                            |                                         |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| ■ FDA warns against loose edible oil.      | ■ 77 samples were found sub-standard.   |
| ■ 1,247 samples were collected in 2025-26. | ■ Stock worth Rs 5.31 crore was seized. |

lakh kg of stock worth Rs 5.31 crore. Officials found violations including unlicensed businesses, adulteration, high acidic value and high trans-fat levels across the edible oil industry statewide. Mundhe said mustard oil cannot be mixed with other edible oils, and retailers should reject unsealed products. He also warned against using old or rusted tins and transporting edible oil in tankers previously used for non-edible oil or hazardous materials. Oil should be protected from direct sunlight and strong odours during storage and transport. Repeated heating and reuse can also form harmful compounds. The commissioner said food safety violations can bring strict penalties, while operating without a licence can attract a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh. He said the campaign aims to improve safety across Maharashtra.

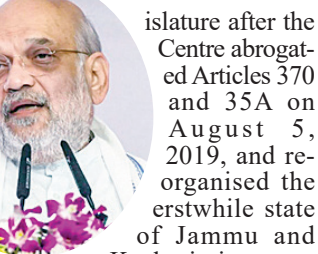
## CBI arrests man wanted in parliament impersonation case

**NEW DELHI**  
The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested Jitendra Pathak, a proclaimed offender accused of impersonating an employee of the Lok Sabha Secretariat. Pathak had reportedly remained absconding for about 10 years and was finally arrested in Ludhiana, Punjab, on August 19. The CBI had registered the case in July 2009 against Pathak and others for allegedly cheating a private person by promising employment in Parliament in return for Rs 50,000. After completing its investigation, the agency filed a chargesheet against Pathak and another accused in December 2009. Pathak did not appear before the trial court after the chargesheet was filed. Despite repeated efforts, investigators could not trace him for several years. Following the required legal process, the trial court declared him a proclaimed offender on September 28, 2016. The CBI said information gathered during field verification indicated that Pathak was living in Ludhiana. Acting on these inputs, the agency conducted an operation supported by technical analysis and arrested him. His arrest marks a major development in a case that had remained pending for years. In a separate case, the CBI also arrested Assistant DGFT official Hemlata Hedau in Haryana in an alleged bribery matter. The agency said Hedau allegedly demanded Rs 30,000 to process an Export Promotion Capital Goods authorisation file. The CBI laid a trap on August 19 and allegedly caught her while demanding and accepting the money. Both cases highlight the agency's continuing action against corruption and long-pending criminal cases. There is no direct quote from Jitendra Pathak or a CBI official in the information you provided.

## Amit shah announces high court bench in Ladakh

**LADAKH**  
Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday announced that the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the establishment of a bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir in Ladakh. Shah said the decision is aimed at improving access to justice for people living in the remote areas of the Union Territory by reducing the time and distance involved in accessing legal services. In a post on X, Shah said the government is committed to the all-round development of Ladakh and to ensuring constitutional safeguards for the Union Territory. He said the new High Court bench would significantly enhance access to justice for citizens who are entitled to legal services. Ladakh became a separate Union Territory without a legis-

**The Union Cabinet has approved a Jammu and Kashmir High Court bench in Ladakh, aimed at improving access to justice and reducing travel time for residents.**



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## Pawan Kalyan absences fuel NDA rift speculation



**AMARAVATI**  
Questions have emerged over the stability of Andhra Pradesh's ruling NDA alliance as Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has missed several Cabinet meetings and public events attended by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. His repeated absence has led to speculation about differences between the Jana Sena leader and the TDP chief. Kalyan has reportedly skipped at least four Cabinet meetings in recent weeks, including an event linked to new buildings and roads in the Amaravati capital region. He has also stayed away from Assembly sessions. His last public appearance with Naidu was at the Bhogapuram Airport inauguration on August 1, which was also attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Political observers believe the absences could be connected to differences over seat-sharing for upcoming local body elections. Sources in Jana Sena said Kalyan wants a larger share of seats and some civic corporations for his party. The TDP, however, is reportedly reluctant to give up more constituencies because of concerns among its grassroots workers. Jana Sena has also pointed to Kalyan's health problems following shoulder surgery as a reason for his absence. A senior party leader said Cabinet meetings require long hours of sitting and that Kalyan has been avoiding them on health grounds.

MAHARASHTRA LOOSE OIL WARNING

## Maharashtra Warns Consumers Against Buying Loose Oil

**MUMBAI**  
Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe has urged people not to buy loose or unsealed edible oil, calling it unsafe. The warning came as the FDA issued a compliance order for the edible oil sector after finding several violations, including adulteration, poor packaging and improper storage and transport. The order applies to oil producers, processors, packers, importers, supermarkets, online sellers and retailers. It covers commonly used oils such as groundnut, mustard, sunflower, rice bran, palm, coconut and maize. Mundhe said consumers buying packed oil should check the label, manufacturing and expiry dates, and make sure the package is sealed properly. Old or reused packaging should be avoided by consumers. During 2025-26, the FDA collected 1,247 edible oil samples and analysed 1,142. Inspections found 77 substandard samples and 15 cases of misbranding. The department also seized 3.20 lakh kg of stock worth Rs 5.31 crore. Officials found violations including unlicensed businesses, adulteration, high acidic value and high trans-fat levels across the edible oil industry statewide. Mundhe said mustard oil cannot be mixed with other edible oils, and retailers should reject unsealed products. He also warned against using old or rusted tins and transporting edible oil in tankers previously used for non-edible oil or hazardous materials. Oil should be protected from direct sunlight and strong odours during storage and transport. Repeated heating and reuse can also form harmful compounds. The commissioner said food safety violations can bring strict penalties, while operating without a licence can attract a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh. He said the campaign aims to improve safety across Maharashtra.

## Jadavpur university clash sparks tension

**KOLKATA**  
Tension continued around Jadavpur University on Thursday after a clash between the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and Left-backed student groups over a general body meeting. The violence later spilled onto Kolkata streets, with rival groups staging protests amid heavy police and CRPF deployment. The confrontation began late Wednesday during a meeting of the Faculty of Engineering and Technology Students' Union. Members of ABVP and Left groups, including SFI, DSF and DSO, accused each other of attacks and bringing outsiders onto the campus. Several students were injured and taken to KPC Medical College and Hospital for treatment.

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He now sits just one single goal behind Dallas striker Petar Musa in the race for the coveted Golden Boot award, which Messi successfully claimed last year. Fans across the globe continue to send their best wishes to the Argentine icon as he navigates this tough personal chapter while maintaining his brilliant form on the football pitch.





## ‘Toxic’ English Trailer Focuses More on Its World

Yash’s Toxic English trailer focuses on its fictional world, period setting and story, offering international viewers a clearer introduction.

The English trailer of Yash-starrer Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups has taken a different approach from the Kannada version, giving more attention to the film’s fictional world than its lead actor.

The new trailer, released for international audiences on Wednesday, is shorter than the Kannada trailer released on August 8. However, it includes two new snippets and presents the story in a more detailed and atmospheric manner.

The Kannada trailer introduced Yash prominently in his dual roles as Raya and Ticket, with several action sequences. The English version keeps much of the action but builds the setting more carefully. It takes viewers into a fictionalised Goa during the final years of Portuguese colonial rule.

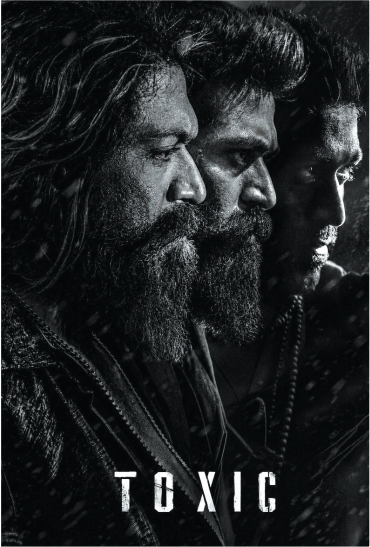
The international trailer also has a tighter narrative structure. Instead of moving quickly between action, romance and character introductions, it presents the events with a clearer flow. This approach appears designed to help audiences unfamiliar with Yash understand the film’s setting and story.

The English version also contains stronger language from Yash’s character. One line uses an expletive that was not included in the Kannada trailer.

The film features Nayanthara as Ganga, Kiara Advani as Nadia, Tara Sutaria, Rukmini Vasanth as Melissa and Huma Qureshi.

Directed by Geetu Mohandas, Toxic is a period gangster drama co-written by Mohandas and Yash. It is produced by Venkat K. Narayana and Yash under KVN Productions and Monster Mind Creations.

Toxic will release worldwide on August 26 in Kannada, English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam across several markets.



### Toxic At A Glance

Toxic is a period gangster drama set in a fictionalised Goa during the declining years of Portuguese colonial rule. Yash plays two characters, Raya and Ticket. Geetu Mohandas directs the film and co-writes it with Yash. The cast includes Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, Tara Sutaria, Rukmini Vasanth and Huma Qureshi. The film releases worldwide on August 26.

## Will Smith Reportedly Joins Allu Arjun’s ‘RAAKA’

Will Smith’s reported entry into Allu Arjun’s Raaka could give the pan-India film greater international attention and boost its global appeal



Hollywood star Will Smith is reportedly set to join Allu Arjun’s upcoming pan-India film Raaka, directed by Atlee.

Indian cinema, especially films from the South, has gained strong global attention. Movies such as Baahubali, RRR and Pushpa have performed well worldwide.

Now, another Hollywood name may enter Tollywood. Os-

car-winning actor Will Smith is reportedly in talks to appear alongside Allu Arjun in Raaka. If confirmed, his presence could increase the film’s popularity, particularly among overseas audiences.

Allu Arjun is currently working on Raaka, which is being directed by Tamil filmmaker Atlee.

Deepika Padukone is set to play the female lead opposite Allu Arjun. Rashmika Mandanna, Janhvi Kapoor and Mrunal Thakur are also reportedly associated with the project, although details about their roles have not been officially confirmed. Will Smith is one of Hollywood’s most recognised actors. His reported involvement could give Raaka greater publicity



in overseas markets. South Indian cinema has increasingly welcomed international actors. Arnold Vosloo, known for The Mummy, has been associated with Vijay Deverakonda’s upcoming film, while James Cosmo appeared in Dhanush’s Jagame Thanthiram.

## The Shangles Andrew Garfield Reveals Secret Band

Oscar-nominated actor Andrew Garfield has revealed that he is part of a band called The Shangles, which performs covers from the 1976 musical Bugsy Malone.

Garfield, who displayed his singing skills in Tick, Tick...BOOM!, said music continues to be part of his life through the group. I do have a band, we do Bugsy Malone covers, he told E! News. He also invited fans to look out for The Shangles, describing them as a group of middle-aged guys doing Bugsy Malone covers.

The Amazing Spider-Man actor said the band has plans ahead, but he is keeping them

until everything is confirmed. We have some big plans, Garfield said, adding that he did not want to jinx it.

Garfield stressed that The Shangles is not being created for money or commercial success. It’s more of a passion project, he said, making clear that the group is simply something he enjoys.

Meanwhile, Garfield is preparing for the release of The Magic Faraway Tree, which reaches theatres on August 21.

The fantasy film also stars Claire Foy and Nicola Coughlan.



## ‘Mandaadi’ Clears Censorship, Sets Sept Release

Soori’s upcoming sports action drama Mandaadi has cleared censorship and is set for a worldwide theatrical release on September 10, 2026. The certification has increased interest in the film, which features an unusual sea-based setting.

Directed by Mathimaran Pugazhendhi, the film has been shot extensively across Tamil Nadu’s coastal regions. The Central Board of Film Certification has cleared Mandaadi with a U/A 16+ certificate. The makers announced the update through their official X account as promotions enter the final stage.

Soori plays the lead role, while Mahima Nambiar is the female lead. Telugu actor Suhas will make his Tamil debut with the film in an important role. The cast also includes Sath-

yaraj, Ravindra Vijay, Mithun and Balasaravanan.

The film stands apart from regular sports dramas because several major sequences were filmed at sea. Soori is reported to have performed difficult action scenes himself rather than using body doubles. He also underwent training for sailing and boat-racing sequences before filming.

The team completed the shoot in April after working in challenging weather and coastal locations. Earlier, the makers released a video highlighting the demanding production, during which some cast and crew members reportedly suffered injuries.

The title Mandaadi draws inspiration from the maritime culture of Tamil Nadu’s coastal communities.



## Rajinikanth’s spiritual side shines before Jailer 2

Superstar Rajinikanth is known for his powerful screen presence, but away from films, his spiritual life remains an important part of his identity.

At 75, Rajinikanth continues to balance demanding film roles with a simple and disciplined lifestyle. He has often said spirituality matters more to him than fame, money or status. He believes it gives him energy and helps him remain grounded despite his huge popularity.

The actor has visited several spiritual places and temples across India, including Tirupati and the Raghavendra Swamy Temple. His connection with the Himalayas is especially well known. During a break from the shooting of Jailer 2, he travelled to Rishikesh, spending quiet time away from the busy film industry.

Rajinikanth’s lifestyle also includes regular exercise, careful eating and meditation. His doctor has spoken about these habits, saying they help the actor maintain his fitness and energy for physically demanding roles. This peaceful side of Rajinikanth now contrasts with the excitement around Jailer 2. Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar, the film sees him return as Muthuvel Pandian.



BLACK PAPPER MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

IN ASSOCIATION WITH MELEKOTE TOURING TALKIES

Sparkling Star

Shreeya in & as



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WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY

UDAYAPRASANNA

PRODUCED BY

VINOD

WISH YOU

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Shreeya

KANNADA - TAMIL - TELUGU - MALAYALAM - HINDHI - MARATI

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