

Iran-Pakistan Talks Push Efforts for Peace

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ECI announces Rajya Sabha polls for 24 seats on June 18

Election Commission schedules Rajya Sabha elections across ten states in June

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Friday announced that elections to 24 Rajya Sabha seats will be held on June 18, following the retirement of members across 10 states. The announcement comes as several high-profile leaders, including former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, and senior leader Digvijaya Singh, are set to complete their terms.

According to the ECI statement, the elections will be held in states where seats are falling vacant between June 21 and July 19. The notification has set June 8 as the last date for filing nominations.

The distribution of seats includes four each in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Karnata-



ka; three each in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan; two in Jharkhand; and one each in Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram. The Commission has also announced bypolls for one Rajya Sabha seat each in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

In Maharashtra, the vacancy arose after Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar resigned from the Upper House following her election to the state assembly.

"Elections will be conducted in accordance with the retirement schedule of members across states."
—Election Commission

Total seats	24
Poll date	June 18
States involved	10
Highest seats	Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka (4 each)
Nomination deadline	June 8
Bypolls	Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu (1 seat each)

Key Leaders Retiring

Several prominent leaders are among those retiring, including H. D. Deve Gowda, Mallikarjun Kharge, Union Minister Ravneet Singh, George Kurian, former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh, and Congress leader Shaktisinhji Govil. Their exit is expected to reshape the balance of the Upper House after the elections. The Rajya Sabha polls are being closely watched as they may influence party strength in Parliament ahead of upcoming legislative sessions.



VTU declares engineering results in 10 minutes, sets new benchmark

BENGALURU

Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) has set a new record by announcing final semester B.E. and B. Tech examination results within just 10 minutes of the exams ending. A total of 56,192 students appeared for the examinations. The final paper concluded at 5.30 pm on Friday, and the results were declared by 5.40 pm, with an overall pass percentage of 99.98%. The results were released by VTU Vice-Chancellor Prof. S. Vidyashankar and Registrar (Evaluation) Prof. U.J. Ujwal. The university said the evaluation process was completed eight days ahead of schedule, surpassing previous records. Results were also sent directly to students' mobile phones. Prof. Vidyashankar credited the achievement to technology adoption and coordinated efforts by university and college staff. Students can check their results at: results.vtu.ac.in.

KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar said Cong has launched statewide SIR awareness

Conspiracy to delete poor voters through SIR: D.K. Shivakumar

BENGALURU

Speaking to reporters at his Sadashivanagar residence on Friday, Shivakumar, who is also the KPCC president, said the party has launched an awareness campaign among MLAs, Booth Level Agents (BLAs) and grassroots workers regarding the SIR process.

He said meetings have already been scheduled to educate party workers and voters about the need to submit the required applications and documents to safeguard their voting rights.

According to Shivakumar, experiences from other states have raised concerns that eligible voters could lose their names from the electoral rolls if they fail to comply with the revision process.

He maintained that losing



"We have seen such situations in other states. If citizens lose their voting rights, they may face difficulties in accessing several benefits, including welfare schemes. That is why we are creating awareness and asking everyone to complete the required procedures."
—D.K. Shivakumar, Deputy CM

voting rights could have wider implications for citizens, particularly beneficiaries of government welfare schemes. Responding to criticism over the state government's decision to withdraw certain criminal cases, Shivakumar defended the move, stating that politically motivated cases had been reviewed and withdrawn in accordance with policy.

He clarified that the decision was not limited to any one community and included cases registered against farmers, pro-Kannada activists and others involved in public agitations. "Politically motivated cases have been withdrawn. Cases against farmers and Kannada movement activists have also been dropped. There is nothing wrong in such a decision," he said.

HEALTHCARE GOVERNANCE...

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah chairs the Board meeting of the Institute of Nephro-Urology at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Friday. Medical Education Minister Dr Sharanaprakash Patil, senior officials and board members were present.



IRAN TALKS CONTINUE

US reports 'slight progress' in Iran talks amid tensions

TEL AVIV

The United States on Friday reported "slight progress" in ongoing negotiations with Iran, raising cautious hopes for diplomacy even as uncertainty remains over whether the conflict could reignite.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said discussions with Tehran had shown limited movement, but warned against overstating the breakthrough. "There has been a little bit of movement and that's good," Rubio said ahead of a NATO foreign ministers' meeting in Sweden.

The talks come after US President Donald Trump delayed a possible military strike on Iran, citing ongoing negotiations. However, Trump has repeatedly alternated between pursuing diplo-

macy and threatening military action, keeping tensions high across the region.

The diplomatic effort has also exposed differences between Washington and Israel. Reports suggest Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is unhappy with US attempts to negotiate with Iran, despite close coordination between the two allies during the conflict.

Pakistan has stepped up mediation efforts, with senior officials making multiple visits to Tehran this week. Meanwhile, discussions continue over post-war security arrangements, including the future of the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.

Major obstacles remain unresolved. The US and Israel insist Iran must never acquire nuclear weapons, while Teh-



"There has been a little bit of movement and that's good."
—Marco Rubio, US Secretary of State

ran maintains that its nuclear programme is intended solely for peaceful purposes. Disagreements also persist over Iran's enriched uranium stockpile and broader regional security concerns.

Key Developments

- US reports "slight progress" in Iran talks on Friday
- Trump delays potential military action
- Pakistan intensifies mediation efforts
- Israel reportedly unhappy with negotiations
- Nuclear programme remains main sticking point

What's at stake

- Regional stability in the Middle East
- Security of the Strait of Hormuz
- Future of Iran's nuclear programme
- Risk of renewed military conflict
- Global energy supply routes

CM to lay foundation stone for international cricket stadium today

BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will lay the foundation stone for Karnataka's proposed international cricket stadium near Anekal on Saturday, marking the formal launch of one of the state's largest sports infrastructure projects.

The stadium, coming up on Bengaluru's outskirts, is being developed by the Karnataka Housing Board (KHB). Officials said the project has moved ahead after completion of feasibility studies and preparation of a specialised stadium design.

The first phase of the project will focus on constructing the main stadium, which is expected to have a seating capacity of nearly 80,000 spectators. The estimated cost of the phase is around ₹950 crore.

According to project documents, the stadium structure will cover 1,08,963 square metres, while an additional podium area of 12,750 square metres will take the total built-up area to 1,21,713 square metres. The seating bowl design has reportedly been inspired by concepts developed by renowned structural engineer Walter P Moore.

The KHB had invited tenders for the first phase in April and received a positive response from contractors. Officials are expected to complete the technical evaluation process and issue work orders after scrutiny of bids.

The decision to build a new international venue gained



PROJECT AT A GLANCE

- Location:** Near Anekal, Bengaluru outskirts
- Seating capacity:** Approx. 80,000
- Phase-1 cost:** ₹950 cr
- Stadium area:** 1,08,963 sq m
- Executing agency:** Karnataka Housing Board
- Expected completion:** 2029
- Usage:** Cricket, concerts and major events

momentum following the tragic stampede outside M. Chinnaswamy Stadium during celebrations of Royal Challengers Bengaluru's IPL title victory in June 2025, in which 11 people lost their lives.

The upcoming facility is planned as a multi-purpose venue capable of hosting international and domestic cricket matches, large-scale concerts and major public events. Authorities expect construction to be completed by 2029.

Multiple housing initiatives to be launched

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and Housing Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan will symbolically distribute plots to landowners who contributed land for the housing project and to beneficiaries selected under various schemes. The programme will also be attended by Karnataka Housing Board Chairman Shivalinge Gowda, Anekal MLA B. Shivan-na, ministers, MPs, MLAs and other dignitaries. During the event, foundation stones will be laid for the Surya Shine and Surya Divine housing complexes. The Chief Minister will also launch the government's ambitious One Lakh Houses Scheme, aimed at expanding affordable housing opportunities across Karnataka.

BJP to launch nationwide outreach to mark 12 years of NDA rule



NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has announced a month-long nationwide outreach campaign to mark 12 years of the NDA government at the Centre, highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance record, development agenda and electoral performance across states.

From June 8 to June 14, senior BJP leaders including Union ministers, MPs, MLAs and party office-bearers will participate in the 'Pragati Path Yatra' and 'Viksit Bharat

Sankalp' conventions across the country. As part of the programme, leaders will visit major infrastructure and development projects to showcase achievements under the NDA government.

The campaign will also include district-level conventions, media briefings, and public outreach programmes aimed at highlighting welfare schemes and development initiatives. Party leaders will be tasked with engaging prominent personalities from various sectors and presenting government achievements.

Grassroots push and public outreach

As part of the campaign, BJP cadres will organise registration drives for welfare schemes such as Ayushman Bharat, PM Surya Ghar, Ayushman Vay Vandana and the VB-G-RAM initiative. District-level exhibitions, painting competitions and awareness programmes will also be held. The party has also planned workshops on natural farming at over 1,000 locations, featuring demonstrations by experts. Ahead of the main campaign, plantation drives will be held on World Environment Day under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative.

Govt to expel every infiltrator, prevent 'demographic changes': Amit Shah

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the government has decided not only to stop infiltration but also to ensure the expulsion of every infiltrator to prevent what he called "unnatural demographic changes" in the country.

Addressing the Border Security Force (BSF) Investiture Ceremony and the Rustamji Memorial Lecture, Shah said a "high-powered demography mission" will soon be announced to identify infiltration routes and assist the BSF in securing vulnerable areas. He also announced plans for a "Smart Border" system to make the India-Pakistan and



"We will not allow unnatural demographic changes. Every infiltrator will be expelled."
—Amit Shah, Home Minister

India-Bangladesh borders "impregnable" using drones, radars, cameras, and advanced surveillance technologies.

He stressed the need for co-ordination between the BSF, state police, revenue officials, and district administration to detect illegal migration routes and strengthen territorial security. Shah said border management must evolve into a joint responsibility involving multiple agencies.

"The Government of India has decided to not only stop infiltration but also deport each and every infiltrator. We will not allow unnatural demographic changes," he said. He added that new security challenges such as fake currency, cyber threats, hybrid warfare, and drone activity require a comprehensive and technology-driven response.

Local newspapers top priority, says CM Media Advisor KV Prabhakar

'Local newspapers remain government priority as new advertising policy is introduced'

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister's media advisor K.V. Prabhakar said local newspapers are among the government's top priorities and assured that a new advertising policy will support small and regularly published newspapers.

Speaking at a felicitation programme organised by the Karnataka Working Journalists' Association in Bengaluru on completion of his three-year tenure, he described the role of a media advisor as highly demanding and stressful, saying it is "not a bed of roses but a bed of thorns."

He said the responsibility involves daily challenges and constant monitoring of media coverage, adding that he feels



both anxiety and satisfaction in handling the job.

He also noted that the Chief Minister has never interfered in media reporting or asked for action against any channel, maintaining respect for media freedom.

He added that decisions to ease conditions for free bus passes to rural journalists and the introduction of a revised advertising policy are expected to benefit thousands of journalists and strengthen small publications.

Prabhakar dedicated the honour to the Chief Minister, journalists of Kolar, and the wider journalist community, and expressed satisfaction over government support extended to his former school, which has now seen increased student strength.

Senior journalist leaders and media academy representatives attended the event.

Officials said discussions are also underway to revise advertisement rates and address disparities in allocation, ensuring fair opportunities for all categories of publications across the state. This move strengthens the financial stability of small and local newspapers, which the government considers a key part of democratic communication.

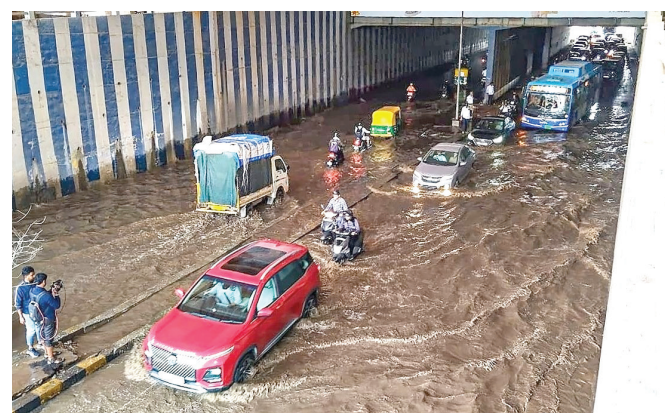
Heavy rains trigger traffic chaos, waterlogging across Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Heavy rain accompanied by strong winds lashed several parts of Bengaluru on Thursday evening, leaving roads waterlogged, uprooting trees and causing severe traffic congestion across the city. Thousands of commuters struggled to reach home as major roads and junctions witnessed long vehicle queues during peak office hours.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had earlier warned of moderate to heavy rainfall, thunderstorms and gusty winds reaching speeds of 40-50 kmph in Bengaluru Urban and Rural districts. After a humid day, dark clouds gathered over the city and heavy showers began in the evening, quickly inundating roads.

Areas including Majestic, MG Road, Gandhinagar, Richmond Circle, Ulsoor, Indiranagar, RT Nagar, Shivajinagar, KR Circle, KR Market, Hebbal, Mysore Road, Old Airport Road, Bellary Road, JC Road, Town Hall, Malleswaram and Corporation Circle received intense rainfall. Several roads resembled streams as rainwater accumulated rapidly, slowing traffic movement.



Pre-monsoon showers once again exposed Bengaluru's infrastructure woes, with waterlogged roads, fallen trees and massive traffic snarls disrupting evening commuters across the city

Major traffic snarls were reported on Bellary Road, Richmond Road, KG Road, KR Puram, Tumkur Road, Magadi Road, Mysore Road, Bannerghatta Road and Kanakapura Road. Office-goers, gig workers and motorists were stranded for hours as vehicles crawled through flooded stretches.

Overflowing manholes and

poor drainage aggravated the situation, while knee-deep water was reported in several low-lying areas. Temporary power outages were reported in some localities. Tree branches and entire trees fell in several places, blocking roads and disrupting traffic.

Traffic disruptions were reported near Domlur on Old Airport Road after a tree collapsed. Similar incidents occurred near Swami Vivekananda Road Metro Station, the Banaswadi-Horamavu underpass, Davis Road and Machalibetta Junction near ITC Limited. The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) control room received nearly 50 complaints related to fallen trees.

Institutions must focus on holistic growth of students: Prof. S. Jayarama Shetty

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

JS College Founder-President Prof. Dr. S. Jayarama Shetty has said that educational institutions must focus not only on providing quality education but also on ensuring the all-round development of students to help them excel in academics and life.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the First PUC classes for the 2025-26 academic year at JS Pre-University College in Mallathahalli, Bengaluru. Addressing students, parents and faculty members, Prof. Shetty said that educational institutions can grow and achieve excellence only through continuous effort and commitment.

Emphasising the importance of student-centric learning, he said the institution has consistently given top priority to the academic progress and knowledge development of students. He noted that close interaction with parents and regular monitoring of students' learning abilities have played a key role in achieving academic success.

"An institution can develop only when it remains active and committed to its mission.



By maintaining constant communication with parents and assessing students at every stage, we have been able to secure more than 100 ranks over the past five years," he said.

Educationist and retired Vice-Chancellor Dr. S. Chandrashekhara said students are the driving force behind the development of society and the nation. He pointed out that in today's highly competitive world, success depends on continuous learning, innovation and research.

"In every field there is intense competition. Students must strive for excellence and contribute meaningfully to society through knowledge and achievement," he said.

Kanyakumari Vidya Sanshata Secretary Dr. H. Tukaram described educational institutions as centres of social

transformation. He said schools and colleges that promote equality through education are the true temples of knowledge.

He added that modern educational facilities and digital learning tools are helping students achieve better academic outcomes and secure top ranks at the state level.

During the programme, students who secured the highest marks in First PUC examinations were felicitated and presented with certificates of appreciation. Among those present were former Adichunchanagiri University Vice-Chancellor Dr. S. Chandrashekhara, Sri Durgaparameshwari Education Trust Vice-President Sulatha G. Shetty, Secretary Nidhish Shetty, Principal N.K. Vijayalakshmi, Pratibha Kalas and several members of the teaching faculty.

Consumer forum orders refund after holiday club denied membership cancellation

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A Bengaluru consumer has won a legal battle against a holiday club company after the city's consumer commission ruled that the membership agreement contained unfair and one-sided terms and directed the company to refund his money along with compensation.

The Second Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Bengaluru Urban, ordered Mahindra Holidays and its customer service manager to refund ₹76,419 to 56-year-old H.N. Murali, a resident of RBI Layout in J.P. Nagar. The commission also directed the company to pay ₹10,000 as compensation for deficiency in service and ₹5,000 towards litigation costs, taking the to-

tal relief to over ₹91,000.

The dispute began on July 29, 2023, when Murali attended a promotional event organised by the holiday club at a luxury hotel on Vittal Mallya Road. During the presentation, company representatives highlighted attractive vacation offers and allegedly pressured him to make an immediate decision by claiming the benefits would lapse if he did not sign up on the spot.

Convinced by the sales pitch, Murali enrolled in the Club Mahindra Bliss Membership programme on August 27, 2023, and paid ₹76,419 upfront. The remaining amount of ₹16,503 was to be paid in instalments over 12 months. The following day, company representatives visited his residence, collected

cheques and obtained a 10-month ECS mandate.

According to the complaint, the detailed terms and conditions of the 10-year membership plan were never properly explained. Murali stated that the conditions were only described orally and at a rapid pace, preventing him from fully understanding the agreement.

After receiving his account credentials on October 1, he attempted to book holiday accommodation through the club but was unable to secure reservations. Disappointed by the experience and claiming he had not used any of the membership benefits, Murali sought cancellation and a full refund on October 3, within the stipulated cancellation period.

Cabinet discusses Supreme Court move over final voter list amid SIR concerns

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Cabinet held an extensive discussion on the proposed Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, with ministers examining the possibility of approaching the Supreme Court regarding the publication of the final voter list.

Briefing reporters after the Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Law Minister H.K. Patil said concerns over the SIR process

and its potential impact on voters' rights dominated deliberations.

Patil said the government is closely studying legal options in view of apprehensions that eligible voters could be excluded from electoral rolls during the revision process. He noted that similar exercises in other states had generated controversy and allegations of voter disenfranchisement.

"The Cabinet discussed the issue at length. There are con-

cerns that names of genuine voters may be deleted. This is a matter involving citizens' democratic rights, and every effort must be made to protect those rights," he said.

According to the minister, the Election Commission enjoys legal protection in matters related to electoral roll revisions. As a result, the state government is examining whether it can seek the intervention of the Supreme Court regarding the publication of the final voter list and the pro-



cedures being followed under the SIR exercise.

Patil said the Cabinet delib-

erated on nearly a dozen key aspects of the revision process, including mechanisms

for verification, safeguards against wrongful deletion of names, and legal remedies available to affected voters. However, discussions remained inconclusive and a final decision is expected within the next three to four days.

He also pointed to concerns over the functioning of tribunals and the overall transparency of the revision exercise. "There are several doubts and ambiguities surrounding the process. These issues were

discussed in detail during the Cabinet meeting," he added.

To formulate a coordinated strategy, the Congress has convened a meeting on May 24 at a private resort. The gathering will include party leaders, ministers, MLAs, key office-bearers and defeated candidates.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and Congress general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala are expected to participate.





GUARANTEE HABBA

Stepping into the 4th year

QUICK READ

Women Commission Chief to tour Udupi district

UDUPI

Karnataka State Women's Commission Chairperson Dr. Nagalakshmi Chowdhury will visit Udupi district from May 24 to May 26. Officials said the tour includes meetings, inspections, awareness programs and interactions with students, workers and institutions across the district. The visit aims to review women welfare services and strengthen support systems. On May 24, she will attend a public program in Karkala and visit a residential school in Udupi. She will later join a women's conference in Thekkatte and inspect a girls' hostel. On May 25 and 26, she will visit hospitals, colleges, police station, industries and attend awareness and review meetings before departing for Bengaluru.

Basanagowda S Patil honoured after appointment ceremony

HANGAL

Basanagowda S. Patil, an activist from Masanakatti village, has been appointed as the new president of the Hanagal Taluka Block Congress. He was felicitated by the Sneha Balaga at his residence for his contribution and new responsibility. Congress youth leader Shekhar Gowda Patil, Panchayya Shanmukeshwara Math, and Mahanthayya Adarakatti Math were present on the occasion. Leaders said the appointment will strengthen party organisation in the taluk. We also noted that local workers expressed confidence in future growth and unity under the new leadership. The program concluded with appreciation from party members and supporters gathered at the event in Hanagal taluk.

Bammanahalli leader joins Congress party

HANGAL

In Bammanahalli village of Hangal taluk, local leader Mukhanda Shekappa Basapura left the BJP and joined the Congress party. The joining took place in the presence of MLA Srinivas Mane, party workers and supporters. Officials said the event marked a political shift in the region as more local leaders are changing affiliations. MLA Srinivas Mane said the Congress party works for all communities without encouraging caste or religious divisions. He added that the party has a long history of focusing on welfare and development. He also said many local leaders are joining the party due to its people-friendly programs and development activities in the taluk. Several community members attended the event.

MLA inaugurates Mango Jackfruit Fair in Madikeri

Three-day mango festival organized by district bodies showcased varieties, farmer produce, and promoted traditional farming in Kodagu

MADIKERI

The sixth annual mango and jackfruit fair was inaugurated at Hopcoms premises in Madikeri on Friday by MLA Dr. Mantar Gowda after tasting mangoes. It highlighted local fruit diversity and encouraged farmers and public to support seasonal produce.

It is organised for three days by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat and Horticulture Department with participation of officials and public. Various mango varieties like Badami Alphonso Kesar Dasheri and others were displayed along with jackfruit and fruit plant stalls. Farmers showcased produce directly to customers and MLA appreciated traditional farming practices in Kodagu district.



He also noted that mango prices varied across stalls and encouraged farmers to adopt improved cultivation methods and training programmes. Prices included Totapuri at forty rupees Rasapuri at one hundred Alphonso at one hundred fifty and Kesar at two hundred rupees. Officials said the fair attracted many visitors and promoted local horticulture

development in the district. Stalls included fruit seeds vegetable plants and ornamental plants that attracted many visitors throughout the fair.

Weeks of preparation by departments ensured smooth conduct and awareness about horticulture practices among farmers and youth. Officials from horticulture department explained varieties and guided

Officials said the 200-year-old heritage building needs careful full restoration, not minor repairs or reconstruction work

200-year-old Sanskrit heritage building cries for revival

SHYAM SUNDARVAT-TAM MYSURU

A 200-year-old Maharaja Samskrutha Pathashale in Mysuru, which has nurtured thousands of scholars over generations, is now standing at a critical crossroads — battling crumbling walls, leaking roofs and years of neglect, even as restoration efforts slowly gather momentum.

What began with the collapse of a portion of the historic “Ganapati Totti” structure inside the central courtyard has now exposed the fragile condition of the entire heritage campus. For nearly two years, authorities and well-wishers have been struggling to save the iconic institution without damaging its heritage character.

Now, the Public Works Department (PWD) has finally begun major restoration work on the middle section of the college building. Renovation of that portion is expected to be completed within a month.

Officials said the structure cannot be repaired through minor patchwork because of its age and heritage nature. “This is a 200-year-old building. The structure itself is still strong. But once one portion collapses, even touching another section may require complete restoration. Heritage buildings must be repaired carefully — not demolished and rebuilt,” an official associated with the restoration explained.

The restoration plan focuses on preserving the original architectural identity of the institution. Traditional lime plastering, damaged flooring, roof leak prevention, restoration of tiles, doors and windows, and proper rainwater drainage systems are all part of the proposed conservation work.

The first block housing the Agama and Veda sections has

also been taken up for restoration. Transport and Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy has sanctioned ₹1 crore for the work. The Mysuru Deputy Commissioner has recommended that the amount be directly released to the PWD so that the ongoing renovation can continue without interruption. However, new concerns have emerged regarding the collapsed rear compound wall near the hostel area. Authorities suspect that years of neglect, unhygienic conditions and structural weakening led to its partial collapse.

The issue has now become a serious safety concern because the hostel lies just behind the damaged compound. Though students are currently away for vacation, admissions for the new academic year will begin from June 1, and children are expected to return soon.

“People can now enter through the broken rear side. This becomes a major safety issue for hostel students,” officials warned, urging immediate intervention either through emergency government assistance or support from donors.

Engineers have reportedly been instructed to include reconstruction of the entire compound wall in the next estimate proposal.

The restoration work already underway is nearing completion. Roofing and structural cement works are said to be almost 99 percent complete. Only painting, polishing of columns, and finishing work on doors and windows remain pending.

Due to budget limitations, authorities said completely replacing all doors and windows may not be possible immediately.

“The sanctioned amount is not enough for entirely new woodwork. Damaged portions will be repaired temporarily,

painted and strengthened,” officials said.

Experts estimate that restoring each remaining section of the institution could require another ₹1 crore to ₹2 crore. The large administrative block alone may need up to ₹2 crore because of its massive size and upper-floor rooms.

Officials believe that if adequate funds are provided now, the entire campus can be protected for another hundred years.

Beyond structural restoration, conservationists are also calling for preservation of the institution's rare palm-leaf manuscript collection. There are plans to seek Central Government support for scientific chemical preservation of these priceless Sanskrit manuscripts.

The institution's supporters now want the heritage campus to receive national attention. Suggestions have been made to submit a detailed proposal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union Education Ministry, highlighting the institution's two-century contribution to Sanskrit education across India.

“Thousands of students studied here and spread Sanskrit learning across the country and abroad. Many people still do not realise the true value of this institution,” one supporter said emotionally.

Even members of the Mysuru royal family have reportedly been approached for support. The Maharaja himself is said to have visited the damaged structure earlier and assured efforts to seek assistance from the Centre.

For those fighting to save the institution, the restoration is no longer just about repairing old walls — it is about preserving a living symbol of Mysuru's cultural, spiritual and educational heritage for future generations.

Bengaluru Authority to implement SC order on stray dogs

BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority has said that it will fully follow the Supreme Court order issued on 19 May 2026 regarding management of stray dogs in the city.

In line with the order stray dogs will be moved from schools, hospitals, sports complexes, bus stands and railway stations to designated shelters. The authority has started building shelters in five urban local bodies and is selecting service providers to manage them safely. In cases where stray dog numbers are high or public safety is affected due to repeated bites or aggressive behaviour, authorities will take action as per law. This includes relocation, sterilisation and in rare cases euthanasia of rabid or incurably sick and dangerous dogs, only after veterinary certification under relevant animal welfare rules. Citizens have been advised not to take matters into their own hands and to report issues to municipal authorities for proper handling. Officials said these steps aim to ensure public safety and humane treatment of animals while maintaining compliance with court directions. The authority also appealed to residents to cooperate with municipal teams and support awareness efforts across Bengaluru city for safer public spaces.

HUNSUR ROAD PROJECT FACES DELAYS IN PROGRESS

HUNSUR

Sathya MS Foundation President Satyappa has urged speedy completion of the 85 crore quadrilateral road project and the new bridge over the Lakshmana Tirtha river in Hunsur.

He said that the quadrilateral highway work from Mookanahalli to Halagere on National Highway 275 is in progress, but the bridge construction

₹414 Crore Boost for Mangalore Port Connectivity

MANGALURU

Dakshina Kannada MP Captain Brijesh Chowta expressed delight while sharing news of the Union government's approval for a ₹414.16-crore infrastructure development on National Highway 66.

The plan covers an elevated flyover along with service roads stretching from Baikampady to KIOCL Junction, with the National Highways Authority of India already moving forward by starting the tender process.

This development centres on a 3.075-kilometre road corridor specifically created to strengthen direct access to the New Mangalore Port. Core elements include a 1.520-kilometre six-lane elevated flyover built under the EPC model. Planners have also incorporated service roads measuring 5.825 kilometres in total on both sides of the main highway. The New Mangalore Port Authority has committed to supplying necessary additional land and financial assistance.

Captain Brijesh Chowta highlighted how the current NH-66 section in the port area handles vital export and import cargo traffic. The new infrastructure will effectively divide fast-moving highway vehicles from local traffic, resulting in smoother overall movement and markedly better road safety standards.

The upgrade targets the Baikampady industrial zone

MP announces Union government approval for a significant highway upgrade that promises smoother cargo movement and enhanced safety around New Mangalore Port

and KIOCL region, which should drive stronger industrial activity and economic progress across Dakshina Kannada district while meeting growing future traffic demands in the coastal region.

Earlier hurdles existed because the road stretch inside port limits fell under the National Highway Logistics Management Limited, leading to coordination difficulties and funding shortages. Persistent advocacy helped shift responsibility to NHAI, clearing the path for progress. Separate approval already exists for underpasses at Baikampady and Kuloor Junction costing ₹11.63 crore, with construction actively progressing.

The MP emphasised continuous efforts to achieve superior port connectivity and promote port-led development throughout Dakshina Kannada.

He extended gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari for approving this vital project, noting its role in advancing the district's growth as part of the broader Viksit Bharat vision.

KP Gowda committee president raises concern construction

MAGADI

KP Gowda Development Committee State President H M Krishnamurthy expressed concern over proposed construction of a civic rest house near Dr B R Ambedkar statue in front of the town municipal office and said the development work is not appropriate in the area.

He told reporters in Magadi that a nearby government hospital could be affected if sanitation facilities are not maintained properly and also alleged that it would disrespect Dr B R Ambedkar and inconvenience citizens visiting the municipal office.

Speaking further he demanded that the construction be stopped and said a petition

would be submitted to the district administration while local leaders also objected to demolition of Ambedkar Bhavan and insisted it should be rebuilt at the same place.

Officials clarified that the rest house is planned for municipal workers engaged in sanitation duties and said it is necessary for public service and cleanliness operations near the municipal office area.

Several local leaders and residents participated in the discussion and expressed mixed opinions on development works in the town.

The issue has triggered discussion among citizens regarding urban development preservation of Ambedkar memorial structures and the need for balanced infrastructure.

over Lakshmana Tirtha river is moving very slowly.

Last year, bridge construction started at the same time, but heavy monsoon rains washed away the work worth crores of rupees, causing major losses. This year again, although work has begun before monsoon, it must be completed quickly. He has urged contractors to finish the project without delay.

The foundation president

has also appealed to the concerned authorities and contractors to speed up the work and ensure quality construction so that public inconvenience is avoided and the project is completed before the next monsoon season for safe travel and better connectivity in the region. He emphasized the importance of timely completion for public safety and development in Hunsur region and surrounding areas urgently.

Dr. Ramakrishna Achar's vision brings industrial skills to youth

KUNDAPURA

The SKF Industrial Training Centre at Guddeangady in Kundapura taluk represents a significant step toward addressing unemployment among rural youth. Established jointly by the Dr. G. Ramakrishna Achar Charitable Trust and Moodbidri-based SKF Elixer India Pvt. Ltd., this facility will start its programmes in June with completely free training, aside from minimal registration fees. Organisers designed the centre specifically for students who left formal education early or did not succeed

in examinations yet possess strong potential for technical careers.

Dr. G. Ramakrishna Achar, a successful entrepreneur who grew up in Guddeangady, drives the project with his personal story of rising from humble beginnings to lead a globally competitive company. His firm, SKF Elixer India Pvt. Ltd., produces essential machinery for paddy processing, drinking water purification, and wastewater management, with exports reaching more than 25 countries. This real-world industrial experience shapes the training approach at the centre.

Participants can join one-year integrated courses that condense vital industry knowledge into an efficient format. The centre admits around 60 students each year across batches of 20. Available fields include Electrical and Electronics, Fitting and Welding, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, and Plumbing.

Trainees gain direct practice in wiring, fabrication, motor control, industrial assembly, welding technology, refrigeration repair, and pipeline maintenance. Experienced industrial workers and skilled instructors lead all ses-

sions.

Young people who passed or failed SSLC, discontinued PU studies, or come from economically weaker sections qualify for admission. Those enrolled in Fitting and Welding receive valuable in-plant exposure at SKF Elixer India Pvt. Ltd., where they learn fabrication techniques, machinery handling, quality control processes, and industrial discipline. Stipends support students during this practical phase.

Beyond technical trades, the trust also plans tailoring and fashion designing programmes exclusively for women.

NITK Surathkal workshop explores graph theory and neural networks

MANGALURU

The Department of Mathematical and Computational Sciences at National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK), Surathkal successfully conducted a five-day workshop titled “Emerging Directions in Graph Theory and Graph Neural Networks” from 18 to 22 May 2026.

Funding support came from the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under the Government

of India. Prof. Pratima Panigrahi from the Department of Mathematics at IIT Kharagpur served as Chief Guest during the inaugural session held on 18 May 2026. Prof. Udaya Bhat, Dean of Research and Innovation at NITK Surathkal, presided over the function.

Organisers structured the workshop to deliver deep insights into the mathematical foundations alongside real-world uses of graph theory and Graph Neural Networks (GNNs). These areas have grown vital for

analysing social networks, biological systems, recommendation systems, transportation networks, and scientific computing applications.

The programme effectively connected classical theoretical ideas in graphs with contemporary computational approaches, attracting participants from mathematics, computer science, data science, and related fields.

A total of 52 faculty members and research scholars from different institutions joined the event.

QUICK READ

Karnataka announces relief for minority loan borrowers

CHITRADURGA

The Karnataka Minority Development Corporation introduced a One Time Settlement Scheme to help minority borrowers clear pending loans without paying interest. District officials said beneficiaries who borrowed under different schemes between 2013-14 and 2018-19 can use this opportunity. Borrowers must repay only the principal amount in three installments. The first and second installments require 25 percent payment each, while the final installment covers the remaining 50 percent amount. The special scheme will remain active from May 1, 2026, to July 31, 2026. Beneficiaries can make payments online through the corporation's official website. Officials urged eligible people to use this government relief scheme quickly.

Officials promote proper waste management in town

MADIKERI

Kushalnagar town administration has issued a public notice asking residents and business owners to connect their buildings to the existing sewerage network. Officials said connections must be obtained through the Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Board, along with a no-objection certificate from the municipality. The initiative aims to improve sanitation and ensure proper waste management in the town. The municipality has fixed one-time connection charges and annual maintenance fees based on building type and usage. Hotels, commercial units and residential buildings will be charged differently, while smaller homes have lower rates.

Heavy rain damages crops and houses districtwide

CHITRADURGA

Chitradurga district recorded an average rainfall of 17.8 mm on Friday morning, according to officials. Challakere taluk received the highest rainfall at 28.4 mm, followed by Chitradurga with 25.4 mm. Several hoblis also reported moderate to heavy showers across the district. Authorities said the rainfall brought temporary relief from heat but caused damage in many areas. District officials confirmed partial damage to five houses due to heavy rain. Around eight hectares of agricultural crops and seven hectares of horticultural crops were affected across different taluks. Challakere, Holalkere, Hosadurga and Molakalmuru reported major crop losses, while Hiriyur and Chitradurga recorded house damage.

Government withdraws Ladle Mashak case, triggers political controversy

BIDAR

The State Government's decision to withdraw the controversial "Ladle Mashak" case has sparked a fresh political row across Karnataka, with opposition parties accusing the government of indulging in appeasement politics.

The decision was reportedly taken during the State Cabinet meeting. Along with the Ladle Mashak case, the government has also decided to withdraw several cases registered against farmers and pro-Kannada activists in different parts of the state.

Deputy Lokayukta urges honesty in governance systems

Veerappa said Lokayukta cannot be weakened, emphasizing discipline, equality before law, media role in exposing corruption and accountability

MANDYA

Deputy Lokayukta Justice B Veerappa addressed a hearing and disposal programme of pending cases held at Ambekar Bhawan in Mandya taluk where he urged officials to work with honesty responsibility and legal discipline for the benefit of society and warned that corruption and illegal practices in government offices must be strictly acted upon while ensuring that common people do not suffer injustice under any circumstances and reaffirmed commitment to public service



accountability across all departments in the district administration.

He said that the Lokayukta institution cannot be weakened by anyone and its purpose is to guide society in a

the media should highlight corruption and wrongdoing in government offices to strengthen accountability in public administration system transparency.

During an inspection visit he visited Dr B R Ambedkar Girls Hostel and Valmiki Hostels at Second Cross Bandigowda Layout where students complained about lack of basic facilities and poor toilet maintenance. In response he directed authorities to shift the hostel within fifteen days and ordered changes in kitchen staff and appointment of a new warden to improve living

conditions and ensure student welfare in the institution premises promptly implemented.

District Chief Justice Subramanya Lokayukta SP Suresh Babu Deputy Lokayukta personal secretary Arvind District Legal Services Authority officials. District Commissioner Dr Kumar District Superintendent of Police V J Shobharani and other dignitaries including lawyers association representatives attended the programme and discussed public accountability measures in detail.

Vijayapura issues high alert for monsoon preparedness

VIJAYAPURA

District administration has placed all departments on high alert for the upcoming monsoon season and ordered strict coordination to prevent loss of human life.

Officials have been directed to set up 24-hour helplines in all taluks and maintain control rooms with updated contact numbers for quick emergency response. Authorities were instructed to continuously monitor the Krishna, Bhima and Doni rivers and keep rescue equipment like boats, ropes and life jackets ready for emergencies. Officials were asked to identify flood-prone areas prepare local action plans and ensure drainage cleaning works are completed to prevent urban flooding in towns.

JDS challenges DCM over farmer allegations row

RAMANAGARA

Ramanagara district JDS leaders held a press conference at the party office on Friday. They strongly criticized Ganakal Nataraj and responded to his remarks against Nikhil Kumaraswamy. Leaders said Nataraj should first speak responsibly and understand facts before making public statements about the Bidadi Smart City issue.

They challenged Ganakal Nataraj to visit Byramangala village along with Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar and speak directly with farmers. Leaders said truth should be discussed in front of local people instead of media reports and political claims.

They raised concern over Bidadi Smart City project land use, saying that earlier around 2,000 acres of cattle land existed in Kanchugaranahalli of Byramangala, but now only about 700 acres remain. They demanded clarity on missing land records and

promised to release documents soon.

Leaders accused Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar of making repeated accusations over the project and said he should focus on protecting farmers' interests. They also criticized his remarks, claiming his behavior and language were inappropriate for a constitutional post.

They referred to past elections, saying Nikhil Kumaraswamy was defeated in Channapatna by-election and blamed political rivals for working together against him. Leaders argued that age and status should not be used to twist statements or target individuals.

Party leaders said that the Deputy Chief Minister has not given proper development to Ramanagara district and is making statements to divert attention from internal political issues. They alleged that recent comments were aimed at protecting political position and accused him of behaving aggressively in public speeches.

Leaders criticized D. K. Shivakumar's remarks, urged focus on farmers, referenced Nikhil Kumaraswamy's Channapatna by-election defeat, and opposed misuse of age or status in politics

They also said social media criticism of his behavior is increasing every day and urged him to respond carefully. They added that leaders should focus on public service instead of personal attacks. Several JDS leaders including B. Umesh, Sugganahalli Ramakrishnaiah, Gowdayyanadoddi Krishnagowda, Anjanapura Vasu, Mavinassasi Venkatesh, Balageri Ravi, Gooli Kumar Gowda, Laxmikant, Kottipura Govinda, Bireesh Boregowda, Kadanakuppe Naveen, Auditor Kumar, Pawan, Doddi Umesh, Suhas, Jayakumar, Kemparaju and Srinivas were present at the press conference in Ramanagara held on Friday at the party office.

Officials must report and repair public property damage, keep emergency teams alert, and prepare monsoon crop input distribution

Deputy Commissioner orders monsoon precaution measures districtwide

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Deputy Commissioner G Prabhu held a meeting in Chikkaballapura and directed officials to take strong precautionary measures as the monsoon is expected to arrive at the end of this month and asked departments to work round the clock to prevent rain related damage across the district.



During pre monsoon rains on May 21 the district recorded heavy rainfall and Gouribidanur taluk was the worst affected where horticultural crops including banana area nut tomato and vegetables were damaged across several hectares according to initial reports.

Officials were instructed to visit affected farms conduct joint surveys with horticulture department and ensure immediate compensation while tehsildars were asked to personally meet farmers and assess losses and the administration

also noted two deaths due to lightning and warned residents about safety during thunderstorms.

Officials were directed to report all public property damage including schools colleges anganwadis health centres electricity transformers and poles and to carry out immediate repair works while emergency response teams were told to stay alert and ensure safety and Joint Agriculture Directors were asked to prepare crop plans and ensure timely distribution of seeds and fertilizers based on farmer identification data before monsoon onset.

The Zilla Panchayat CEO Dr Y Naveen Bhat instructed officials to clean drains canals and roadsides within a week and remove plastic waste from roads and vacant plots and ensure local bodies recover costs from property owners while village level teams were formed to carry out sanitation drives and maintain smooth water flow during rains and officials from district and taluk levels participated in the meeting and were urged to coordinate effectively for monsoon preparedness measures implemented.

Tobacco rule violators fined during Challakere inspection

CHITRADURGA

Health officials conducted a special awareness and enforcement drive in Challakere city to stop violations under the COTPA 2003 Act. The operation was led by District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr. Renuprasad and District Tobacco Control Officer Dr. Abhinav under the National Tobacco Control Programme.

Officials inspected tobacco shops near the city bus stand on May 19 and around the public hospital on May 20. The surprise checks were carried out by the District and Taluk Level Tobacco Investigation Team along with members of the District Tobacco Control Cell. During the drive, officers warned shopkeepers and residents about the harmful effects of tobacco use among young people.



The team also instructed shop owners to display Section 4, 6A, and 6B boards as required under the law. People were advised not to smoke in public places or consume chewing tobacco and paan masala openly.

Officials registered 21 cases during the operation. Fifteen cases were booked for smoking in public places, while six cases involved selling tobacco products to minors.

A total fine of Rs 2,100 was collected on the spot from offenders.

District Tobacco Control Cell advisor B.M. Prabhudev, social worker K.M. Thippeswamy, Health Inspector Govindaraju, and Municipal Health Inspector Sagar joined the joint raid. Officials said similar inspections would continue across Challakere to protect residents from tobacco health dangers.

Mosque campaign promotes cleaner waste disposal habits

SRINIVASPUR

The Srinivaspur Town Municipal Council conducted a special awareness programme at Charminar Mosque and Jamia Mosque on Azad Road after Friday prayers to educate people about the Solid Waste Management Rules 2026. The campaign encouraged residents to separate household waste properly and follow safe disposal methods to keep the town clean and healthy.

District Nodal Officer G. Naveen Chandra said the new waste management rules became compulsory across the country from April 1, 2026. He explained that every family must separate wet, dry, sanitary and special waste before disposal. He also said proper waste segregation

would reduce pollution, improve public health and support environmental protection in the long run.

Municipal officials demonstrated scientific waste segregation methods during the event. Banners and placards displayed the colour coded bin system, including green bins for wet waste, blue bins for dry waste, red bins for sanitary waste and black bins for special waste. Town Municipal Council Chief Officer Nagaraj requested residents to cooperate with sanitation workers and maintain cleanliness in Srinivaspur. Many worshippers and local residents interacted with officials after the programme and sought guidance regarding the new rules.

Madikeri implements strict waste segregation rules

MADIKERI

Following Civil Appeal No. 6174/2023 in the Supreme Court, the government has directed all urban local bodies in the state to implement the Solid Waste Management Rules 2026 within the fixed time. In Madikeri city limits, commercial establishments, bus stands, depots, industries, hotels, hospitals, hostels, stadiums, community halls, wedding halls and other large waste generators must strictly follow waste segregation rules. They are required to separate waste at source and hand it over to municipal collection vehicles.

Green waste includes kitchen, food, vegetable, fruit, flower and garden waste. Dry waste includes plastic, cloth, iron, rubber and wood.

Free books distributed to students by SKSCESSEF

ULLALA

SKSCESSEF organized a free book distribution program in Ullala to support education of children from poor families. Leaders said the initiative aims to ensure that no child is deprived of learning due to financial problems. State Congress Campaign Committee coordinator Farooq Ullal praised the organization for continuing this effort for fourteen years and called it commendable. He said such programs help

rural students build a better future.

Speaking at the event, he suggested SKSCESSEF should provide training for students after secondary education so they can pursue higher studies successfully. The meeting was inaugurated by Imam Maulana Uwaisi Toke Al Azhari of Kodijal Jumma Masjid. Padma Shri Harekala Hajjar said rural students cannot access IAS and IPS level education due to lack of training and urged a village training centre.



QUICK READ

Government college to host cultural finale

CHITRADURGA

The Government Arts College (Autonomous) in Chitradurga will conclude its cultural, sports, NCC, NSS, Youth Red Cross, and Rovers and Rangers activities for the year 2025-26 on May 25. Officials said the event will also include the release of the annual magazine "Kala Siri 2026" at the college campus. The program will be inaugurated by MLA K.C. Veerendra. MLC Naveen K.S. will attend as a special guest, while retired professor Rajashekaraiah G will be the chief guest. College principal Prof. Tarini Shubhadayini R will preside over the event. Faculty members and committee heads will also participate in the concluding ceremony.

Hostel admissions and scholarships announced

CHITRADURGA

The Social Welfare Department has invited applications for admission to government pre-matric and post-matric hostels for the 2026-27 academic year in Hosadurga taluk. Officials said eligible students from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other communities can apply online through the department website. The scheme aims to provide safe accommodation and support for students pursuing education. The department has also invited applications for the Pratibha Puraskar award for SC students who passed SSLC and PUC with first class in their first attempt. In addition, the Backward Classes Welfare Department has opened hostel admissions for various categories with fixed income limits. Applications, verification and selection will be completed through online and official procedures.

Heavy rain damages farms in Pavagada taluk

Pavagada

Heavy rain on Thursday night in Y.N. Hosakote taluk of Pavagada caused widespread damage in several villages, leaving farmers worried about their crop losses. In Megalapalya village, farmer Bestar Hulappa lost his tomato crop after flood water washed away the plants. His drip irrigation system and equipment were also destroyed, causing an estimated loss of about seventy thousand rupees. In B. Hosahalli village, rainwater entered the arecanut orchard of Manjunatha Reddy and washed away young arecanut plants. In the same village, banana crops grown by Baiyappa Reddy were also damaged as trees fell due to heavy rain.

Commissioner directs monsoon preparedness works across Bengaluru

Commissioner ordered immediate desilting of drains and stormwater channels to prevent monsoon flooding and urban waterlogging

BENGALURU

Bengaluru Central City Corporation Commissioner Rajendra Cholan has directed officials to speed up all monsoon preparedness works including drain cleaning road repairs and infrastructure maintenance across the city. He issued the instructions during a progress review meeting of the Engineering Department held to assess ongoing development works under special government schemes.

The Commissioner stressed that desilting of roadside drains must be completed immediately to ensure smooth



rainwater flow and prevent flooding during the upcoming monsoon season. He also directed officials to clear storm water drains on priority so that water does not accumulate and cause waterlogging in residential and commercial areas.

Cholan ordered the formation of additional teams to

remove dangerous trees and branches which may fall during heavy rain and strong winds. He said public safety is a top priority and instructed the Forest Department to identify risky trees and remove them without delay using skilled manpower and equipment.

The Commissioner further instructed that road asphaltting works under various development schemes must be completed within one week without fail. He warned that strict action will be taken against engineers if road works are delayed or left incomplete during the monsoon preparedness period.

Officials were also told to prioritise pothole filling works across the city to ensure safe travel for citizens and reduce traffic hazards during rains. He added that new cement concrete roads and ongoing works should be completed quickly with focus on quality and durability.

The meeting reviewed multiple civic projects including footpath development drainage improvement and road infrastructure works under state sponsored development programmes.

Senior officials including Additional Commissioner K Ranganath Joint Commissioner Hemanth Sharan Chief En-

gineer Vijaykumar Haridas and other engineers attended the meeting.

The Commissioner instructed departments to work in coordination and ensure all monsoon related preparations are completed before heavy rains begin. He emphasised that delays in civic works will not be tolerated and accountability will be fixed on responsible officials for negligence in execution.

Authorities said continuous monitoring will be carried out to ensure proper drainage systems road safety and emergency readiness across Bengaluru Central City Corporation limits during the monsoon season.

Bhovi Mahasabha holds community press meet in Vijayapura

VIJAYAPURA

A press conference was held by the Karnataka State Bhovi Vaddara Mahasabha in Vijayapura at Adilshahi Mayura Hotel, focusing on the progress and social justice of the community.

The organization announced a coronation and mass marriage convention of Jagadguru Panch Peethadhis of Bhovi Vaddara Samaj held at Kaggoda village in Vijayapura district under leadership of State General Secretary Vithala Vaddara.

The event was attended by several swamijis and community leaders including H H Swami Umesh Yogi from Spain based Global Peace and other pontiffs from various mutts across Karnataka.

Dairy subsidies to empower mining affected women

CHITRADURGA

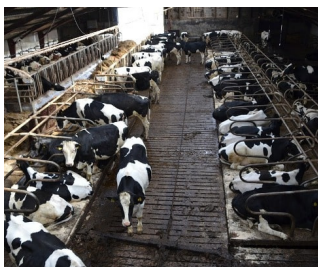
The Karnataka government has launched a welfare scheme to support women living in mining-affected areas. This project helps female members of Self-Help Groups across 187 villages in Chitradurga, Holalkere, and Hosadurga taluks. The initiative will give financial assistance to 3,179 selected beneficiaries to start their own small-scale dairy businesses.

Under this plan, chosen women can buy a crossbreed cow or buffalo, along with a rubber cow mat, for a fixed price of ₹63,000. To make it highly affordable, the government is offering large subsidies. Women from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will receive a massive 90% subsidy, meaning they only pay a small fraction of the cost. Meanwhile, general category beneficiaries will get a 50% discount. The rest of the money can be covered by personal savings or low-interest bank loans.

To apply, interested women must submit their forms

through their local Gram Panchayat federation. They can easily collect these applications from local veterinary hospitals, village offices, or milk cooperative societies. The government needs applicants to submit three completed copies to their nearest veterinary clinic.

The deadline to submit all documents is June 6, 2026. For extra guidance, citizens can directly call the chief veterinary officers of Chitradurga, Holalkere, or Hosadurga hospitals. This scheme aims to uplift rural households by providing a steady daily income through livestock farming, helping families recover from the environmental impacts of local mining activities.



Jaljeevan Mission works face major implementation delays

CHITRADURGA

Zilla Panchayat CEO Dr S Akash expressed strong dissatisfaction over delays in Jaljeevan Mission drinking water works and directed officials to take strict action against contractors who ignore notices and fail to complete projects on time.

He said contractors who do not respond even after repeated notices should be blacklisted and engineers must recommend legal action as per rules for non performing agencies working under the scheme.

Officials were instructed to prepare a detailed line list of 560 ongoing works under Jaljeevan Mission and submit a report explaining reasons for delay and steps taken to complete each project immediately.

He also said Gram Panchayats must allocate a fixed share of their tax collection under Fund One for sanitation



Officials must list 560 Jal Jeevan Mission works, explain delays, improve sanitation funding, and address failed Gram Panchayat waste management across 189 villages

management to improve garbage disposal and ensure long term cleanliness systems.

He expressed concern that the Gram Panchayat Level Federations formed for waste management have failed completely in all 189 Gram Panchayats and none are actively handling segregation or disposal work.

He added that successful private agency models from other districts will be studied and similar tender based systems may be introduced in Chitradurga to permanently

solve the garbage problem. The meeting was attended by district planning director and officials from rural drinking water department urban development cell education social welfare and other de-

partments who discussed progress monitoring and implementation issues. Dr Akash reiterated that timely completion of drinking water projects is essential and warned that negligence will not be tolerated in any stage of work execution under the mission. He instructed officials to maintain regular monitoring field inspections and coordination between agencies to ensure safe drinking water supply to rural households without delay. He stressed that accountability will be fixed on contractors and officials responsible for delays and action will be taken strictly as per government rules to ensure project completion. Senior officials present included engineers, education department officers, sanitation staff and elected representatives who shared field level issues and suggested improvements for faster execution of works across rural areas of the district.

Naganur teacher known for cultural contributions education

HAVERI

Guddappa Omkarannavara, a teacher from Naganur village in Haveri taluk, is serving as head teacher at Government Higher Primary School, Machapur. Born on 10 May 1967, he is eldest son of Mahadevappa and Gangamma and is known for his cultural and creative talents in education and arts.

He has written, directed and staged about 52 plays, including works on saints, social themes and historical figures. His important plays include Galaganatha, Gaali and Neeru, Vetta Peele Buddhi Bandhu, Mekkali Kani, Sindhagi Shantaveera Pattadhyaksha, Kolar Kodagoosu, Sharane Danamadevi and Sangolli Rayanna. He has also directed plays of senior writers and presented programmes on All India Radio and Doordarshan, and published books through his Om-

karanna publication.

He has received several awards for his contribution to literature, culture and education. His play Nai Bharamya won three prizes in a drama competition held in Mumbai during the Kuvempu birth centenary celebrations, including best actor, best supporting actor and best child artist awards. He has also received the state level Best Teacher Award from Karnataka Pratibha Academy, Kannada Ratna award, Lions Club Best Teacher Award, CGK Ranga Award and district level recognition for direction and teaching excellence.

He has also acted in films such as The National Flag (2016) and Ingale Marga (2014), which reflect patriotism and social reform ideas inspired by Dr B R Ambedkar. He is active in several cultural and literary organisations and serves in various district level associations.

Awareness programme highlights child rights protection drive

KOPPAL

A public awareness programme on prevention of child abuse and child rights was organised at Hital Gram Panchayat in Koppal taluk jointly by the district administration police department women and child development department and district child protection unit to educate the public about legal safeguards and child safety measures.

Chief guest Pratibha Kashimath explained that child marriage is a punishable offence under the Child Marriage Prohibition Act and Karnataka amendment and said that marriages involving minors lead to legal punishment for organisers participants and supporters and stressed the need to build a child marriage free society in the district.

Farmers claim legitimacy, grow multiple crops, produce milk and silk, and challenge officials for land inspection anytime

Farmer leader alleges government suppressing ongoing protest

RAMANAGARA

Farmer leader Nagaraju has alleged that the state government is trying to suppress the ongoing protest against GBDA land acquisition by mobilising certain groups of farmers in Ramanagara district. He said the sit in protest at Bairamangala village has continued for more than 400 days and accused authorities of attempting to divide the protest movement and weaken farmer unity.

They claim that farmers involved in the protest are genuine cultivators growing multiple crops including mango coconut jackfruit sapota arecanut and other

fruits. Nagaraju said they produce six lakh litres of milk every month and also grow silk worth thirty five crore annually and challenged officials to inspect their lands at any time.

He criticises government promises of final notification and compensation saying they are false assurances meant to break farmer unity. Leaders also argue that fertile land is being wrongly labelled as barren and insist they will not surrender land even under pressure or threats as it is their livelihood and inheritance.

They also question claims that majority of farmers have given consent for the project and ask who actually

approved the land acquisition process in the area. They say that those opposing the project include small land holders who depend on dairy silk fruit and vegetable farming and fear loss of livelihood if lands are taken away. Leaders warned that they will continue their agitation peacefully but strongly and declared that they will not give up land even if they face extreme pressure or force.

Several farmer leaders and association members attended the protest and reiterated demands for withdrawal of land acquisition and protection of agricultural livelihoods rights safeguarded.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITMENT

Hard work can transform school standards: P Bagewadi

KOLAR

Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Panchayat Dr Praveen P Bagewadi stressed the need for dedication and accountability among officials and hostel staff to improve standards of schools and student hostels across Kolar district during a review meeting held with Social Welfare Department at Zilla Panchayat hall.

He said that with full commitment every official can raise quality of education and hostel management



and instructed staff to immediately report shortages of basic facilities so that in-

frastructure can be provided without delay and ensure safety cleanliness and installation of CCTV cameras proper gates doors and windows.

He also expressed concern over drinking water shortage and poor quality food in hostels and directed officials to coordinate with Gram Panchayats and implement Jal Jeevan Mission connections to ensure safe water supply for students in affected institutions.

He urged focus on academic improvement through

crash coaching classes special training programmes and identification of weak students in Mathematics and Kannada while encouraging sports talents and public speaking skills for holistic development.

Officials including Social Welfare Department Backward Classes and Minority Welfare officers attended the meeting and discussed hostel approvals staff shortage administrative reforms student safety measures and use of digital systems for better governance.

Dr Bagewadi also directed installation of complaint and suggestion boxes in hostels and awareness of Child Helpline 1098 and instructed verification of student attendance daily before evening and strengthening PFMS e office systems and ensuring anti suicide safety measures in all hostels for student wellbeing and discipline. He emphasized coordination between departments for sustained improvement in education and hostel infrastructure across the district.

Deputy Commissioner enforces cattle protection act strictly

KOPPAL

No permission for unauthorized slaughter and transportation of cattle during Bakrid festival on May 28, district authorities said. Deputy Commissioner Dr Suresh B Itnal said strict rules are enforced under Karnataka Cattle Slaughter Prohibition and Protection Act 2020. He instructed officials to form joint teams with police and animal husbandry department to prevent illegal transport and slaughter.

Police said cattle transport is allowed only with valid permits

and documents and violation may lead to imprisonment and heavy fines. Deputy Superintendent of Police Dr Ram Arasiddi said punishment includes three to seven years imprisonment or fine ranging from fifty thousand to five lakh rupees per cattle. He added that night transport of cattle is strictly prohibited and all vehicles must carry ownership details and veterinary first aid kits.

Authorities will set up sixteen check posts across the district including major highways and sensitive routes to monitor cattle movement during festival days.

QUICK READ



Haryana focusing on futuristic skill development

CH NEWS, Chandigarh Haryana is focusing on futuristic skill development and technology-based vocational education, with the government planning major initiatives in artificial intelligence (AI), green technologies, digital skilling and industry-linked training systems. At a meeting of the Skill Development and Industrial Training (SDIT) Department, Chief Secretary Anurag Rastogi on Friday reviewed reforms aimed at preparing the youth for future employment opportunities and strengthening Haryana's skilled workforce in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Viksit Bharat'. The review focused on the modernisation of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), introduction of AI and emerging technology courses, improvement in monitoring of training programmes and development of an industry-oriented skill ecosystem.

Jammu woman sets herself ablaze after boyfriend 'ignores' her

CH NEWS, Jammu In a shocking incident, a woman in J&K's Jammu city set herself ablaze allegedly after her boyfriend ignored her calls, police said on Friday. Police said that the incident occurred near the Tawi bridge area on Thursday when the woman allegedly poured an inflammable substance on herself and set herself on fire in a fit of rage, they said. A police statement said that the 22-year-old woman allegedly set herself ablaze after her boyfriend did not respond to her phone calls. Passersby immediately rushed to her aid and managed to douse the flames before police personnel admitted her to a hospital for treatment.

Two faculty members of university held while accepting bribe

JAIPUR Acting under the directions of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Headquarters in Jaipur, the ACB's Tonk Unit in Rajasthan conducted a trap operation on Friday and arrested two accused persons, including Dr (Ms.) Meenu Gangal, currently serving as Associate Professor and Head of Department, and Ramesh Chand Meena, currently serving as Assistant Professor/Associate at Dr K.N. Modi University, Banasthali Road, Niwai, while accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000. Director General of Police

(ACB), Govind Gupta, stated that the ACB's Tonk Unit had received a complaint alleging that the complainant, a student enrolled in the two-year B.Ed. course (Session 2024-26) at Dr K.N. Modi University, was being harassed by the accused persons. It was alleged that both accused, acting in collusion, demanded a bribe of Rs 23,000 in exchange for regularising the complainant's attendance, permitting him to appear in the main examinations, and issuing his admit card. During verification proceedings conducted on May 21, 2026, the ac-



cused allegedly reiterated their demand for Rs 23,000 and assured the complainant that payment of the bribe would enable him to appear in the examination and obtain his admit card. Subsequently, under the supervision of Narayan Togas, Deputy Inspector General of Police, ACB Ajmer Range, and led by Trap Laying Officer Ri-

shikesh Meena, Additional Superintendent of Police, ACB Tonk, a trap operation was organised. During the operation, the accused Dr Meenu Gangal allegedly instructed her co-accused, Ramesh Chand Meena, to accept the bribe amount of Rs 20,000 from the complainant inside her office chamber and in her presence. Ramesh Chand Meena allegedly received the bribe amount, counted the cash, and placed it in his trouser pocket, from where the tainted money was subsequently recovered by the ACB team.

Bengal Announces ID Rules for Free Bus Rides

KOLKATA The West Bengal Transport Department has released detailed guidelines specifying the identity documents women commuters must carry to avail free travel on state-run buses under the newly announced welfare initiative of the state government. The scheme, introduced earlier this month under the government led by Suvendu Adhikari, is aimed at improving women's mobility, strengthening access to public



transport and supporting broader women's empowerment efforts across the state. According to the notification issued on Thursday, wom-

en seeking to use the free bus service must carry a valid identity document to establish eligibility and ensure that the benefit reaches women resi-

dents of West Bengal. The transport department has approved a broad range of identity documents for verification. These include Aadhaar, Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC), Grameen Rozgar Guarantee Card, Ayushman Bharat Health Card, driving licence, PAN card, passport, pension documents carrying photographs, service identity cards issued by Central or State governments, public sector undertakings and public limited companies. In addition, official identity

cards issued by schools, colleges and universities, along with any government-issued identity card carrying a recent photograph of the beneficiary from the Government of West Bengal, will also be accepted. Women commuters will be required to present any one of these approved identity documents while travelling to access the fare exemption. To streamline implementation, the government has also announced the introduction of a dedicated smart card system for beneficiaries. Under the

plan, eligible women will receive a digital smart card equipped with a QR code along with their name and photograph. Applications for these smart cards will be submitted through the offices of the Block Development Officer (BDO) or Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) having jurisdiction over the applicant's area. Until the smart cards are issued, women can continue using any of the approved photo identity documents to claim the benefit.

Rajasthan Launches Rural Water Conservation Drive

Rajasthan announced a statewide campaign promoting water conservation and village development

JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma on Friday announced the launch of the 'Vande Ganga Water Conservation Campaign', a statewide initiative aimed at strengthening water conservation efforts and promoting rainwater harvesting across rural areas. The campaign will officially begin on May 25, coinciding with Ganga Dussehra, and is expected to focus heavily on community participation to improve groundwater availability and address long-term water scarcity challenges in villages. The announcement came during the Chief Minister's visit to Dhambola village in Dungarpur district, where he stayed overnight before beginning an early morning tour of



the village. During the visit, Sharma interacted with local residents, walked through village lanes, and met elders, seeking their blessings and understanding local concerns. The Chief Minister also engaged with shopkeepers and residents to gather insights into their livelihoods and daily challenges. Throughout the visit, he listened to public grievances and collected feedback on the implementation of various government welfare schemes. Highlighting the importance of traditional rural values, Sharma spoke about the close social ties that define village life. He noted that communities in villages continue to support one another through both celebrations and hardships, strengthening social harmony. Referring to the local culture of mutual greetings and connection, popularly known as "Rama-Shyama," he described it as an important reflection of rural unity. During an informal interaction over tea with villagers, Sharma outlined additional measures focused on education and youth development. He announced that the State Government is establishing 'Atal Gyan Kendras' in Pan-

chayats across Rajasthan. These centres are intended to provide books, newspapers and educational study materials to rural students and job aspirants, allowing young people to prepare for competitive examinations without relocating to urban areas or bearing additional financial expenses. Reiterating the government's commitment to rural infrastructure, Sharma said development projects would be implemented in phases while ensuring that essential services reach every village. Speaking on water security, he emphasised that proper rainwater management and restoration of village ponds can play a major role in reducing water shortages and increasing groundwater recharge.

PM Modi to Distribute Recruitment Letters

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute more than 51,000 appointment letters to newly selected candidates across various government departments and organisations during the 19th Rozgar Mela scheduled for Saturday. The recruitment event will be conducted through video conferencing and will include an address by the Prime Minister to newly appointed candidates joining public service across different sectors. The Rozgar Mela initiative was launched as part of the Central Government's broader objective of accelerating employment generation and streamlining recruitment processes across government institutions. The programme has been positioned as a mission-driven effort to expand employment opportunities for young Indians. According to official information, nearly 12 lakh appointment letters have already been issued through 18 editions of the Rozgar Mela organised across the country since the initiative began. The 19th edition of the programme will be conducted simultaneously at 47 locations nationwide. Candidates selected from different



Blurb Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hand appointment letters to youth nationwide.

regions of India will join multiple ministries and departments under the Government of India. Among the departments where recruits will be appointed are the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Financial Services and Department of Higher Education, along with several other government institutions. During the 18th Rozgar Mela held earlier this year, Prime Minister Modi had reiterated that creating employment opportunities and strengthening skill development remained among the government's key priorities. He had stated that the initia-

tive was introduced to bring government recruitment under a focused and time-bound framework and noted that over time it had evolved into an institutional mechanism connecting youth with employment opportunities. The Prime Minister had also highlighted India's demographic advantage, noting that the country remains one of the youngest nations globally and that efforts are being made to expand employment avenues both within India and internationally. Referring to global engagement, Modi had said that India's trade and mobility agreements with several countries were creating new pathways for Indian youth to access opportunities abroad. He also pointed to increased investment in modern infrastructure projects in recent years, stating that development activities had generated large-scale employment across construction and related industries. Additionally, Modi emphasised the growth of India's startup ecosystem, noting that nearly two lakh registered startups are contributing significantly to job creation and are currently providing employment to more than 21 lakh young people across the country.

BHOPAL

Retired judge Giribala Singh on Friday questioned the manner in which police are investigating the death of her daughter-in-law, Twisha Sharma, and alleged that the inquiry was being conducted under external pressure. Speaking to media persons, Singh responded to claims made by police from Katara Hills Police that she had failed to cooperate with investigators and had not appeared before authorities to record her statement. Rejecting the allegations, Singh stated that police officials had repeatedly visited her residence and interacted with people present there but did not formally record her version of events. According to her, the first official notice asking for her appearance was sent through WhatsApp after she had already left for Jabalpur. She questioned why investigators



had not recorded her statement during previous visits to her residence. Singh also raised objections over the use of WhatsApp communication for issuing notices and alleged that certain electronic materials connected to the case had been altered. Expressing concern over the circumstances surrounding the incident, she said she also wanted clarity about what had happened inside her house on the day of Twisha Sharma's death and described the event as unusual and difficult to understand. The former judge further alleged that investigating officials entered her residence and secretly recorded conversations without informing her. She claimed her legal counsel had submitted an application objecting to the alleged conduct. According to Singh, covert recording without consent amounted to a violation and she questioned the authentic-

Cong leader caught on camera making filthy comments at PM Modi, BJP fumes

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Ajay Rai was caught on camera on Friday making highly objectionable and filthy comments on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The incident, in utterly bad taste, is set to snowball into a major political firestorm with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) taking strong offence to it. In the video that has gone viral on social media, the Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) chief Ajay Rai is seen making distasteful remarks while waving to a group of people, who apparently assembled to see him off. BJP IT cell Amit Malviya, taking quick cognisance of the incident, shared the despicable video, capturing the moment

when Congress leader blurted out disparaging remarks against the Prime Minister. Malviya reminded the Congress leader of PM Modi's magnanimity, as to how the latter enquired about his health and also publicly wished for his speedy recovery, when he suddenly faced a 'health scare' and compared it with that of the former's vile conduct. "This is the level of Congress's politics - responding to courtesy with rudeness," wrote Malviya on X, while sharing the video. The abusive comments against PM Modi are set to invite huge backlash from the people as well, not just for Ajay Rai but also for the Congress. Netizens have already started questioning the morality and ethics of the grand old party.

Teen killed in Bihar's Aurangabad; love affair angle suspected

PATNA

A 17-year-old boy was allegedly beaten to death in Bihar's Aurangabad district on Friday, with villagers suspecting that the murder may be linked to a love affair. The incident occurred in Adalpur village under the jurisdiction of the Rafiganj Police Station area. The deceased has been identified as Ritesh Kumar, son of Amresh Das. Following information about the incident, SDPO-2 Aditya Kumar and SHO Shambhu Kumar reached the spot and initiated an investigation. According to an official, the teenager had suffered fractures in his hands and legs along with serious head injuries, indicating that he was brutally assaulted before his death. The victim's father, Amresh Das, alleged that a neighbour from the same village had assaulted Ritesh around ten days ago as well. He suspects the same individual is behind the murder.



Police said that Mantu Kumar, son of Dhanush Das and a resident of the village, has been named as the accused in the case. Raids are currently being conducted to arrest him. While the exact motive behind the killing is yet to be officially confirmed, local villagers believe the incident may have been triggered by a suspected love affair. Police stated that further investigation is underway. An FIR has been lodged in this regard in Rafiganj police station under relevant sections of murder against the accused. A dedicated team has been formed to nab the accused. Earlier, on Tuesday night, around 10:00 P.M., a romantic affair took a violent turn near the Ram-Janaki cult in Mangrauni village, within the jurisdiction of the Rajnagar Police Station in Madhubani district.

QUICK READ

POCSO court awards Jhansi man 5 years' RI in sexual exploitation case

Jhansi

A special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Uttar Pradesh's Jhansi has convicted and sentenced an accused to five years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) along with a fine of Rs 1.5 lakh in a child sexual exploitation material (CSEM) case, officials said on Friday. According to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the court of the Special Judge under the POCSO Act pronounced the judgment against accused Ramji on May 22 after finding him guilty in the case related to circulation and storage of child sexual exploitation material through online platforms. The CBI had registered the case on November 14, 2021, based on source information indicating that a syndicate operating from different parts of India and abroad was allegedly involved.

Allahabad HC flags lapses in arms licence regime in UP

Prayagraj

The Allahabad High Court has expressed serious concern over widespread violations of arms licensing norms in Uttar Pradesh, observing that district administrations and police authorities in all 75 districts were not adhering to government orders and statutory provisions governing the grant and renewal of firearm licences. A single-judge Bench of Justice Vinod Diwakar, while hearing a writ petition filed by Jai Shankar alias Bairistar, directed the state government to furnish detailed information regarding arms licences and security cover granted to several persons across the state, including individuals allegedly.

'Rahul Gandhi solely responsible for Congress' downfall'

Ghaziabad

Spiritual guru and former Congress leader Acharya Pramod Krishnam on Friday remarked that Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi is solely responsible for the downfall of the Congress.

His remark came in response to LoP Gandhi's allegation that the country is facing economic distress, inflation, unemployment, and student unrest while Prime Minister Narendra Modi is busy making reels. Rahul Gandhi had made the remark after PM Modi gifted a packet of 'Melody' toffee to his Italian counterpart Giorgia Meloni during his recent visit to Rome. Taking a swipe at the Congress leader, Krishnam said: I would request PM Modi to gift a packet.

Yogi Adityanath Slams Ajay Rai Over Remarks Against PM

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday strongly criticised State Congress President Ajay Rai for allegedly making objectionable remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

LUCKNOW

The controversy began after a video clip surfaced on social media in which Ajay Rai was allegedly heard making offensive comments against Prime Minister Narendra Modi while interacting with Congress supporters. The video quickly went viral, drawing sharp reactions from leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), who condemned the language used by the Congress leader.

Reacting to the incident, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took to social media plat-

form X and criticised Rai as well as the Congress leadership. He stated that the remarks reflected the distorted political culture of the Congress party and were unacceptable in democratic politics.

The indecent, unparliamentary and unforgivable remark made by the Uttar Pradesh Congress President about respected Prime Minister Narendra Modi reveals the Congress party's distorted political culture, Adityanath said in his statement.

The Chief Minister also targeted Congress leader Rahul

Gandhi during his criticism of the opposition party. Referring to Gandhi as the Congress Yuvraj, Adityanath alleged that such behaviour had been displayed by the party leadership earlier as well. He accused the Congress of being driven by frustration, despair, and political resentment.

According to Adityanath, the Congress had reached a stage of mental bankruptcy and had lost the moral standing to seek forgiveness from the people of the country. His remarks intensified the po-

litical confrontation between the BJP and the Congress in the state.

The BJP has strongly condemned Ajay Rai's comments, accusing him of reducing the dignity of political debate. Several BJP leaders also criticised the Congress for what they described as disrespectful language directed at the Prime Minister.

The



incident has gained further attention because it comes only weeks after Prime Minister Modi had publicly wished Ajay Rai a speedy recovery when the Congress leader was admitted to a hospital in Lucknow earlier this month.

BJP leaders highlighted this gesture while attacking the Congress over the latest controversy.

The exchange has once again sparked a heated political debate between the ruling BJP and the Congress ahead of upcoming political activities in Uttar Pradesh.

Gujarat CM, Russian Consul General discuss expansion of maritime

GANDHINAGAR

India-Russia cooperation in maritime, shipbuilding and education sectors was discussed during a high-level courtesy meeting held in Gandhinagar between Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Russian Federation's Consul General in Mumbai, Ivan Fetisov, with both sides exchanging invitations to major investment summits in Gujarat and St. Petersburg.

The discussions focused on avenues to strengthen bilateral engagement, particularly in maritime infrastructure, shipbuilding and education, with both sides expressing interest in expanding institutional and industrial cooperation in these areas.

No Consensus Reached on JTET Language Policy Dispute

RANCHI

The committee was formed by the Jharkhand government after a major controversy erupted over the recently approved JTET language rules. The new policy excluded Bhojpuri, Magahi, Maithili and Angika from the list of regional languages permitted for the examination, triggering protests and criticism from several political leaders and social groups.

The high-level meeting was chaired by Finance Minister Radha Krishna Kishore and witnessed sharp differences among committee members regarding the language framework. Ministers Sanjay Prasad Yadav and Rural Development Minister Deepika

Pandey Singh strongly supported the inclusion of the four excluded languages. They argued that lakhs of aspirants residing in border districts regularly use these languages and that excluding them from the examination process would unfairly affect candidates.

The ministers maintained that the language policy should reflect the linguistic realities of the state and provide equal opportunities to students from all regions. They warned that the exclusion of widely spoken languages could create unnecessary barriers for deserving candidates appearing for the teacher eligibility examination. Apart from the issue of excluded languages, concerns

were also raised regarding the current examination pattern that requires candidates to choose one among 15 tribal languages. Some committee members pointed out that several districts, including Palamu, Garhwa and Chatra, do not commonly use these tribal languages in daily communication. According to them, making such languages mandatory could place candidates from these regions at a disadvantage.

During the discussion, Minister Sudivya Kumar Sonu questioned the composition of the committee itself. He said that sensitive issues involving language and cultural identity should also include representation from Scheduled Tribes and minority communities to

ensure a balanced and inclusive approach.

The committee had earlier directed the Personnel and Education departments to provide data regarding the languages selected by candidates in previous examinations. However, officials reportedly failed to submit clear and complete data even during Friday's meeting. This drew criticism from several ministers, who expressed dissatisfaction over the lack of preparation by the concerned departments.

Following the meeting, Finance Minister Radha Krishna Kishore said that all suggestions, objections and differing opinions expressed by committee members are being compiled into a detailed report.

Major administrative reshuffle in Bihar; 11 IAS officers transferred

PATNA

The Bihar government on Friday carried out another major administrative reshuffle involving several senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers, officials said.

The notification issued by the General Administration Department under the leadership of Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, announced new appointments, transfers, and additional responsibilities across multiple departments. Under the new postings, 1992-batch IAS officer Deepak Kumar Singh has been appointed as Principal Secretary to the Governor. Gopal Meena has been posted as Secretary to the Governor.

Senior IAS officer B. Rajendra has been given charge as Additional Chief Secretary of the Monitoring Department, while Kundan Kumar has been appointed Secretary in the Home Department.

According to the notification, Sanjay Kumar Singh has been relieved from his responsibilities in the General Administration Department. Seema Tripathi has



been assigned additional charge as Secretary of the Revenue and Land Reforms Department.

Further appointments include Nilesh Ramchandra Deore as Managing Director of the Bihar State Housing Board and Inayat Khan as Special Secretary in the Revenue and Land Reforms Department.

The reshuffle also includes the appointment of Arvind Kumar Verma as Special Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat Department, while Rajiv Kumar Srivastava has been posted as Additional Secretary in the Finance Department.

The latest round of transfers is being seen as part of the Bihar government's broader administrative restructuring aimed at improving departmental coordination, strengthening governance, and accelerating policy implementation.

HC Rejects Plea Against Use of Ballot Papers in Punjab Municipal Polls

CHANDIGARH

The petition had questioned the State Election Commission's decision to move away from the EVM-VVPAT system and return to ballot paper voting for the municipal elections in Punjab. The petitioner argued that the change had been introduced abruptly through an administrative communication without any statutory amendment, legislative approval, or public consultation.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Sheel Nagu and Justice Sanjiv Berry dismissed the plea, observing that the election process had already reached an advanced stage. The court noted that the election schedule had been officially announced on May 13 and the last date for withdrawal of nominations had already passed on May 19.

It is now too late for us to pass any orders or issue any writ since the election programme was published as early as May 13, the Bench observed while refusing to interfere with the ongoing electoral process.

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Friday dismissed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) challenging the Punjab State Election Commission's decision to conduct

According to the petition, replacing EVMs with ballot papers undermined the constitutional principles of free, fair, transparent, and credible elections. The plea also claimed that the move violating Articles 14, 19(1)(a), 21, and 243ZA of the Constitution.

During the hearing, Punjab Advocate General Maninderjit Singh Bedi defended the State Election Commission's authority, arguing that under Article 243ZA of the Constitution, the responsibility for conducting municipal elections rests solely with the State Election Commission. He clarified that the Election Commission of India has no direct role in municipal polls conducted by the state authorities.

The State Election Com-

mission further argued that even if EVMs were made available immediately, the deployment process would require around 15 to 18 days for transportation, setup, and operational arrangements. With less than a week remaining before polling day, the commission stated that conducting elections through EVMs was no longer practical.

However, during the proceedings, the Election Commission reportedly rejected the state government's claim regarding the lengthy preparation time for EVM deployment. It informed the court that the machines requested for the elections were already being transported from Rajasthan to Punjab and that the commissioning process could be completed within a day. The commission also maintained that training related to the election process could be conducted in a short time.

Despite these submissions, the High Court declined to intervene, citing the advanced stage of the election schedule.

Punjab will go to the polls on May 26 to elect representatives.

Engagement is only path to peace: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

SRINAGAR

Chief cleric and senior Kashmiri religious leader, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, said on Friday that engagement is the only path to peace among nations, communities and people.

Delivering the Friday sermons at the Jama Masjid in Nowhatta area of Srinagar, Mirwaiz Umar said, Today, as we gather at this historic pulpit of Jama Masjid, our hearts are filled with pain and disappointment that we were once again not allowed to visit Mazar-e-shuhuda Eidgah to pay tribute to our beloved leaders and the martyrs.

Thirty-six years have passed since the martyrdom of Shaheed-e-Millat Mirwaiz Molvi Muhammad Farooq (RA) and the Hawal massacre of May 21, 1990, yet the wounds remain fresh in our hearts.

His absence is more and more keenly felt.

These past thirty-six years, have been very tough on Kashmir witnessing tragedies, violence and loss, and yet no closure.

CM BIG STATEMENT

'M'rajshtra on track to become \$1 tn economy by 2030'

MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday expressed strong confidence in the state's rapid economic and technological progress, stating that Maharashtra is emerging as a global leader in research. Speaking during an interview with an English television channel, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said Maharashtra has established itself as the country's leading hub for startups, unicorns, innovation, and technology-driven growth. He

asserted that no other state in India currently matches Maharashtra in terms of infrastructure, revenue generation, industrial ecosystem, and research capabilities.

Fadnavis highlighted the remarkable expansion of the state's economy over the past decade. According to him, Maharashtra's economy stood at nearly ₹14 lakh crore in 2015 and has now expanded to around ₹54 lakh crore. He said the state has more than tripled the size of its economy within ten years and

is now closest among all Indian states to achieving the \$1 trillion economy target.

The Chief Minister stated that Maharashtra's economy is currently valued at nearly \$660 billion and continues to maintain a steady annual growth rate of around 10 per cent. He added that if the present



mentum continues, the state will comfortably achieve the \$1 trillion milestone by 2030 despite temporary challenges such as adverse weather conditions or agricultural fluctuations caused by phenomena like El Niño.

Fadnavis also claimed that Maharashtra has now emerged as the world's 30th largest economy and is no longer competing only with other Indian states. He said the state's economy is expected to surpass major international financial centres such as Singapore and the United

Arab Emirates within the next two to three years.

The Chief Minister credited technology and AI for accelerating Maharashtra's development. He explained that the government is extensively using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), data tracking mechanisms, and centralised digital data pools to improve governance and economic planning. He also mentioned the establishment of an Economic Advisory Council tasked with preparing sector-specific growth strategies.

According to Fadnavis,

Government of Karnataka

STATE INSTITUTE OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT
ATI Campus, Lalitha Mahal Road, Mysore-570011
Phone No. 0821-2520116, 163, Fax No. 0821-2520164
e-mail: directorsiud@gmail.com, website: www.siuadmysore.gov.in

No:SIUD-ADMIN/HOST/15/2025

Date: 21.05.2026

Tender Notification (Through KPP Portal Only)

State Institute of Urban Development, ATI Campus, Lalitha Mahal Road, Mysuru invites Tender from interested agencies.

SI.No 1: Tender Number SIUD/2025-26/SE0003/CALL-2,
Name of the Service: Providing Cooking (Food) and Catering Service for the State Institute of Urban Development (SIUD), Mysuru for a Period of One year, Amount put to Tender. **Rs.90,00,000/- EMD: Rs.1,80,000/-** Last Date & Time for receipt of tender is **04.06.2026 upto 4.00 pm**. Further details can be obtained by logging into **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Deputy Director
SIUD, Mysuru

DIPR/MYSORE/SSC/222/2026-27

Government of Karnataka

**Public Works Department,
Special Division, Hunsur**
Short Term tender Notification
(Through <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>)
IFT No:05/2026-27 **Date: 20-05-2026**

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka the under signed has invited item wised tender for 2-works related to Hunsur Special Division as per terms and conditions of "standard tender documents" from the eligible registered contactors under PWD through kppp Portal. Maximum amount put to tender Rs.81.46 lakhs and Minimum amount put to tender Rs.42.34 lakhs, Maximum EMD amount of Rs.81,500/- and Minimum EMD amount of Rs.42,350/- . Tender documents is downloaded from the <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> website from Dt: 20-05-2026 Last date for submission of filled tender documents for SI no is Dt: 29-05-2026 and for SI no 2 is Dt: 03-06-2026 upto 16.00 Hours. Period for completion of works (including monsoon): Maximum 6-Months and Minimum 2-months. For more details visit the undersigned during office working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, Special Division, Hunsur.
DIPR/DDMYS/209KSMCA/158/2026-27

QUICK READ



Outrage grows after Israeli minister mocks Gaza flotilla activists

JERUSALEM

Western governments voiced outrage after Israel's far-right security minister posted a video of himself taunting Gaza-bound flotilla activists being pinned to the ground, with two later alleging they were physically assaulted in detention. The activists' treatment by police officers under the direction of National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir also drew a rebuke from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and from the United States, Israel's staunch ally. The activists, whose vessel was intercepted on Wednesday in international waters by Israeli naval forces as they were trying to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza, were all deported from Israel on Thursday, the Israeli foreign ministry said.

NOTICE

We M/s PRESTIGE OVERSEAS
Closed our Branch office business in Bengaluru with immediate effect.

In the event there is any complaint against us the same may be referred to within 30 days of the publication of the notice. Copies of the complaint may be sent to The Protector General of Emigrants, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Akbar Bhavan, Satya Marg, ChanakyaPuri, New Delhi-110021.

Place:- BANGALORE
Dated: 19-05-2026

Sd/-
Proprietor
Office No.01, 2nd Floor,
Shamantha Plaza, Coconut
Avenue Rd, Between 5th &
6th Cross, Malleshwaram,
Bengaluru, Bengaluru Urban,
Karnataka, 560003

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the general public that our client, **Shreevi Developers Pvt. Ltd.**, having its office/address at **Wandagokula Nilaya, Kumbh Village, Kundana Post, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District (Contact No: +91 9845582290)**, intends to purchase the schedule properties mentioned below.

The Present owners, **Gangaraju S/o Late Chikkavekatappa, Munilakshamma C/o Chikkavekatappa, Giriyappa S/o Late Chikkavekatappa** resident of **Kallukunte Village, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluku, Bangalore Rural District.**

Shree Narasimhaiah S/o Narasiyappa, Smt. Shanthamma W/o Narasimhaiah (resident of **Ujani Village, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluku, Bangalore Rural District.**)

Jayamma W/o Shreeram (resident of **Yakarlahalli Village, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluku, Bangalore Rural District.**)

Shree. Nagaraju S/o Nanjappa (resident of **Yakarlahalli Village, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluku, Bangalore Rural District.**) have represented to our client that they are the absolute owners of the schedule properties, having acquired the same through inheritance.

Further on 12.05.2021, all the above-mentioned persons had executed an Agreement of Sale in favour of **Sri. PINNAMARAJU SATYA ANIL VARMA S/o Sri. Venkata Subramanya Narasimharaju Pinnamaraju**, Residing at: **No.K-506, Purva Fountain Square, Near Spice Garden Bus Stop, Mammakota, Marathahalli, Bengaluru-560027**, K. Sri. SRINIVASA KUMAR DINDUKURTI S/o Sri.Dindukurti Muniraj Shetty, Residing at: **No.8-35, Bazar Bheedi, Vayalpadu, Chintlaparhi, Chittoor Dist, Andhra Pradesh-517277** in respect of all the above or below mentioned schedule properties."

Any person(s) having any right, title, interest, or claim of any nature over the said properties, or any objection to the proposed sale, is hereby required to lodge such objections/claims along with supporting documentary evidence with the undersigned within three (3) days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no objections are received within the stipulated period, it shall be deemed that the schedule properties are free from all encumbrances, and our client will proceed with the purchase.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

Property 01:
All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Sy. No. 28, situated at **KG Devapala Village, Arudi grama panchayath, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, measuring 3 Acres 10 Guntas. 4 guntas Kharab Land Included**, that is measuring bounded as follows:
* East by: Property of Jayamma Shreeram
* West by: Property of Gagaraju and Others
* North by: Property of Madhugiri Shivanna
* South by: Property of Raju and Others

Property 02:
All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Sy. No. 22/1, situated at **KG Devapala Village, Arudi grama panchayath, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, measuring 4 Acres (6 guntas Karab Land Included)**, that is measuring bounded as follows:
* East by: Property of Praveen kumar Roddam and Ravikumar Roddam.
* West by: Property of Narasimhaiah
* North by: Property of Madhugiri Shivanna
* South by: Property of Government

Property 03:
All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Sy. No. 23, situated at **KG Devapala Village, Arudi grama panchayath, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, measuring 2 Acres 22 Guntas. bounded as follows:**
* East by: Property of Narasimhaiah
* West by: Property of Giriyappa and Gangaraju
* North by: Property of Madhugiri Shivanna
* South by: Property of Government.

Property 04:
All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Sy. No. 22/2, situated at **KG Devapala Village, Arudi grama panchayath, Sasalu Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, measuring 3 Acres 36 Guntas. bounded as follows:**
* East by: Property of Praveen kumar Roddam and Ravikumar Roddam.
* West by: Property of Narasimhaiah
* North by: Property of Madhugiri Shivanna
* South by: Property of Government.

Vasanth Kumar A., Advocate, Bengaluru

Iran-Pakistan Talks Push Efforts for Peace

Iran and Pakistan intensified diplomatic engagement as efforts continued to end conflict.

TEHRAN

Iran's diplomatic outreach gained momentum on Friday as the country's foreign minister held discussions with Pakistan's interior minister over proposals aimed at ending the ongoing U.S.-Israeli war and easing regional tensions.

The meeting took place in Tehran amid continued disagreements between Tehran and Washington on key strategic issues, including Iran's uranium stockpile and control over the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.

According to Iranian media reports, Pakistan's Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi met Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi for another round of talks, just two days after delivering the latest message from the United States as part of diplomatic negotiations.



Reports indicated that Naqvi has been playing an intermediary role by facilitating communication channels intended to establish a framework for ending hostilities and narrowing differences between the involved parties. The diplomatic engagement reflects growing regional efforts to prevent further escalation and move toward a negotiated settlement.

Meanwhile, the United States signaled cautious optimism over recent developments. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio stated that negotiators had observed encouraging signs in the discussions but warned that substantial challenges remained unresolved.

Rubio emphasized that progress would be difficult if Iran moved forward with enforcing a tolling mechanism in the Strait of Hormuz. Since the outbreak of the war on February 28, shipping activity through the crucial maritime corridor has been severely disrupted.

A senior Iranian source indicated that negotiators had reduced differences in several areas, although disputes over uranium enrichment and navigation policies in the Strait of Hormuz continued to represent major obstacles.

The conflict has triggered widespread economic consequences across global markets.

Energy prices have surged sharply, fueling concerns over renewed inflationary pressure worldwide. Before the conflict, approximately one-fifth of global oil supplies and liquefied natural gas shipments moved through the Strait of Hormuz, making stability in the region critical for international trade.

Financial markets also reflected investor caution. The U.S. dollar remained close to a six-week high, while oil prices climbed further amid uncertainty surrounding whether diplomatic efforts would produce a breakthrough in the coming days.

Overnight drone strikes in Luhansk triggered casualties and emergency rescue operations.

Deadly Drone Strike Hits Luhansk Dormitory

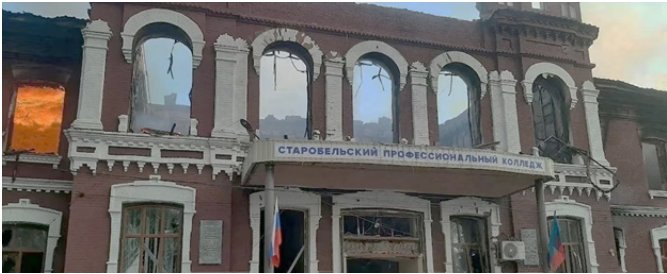
MOSCOW

At least four people were reported killed and dozens of children injured after an overnight drone attack struck a student dormitory in the Russian-controlled Luhansk region of eastern Ukraine, according to Russian officials.

The reported strike targeted a hostel associated with Starobilsk College of Luhansk Pedagogical University, where teenagers were staying overnight. Russian authorities said emergency services continued rescue operations amid fears that additional victims remained trapped beneath the debris.

According to Yana Lantrtova, a total of 86 teenagers between the ages of 14 and 18 had been asleep inside the building when the attack occurred. Officials stated that at least 35 children sustained injuries during the incident.

Leonid Pasechnik said rescue teams had managed to pull two people alive from the rubble while continuing



search operations for others believed to remain trapped.

Authorities mobilised emergency crews throughout the night to clear collapsed structures and provide medical assistance. Images and videos released by Russian authorities showed heavily damaged buildings, sections appearing to have collapsed, emergency personnel carrying survivors on stretchers and firefighters attempting to extinguish remaining fires. Russia blamed Ukraine for carrying out the strike, although Reuters said it could not independently verify the circumstances surrounding the incident. Ukrainian authorities had not immediately commented on the allegations.

The Luhansk region remains one of four eastern Ukrainian territories that Russia declared annexed in 2022. Ukraine and much of the international community rejected the move and continue to regard the territory as part of Ukraine.

Reacting to the reported attack, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov condemned the strike and called for accountability. Peskov described the incident as a serious attack on an educational institution where children and young people were present and stressed that rescue efforts remained the immediate priority.

Investigation into King Charles' brother Andrew will be lengthy, UK police say

LONDON

The British police investigation into Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor will be long and complex, senior officers said on Friday, after his arrest earlier this year on suspicion of misconduct in public office, an offence that can include sexual impropriety.

King Charles' younger brother was interviewed under caution for hours by detectives after he was arrested at his home in Norfolk in February following the release of millions of documents by the

U.S. Department of Justice relating to the late U.S. sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

The arrest of the senior royal, eighth in line to the throne, was unprecedented in modern times. A photo of the ashlen-faced former prince leaving the police station made front pages around the world.

Mountbatten-Windsor, 66, the second son of the late Queen Elizabeth, has always denied any wrongdoing in relation to Epstein, and said he regrets their friendship. He has made no public statement since his arrest.

Spain Unveils Jobs Plan for Migrants

MADRID

Spain has announced a major immigration initiative designed to connect undocumented migrants with formal employment opportunities while granting legal status to hundreds of thousands of workers already contributing to the country's economy.

The programme, first introduced in January, is expected to regularise the status of around 500,000 undocumented migrants and support Spain's long-term economic growth strategy. The government believes the policy will strengthen the labour market and help address demographic challenges linked to an ageing population.

Speaking to Reuters, Spain's Secretary of State for Migration, Pilar Cancela, said authorities had already received more than 200,000 applications during the programme's first month. Many applicants have reportedly been granted temporary work permits after their applications entered official processing.

The initiative forms part of a broader strategy by Spain's Socialist-led coalition government to use managed migration as a tool for economic sustainability. Officials argue that bringing workers into the formal economy will expand the tax base, strengthen public services and improve the long-term viability of pension systems.

According to official estimates, Spain will require approximately 2.4 million additional contributors to its social security system over the next decade in order to maintain its

Spain launched a migration initiative linking undocumented workers with formal employment.

welfare structure and meet future economic obligations.

The government has prepared administrative systems to manage significant demand. Dedicated offices and support networks, including non-governmental organisations, have been mobilised to process as many as one million applications — double the projected intake.

Economic analysts suggest the measure addresses an existing reality rather than creating a new labour supply. Research by Fincas estimates that roughly 840,000 undocumented migrants are already working informally across Spain, with many originating from Latin American countries.

Officials say the employment-matching mechanism is intended to shift workers from unstable and unregulated jobs into the formal economy, helping reduce labour shortages across critical sectors.

Cancela described the programme as an opportunity to recognise the contribution of migrants already living and working in Spain and said genuine social integration would become possible once workers gained access to stable, legal employment.

The proposal, however, has sparked criticism from far-right political groups in Spain and elsewhere in Europe, reflecting broader debates across the continent over migration policy and economic priorities.

Paul McCartney helps Stephen Colbert say goodbye to Late Show

NEW YORK

Comedian Stephen Colbert signed off from his late-night talk show after 11 seasons with a sentimental chat with Beatles musician Paul McCartney and pointed jokes about his forced departure from CBS. The final installment of "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" began with the comic thanking the in-person and television audience for watching his nightly take on current events, often punctuated by verbal jabs at Republican President Donald Trump.

We were here to feel the news with you, and I don't

know about you, but I sure have felt it," Colbert said to laughter in the Ed Sullivan Theater in New York.

CBS announced last July that it was cancelling the "Late Show," citing financial reasons. Late-night television, an American tradition since the 1950s, has been losing viewership and advertising dollars for years.

The decision to end the top-rated late-night talk show sparked an outcry, however, from Democrats and other critics who saw it as a move to silence political satire in violation of the First Amendment's free speech protection.

US Ebola patient in Berlin hospital not critically ill, family tests negative

BERLIN

A U.S. citizen who contracted Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where an outbreak of a rare strain has killed over 130 people, is not critically ill and his wife and four children have tested negative, the Berlin hospital where the family is being treated said on Friday.

"Because the course of the illness can change, he remains under close observation and is receiving treatment," Charite

university hospital said in a statement. "He is being cared for in the high-security area of the specialized isolation unit."

The patient's wife and four children "are currently asymptomatic and quarantined in a separate part of the unit — an initial PCR test detected no Ebola virus infection."

The patient, identified by the Serge Christian mission organization as medical missionary Dr. Peter Stafford, contracted Ebola while treat-

ing patients in the DRC, where he had been living with his family.

The White House said Stafford and his family had been brought to Germany because it is 12 hours closer to the DRC than the United States.

Charite said in its statement that the patient room had been made as child-friendly as possible, adding that the children were able to see their father "through a glass partition, and family members can communicate via an intercom."

AUTHORITIES MONITOR SITUATION

Authorities monitor Ebola developments while assuring

JOHANNESBURG

Concerns over the ongoing Ebola outbreak in Central Africa have cast a shadow over preparations for the upcoming FIFA World Cup, although health experts say the overall risk to international fans remains low.

The expanded 48-team tournament, jointly hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico, is scheduled to run from June 11 to July 19. Organisers and public health authorities are continuing preparations while monitoring the



evolving disease situation.

According to global health expert Dr Oliver Johnson of King's College London, ordinary visitors attending World Cup matches face a very low

risk of Ebola exposure. He noted that Ebola transmission has historically remained extremely limited in high-income countries and has generally involved isolated cases

rather than widespread community spread.

The comments come as the outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has intensified.

The World Health Organization declared the Ebola outbreak caused by the Bundibugyo virus strain a Public Health Emergency of International Concern earlier this month after cases spread across borders into Uganda. WHO emphasized that the event does not currently meet the threshold of a pandemic emergency.

Recent reports indicate hundreds of suspected cases and more than 130 suspected deaths linked to the outbreak, with health officials warning that numbers may continue rising as surveillance expands.

The outbreak has become more difficult to contain because transmission circulated before detection and is occurring in regions facing conflict and mobility challenges. The situation has already affected World Cup logistics for DR Congo's national football team.

Sweety Kujur to lead India U-18 squad

Led by captain Sweety Kujur, India's eighteen-member junior women's hockey squad heads to Japan for the Asia Cup



NEW DELHI

Hockey India announced an eighteen-member junior women's squad for the upcoming Under-18 Asia Cup. Forward Sweety Kujur has been named captain of the promising team, which will travel to Kakamigahara, Japan, for the tournament from May 29 to June 6.

The young squad finalized its preparations during an intensive national training camp in Bhopal.

Under the watchful guidance of legendary former captain and current coach Rani Rampal, the players focused heavily on improving match

fitness, sharpening tactical coordination, and building on-field combinations over the past few weeks.

As part of their training, the Indian team recently played a tough four-match exposure series against Australia in Bhopal. The home side concluded that series on a massive high, securing a dominant four-to-one victory in the final match, which provided a timely confidence boost to the squad.

India finds itself placed in Pool A for the continental championship. The team will compete against heavyweights South Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore in the ini-

tial phase. The girls will begin their campaign against Malaysia on May 30, followed closely by a challenging match against South Korea on May 31. They will conclude their pool games against Singapore on June 2.

Coach Rani Rampal expressed immense excitement about the selected lineup, stating that the prestigious tournament provides a fantastic platform for these young athletes to handle high-pressure international matches. She emphasized that the team is deeply motivated to play fearless hockey and strongly challenge for the Asia Cup title.

Ashmita Chaliha knocked out after brave fight

KUALA LUMPUR

India's campaign at the Malaysia Masters badminton tournament officially ended. The final hope, Ashmita Chaliha, suffered a heartbreaking defeat against Denmark's Line Kjaersfeldt in the women's singles quarterfinals.

Chaliha, ranked 71st in the world, put up a brave fight but eventually lost to her 23rd-ranked opponent. The grueling match lasted over an hour, with the final score ending 23-21, 18-21, 11-21 in favor of the Danish player.

The young Indian shuttler started the match brilliantly, using sharp control to take a commanding 11-6 lead. A 1 - though

Denmark's Line Kjaersfeldt defeated Ashmita Chaliha in the quarterfinals, ending India's campaign at the Malaysia Masters badminton tournament after earlier exits from top stars

Kjaersfeldt fought back fiercely to level the game, Chaliha kept her composure to win the opening game. The momentum shifted during the second game. Chaliha again built an early 10-5 lead, but the experienced European Games champion adjusted her strategy to level the score and force a deciding third game.

The final game proved entirely one-sided. After a tense 4-4 tie, Kjaersfeldt took absolute control of the court. She rushed ahead to a massive 13-6 lead, leaving a tired Chaliha with no chance of recovery.

With Chaliha's elimination, India has no remaining players left in Kuala Lumpur. The rest of the Indian squad had already exited the tournament earlier. Players like Malvika Bansod and Devika Sihag lost their second-round matches, while top male stars Lakshya Sen and HS Prannoy suffered disappointing first-round defeats. The Indian badminton contingent will now look to rebuild their confidence before the upcoming Singapore Open tournament.



New AFC rules blow for Indian clubs

NEW DELHI

Indian football has suffered a massive blow after the Asian Football Confederation changed its tournament entry rules for the 2027-28 season. Indian clubs have been demoted to the Challenge League, which is Asia's third-tier football competition.

Currently, Indian teams enjoy a direct spot in the second-tier Champions League Two, and they will keep this place for the upcoming 2026-27 season. However, because of poor results in recent years, India has dropped significantly in the Asian rankings. India is now ranked fifteenth in the West Asian region, falling behind smaller football nations like Tajikistan and Lebanon.

Another major reason for this demotion is that the domestic Indian Super League did not play enough matches. Asian rules state a country's top league must feature at least twenty-seven games per team. Because the recent Indian season was shortened, local clubs only played thirteen matches each, failing to meet the

strict continental requirements.

Under the new rules, India loses all direct spots in the top tournaments. Instead, they will receive just one indirect qualification spot in the lower-tier Challenge League. This means Indian teams must play difficult knockout qualifying matches just to enter the main tournament.

The only positive news for local clubs is that the winner of the Challenge League earns a promotion ticket back to the second tier for the following year. Indian football officials must now completely restructure their domestic calendar to improve player performances and help Indian clubs regain their lost respect in Asia.

HISTORIC VOLLEYBALL TRIALS KICK OFF IN DELHI

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Pro Volleyball League has announced that its player trials for the historic first season will begin on May 24. Organizers will hold the tryouts in multiple stages to discover the best sports talent from different regions.

The first phase of the selection process will take place at Laxmi Public School in Karkardooma, New Delhi. After all trial stages wrap up, the chosen players will enter an official auction pool. From there, six different franchise teams will buy players to build their final squads for the tournament.

League founder Neeti



Rawat expressed great excitement about the massive response from young athletes during the registration process. She revealed that players from more than twenty states across India have signed up to participate. Rawat stated that it is deeply inspiring to see the new league grow so rapidly just months after its official launch.

The main goal of these tri-

als is to find raw athletic talent, nurture young players, and give them a professional stage to display their skills. The local competition was launched earlier this year with strong backing from both the Delhi Volleyball Association and the Delhi Olympic Association to build a better future for the sport.

The tournament will feature six city franchises playing in a professional league format later this year. By introducing this structured competition and increasing television media coverage, organizers hope to significantly boost the popularity of volleyball across the entire country.



Russell trails teammate Antonelli ahead of Canada

MONTREAL

Mercedes driver George Russell insists there is no need to panic ahead of this weekend's Canadian Grand Prix. The British racer faces a tough challenge as his teenage teammate, Kimi Antonelli, arrives in Montreal chasing his fourth consecutive victory. Russell currently trails the championship lead by twenty points after a mixed start to the year. However, Mercedes has brought its first major car upgrades of the season to the Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve. Rivals McLaren and Ferrari introduced successful developments at the previous race in Miami, putting extra pressure on Mercedes to respond.

Russell stated that the

championship is not on his mind since there are still eighteen races remaining. He revealed that factory data for the new upgrades looks very promising. However, he warned that until they drive the car on track, a few performance unknowns will remain.

The driver identified poor race starts as the team's biggest current weakness, admitting that making major short-term gains in that area will be difficult. Despite this, Russell feels confident about Montreal, noting that the flowing track layout has suited their car perfectly over the last two years.

Meanwhile, nineteen-year-old Antonelli is enjoying a stunning season. If the Italian



rookie wins this weekend, he will join elite active drivers like Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen in winning four straight races. Antonelli admitted his spectacular success has been a surprise, but he remains fully focused on taking the season one race at a time.



SINNER seeks Paris glory amid rival injuries

year after his heartbreaking final defeat to Carlos Alcaraz.

Sinner's path to the trophy has opened up significantly. Defending champion Alcaraz has officially withdrawn from the tournament due to a persistent wrist injury. Meanwhile, world number four Novak Djokovic arrives in Paris short on match practice. The Serb's only clay-court appearance ended in an early defeat in Rome, and he chose to skip his title defense in Geneva to rest. Despite this, former champion Andy Roddick warned against writing Djokovic off, stating the veteran remains incredibly dangerous whenever he shows up.

Several other contenders will look to challenge Sinner's supremacy. Germany's Alexander Zverev remains a major threat but carries fitness concerns over a nagging back issue. Norway's Casper Ruud, a two-time French Open runner-up, brings proven clay-court pedigree but recently lost to Sinner in the Rome final. Young Frenchman Arthur Fils and American star Ben Shelton also enter with high confidence after winning titles in Barcelona and Munich, respectively.

BSF tournament boosts youth in border regions

RAJOURI

The Border Security Force (BSF) and the Sports Authority of India have launched a major three-day district volleyball tournament in Jammu and Kashmir. Named 'Spanandan,' the competition is currently taking place at the District Sports Complex Stadium to promote peace and development. The event features fourteen enthusiastic teams from the border districts of Rajouri and Poonch. This includes eight boys teams and six girls teams. BSF leader Chander Mohan Singh Rawat inaugurated the tournament alongside local officials and sports enthusiasts.

Significantly, this marks the first time the BSF has provided such a massive sporting platform specifically for young girls in this border region. Local players expressed great joy, stating that the Pir Panjal region is full of hidden athletic talent that desperately needs proper exposure and encouragement. To ensure the event's success, the BSF is providing all players with complete support, including free accommodation, food, and sportswear.

During his opening speech, Rawat highlighted the power of sports in building disciplined, confident, and responsible citizens. He stressed that regular athletic activities play a crucial role in keeping the younger generation away from drug abuse and other harmful social evils.

Manchester United appoint Michael Carrick until 2028

MANCHESTER

Manchester United has officially named Michael Carrick as their permanent head coach. The forty-four-year-old former midfielder signed a new long-term contract that keeps him at the famous football club until 2028.

Carrick originally took temporary charge of the team in January after previous manager Ruben Amorim was dismissed. He made an instant impact, winning the Manager of the Month award after guiding United to memorable victories over rivals Manchester City and Arsenal in his first two games. Under his leadership, the team completely transformed, winning eleven out of sixteen matches to secure a third-place finish and qualify for next season's prestigious UEFA Champions League.

Expressing his joy, Carrick

stated that leading this special club fills him with immense pride. He praised his squad for showing incredible resilience and determination over the past five months. He emphasized that Manchester United and its passionate supporters deserve to challenge for the biggest trophies in football once again.

Club director Jason Wilcox praised Carrick, stating he thoroughly earned the position by rebuilding a winning culture that aligns with United's rich traditions. Carrick is deeply respected at Old Trafford, having played 464 games and winning five Premier League titles and a Champions League trophy during his career. After working under managers Jose Mourinho and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, his successful interim run convinced club bosses he is the right man to lead United forward.



Commissioner Kiran More evaluates grassroots talent

NEW DELHI

Former Indian wicketkeeper Kiran More successfully completed the Delhi NCR player trials for the Beyond Reach Premier League. The two-day selection event took place at the Trident Cricket Academy in Ghaziabad, drawing thousands of eager young players.

The league aims to discover hidden tennis-ball cricket stars from across the nation. More, serving as the league commissioner, personally monitored the hopefuls over May 20 and 21. Selectors thoroughly evaluated the participants on various skills, including batting, bowling, fitness, and mental calmness under intense match pressure.

League CEO Sushil Sharma expressed great joy over the massive turnout. He stated that the incredible energy and passion shown by players traveling from all over the region was deeply inspiring. Sharma explained that this enthusiastic response is exactly what the tournament wants to build to support local sports communities.



More admitted he was highly impressed by the raw talent visible at the grassroots level. He emphasized that structured tournaments give young players the direction and exposure they need to build confidence. He added that many participants displayed brilliant skills and a strong hunger to succeed at a professional level.

The league was created to transform casual tennis-ball cricket into a professionally managed sport. By offering competitive matches and digital media visibility, organizers hope to give raw talent from small towns a fair pathway to professional success. Following the successful Delhi selection, the league will continue its nationwide hunt to give every passionate cricketer a genuine platform to shine.

QUICK READ

Swiggy Faces Setback in Ownership Structure Change Bid

CH NEWS, New Delhi Swiggy failed to secure the required shareholder approval to amend its Articles of Association (AoA), a move aimed at qualifying the company as an Indian-owned and controlled entity, according to an exchange filing. The proposal sought changes in ownership and control provisions to meet regulatory requirements for domestic classification. However, the resolution did not receive the necessary threshold support from shareholders. Swiggy, a leading quick commerce platform, will continue operating under its existing structure. The development could delay potential regulatory benefits linked to domestic ownership status. The company has not disclosed further details on next steps following the vote outcome at the shareholder meeting. Market response remains closely watched investors.

RBI dividend to govt expected to hit record levels in FY26

CH NEWS, Mumbai Reserve Bank of India (Reserve Bank of India) Central Board is expected to announce a record surplus transfer to the Government of India for FY26, likely exceeding last year's Rs 2.7 lakh crore payout. Estimates from economists place the dividend between Rs 2.8 lakh crore and Rs 3.3 lakh crore, driven by higher income and potential adjustment in the contingency risk buffer under the Economic Capital Framework. Analysts say a lower buffer requirement could release additional surplus. The windfall is expected to strengthen government finances, helping contain the fiscal deficit without extra borrowing. The RBI Board meeting on Friday will finalise the transfer amount for approval and accounting and government reporting process.

Report projects 20–25% revenue rise in FY27 for gold retailers

CH NEWS, New Delhi India's organised gold jewellery retail sector is expected to grow revenue 20–25% in FY27, driven by higher gold prices, says Crisil report. However volumes are expected to decline 13–15%, as high prices and import curbs reduce demand. The report says sales could fall to 620–640 tonnes, the lowest level in a decade excluding Covid year. Higher realisations may boost revenues, but margins could be pressured by discounts and promotional costs. Analysts also warn that volatility in prices, policy changes, and shifting consumer sentiment remain key risks for the sector.

India capital goods sector sees strong double-digit growth outlook

India's capital goods sector is projected to grow 12–14% this fiscal, driven by strong government and infrastructure-led investment demand.

NEW DELHI

India's capital goods industry is expected to record revenue growth of 12–14 per cent in the current fiscal year, driven by sustained government capital expenditure, capacity expansion across key sectors, and rising demand from emerging industries, according to a report by Crisil.

The report highlights strong investment momentum in sectors such as power, mining, oil and gas, metals, automobiles, and rapidly growing segments like data centres and electric vehicle infrastructure. These drivers are expected to support robust demand for heavy engineering and industrial equipment.



It notes that ongoing geopolitical developments in West Asia are unlikely to significantly impact the sector, as most companies have diversified order books and limited

exposure to the region. The majority of revenues continue to come from the domestic market, providing stability to earnings.

Operating margins are pro-

FIEO expects Goyal's Canada visit to boost trade ties and advance CEPA talks, targeting stronger economic cooperation

India-Canada trade ties may strengthen after Goyal visit

NEW DELHI

The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) has expressed optimism that Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal's upcoming visit to Canada will significantly boost India-Canada economic relations and help advance negotiations on a proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

The visit, scheduled from May 25 to 27, comes at a crucial time as both countries aim to revive trade talks and work towards an ambitious target of reaching \$50 billion in bilateral trade by 2030. Industry bodies believe the engagement could accelerate discussions on market access and investment opportunities.

FIEO president S.C. Ralhan said the visit reflects a strong commitment from both nations to rebuild economic ties and



deepen cooperation in key sectors. These include agriculture, clean energy, critical minerals, food processing, education, and advanced manufacturing, all of which offer strong potential for mutual growth.

The exporters' body noted that the proposed CEPA could create significant opportunities for Indian exporters, especially MSMEs, by easing trade procedures, improving market access, and encouraging technology-driven collaboration. It added that this could help Indian businesses integrate more effectively into global supply chains.

FIEO also highlighted that the timing of the visit is important, given ongoing global trade uncertainties caused by geopolitical tensions and supply chain disruptions. Strengthening bilateral partnerships, it said, would help both countries build more resilient and diversified trade networks.

According to the organisation, increased ministerial exchanges and trade delegations in recent months signal positive momentum in bilateral engagement. Stakeholders from both sides are expected to continue discussions aimed at expanding commercial cooperation.

The federation expressed confidence that the visit will inject new energy into CEPA negotiations and pave the way for deeper economic integration between India and Canada in the coming years.

BJP defends India economy, hits Congress criticism

NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday strongly rejected Congress criticism of the Indian economy, accusing the opposition of misrepresenting facts and ignoring key economic data. The exchange came after Congress



leader Jai Ram Ramesh cited an article by economist Surjit Bhalla, calling it a "damning indictment of Modi-nomics."

BJP leader Amit Malviya said the opposition was far removed from data, facts, and context, and argued that comparing today's economy with the 2013 "Fragile Five" period was "historically and statistically incorrect." He said India has emerged as the world's fastest-growing major economy despite global uncertainty.

Malviya highlighted that international agencies such as the World Bank and OECD have projected India's growth at 7.6% for FY26, while the IMF expects India to remain the fastest-growing major economy through 2026 and 2027. He said these projections reflect sustained economic resilience.

He also pointed to improvements in key macroeconomic indicators, including lower inflation, stronger forex reserves, and a reduced current account deficit. According to him, India's current account deficit stood at around 1 per cent of GDP in FY26, compared to 4.8 per cent during the 2013 economic stress period.

On inflation, Malviya said consumer price inflation had fallen significantly, dropping

from about 10 per cent in 2012–13 to 3.48 per cent in April 2026. He also noted that foreign exchange reserves had risen to nearly \$697 billion, providing strong import cover and financial stability.

The BJP leader further cited record GST collections, declining non-performing assets in public sector banks, and rising industrial growth as evidence of economic strength. He also referred to government initiatives such as Production Linked Incentive schemes, semiconductor investments, insurance reforms, and new trade agreements as drivers of investor confidence.

Malviya concluded that the opposition was attempting to build a "collapse narrative," while official data and global assessments indicate continued economic stability and growth momentum in India.

Heatwave pushes India peak power demand to record 270.82 GW

NEW DELHI

India's electricity demand surged to a record 270.82 gigawatts (GW) as an intense heatwave drove up cooling needs across the country.

The spike in demand has been attributed mainly to increased use of air conditioners, fans, and cooling systems as temperatures remain significantly above normal in many regions. The surge marks one of the highest-ever levels of electricity consumption recorded in India's power sector history.

According to reports, the peak demand has now crossed the government's earlier summer projections, reflecting sustained stress on the national electricity grid. The trend has been particularly strong during daytime hours, when solar contribution is high but cool-

ing demand also peaks sharply.

The Ministry of Power said the power system is currently stable and capable of meeting high demand levels, though it continues to closely monitor regional imbalances and localised supply pressures. Officials noted that while overall generation capacity is sufficient, distribution-level constraints can still lead to temporary outages in some areas.

The record-breaking demand has been observed over several consecutive days, indicating a sustained impact of extreme weather conditions linked to the ongoing heatwave. Energy experts say such spikes are becoming more frequent due to rising temperatures and increased

Bernstein turns bullish on Adani group execution

MUMBAI

Global brokerage Bernstein has taken a bullish stance on Adani Group, citing strong execution capabilities at scale, healthy balance sheet metrics, and improved investor comfort regarding debt and promoter shareholding structures.

In its latest note, the brokerage said it is not concerned about the group's debt levels, highlighting that repayment schedules and interest yields remain comfortable. It also described promoter holding patterns and share pledge ratios as stable and healthy. Bernstein observed that across businesses such as ports, logistics, renewable energy, and thermal power, the key challenge remains securing large contiguous land parcels with appropriate infrastructure and evacuation connectivity. It noted that the group already controls around 0.5 million acres for renewable projects with significant capacity already connected.



urban cooling needs.

Power sector analysts have also pointed out that India's grid is under growing seasonal stress during peak summer months, when electricity consumption rises sharply, especially in urban and industrial clusters.

Authorities have urged consumers to use electricity efficiently during peak hours to reduce pressure on the grid. They also highlighted the importance of expanding storage systems, transmission infrastructure, and renewable integration to manage future demand surges. The latest figures underline the increasing link between climate extremes and energy demand in India, reinforcing concerns about grid resilience during prolonged heatwave conditions.

DigiHaat expands cooperative ride service to 55 cities

NEW DELHI

Government-backed e-commerce platform DigiHaat on Friday announced the expansion of its mobility service "DigiHaat Rides" to 55 cities across India through partnerships with driver-owned cooperatives such as Bharat Taxi and Namma Yatri. The service, which was earlier available in Delhi NCR and Bengaluru, has now been extended to major cities including Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Jaipur, Kochi, Lucknow, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Vadodara, and several tier-2 and tier-3 urban centres. According to the platform, the expansion is aimed at promoting a cooperative and citizen-centric model in the ride-hailing sector, differing from traditional app-based services by giving drivers greater ownership and control over earnings.

India's industrial energy transition could unlock a \$100 billion opportunity by 2030

India's industrial energy shift seen as \$100 billion opportunity

NEW DELHI

India's industrial energy transition could unlock a \$100 billion decarbonisation opportunity by 2030, according to a new joint report by TDK Ventures and Theia Ventures. The report highlights that the sector remains significantly underfunded, with current investment levels at less than 40 per cent compared to more developed economies.

The study frames India's decarbonisation journey not only as an environmental necessity but also as a strategic economic opportunity. It notes that India currently spends around \$140 billion annually on energy imports, leaving the economy exposed to global price fluctuations and geopolitical risks.

Experts say that transitioning industrial energy systems can help build a more resilient "for-

trepreneurial" by reducing dependence on imported fuels and improving domestic efficiency. The report identifies three key high-impact areas: long-duration energy storage, industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) with digital twins, and advanced energy efficiency technologies. According to Ravi Jain, Investment Director at TDK Ventures, India's transition is not just about expanding renewable energy capacity but also about improving how efficiently energy is used across industries. He noted that there is strong investment potential in storage systems, smart industrial technologies, and efficiency-driven solutions. Priya Shah, Founder and General Partner at Theia Ventures, said the report aims to provide entrepreneurs and investors with a clear roadmap for high-impact opportunities in the clean energy space.

MERAMANDALI FREIGHT PROJECT

Green Line expands LNG truck fleet with Tata steel

MUMBAI

GreenLine Mobility Solutions Ltd., an Essar Group venture, has expanded its clean logistics partnership with Tata Steel by deploying LNG-powered trucks at the company's Meramandali facility in Odisha, strengthening efforts to decarbonise long-haul freight operations in India.

The initiative is part of a broader collaboration between the two companies to reduce carbon emissions across industrial transport networks. GreenLine, a green logistics



pioneer, currently operates over 1,000 LNG and electric vehicles across major freight corridors serving sectors such as steel, cement, mining, FMCG, and chemicals.

According to the company, its fleet has already covered

more than 90 million kilometres and helped reduce over 24,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. The new deployment at Tata Steel's facility marks another step in scaling cleaner fuel alternatives in heavy-duty logistics.

GreenLine plans to significantly expand its operations with a long-term goal of deploying over 10,000 LNG and electric trucks across India. This expansion will be supported by a nationwide infrastructure network of LNG refuelling stations, EV charging hubs, and battery-swapping points. The company estimates that this transition could help cut up to 1 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

LNG-powered trucks used in the fleet offer a driving range of up to 1,200 km on a single fill and can reach up to

2,400 km with dual tanks. Compared to diesel vehicles, they reduce carbon dioxide emissions by up to 40 per cent and also significantly lower harmful pollutants such as particulate matter, SOx, NOx, and CO.

Officials from both companies highlighted that collaboration between industry partners is essential for accelerating green logistics adoption in India. The initiative is seen as part of the broader push toward sustainable industrial transport and improved energy security.

India's passenger vehicle growth set to reach 4.6% in FY27

NEW DELHI

India's passenger vehicle industry is expected to grow by 4.6 per cent in FY27, driven by sustained demand momentum, according to a latest report by ICRA. The growth outlook comes despite concerns over a weak monsoon forecast and ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia.

The report noted that the sector has already witnessed strong performance in recent months, supported by GST rate cuts, an extended summer wedding season, and healthy demand for newly launched mod-

els. These factors collectively boosted both wholesale and retail sales across the country.

Wholesale volumes of passenger vehicles rose by 25 per cent year-on-year in April 2026, reaching around 4.4 lakh units. Automakers maintained steady production levels to meet robust domestic demand. Retail sales also recorded a strong 16 per cent year-on-year growth during the same period.

On a sequential basis, wholesale dispatches remained stable, while retail sales saw a slight decline compared to March due to higher year-end discounts.

Gaikwad defends young team after playoff exit

AHMEDABAD

Chennai Super Kings suffered a double blow in the last match. After getting knocked out of the cricket tournament, skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad and his entire team faced heavy fines for bowling too slowly. The trouble hit during their must-win match against Gujarat Titans. Because Chennai could not finish their overs on time, Gaikwad was fined 24 lakh rupees. This was his second offence this season. To make matters worse, all other players, including the substitute, were fined six lakh rupees or a quarter of their match fees. On the field, things were just as painful. Gujarat com-

pletely dominated the game, scoring a massive 229 runs. Chennai's batting crumbled under pressure, and they were bowled out for just 140 runs, losing by a huge margin of 89 runs. This crushing defeat officially ended Chennai's dreams of reaching the playoffs. It also marks three disappointing years in a row without a top-four finish for the five-time champions. After the match, an emotional Gaikwad opened up about their struggles. He explained that losing three games at the start hurt their confidence. Just as they found their rhythm and the right team combination, unexpected player injuries disrupted their plans once again. Gaikwad asked fans to un-

Following a crushing playoff elimination by Gujarat Titans, Chennai Super Kings face massive fines for a slow over-rate.

derstand their current situation, reminding everyone that the squad is currently changing. He stated that many people do not realize they are a young team going through a transition period, lacking experienced players to handle such high-pressure matches.



Bangar advises Chennai to revamp overseas lineup

NEW DELHI

Former India coach Sanjay Bangar believes Chennai Super Kings must find better foreign players for next season. This advice follows Chennai's heavy 89-run defeat against Gujarat Titans, which knocked the five-time champions out of the current tournament. The disappointing loss ended Chennai's campaign with only six victories from fourteen league matches. It also marked the third consecutive year that the popular franchise failed to reach the crucial playoff stages. Against Gujarat, Chennai's bowlers leaked a massive 229 runs before their batting unit collapsed completely for just 140 runs. Speaking about the team's future, Bangar explained that Chennai already possesses a very talented core of Indian players. He highlighted Sanju Samson, who led their batting



beautifully, alongside promising youngsters like Urvil Patel and Anshul Kambhoj. However, he stressed that the real problem lies in their overseas line-up. Bangar stated that the team desperately needs more consistency from their foreign batsmen and extra depth in the fast-bowling department. Throughout the year, Chennai struggled to find a balanced combination of international stars, leaving their batting without firepower and their bowling weak during high-pressure games. According to Bangar, Chennai's main priority before the next tournament must be identifying experienced overseas match-winners who can perform instantly. He concluded that finding reliable international talent is the only way for the transitioning team to rebuild successfully and challenge for the trophy once again.

Deep Dasgupta decodes Gujarat's dominant cricket form

NEW DELHI

Former India cricketer Deep Dasgupta believes keeping things simple is the main secret behind Gujarat Titans' brilliant form. His comments came after Gujarat secured a top-two spot by crushing Chennai Super Kings by 89 runs. In that match, half-centuries from Sai Sudharsan, Shubman Gill, and Jos Buttler helped Gujarat score a massive 229 runs. Later, bowlers Mohammed Siraj, Kagiso Rabada, and Rashid Khan destroyed Chennai, bowling them out for 140 runs. This big win also knocked the five-time champions out of the tournament. Dasgupta explained that Gujarat succeeds because every player knows their role perfectly. The team keeps an uncomplicated mindset. For example, the same bowlers operate in fixed parts of the game regardless of runs conceded, and the opening batsmen always maintain their specific playing style. Furthermore, Dasgupta praised Gujarat's smart strategy of keeping a small, tightly-knit squad instead of having too many options. The team intentionally released big names like David Miller and Sherfane Rutherford to ensure better consistency and unity among the playing group. This clear plan worked perfectly against Chennai.

Bangar credits Siraj and Rabada for top-two finish

NEW DELHI

Former coach Sanjay Bangar has praised fast bowlers Mohammed Siraj and Kagiso Rabada for leading Gujarat Titans into the top two spots. Their brilliant bowling helped Gujarat crush Chennai Super Kings by 89 runs in their last match. Gujarat set a massive target of 229 runs, thanks to quick half-centuries from Sai Sudharsan, Shubman Gill, and Jos Buttler. When it was time to bowl, Siraj and Rabada destroyed Chennai's batting lineup early on. They took three wickets each, leaving Chennai struggling at 31 for 3 within the first three overs. Chennai never recovered and was bowled out for 140 runs. Bangar explained that the two fast bowlers have set a perfect

tone this season. By bowling long spells at the start, they attacked the batsmen without needing defensive field changes. Bangar added that these early wickets created a great platform for the team. It allowed star spinner Rashid Khan to bowl with complete freedom and dominate the middle overs. Apart from the excellent bowling, Bangar also praised Jos Buttler for his explosive batting. Buttler smashed an unbeaten 57 runs off just 27 balls. He hit consecutive sixes and reached his half-century in 23 balls, pushing Gujarat's score past 220. Bangar concluded that Buttler's aggressive batting completely destroyed Chennai's confidence before they even started chasing.



T20 WORLD CUP HEROES ZIMBABWE HOST BANGLADESH

NEW DELHI

Zimbabwe will host Bangladesh for an exciting multi-format cricket series throughout June and July, according to official reports. This highly anticipated tour will feature one Test match, three One-Day Internationals, and three T20 International matches. The international cricket action begins in Harare with a five-day Test match from June 28 to July 2. Following the red-ball battle, the same stadium will host the three



One-Day Internationals on July 6, 9, and 11. Both teams will then travel to Bulawayo to play the thrilling T20 series on July 15, 17, and 19. This tour marks Zimbabwe's first home series of the year. It follows their historic and incredibly successful run to the Super Eight stage at the T20

World Cup, where they shocked fans by defeating giants Australia and Sri Lanka. Zimbabwe holds great recent memories against Bangladesh, having won both the short-format home series in 2022. They also secured a historic Test victory in Bangladesh during their

last red-ball meeting. Zimbabwe Cricket Managing Director Givemore Makoni expressed massive delight about the tour, stating that local fans are eager to support the team after their brilliant World Cup performances. To prepare for the tough challenge, Zimbabwe has hired former South African bowler Quinton Friend as a consultant bowling coach. Friend is already working closely with head coach Justin Sammons at an intense training camp in Harare.

MS Dhoni's 2027 season future remains uncertain: Eric Simmons

AHMEDABAD

Chennai Super Kings coach Eric Simmons has revealed that legendary cricketer MS Dhoni's future for the 2027 season remains highly uncertain. This update comes after Dhoni missed the entire current tournament due to injury, leaving a massive gap in the squad. Chennai suffered another disappointing end to their year, crashing out before the playoffs for the third consecutive time. Their exit became official after a heavy 89-run defeat against Gujarat Titans, leaving them with just six wins from fourteen matches. Simmons admitted that Dhoni's absence severely hurt the

team's balance and confidence. He stated that no decision has been made yet about whether the veteran wicketkeeper will return next year. According to the coach, those major discussions will happen later, as the team currently needs to focus on fixing their mistakes. Despite the poor season, Simmons found positive signs in the development of younger players.



ers. He praised bowler Anshul Kambhoj, who performed brilliantly to become the team's leading wicket-taker with 21 wickets. Young player Kartik also showed magnificent improvement throughout the challenging campaign. Simmons explained that the coaching staff will now create detailed progress reports for each cricketer to work on over the next nine months. He concluded that this tough season gave the management a much better understanding of their squad depth, helping them identify which young talents can handle high-pressure situations in the future.

Mukund criticizes Chennai's poor roster auction strategy

NEW DELHI

Former Indian batsman Abhinav Mukund has labeled Chennai Super Kings latest tournament run as highly disappointing. His comments follow Chennai's heavy 89-run defeat against Gujarat Titans, which left them seventh on the table with twelve points. Mukund pointed out that Chennai only managed to defeat lower-ranked teams like Mumbai and Delhi. Crucially, they failed to challenge any of the top four sides.

Boucher praises Siraj for early Samson dismissal

NEW DELHI

Former South African cricketer Mark Boucher believes that dismissing Chennai Super Kings opener Sanju Samson on the very first ball was the turning point for Gujarat Titans. Gujarat went on to register a massive 89-run victory over the five-time champions. Chasing a mammoth target of 229 runs, Chennai's hopes were instantly dashed when pace spearhead Mohammed Siraj forced a faint edge from Samson on his opening delivery. Boucher stated that Samson was the single batsman who possessed the capability to aggressively hunt down Gujarat's massive score. Getting him out for a golden duck dealt a fatal blow to Chennai's confi-

dence, from which they never recovered, eventually collapsing for 140 runs. Bangar and Boucher both praised Siraj for executing his bowling plans perfectly on the red-soil pitch, finding immediate swing with an immaculate line and length. Siraj finished with brilliant figures of 3 for 26, while teammate Kagiso Rabada and spinner Rashid Khan also grabbed three wickets each to dismantle Chennai's batting order. Earlier, Gujarat's top order put on an absolute masterclass. Openers Shubman Gill and Sai Sudharsan smashed elegant half-centuries during their brilliant 125-run partnership. Jos Buttler then added late fireworks with an unbeaten 57 off just 27 balls to push the total past 220.



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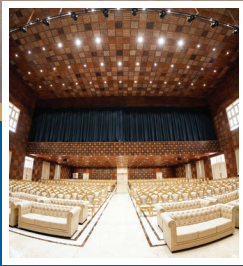
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