CITY HILIGHTS

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The Truth Speaks

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'FINALLY, POVERTY LEAVING MY COUNTRY'

50 cr people lifted out of poverty, but some still hesitant to acknowledge it: PM Modi

AHMEDABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said some individuals still hesitate to acknowledge that 50 crore people have been pulled out of poverty in the country, in an apparent dig at the Opposition.

Addressing BJP workers virtually during a post-Diwali 'Sneh Milan' programme organised across all 182 assembly constituencies in Gujarat, he said the achievement reflected the success of his government's policies and efforts.

"All those who sacrificed their lives for independence, all those who dedicated their lives to freedom, all those who spent their youth in jails for independence, wherever their souls may be, today they must be the happiest seeing this World Bank report, thinking, 'finally, poverty is leaving my country'," he said.

According to a World Bank report, India's extreme poverty rate dropped sharply to 2.6 per cent in 2023 from 27.1% in 2011, with the country lifting an estimated 496 million people out of poverty. "A thousand years of slavery had impoverished us; for the first time after a thousand years of slavery, 50 crore people are coming out of poverty. There can be no greater satisfaction in life than this, no greater achievement than this," he said.

However, he said, some people were still reluctant to acknowledge the achievement. "I know many people still hesitate to say this aloud, because all of this happened during this period (BJP rule). They don't like it. Whether they like it or not, we have the satisfaction that our efforts have borne fruit," he said.

Terming the development the beginning of a new chapter in the lives of citizens, he said coming generations would witness the country's "golden era".

"Our intention is true, our policy is right, our direction is right, and there is no shortcoming in our hard work," he said.

The BJP had organised the programme across all 182 assembly constituencies in Gujarat. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel listened to the PM's virtual address in his Ghatlodia constituency.

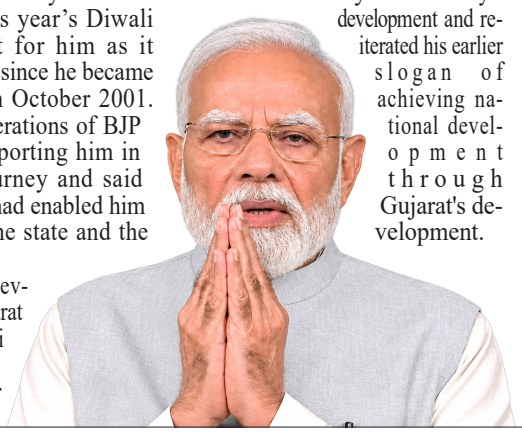
Modi said this year's Diwali was significant for him as it marked 25 years since he became Gujarat's CM in October 2001. He credited generations of BJP workers for supporting him in his political journey and said their hard work had enabled him to serve his home state and the country.

Recalling the devastating 2001 Gujarat earthquake, Modi said his first Diwali as chief minister was spent with affected families. "That day, my belief became very strong that the true happiness of festivals, the true joy of festivals, lies in lighting a lamp of hope in someone else's life."

Modi said the spirit of public participation had helped Gujarat overcome the devastation and transform Kutch into a new centre of hope. The reconstruction efforts subsequently spread across the state, leading to a wider transformation, he said.

Recalling Gujarat's development journey, Modi said the state, once largely associated with trade, had expanded its presence in sectors such as agriculture, dairy, industries, semiconductors, petrochemicals, automobiles and green energy.

He said Gujarat's economic progress had contributed significantly to the country's development and reiterated his earlier slogan of achieving national development through Gujarat's development.



BRIEF OVERVIEW

Poverty reduction: Modi claimed that around 50 crore people have been lifted out of poverty.

World Bank report: India's extreme poverty rate declined from 27.1% (2011) to 2.6% (2023).

Opposition criticism: Modi said some Opposition leaders were reluctant to acknowledge the poverty-reduction achievement.

Gujarat's development: Growth in agriculture, dairy, industries, semiconductors, automobiles and green energy.

2001 earthquake: Modi recalled Gujarat's earthquake recovery and reconstruction, particularly in Kutch.

Water conservation: Check dams, water conservation campaigns and public participation helped tackle droughts and water shortages.

Welfare initiatives: Jan Dhan accounts, LPG connections, electricity connections and Ayushman Bharat cards.

Social justice: Welfare schemes focused on Dalits, tribals, women and economically weaker sections.

Garib Kalyan Melas: Introduced during Modi's Gujarat CM tenure to support poor families.

BJP workers: Urged workers to prioritise national interest over party interests.

Future vision: Expressed confidence that Gujarat would achieve greater development in the next 20 years.

Central theme: Poverty alleviation, inclusive development, welfare delivery, Gujarat's transformation and national progress.

Welcome to Tokyo, CM

BENGALURU

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who is currently on a visit to Japan to strengthen Karnataka's investment outreach and attract new investments to the state, received a warm welcome in Tokyo on Sunday.

He was welcomed by India's Ambassador to Japan, Nagma Mohamed Mallick, along with members of the Tokyo Kannada Sangha. The visit aims to strengthen investment ties and explore new opportunities for Karnataka on the global stage.

The delegation will visit Nagoya on November 23, Osaka on November 24 and Tokyo on November 25. Minister for Large and Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development M B Patil will accompany the CM.

The discussions will focus on automotive and electric vehicle components, specialty chemicals, pharmaceuticals, industrial automation and manufacturing.

The delegation will also meet JFE Engineering Corporation to explore its expertise in waste management and urban infrastructure.GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao and senior officials from the industries department and Chief Minister's Office will be part of the delegation.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF VISIT

Itinerary: The delegation's schedule spans Nagoya, Osaka, & Tokyo from Nov 23 to 27.

Target industries: Discussions target sectors like automobiles, EV components, specialty chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and industrial automation, with meetings scheduled with major firms including Toyota, Panasonic, Mitsubishi Chemical, Takeda, Yokogawa, Sumitomo, and JFE Engineering.

Global Investors Meet: The team is engaging with JETRO to foster institutional ties and promoting the upcoming Global Investors Meet 2027 scheduled for April 20–22, 2027, in Bengaluru.

Urban planning focus: Officials from the GBA are studying Japanese systems in transit management, waste-to-energy solutions, and urban infrastructure.

Incentives: The delegation is highlighting Karnataka's Aerospace and Defence Policy, up to 20% capital subsidies for priority regions, the KIADB Digital Industrial Land Bank, and single-window clearance frameworks.

FSSAI clears Bisleri prosecution over 'unsafe' drinking water

NEW DELHI

Food regulator FSSAI on Sunday said it has sanctioned prosecution against Bisleri International after finding its sample of packaged drinking water "unsafe".

In a social media post, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said it has sanctioned prosecution against Bisleri International Pvt Ltd regarding "unsafe packaged drinking water".

A regulatory sample of "Packaged Drinking Water (other than Mineral Water)" was collected from the premises of Bisleri International for analysis.

"The sample was found non-compliant with the prescribed bromate limits and declared unsafe under the FSS Act, 2006," the regulator said.

Upon appeal by the company, the sample was sent to the referral food laboratory, which also declared it "unsafe" due to the detection of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), the regulator added.



The findings of the lab established violations relating to unsafe food under the law.

Hence, the FSSAI said it has granted sanction to launch prosecution under the FSS Act, 2006, against Bisleri International Pvt Ltd.

During this calendar year, the FSSAI has stepped up enforcement actions against food business operators as well as e-commerce companies.

The regulator has also cracked down against energy drink and alcoholic beverage makers.

FSSAI ACTION AGAINST BISLERI

- **Prosecution sanctioned**: FSSAI has approved prosecution against Bisleri International Pvt. Ltd. under the Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006.
- **Unsafe water sample**: A regulatory sample of Bisleri packaged drinking water was found non-compliant with prescribed safety standards.
- **Bromate detected**: The initial laboratory analysis found bromate levels exceeding the prescribed limits.
- **Appeal rejected**: Following Bisleri's appeal, a referral food laboratory also declared the sample unsafe.
- **PAHs detected**: The referral laboratory detected polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which raised additional food-safety concerns.
- **Legal violation**: FSSAI concluded that the findings established violations relating to unsafe food under the Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006.
- **Increased enforcement**: FSSAI has intensified action against food business operators, e-commerce companies, energy drink manufacturers and alcoholic beverage makers.

8 killed, 2 injured as car rams into tree in TN

TIRUCHIRAPALLI

Eight people were killed and two others seriously injured after the car they were travelling in collided with a neem tree in this district on Sunday, police said.

The accident occurred near Kothurpatty four road within Jambunathapuram police station limits at around 4.05 pm, when 10 people were returning to Thirukattupalli in Thanjavur district after attending an ear-piercing ceremony at Erumapatti in Namakkal district, they added.

While five occupants died on the spot, three others succumbed to their injuries at the Musiri Government Hospital, police said.

The deceased were identified as Manickam, Murugan, Rajesh, Sakthivel (42) and Subramani, all residents of Maharajapuram in Thirukattupalli; Sangili of Sathanur in Thanjavur district; and Pavadai (50) and Seetharaman of Villupuram district.

'India cherishes special friendship'

S Jaishankar Meets Nepal PM Balen Shah

NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar called on Nepal Prime Minister Balendra Shah in New Delhi on Sunday, holding discussions on various aspects of bilateral ties and further strengthening cooperation.

Following the meeting, EAM Jaishankar said that India cherishes its special friendship with Nepal.

"Prime Minister Balendra Shah was called on by the External Affairs Minister of India, S Jaishankar at Hotel Taj Mahal in New Delhi. On the occasion, various aspects of Nepal-India relations, including co-operation in the areas of connectivity, trade, transit commerce, energy, culture, education, sports especially cricket and football, and people-to-people ties, were discussed. They also exchanged views on further strengthening bilateral cooperation," Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on social media platform X.

EAM Jaishankar said that he looked forward to Balendra Shah's engagements with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Privileged to call on PM Balendra Shah of Nepal on his visit to New Delhi this evening. India cherishes the special friendship with Nepal. Look forward to his engagements with PM Narendra Modi tomorrow," the EAM said on X.

Earlier in the day, Balendra Shah arrived in New Delhi for a two-day State visit at the invitation of PM Modi. Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada welcomed him at the airport.

"Warm welcome to the Prime Minister of Nepal, Balendra Shah, as he arrives in New Delhi on a State Visit. He was received by Jitin Prasada, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry. The visit provides an opportunity to strengthen the enduring and multifaceted partnership between India and Nepal," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on X.

This is Balendra Shah's first visit to India and the first bilateral visit since assuming office as Nepal's Prime Minister in March this year.

INDIA-NEPAL TIES GET A BOOST

EAM S Jaishankar met Nepal PM Balendra Shah in New Delhi.

Discussed connectivity, trade, transit, energy, education, culture and sports.

Shah's first visit to India since becoming PM in March 2026.

PM Narendra Modi to hold bilateral talks with Shah on November 23.

Both sides to review bilateral, regional and international issues.

Joint press conference to follow the talks.

Shah will also meet President Droupadi Murmu.

Visit reinforces India's Neighbourhood First Policy and India–Nepal ties.

Modi-Shah talks today

During his visit, Balendra Shah is scheduled to hold talks with PM Modi on Monday, where both sides will review the full range of India-Nepal relations and exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, according to the MEA statement.

Following interactions over the phone and the exchange of social media messages, this will be the first in-person meeting between the two leaders.

QUICK READ

3 killed as tractor-trolley overturns on MP highway

SAGAR

Three people, including a 17-year-old girl and a 65-year-old woman, were killed and around 30 others injured when a tractor-trolley carrying them overturned on National Highway-44 in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district on Sunday afternoon, police said. At least two to three of the injured are in critical condition and admitted to Bundelkhand Medical College and Hospital. The tractor-trolley, carrying more than 30 people, was returning to a village in Sagar district when the accident occurred near Neem Ghati, police said, adding that the group had visited Narsinghpur district to take a holy dip in the Narmada River and offer prayers. The deceased are tractor driver Rakesh Yadav (49), Raksha Prajapati (17) and Premrani Yadav (65). Prima facie, the accident occurred as the driver was allegedly over-speeding while negotiating a slope.

Cong-SP begins UP seat-sharing talks

Lucknow

The Samajwadi Party (SP) and Congress are set to begin the first round of seat-sharing talks in New Delhi on Monday ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, with discussions likely to continue for two days. Congress leaders indicated that Rajya Sabha MP Pramod Tiwari's residence in Delhi could be the venue for the talks. "We are to meet for a preliminary discussion from Monday," Congress state working president Imran Masood told reporters. Congress leaders suggested that party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra could lead the negotiations, with the party hoping to finalise the arrangement by December 20. "That's what we feel because there isn't much time left for polls. So we need to close it by mid-December, say by December 20," Congress's UP incharge Rajendra Pal Gautam said. Although the alliance performed poorly in 2017, the two parties fared better in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

DISASTER RESPONSE

'Zero casualty' at heart of India's disaster strategy: Shah

ITANAGAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the government was following a 'zero-casualty' approach for disaster management, under which timely warnings and immediate evacuation measures were being prioritised to protect vulnerable people.

Inaugurating the 12th battalion campus of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) at Hollongi, near here, he said it would significantly strengthen disaster preparedness and response across the Northeast, one of the country's most vulnerable regions to natural calamities.

Shah said the region is prone to various natural disasters and stressed the need for preparedness, modern warning systems and coordinated efforts to minimise loss of lives and property.

He said the campus has been constructed in accordance with earthquake-resistant standards, keeping in view the vulnerability of the region to seismic activity. He said the NDRF's expansion, improvement in resources and specialised training were among the key priorities of the government to strengthen the country's disaster management capabilities.

Highlighting the importance of community participation in disaster management, he lauded the role of local volunteers, including children associated with scouts and trained 'Aapda Mitras', who remain prepared to assist people during emergencies.

He said disaster management efforts should not be limited to specialised forces but must involve people at the grassroots level, including village-level functionaries.

Shah claimed that the country's improved disaster response mechanism has improved and timely cyclone warnings, issued 24 to 48 hours in advance, help authorities evacuate people from vulnerable areas and prevent casualties.

The NDRF has undertaken more than 11,000 rescue and relief missions in India and abroad, including in Japan, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka, he said, adding that the force has earned recognition through its professional response during disasters in different parts of the world.

He expressed confidence that the force would emerge as one of the leading disaster response agencies in the world.

SHAH'S STATEMENT SUMMARY

Zero-casualty approach
Prioritising early warnings & timely evacuations to prevent disaster-related deaths.

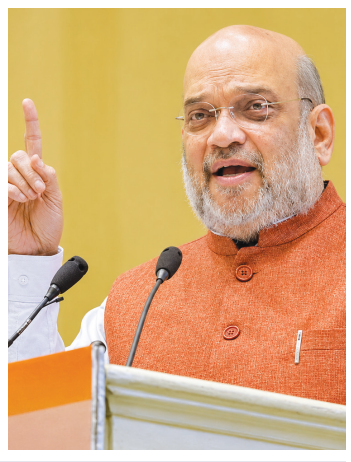
New NDRF campus
Shah inaugurated the 12th NDRF Battalion campus at Hollongi, Arunachal Pradesh, to strengthen disaster preparedness in the Northeast.

Earthquake-resistant infrastructure
The campus is built to withstand seismic risks prevalent in the region.

Community participation
Emphasised the role of Aapda Mitras, scouts, local volunteers and village-level functionaries in disaster response.

NDRF's achievements
Conducted over 11,000 rescue and relief operations in India and abroad. Improved cyclone forecasting and evacuation have helped prevent casualties.

Key takeaway
Strengthening disaster resilience through early warnings, modern infrastructure, trained forces and community participation.



Quick Read

Bengaluru police intensify crackdown on rowdy-sheeters

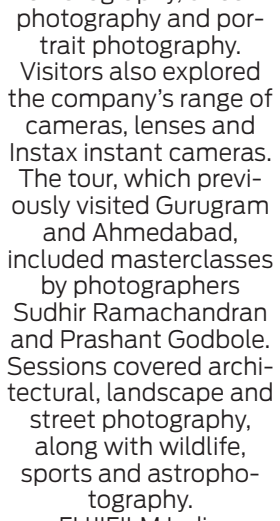
CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru Police have intensified action against rowdy-sheeters, extortionists and anti-social elements following Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's directions to strengthen law and order.

Dr. P.S. Harsha, Commissioner of Police, East Bengaluru, said the department would prioritise action against those involved in serious offences, including murder. Special attention would be given to absconding accused, and strict measures would be taken to ensure their appearance before courts.

The East Bengaluru division has 325 registered rowdy-sheeters, of whom 304 are reporting regularly, Harsha said. He warned that those involved in criminal activities, including threats and extortion, would face legal action.

The operation follows a November 20 meeting chaired by Chief Minister Shivakumar with senior police officials. Chief Commissioner of Police R. Hithendra and Commissioner of Police (Traffic) and Anti-Rowdy Squad Hemant M. Nimbalkar also participated. Police have been directed to intensify surveillance and take action against organised crime.



FUJIFILM Spectrum tour draws B'luru photography enthusiasts

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The three-day FUJIFILM India Spectrum Tour concluded at Venkatappa Art Gallery in Bengaluru, attracting photography enthusiasts, visual creators and students.

The event featured dedicated experience zones for vlogging, cinematography, street photography and portrait photography. Visitors also explored the company's range of cameras, lenses and Instax instant cameras.

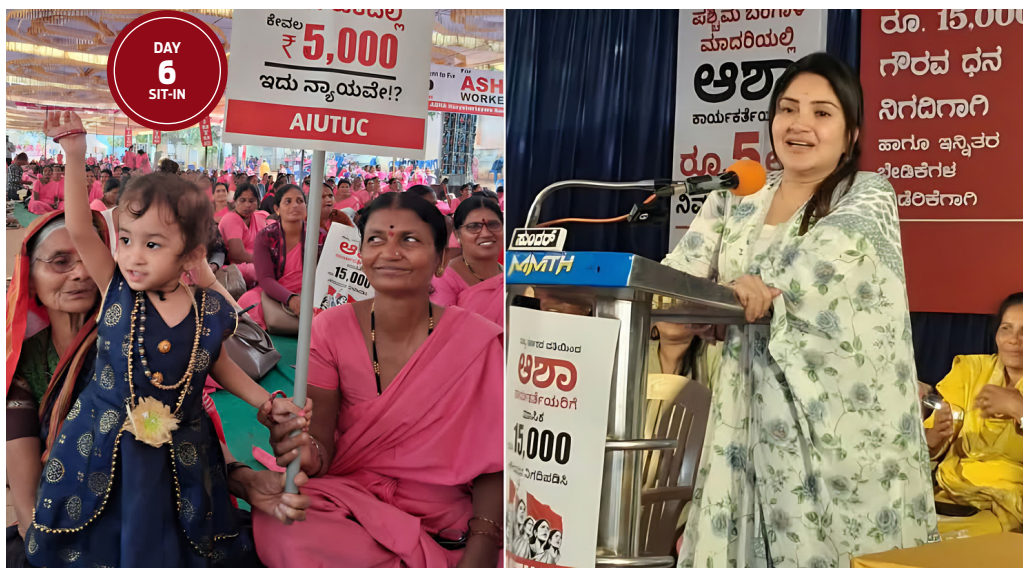
The tour, which previously visited Gurugram and Ahmedabad, included masterclasses by photographers Sudhir Ramachandran and Prashant Godbole. Sessions covered architectural, landscape and street photography, along with wildlife, sports and astrophotography.

FUJIFILM India Managing Director Koji Wada said the event aimed to connect with Bengaluru's creative community. Arun Babu, Associate Director of the Imaging Solutions Division, said the hands-on sessions encouraged visitors to explore new creative possibilities.

ASHA protest draws support from actress, activists

Actress Karunya Ram supported protesting workers by distributing food and water, urging the government to immediately fulfil their justified demands.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



ASHA workers and their supporters at the indefinite protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru, which entered its sixth day on Sunday.

The indefinite protest by Karnataka ASHA workers at Freedom Park in Bengaluru entered its sixth day on Sunday, receiving support from actors, social activists and various organisations. The workers, led by the Karnataka State ASHA Workers' Association, are demanding that the government address their long-pending demands.

Actress Karunya Ram visited the protest site and expressed solidarity with the workers. She said their demands were justified and urged the state government to fulfil them immediately. Describing herself as a daughter and younger sister of the protesting women, she assured them of her continued support until their demands were met. She also distributed rice, biscuits and drinking water to the workers.

Indiramma, representing the Tumakuru-based Committee for the Rehabilitation of Mining-Affected Environments and Livelihoods, also extended her support. She said ASHA workers, who work tirelessly in the Health Department, deserve basic facilities and a dignified life.

Indiramma asked if politicians could manage on an ASHA worker's honorarium

She questioned whether politicians could manage their daily expenses with the honorarium paid to ASHA workers. She said her organisation fully supported their struggle.

Yogananda, a member of the Right to Education (RTE) Committee, criticised the government's delay in addressing the workers' demands. He said people across the state supported the agitation and urged the workers not to withdraw their protest until their demands were fulfilled.

Jyothi Ananthasubbarao, president of the KSRTC Staff and Workers' Union, also criticised the government.

She questioned its claims of supporting women while ASHA workers were forced to protest for their rights. She further alleged that the government was delaying action despite making assurances.

The workers are demanding a fixed monthly honorarium of Rs 15,000, along with other benefits.

The indefinite protest, which began on November 17, is continuing as workers await a concrete decision from the government.

The protesters have maintained that they will continue their agitation until their demands are addressed.

INSIDE THE ASHA AGITATION

- **The sit-in:** indefinite, at Freedom Park since November 17, led by the Karnataka State ASHA Workers' Association
- **The support:** film personalities, transport unions, and education and mining activists
- **The standoff:** despite earlier assurances, the workers will not withdraw until the government takes a concrete decision

Freedom Park protest curbs under review

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



R. Hithendra, Bengaluru's Chief Commissioner of Police.

HITHENDRA'S ACTION PLAN

- **Unified command:** each of the five commissioners reports directly to the Chief Commissioner
- **Deeper probes:** keep skilled cybercrime staff and trace networks beyond the first accused

Bengaluru's newly appointed Chief Commissioner of Police, R. Hithendra, has said the government has asked the police department to reconsider the rule restricting protests to Freedom Park. However, no final decision has been taken on changing the existing restrictions.

In an interview with The Hindu on November 21, Hithendra said his immediate priorities were to establish a new administrative structure and improve coordination among the five police commissionerates created following the recent restructuring of Bengaluru City Police.

Focus on better coordination

Hithendra said the new system would have both local and senior-level supervision. Each commissioner would report to him, ensuring better coordination between the commissionerates. He also said the four commissionerates outside Central Bengaluru could gradually expand to cover more urbanised areas of neighbouring districts.

Regarding the 2021 order regulating protests and demonstrations, he said the Home Minister had asked officials to reconsider the restrictions. Discussions were underway, but no decision had been finalised.

CCB renamed Anti-Rowdy Squad

Clarifying the status of the Central Crime Branch (CCB), Hithendra said it had been renamed the Anti-Rowdy Squad, while its other functions would continue.

He also highlighted the need to improve cybercrime investigations. He said trained investigators should be retained in specialised positions instead of being transferred frequently.

Stronger action against drug networks

Hithendra said police must investigate drug supply networks beyond street-level peddlers. He pointed out that investigations should identify those supplying drugs and those involved in distribution.

He also cited the department's FIR-to-chargesheet ratio, saying investigations must go beyond the first accused named in a complaint.

The Chief Commissioner said his broader priorities included improving transparency, strengthening women's safety, controlling drug-related activities and making Bengaluru safer.

Court bars Sharmila from Yelahanka Palace

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president Y.S. Sharmila has been restrained by a Bengaluru court from entering or interfering with the disputed Yelahanka Palace property amid an ongoing family dispute with her brother, YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

The Principal Senior Civil Judge's Court in Devanahalli issued an interim injunction on Saturday, November 21, following a petition filed by Silicon Builders Private Limited. The order also covers Sharmila's family members, agents, representatives and others acting on her behalf. The court directed them not to interfere with the company's possession and enjoyment of the property.

A lease from 2007

The company claimed that it had leased the property under an agreement signed on March 1, 2007, and had been maintaining it by paying rent and other expenses. The court examined the documents submitted by the company before granting interim protection. The next hearing is scheduled for December 19, 2026.

Dispute over daughter's wedding venue

The legal development comes amid a dispute over the proposed wedding venue of Sharmila's daughter, Y.S. Anjili Reddy, whose marriage is scheduled for November 25.

Sharmila had initially planned to hold the wedding at Yelahanka Palace and had reportedly distributed invitations mentioning the venue. However, Jagan objected to the proposal, citing security and privacy concerns.

Sharmila subsequently announced that the wedding venue had been shifted to another location to avoid further disagreements and ensure a peaceful ceremony.

THE PALACE ROW

- **MARCH 1, 2007** — The lease agreement the company relies on
- **NOVEMBER 21** — Devanahalli court grants an interim injunction
- **NOVEMBER 25** — Anjili Reddy's wedding, at another venue
- **DECEMBER 19** — Next hearing

The property dispute has brought the differences between the siblings into the spotlight once again. While Sharmila has claimed that the property belongs to her and her children under a family property arrangement, the company has asserted its leasehold rights.

Security arrangements, including barricades, were reportedly put in place near the property. The interim court order does not settle the final question of ownership.

21 booked in ₹3.98-crore BMTC parts scam

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

An alleged ₹3.98-crore scam involving the procurement of bus spare parts has surfaced in the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC). Police have registered a First Information Report (FIR) against 21 officials and employees over allegations of creating fake supply records and bills for parts that were never delivered.

According to the complaint, false documents were prepared between 2021 and 2026, claiming that 2,820 spare parts had been supplied through five vendor companies. However, the materials were allegedly never delivered to BMTC. The suspected loss is ₹3,97,83,142.

Parimala Naik, an official from BMTC's Security Department, filed the complaint. Based on it, Wilson Garden police registered an FIR on November 20 against the 21 accused.



BMTC buses at a bus station in Bengaluru.

Officials from different departments named

The accused include assistant storekeepers, junior assistants, stores officers, technicians, executive superintendents, divisional engineers and security personnel associated with BMTC's Central Workshop-1 and other units.

The list also includes retired employees, staff members reportedly under suspension in earlier cases, an employee who has submitted a resignation and individuals associated with private supply firms. Gajanana Engineering Works and M.S.-G.S. & Company are also named.

THE ALLEGED FRAUD

₹3.98 cr	SUSPECTED LOSS
2,820	SPARE PARTS NEVER DELIVERED
21	ACCUSED IN THE FIR
5	VENDOR COMPANIES

The allegations have raised questions about BMTC's procurement procedures, stock records and internal monitoring systems.

The controversy has also drawn attention to reports of spare-parts shortages affecting bus maintenance. However, a direct connection between the alleged financial irregularities and individual bus breakdowns has not been established.

Police are expected to investigate the alleged fake invoices, supply records, payment approvals and the roles of those named in the FIR.

Karnataka seeks teacher exemption from voter-list duties

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka School Education Department has requested the Election Commission not to assign government school teachers and pre-university college lecturers to the upcoming electoral roll revision work. The department has warned that additional election duties could affect classroom teaching, syllabus completion and students' examination preparations.

Additional Chief Secretary V. Rashmi Mahesh wrote to Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer V. Anbukumar on November 17, seeking exemption for teachers from the Special Summary Revision (SSR) of electoral rolls for the remainder of the 2026-27 academic year.

Earlier election duties affected teaching

The department said nearly 30 per cent of teachers across Karnataka had been deployed as Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and supervisors during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) conducted between June and October 2026.



Officials with electoral roll papers during a revision drive.

Their absence from schools reportedly affected regular teaching and completion of the syllabus. Bengaluru was among the worst-affected areas, according to the department.

Citing the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, the department pointed out that teachers are required to work for at least 45 hours a week, including lesson preparation. It argued that assigning additional election responsibilities could affect their academic duties.

Examination schedule raises concerns

The department highlighted the upcoming examination schedule while seeking exemption. Three preparatory examinations for Class 10 students are scheduled between January 4 and February 27, 2027. Annual examinations will be held from March 22 to May 31.

For second-year PUC students, preparatory examinations are scheduled between January 2 and 29, followed by annual examinations from February 27 to May 15.

The Election Commission has scheduled the SSR process in Karnataka, with the draft electoral roll publication and claims and objections period beginning on December 1.

The department has urged the authorities to instruct district election officers not to deploy government school teachers and government PU college lecturers for the exercise.

The state government is also considering legislation to protect teachers from non-academic duties. However, their deployment for other government activities, including the Census scheduled for January, remains a concern.

CHILD RIGHTS CRISIS

1,712 child marriage cases pending in Karnataka courts

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

As many as 1,712 child marriage cases are pending before various courts across Karnataka, Karnataka High Court Justice S. Sunil Dutt Yadav has revealed. He stressed the need for stronger measures to prevent child marriages and protect children's rights.

He shared the figures at a state-level consultation on preventing child marriage and combating child sexual exploitation and abuse, held at the Karnataka Judicial Academy in Bengaluru on November 21.



The High Court of Karnataka in Bengaluru.

Child marriages rarely happen without warning signs, says Justice Yadav

Early intervention can prevent child marriages

Justice Yadav said child marriages rarely happen without warning signs. Children dropping out of school, financial difficulties within families and social pressure taking priority over education are some of the factors that can lead to child marriages.

He said identifying these warning signs at an early stage and taking timely action could help prevent such incidents.

Public awareness and community participation needed

Justice Anu Sivaraman, Karnataka High Court judge and Executive Chairperson of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA), stressed the importance of creating awareness, particularly in rural areas.

She said the belief that child marriage is an age-old tradition must change.

Merely enforcing laws would not be enough to eliminate the practice.

Continuous public awareness and community participation are equally important, she added.

Departments urged to work together

The meeting also highlighted concerns over the growing threat of online sexual exploitation of children.

Justice Yadav called for better coordination among government departments, legal services institutions and social organisations to strengthen child protection.

The consultation was organised by the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Karnataka High Court, Karnataka Judicial Academy and associated judicial committees in collaboration with Just Rights for Children.

The participants stressed the need to protect children's education, safety, dignity and legal rights through early intervention and coordinated action.

Quick Read

Man gets 10 years' rigorous imprisonment for rape

CH NEWS, BANTWAL

A Mangaluru court has handed down a 10-year prison sentence and slapped a Rs 54,000 fine on a man convicted of assaulting, raping, and issuing death threats to a woman in the Bantwal Rural police limits. The convict, identified as Anil, had trespassed into the woman's house before brutally assaulting and raping her, and threatening her with dire consequences. Following the survivor's complaint, the Bantwal Rural police registered a case (Crime No. 92/2021) under Sections 376 (rape), 448 (house-trespass) and 323 (voluntarily causing hurt).

Court sentences man for filing false affidavit

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

The 2nd Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) Court in Mangaluru has sentenced a man to three months of simple imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 for submitting false affidavits and declaration letters and providing misleading information to the court. The accused, identified as Mohammad Ismail Hali, had appeared before the 2nd JMFC Court in Mangaluru on September 8, 2017, for a hearing in connection with criminal case number 2615/2016. During the proceedings, he submitted a declaration along with an affidavit stating that he had never stood as a surety in any criminal case before the court.

SIT summons Mattannavar, Thimarodi in 2012 rape-murder probe

The SIT has summoned Girish Mattannavar and Mahesh Shetty Thimarodi for questioning in the 2012 Beltangady rape-murder case, seeking their cooperation and relevant documents as reinvestigation continues.



The SIT is reinvestigating the 2012 case.

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT), which is conducting a reinvestigation into the 2012 rape and murder case in Beltangady taluk, has issued notices to Girish Mattannavar and Mahesh Shetty Thimarodi, directing them to appear for questioning and submit relevant documents and information.

Confirming the development while speaking to the media, Girish Mattannavar said that SIT officials had served notices to both of them three days ago. He stated that they would appear before the investigation team next week and extend their full cooperation.

"We will appear before the SIT officials next week. The SIT is conducting a thorough investigation without missing a single detail. Therefore, we will extend our full cooperation to the investigation team," Mattannavar said.

The reinvestigation

- SIT issues notices to Girish Mattannavar and Mahesh Shetty Thimarodi.
- Both have been asked to appear for questioning and submit relevant information.
- Mattannavar confirms they will cooperate with investigators next week.
- He says the original FIR remains active and the investigation will continue.
- High Court dismissed Mattannavar's petition challenging an FIR linked to the investigation.

He also clarified the status of a petition he had filed challenging an FIR registered in connection with the SIT investigation into Dharmasthala and allegations of spreading misinformation. According to Mattannavar, the High Court dismissed his petition.

Rejecting speculation that the investigation could be stopped, he maintained that the reinvestigation would continue as planned.

"Reports claiming that the SIT investigation will be halted are far from the truth. The original FIR still stands, and the investigation will continue," he said.

Mattannavar further clarified that no petition had been filed before any court seeking to quash the original FIR, registered as Crime No. 39/2025 at Beltangady police station. He also stated that the FIR had not been cancelled and that proceedings continued as usual.

The notices come as the SIT intensifies its investigation following the Supreme Court's directions for a fresh probe into the case.

Basel Mission museum to open on December 2



An artist's impression of the museum's entrance.

A legacy preserved

OPENS	December 2, by former Union Minister Veerappa Moily
WHERE	Karnataka Theological College, Balmatta
ON SHOW	Rare books, historical documents, printing equipment and artefacts

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

The Basel Mission Museum and Art Gallery at Karnataka Theological College (KTC), Balmatta, will be inaugurated by former Union Minister Veerappa Moily on December 2, marking a significant step towards preserving and showcasing the historical, literary, cultural and technological contributions of the Basel Mission to Karnataka.

The four-storey facility, spread across approximately 20,000 square feet, has been established by KTC. Designed by architect Guulshan Roy, the museum will provide visitors access to a rich collection of historical documents, rare publications, photographs and artefacts preserved in the institution's archives.

The Basel Mission played an important role in shaping the region's development, particularly in education, literature, journalism, printing, industry and social transformation. Among its major contributions was the publication of Mangalura Samachara by Hermann Moegling. The mission also established the Basel Mission Press in 1841 and a tile factory in 1860, which pioneered tile manufacturing in India and popularised Mangalore tiles.

Another significant contribution was Rev. Ferdinand Kittel's Kannada Dictionary, which remains a landmark in Kannada scholarship.

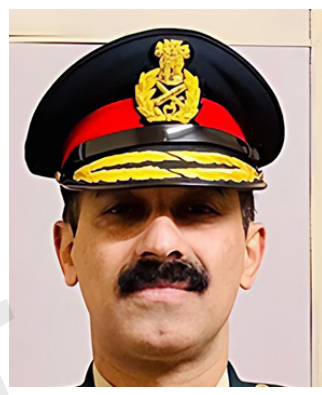
KTC, established by the Basel Mission in 1847, has continued to preserve this historical legacy. The new museum will feature several important literary works, including the Kittel Kannada Dictionary, Gundert Malayalam Dictionary, Tulu Dictionary, Kannada and Tulu grammar books, classical publications and copies of Mangalura Samachara.

Historical printing equipment and artefacts highlighting the mission's industrial contributions will also be displayed.

The museum's collection includes more than 5,000 photographs documenting the region's people, institutions, architecture, educational development, industries and cultural life. These photographs will be displayed at a later stage.

The facility will also house an art gallery and dedicated exhibition spaces, allowing visitors to explore Karnataka's cultural and artistic heritage while understanding the Basel Mission's lasting influence on the region.

Sachidananda Prabhu of Karkala promoted to Major General



Sachidananda Prabhu

CH NEWS, KARKALA

Bringing pride to Karnataka, Sachidananda Prabhu, a native of Kaduhole in Marne village of Karkala taluk, has been promoted to the rank of Major General in the Indian Army after completing 29 years of distinguished service in its legal branch.

First Kannadiga

With this elevation, Prabhu is expected to take charge as the Army's Judge Advocate General (JAG). He will become the first Kannadiga to attain the rank of Major General in the Indian Army's judicial wing, marking a significant milestone for the state.

Born in 1972 to the late Baburaya Prabhu and Ratnamma, Sachidananda completed his early education at Kaduhole Government Lower Primary School and Jyothi School in Ajekar. He pursued his pre-university education at SDM College, Ujire, before obtaining his Bachelor of Laws degree from Vaikunta Baliga College of Law in Udupi.

Kargil War service

Prabhu joined the Indian Army's legal branch as a Lieutenant in 1997 and began his professional journey as an Assistant Judge Advocate General. During his distinguished career, he also served during the 1999 Kargil War, contributing to the country's military establishment during a significant period in India's history.

Over the years, he held several important responsibilities within the Army's legal and administrative framework. His appointments included serving as Colonel Military Secretary at Army Headquarters and Deputy Judge Advocate General at the Western and Central Commands.

Through the ranks

His 29-year journey has also involved serving in military courts across different parts of the country, gaining extensive experience in military law and judicial administration.

Prabhu steadily progressed through the ranks of Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel and Brigadier before earning his latest promotion to Major General.

Pride of the coast

His achievement is being regarded as a moment of pride for Karnataka, particularly for the coastal region, from where he began his journey to reach one of the highest positions in the Indian Army's legal establishment.

29 years in uniform

- **1972** Born at Kaduhole, Marne village, Karkala taluk
- **1997** Joins the Army's legal branch as a Lieutenant
- **1999** Serves during the Kargil War
- **LATER** Colonel Military Secretary at Army HQ; Deputy JAG, Western and Central Commands
- **NOW** Promoted to Major General

29 years of service in the Army's legal branch

Two feared drowned after waves sweep them away at Kaup beach

CH NEWS, KAUP

Two persons, aged 20 and 15, are feared drowned after being swept away by strong waves while swimming at Kaup Beach on Sunday evening. The incident occurred when a group of youngsters entered the sea during a family outing, triggering a rescue operation along the coastline.

According to reports, a family from Davanagere had visited Kaup Beach for an outing. Five young men from the group entered the water to play in the sea. However, they were suddenly caught in strong waves and swept further into the waters.

Following the incident, local rescuers and others present at the beach managed to save three of the youngsters. However, the remaining two went missing, raising concerns about their safety. Search efforts were initiated to trace the missing individuals.



Kaup, Udupi district

Rescued youths in hospital

The three rescued youngsters were reportedly in serious condition following the incident. They were provided immediate assistance and shifted to a hospital in Udupi for further treatment. An ambulance belonging to the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) from Uchila was used to transport them to the hospital.

It is learnt that one of the youngsters who entered the sea was pursuing an engineering course at a college in Udupi. The family from Davanagere had reportedly travelled to the coastal region to visit him, turning what was intended to be a family outing into a tragic incident.

Kaup police rushed to the beach after receiving information about the incident. They are conducting an investigation and gathering details about the circumstances surrounding the incident.

The incident once again highlights the dangers of swimming in the sea, particularly when strong waves and currents prevail. Beachgoers are advised to exercise caution, follow safety instructions and avoid entering the water when conditions are dangerous.

'Audit promotes transparency in govt spending'

CH NEWS, UDUPI

Audit plays a vital role in ensuring transparency and accountability in the utilisation of public funds, said Yamini T.M., Deputy Accountant General of Karnataka.

Workshop at Ajjarkad

She was speaking at a workshop organised at Dr. G. Shankar Government Women's First Grade College and Postgraduate Study Centre in Ajjarkad on the occasion of Audit Diwas. The programme was jointly organised by the Office of the Principal Accountant General (Audit-I), Karnataka, Bengaluru, and the college's Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and postgraduate departments.

Yamini said the efficiency of any organisation was reflected in the quality of its accounting practices. Auditing was essential to ensure transparency in public finances and make authorities accountable for the use of government funds.

Audit plays a vital role in ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of public funds

Role of the CAG

She explained that the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) was responsible for auditing the financial accounts of the Central and State governments. At the State level, this responsibility was carried out through the offices of the Accountants General.

She also explained how audit reports were prepared and presented before Parliament. The Public Accounts Committee and the Committee on Public Undertakings examine important findings in these reports, seek explanations from officials and make recommendations in the public interest.

Careers in audit

Senior Audit Officer Mallikeshwari C. spoke about career opportunities available to students in the audit department.

College Principal Prof. Nikethana presided over the programme. Assistant Audit Officer Vishal Kumar Chhatwani, M. Com. Coordinator Dr. Abdul Razak and faculty members attended the workshop.

KASARAGOD MERGER DEMAND

Banari calls for Kasaragod's merger with Karnataka

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Noted scholar and litterateur Dr Ramananda Banari Manjeshwar has called for renewed efforts to address the grievances of Kannada-speaking people in Kasaragod and reiterated the demand for the district's merger with Karnataka.

He made the appeal while delivering the Kannada Rajyotsava message at a programme organised by the Kannada Rajyotsava Celebration Committee in association with Kalkura Prathisthana at Sharada Vidyalaya, Kodialbail. The event also featured the presentation of Kannada Rajyotsava honorary awards to achievers from various fields.



The Kannada Rajyotsava programme at Sharada Vidyalaya, Kodialbail.

Highlighting what he described as the injustice faced by Kannada-speaking people in Kasaragod, Dr Banari urged the community to formulate a collective plan to raise its concerns.

> **"Let us nurture the aspiration that Kasaragod should merge physically with Karnataka and work towards making it a reality."**
>
> — **Dr Ramananda Banari Manjeshwar,** Scholar and litterateur

"Kasaragod has faced injustice on several fronts. We must formulate a plan to protest against the injustice being meted out to Kannada-speaking people. Let us nurture the aspiration that Kasaragod should merge physically with Karnataka and work towards making it a reality," he said.

Dr Banari pointed to the historical and cultural connections between Kasaragod and Karnataka, highlighting the district's significant contributions to Yakshagana. Referring to the Mahajan Commission report, he said it had recommended the merger of Kasaragod with Karnataka.

He also questioned the silence of elected representatives on the issue and asked how many Members of Parliament had raised the matter in Parliament.

Former Kannada Sahitya Parishat president Dr Harikrishna Punaroor inaugurated the programme by lighting the ceremonial lamp. Coastal Writers and Readers Association president Shakuntala V. Shetty hoisted the Kannada flag, while Vidwan Nagesh A. Bappanadu offered floral tributes to Goddess Bhuvaneshwari.

Dr M. B. Puranik, president of Sharada Vidyalaya Group of Institutions, presided over the function.

Several prominent personalities from literary, cultural and social organisations attended the event, including former Karnataka Tulu Sahitya Academy president A. C. Bhandary, Dakshina Kannada district Kannada Sahitya Parishat president Dr M. P. Srinath, Bhuvanabhiram Udupa, Ravi Naikapu, S. L. Bharadwaj and scholar Dr M. Prabhakar Joshi.

Quick Read

Engineering student dies by suicide in Chikkaballapur

CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPUR

A 21-year-old engineering student died by suicide at his rented accommodation in Chikkaballapur city, leaving behind a death note apologising to his parents and girlfriend. The deceased, Mithun, son of Srinivas and Kusuma fromChintamani, was pursuing engineering at a private college. He was staying in a rented room opposite the KSRTC depot. In his death note, Mithun reportedly took responsibility for his death and expressed regret that his plans had not worked out. He also apologised to his father, mother and girlfriend. Chikkaballapur City Police visited the spot, conducted an inspection and registered a case. Further investigation is underway to establish the circumstances surrounding his death.

Teachers' training workshop on 'Safe Childhood Campaign'

CH NEWS, MADIKERI

A training workshop for teachers under the 'Safe Childhood Campaign' (Surakshita Balya Abhiyana) will be held on November 23 at 10.15 am at the court premises in Madikeri. The programme is jointly organised by the District Legal Services Authority, School Education and Literacy Department, Public Prosecution Department, Police Department and Madikeri Bar Association. Principal District and Sessions Judge Maruti S. Bagade, Bar Association President C.T. Joseph, Judge G. Surendra, Senior Civil Judge Shubha and Special Public Prosecutor B.S. Rudraprasanna will participate in the workshop.

Vijayendra predicts Congress defeat in Hiriyur by-election

BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra predicted voters will deliver another electoral setback to Congress in the upcoming Hiriyur by-election.



BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra

At a glance

- **Community:** Congress accused of politicising the Kadu Golla community
- **Water project:** sanctioned by the previous BJP government
- **Drought:** government failed on relief and roads
- **Appointments:** criticised amid farmer distress
- **CM residence:** spending questioned
- **Ravi Hanj:** strict punishment demanded

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra has predicted that voters will deliver another electoral setback to the Congress in the upcoming Hiriyur by-election, just as they did in the recent Legislative Council elections.

Speaking to reporters in Shivamogga, Vijayendra criticised Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar for allegedly making provocative statements during his visit to Hiriyur, including asking people to boycott BJP leaders if they approached them. He said voters would respond appropriately through the ballot box.

Questioning the Chief Minister's sudden concern for the Kadu Golla community, Vijayendra alleged that the Congress government had ignored the community for the past three-and-a-half years and was now using it for political gains.

He also clarified that funds for the water project in Hiriyur had been sanctioned during the previous BJP government under former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa. He challenged Shivakumar to discuss irrigation funding during the forthcoming winter session and disclose how much the present government had allocated.

Vijayendra accused the Congress government of failing to address drought conditions, repair potholes and provide adequate development funds to constituencies. He alleged that the government was spending more time making announcements and issuing advertisements than implementing development projects.

He questioned the appointment of Guarantee Implementation Committee chairpersons and Bharat Jodo coordinators while farmers were struggling without adequate drought relief. He also criticised the government for failing to provide the required financial assistance to ASHA workers, despite announcing major infrastructure projects.

Referring to reports of expenditure on the Chief Minister's residence, he questioned the government's priorities during a period of financial difficulties and drought.

Vijayendra also demanded strict punishment for Ravi Hanj over alleged derogatory remarks about Basavanna, saying such writings could disturb social harmony and hurt public sentiments.

Regarding the Hiriyur by-election, he said discussions had already taken place and both parties would field a consensus candidate. He expressed confidence that the NDA candidate would emerge victorious.

Food safety officials seal hotel, factory in Gadag



During the inspection in Gadag.

MALINGARAYA PUJAR, GADAG

Food safety officials have sealed the Kantara Hotel near Tipu Sultan Circle and the Kalyani Trading Company savoury powder factory in Gadag for allegedly violating food safety regulations and ignoring official closure orders.

The action against the hotel followed a surprise inspection, led by State Food Commission Chairman Dr. H. Krishna. During the inspection, officials reportedly found meat stored in the same freezer as vegetarian food items, including dal and ice cream. Expired meat was also found, while the kitchen lacked basic hygiene standards.

Officials further observed that kitchen workers were not wearing masks or caps and that medical examinations had not been conducted for the staff. Following the inspection, Dr. Krishna imposed a fine of ₹25,000 and directed the hotel management to close the establishment for 24 hours to clean the kitchen and rectify the violations.

The penalty

25,000 Rs	FINE IMPOSED
24 hrs	CLOSURE ORDERED
48 hrs	TO THE NEXT INSPECTION

Hotel kept operating

However, the hotel allegedly continued operations without paying the fine or complying with the closure order. Food safety officials subsequently sealed the premises. They said another inspection would be conducted after 48 hours and permission to reopen would depend on compliance with the required standards.

Factory sealed too

Meanwhile, Kalyani Trading Company's savoury powder factory in the Gadag Industrial Area was also sealed. Officials had earlier collected samples of chilli powder, chillies, cooking oil and salt for laboratory testing and directed the unit to remain closed until the reports were received. The factory was allegedly operating before the test results arrived.

The action highlights the need for hotels and food manufacturing units to follow hygiene and food safety requirements to protect public health.

MLA displays resignation letter over elephant relocation

CH NEWS, CHIKKAMAGALURU

Three Congress MLAs from Chikkamagaluru district have strongly opposed the relocation of wild elephants from Hassan to the Bhadra region, warning that they would resign if the operation continued.

MLA Nayana Motamma displayed her resignation letter during a joint press conference, saying that public safety was more important than holding office.

The press conference was attended by Nayana Motamma, H.D. Thammaiah and Sringeri MLA T.D. Rajegowda. They expressed displeasure over the decision to move elephants towards the Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary without consulting them.

She said she had communicated her opposition to senior forest officials and even warned them that she was prepared to resign. Displaying her resignation letter, she demanded an immediate halt to the operation and the return of the elephants to their original locations.



Nayana Motamma displays her resignation letter at the press conference.

"People matter more to me than the government. Do the lives of Chikkamagaluru residents have no value?" she asked.

A meeting involving the Forest Minister, MLAs and officials from Hassan and Chikkamagaluru districts had been scheduled for November 25 to discuss the issue. However, she alleged that the elephant relocation operation had begun without prior information or consultation.

Rajegowda said human-elephant conflict had increased in Mudigere, Sringeri and Chikkamagaluru constituencies. He claimed that 13 people had died in the Sringeri constituency and three in Mudigere. He also expressed concern over the reported movement of 54 elephants from Hassan, saying more than 50 wild elephants had entered Mudigere taluk.

> **"People matter more to me than the government. Do the lives of Chikkamagaluru residents have no value?"**
> — **Nayana Motamma,** MLA

He questioned the decision to move elephants into the Bhadra region, stating that the sanctuary already had a substantial wildlife population. He said the Forest Minister had assured them that steps would be taken to stop the operation.

H.D. Thammaiah said all three MLAs were united in opposing the relocation. He warned that they would resign if the elephants were not sent back towards Belur.

The MLAs reiterated that protecting residents from increasing human-elephant conflict should remain the priority.

Reddy questions BJP's objection to banquet attendance

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Gangavathi MLA Gali Janardhana Reddy has expressed displeasure over BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra's criticism of party MLAs attending the housewarming ceremony and banquet hosted at Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's official residence.

Speaking in Karatagi, Reddy said that if BJP MLAs were not expected to attend the event, the party leadership should have informed them in advance. He said a simple WhatsApp message or an official directive issued a day earlier would have made the party's position clear.

Reddy maintained that he attended the ceremony only because he had been personally invited by the Chief Minister. He clarified that it was a housewarming function at Shivakumar's official residence and not a Congress party programme.

Questioning Vijayendra's reaction, Reddy said he did not understand why the BJP state president had taken exception to the attendance of party legislators. He added that senior leaders and MLAs had merely visited the Chief Minister to convey their greetings following his invitation.

Politics openly, not behind the scenes

Taking an apparent dig at Vijayendra, Reddy said he was not a politician who operated behind the scenes or made political adjustments secretly. "I practise politics openly.

I am not the kind of politician who sneaks around in the dark to make adjustments," he remarked.

Reddy also pointed out that details of the expenditure incurred for the event had already been reported in the media. He said Vijayendra was free to raise any questions about the expenses during the Assembly session.



> *"I practise politics openly. I am not the kind of politician who sneaks around in the dark to make adjustments."*
> **GALI JANARDHANA REDDY**
> Gangavathi MLA

His remarks came amid a political debate within the BJP over the participation of its legislators in the Chief Minister's housewarming ceremony and banquet.

Herd of 38 wild elephants moves towards Bhadra Sanctuary

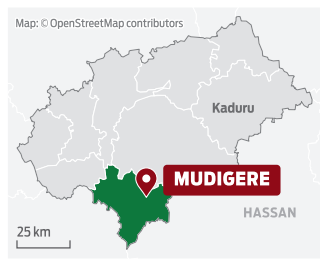
CH NEWS, HASSAN

A herd of 38 wild elephants has crossed the Hassan district border and is moving towards Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary in Chikkamagaluru district as part of a Forest Department operation that entered its fifth day.

The herd, which includes four tuskers and more than five calves, also has the well-known wild elephant Bhima. After conducting operations throughout the night, forest personnel successfully moved the animals from the Aramane Gudda area near Kogodu village in Belur taluk.

The herd is currently near Karabailu in Mudigere taluk of Chikkamagaluru district. The Forest Department plans to guide the elephants through the Tatkola forest towards Bhadra Sanctuary. The animals are presently around 8.5 kilometres from the Tatkola forest area.

The operation is being carried out without using kumki elephants. Teams from the Hassan and Chikkamagaluru forest divisions, along with Elephant Task Force (ETF) personnel, are coordinating efforts to safely move the herd away from human settlements.



Mudigere: the herd is near Karabailu in the taluk

Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Yedukondalu said officials had managed to drive the elephants for nearly six kilometres through coordinated efforts. The operation has continued for five consecutive days, with forest personnel monitoring the herd's movement and guiding it towards the sanctuary.

Officials are expected to continue the operation, taking precautions to prevent the elephants from entering populated areas.

Veerashaiva leader seeks action over Basavanna remarks

CH NEWS, MAGADI

Veerashaiva leader Honnapur Shivaprasad has urged the authorities to take disciplinary action against writer Ravi Hanj for allegedly making derogatory remarks about Jagajyoti Basavanna and the Lingayat community.

Speaking at a press conference near the Yallotza Tourist Centre, Shivaprasad strongly condemned the alleged description of Basavanna as a "murderer" in the work Basava Mantapa and during an interview. He said such remarks had hurt public sentiments and could create confusion and unrest in society.

He questioned the purpose of statements that divide people instead of promoting social welfare and harmony. Ideas shared with the public, he said, should contribute to society's progress rather than encourage differences and conflict.

Recalling Basavanna's contributions, Shivaprasad said the 12th-century social reformer fought against untouchability and propagated equality, dignity of labour through kayaka, and selfless service through dasoha.

> *Basavanna fought against untouchability and propagated equality*

Through the Anubhava Mantapa and his vachanas, Basavanna spread messages of human values and social equality beyond caste and religious barriers.

He said attempts to circulate misleading information about Basavanna in the name of history should not be encouraged. Respecting his personality and philosophy was the responsibility of every individual, he added.

Shivaprasad described Basavanna as a source of pride whose teachings continue to inspire generations and remain deeply rooted in people's minds. He reiterated his condemnation of the alleged remarks and demanded appropriate action against the writer.

NAME CHANGE

I, **Shakeel Ahamed** S/O Abdul Rahim resident of Ward No. 29, Masjid Road, Ijoor, Ramanagara Town-56159, Bengaluru South District, Karnataka, have changed my name to **Shakeel Ahmed** vide affidavit dated: 21.11.2026 before Notary Kantharaju.S Ramanagara.

CH CLASSIFED
To Place Classifed ad
Contact : 080-41209042

TOXIC SPRAY CASE

FIR filed over alleged chemical spraying on planta

CH NEWS, MADIKERI

A case has been registered at Virajpet Rural Police Station following allegations that toxic chemicals were sprayed on a 32-acre coffee plantation at Kottoli village in Virajpet taluk, causing damage to coffee plants, pepper vines and trees.

The plantation belongs to Bengaluru-based senior advocate Ravindranath Kamath, who has filed a complaint against Chappudira Monnappa alias Tagu of Kanuru village, his manager Subramani and others.

According to the complaint, Monnappa had earlier managed the plantation. However, their professional relationship ended on June 25, after which the responsibility for managing the estate was entrusted to Maletira Saba Muthappa.

The complainant alleged that the accused trespassed into the plantation between November 11 and 13 and sprayed toxic chemicals on the crops. The alleged damage came to light on November 15, when the estate manager visited the property.



How it unfolded

- **JUNE 25** — Monnappa's role as plantation manager ends
- **NOV 11-13** — Chemicals allegedly sprayed on the crops
- **NOV 15** — Damage found by the estate manager
- **FIR** — Case registered at Virajpet Rural Police Station

Damage yet to be assessed

According to the complaint, several coffee plants had turned black and coffee beans were falling from the plants. An inspection reportedly raised suspicion that a chemical substance had been sprayed across the plantation.

The complaint further alleged that around 12 labourers had assisted in carrying out the act. The extent of the damage to the coffee plants, pepper vines and other trees is yet to be officially established.

Case under the BNS

Based on Kamath's complaint, Virajpet Rural Police registered Crime No. 125/2026 under Sections 329(3), 324(5) and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Quick Read

Training programme equips staff for rural survey operations

CH NEWS, MADIKERI

A 21-day training programme on modern surveying techniques was conducted at the Kodagu Zilla Panchayat Resource Centre to strengthen rural survey operations. Organised jointly by the Karnataka Panchayat Raj Commissionerate, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department and Abdul Nazir Sab State Institute for Rural Development, Mysuru, the programme included 15 days of classroom instruction and six days of practical training. Selected tax collectors, data entry operators, technical assistants and barefoot technicians participated. Inaugurating the programme, Zilla Panchayat CEO Dinesh Kumar Meena urged participants to utilise the training effectively and independently operate modern surveying equipment.

Public urged to utilise government health schemes

CH NEWS, GADAG

District Health Education Officer Roopasena Chavan has urged the public to utilise various health schemes offered by the Central and State governments. She was speaking at a health awareness exhibition organised by the Department of Health and Family Welfare at the APMC livestock market grounds in Gadag under the National Health Mission 2026-27. The exhibition highlighted schemes covering maternal and child healthcare, diabetes, hypertension, mental health and HIV/AIDS awareness. Information boards, models and pamphlets were displayed, while free health screenings for diabetes and high blood pressure were conducted. Officials advised people to undergo regular medical check-ups.

Mass weddings bring hope to poor families: Saleem Ahmed

Saleem Ahmed said mass weddings ease financial burdens for middle-class and poor families while promoting social harmony.



CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Mass weddings help poor and middle-class families overcome the financial burden of expensive marriage ceremonies and promote social harmony, Karnataka Legislative Council Chairman Saleem Ahmed said.

He was speaking after inaugurating a mass Nikah ceremony organised by the Muslim Pinjar Panch Committee of Sardar Galli in Koppal on Sunday. As part of the annual Hazrat Mehboob Subhani Garavi festival, 40 couples were married at the event.

The mass Nikah

WHERE	Sardar Galli, Koppal
BY	Muslim Pinjar Panch Committee
OCCASION	Hazrat Mehboob Subhani Garavi festival
NIKAH	conducted by Qazi Abbas Ali

Ahmed appreciated the committee for supporting marriages of daughters from economically weaker families and described the initiative as a meaningful service to society. He said that organising simple mass weddings was a commendable effort at a time when wedding expenses had become increasingly difficult for many families to afford.

However, he stressed that community development should not stop with organising marriages. Parents must give priority to their children's education, as economic, social and educational progress depends on access to quality education.

The Chairman also highlighted various welfare schemes introduced by the State Government for minorities and urged eligible families to make use of the educational and financial assistance available to them. He wished the newly married couples a happy life based on love, trust and mutual understanding and assured them of efforts to help them access government benefits.

On the occasion, senior Koppal leader and KPCC coordinator Dr. K.M. Sayyed provided gold thalis for all 40 brides through his foundation. Saleem Ahmed distributed the wedding necklaces.

MLA K. Raghavendra Hitnal, former MP Sanganna Karadi, JD(S) leader C.V. Chandrashekhar and former municipal council president Amjad Patel were among those present. Sri Gavisiddeshwara Mahaswamiji of Sri Gavimatha blessed the couples. Maulana Mufti Mohammed Nazir Ahmed Qadri Taskini led a special prayer, while Qazi Abbas Ali conducted the Nikah ceremonies.

Hundreds of people, community leaders and public representatives attended the programme.

Nirani demands arrest, severe punishment for Ravi Hanj over his book on Basavanna



Former Minister Murugesh Nirani

Former Minister Murugesh Nirani demanded the arrest and severe punishment of Ravi Hanj for allegedly writing a derogatory book about Basaveshwara.

CH NEWS, HAVERI

Former Minister and Veerashaiva Mahasabha Vice-President Murugesh Nirani has demanded the arrest and severe punishment of Ravi Hanj, who allegedly authored a derogatory book about 12th-century social reformer Basaveshwara.

He also called for action against those who supported and facilitated the publication.

Speaking to reporters in Hirekerur, Nirani strongly condemned the book and said the people behind its publication should also be identified and punished. He said opposition to the controversial work was growing across Karnataka and beyond.

Describing Basavanna as a visionary who worked for humanity beyond caste and community boundaries, Nirani said his Vachanas had been translated into several languages and continued to inspire people across the country.

He recalled that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also praised Basavanna's contribution to society. Attempting to damage the reputation of such a respected personality through derogatory writings was unacceptable, he said.

Commenting on the BJP state president's position, Nirani said B.Y. Vijayendra's three-year term had ended, but the party's rules allowed reappointment or an extension. He appreciated Vijayendra's role in opposing the alleged MUDA irregularities and securing victories in four Legislative Council elections, leaving the final decision to the party high command.

Nirani referred to the government's announcement that the books would be confiscated and expressed confidence that Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar would take appropriate action. He alleged that political motives were behind attempts to create divisions within the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community and warned the Congress against repeating such efforts.

Meanwhile, former Minister B.C. Patil also strongly condemned the publication, alleging that it had a political agenda. He described the act as unforgivable and said Basavanna had promoted social equality through the Anubhava Mantapa in the 12th century.

Patil demanded strict action against both the author and publisher, insisting that registering a police case alone would not be sufficient.

MLA addresses over 80 public grievances at Sammasagi

CH NEWS, HANGAL

More than 80 public grievances were received and addressed during a public service movement organised at Sammasagi village, where MLA and Karnataka Housing Board Chairman Mane Srinivas interacted with residents and directed concerned officials to respond to their issues.

The programme provided an opportunity for villagers to submit applications relating to various government departments and seek solutions to their long-pending problems. Srinivas listened to the complaints and discussed the issues with officials present at the meeting.

What villagers raised

- **Title deeds:** for eligible families
- **Workers:** facilities and benefits for registered workers
- **Housing:** housing-related issues
- **Property:** delays in property matters
- **Water:** irregular drinking water supply

Several families raised concerns over the distribution of title deeds. Responding to their requests, the MLA assured them that no eligible family would be deprived of its rightful title deed. He said the applications would be examined and necessary steps taken to ensure that eligible beneficiaries received the documents.

Residents also submitted complaints regarding facilities and benefits for registered workers, housing-related issues, delays involving property matters and irregularities in drinking water supply. The MLA directed the concerned officials to examine these applications and take appropriate action.

More than 80 applications concerning different departments were submitted during the programme. Officials were asked to respond to the grievances and work towards resolving the issues in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures.

The public service movement was organised with the objective of bringing government departments closer to villagers and providing an accessible platform for addressing local problems. Such programmes enable residents to explain their difficulties directly to elected representatives and officials without having to make repeated visits to government offices.

Srinivas said efforts would be made to ensure that genuine public grievances received due attention. The programme also highlighted the importance of coordination among departments in delivering public services and implementing government welfare schemes effectively at the village level.

Madhu Bangarappa under fire over viral video

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa has come under criticism following allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards an SDMC coordination committee president who approached him with a request concerning the delayed distribution of shoes, socks and textbooks to government school students.

A video of the heated exchange at the Koppal Deputy Commissioner's office has gone viral on social media, triggering a debate over the minister's response to public grievances.

The incident reportedly occurred during Bangarappa's visit to Koppal district last week. Devaraja Kinnala, president of the SDMC coordination committee, met the minister and attempted to submit a memorandum highlighting the inadequate distribution of shoes, socks and textbooks to students in government schools.

However, the meeting reportedly turned into a verbal confrontation between the two. In the viral video, the minister is heard questioning Kinnala's authority to raise the issue and asking him to remain quiet if he lacked the standing to make such demands.



Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa faces criticism for alleged inappropriate behaviour toward an SDMC official who requested delayed school supplies for students.

Kinnala attempted to explain that he had already secured school admissions for the children concerned in July. The minister then questioned him about the admission process and asked when it had been completed.

Bangarappa also explained that printing the required documents would take time and said that around 42,000 students had appeared for the examination. He expressed frustration during the exchange and remarked that continuing the discussion was a waste of time.

The video has drawn attention on social media, with questions being raised about the minister's conduct towards a representative seeking to highlight problems faced by government school students.

Meanwhile, Devaraja Kinnala has reportedly expressed displeasure over the minister's remarks. The issue of the delayed distribution of educational materials has also come into focus following the incident.

HESCOM carries out preventive maintenance

CH NEWS, KARWAR

The Hubballi Electricity Supply Company (HESCOM), Dandeli division, has undertaken special maintenance work across its power distribution network in Dandeli and Joida taluks to prevent electrical accidents and improve the reliability of electricity supply.

The initiative was carried out under the direction of HESCOM management, with a focus on identifying and repairing potential faults before they cause power disruptions or safety hazards.

Maintenance work was completed on major 11 kV feeders covering different areas of the two taluks. These included the Haliyal Road feeder in Dandeli city; Kumbarwada, Anshi and Ganeshgudi feeders in the Joida branch; Ramnagara (Borikori) and Mailaralinga feeders in the rural branch; and Ramnagara Town and Adali feeders in the Ramnagara branch.

A preventive approach

As part of the drive, technical teams inspected transformer centres, repaired damaged electricity poles, tightened loose wires and removed tree branches obstructing power lines. Faulty transformers were also replaced, while power lines and associated equipment underwent comprehensive inspections.

HESCOM has adopted a preventive maintenance approach instead of waiting for faults or power outages before carrying out repairs. The strategy aims to identify possible problems at an early stage and take corrective measures to avoid electrical accidents and unexpected interruptions.

Safety first

Officials said regular maintenance would help reduce technical faults, improve the performance of the distribution network and ensure better service for consumers. It would also strengthen safety for residents and farmers who depend on electricity for their daily activities and agricultural requirements.

In a statement, the Dandeli division said public safety, the interests of farmers and reliable electricity supply remained among its key responsibilities. The division added that such maintenance activities would continue as part of efforts to develop a safer and more dependable power distribution system.

Gadag DC's retirement party amid drought sparks outrage

CH NEWS, GADAG

Deputy Commissioner C.N. Sreedhara has drawn public criticism after hosting a lavish dinner party at his official residence to mark his retirement, at a time when Gadag district is facing severe drought conditions.

The special gathering was organised for government officials and staff members at the Deputy Commissioner's official residence. The premises were reportedly decorated with elaborate lighting and festive arrangements, giving the building a grand appearance.

A video of the celebration has gone viral on social media, showing Sreedhara dancing to folk songs along with officials and staff members who attended the gathering.The event has triggered criticism among sections of the public, particularly because farmers and ordinary residents across the district are struggling with drought-related difficulties. With agricultural activities affected and people facing water shortages and financial hardships, the celebration has raised questions about the administration's sensitivity towards the prevailing situation.

Many have expressed displeasure over the choice of venue and the scale of the arrangements, arguing that a government official's retirement celebration at an official residence should reflect greater consideration for the circumstances facing the district.

KHADER APPEALS TO ASHAS

Govt committed to resolving ASHA workers' demands

CH NEWS, BIDAR

Karnataka Health and Family Welfare Minister U.T. Khader has assured that the State government is committed to addressing the demands of ASHA workers staging an indefinite protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru.

He appealed to the protesters to give the government sufficient time to find a solution.

Speaking to media persons in Bidar, Khader said ASHA workers were an integral part of the Health and Family Welfare Department and that the government wanted to ensure justice for all categories of employees.

He said he had discussed the workers' demands with Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar. Despite his busy schedule and a Cabinet meeting planned for the afternoon, the Chief Minister had spent nearly an hour meeting the protesting workers and listening to their concerns.

According to Khader, the Chief Minister had received their memorandum and assured them that their demands would be examined. However, he had explained that the government could not accept them immediately without assessing the financial and administrative requirements.

"Accepting demands without making adequate arrangements for their implementation could lead to criticism later if the promises are not fulfilled."
— U.T. Khader, Health and Family Welfare Minister

He added that the demands would be discussed with the concerned officials, the Cabinet and the Finance Department before the government took an appropriate decision. The Chief Minister had also appealed to the workers to trust the government and allow some time for the issues to be resolved.

Khader acknowledged that ASHA workers had decided to continue their indefinite agitation until their demands were met. However, he said he did not consider their protest wrong, as expressing grievances through demonstrations was a democratic right.

He stressed that the government had a responsibility to build mutual trust with its employees and resolve their concerns through dialogue.

"The government wants to resolve these issues through discussion and ensure justice to the workers," he added, reiterating that the administration remained committed to finding a practical solution.

Department of Agriculture
Seshadri Road, Bangalore

No.: ಉಕೃಸಿ(ಮಾಸಂಬಿ)/e-2285847/CUG-tender/2026-27 Date: 21.11.2026

Tender Notification

The Short term tender has been invited for a period of 07 days through e-Procurement portal for the **procurement of CUG connections to be provided to the officers of the Department of Agriculture.**

The Bid document containing instructions to Bidders, criteria for qualification and criteria for evaluation may be downloaded from the e-Procurement Website of Government of Karnataka ("GoK") viz. w**ww.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and the Proposals shall be submitted as per the provisions of the Short tender tender document.

Important Details:

Bid Publishing Date: **24.11.2026.** Bid submission closing date: **04.12.2026.** Opening of bid document: **07.12.2026.** EMD Amount: **Rs.1,50,000/-** (Rs. One Lakh Fifty Thousand only). Project Proponent: Department of Agriculture, GoK. **Shri. B.R Palaksha Gowda,** Deputy Director of Agriculture (IEC), Department of Agriculture, Government of Karnataka, Sheshadri Road, Bangalore-560001. Phone: **+91-80-22074138/8884000428.** Email: **agri.kar2024@gmail.com**

Sd/- Director of Agriculture
and Tender Inviting Authority

DIPR/CP/3849/SA/2026-27

WHY WAIT FOR A NEW YEAR TO CHOOSE YOURSELF? LOOK WELL TO THIS DAY

DR. KANIMOZHI A.

Did you hit the gym regularly? Did you follow the diet you had planned so keenly? Did you finally finish the book that had been resting on your shelf for months? Did you take that trip you kept postponing because of work deadlines? Did you finally purchase the product that has been waiting in your shopping cart? Did you meet that one friend you had been hoping to catch up with for so long? Did you make the financial progress that you had hoped for? Or, somewhere in the middle of life's endless rat race, did you forget to make time for all these small things? Or, were you so busy mirroring the people around you that you forgot to discover what truly matters to you?

With hardly a month left in the year, many of us may have already begun looking back at the resolutions we made at the beginning of the year. Some might be reflecting on the goals they have accomplished, while others may be thinking about the promises they could not keep. Meanwhile, our minds may already be turning towards the possibilities and promises of a new year.

Relax! Why do you always wait for a new year to choose yourself? We do not need a new year, a new month or even a Monday to start working towards the life we wish to lead.

Somewhere along the way, we must learn to prioritise



ourselves without feeling guilty about it. We must give ourselves freedom to feel, to pause when overwhelmed and to accept that not every day has to be perfect. Treat yourself with the same kindness and consideration that you hope to receive from others. Does it really make a difference? Absolutely!

Throughout our lives, we spend so much time searching for the best people, often forgetting to become one among them. When we are happy, we have happiness to share with the people around us. When we are emotionally drained and broken, all we have left to offer are those broken pieces. When we are at peace with ourselves, we naturally bring more compassion, kindness and positivity in the society.

However, a sense of contentment comes from fulfilling the promises we make to ourselves. Even the smallest accomplishment can boost our confidence, encourage self-love and make us feel proud of how far we have come. These are rewards we promised ourselves and not tasks to be ticked off a list. These little accomplishments remind us that we are capable of achieving what we set our minds to and motivate us to keep moving forward.

So, how do we turn these resolutions into reality? The answer is simple: Make your goals achievable. Don't take a giant leap; begin with a small step. If you want to develop a reading habit, start with a few pages a day. If going to the gym is your goal, begin with a realistic goal of three days a week. These little steps and every little accomplishment bring us closer to becoming the person we are striving to become.

Perhaps Kalidasa's timeless words in "Look to This Day" offer the reminder we need: "Look well to this day". So, why wait for a New Year to Choose Yourself? Choose Yourself: always.

> *"We do not need a new year, a new month or even a Monday to start working towards the life we wish to lead."*
> **DR. KANIMOZHI A.**

HOW MARRIAGE PALACES HAVE STOLEN THE CHARM OF VILLAGE LIFE



DR. VIJAY GARG

The identity of Punjab's villages has never rested solely on their fields, traditional homes, and green crops. It has also been rooted in the love, brotherhood, and community spirit of their people. In villages, a wedding was not merely the union of two individuals or two families; it was an occasion of collective joy, enthusiasm, and togetherness for the entire village. However, changing times have transformed wedding traditions. Today, the glitter of marriage palaces, expensive decorations, and the growing culture of extravagance have significantly affected the community spirit that Punjab once cherished.

When a Wedding Was a Celebration for the Entire Village

In earlier times, village weddings had a charm of their own. Preparations began several days in advance, filling homes with excitement and activity. Neighbours, relatives, and other villagers would arrive to help without waiting for a formal invitation. Some brought provisions, others arranged utensils and bedding, while many helped prepare food and serve guests. Women gathered to sing traditional folk songs, including suhag and ghoriyan. The laughter of children, the advice of elders, and the enthusiasm of young people brought life to the village courtyard. From cooking meals to welcoming guests, everyone participated in the arrangements. These occasions were not merely about sharing responsibilities; they strengthened affection, trust, and a sense of belonging. A wedding was not the responsibility of one family alone. It was a shared celebration for the entire village.

The Growing Popularity of Marriage Palaces

Today, marriage palaces have become an important part of wedding celebrations. Beautiful decorations, dazzling lights, air-conditioned halls, elaborate menus, and professional arrangements offer convenience to families. Such venues can make it easier to accommodate large numbers of guests. Therefore, the trend of holding weddings in marriage palaces cannot be considered entirely negative. The problem arises when the success of a wedding is measured by the number of guests, the variety of dishes, the cost of decorations, and the grandeur of the venue.

> **"The true charm of Punjab will return when the glitter of marriage palaces is accompanied by the warmth of village courtyards, the affection of neighbours, and the laughter of people celebrating together."**
> **— Dr. Vijay Garg**

The genuine happiness of the occasion and the warmth of relationships sometimes disappear behind a display of wealth and extravagance. Earlier, villagers actively participated in wedding preparations. Today, many responsibilities are handed over to contractors, caterers, and event-management companies. Although this can make



arrangements more efficient, it may reduce opportunities for people to work together, spend time with one another, and strengthen community relationships.

Declining Togetherness and Growing Formality

In the past, participation in village weddings was itself an expression of social bonding. When a family celebrated a wedding, villagers often considered it their own occasion of happiness. Today, many weddings are limited to selected guests, formal invitations, and tightly scheduled programmes. Guests arrive at marriage palaces, eat, take photographs, and leave. Sometimes, even close relatives of the bride and groom hardly find enough time to interact meaningfully with everyone present. What was once an opportunity for social interaction can become a formal event. This change is not equally visible in every family or village, but it raises an important question: Are we making weddings more glamorous while gradually losing their soul?

The Race for Showmanship and the Financial Burden

The growing culture of extravagance places considerable financial pressure on families. Expensive venues, elaborate decorations, multiple food counters, photography, and other arrangements can cost far more than a family's income comfortably allows. Some families feel compelled to spend beyond their means because of social competition or the expectations of relatives.

In this race, simplicity and genuine happiness often take a back seat. Money that could have been saved for children's education, healthcare, employment, or future security is sometimes spent on a few hours of display. The dignity of a wedding should not be measured by its cost. It should be reflected in the strength of relationships, the happiness of families, and the beautiful beginning of a new life.

Traditional Culture Is Also Being Affected

The soul of Punjabi weddings has always lived in folk songs, customs, humour, and shared memories. Traditional suhag and ghoriyan, giddha, boliyan, and other rituals have helped pass Punjabi culture from one generation to the next. Today, DJs, loud music, and programmes designed primarily for photographs and videos have become prominent at many weddings. Modern music and new customs are not inherently wrong. However, if traditional practices are completely sidelined, future generations may gradually become disconnected from their cultural heritage. Preserving culture does not mean returning to the past. It means keeping our roots alive while adapting to the changing times.

Can the Old Community Spirit Be Revived?

The answer is yes. There is no need to abandon marriage palaces or oppose modern facilities. What matters is ensuring that convenience does not replace community participation and human connection.

- **Give priority to simplicity:** Avoid unnecessary expenditure and excessive showmanship at weddings.
- **Involve village communities:** Encourage neighbours, friends, and relatives to participate in wedding preparations.
- **Preserve folk traditions:** Make room for suhag, ghoriyan, giddha, and traditional Punjabi boliyan.
- **Keep the spirit of shared meals alive:** Hospitality should mean more than serving food; it should also involve sitting together and spending meaningful time with guests.
- **Connect the younger generation with heritage:** Tell children about traditional village weddings and the social values behind their customs.

Village panchayats, social organisations, and young people can also encourage simple weddings and community celebrations. Such efforts can help preserve the values of cooperation, equality, and mutual respect.

Relationships Matter More Than Palaces

Marriage palaces may be a product of changing lifestyles and modern needs, but they cannot replace village solidarity, mutual cooperation, and meaningful human relationships. The grandeur of buildings may attract attention for a few hours, but the warmth of people's affection can remain in our hearts for a lifetime. We must understand that the real happiness of a wedding does not lie in expensive venues, elaborate decorations, or the number of dishes served. It lies in the love that unites two families and brings the wider community closer.

JUSTICE, RESERVATION AND ELECTORAL INTEGRITY: THE SUPREME COURT'S CONSTITUTIONAL TEST

LALIT GARG



The true measure of a strong democracy lies not merely in the regular conduct of elections, a parliamentary majority, or the popularity of political parties, but in ensuring that the Constitution stands above all, placing those in power, the opposition, and ordinary citizens on an equal footing before the law. When questions concerning social justice, reservation, religious freedom, and electoral fairness simultaneously occupy the centre of national discourse, the role of the Supreme Court becomes all the more significant. The judiciary is the constitutional institution to which citizens look for justice, expecting it to uphold the rule of law independently of political compulsions, social pressures, and the influence of those in power. Today, issues ranging from eligibility for reservation and religious conversion to electoral integrity and the dignity of the judiciary have emerged as crucial tests of this expectation. In examining these questions, it is essential neither to become a propagandist for any political side nor to harbour prejudice against any religious community. Instead, the spirit of the Constitution and the broader objectives of justice must remain at the heart of the debate.

Reservation for Scheduled Castes is one of the Constitution's historic instruments designed to address the consequences of centuries of social exclusion, untouchability, and discrimination. It is not merely a provision offering additional opportunities in education and employment; it is a constitutional intervention intended to correct a deeply entrenched social injustice that deprived a substantial section of the population of equal opportunities for generations. Therefore, the debate surrounding reservation and religious conversion must be approached on the basis of constitutional provisions and social realities, rather than emotional appeals, religious compulsions, or political allegations.

The Supreme Court's clarification that individuals belonging to Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) who convert to another religion may not remain entitled to reservation benefits under the applicable legal framework is a significant development. The Tamil Nadu government's challenge to this position before the High Court, along with its stand in favour of continuing such benefits even after conversion to Islam or Christianity, raises important questions concerning the constitutional framework governing reservation and the criteria for determining eligibility. These questions deserve careful scrutiny in the light of the law, the historical purpose of affirmative action, and the principles of equality and social justice.

The debate also brings into focus a wider concern: whether reservation benefits should continue when the legal conditions governing eligibility are no longer satisfied. Some organisations argue that caste-based discrimination does not exist within their religious traditions, while simultaneously advocating the continuation of reservation benefits for converts from historically disadvantaged communities. Such positions invite legitimate questions about consistency, eligibility, and the intended beneficiaries of affirmative action. However, these issues must be examined through evidence and constitutional principles rather than sweeping generalisations about religious communities. The relationship between conversion, social disadvantage, and reservation is a complex legal and social question that cannot be resolved through political rhetoric alone.

Although several state governments have enacted stringent laws against unlawful or coercive religious conversion, concerns continue to be raised about their implementation and the protection of individual religious freedom. What is needed is a clear, consistent, and constitutionally sound approach by the Union government and the Supreme Court, one that prevents coercion and misuse of the law while safeguarding genuine freedom of conscience and ensuring that reservation benefits remain governed by the applicable constitutional and statutory provisions.

Within this broader constitutional framework, the Supreme Court's intervention in disputes relating to the electoral process is equally noteworthy. On October 12, 2026, Rahul Gandhi and other leaders of the opposition INDIA alliance reportedly marched towards the Supreme Court over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The Court's response to this development has drawn attention to an important question concerning the relationship between political protest and judicial independence. Although the opposition has raised allegations of irregularities in electoral rolls, the deletion of voters' names, and concerns about the transparency of the electoral process, the truth of these allegations must be determined through judicial scrutiny and examination of the relevant records.

Elections are not merely a mechanism for choosing a government; they are a constitutional opportunity for every eligible citizen to express their political will. The accuracy and credibility of electoral rolls are therefore not the concern of any single political party but a matter of fundamental importance to the entire democratic system. At the same time, taking political demonstrations directly to the Supreme Court raises questions about the appropriate means of expressing dissent and seeking institutional redress. Political disagreement is an integral part of democracy, but it must be expressed in ways that respect the independence and dignity



of constitutional institutions.

On October 15, the Supreme Court reportedly sought responses to the opposition leaders' petition from the Election Commission of India, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi. This development reinforces a fundamental constitutional principle: even decisions taken by an important constitutional body such as the Election Commission are subject to judicial review within the limits of the law. The independence of the Commission does not mean that every decision it takes must be regarded as beyond scrutiny. Equally, disagreement with a decision does not, by itself, establish that the Commission has acted improperly. The purpose of judicial review is to distinguish allegations from established facts, examine the legality of decision-making processes, and protect citizens' constitutional rights.

In the same sequence of events, the Supreme Court reportedly sought responses from Rahul Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, and other concerned leaders in connection with the march on October 12. The underlying concern was whether political demonstrations could create a situation in which pressure was brought to bear upon the judiciary. This episode must be assessed with due regard to three essential democratic principles: the right to peaceful protest, the freedom to express political disagreement, and respect for the dignity of the judiciary. The opposition has every right to question the government and the Election Commission, but respect for the independence of judicial institutions is also a constitutional responsibility. At the same time, the protection of judicial dignity must not become a pretext for curtailing legitimate criticism or peaceful dissent. The issuance of a notice does not, by itself, establish guilt; it is a procedural step intended to provide an opportunity to respond before the Court reaches a conclusion.

This is precisely where the question of balance between judicial activism and judicial restraint becomes important. If the judiciary remains silent in the face of social injustice, administrative arbitrariness, or violations of constitutional rights, public confidence in the justice system may erode. Conversely, if it assumes the role of a principal policymaker in every political controversy, the constitutional principle of separation of powers may be undermined. Democratic institutions are not adversaries competing for supremacy; they are distinct pillars of governance, each expected to operate within constitutional boundaries and hold the others accountable through lawful mechanisms.

The legislature makes laws, the executive implements them, and the judiciary ensures that laws and their implementation remain consistent with the Constitution. A healthy balance among these three institutions forms the foundation of democratic stability. The prestige of the Supreme Court is built not merely on the firmness of its orders but, more importantly, on its impartiality, independence, and reasoned judgments.

What India needs today is a judiciary that is fearless in confronting injustice yet mindful of the limits of its jurisdiction; one that protects citizens' rights without being influenced by political considerations; and one that safeguards the dignity of constitutional institutions while ensuring that they remain accountable under the law. Clarity on the relationship between religious conversion and reservation, transparency in electoral disputes, and respect for the judiciary may appear to be separate concerns, but they converge on one fundamental question: how can the supremacy of the Constitution be ensured in practice?

Justice is not simply a matter of one side winning and another losing. It is a source of public confidence, a conviction that every citizen will be heard, every claim will receive an impartial hearing, and no individual or institution, however powerful, stands above the law. The true strength of the Supreme Court will be reflected when its judgments rise above political clamour and become enduring examples of constitutional wisdom, social sensitivity, and legal impartiality. Ultimately, the authority of the judiciary rests not merely on the power to pronounce judgments, but on the public's faith that those judgments are guided by the Constitution, delivered without fear or favour, and directed towards the preservation of justice, equality, and democratic integrity.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Say no to plastic waste

Through your respected paper, I wish to draw attention to the rising use of plastic in daily life. Plastic bags and bottles are choking drains, polluting soil and harming animals. Citizens must carry cloth bags and avoid single-use plastic. Authorities must enforce strict rules and promote recycling. Protecting our environment is our shared duty today. Every small step matters greatly.

– Syed Shan Nawaz

Youth need jobs now

I write to express deep concern over increasing unemployment among educated youth. Many qualified young people are struggling to find suitable jobs despite hard work and degrees. This causes frustration, stress and loss of confidence. Authorities must promote skill development, support startups and create more employment opportunities. Youth are our future and must not be ignored. Their dreams deserve attention.

– Shiva

Quick Read

FII flows, US inflation, crude oil among top factors to watch next week

MUMBAI

Foreign investor activity, domestic inflation data, rupee movement and global economic cues are likely to dictate market direction as the Nifty approaches the crucial 26,000 mark after a fourth consecutive week of gains. In the previous week, the Nifty gained 2.61 per cent, while the Sensex advanced 2.85 per cent. Markets also demonstrated resilience on Friday, recovering sharply from a weak opening amid continued foreign institutional buying and domestic investor support, even as global equities faced selling pressure, particularly in technology and AI-linked stocks.

India's digital economy entering a new phase of growth

NEW DELHI

India's next digital growth cycle is expected to be driven by artificial intelligence, expanding 5G networks and rising investments in data centres, creating business opportunities across telecom, banking, manufacturing, healthcare and technology infrastructure, a report has said. After a decade of rapid progress in mobile internet penetration, digital payments and online services, the focus is now shifting towards building advanced technology infrastructure that can support businesses, improve productivity and accelerate innovation. The transition is expected to create opportunities across several industries, including telecommunications, information technology, banking, manufacturing, healthcare, retail and logistics.



India set to install 200 million new ACs by 2035: IEA

NEW DELHI

India is expected to install an additional 200 million air conditioners in homes over the next decade, making it the single biggest contributor to the growth in global energy demand, according to the International Energy Agency's (IEA) World Energy Outlook 2026. The IEA estimates that the share of India and Southeast Asia in the global stock of air conditioners will double from less than 10% at present to around 20% by 2035. In countries such as India and Indonesia, fewer than one in five households currently own an air conditioner, significantly lower than developed nations such as Australia, Japan and the United States, where around 90 per cent of households have at least one cooling unit.

The agency noted that, for the first time in energy history, demand for cooling in buildings is set to overtake demand for heating.

India's electricity demand is projected to grow by around 6 per cent annually over the next decade under the IEA's Stated Policies Scenario, the fastest pace among major regions globally. The country's total energy demand is expected to increase by 2.5% each year, nearly three times the global average.

India's oil and gas import bill jumps to $16 billion

The rising import bill highlights India's exposure to disruptions in global energy supplies, given its heavy dependence on overseas crude and natural gas.

NEW DELHI

India's net import bill for crude oil and natural gas surged to $16 billion in October 2026, compared with $10 billion during the corresponding month last year, as a sharp rise in international energy prices increased the country's import expenditure, according to data compiled by the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC).

The average price of the Indian basket of crude oil imports stood at $119.91 per barrel in October, significantly higher than the $65.08 recorded in October 2025. The increase comes at a time when India continues to depend heavily on overseas supplies to meet its energy requirements, importing more than 85 per cent of its crude oil needs.

During October, India's crude oil imports were valued at $19.5 billion, while liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports accounted for $1.3 billion. Petroleum product exports during the month stood at $6.3 billion.

In volume terms, crude oil imports increased 11% to 23.31 million metric tons in October, against 21 million metric tons in the same month last year. The volume was also 4.7% higher than in September.

The cumulative net import bill for April-October of FY 2026-27 reached $97.7 billion, compared with $70.3 billion during the corresponding period of the previous financial year.

Crude oil import volumes during the seven-month period also increased 2.7 per cent year-on-year.

Meanwhile, petroleum product exports grew 4.7% in October but declined 13.2% during April-October, primarily due to lower exports of high-speed diesel, petrol, aviation turbine fuel and naphtha.



October in figures

- **$19.5 bn** crude oil imports
- **$1.3 bn** LNG imports
- **$6.3 bn** petroleum product exports

$119.91 a barrel: the Indian crude basket's October average, against $65.08 in October 2025

Maruti Suzuki raises prices again



NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki India has announced another price increase across select vehicle models, citing persistent inflationary pressures and rising input costs.

The revised prices will come into effect from November 22, 2026, resulting in a volume-weighted average increase of approximately 0.31%.

In a regulatory filing, the country's largest carmaker said that despite continued efforts to optimise costs, the prevailing inflationary environment had made it necessary to pass on a portion of the increased expenses to customers. The company added that it would continue working to minimise the impact of the price revision on buyers.

The latest announcement marks another increase in vehicle prices by Maruti Suzuki during 2026. In September, the automaker raised prices of select models by up to Rs 20,000, citing inflation and higher input costs.

Earlier, in August, the company implemented price increases of up to Rs 30,000 across its Arena and Nexa vehicle ranges. Another hike of up to Rs 30,000 across its passenger vehicle portfolio had come into effect in June.

Maruti Suzuki India's standalone net profit declined 26.9% year-on-year to Rs 2,415 crore in the July-September quarter of FY27.

However, revenue from operations increased 26 per cent to Rs 53,340 crore during the quarter, compared with Rs 42,332 crore in the corresponding period last year.

Price hikes in 2026

- **JUNE** Up to Rs 30,000 across passenger vehicles
- **AUGUST** Up to Rs 30,000 across Arena and Nexa models
- **SEPTEMBER** Up to Rs 20,000 on select models
- **NOVEMBER 22** Volume-weighted average increase of about 0.31%

India weighs 30% duty on rice exports



Highlights

- **Duty:** 30% on non-Basmati white rice under consideration
- **Timing:** export duty likely next month; a minimum export price also explored
- **Last resort:** a temporary export ban
- **2023 ban:** stayed in force for 14 months

MUMBAI

India is considering imposing a 30 per cent export duty on non-Basmati white rice as part of efforts to bring down domestic prices, with the government also exploring a minimum export price (MEP) mechanism to regulate overseas shipments.

According to sources, the government is preparing to introduce the export duty next month, while a temporary export ban remains an option of last resort if other measures fail to stabilise domestic prices.

The proposed restrictions are aimed at reducing the competitiveness of Indian rice in international markets, potentially encouraging exporters to limit overseas shipments and increase domestic availability. However, any export restriction under consideration is expected to be temporary, unlike the previous ban imposed in 2023, which remained in force for 14 months.

The government is examining international rice prices and India's export rates before finalising the proposed measures. Sources indicated that even a 20 per cent export duty could allow Indian exporters to remain competitive against major suppliers such as Thailand and Vietnam, whose rice prices are currently higher. Pakistan is expected to remain the only major competitor offering lower prices under such circumstances.

During the first week of November, when the proposal to impose export restrictions was presented before an inter-ministerial panel, India's free-on-board (FOB) price for white rice with five per cent broken grains stood between $384 and $389 per tonne.

In comparison, Pakistan's price was approximately $415 per tonne, while Thailand quoted around $495 and Vietnam $480 per tonne.

'Moving experience': Adani on meeting Mata Amritanandamayi

AHMEDABAD

Gautam Adani, chairman of Adani Group, met spiritual leader Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, describing the experience as "moving".

In a post on the social media platform 'X', Gautam Adani said: "Meeting Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi (Amma) in Ahmedabad was a deeply moving experience. There is something extraordinary about a mother's love. It asks for nothing, gives without measure and stays with us throughout our lives."

According to the billionaire industrialist, what makes 'Amma' extraordinary is her "ability to turn the tenderness of a mother's embrace into a powerful mission of service to humanity".

"Through her schools, hospitals and humanitarian initiatives, she has brought hope, healing and dignity to countless lives, giving a mother's compassion a reach that transcends all boundaries," he added.



He further said, "Amma reminds us that the greatest expression of love is not simply in what we feel, but in the lives we touch." Earlier in September, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan participated in the 'Vishwa Seva Dinam' celebrations at Mata Amritanandamayi Math at Amritapuri in Kollam.

He also offered his respectful pranam to Mata Amritanandamayi Devi and said that 'Amma' (referring to Mata Amritanandamayi Devi) is a miracle and should continue to guide us in serving society and the nation, an official statement said.

Speaking at an event organised on the occasion of the 73rd birthday of Mata Amritanandamayi Devi, the Vice-President said, "Bharat is progressing towards the vision of a Viksit Bharat, and development requires infrastructure, technology, investment, innovation and economic growth."

He also called for ensuring that Viksit Bharat is an inclusive Bharat where no one is left behind.

Modi's gold appeal shows in import data: CAIT

NEW DELHI

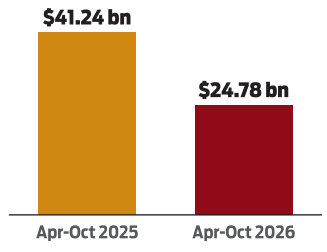
Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to citizens to avoid non-essential gold purchases for a year is beginning to reflect in India's import figures, with the country's gold import bill declining by nearly 40% during April-October 2026, according to Praveen Khandelwal, Secretary General of the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), on Sunday.

Welcoming the development, Khandelwal said gold imports fell to $24.78 billion during the seven-month period from $41.24 billion a year ago, reducing the country's import expenditure by $16.46 billion.

He described the decline as a reflection of public participation in the government's nation-first approach. The decline was particularly pronounced in October, when gold imports fell to $5.51 billion from $14.72 billion in October 2025, registering a year-on-year drop of approximately 62.6%.



Gold imports
April-October, $ billion



Figures: CAIT

Khandelwal also highlighted the sharp increase in India's gold imports in recent years. The country imported gold worth approximately $71.98 billion in FY26, compared with $58.01 billion in FY25.

However, based on current trends, he estimated that India's total gold imports could decline to around $35-40 billion in FY27, significantly lower than the previous financial year's level.

CAIT National President B.C. Bhartia said the Prime Minister's appeal went beyond reducing gold purchases and encouraged citizens to exercise restraint in personal consumption in the larger national interest. He added that the public's response reflected a growing understanding of the country's economic priorities.

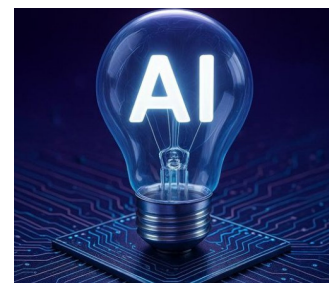
Enterprise AI drives tech services M&A in Q3 2026

MUMBAI

Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) in the technology services sector are increasingly shifting towards businesses offering enterprise artificial intelligence (AI) deployment capabilities, as companies look to move beyond experimentation and integrate AI into complex business operations, a report said on Sunday.

The report by EY, titled 'Technology Services Deal Insights: Q3 CY26 Deal Round-up', recorded 247 announced transactions during the July-September quarter, registering a 4.7 per cent increase from 236 deals in the previous quarter.

The disclosed deal value stood at approximately $5.3 billion, with four large transactions accounting for nearly $2.8 billion. According to the report, acquisition strategies are increasingly focused on companies with proven AI-led revenues, advanced data engineering capabilities and solutions that can help enterprises deploy AI at scale.



Data and AI-related deal activity rose around 28 per cent in Q3 CY26 compared with the previous quarter, as acquirers sought businesses specialising in data modernisation, governance and AI-ready infrastructure.

Shivani Nagpaul, Partner, Investment Banking – Technology, Media and Telecom (TMT) at EY India, said buyers are increasingly looking for data foundations and application expertise that can translate enterprise AI investments into measurable business outcomes.

"As enterprise AI moves into production, buyers are increasingly seeking the data foundations and application expertise needed to deliver measurable business outcomes. That shift is bringing greater scrutiny to AI-led revenues, proven use cases and reusable solutions," as per the report.

NEW CONTENT OPPORTUNITIES

NFDC, Sony join hands to discover creators

GOA

The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) and Sony Pictures Networks India (SPNI) have joined hands to create new opportunities for writers, content creators and production houses across the country through an initiative aimed at discovering original stories across languages and formats.

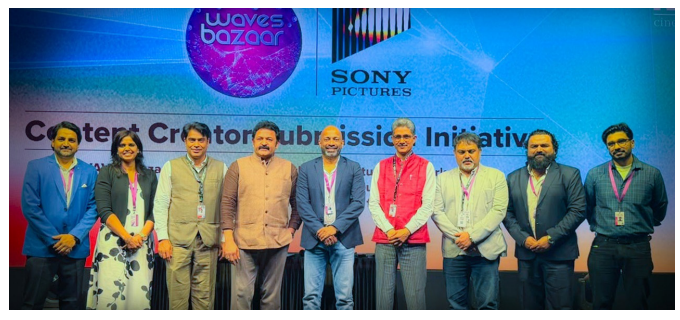
The two organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Sunday at the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) to launch the WAVES Bazaar × SPNI Content Creator Submission Initiative.

Under the collaboration, creators will be able to pitch original fiction and non-fiction concepts to SPNI in Hindi, English, Tamil, Telugu and Bangla. Submissions are invited across multiple formats, including fiction series, premium TV+ content, reality shows, game and competition formats, talent-based programmes and other unscripted concepts.

Selected applicants will be invited to present their ideas to SPNI for consideration and potential development.

The initiative will operate through WAVES Bazaar, an industry platform managed by NFDC under the aegis of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

NFDC will manage the submission process through the WAVES Bazaar portal and shortlist entries based on mutually agreed criteria.



NFDC Managing Director Dhiraj Singh said the collaboration would create new avenues for writers, creators and production houses to showcase original concepts across languages and formats.

> "We look forward to discovering fresh perspectives and compelling ideas for audiences."
>
> — **Gaurav Banerjee,** MD and CEO, Sony Pictures Networks India

Quick Read

Delhi Police arrests mastermind of fake job racket

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has busted an alleged fake job racket operating from Patel Garden near Dwarka Mor and arrested its suspected mastermind, 34-year-old Sarvesh Kumar. He allegedly cheated unemployed youths by collecting registration fees and uniform charges after promising them jobs.

Police said around 10 to 15 candidates visited the office daily seeking employment. Kumar allegedly assured them of early joining but later blocked their mobile numbers after collecting money. Two HR employees, Kumari Nirupama alias Mahi and Kanchan Chhabra, have joined the investigation.

Verification of four bank accounts linked to Kumar revealed nine cybercrime complaints from different states. Police recovered three mobile phones, 29 pamphlets advertising jobs and an attendance register. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and further investigation is underway to identify victims and trace the money.

15 foreign nationals deported after Dwarka police drive

NEW DELHI

Dwarka District Police apprehended 46 foreign nationals during a verification drive under Operation VISTA on November 20. Of them, 15 were deported after completing the required verification and legal formalities, according to a police statement.

The operation covered Bindapur, Uttam Nagar, Mohan Garden and Dabri police station areas. It targeted foreign nationals suspected of staying illegally or overstaying their permitted period in India.

Among those apprehended, 39 were Nigerian nationals. The remaining seven included two each from Ghana and Tanzania, and one each from Cameroon, Kenya and South Africa. Police said all 46 underwent verification as part of the drive.

Delhi Police rescues kidnapped 8-month-old, arrests 3

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police rescued an eight-month-old boy kidnapped from east Delhi's Pandav Nagar area within 24 hours and arrested three people allegedly involved in the crime. The accused are Rishipal (40), a truck driver, and a couple, Chatru (50), a farmer, and his wife Kusma (45).

Police said the couple allegedly arranged to procure a boy because they already had three daughters and wanted a son to carry forward their family name and inheritance. The child was taken while under a caretaker's supervision.

CCTV footage and technical investigation helped police trace the accused. The baby was recovered safely from Wajidpur village in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh district. Further investigation is underway to identify possible links to a wider trafficking network.

"Population rises in 40 Arunachal border villages": Amit Shah

Amit Shah said improved facilities and local procurement by security forces have boosted livelihoods and reversed migration in 40 Arunachal Pradesh border villages.

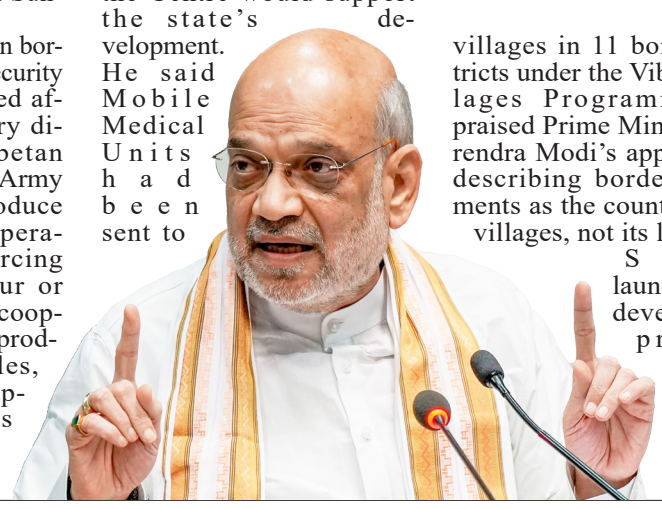
ITANAGAR

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah said population has increased and migration has stopped in 40 villages along the China border in Arunachal Pradesh, citing improved employment, electricity, healthcare and water facilities. He made the remarks at a cooperative conference in the state on Sunday.

Shah said ties between border communities and security forces had strengthened after the Home Ministry directed the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and the Army to purchase local produce through village cooperatives instead of sourcing supplies from Tezpur or Guwahati. Women's cooperatives supply dairy products, eggs, vegetables, millets and flour, supporting rural incomes and agriculture.

Shah said. He identified employment, education, healthcare and family prosperity as four priorities for Arunachal Pradesh. He urged cooperatives and women's self-help groups to make the state self-reliant in essential food products.

Shah assured Chief Minister Pema Khandu and the Deputy Chief Minister that the Centre would support the state's development.



He said Mobile Medical Units had been sent to villages in 11 border districts under the Vibrant Villages Programme. He praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's approach of describing border settlements as the country's first villages, not its last.

Shah launched 199 development projects worth Rs 110.95 crore across 11 border districts and unveiled the Arunachal Pradesh Cooperative Vision 2047.

On Saturday, he chaired a review meeting on law and order, internal security, border management and development, including coordination among security agencies and infrastructure along Arunachal Pradesh's 1,126-kilometre international border with China. The programme also focuses on improving basic facilities and supporting livelihoods in remote border villages.

Border push in numbers

PROJECTS LAUNCHED
199

WORTH
Rs 110.95 crore

BORDER DISTRICTS
11

BORDER WITH CHINA
1,126 km

> *"I am pleased that people have begun returning to all 40 villages (bordering with China), the population there has increased, and migration has stopped."*
> **AMIT SHAH** Union Home and Cooperation Minister

Modi announces Rs 2 lakh relief for Kutch victims



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced financial assistance for the families of people killed and injured in a road accident in Gujarat's Kutch district, where at least seven people died. The Prime Minister's National Relief Fund will provide Rs 2 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased person and Rs 50,000 to every injured victim.

The Prime Minister's Office shared Modi's message on Sunday, in which he expressed condolences to the bereaved families and wished those injured a speedy recovery. "Saddened by the loss of lives due to a mishap in Kutch, Gujarat. My condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. Praying for the speedy recovery of the injured," he said.

The PMO confirmed the compensation amounts, stating that the assistance would be paid from the PMNRF.

In a separate incident, Modi also announced identical financial assistance following a road accident in Rajasthan's Kota district, where nine people were killed and several others injured. A vehicle carrying 16 pilgrims collided with a parked truck near Shambhupura on the Kota-Udaipur highway. The group was returning to Maharashtra after visiting Khatu Shyam Ji, and all occupants belonged to one family, Additional District Collector Rajesh Joshi said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced ₹2 lakh compensation for families of those killed and ₹50,000 for injured victims in the Kutch accident.

Joshi said the administration was prioritising medical treatment for the injured, while post-mortem procedures were being conducted. President Droupadi Murmu, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot also expressed condolences over the Kota accident. Joshi described it as "a deeply tragic and painful accident" and said the victims were returning to Maharashtra after visiting Khatu Shyam overnight.

Over 100 fall ill after eating chowmein at Balaghat fair

BALAGHAT

More than 100 children and 12 adults were hospitalised with suspected food poisoning after eating chowmein at a village fair in Madhya Pradesh's Balaghat district on Saturday evening. Officials said on Sunday that all those admitted were stable and receiving medical care. The incident took place at a fair in Hiri village, within the limits of Kirnapur police station.

Balaghat Collector Aditya Singh said several visitors



complained of severe stomach pain shortly after consuming noodles at the fair. A total of 118 children were initially taken to the community health centre in Kirnapur for treatment. Of them, 45 were later shifted to the Balaghat district hospital for further medical attention, while the remaining 73 were discharged after receiving primary care.

In addition to the children, 12 adults were admitted to the district hospital. The collector visited the hospital to check on the patients and instructed doctors to ensure that everyone received proper treatment. The authorities said medical teams were monitoring the condition of those admitted.

Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr Shatrughan Singh Dahiya said all 45 children in the paediatric ward and the 12 adults in the medical ward were stable. "All patients are out of danger and receiving treatment under the supervision of doctors," he said.

AT THE HOSPITALS

118	CHILDREN TAKEN TO KIRNAPUR HEALTH CENTRE
45	SHIFTED TO THE DISTRICT HOSPITAL
73	CHILDREN DISCHARGED
12	ADULTS ADMITTED

Tamil Nadu challenges order permitting Deepam lighting

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu's Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department has approached the Supreme Court seeking review of the interim arrangement permitting the Karthigai Deepam lamp to be lit at Deepathoon on Thiruparankundram Hill in Madurai on November 24. The court had allowed the ritual under safeguards while the wider dispute remains pending.

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Vipul M Pancholi granted permission on Friday. It clarified that the arrangement was not an endorsement of the Madras High Court's judgment or findings. The Supreme Court will independently examine the validity of the High Court's January 6, 2026, judgment when the matter is heard in the second week of January 2027. All legal questions remain open.

The court directed that the ritual be conducted by a restricted team organised by the temple administration. The Madurai District Collector will decide the team's size and composition in consultation with the temple Executive Officer, the Archaeological Survey of India and the Madurai Police Commissioner. The Collector will supervise the arrangements.

The dispute began in November 2025, when authorities refused permission to light the lamp at the hilltop site, citing its proximity to a dargah and possible law-and-order concerns. In December 2025, a Madras High Court single judge directed the temple authorities to light the lamp at Deepathoon, noting that the pillar was more than 50 metres from the dargah. A division bench upheld the direction on January 6, 2026, requiring consultation with the ASI and police because of the site's heritage status.

Tamil Nadu Minister CTR Nirmal Kumar said the government was considering its legal options. "We are discussing with the legal experts on the next step," he said. The review petition places the state's challenge before the Supreme Court, while the November 24 ritual remains subject to safeguards.

The Deepam dispute

- **NOV 2025** Permission to light the lamp at the hilltop site refused
- **DEC 2025** High Court single judge orders the lamp lit at Deepathoon
- **JAN 6, 2026** Division bench upholds the direction
- **FRIDAY** Supreme Court allows the ritual under safeguards
- **NOV 24** Karthigai Deepam to be lit
- **JAN 2027** Supreme Court hearing

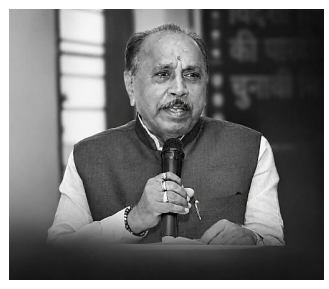
BJP Rajya Sabha MP Ramrao Wadkute dies at 72

MUMBAI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Rajya Sabha MP Ramrao Wadkute died of a heart attack at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi on Sunday. He was 72. The leader from Maharashtra's Hingoli district was admitted to the hospital after complaining of chest pain. He had been nominated to the Rajya Sabha in March this year.

Wadkute began his political career with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in 1999. He contested the 2004 Maharashtra Assembly election from Kalamnuri but lost. He was subsequently elected to the Maharashtra Legislative Council under the NCP quota and took up several organisational and institutional responsibilities. He also served as chairman of the Maharashtra Sheep and Goat Development Corporation during the Congress-NCP government.

In October 2019, Wadkute left the NCP and joined the BJP. In 2021, he was appointed the party's Hingoli district president. He later served as the BJP's election chief and was given responsibility for the Hingoli Lok Sabha constituency before his nomination to the Upper House. He was also



Ramrao Wadkute

known for his work among the Dhangar community in Maharashtra's Marathwada region.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis condoled his death, describing him as a simple and unassuming leader who worked for marginalised communities. He recalled Wadkute's contributions to the Dhangar community and the cooperative sector. BJP national general secretary Vinod Tawde also paid tribute, remembering his association with the people of Marathwada and his efforts to address the concerns of disadvantaged sections.

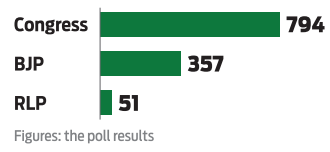
Deputy Chief Minister and NCP president Sunetra Pawar also expressed grief over his death, describing him as a leader committed to public and social service. Wadkute's political journey spanned roles in the NCP and BJP, the Maharashtra Legislative Council and the Rajya Sabha.

Streetlights removed after BJP-backed candidate loses Rajasthan polls



Visuals purportedly showing the streetlights being taken down

Zila parishad seats won
of 1,271 seats



Figures: the poll results

JAIPUR

The removal of around 50 streetlights from a village in Rajasthan's Tonk district has triggered controversy, with residents alleging that the lights were taken down after a BJP-supported candidate lost the recent panchayat elections. Videos purportedly showing workers removing the lights from electricity poles have circulated online, raising questions over the timing of the action.

The incident reportedly took place in villages and hamlets under the Peeplu Panchayat Samiti area. Priyanka Sharma, wife of Alok Sharma, who works as personal assistant to Niwai MLA Ramsahay Verma, contested from Ward 2 as the BJP candidate. According to a local ward panch, Kajod Prajapat, Sharma arranged the installation of approximately 50 streetlights on October 24 after noticing poorly lit residential areas during her election campaign.

The lights were reportedly removed following her defeat in the polls. Residents have questioned why the removal took place after the election, particularly when the installations had been made to improve lighting in the area. However, the claims surrounding the timing and circumstances of the removal have not been independently confirmed.

Electricity department officials maintained that the streetlights had been installed illegally. Residents, meanwhile, have raised concerns about the sudden action and its impact on public lighting.

The controversy comes amid a broader political discussion over the outcome of Rajasthan's rural local body elections. While the BJP performed strongly in urban local body polls, the Congress made significant gains in the panchayat elections. The Congress won 794 of the 1,271 zila parishad seats and 3,758 of the 7,520 panchayat samiti seats. The BJP secured 357 zila parishad seats and 2,213 panchayat samiti seats, while the Rashtriya Loktantrik Party won 51 and 497 seats, respectively.

SHIMLA SEISMIC ACTIVITY

Earthquake measuring 2.8 magnitude hits Shimla district



SHIMLA

An earthquake measuring 2.8 on the Richter scale struck Himachal Pradesh's Shimla district on Sunday morning, according to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS). The tremor was recorded at 6.29 am at a depth of eight kilometres.

The NCS reported that the epicentre was located at latitude 31.422 degrees north and longitude 77.783 degrees east in Shimla district. The agency shared the seismic details through a post on its official social media account.



Shimla district: epicentre of Sunday's tremor

The latest tremor comes after another earthquake struck Himachal Pradesh in August. On August 14, a quake measuring 3.0 magnitude was recorded in Chamba district at 6.36 am. According to the NCS, that earthquake originated at a depth of five kilometres, with its epicentre at latitude 33.131 degrees north and longitude 76.585 degrees east.

Earthquakes are classified according to the depth at which they originate beneath the Earth's surface. According to the United States Geological Survey, shallow earthquakes occur at depths of up to 70 kilometres, intermediate earthquakes between 70 and 300 kilometres, and deep earthquakes between 300 and 700 kilometres.

Quick Read

2 minor girls rescued after alleged abduction, rape

NEW DELHI

Police rescued two minor girls and arrested two men in connection with the alleged abduction and rape of three girls in Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi district. A third girl, aged 16, and the suspect accused of abducting her remain missing.The girls, aged 14, 15 and 16, went missing on October 21 after leaving for school on bicycles. Their families later found the bicycles at the school and learnt that the girls had been seen with three men.The 14-year-old and 15-year-old were rescued on Friday. Medical examinations confirmed rape, following which charges under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the POCSO Act were added. The two arrested suspects, aged between 22 and 24, have been sent to judicial custody.

Civic body uses garbage truck to transport worker's body

RANCHI

The body of sanitation worker Sonu Hadi, 30, was taken to Giridih Sadar Hospital in a garbage truck, despite the municipal corporation having three government-provided hearses.Hadi, a daily-wage worker with the Giridih Municipal Corporation, reportedly drowned in a pond. A video of the body being transported in the truck circulated on social media, triggering criticism and demands for an inquiry. Municipal Commissioner Vijay Singh Birua said he was unaware of the incident and arranged an ambulance after learning about it. Mayor Pramila Mehra called it gross negligence, saying every deceased person deserved dignity and officials must be held accountable.

Assam plans ₹4,000 crore investment to upgrade ITIs



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

GUWAHATI

Assam plans ₹4,000 crore investment to modernise ITIs, strengthen technical education and equip youth with industry-relevant skills for future employment opportunities.

The Assam government has planned investments exceeding ₹4,000 crore to transform Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and the state's skill development ecosystem into world-class Centres of Excellence, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Sunday. The initiative aims to modernise technical education, strengthen industry partnerships and prepare young people for employment opportunities in emerging sectors.

Sarma said the government had launched an Industry 4.0 modernisation programme worth more than ₹2,390 crore in partnership with Tata Technologies and over 20 global original equipment manufacturers. The initiative will upgrade 77 technical institutions, comprising 43 ITIs and 34 polytechnics. Students will receive training in emerging fields such as electric vehicles, industrial robotics, 3D printing, the Internet of Things and artificial intelligence-driven manufacturing.

Another major component is the ₹1,016 crore Assam Skill University being developed in Mangaldai. Described by the Chief Minister as eastern India's first government skill university, the institution will offer programmes ranging from vocational diplomas to B. Tech, MBA and PhD courses in areas including artificial intelligence, data science and digital manufacturing. The university is intended to connect vocational training with higher education and advanced technical learning.

> **"Whether it is an IIT or an ITI, for me, both are equally the treasures of my country, the strength of my nation, and the future of India"**
>
> **— Himanta Biswa Sarma,** Chief Minister, Assam

The government has also outlined a ₹600 crore hub-and-spoke school skill network in partnership with Tata Nelco and Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan. The project will establish 50 satellite-connected skill hubs and 500 spoke centres across the state, extending technical training to rural institutions beyond major urban centres.

Sarma further highlighted industry-linked training clusters in Jorhat, in association with Numaligarh Refinery Limited, and Tinsukia, with Oil India Limited. A Skill India International Centre is planned in Guwahati, alongside nine Multi-Skill Centres of Excellence across districts including Majuli, Kokrajhar, Silchar and Dibrugarh. An international partnership with ITE Singapore is also expected to support global employment opportunities.

Tamil Nadu secures ₹1.14 lakh crore in investments

Tamil Nadu secured ₹1.14 lakh crore in investment commitments from 112 companies, expected to generate over 1.32 lakh jobs statewide.

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu has attracted investment commitments worth ₹1,14,811 crore from 112 companies during the first 195 days of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) government, an official said on Sunday. The proposed investments are expected to generate 1,32,771 jobs across the state. The announcement comes ahead of the government's second investors' conclave, scheduled to be held in Chennai on November 25.

According to the official, the state signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with the companies across multiple sectors to promote diversified industrial growth. The government is expected to share details of the agreements through Guidance Tamil Nadu, the state's investment promotion agency, and the Chief Minister's Office.

The announcement has drawn questions from the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has sought clarification over allegations that investments intended for Tamil Nadu were being diverted to neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. Former Puducherry Lieutenant Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan urged the state Industries Department to address these concerns before organising another investors' conclave.

Soundararajan also questioned the government about the steps taken to retain industries already operating in Tamil Nadu. She demanded details on how many MoUs announced so far had resulted in operational factories and how many jobs had actually been created. She said the government should provide clear answers instead of repeatedly making investment announcements.

The development comes as Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay prepares to host the second investors' conclave. The first edition was held on August 13. Vijay took office on May 10 after his party won 108 of the 234 Assembly seats. The TVK subsequently formed a post-poll alliance with the Congress, VCK and IUML, while the CPI and CPI(M) extended outside support. The opposition has also questioned whether the investment commitments were newly secured under the TVK administration or included agreements signed during the previous DMK government.

Investors' conclave

NEXT	November 25, the second edition
WHERE	Chennai
FIRST	Held on August 13
HOST	Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay

₹1,14,811 cr	112	1,32,771	195
investment commitments	companies signed MoUs	jobs expected	days of the TVK government

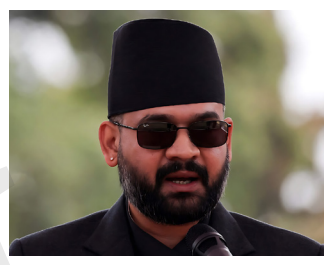
Nepal PM Balen Shah to discuss economic package during India visit

NEW DELHI

Nepal Prime Minister Balen Shah arrived in India on Sunday for his first official visit since assuming office in March. Discussions on a proposed $2 billion economic package and a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi are expected to feature prominently during the visit, which comes at a significant time for bilateral relations between the neighbouring countries.

Shah is visiting India at the invitation of Prime Minister Modi. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the Nepalese leader arrived on November 22 and will depart the following day, making the visit slightly longer than 24 hours.

The two prime ministers are scheduled to hold wide-ranging discussions on Monday, covering various aspects of bilateral cooperation.



The visit

- **Arrived:** Sunday, Nov 22
- **Talks:** with PM Narendra Modi on Monday
- **Meetings:** EAM S Jaishankar; President Droupadi Murmu
- **On the table:** a proposed $2 billion economic package

The talks are expected to provide an opportunity for both leaders to review the progress of India-Nepal relations and discuss ways to strengthen cooperation. They will also exchange views on regional and international developments of mutual interest. The proposed economic package is among the key matters expected to draw attention during the discussions.

During his stay, Shah is also scheduled to meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and call on President Droupadi Murmu. These engagements are expected to underline the importance both countries attach to maintaining regular high-level diplomatic contact.

The visit marks Shah's first state visit to India since taking charge as Nepal's prime minister in March.

His political journey has attracted attention, as he moved from a career in music as a rapper into politics before assuming the country's top executive position.

CJP launches 'Kya Bolti Public' campaign in Goa

GOA

The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) has launched its 'Kya Bolti Public' campaign in Goa, with founder Abhijeet Dipke expressing surprise over the support extended by residents during the party's protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar. The campaign was launched at the Panjim Convention Centre in the presence of co-convenor Saurav Das and party leader Ashutosh Ranka.

Speaking at the event, Dipke said the party was unaware that people in Goa had taken to the streets to express solidarity with its protest in Delhi. He acknowledged their support and said the campaign aimed to create a platform for public participation and discussion.CJP has invited residents to share their concerns, questions and aspirations through the initiative.

Adhikari announces infrastructure push to develop Nabadwip

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari announced infrastructure initiatives to develop Nabadwip, the birthplace of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, as an international pilgrimage destination. The measures include financial support for facilities and steps to accelerate a proposed bridge across the Bhagirathi River. He made the announcements during the Raas Purnima Mela.

Adhikari announced Rs 3 crore for infrastructure, including Rs 2 crore to complete a research centre dedicated to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Rs 1 crore to expand a gaushala at the saint's birthplace temple and ashram. He also said work at the Sanskrit university in Nabadwip would be completed.

The plan includes a proposed bridge over the Bhagirathi. The state government will bear the land acquisition cost, while the National Highways Authority of India will fund construction and improve access for pilgrims visiting this town. Adhikari said Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari would visit on November 26, after which the Centre and state would jointly take the project forward. He directed district officials to speed up land acquisition, soil testing and preparation of the detailed project report.



West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari.

> *"I will return to Nabadwip after the Gangasagar Mela in January. By then, the ghat renovations should be complete, and we will provide modern ferry services till the bridge is ready"*
>
> **SUVENDU ADHIKARI** West Bengal Chief Minister

Until the bridge is built, the government plans to renovate ghats and introduce modern ferry services for devotees. "I will return to Nabadwip after the Gangasagar Mela in January. By then, the ghat renovations should be complete, and we will provide modern ferry services till the bridge is ready," Adhikari said.

The chief minister said the government wanted to strengthen Nabadwip's identity through infrastructure development, heritage conservation and publicity. Comparing it with Mayapur's international profile, he said Nabadwip deserved recognition because of its association with Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He criticised previous administrations for neglecting the town and said the government would expand its involvement in Raas Purnima celebrations in Nabadwip and Santipur.

Telangana farmers face losses as banks miss credit targets

HYDERABAD

Farmers in Telangana have faced difficulties during the recently concluded kharif season as adverse weather conditions reduced agricultural production and banks failed to meet their agricultural credit targets. The situation has raised concerns over the financial support available to cultivators ahead of the rabi season, particularly as the government has advised them to avoid water-intensive crops such as paddy.

Telangana, which has emerged as one of the country's leading paddy-producing States, witnessed an estimated 16% to 17% decline in kharif production. The shortfall has been attributed to an El Niño-induced deficit in monsoon rainfall, which affected cultivation and made it difficult for farmers to maintain production levels. The inadequate rainfall added to the challenges faced by farmers during the agricultural season.

The failure of banks to achieve their agricultural lending targets has further increased concerns among the farming community. Agricultural credit plays an important role in helping cultivators meet expenses related to seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, labour and other farming requirements.

The concerns have become more significant with the approaching rabi season. The government has advised farmers against cultivating water-intensive crops, particularly paddy, amid concerns over water availability. However, the extent of financial assistance that will be provided to farmers who shift to alternative crops remains uncertain.

The situation has placed farmers in a difficult position, as they are dealing with reduced kharif output while also facing uncertainty over their next cultivation cycle. A change in cropping patterns could require additional planning, investment and access to suitable agricultural resources. Farmers who depend heavily on paddy cultivation may particularly need financial support to make the transition.

AIADMK Accuses Vijay of Neglecting Farmers

CHENNAI

Senior All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) leader R B Udhayakumar on Sunday criticised Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, accusing him of paying greater attention to his appearance than to the difficulties faced by farmers in the Cauvery delta region. He alleged that the government had failed to respond adequately to the growing agricultural distress caused by water shortages and crop damage.

Udhayakumar said farmers in the delta region were struggling with mounting debts after inadequate water supply affected their crops. He urged the state government to conduct an immediate inspection of the affected agricultural areas and assess the extent of the damage. He also demanded that the government officially declare the region drought-affected to ensure farmers receive necessary assistance.

The AIADMK leader called for urgent measures, including compensation for crop losses, timely settlement of crop insurance claims and additional relief for debt-ridden cultivators. He argued that farmers required immediate government intervention to protect their livelihoods and prevent further financial hardship. According to him, the administration should prioritise agricultural concerns instead of focusing on the chief minister's public image.

The remarks included a reference to Vijay's appearance at a recent wedding, where his changed hairstyle attracted attention.

Udhayakumar reportedly described the new look as a feast for the eyes but contrasted it with the suffering of farmers, which he said brought tears. The comment was part of his broader criticism of the chief minister's priorities.

SUSPECTED LIQUOR TRAGEDY

Manipur suspected liquor deaths rise to 17, around 600 hospitalised

IMPHAL

At least 17 people have died and around 600 have been hospitalised in Manipur's Chandel district following the suspected consumption of adulterated liquor, Excise Commissioner Hungyo Worshang said on Saturday. Authorities said the exact cause of the deaths has not yet been established and is awaiting medical findings and laboratory examinations.

The incident was first reported on November 18, when two people from Chakpikarong allegedly died after consuming the suspected liquor. The death toll rose to 11 by Friday and reached 17 by Saturday. Health and administrative teams visited affected areas, including Sugnu, Chakpikarong and Chandel, and inspected hospitals treating patients. Twelve patients were in critical condition and admitted to intensive care units at Shija Hospital, Babina Hospital and JNIMS.

Chandel toll

17	DEAD
600	IN HOSPITAL (AROUND)
12	CRITICAL, IN ICUS
6	ARRESTED



Around 600 people have been admitted to government and private hospitals across the district. At Sub-District Hospital in Sugnu, 121 people were screened on Saturday. Of these, 40 had mild symptoms and three showed serious symptoms. All 43 were referred to the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences for further examination. Health officials have been deployed to monitor patients, while district administrations have issued advisories and police have intensified action against the sale of country-made liquor.

Police said six people had been arrested in connection with the incident. A suo motu case was registered under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The Chandel superintendent of police said the liquor was not manufactured in the district but had been procured from neighbouring Kakching district.

The government has formed a four-member enquiry committee to investigate the incident. The panel will examine the liquor's origin and chemical composition, medical and forensic findings, and regulatory or enforcement lapses. It has been asked to submit a report within one month.

Why the World's Biggest Companies Keep Getting Hacked

From JPMorgan Chase and Uber to Microsoft and Coinbase, recent cyberattacks reveal what criminals and state-backed groups want from the companies millions of people trust.



The cases at a glance

When each came to light, what was hit and how the attackers got in

JPMORGAN CHASE, VISA, MASTERCARD	UBER	COINBASE	QANTAS	STRYKER	MARKS & SPENCER	MICROSOFT
NOVEMBER 2026	**OCTOBER 2026**	**MAY 2025**	**JULY 2025**	**MARCH 2026**	**APRIL 2025**	**JANUARY 2024**
Hit: Marketing data held by vendors: names and email addresses	**Hit:** Driving licence images and data of 149,346 drivers	**Hit:** Contact details; for some, ID images, balances and transaction histories	**Hit:** 5.7 million customer records: names, emails, frequent flyer details	**Hit:** Its internal Microsoft environment: orders, manufacturing, shipping	**Hit:** Online shopping paused; a forecast £300m blow to operating profit	**Hit:** Email of senior leaders and security and legal staff
Way in: Outside vendors and service providers	**Way in:** A provider's compromised credentials	**Way in:** Support workers paid by criminals to copy data	**Way in:** A targeted call centre and a third-party platform	**Way in:** Not established; the group Handala claimed it	**Way in:** Impersonation involving a third party	**Way in:** An older test account without multifactor authentication

On November 19, JPMorgan Chase said attackers had targeted outside vendors that held marketing information about some of its customers. Visa and Mastercard also acknowledged incidents involving service providers. For a Chase customer who had struggled to access online banking earlier that week, the obvious question was whether the two events were connected. The bank said they had separate causes. A software problem explained the outage. A cyberattack explained the exposure of customer information held elsewhere.

Why do attackers pursue companies with the resources to employ experienced defenders? Because these companies accumulate assets that are difficult to find anywhere else. A bank knows who its customers are. A cryptocurrency exchange knows what some of them hold. A technology company's executives know what its security investigators are discovering. A medical manufacturer coordinates orders that customers need delivered on time. An intruder who gains access to even a small part of one of these businesses can come away with something valuable.



Each has a different explanation, a different group of victims and a different measure of damage.

JPMorgan Chase, Visa and Mastercard show the value of an ordinary email address

The November disclosures concerned information that many people would consider unremarkable. JPMorgan said its investigation indicated that attackers had accessed certain marketing data held by vendors, potentially including customer names and email addresses. Journalists reviewed material that appeared to contain more than 16,000 customer email addresses, some accompanied by phone numbers and postal codes. That was a count of addresses visible in that material. The total number of affected customers was still being investigated.



Why would anyone want an email address that might already be public? Because the relationship attached to it adds information. An address on its own says someone can be contacted. Its appearance on a particular customer list can indicate which institution the person uses or which programme they joined. That gives a fraudulent approach a factual starting point. The recipient may reasonably wonder how a stranger could know about a genuine relationship. The answer could be a marketing record held several steps away from the account the customer is worried about.

Uber and the identity document a driver cannot easily replace

Uber's November disclosure was especially consequential for drivers because of the kind of information involved. In its notice to Iowa authorities, the company said the affected information included driving licence images and data extracted from them, including names, addresses, dates of birth and licence numbers. Reporting based on a separate filing in Maine put the total at 149,346 affected drivers. For someone who supplied a licence to earn a living through the platform, the document was a condition of participating in the business.

Uber's filing supports a precise conclusion about why this attack succeeded. A provider's compromised credentials allowed access to data within the scope of an existing relationship. The filing also records an important limit. Those credentials did not provide access to other Uber systems. The same incident therefore supplies evidence for two different decisions. Restricting the provider's reach mattered. So did deciding how much sensitive information the provider could reach within that restriction.

How the Uber breach unfolded

- **OCTOBER 7** — The access occurs
- **OCTOBER 9** — The provider tells Uber its internal credentials were compromised
- **OCTOBER 13** — Uber finds they were used to access its data
- **NOVEMBER 10** — Notice: credit monitoring and fraud help for those affected

Coinbase and the price of borrowing a trusted voice

At Coinbase, the attackers' intended use for stolen information was unusually clear. In May 2025, the cryptocurrency exchange said criminals had paid a small group of overseas support workers to copy customer information. The workers already had access to the information as part of their jobs. According to Coinbase, the criminals wanted to impersonate its representatives and persuade customers to transfer cryptocurrency. They also demanded $20 million from the company. Coinbase refused to pay.

Consider the position of a customer trying to decide whether a communication is genuine. Generic greetings and vague statements are familiar warning signs. Accurate knowledge of a recent transaction can have the opposite effect. Indeed, customers have spent years answering personal questions to prove their identity to institutions. It is understandable that some would reverse that logic and assume a caller who knows the answers has proved an institutional identity. The Coinbase case exposes the flaw in that assumption. Confidential facts can lose their value as proof the moment a second party acquires them.



The expense came through more than one channel. Coinbase's initial regulatory filing estimated between $180 million and $400 million in remediation expenses and voluntary reimbursements, subject to revision. Its subsequent annual report identified customer reimbursements and direct legal costs among the losses associated with the incident. The $20 million demand and the estimated cost of responding describe different things. Declining the first did not spare the company the second.

> *Confidential facts can lose their value as proof the moment a second party acquires them.*

Stryker and the distance between a working device and a missed shipment

On March 11, 2026, medical technology manufacturer Stryker identified an attack that disrupted its internal Microsoft environment globally. Order processing, manufacturing and shipping were affected. Stryker said connected medical products and patient-related services were unaffected. For a healthcare customer, these facts answered two different questions. Could equipment already in use continue functioning? And could the supplier process and fulfil the next order normally? The first answer was reassuring. The second required operational work.

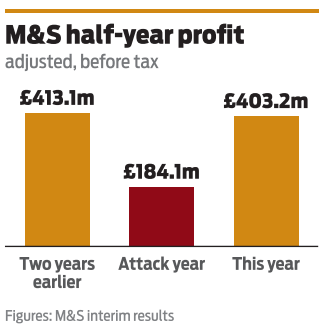
A factory depends on decisions as well as machinery. Staff need to know what was ordered, which goods are available, where a shipment belongs and whether its release has been authorised. If those answers are unavailable or cannot be trusted, having an intact product on a shelf may be insufficient to complete a delivery. Restarting production also does not create extra hours in the day. A delayed order can arrive just as the customer needs the next one, leaving staff to decide which commitment to meet first.



Marks & Spencer and the cost of a week in retail

At Marks & Spencer, the effects of its April 2025 attack were visible in two decidedly everyday places, the online shopping basket and the food aisle. The retailer paused online shopping. Its food business faced reduced availability, extra logistics costs and more waste as staff used manual processes. Chairman Archie Norman subsequently told British MPs that impersonation involving a third party had enabled the intruders to gain entry. One incident had reached businesses with very different operating rhythms.

A clothing order postponed for a week may still become a sale, although the shopper can go elsewhere in the meantime. A perishable item has a deadline. Staff can keep a store open, work longer hours and improvise ways to move stock, but those efforts cannot restore the shelf life of food that arrives too late. This helps explain why the financial consequences of a retail cyberattack can continue accumulating even while customers see open doors and employees at work.



Figures: M&S interim results

What these attacks have in common

FOLLOW ONE PROMISE THROUGH THE BUSINESS

1. **Verify a driver:** who receives the licence image, and when can the last copy be deleted?
2. **Resolve an account query:** what information must appear on the agent's screen?
3. **Deliver a medical product:** who can establish the status of an order when normal systems are down?

Each question has an identifiable business owner. Each answer can be tested.

The recurring feature is how closely the attacks followed relationships the companies needed for legitimate work. A provider needed to process driver information. A support agent needed to understand a customer's account. A retailer relied on outside help. An airline wanted staff to recognise returning passengers. Verizon's 2026 Data Breach Investigations Report puts that pattern in perspective. Third parties were involved in 48% of breaches in its dataset. Verizon also identified exploitation of vulnerabilities as the leading entry point, an important reminder that outside providers explain a substantial part of the problem, alongside weaknesses in technology itself.

48% **of breaches in Verizon's 2026 report involved third parties**

The attackers' reasons varied. At Coinbase, stolen information supported impersonation and extortion. At Microsoft, the evidence pointed towards intelligence gathering. At Stryker, the group claiming responsibility publicly described a political motive. In the newest banking disclosures, investigators had identified affected data while important questions remained open. Assigning a single motive to all four would make for a simpler story and a less accurate one. What unites them is the value concentrated inside a trusted institution and the number of people and systems that need some access to it.



The world's biggest companies keep attracting attackers because their success gives them something worth pursuing. People trust them with evidence of who they are, knowledge of what they own and services they depend on tomorrow. Protecting that trust requires attention to remarkably ordinary decisions. How long should a licence image be kept? Who still needs an old account? Which details should a support worker see? How will a warehouse know what to ship on Monday morning? Long before an attack becomes international news, decisions like these help determine whose information will be exposed and whether the business can keep its promises.

Quick Read

Croatians demand justice over psychiatric hospital death

ZAGREB

Thousands gathered in Croatia's capital to protest over the death of 32-year-old Kristian Josip Peris in a psychiatric hospital, demanding accountability for those responsible and better regulation of treatments in hospitals. Peris, a former athlete and coach, died on October 21 after being admitted to the clinic. His death sparked public outrage across Croatia after images and video from hospital surveillance cameras were published by local media.
"Kristian Josip Peris asked for help at the St. Ivan Jankomir clinic and during that hospitalization he passed away," the family lawyer Leon Zrnic said.

Nigeria boat tragedy claims 24 lives during funeral journey

BAYELSA

At least 24 people have died after a crowded boat carrying passengers to a funeral ceremony capsized in southern Nigeria, according to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). Rescue operations continued as authorities searched for missing passengers following the tragic accident in Bayelsa State. In a statement, NEMA confirmed that 24 bodies had been recovered, while 24 survivors had been rescued so far. Search and rescue operations remained underway as emergency teams continued efforts to locate other possible survivors. The boat was transporting passengers from Ayama to the Ukubie community in Bayelsa State, where they were scheduled to attend a burial ceremony.

Kyiv's restaurant owners brace for tough winter

KYIV

Once-bustling Khreshchatyk, the Ukrainian capital's main street, is quieter and emptier now. With air raid sirens wailing at all hours and Russian drones often prowling the skies above Kyiv, many residents avoid the city centre and stay home. "With every year, it's getting harder," said Olena Borysova, the owner of Gastro Family, one of Ukraine's leading restaurant chains, with dozens of sites. Gastro Family shut two of its restaurants in the capital and suspended two more until April, Borysova said.

UN climate talks collapse over 'weak' deal

UN climate negotiations collapsed after the European Union and other nations rejected a draft agreement, citing weak commitments on fossil fuels and climate finance amid worsening global warming.



The COP31 climate conference in Antalya, Turkey

ANTALYA

United Nations climate talks collapsed on Sunday after the European Union and several other countries rejected a final draft agreement proposed by COP31 presidents Turkey and Australia, saying it was too weak to advance efforts to tackle global warming.

The failure highlighted the growing difficulties faced by governments in reaching ambitious climate commitments as wars, economic pressures and other international crises compete for their attention.

The negotiations continued for more than two weeks and extended two days beyond the scheduled deadline, making them the longest COP conference on record. However, delegates failed to reach a consensus on the proposed agreement.

> **"There is nothing to do, we did all that we could. There will be no new text from now on."**
> — **Murat Kurum,** COP31 president, Turkey

At the closing plenary, Turkey's conference president Murat Kurum acknowledged that there was no agreement and confirmed that no fresh draft would be presented.

"There is nothing to do, we did all that we could. There will be no new text from now on," Kurum said.

He later walked off the stage while representatives of various countries were delivering their speeches.

Australia's COP31 President of Negotiations, Chris Bowen, described the outcome as "very disappointing". He said disagreements over fossil fuels and climate finance had emerged as the major obstacles to reaching an agreement.

Key issues behind the collapse

Fossil fuels
Disagreements over commitments on fuels remained a major obstacle.

Climate finance
Differences over financial commitments prevented consensus.

Prolonged talks
Talks ran two days beyond the deadline, the longest COP conference on record.

Crews battle blaze on Russian cargo ship hit by drones


Vessels use water cannons on the burning ship

Emergency teams from Finland, Russia and Estonia continued firefighting operations after a drone strike damaged a Russian cargo ship in Baltic waters.

HELSINKI

A fire onboard a Russian cargo ship struck by drones in the Baltic Sea continued to smoulder on Sunday, with emergency services from Finland, Russia and Estonia working together to control the blaze.

The vessel, Sparta II, was struck and later drifted into Finnish waters, where it remains anchored. Finland's military said the attack was likely carried out by Ukraine.

All 16 crew members were evacuated to a nearby Russian ship following the incident. One crew member sustained minor injuries.

Finnish authorities said visible flames had been extinguished by Sunday, but firefighting operations continued to cool the containers stacked on the vessel and stabilise the ship.

Images and videos released by the Finnish coast guard showed several vessels using water cannons to fight the fire during the night and cool the containers on the deck.

Seven vessels were involved in the operation, including two Russian, two Estonian and three Finnish vessels. Preparations were also underway to enable Russian vessels to tow the Sparta II away from the area.

The incident

VESSEL
Sparta II, Russian cargo ship

WHERE
Baltic Sea, Finnish waters

CREW
All 16 evacuated; one slightly hurt

RESCUE
Seven vessels from three countries

Russian drone strike kills 2 in Kyiv


Rescuers at the damaged apartment building

KYIV

At least two people were killed and four others, including a teenager, injured after a Russian drone struck a residential building in Ukraine's Kyiv region on Sunday morning. Around 10 people were feared trapped under the rubble, President Volodymyr Zelenskiy and local officials said.

The attack caused part of a five-storey apartment building to collapse, leaving residents trapped beneath the debris. Emergency services rushed to the spot and launched rescue operations to search for survivors.

"Part of a five-story apartment building has collapsed following a Russian drone attack," Zelenskiy said in a post on X. He thanked first responders for their quick action, adding that nine people had already been evacuated and the fire had been brought under control.

Local authorities confirmed that four people, including a teenager, had sustained injuries in the attack. The condition of the injured was not immediately available.

Footage released by emergency services showed rescuers searching through a large pile of rubble as they worked to locate people believed to be trapped inside the damaged structure. Rescue personnel were also seen helping residents escape from the building using ladders and crane platforms.

The operation involved efforts to remove debris and reach people who may have been buried beneath the collapsed sections.

Thailand plans to ban exports of chemicals

BANGKOK

Thailand plans to stop exporting chemicals used in rare earth mining to Myanmar amid growing concerns over cross-border pollution and the contamination of rivers in northern Thailand, Deputy Prime Minister Yodchanan Wongsawat said.

The proposed move aims to restrict the supply of chemicals used in the production of rare earth elements in Myanmar and other relevant countries. Wongsawat said the government was considering "leveraging every possible avenue" to address the issue but did not provide further details about the proposed restrictions.

The decision comes amid increasing concerns over the environmental impact of extensive rare earth mining operations in Myanmar, which have been linked to the contamination of rivers flowing into northern Thailand.

Thailand, China and Myanmar are also planning to hold discussions on the issue between November 24 and 26, according to the Thai government. The talks are expected to address concerns surrounding mining activities and their environmental consequences, although the government has not disclosed specific details of the proposed agenda.



A banner protests against mining

In a related development, the Thai government said on Sunday that it planned to designate the Thai side of the Kok River as a "pollution control zone" to tackle toxic contamination.

The proposed designation is aimed at addressing pollution affecting the river, which has become a growing concern for communities in northern Thailand.

29 workers missing after Indonesia factory fire

JAKARTA

Indonesian police removed 24 body bags from a factory destroyed by fire in Java on Sunday, as firefighters continued battling remaining hotspots following the deadly blaze that broke out a day earlier.

The fire erupted at the PT Fonusa Agung Mulia candy factory in Cikande, in Serang regency. The factory is part of Indonesia's United Family Food company, which was founded in 1981.

Search operations for missing workers were suspended overnight and are scheduled to resume on Monday morning, Hendra Kurniawan, police chief of Indonesia's Banten province, told Metro TV.

Factory CEO Steven Erwin Wijaya said around 300 people were present during the shift. In a statement, the factory said 24 of the 65 workers involved had returned home, while four were receiving medical treatment. Another 29 remained missing, and the whereabouts of eight others had not been confirmed.


Rescue workers at the fire-hit factory in Cikande

Worker status	
24	RETURNED HOME
4	IN TREATMENT
29	MISSING
8	NOT CONFIRMED

Wahyu Hidayati, a police disaster victim identification official, said the intensity of the fire had made it impossible to identify the recovered victims through visual inspection.

Authorities are collecting DNA samples from relatives and personal belongings of missing workers to establish their identities.

Schumer faces leadership challenge after leading Democrats to Senate win

WASHINGTON

Chuck Schumer led Senate Democrats through November's midterm elections that gave them a decisive 56-seat majority. Progressives responded with a collective "thank you, next," arguing he should now make way for a successor.

Critics say Schumer's decades in Washington, his age and his close ties to the party establishment make him ill-suited to lead a caucus increasingly shaped by younger, anti-establishment lawmakers.

"We write first to thank you," leaders of the populist Working Families Party, which backs like-minded Democratic candidates in elections, said in a November 13 letter to Schumer that called for a generational leadership change.

"If you step aside at the height of a victory you helped secure, you would show voters that the Democratic Party heeded their call for change. The new majority can begin its work united and focused on fighting for the people who elected them."


Chuck Schumer (file photo)

The top Democrat in the Senate for the past decade, Schumer, who turns 76 today, has projected confidence that his colleagues will choose to keep him as their leader in a secret vote on December 1.

"I will be elected majority leader," Schumer, who is strongly favored to win, told reporters matter-of-factly last week.

But in the first contested Senate Democratic leadership race since 1994, the New York senator faces a challenge from Senator Chris Van Hollen, 67. While only modestly younger than Schumer, the Maryland lawmaker and his progressive allies outside the Capitol have cast him as an agent of change.

Van Hollen has said the 2026 results show voters are demanding the party break with the status quo and adopt a bolder approach that gives new voices, including incoming progressive lawmakers, more influence in the caucus.

56	16+	6
Senate Democrats vote	back Schumer	back Van Hollen

German army starts testing kamikaze drones, AI targeting tool

RUDNINKAI

Germany's army began its first tactical tests of kamikaze drones during drills on Sunday in Lithuania, where an armoured brigade of 5,000 German troops will be permanently stationed by the end of 2027. The tests mark a significant step for Germany, which only decided in 2025 to buy loitering munitions, or exploding drones, after years of controversy over the procurement of the weapons.

Both Russia and Ukraine have fielded single-use drones, which can stay airborne over an area before cruising towards their target, plummeting at velocity and detonating on impact.

At Rudninkai training ground near the Belarusian border, army chief Christian Freuding watched loitering munitions made by German companies Helsing and Stark, equipped with inert warheads, plummet from the sky and hit main battle tanks.


A drone on display (file photo)

? LOITERING MUNITIONS
Also called exploding drones, they can stay airborne over an area before cruising towards their target, plummeting at velocity and detonating on impact.

The tests were part of Freedom Shield, the largest German military drills in Lithuania to date.

Days earlier, German troops at Rudninkai ran their first tests of Helsing's targeting software Clarity, an AI-based tool that can sift through large volumes of data supplied by satellites, drones and other sensors faster than any human, analyse them and recommend action.

Lieutenant General Freuding, who oversaw Berlin's arms supplies to Kyiv before taking his current position, described both kinds of systems as indispensable for modern warfare. He is set to assume the post of chief of defence in February.

In 2023, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius pledged to permanently deploy a combat brigade to Lithuania, a first for Berlin.

Germany kicked off a surge in defence spending after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, investing hundreds of billions of euros to bring its forces up to speed after decades of neglect.

WEST BANK ATTACKS

Settler attacks spark fires in West Bank villages

RAMALLAH

Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian villages in the occupied West Bank early on Sunday, setting vehicles on fire and spray-painting racist slogans on walls, residents said.

The attacks prompted opposition leader Gadi Eisenkot, who has been asked to form Israel's next government, to accuse extremist groups of carrying out "Jewish terrorism".

The incidents were reported in villages near Ramallah, journalists saw burned-out Palestinian vehicles and walls carrying slogans such as "Revenge".


No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks, and no injuries were reported.

The violence comes amid an escalation that began after Hamas launched attacks on Israel from the Gaza Strip in 2023. It also comes nearly a month after an inconclusive election stripped incumbent Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of his parliamentary majority.

Eisenkot, who has been tasked with forming a government, condemned the attacks and warned that extremist violence was threatening regional stability and Israel's security.

"Extremist groups that set fire to vehicles and homes are undermining regional stability, putting lives at risk and doing grave damage to Israel's national security and foreign relations," Eisenkot said.

He also criticised the policies of ultra-nationalist ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, saying their actions had brought the region close to anarchy and accusing authorities of failing to address the crisis.

Israeli police said they had opened an investigation into the attacks. The military also condemned the violence, confirming that soldiers and police had been dispatched to the affected areas.

India smash 720/9 against NZ , set historic test record

WELLINGTON

India registered a historic total of 720/9 declared against New Zealand in the first innings of the Test match at the Basin Reserve in Wellington on Sunday, recording the highest team score in a Test played on New Zealand soil. India built a commanding 352-run lead after batting for 166 overs across two-and-a-half days.

The total surpassed New Zealand's previous record of 715/6 declared against Bangladesh in Hamilton in 2019. It also became India's highest-ever Test innings score outside the country, eclipsing their previous best of 707 against Sri Lanka in Colombo in 2010.

Shubman Gill led the batting effort, narrowly missing a century with 98 runs. KL Rahul scored 136, while Rishabh Pant struck 128, including six sixes. Yashasvi Jaiswal contributed 85, Devdutt Padikkal made 80 and Dhruv Jurel added 78. Their contributions helped India cross the 700-run mark.



India scored a record 720/9 declared against New Zealand in Wellington, securing a 352-run lead and setting a historic Test record overseas.

India also achieved a unique milestone by becoming the first team in Test cricket history to record partnerships of more than 50 runs for each of the first seven wickets in a single innings.

Rahul became the first Indian and only the second Asian opener to score Test centuries in all four SENA countries — South Africa, England, New Zealand and Australia. Pant created another milestone by becoming the first visiting wicketkeeper to score Test centuries in all four SENA nations. His 128-run innings also marked his ninth Test century.

Sachin Tendulkar receives Global Peace Honours 2026

MUMBAI

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar was honoured with the 'Global Peace Honours 2026' by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at the Gateway of India in Mumbai on Saturday. He was recognised for his philanthropic contributions through the Sachin Tendulkar Foundation, which promotes sports among children from tribal and underprivileged communities, particularly encouraging girls' participation.

The event was organised by the Divyaj Foundation, an NGO founded by Amruta Fadnavis. The annual programme pays tribute to victims of terrorism and recognises individuals who have promoted peace, courage and humanity. Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Sunetra Ajit Pawar, Reliance Industries Executive Director Anant Ambani and actor Ranveer Singh were among those present.



> "I bow down to all those selfless people who sacrificed their lives."
> — Sachin Tendulkar, Former cricketer

Through his foundation, Tendulkar has supported opportunities for children in sports such as football, basketball, wrestling, boxing and athletics. Fadnavis congratulated the former cricketer, praising his contributions to cricket and his initiatives in healthcare, education and sports.Speaking at the event, Tendulkar appreciated Amruta Fadnavis and the Divyaj Foundation for promoting peace and harmony. He also paid tribute to those who lost their lives in the November 26, 2008, Mumbai terror attacks and expressed solidarity with their families.

"I bow down to all those selfless people who sacrificed their lives, and also to the families who lost their loved ones, who continue to live with that massive, irreparable loss," Tendulkar said.

Fit India's 99th Sundays on cycle held across 26,000 locations

GANDHINAGAR

The 99th edition of Fit India Sundays on Cycle was celebrated across 26,000 locations nationwide on Sunday, with the theme of Samvidhan Divas, promoting fitness, civic responsibility and public participation. Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi led the celebrations at Dandi Kutir and Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar.

Addressing participants, Mandaviya said a fit, healthy and drug-free youth population was essential to achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. He urged citizens, particularly young people, to make cycling a regular part of their daily lives. He emphasised that fitness should not be restricted to a particular day or a few hours but should become a lasting lifestyle choice.

"Fitness should not be limited to a few hours or a particular day; it should become a part of our everyday lives," Mandaviya said. He added that cycling could encourage healthier habits and greater awareness of personal responsibility towards society and the nation.

Mandaviya also announced that the 100th edition, scheduled for November 29, would celebrate the Olympic Movement in India.

The milestone event aims to promote Olympic values and encourage greater participation in sports and physical activities, especially among young people. Sanghavi appreciated the growing nationwide participation and said the initiative was inspiring citizens to adopt healthier lifestyles.

The Gandhinagar programme began with a community Zumba session at 6.30 am at Dandi Kutir, followed by a 2.5-km cycling rally to Mahatma Mandir and back. International soft tennis medallists Aadhya Tiwari, Jay Meena and Aniket Patel joined the event. Fit India Ambassadors Rakesh Saini and Bhishma Madhani, along with Fit India Champions Bhanu and Urvi, also participated.

Pant becomes 1st Indian wicketkeeper to Score SENA centuries

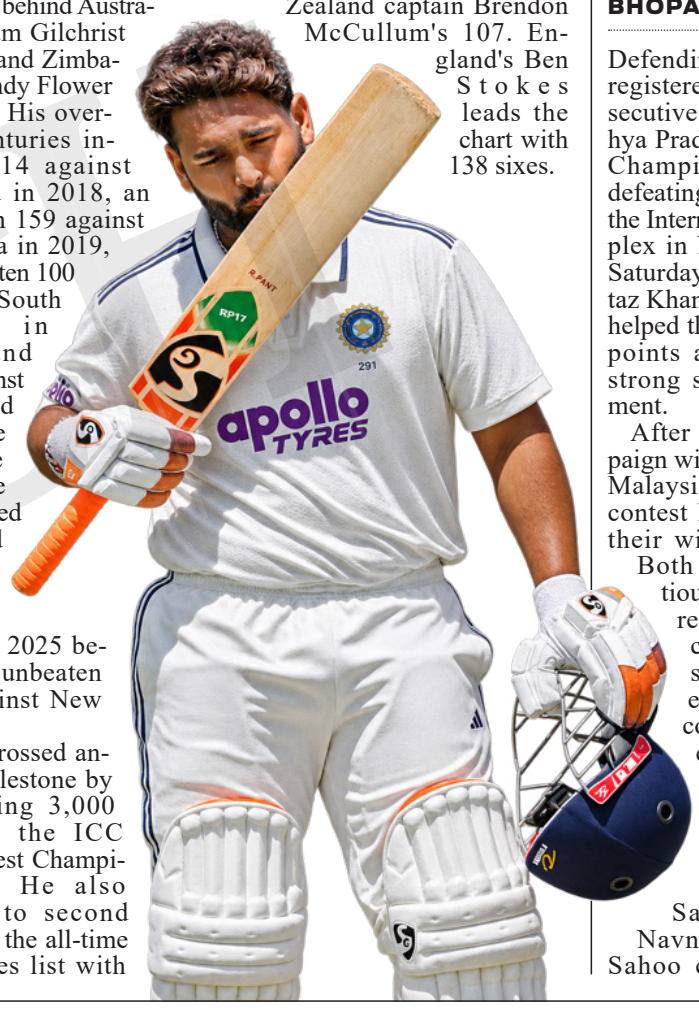
WELLINGTON

Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant achieved a historic milestone on Sunday by becoming the first Indian wicketkeeper to score Test centuries in all four SENA countries — South Africa, England, New Zealand and Australia. He reached the landmark during the first Test against New Zealand at the Basin Reserve in Wellington.

The left-handed batter completed his century in 135 deliveries, continuing his aggressive approach against the New Zealand bowling attack. He moved to 99 with a reverse-sweep off Glenn Phillips before reaching the three-figure mark with a slog over mid-off. The achievement also made him the sixth Indian batter to score Test centuries in all four SENA nations.

Pant joined an elite group of Asian cricketers, including Mohammad Azharuddin, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Younis Khan, Kumar Sangakkara, Virat Kohli and KL Rahul, who have achieved the same milestone.

With nine Test centuries as a designated wicketkeeper, Pant stands third on the all-time list, behind Australia's Adam Gilchrist with 17 and Zimbabwe's Andy Flower with 12. His overseas centuries include 114 against England in 2018, an unbeaten 159 against Australia in 2019, an unbeaten 100 against South Africa in 2022 and 146 against England in the same year. He also scored 134 and 118 against England in 2025 before his unbeaten 103 against New Zealand.



Pant crossed another milestone by surpassing 3,000 runs in the ICC World Test Championship. He also moved to second place on the all-time Test sixes list with 108, overtaking former New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum's 107. England's Ben Stokes leads the chart with 138 sixes.

India beat South Korea 2-1, secure 2nd straight victory

BHOPAL

Defending champions India registered their second consecutive victory at the Madhya Pradesh Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2026, defeating South Korea 2-1 at the International Sports Complex in Nathu Barkheda on Saturday. Goals from Mumtaz Khan and Sunelita Toppo helped the hosts secure three points and maintain their strong start to the tournament.

After opening their campaign with a 4-1 victory over Malaysia, India entered the contest looking to continue their winning momentum.

Both teams began cautiously, with South Korea maintaining a disciplined defensive structure. Despite earning five penalty corners in the opening quarter, India failed to find the breakthrough.

India increased their attacking pressure through captain Salima Tete, while Navneet Kaur and Puja Sahoo contributed to the team's forward movements. The hosts finally broke the deadlock in the 30th minute when Mumtaz Khan converted a field goal. A pass from Sakshi found Navneet, who delivered the ball to Mumtaz to complete the move just before half-time.

India extended their advantage shortly after the restart. Sunelita Toppo converted a penalty corner in the 34th minute to make it 2-0. The hosts continued to control the midfield and create attacking opportunities as South Korea struggled to reduce the deficit.

South Korea mounted a late challenge when Hong scored in the 56th minute, bringing the score to 2-1. However, India defended their advantage during the closing minutes to secure victory.

India now shares the top position with Japan, with both teams having six points and an identical goal difference of +4. China is third with four points, followed by Malaysia with one. South Korea and Thailand are yet to register points. India will face Thailand in their next match on November 22.

Columbus crew thrash Messi's inter Miami 3-0 in playoff opener

MIAMI

Inter Miami suffered a 3-0 defeat against Columbus Crew in the first game of their Major League Soccer (MLS) Cup Round One playoff series at Nu Stadium on Saturday, leaving Lionel Messi's side facing an early exit from their title defence.

Gonzalo Tapia scored twice and Taha Habroune added another goal as Columbus secured an away victory over the defending champions. The result gave Columbus a 1-0 advantage in the best-of-three series, putting pressure on Inter Miami ahead of the next match.

Columbus made an early breakthrough in the ninth minute when Tapia converted a penalty. The spot-kick was awarded after Inter Miami goalkeeper Dayne St. Clair fouled an opponent inside the penalty area. The early goal put the hosts on the back foot, but they struggled to find a response.

Inter Miami captain Messi attempted to inspire an equaliser, but Columbus goalkeeper Patrick Schulte stood firm. He produced important saves to deny the home side and maintain his team's advantage.

Columbus extended their lead seven minutes after the restart.

Habroune finished a well-worked attacking move in the 52nd minute to make it 2-0. Tapia struck again six minutes later, completing his brace and putting the visitors in control. Schulte finished with five saves and kept a clean sheet as Columbus protected their advantage.

The defeat came on a night when Messi received the 2026 MLS Golden Boot before kick-off. The Argentine forward finished the regular season with 26 goals, becoming the first player to win the award in consecutive seasons. However, the individual recognition was overshadowed by Inter Miami's performance.

With Columbus leading the series 1-0, Inter Miami must respond in the remaining games to keep their hopes of retaining the MLS Cup alive. The defending champions will need a stronger attacking display and defensive discipline to avoid elimination.



Assam to host senior women's inter-zonal T20 trophy

GUWAHATI

The Assam Cricket Association (ACA) will host the Senior Women's Inter-Zonal T20 Trophy 2026 for the first time in Guwahati from November 24 to December 4. The tournament, part of the BCCI Domestic Cricket Season 2026–27, will feature six zonal teams comprising several prominent Indian international cricketers.

Matches will be played at two venues: ACA Stadium in Barsapara, Guwahati, and ACA Cricket Academy Ground in Fulung, North Guwahati. The participating teams are West Zone, East Zone, North East Zone, South Zone, North Zone and Central Zone. The competition will follow a league and knockout format.The tournament will begin on November 24 with three matches. West Zone will face East Zone, while North Zone will take on Central Zone at ACA Stadium. In the third fixture, North East Zone will meet South Zone at the ACA Cricket Academy Ground.

Zverev Defeats Medvedev, Sets Up ATP Finals Clash With Alcaraz

TURIN

Germany's Alexander Zverev advanced to the Nitto ATP Finals championship match after defeating Daniil Medvedev in straight sets in the semi-final on Saturday. The top-seeded player secured a 7-6(0), 6-4 victory to set up a title showdown against second seed Carlos Alcaraz on Sunday.

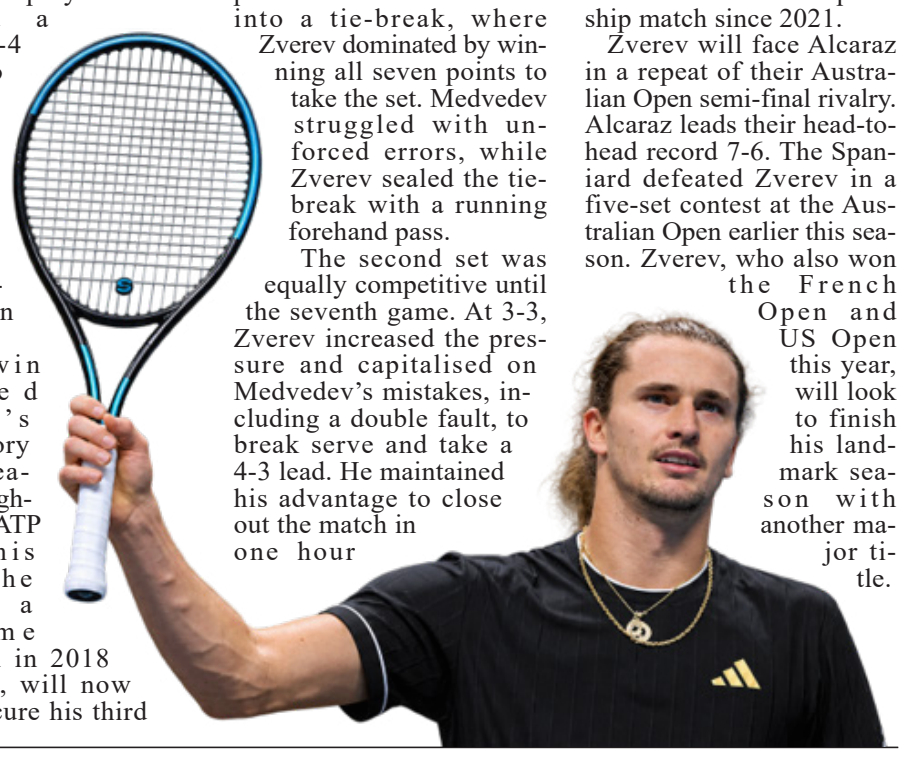
The win marked Zverev's 69th victory of the season, the highest on the ATP Tour this year. The German, a two-time champion in 2018 and 2021, will now aim to secure his third ATP Finals title. He has maintained an unbeaten record throughout the tournament in Turin.

The opening set remained closely contested, with both players holding their serves without conceding a break point. The contest moved into a tie-break, where Zverev dominated by winning all seven points to take the set. Medvedev struggled with unforced errors, while Zverev sealed the tie-break with a running forehand pass.

The second set was equally competitive until the seventh game. At 3-3, Zverev increased the pressure and capitalised on Medvedev's mistakes, including a double fault, to break serve and take a 4-3 lead. He maintained his advantage to close out the match in one hour and 26 minutes.

According to match statistics, Zverev won 81 per cent of points on his first serve and struck 16 aces, compared with Medvedev's 12. The victory ended Medvedev's hopes of reaching his first ATP Finals championship match since 2021.

Zverev will face Alcaraz in a repeat of their Australian Open semi-final rivalry. Alcaraz leads their head-to-head record 7-6. The Spaniard defeated Zverev in a five-set contest at the Australian Open earlier this season. Zverev, who also won the French Open and US Open this year, will look to finish his landmark season with another major title.



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