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Change of guard, finally?

Top leadership reportedly asks Siddaramaiah to step down as CM, offers RS seat, likely to resign soon; DKS frontrunner for top post

NEW DELHI

Karnataka may be headed for its biggest political reset since the 2023 Assembly elections, with reports claiming Siddaramaiah has been asked by the party high command to step down as the Chief Minister, move to Delhi as Rajya Sabha member, and take up a larger national role ahead of the 2029 Lok Sabha polls.

The dramatic behind-the-scenes push unfolded through nearly seven-hour meeting in Delhi on Tuesday, even as senior Congress leaders publicly denied any discussion on change of guard and insisted that talks were restricted to the upcoming Rajya Sabha and Karnataka Legislative Council elections.

But behind the official denials, sources described intense negotiations, persuasion attempts and a carefully crafted political offer aimed at convincing the veteran leader to vacate the CM seat without triggering open rebellion in the party state unit.

As per sources, Siddaramaiah was told by the Congress leadership that the party now needed him in Delhi as one of its most prominent OBC faces, particularly at a time when Rahul Gandhi has aggressively sharpened the Congress's social justice and caste census pitch nationwide. "He was told that he is a major OBC face and the party wants him to play a much bigger role nationally in the run-up to the 2029 Lok Sabha elections," as per sources.

The leadership assured Siddaramaiah that "all other things and his issues will be taken care of" if he agreed to move to Delhi through the Rajya Sabha route, sources added. The proposal, however, has not yet received Siddaramaiah's approval.



Cautious move!

Sources said the Congress leadership wants to proceed cautiously to avoid factional unrest, as Siddaramaiah continues to command strong support among MLAs, particularly from backward classes, Dalits and minorities, who view him as the party's most influential mass leader.

Siddu seeks more time?

Sources said Siddaramaiah did not give a definitive answer during the meetings and instead sought more time. Soon after returning from Delhi, the CM reportedly went into a huddle with close ministers and trusted aides as consultations over the Congress proposal intensified.

Inside the marathon meetings

The series of meetings stretched for almost seven hours and involved multiple rounds. One key one-on-one interaction reportedly included Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, where Siddaramaiah was directly told that the party wanted him to end his tenure as CM and shift to a larger organisational role at the Centre. Another broader meeting at the Congress headquarters was attended by Siddaramaiah, DK Shivakumar, KC Venugopal and Karnataka in-charge Randeep Surjewala.

Cong denies change of guard

Speaking after the meeting, KC Venugopal dismissed reports of a Karnataka leadership reshuffle.

Siddu set to resign?

Siddaramaiah is expected to resign on Thursday or Friday, as per sources. However, he is yet to be convinced about a Rajya Sabha nomination and is currently in a huddle with close ministers. Shivakumar is likely to be the new CM, sources added.

RS polls add pressure?

The timing of the meeting is important as nominations for the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls are expected to begin soon. Karnataka is set to elect 4 RS members, with Cong expected to win 3 seats based on current Assembly strength. However, the party appears to be moving cautiously, with Siddaramaiah yet to give any final approval on Delhi move.

DKS at centerstage

The latest developments have once again brought DK Shivakumar to the centre of Karnataka politics. For nearly two years, supporters of Shivakumar have maintained that a power-sharing understanding existed when the Congress formed the government in 2023, with Siddaramaiah taking over first and Shivakumar expected to eventually succeed him. The discussions intensified again after the Siddaramaiah govt completed around half of its tenure earlier this month.

Congress' 2029 calculation

The Congress's outreach to Siddaramaiah also reflects its broader political recalibration ahead of 2029. Rahul's repeated focus on OBC politics and social justice has increasingly shaped the Congress's national messaging.

Panel to study 'unnatural demographic shifts'

NEW DELHI

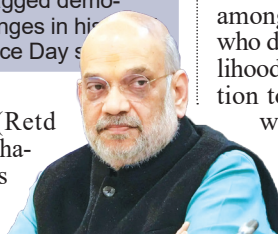
The Union government has moved to institutionalise a nationwide review of 'unnatural demographic shifts' linked to illegal immigration and other causes, with Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday announcing the formation of a high-level committee tasked with studying population changes that the Centre says could impact national security, sovereignty, and social stability.

In an X post, he said infiltration and other factors contributing to "unnatural demographic change" pose a serious challenge to both the present and future of the nation. The panel would be headed by Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar (Retd). It will also include Census Commissioner, Durga Shankar Mishra (Retd IAS), Balaji

Panel and its role

- Retired Supreme Court judge Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar will head the panel with five other members.
- The panel will analyse abnormal population shifts among religious and social communities.
- It will recommend planned, time-bound solutions.
- The panel has been given a deadline of one year to submit the report.
- Modi first flagged demographic changes in his Independence Day speech.

Srivastava (Retd IPS) and Dr Sharmika Ravi as members.



'Reject Karnataka's DPR for Mokedatu Project'

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Tuesday expressed surprise over the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the CWC entertaining Karnataka's proposal for the Mokedatu Project, without considering Tamil Nadu's plea.

He also requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to instruct officials concerned to reject the DPR prepared by Karnataka, as it contravened the final award of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal and also the Supreme Court judgment. Also, PM should advise the Karnataka government not to take up any new project without getting the concurrence of co-basin states and not to violate the apex court judgment, he said.

In a letter to the PM, Vijay said the announcement for the 'Bhoomi Puja' of the Mokedatu reservoir across Cauvery river and utterances of Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar have caused a lot of concern among the lakhs of farmers of Tamil Nadu, who depend on the Cauvery river for their livelihood. "You may be well aware that a solution to the sensitive Cauvery water dispute was obtained after a long legal battle, lasting about three decades, and the judgment dated February 16, 2018, is under implementation," he said.

Polls to 7 Council seats in K'taka, 9 in Bihar on June 18

BENGALURU: The Election Commission on Tuesday announced the schedule for the biennial polls to nine seats of the Bihar Legislative Council and seven seats of the Karnataka Legislative Council.

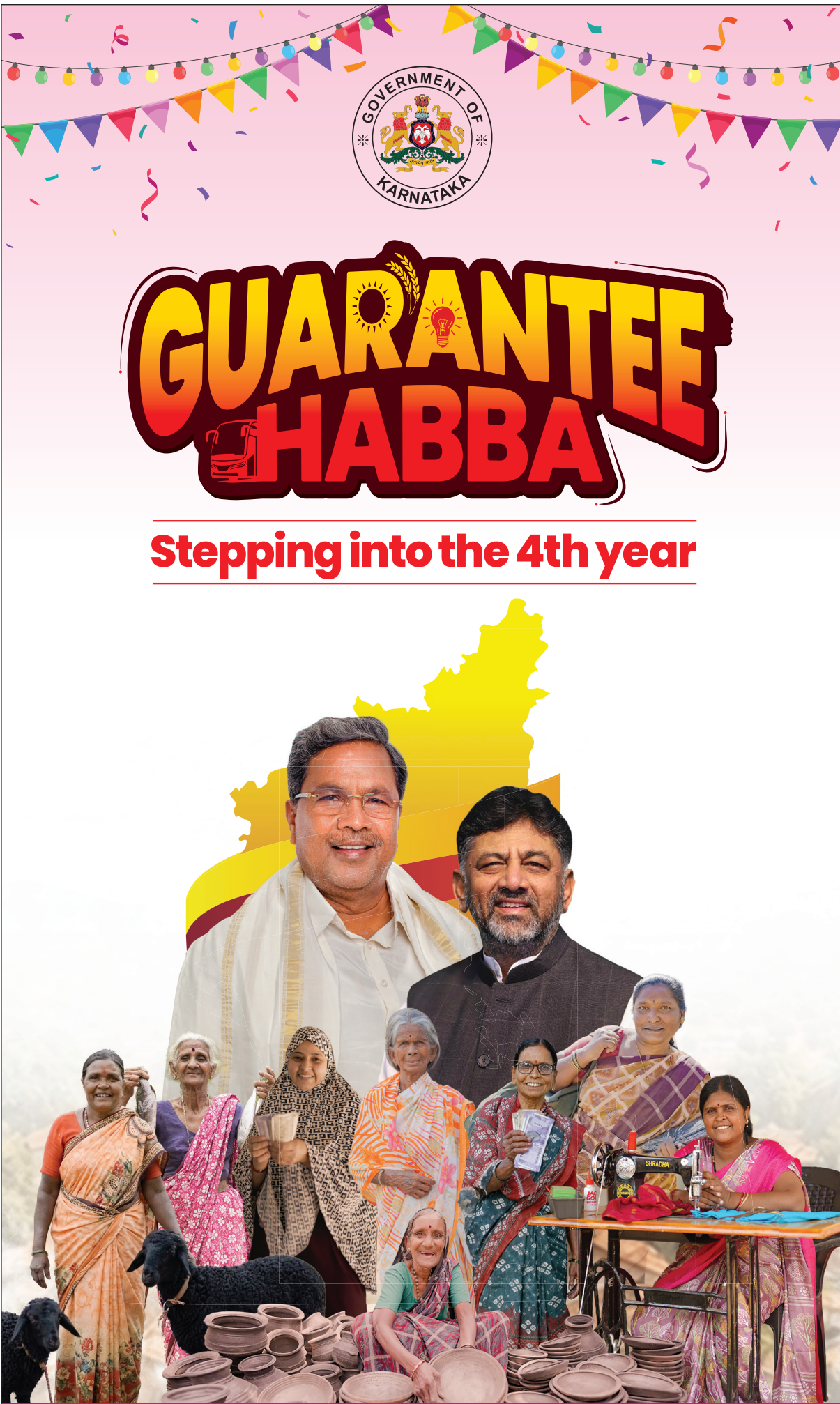
In Karnataka, the term of BK Hariprasad, Naseer Ahmed, Govinda Raju, N Nagaraju (MTB), Pratap Simha Nayak K, Thippannappa, and Sunil Valyapur will end on June 30.

Schedule

- Issue of poll notification: June 1
- Last date for filing nominations: June 8
- Scrutiny of nominations: June 9
- Last date for withdrawal of nominations: June 11
- Voting: June 18
- Counting of votes: June 18



Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) triumphed over Gujarat Titans (GT) in the IPL 2026 Qualifier 1, clinching their spot in the finals, at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium in Dharamsala on Tuesday.



Stepping into the 4th year



Gruha Lakshmi

₹2,000 per month
to woman head of the family

Over the past three years, Guarantee Sarkara, through the Gruha Lakshmi Scheme, has empowered women heads of families with ₹2,000 every month, enabling them to support household needs, start small businesses, and move towards financial independence

₹69,783 Crore

Direct financial assistance has been transferred to women heads of families, strengthening economic security across households

Siddaramaiah

Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister

1.24 Crore Women

are benefiting under the Gruha Lakshmi Scheme, helping build stronger and more secure futures for their families

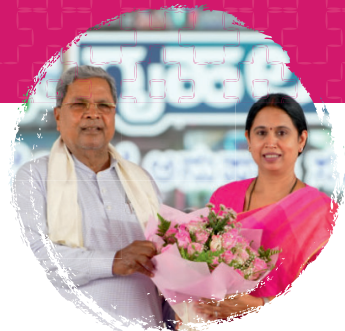
D K Shivakumar

D K Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister

Shakthi Anna Bhagya
Gruha Jyothi Yuva Nidhi



Scan the QR Code to Witness the Impact of Gruha Lakshmi



Hon'ble Minister Smt. Lakshmi Hebbalkar welcoming Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Siddaramaiah during the inauguration ceremony of the Gruha Lakshmi scheme

CMoKarnataka <https://idp.karnataka.gov.in/>
To protect and respect our vibrant culture and tradition, this is offered by our Constitution.

karnataka information

Debut book of St Philomena's College's student Mohammed Azhar released

MYSURU

The Department of English, St. Philomena's College, Mysore, proudly organised the book launch of The Day I Buried My Only Home, the debut literary work of Mohammed Azhar, a second-year M.A. English student of the college.

The book, The Day I Buried My Only Home, explores themes of longing, belonging, emotional displacement, memories, and the silent ache of losing a place once called "home." Through reflective narration and emotionally layered writing, Mohammed Azhar captures the fragile relationship between people and memories while speaking about identity, loneliness, healing, and emotional survival in today's fast-moving



world. The author shared that the process of writing the book was deeply personal and transformative, allowing him to express emotions often left unspoken. The work reflects the emotional conflicts of modern youth while also carrying a universal appeal for readers who have experienced distance, nostalgia, or loss. Azhar expressed immense gratitude towards the college, mentors, and guests who sup-

ported and encouraged his literary journey.

Principal of St. Philomena's College, Dr. Ravi J.D. Saldanha expressed deep happiness and honour in witnessing one of the institution's students publish a literary work at such a young stage in life. The occasion was not merely a book launch, but a celebration of creativity, discipline, and youthful ambition. Achievements like these bring

immense pride and recognition to the institution and inspire many more students to pursue literature and creative expression.

The Rector of the college, Dr. Lourdu Prasad Joseph described the publication of the book as a "new beginning" not only for Mohammed Azhar but also for the literary culture of the college. He highlighted the importance of encouraging students to move beyond academics and pursue meaningful creative expressions. Literature has the power to preserve emotions, shape society, and connect generations through stories and ideas.

Stephen Anurag Prathipati, NISG Project Officer to the Government of Meghalaya, Shillong, spoke extensively about the present generation,

particularly the changing perspectives of millennials and Gen Z. He reflected on how modern youth are constantly evolving in thought, ambition, communication, and creativity. Using relatable anecdotes and light-hearted examples from contemporary culture and professional life, he kept the audience deeply engaged while stressing the importance of adaptability and expression in today's world.

Shubha Sanjay Urs, Founder-President of Mysuru Book Clubs Charitable Trust and Mysore Literature Festival, praised the debut work of Mohammed Azhar and appreciated his dedication towards writing and publishing at a young age.

Rev. Fr. Roshan, Finance Officer of the college was present.



Organise Bhovi Women into SHGs: MLA Ramappa M

MYSURU

Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation Chairman Ramappa M said that women belonging to the Bhovi community should be brought together to form associations and self-help groups so that they can be provided government loan schemes and become economically empowered.

Presiding over the progress review meeting of the corporation here on Tuesday, he said under the Micro Credit Scheme, women self-help groups consisting of a minimum of 10 members from the Bhovi community will be provided ₹2.50 lakh as subsidy and ₹2.50 lakh as loan assistance for productive activities. The girls and women from the Bhovi community should come forward to avail the scheme, and officials of the Women and Child Development Department along with community leaders should create awareness and motivate women to benefit from it. Officials must ensure that students from the Bhovi community are not deprived of education. Hostel facilities would be provided to all students taking admission. As admissions to schools and colleges have already begun, caste certificates should be issued without delay.

If banks submit the list of selected beneficiaries who have applied for loan schemes to the Lead Bank Manager, the exact reason for rejection could be obtained in cases where banks refuse to sanction loans. Beneficiaries under various schemes of the Bhovi Development Corporation would be selected in meetings chaired by MLAs. All Assembly constituencies should achieve 100 percent target implementation. Community leaders should be informed about the schemes and encouraged to ensure that more people apply, he said.

Managing Director of the Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation Chandra Nayak said to avail facilities under the corporation, beneficiaries should belong to any of the nine communities including Bhovi, Od, Odde, Oddar, Vaddar, Vaddara, Kallu Oddar, Govi (Non-Gosta) and Mannu Vaddar. The objective of the corporation is to improve the economic condition of these communities by providing various loan facilities.

Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Yukesh Kumar said beneficiaries who have never availed loans from banks earlier would have zero CIBIL score, but that would not create any problem in obtaining loans.

AXING OF 137 TREES IN BEML PREMISES

Environmental group withdraws objection

MYSURU

Parisarakkaagi Naavu, an organization dedicated for the protection of environment in Mysuru, has decided not to object to the felling of 137 trees for the construction of an Occupational Health Centre within the premises of the BEML Limited factory located on the outskirts of Mysuru.

The decision was taken after a five-member delegation from the organisation visited the factory, inspected the site, and held discussions with company officials.

The delegation members said they arrived at that decision after considering a number of aspects. The factory campus, spread across 450 acres, has more than 50 percent green cover. A total of



1,890 workers, staff and officers are employed at the factory. The existing health centre is very small and there is a need for another occupational health facility, as recommended by the ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Certification body. The factory

management is required to comply with these standards.

The proposed health centre is being constructed near the main gate and adjacent to the compound wall along the main road. This would enable quick transportation of injured persons to outside hos-

pitals after administering first aid. It would also help provide emergency primary treatment to members of the public injured in road accidents near the factory premises.

Senior factory officials assured the delegation that efforts would be made to save

as many of the identified 137 trees as possible without cutting them. They also promised to plant and nurture ten times the number of saplings compared to the trees felled.

The officials further assured that native species and fruit-bearing plants would be planted within the factory premises to improve biodiversity.

Factory General Manager Sudhakar S., HR Manager Karithirumal, Deputy General Manager Malatesh K. and other officials cooperated during the inspection and provided the required information.

The delegation comprised Parashuramegowda, Ravi Bale, Bhanu Prashanth, Vishwanath and Sudheer Ganapathi.

“Ganapathy Sachchidananda Ashram: A confluence of knowledge and science”

MYSURU

The Suttur Mutt seer, Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Swamiji said that Avadhoota Datta Peetham, founded by Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji, represents a harmonious confluence of knowledge and science and the seer has explained how inseparable elements of life can be meaningfully integrated into human living.

Speaking at the inauguration of 84th birthday of Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji here on Sunday, he said India possesses a history spanning thousands of years and every Indian should feel proud that ancient Indian sages and seers, through their divine wisdom, had understood and contributed to discoveries and inventions that the modern world recognizes today.

The Suttur seer said in



fields such as metaphysics and other branches of knowledge, ancient sages had no instruments, microscopes, or scientific tools. Yet, through divine grace and intense spiritual practice, they were able to realize universal truths. This is one of the greatest contributions of Indian spiritual tradition to the world.

Quoting the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Swamiji said great souls con-

tinue to incarnate whenever the world requires their guidance, and that this truth remains eternal. Recalling the words of Swami Vivekananda, the seer said a nation remains prosperous as long as saints and spiritual leaders continue to enrich society through penance, spiritual discipline, and selfless service.

He further said Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji has made the ashram globally

accessible and internationally respected. Devotees from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and even foreign countries hold deep reverence for him.

The seer also recalled the close bond shared between his guru Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Mahaswamiji and Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji, describing it as a deeply affectionate and spiritual relationship. He praised junior pontiff Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji for successfully carrying forward the activities of the ashram.

On the occasion, two books were released – Dattavatri Mukta Piyusha authored by Ashwathanarayana and the Tamil translation of Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji's English book Secret for Success. Junior pontiff Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji was also present at the programme.

Special selection trials for sports residential schools and hostels

MYSURU

The Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports has announced a special selection process for admission of sportspersons to Sports Residential Schools and Hostels for Class 8 and First PUC during the academic year 2026-27.

The department had earlier conducted district, divisional and state-level selection trials. However, to provide another opportunity for candidates who could not participate in the earlier rounds, a special selection process will now be held.

The selection trials will be conducted on June 1 from 9 am at various venues across the state. Volleyball, cycling, wrestling and judo trials will be held at the Belagavi District Stadium. Athletics, kabaddi, gymnastics and football trials will take place at the Mahatma Gandhi District Stadium in Tumkur. Basketball, boxing, archery and fencing trials will be

conducted at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru, while hockey trials will be held at the Hockey Stadium in Akkithimmanahalli, Bengaluru.

For admissions to sports schools and hostels run by the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, boys and girls under the age of 14 years (as applicable for June 2026) who are eligible for admission to Class 8 in 2026-27, and boys and girls under the age of 18 years eligible for admission to First PUC, may participate in the selection process. Candidates attending the trials must compulsorily bring a recent passport-size photograph, medical fitness certificate, birth certificate and Aadhaar card.

For further details, candidates may contact the Office of the Assistant Director, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Mysuru, on phone number 0821-2564179, according to a release issued by Assistant Director Bhaskar Nayak.

Applications invited for distribution of sports equipment

MYSURU

The 'MY Bharat Centre' has invited applications for the distribution of sports equipment with the objective of promoting sports culture, physical fitness and youth participation, besides encouraging youngsters to actively take part in MY Bharat programmes. Preference will be given to youth organisations that have participated in MY Bharat activities and have not received sports kits or equipment during the previous financial year. It is mandatory for all youth organisations and their members to register on the MY Bharat portal. Unregistered organisations will not be considered. Youth organisations may submit their applications in the prescribed format along with relevant documents to the District Youth Officer, MY Bharat Centre, Mysuru, on or before June 3. For further information, applicants may contact the office at No. 26/A, Rajarajeshwari Temple Road, Vishweshwara Nagar, 3rd Stage, Mysuru – 570008, or call 0821-2489858 / 7736426247, according to a release issued by the Youth Officer of the MY Bharat Centre.

GAU SEVA MARKED THE SEER'S BIRTHDAY



MYSURU

Members of Apoorva Sneha Balaga and devotees of Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji celebrated the 84th birthday of the seer in a meaningful manner by performing Go Puja and distributing fodder to cows at

Nanjumalige in Mysuru on Tuesday.

Former city corporation member M.V. Ramprasad said the seer is a spiritual treasure and pride of Mysuru. Today, they are celebrating his 84th birthday through Gau Seva. In earlier times, kings and rulers established several religious

centres including Chamundi Hill and many institutions in the Mysore kingdom. After Independence, the spiritual vacuum was filled by Datta Peetham seer. The revered Swamiji has been spreading religious awareness and dharma values among the people of the State

Former corporator M.D. Parthasarathy (Pathi) praised the contributions of the Ashram in preserving and promoting the country's spiritual traditions and said the Swamiji has uniquely adopted music therapy to heal mental stress and illnesses among people. Every year, the Swamiji's birthday is celebrated meaningfully by distributing useful items to specially-abled children, making the celebrations socially significant.

Jagadish, Jeevadara Girish, K.R. Bank President Basavaraj Basappa, Vikram Iyengar, spiritual thinker Vikas Shastri, compere Ajay Shastri, Apoorva Suresh, Doora Rajanna, Arivu organisation president Srikanth Kashyap, Jatti Prasad, Shivalinga Swamy, Gaurishankar Nagar Shivu, T.S. Arun, Chakrapani, Suchendra, Dayananda Nayak and others were present.

Swaralaya cultural celebration on May 31



MYSURU

Swaralaya Sangeeta Samsthe, in association with the Kannada and Culture Department, Bengaluru, will organise "Swaralaya Cultural Celebration 2026" on May 31 at Kannada Sahitya Parishath in Vijayanagar 1st Stage, Mysuru.

The event will be inaugurated at 4 pm by Vidushi Dr. Malati Gopalakrishna in the presence of chief guest Vidushi Vani Subbaya, while Vidushi Dr. Suman Harinath will preside over the programme. As part of the event, Vidushi Sudha Krishnan will conduct a talk on "Music Healing Therapy Workshop," followed by a devotional music recital by Radhavani accompanied by Vidwan C. Chetan on violin and Vidwan V. Shyam on mridangam. The celebration will also feature the play Nammura Shaale, directed by Leelavathi and presented by H.S. Srikanthamani, Secretary of Swaralaya Sangeeta Samsthe.

POST 'KANTARA' CONTROVERSY

Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh offers prayers at Chamundi Hills

MYSURU

Bollywood actor and ‘Dhruvradhar’ fame, Ranveer Singh on Tuesday visited the revered Chamundeshwari Temple atop Chamundi Hills in Mysuru and offered special prayers to Goddess Chamundeshwari, following directions issued by the Karnataka High Court in connection with allegations that he insulted a sacred ritual portrayed in the film Kantara Chapter-1.

Temple sources confirmed that Singh arrived quietly like a common devotee and participated in the rituals without any fanfare. Wearing a mask and avoiding attention, the Bollywood actor reportedly entered the temple premises around 7.15 am through the regular devotees’ queue. Before entering the sanctum, he first offered prayers to Lord Ganesha at the temple entrance and later performed special puja to Goddess Chamundeshwari. Sources said the actor spent some time seated inside the temple premises in silent prayer after the rituals.

According to M.J. Roopa, Secretary of the Chamundeshwari Development Authority, Ranveer Singh reached Chamundi Hills around 7.30 am like an ordi-



nary devotee and sat on the right side of the temple while performing the rituals. Temple authorities also welcomed him ceremonially with a garland during the visit. After offering the Pooja, he left the place without giving any hint to his fans.

Background

The controversy dates back to November 28, 2025, during the closing ceremony of the International Film Festival held in Goa. While speaking at the event, Ranveer Singh allegedly mocked the sacred “Daiva Kola” tradition depicted in Kantara.

According to the complaint, the actor imitated the divine expressions associated with Panjurli/Guliga Daiva — revered spiritual entities worshipped in the coastal regions of Karnataka — in a

manner considered offensive and disrespectful. It was alleged that he referred to the sacred spirit as a “ghost,” triggering outrage among devotees and followers of the tradition.

Complainants argued that the ritual portrayed in Kantara represents deeply rooted spiritual beliefs and is closely associated with the worship of Goddess Chamundeshwari and regional traditions. They alleged that the actor’s remarks hurt Hindu religious sentiments and insulted long-standing cultural practices.

The complaint further stated that such comments made by a celebrity on an international platform caused anger, emotional distress and resentment among devotees, besides potentially disturbing communal harmony.

FIR, Apology and High Court Direction

Based on the complaint, an FIR was registered against Ranveer Singh at the High Grounds Police Station under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Seeking quashing of the FIR, Ranveer Singh later approached the Karnataka High Court. During the proceedings, the actor submitted an unconditional apology affidavit before the court. His counsel also informed the court that the actor would visit the Chamundeshwari Temple and offer prayers.

Taking note of the submission, the High Court directed the actor to visit the temple within one month. Following compliance with the direction, the case was subsequently closed.

Avadhoota Datta Peetham launches Sanskrit education courses

MYSURU

Marking the 84th birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji, the Avadhoota Datta Peetham in Mysuru, a series of new Sanskrit education courses has been launched in Mysuru on Tuesday.

The programmes have been introduced jointly by the Peetham’s key educational wings — SGS Vedanidhi Academy and Masters Institute — in collaboration with the Central Sanskrit University. The newly launched courses are open to anyone interested in learning Sanskrit, scriptures and related traditional subjects. This is a simple six-month or one-year course designed to provide foundational knowledge in spoken Sanskrit, grammar and Indian culture. A two-year pre-university level programme intended for students who have completed Class 10 and above. The course serves as a bridge for those aspiring to pursue B.A. and M.A. degrees in Sanskrit studies. Specialized higher-learning programmes in Advaita Vedanta, Puranic history and Sanskrit grammar have also been introduced for serious scholars.

Professional Yoga Course

The yoga programme extends beyond physical postures and includes human anatomy, Ayurveda and modern medical perspectives, making it a comprehensive professional



training course. This post-graduate programme is specially designed for individuals aged 40 to 50 years and above who wish to pursue self-knowledge and deeper understanding of Hindu philosophy and traditions. A unique course tailored for Vedic scholars who wish to gain an in-depth understanding of the meanings and interpretations of Vedic mantras.

Students enrolled in B.A. and M.A. degree programmes can pursue self-study from anywhere, but examinations must be taken at the Mysuru Ashram campus.

However, diploma and certificate course students have been granted special flexibility by the university, enabling them to write examinations online from anywhere in the world through internet-based protocols. The Peetham authorities stated that detailed curriculum information and official course guidelines will

be published on the website after formal approval letters are received in the first week of June.

First Ph.D Awarded by the Institution

Recognized as a Sanskrit Research Centre since 2012, the institution has now produced its first Ph.D graduate. A. Chinmaya Datta successfully earned the doctoral degree for his research thesis on the Rigveda topic “Aitareya Brahmana and Upanishad.”

The historic academic initiative was formally inaugurated by Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji along with Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji, the honorary president of SGS Vedanidhi Academy, who lit the ceremonial lamp and unveiled the inauguration plaque.

Teachers of the Ashram and members of the administrative board were present during the programme.

VVCE to host 24-Hour National Hackathon “FUSION X 1.0”

MYSURU

The Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering at Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering is set to host a 24-hour national-level hackathon titled “FUSION X 1.0” on May 29 and 30, drawing enthusiastic participation from students across the country.

A total of 111 teams have registered for the event so far, with nearly 70 per cent of the participants coming from outside Karnataka. Students from states including Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are expected to take part, reflecting the growing national recognition of the institution’s academic stan-

dards and innovation-driven initiatives. The hackathon aims to provide students with a platform to develop research-oriented and practical solutions to real-world technical challenges. Participants will work continuously for 24 hours, collaborating in teams to design innovative projects and demonstrate their technical expertise, creativity and problem-solving abilities.

Speaking about the initiative, Principal Sadashive Gowda said the objective of organizing the national-level hackathon is to encourage creativity, technical excellence and innovation among students. He described the participation of students from various parts of the

country as a matter of pride for the institution. Gopala Reddy K, Professor and Head of the Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, is serving as the coordinator of the hackathon.

The inaugural ceremony will be held on May 29 at 10 am at the college sports ground. Mysuru-Kodagu Member of Parliament Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar will inaugurate the event. President of the Vidyavardhaka Sangha Gundappa Gowda will preside over the programme. Principal Dr. B. Sadashiva Gowda, Vice-Principal Dr. Shobha Shankar and other members of the management will be present on the occasion.

ILLEGAL SALE OF GOVT LAND

Revenue Inspector Manjunath suspended

MYSURU

The Directorate of Municipal Administration has suspended Manjunath, the Revenue Inspector of Rammanahalli Town Panchayat, for allegedly colluding with land mafia elements and issuing e-khatas for government properties in favour of private individuals.

Following complaints from the public, Mysuru Deputy Commissioner G Lakshmi-kanth Reddy sought a report from officials and recommended disciplinary action against Manjunath to the Directorate of Municipal Administration.

Based on this recommendation, Director P. N. Ravindra ordered Manjunath’s suspension on May 25, pending a departmental inquiry. The



Suspended RI Manjunath

suspension order came into immediate effect.

According to allegations, Rammanahalli Town Panchayat Chief Officer Mahesh and Revenue Inspector Manjunath

had been causing hardship to the public by delaying khata approvals on one hand, while on the other allegedly working with land mafia members to issue e-khatas for government properties. It is also alleged that they shifted the entire Panchayat office to another location and operated it like a private establishment. Frustrated residents had submitted written complaints to all concerned authorities. Social activist Snehamayi Krishna had also lodged a complaint with the Regional Commissioner against the alleged irregularities.

Acting on the complaints, officials conducted an inquiry and obtained a report regarding the alleged misconduct of the two officers. The report reportedly found prima facie

evidence of irregularities committed by both officials. Based on these findings, the DC Reddy recommended disciplinary action against Chief Officer Mahesh and Revenue Inspector Manjunath.

Since Chief Officer Mahesh falls under the Grade-1 category, the Directorate of Municipal Administration has reportedly forwarded a recommendation to the government for action against him. Meanwhile, Director P. N. Ravindra issued suspension orders against Manjunath.

The order also states that Manjunath’s service lien has been transferred with immediate effect, and he has been posted to a vacant First Division Assistant position at the Hassan City Municipal Corporation.

“NO ONE IN POLITICS IS HONEST”

Ex-minister Sa.Ra. Mahesh attack on Congress on corruption



MYSURU

Former Minister Sa. Ra. Mahesh launched a sharp attack against the Congress, saying that no one in the political system, including himself, can claim to be completely honest. The Congress leaders must speak very cautiously while making allegations against others and challenged them to explain how they themselves amassed wealth.

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, he said corruption has been committed by leaders of all political parties. Some may have indulged in corruption on a larger scale, while others may have done so on a smaller scale. But overall, everyone is corrupt.

Defending Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy, Mahesh said Kumaraswamy had purchased land in Kethaganahalli nearly 40 years ago and

there are valid sale deeds to support it. Many politicians in the state’s history have encroached upon government land, but no such cases were handed over to the SIT for investigation. Looking at how only Kumaraswamy’s land issue has been referred to the SIT, it becomes clear what the intention is. This SIT has been formed with vengeance to tarnish the political lives of former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda and Kumaraswamy.

Mahesh further said that Deve Gowda is now 94 years old, Kumaraswamy is serving as a Union Minister, and Nikhil Kumaraswamy is actively involved in strengthening the party as the youth wing president. When Nikhil questioned Congress leaders, why should they feel offended? Whoever criticizes should respond carefully. In a democracy, criticism should not

descend into personal attacks or disrespectful language.

Referring to Nikhil Kumaraswamy’s electoral performance, the former minister pointed out that though Nikhil may have lost elections, the Congress leaders criticizing him had not secured as many votes in their own elections as Nikhil did in the Mandya Lok Sabha polls.

On the issue of Kumaraswamy’s assets, Mahesh said Congress leaders have been mocking him by asking whether he earned his wealth through potato farming. Kumaraswamy earned money as a film distributor and producer. His son Nikhil Kumaraswamy has also earned through acting in several films and through agriculture.

Taking a dig at Congress leaders who claim to be socialists, Mahesh asked whether they had earned their wealth by cultivating paddy,

ragi, or groundnuts. No one in politics is completely honest. There has been alleged large-scale corruption in the procurement of televisions under the Backward Classes Welfare Department. A television may cost around ₹1 lakh, but amounts much higher than that were sanctioned. They have looted in the name of AHINDA.

Questioning the Congress opposition to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Mahesh asked why Congress leaders were objecting if the exercise was merely meant to remove names of deceased voters or those who had relocated after marriage. If genuine voters are left out, their names can always be re-added later. People are frustrated with Congress corruption. Even if elections are held now, a coalition government will come to power.

One held for attempting to sell Grey Francolins

MYSURU

The CID Forest Mobile Unit police arrested a man for allegedly attempting to sell two grey francolin birds illegally near the public playground at Rammanahalli on the Mysuru–Mahadevapura Road in Mysuru on Tuesday.

Acting on a tip-off, the police team rushed to the spot around 10.30 am and found a person carrying a cage con-

taining two grey francolins and allegedly trying to sell them. The police immediately conducted a raid and arrested one accused, while another person managed to escape from the scene.

The arrested accused has been identified as Shivanna, 50, son of late Karishetty, an agriculturist and residing on Hanchya Road in Rammanahalli of Mysuru taluk.

Police seized two grey fran-

colin birds and a cage in which the birds were being kept illegally.

A case has been registered and further legal action has been initiated against the accused. The operation was carried out by Sub-Inspector Kiran Kumar P of the Mysuru CID Forest Mobile Squad along with staff members Venkatesh, Ramakrishna, Yatish Kumar, Shashidhar and Arun.



QUICK READ

Transport wage talks postponed to June 10

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Conciliation talks between transport workers' unions and management representatives of Karnataka's state-run transport corporations ended without a breakthrough, forcing the Labour Commissioner to defer discussions to June 10. The meeting followed an earlier round on May 18 that had also remained inconclusive. Managing directors of KSRTC, BMTC, KKRTC and NWKRTC attended on behalf of the management, while union leaders represented employees. The unions reiterated their demand for wage revision with effect from January 1, 2024, retention of the four-year settlement cycle, a higher wage increase than the proposed 12.5 per cent, and clearance of arrears.

23 arrested in IPL betting crackdown by CCB police

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) police have arrested 23 people for their alleged involvement in illegal gambling and betting activities linked to the IPL T20 cricket tournament. The arrests were made during simultaneous raids conducted by the Special Investigation Team of the Bengaluru City CCB across multiple police station jurisdictions in the city. Police registered 17 separate cricket betting cases during the operation. Authorities seized seven mobile phones worth ₹1.10 lakh, cash amounting to ₹1,06,433, and betting chips valued at ₹13.37 crore. The total value of seized property is estimated at ₹13.39 crore. Further investigation is underway to identify the masterminds behind the betting network.

Christian Mahasabha seeks repeal of anti-conversion law

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The All India Christian Mahasabha has urged the Karnataka government to withdraw the Prohibition of Conversion Act, alleging that it is being misused against members of the Christian community. Addressing a press conference on Monday, Mahasabha National President S. Prajwalswamy claimed that the legislation was affecting social harmony and was being used to target Christian prayer meetings and priests. He alleged that women, Dalit and Adivasi Christians were facing harassment and attacks. Criticising the Congress-led government for not repealing the law, he demanded protection of religious freedom and equal justice for all communities in the state.

Rising Wage Costs Trigger Steep Menu Price Hike Warnings

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Dining out in Bengaluru could soon become significantly more expensive, with hotel and restaurant associations warning that menu prices may rise by as much as 60 per cent in the coming months due to higher labour costs and increasing input prices.

The warning comes as the Karnataka government considers revising minimum wages for workers, a move that hospitality industry representatives say will sharply increase operating expenses for eateries across the state. From neighbourhood darsh-

June mayhem: School reopening set to worsen traffic around dug-up CBD roads

Students return as civic works threaten gridlock across Bengaluru roads

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru's central business district is bracing for severe traffic congestion as schools and colleges prepare to reopen in June while major road excavation and sewage pipeline replacement works continue across key stretches.

Commuters, parents and students are expected to bear the brunt of the disruption, with ongoing infrastructure projects on major roads such as Richmond Road and Lavelle Road likely to trigger long delays and peak-hour bottlenecks in some of the city's busiest corridors.

One of the most significant traffic choke points is expected near Lavelle Road, where the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSB) has undertaken sewage pipeline replacement work on the stretch leading towards Richmond Road. Vehicular



movement has already been restricted as underground drainage infrastructure is being upgraded.

According to BWSSB officials, work along the roadside has been completed and crews have now moved to replacing ageing pipelines beneath the carriageway. Engineers estimate that the project will require another six weeks for completion.

The timing of the work has become a major concern for residents. The area is surrounded by several prominent schools and colleges, making it a crucial route for thousands of students travelling daily. With educational institutions reopening after the summer break, traffic volumes are expected to rise sharply.

Another major excavation

is under way on Richmond Road near HDFC Bank, where nearly 400 metres of roadway has been dug up for sewer infrastructure upgrades. BWSSB officials said the project is expected to continue for around 60 days. Owing to the heavy traffic density in the central business district, contractors have been permitted to carry out work primarily during night hours.

However, the presence of multiple schools and colleges directly opposite the work zone is likely to complicate traffic movement. School buses, private vehicles and public transport services will have to navigate narrowed road space and diversions.

Beyond these arterial roads, civic works are also under way in Shantinagar, Langford Road and Kamaraj Road. Authorities have announced alternative traffic arrangements, but motorists fear that simul-

taneous projects across multiple locations will push vehicles onto smaller residential roads, creating congestion in neighbourhoods not designed for heavy traffic.

Shivajinagar MLA N A Haris said more than 2.5 lakh students commute through central Bengaluru every day, covering educational clusters around Richmond Road, Residency Road, Vittal Mallya Road, Shantinagar and Langford Road.

"I understand there will be traffic chaos due to the high concentration of schools in the area. However, these sewage pipe changes are important and unavoidable for the larger good," Haris said.

With school reopening just days away, commuters can expect challenging journeys as the city attempts to balance critical infrastructure upgrades with rising traffic demand.

Fuel price surge boosts Karnataka revenues as calls grow for VAT cut

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Rising fuel prices are generating a significant revenue windfall for Karnataka, but growing public and political pressure to reduce Value Added Tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel is placing the state government in a difficult position.

Despite demands from opposition parties, industry representatives and consumer groups, the Siddaramaiah government is unlikely to announce any immediate reduction in fuel taxes, citing fiscal constraints and increasing expenditure commitments.

According to data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC), Karnataka currently levies 29.84 per cent sales tax on petrol and 21.17 per cent on diesel. The state follows an ad valorem taxation system, under which VAT is calculated as a percentage of the fuel's base price, including dealer margins and central excise duty. As fuel prices rise, state tax collections increase automatically.

Officials estimate that the recent increase in fuel prices and corresponding tax collections could generate an additional ₹3,000 crore to ₹4,000 crore annually for the state exchequer.

Finance department sources

Mohandas Pai joins VAT debate

Former Infosys CFO Mohandas Pai criticised the state government for benefiting from higher fuel prices while simultaneously blaming the Centre. "At least reduce VAT on the ₹7.5 increase and continue your political protest," Pai said, adding to calls for immediate tax relief for consumers.

said the government is reluctant to forgo this revenue at a time when it faces mounting financial obligations. Apart from slowing revenue growth, the state is also shouldering an annual expenditure of around ₹51,000 crore on its flagship guarantee schemes.

Officials pointed out that taxes on fuel and liquor continue to be among the most important sources of revenue for states, alongside GST compensation and tax devolution from the Centre.

While Karnataka's fuel taxes have drawn criticism, retail fuel prices in the state remain lower than in several others. Telangana imposes VAT of 35.2 per cent on petrol and 27 per cent on diesel, among the highest in the country. Kerala levies more than 30 per cent sales tax along with additional cess and surcharge components. Tamil Nadu follows a hybrid taxation structure that combines a percentage-based levy with a fixed per-litre

charge.

Political analyst Sandeep Shastri said the state government faces a difficult balancing act between public expectations and financial realities.

"The state already faces a financial crunch. At the same time, the government would like people to believe that the responsibility for providing relief lies primarily with the Centre," he said.

The issue has increasingly become a political flashpoint. Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka recently urged the government to reduce VAT, arguing that rising fuel prices were placing an additional burden on middle-class families and farmers.

Industry bodies have also weighed in. Some members of the state Dealers' Association have suggested that the Centre direct states to temporarily cap VAT at five per cent for three to six months to protect consumers from further price shocks.

cautioned that distractions and temptations in modern society were affecting the success and growth of young people.

Urging parents to play an active role in shaping their children's future, he said education and values must go hand in hand. "Parents should guide their children on the right path and help them build a bright future. The future of children is largely in the hands of their parents," he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Siddalinga Swamiji stressed that talent alone was insufficient and that students should

Tata Power Bid Challenges Karnataka ESCOM Monopoly

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A proposal by Tata Power to enter Karnataka's electricity distribution sector could pave the way for competition in a space long dominated by state-run Electricity Supply Companies (ESCOMs), potentially transforming how power is supplied and priced across the state.

Tata Power has applied to the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) for a licence to distribute electricity in areas currently served by government-owned utilities. The move has triggered strong opposition from employee unions, which fear privatisation of the sector and possible impacts on existing public utilities.

The Federation of Karnataka Electricity Board Employees' Union has warned of statewide protests if the application is approved.

According to a public notice issued in connection with the application, Tata Power plans to operate in 15 districts spread across four ESCOM jurisdictions. These include Bengaluru Rural, Chikkaballapur, Kolar, Ramnagara, Tumakuru and Chitradurga under BESCOM; Mysuru, Hassan and Chamara-

janagar under CESCO; Be-

lagavi, Dharwad and Uttara Kannada under HESCOM; and Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Shivamogga under MESCOM.

The company is expected to focus primarily on urban centres, including city corporations and municipal areas.

Energy sector experts said the proposal could mark a major shift in Karnataka's power sector by introducing consumer choice. Under the existing system, consumers are tied to a single distribution company based on their location. If multiple distributors are allowed to

operate in the same area, consumers could potentially select their electricity supplier without requiring changes to the transmission infrastructure already connected to their homes and businesses.

Independent analysts have largely welcomed the development, arguing that competition could improve service standards, reduce outages and encourage greater operational efficiency.

Tata Power already distributes electricity in cities such as Mumbai and parts of Delhi, Ajmer and Odisha. Industry observers note that its distribution operations have reported lower technical and commercial losses compared to many state-run utilities.



Students must learn values, not focus only on marks: Nirmalanandanath Swamiji

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Students should not restrict themselves to scoring high marks alone but must also cultivate moral values and respect for elders, parents and teachers, said Dr Nirmalanandanath Swamiji.

He was speaking at a programme organised to mark the 119th birth anniversary of Sri Shivakumar Swamiji and the 81st birth anniversary of Sri Balagangadharanatha Swamiji.

Addressing students who were honoured for securing

top marks in the SSLC and II PUC annual examinations, the seer said academic achievement alone was not enough for holistic development.

"Students should not be limited to scoring marks. Alongside academics, they must receive moral education and give importance to respecting elders, parents and teachers," he said.

Dr Nirmalanandanath Swamiji noted that children should grow into responsible citizens and become a source of strength for the nation through their achievements. He also

BURDEN FOR CONSUMERS

State Hotels' Association (KSHA), popular dishes could witness substantial price increases if the proposed wage revisions are implemented. Association president G.K. Shetty said the price of a masala dosa could rise from around ₹80 to ₹150, while a vegetarian meal currently costing ₹150-200 may increase to ₹250-300. Non-vegetarian dishes are also expected to become costlier.

A plate of chicken biryani, which now costs between ₹300 and ₹350 at many establishments, could approach the ₹500 mark. Even basic break-

fast items may not be spared, with a plate of idli potentially increasing from around ₹50 to over ₹80.

The hospitality sector in Karnataka comprises nearly 60,000 hotels and restaurants, of which around 15,000 are members of the KSHA.

Shetty said the industry had requested the government to implement wage increases in phases to ease the financial burden on businesses.

Explaining the impact, he noted that the revised minimum wage for an unskilled worker in Bengaluru could exceed ₹23,000 per month. Once statutory contributions

such as Employees' State Insurance (ESI) and Provident Fund (PF) are added, along with food, accommodation and uniforms, the total monthly expenditure per employee could reach nearly ₹36,000.

He further claimed that Karnataka's hospitality sector already faces higher labour costs compared to neighbouring states such as Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

"Any hotel that follows government directives and operates transparently will eventually have to increase prices in stages over the coming months," he said.



Money dispute ends in murder, auto driver buried near lake

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 25-year-old auto driver was allegedly murdered by his friends over a financial dispute and buried in a deserted area near Ramasandra Lake in Kumbalagodu on the outskirts of Bengaluru.

The deceased has been identified as N. Rakshit, a resident of Udaya Layout in Tavarekere. Police have arrested one accused, Mohin Pasha, while efforts are on to trace another suspect, Hasan, who is believed to have been involved in the crime.

According to police, Rakshit, who drove a passenger auto-rickshaw, had lent money to Mohin Pasha, a resident of Kambipur. On May 24, Rakshit left home around 6 pm after informing his family that he was going to collect the money. However, he did not return.

Concerned over his disappearance, Rakshit's mother visited Kambipur on May 25 and questioned Mohin Pasha about her son's whereabouts. During interrogation, Mohin allegedly confessed that he and another associate had quarrelled with Rakshit over the financial issue.

Police said the accused allegedly attacked Rakshit by smashing stones on his head, killing him on the spot. They then buried the body near Ramasandra Lake in an attempt to conceal the crime and abandoned his auto-rickshaw near Gnanabharathi to mislead investigators.

Based on a complaint lodged by Rakshit's mother, Kumbalagodu police registered a case and launched an investigation. During questioning, Mohin Pasha reportedly led police to the burial site.

The body was subsequently exhumed in the presence of officials and sent for postmortem examination to determine the exact cause of death. Police said evidence collected from the scene and the accused's statement helped establish the sequence of events.

Investigators are continuing their search for Hasan, who remains absconding. Police are also examining the circumstances leading to the dispute and verifying whether others were involved in the crime.

State launches intensive school inspections ahead of reopening

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Department of School Education and Literacy has launched a statewide inspection drive to assess school preparedness, infrastructure, enrolment and learning standards ahead of the 2026-27 academic year.

In a circular issued on Monday, the Commissioner of School Education directed officials to conduct surprise visits and review teaching-learning readiness before schools reopen on June 1.

District- and taluk-level teams led by deputy directors, block education officers and other officials will carry out inspections throughout the academic year. Special attention will be given to schools identified as lagging in learning outcomes.

Officials have been instructed to assess student enrolment and attendance, classroom readiness, bridge course im-

plementation, incentive schemes and safety measures, particularly in view of recent heavy rains.

Each inspection team will visit three schools daily — two primary schools and one secondary school — based on route maps prepared at the district and taluk levels.

Schools recording poor academic progress will be placed under continued monitoring and provided remedial support to improve performance.

The department has also directed schools to complete all cleaning and repair works before reopening. Special focus has been placed on buildings affected by rain damage, fallen trees and electrical hazards.

Schools have been instructed to ensure the availability of safe drinking water, functional toilets and adequate infrastructure to provide a safe learning environment for students when classes resume.

QUICK READ



Residential sports schools open fresh selection process

CH NEWS, Chikkaballapura The Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports has announced special admissions for Sports Residential Schools and hostels for the year 2026-27. A special selection process will be held for candidates who could not participate earlier, giving them another opportunity across Karnataka. It includes sports coaching selection and a sports science test conducted by experts. Eligible students studying in Class 7 for 8th admission and PUC candidates up to 18 years can apply. Those who missed earlier selection rounds may also participate in the process.

Chitradurga city to face power cut today

CH NEWS, Chitradurga Due to emergency maintenance work in Chitradurga city and nearby areas, electricity supply will be disrupted on May 27 from 10 am to 6 pm. Areas including IUDP Layout, Saraswati Puram, Government Diploma College, Kote Road, Kamana bava Baran gay, Jogimatti Road, Karuvinakatte Circle, District Hospital, District Pancharayat, Science College, Arts College, LIC Office and Taluk Panchayat. The BESCOM Nagar Sub Division Assistant Executive Engineer said the shut down is needed for safety and requested public cooperation during the maintenance period.

Deputy Collector highlights digital land records benefits

CHITRADURGA

Deputy District Collector B T Kumaraswamy said that the government's new digital land records system is bringing a quiet revolution through the Bhoo Suraksha software, which is helping citizens access land documents easily at home. He was speaking at a one day workshop on Importance of Records Preservation Maintenance and Public Records Act 2010 and Rules 2013 organized by District Administration and Karnataka State Gazetteer Department at Zilla Panchayat Hall. He said the system is digitizing pahaní mutation and grant documents by scanning and verifying authenticity so people no longer need to visit offices. Records are now accessible on mobile phones through integrated land technology improving transparency and efficiency. Officials emphasized that maintenance and preservation of files is essential in govern-

MLA D S Arun supports HC bench proposal

MLA invited delegation to Delhi to present the issue directly before central govt authorities for consideration

SHIVAMOGGA

Leaders and lawyers in Shivamogga renewed their demand for establishing a High Court bench in the city during a public meeting held. Speakers said Shivamogga has developed rapidly over the years and is now well connected through roads and communication facilities, making it a suitable place for a regional High Court bench.



MLA D. S. Arun said he would strongly support the proposal at the national level and raise the issue with the Union

Law Minister and the Department of Justice. He assured the gathering that he would stand with the people and lawyers in

their struggle until the demand is fulfilled. He also invited a delegation from Shivamogga to visit Delhi so the matter could be presented directly before central authorities. The MLA said Shivamogga is centrally located and covers four nearby districts within a hundred kilometre radius. He added that the number of pending cases in the region meets the required criteria for estab-

lishing a High Court bench. He urged people to continue the movement without political differences and work together for success. Bar Association President Raghavendra Swamy and honorary struggle committee president K. Basappa Gowda explained the progress of the campaign and appealed for united efforts. Several public representatives, lawyers and com-

munity leaders attended the meeting and expressed support for the long pending demand. Leaders present at the programme said the bench would help people from nearby districts receive quicker justice without travelling long distances to Bengaluru. They said the movement would continue until demand and establishes the High Court bench in Shivamogga.

Officials said awareness campaigns and door-to-door visits will improve waste segregation, reduce dumping and strengthen governance

District Collector calls for waste management awareness

MANDYA

District Collector Dr Kumar said that scientific disposal of solid waste is the responsibility of every citizen and public awareness is essential. District Urban Development Cell and Municipal Council organized a one day workshop on Solid Waste Management Rules 2026 at Mandya University Hall for municipal councilors and officials. Dr Kumar said new rules classify waste into green waste dry waste sanitary waste and special waste and citizens must separate waste at source. Local bodies must collect transport and process waste scientifically and segregate recyclables through MRF units while penalties should be imposed for violations. We must change public mindset and create a clean healthy society and officials should use training to educate citizens through demonstrations in wards. Officials said proper waste management is essential for health and sustainable development and urged all departments to implement rules effectively. P Narasimha Murthy

Project Officer explained that waste should be separated into wet dry sanitary and special care waste including batteries bulbs medicines and paint cans and processed scientifically. Authorities said violations of rules will lead to penalties and stressed that cleanliness improves public health and reduces economic burden on society. District officials police officers engineers and civic workers attended the programme and were urged to implement the rules in all local bodies effectively. Workshop concluded with message that scientific waste management is essential for clean and healthy society in Mandya district. Experts said public cooperation and strict enforcement are necessary for success of Solid Waste Management programme. Segregation at source reduces pollution and helps recycling units manage materials efficiently in urban and rural areas. Officials said awareness campaigns and door to door visits will improve public compliance over time. Every household must participate in segregation and proper waste disposal without irresponsible

dumping. Such initiatives will strengthen governance and reduce health risks ensuring sustainable development. Training programmes help officials understand rules and implement them effectively in departments. Stakeholders expressed commitment to maintain cleanliness and ensure proper waste management across Mandya district going forward. Officials urged citizens to follow rules strictly so that Mandya remains clean healthy and environmentally sustainable for future generations. Officials highlighted that scientific waste management under new rules is a key step towards improving urban living standards in Mandya district. They said that coordinated efforts between local bodies, citizens and government departments are required to ensure effective implementation. Proper segregation, collection and disposal will reduce pollution and protect public health. The initiative is expected to create cleaner surroundings, better hygiene and sustainable development across all towns and municipalities in the district.

“Bengaluru: An Environmentally Dead City”

RASHIDA AAMIR

Bengaluru, once known as “the garden city of India” is now being called “an environmentally dead city” due to the drastic decline of its green cover in the recent decades. Research from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) highlights that the city has lost up to 93% of its original green cover and 60% lake bodies to concrete since 1970. This juxtaposition has happened due to the large-scale cutting down of trees for infrastructure, new transportation, and wider roads. Joseph Hoover, an environmentalist and wildlife conservative challenges the promises made by new transportation and wider roads in exchange of deforestation, aimed to promote public transport and reduce/control traffic with the statistic that the number of private vehicles has increased tenfold. Bengaluru's private vehicle population has crossed 1.2 crore with the average of 2,100 new vehicles hitting the road everyday.



Bengaluru's upcoming major infrastructure projects include Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Ltd's (BMRCL) Namma Metro Phase 3, set to clear 6,868 trees. And Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project (BSRP), set to clear 32,572 trees. For each tree cut, BMRCL and BSRP have promised to plant 10 saplings. Hoover counterargues with this by saying, “The saplings you plant today, it will take 20-30 years to give us some ecological value. The existing tree that you cut down, which has been sequestering carbon for all these years and has been giving us oxygen, you can't replace it. When you cut an existing tree, the carbon that is sequestered is released back into the atmo-

sphere.” He adds that the alternative of preserving trees by transplanting them has a success rate of only 10%, it fails due to severe root loss and causes irreversible water stress, hormonal imbalances, and a fatal condition known as transplant shock. “There should be some balance between development and preserving your ecosystem. What are we leaving behind for our future generations?” Hoover draws concern from pollution levels getting higher and Bengaluru's summers getting hotter – India Meteorological Department (IMD) marked the highest temperature in Bengaluru city in 2026 as 36.6%. Hoover demands we shouldn't wait until “our taps run out of water” to take action and stand up against the government and say ‘we have had enough.’ Bengaluru has suffered enough, we need to move forward with caution or else in the future we will have the best metropolitan cities but no life left to use them.

Arebhashe festival celebrated in Kodagu

MADIKERI

Madikeri MLA Dr Mantar Gowda inaugurated Arebhashe village festival at Maragodu Gowda Samaj premises and said efforts must continue for learning and development of Arebhashe language. He said Arebhashe culture and Sahitya Akademi programmes are reaching village level and preserving the language will also strengthen Kannada. Children and youth should learn the language without hesitation. Sadananda Mavaji said academy is publishing books and quarterly Hingara magazine and urged families to read and promote semi language development through reading habits. Speakers said Arebhashe language has grown through associations, Yakshagana, drama and seminars and stressed need to protect culture and encourage speaking in daily

life. Former officials and writers said language reflects culture and urged more studies, documentation and promotion of Arebhashe traditions across Kodagu and coastal regions. Books were released and local achievers were honoured during the event and organisers said unity and cultural pride will help preserve the language for future generations. Many participants including local leaders academicians community heads and cultural activists attended the programme and supported efforts to strengthen Arebhashe language and culture in Kodagu region. They said language and tradition are closely linked and must be preserved through education cultural programmes and public participation in villages and schools. Organisers said workshops book releases and cultural events will continue and will help younger gen-

eration understand the importance of semi language and its heritage. They added that unity among Gowda community members and cooperation from government bodies will ensure survival and growth of Arebhashe language for future generations. A book titled Rsu and Prime Minister Story was released and several books were donated to Maragodu Gram Panchayat during the programme. The event also honoured landholders and cultural contributors and included prayers and cultural performances by local artists and groups. Speakers said such festivals help protect identity and encourage children to learn language and maintain cultural pride in Kodagu and neighbouring regions. Officials said continued support will be given for similar programmes in schools and villages to promote language preservation.

Challakere: Tobacco control raids conducted

CHITRADURGA

Tobacco control teams conducted raids in Challakere city of Chitradurga district to prevent youth from falling into tobacco addiction under the COTPA 2003 Act. They inspected shops near the bus stand and public hospital and caught several violations. Officials from the District Tobacco Control Cell conducted awareness drives and warned shop owners and

youth about rising deaths due to tobacco use. They also instructed shops to display mandatory warning boards as per rules. During the operation, 21 cases were registered and fines were collected under Sections 4, 6A and 6B of the COTPA Act. Authorities imposed penalties of rupees 1500 and 600 in different violations. District officials including health officers and police personnel participated in the in-

spection drive. They said strict enforcement will continue to protect public health and youth. Officials said tobacco control drives will be intensified across Chitradurga district to reduce illegal sales and create awareness among students and young people in future inspections across all towns and villages without delay moving forward with strict monitoring measures system.

DRINKING WATER URGENCY

CEO orders urgent steps for drinking water supply

MANDYA

CEO KR Nandini told officials to take urgent steps to prevent drinking water shortage in villages during summer season. She spoke at District Water and Sanitation Committee meeting held at Zilla Panchayat hall in Mandya. Officials were instructed to ensure continuous water supply and carry out emergency works based on priority and need in every village. There should be no difference in water quality or quantity and all villages must



receive minimum supply without interruption. Officials were asked to prepare action plans showing problems solutions and estimated costs for villages facing water

shortage issues. The meeting discussed borewell failures pipeline repairs electricity issues and falling groundwater levels across several taluks in the district.

Officials directed drilling of new borewells repairing pumps and supplying water through tankers in areas where needed urgently. A special helpline has been set up to receive complaints and resolve drinking water issues quickly for citizens. Officials reviewed Jal Jeevan Mission works and ordered speedy completion of delayed rural water supply projects. Water quality testing campaigns will be conducted in villages with participation of staff and local community workers.

Officials said coordinated efforts between departments will ensure better service delivery and reduce shortages in rural areas. Administration assured that all necessary steps will be taken to ensure safe and uninterrupted drinking water supply during summer. CEO Nandini concluded that the administration is committed to solving water problems across Mandya district and ensuring supply. Officials said village level monitoring will be strengthened and regular inspections will be conducted to

prevent any disruption in water supply during peak summer months. Authorities emphasized that public cooperation is essential for sustainable water management and urged citizens to use water carefully, avoid wastage, and support government efforts to maintain clean and safe drinking water in all rural and urban areas of Mandya district for long term sustainability and better living conditions effectively in all regions ensuring long term water security for all citizens homes.

Health Officials Warn Public About Dog Bites

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Dog bite cases are common in Chikkaballapura and officials have warned that they can become dangerous if not treated quickly because rabies is a deadly disease that spreads through infected animal bites and has no cure once symptoms appear. Health experts said early symptoms include fever, headache, pain or itching at bite site, fatigue, nausea, sore throat and difficulty sleeping, while advanced stages may cause hydrophobia, fear of water, fear of air, anxiety, hallucinations, excessive drooling, muscle spasms and paralysis.

QUICK READ



Fish truck overturns after tyre burst

CH NEWS, Udupi

A fish-laden lorry overturned near Ambagilu in Udupi on Tuesday after a sudden tyre burst caused the driver to lose control of the vehicle. The truck was transporting fish from Mangaluru when the accident occurred on the roadside. The driver, who was alone in the vehicle, escaped with minor injuries. Local residents rushed to the spot and assisted him immediately after the mishap. The lorry suffered considerable damage in the accident. Police visited the scene, conducted an inspection and later cleared the vehicle from the road. Traffic movement in the area was disrupted briefly following the incident.

District to observe Menstrual Hygiene Day with awareness

CH NEWS, Mangaluru

Dakshina Kannada district will mark International Menstrual Hygiene Day on May 28 with a series of awareness programmes across rural areas to encourage healthy discussions on menstruation and hygiene practices. The Karnataka government's decision to withdraw cases registered against rioters. The demonstration was organized jointly by the party's city and rural district units in Mangaluru and witnessed participation from party workers, leaders, and members of the public. Protesters raised slogans against the government and accused it of encouraging forces that disturb communal harmony by withdrawing cases against individuals involved in violent incidents. They demanded immediate action to stop assaults, attacks, and vigilantism carried out in the name of cow protection. Demonstrators also called for strict punishment against those taking the law into their own hands. Addressing the gathering, Riyaz Farangipete criticized the BJP and Sangh Parivar or-

Police educates NCC cadets on cybercrime and drugs

CH NEWS, Udupi

Around 600 National Cadet Corps students at St Francis Xavier English Medium School in Udyavara attended an awareness session on cybercrime and drug abuse conducted by Udupi Police constable Pavan Kumar. During the programme, the officer explained safety measures to prevent cyber frauds such as hacking, fake job offers, fraudulent loan schemes and so-called digital arrest scams. Students were advised to remain alert while using online platforms and avoid sharing personal information with unknown sources. The session also focused on the dangers of narcotic drugs and the legal consequences under the NDPS Act. Cadets were encouraged to make responsible choices and spread awareness among their peers and communities.

CHITRADURGA

Health Education Officer B. Moogappa has advised the public to undergo a blood test for any kind of fever, stating that early diagnosis is the only way to properly identify diseases like dengue and chikungunya. He said there is no specific direct treatment without proper testing.

He was speaking during a community health education programme held at Prashanta Nagar under Budhnagar Health Centre as part of Dengue Awareness Day activities.

Officials urged to speed up minority schemes

Mandya has 64 minority Anganwadi centres with 4,300 children; officials urged to address dropout causes

MANDYA

Karnataka State Minorities Commission Chairman U Nisar Ahmed said that there should be no negligence in implementing the Prime Minister's 15 point minority welfare programme and all departments must ensure timely delivery of benefits.

He presided over a progress review meeting with district level officials at the district collector office and reviewed implementation of the new 15 point programme for minorities in Mandya district.



The Prime Minister's 15 point programme aims at comprehensive development of minority communities including Muslim Jain Christian Sikh Parsi and Buddhist groups across welfare education and employment sectors.

Officials were instructed to ensure Anganwadi enrolment of minority children under six years and to prevent dropouts through door to door awareness campaigns in villages.

There are 64 minority Anganwadi centres in Mandya district with over 4300 children enrolled and officials

were told to identify reasons for dropouts and take corrective action.

He also directed officials to promote self employment schemes including PM Swanidhi micro credit loans youth fund programmes and skill development training for minority youth across the district.

Lead Bank Manager Arun Kumar informed that 477 minority beneficiaries have received education loans while government welfare schemes are being implemented through banks at low interest rates.

District Collector Dr Kumar

said implementation of minority welfare schemes is satisfactory and assured that all eligible beneficiaries are being covered under government programmes.

Officials including Zilla Panchayat CEO KR Nandini and other district officers attended the meeting and stressed the need for effective coordination and monitoring of welfare schemes.

We need to ensure strict implementation of all minority welfare programmes in Mandya district by improving coordination between departments

and increasing field level monitoring. The government is also focusing on education skill development financial inclusion and awareness generation among minority communities to ensure equal opportunities and social justice. Officials were instructed to conduct regular inspections of schools and Anganwadi centres and submit progress reports on time. Community leaders also expressed support for the schemes and requested faster delivery of benefits to eligible families across rural and urban areas.

Activists condemn the state government for shielding rioters while urging strict measures against lawbreakers

SDPI protest condemns vigilantism and case withdrawals

MANGALURU

Members of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) staged a protest near the Clock Tower, strongly opposing the Karnataka government's decision to withdraw cases registered against rioters. The demonstration was organized jointly by the party's city and rural district units in Mangaluru and witnessed participation from party workers, leaders, and members of the public.

Protesters raised slogans against the government and accused it of encouraging forces that disturb communal harmony by withdrawing cases against individuals involved in violent incidents. They demanded immediate action to stop assaults, attacks, and vigilantism carried out in the name of cow protection. Demonstrators also called for strict punishment against those taking the law into their own hands.

Addressing the gathering, Riyaz Farangipete criticized the BJP and Sangh Parivar or-



ganizations, alleging that they act against constitutional principles and spread misinformation through social and political platforms. He claimed that secular political parties had failed to effectively challenge such narratives, allowing the BJP to strengthen its influence across the country.

Farangipete also alleged that in some cases police personnel assist groups involved in stopping cattle transport vehicles, filing cases against transporters while failing to act against those engaged in violence and vigilantism. He questioned the legitimacy of moral policing activities and accused authorities of protecting troublemakers instead of maintaining law and order. State Secretary Riyaz Kadam expressed disappointment over what he de-

scribed as unfulfilled election promises made by the Congress government. He referred to assurances regarding restoration of hijab rights, re-implementation of 2B reservation, and other public welfare measures that had gained significant support from Muslim voters during elections. Rural District President Anwar Sadath Bajatturu said the withdrawal of cases against pro-Kannada leaders such as Vatal Nagaraj was welcome, but criticized the withdrawal of cases against individuals accused of hate speech, including Pramod Muthalik and Chaitra Kundapura.

Several party leaders and representatives attended the protest, including state committee member Ashraf Agnadi, city district general secretary Jamal Jokatte, secretary Nisar Valavoor, rural district secretary Shakir Alakemajalu, and members of the Women India Movement. The programme was compered by rural district secretary Ashraf Talapady.

Udupi administration tightens vigilance ahead of Bakrid

UDUPI

The district administration in Udupi has intensified precautionary measures ahead of Bakrid celebrations to ensure peaceful observance of the festival and maintain communal harmony. A key district-level committee meeting was chaired by the Deputy Commissioner, with participation from senior officials representing various government departments and law enforcement agencies. During the meeting, authorities discussed measures to prevent unauthorized slaughter activities and illegal transportation of livestock during the Eid al-Adha period. Officials emphasized that strict vigilance would be maintained across the district while ensuring that lawful religious practices are carried out without disruption.

Malavalli and Maddur taluks after sustained surveillance and investigation. Officials said the accused were linked to multiple chain snatching and robbery cases reported across several police station limits in previous years.

According to police records, the accused were involved in several cases registered between 2022 and 2026 under charges including robbery and theft. Authorities said they had been operating across rural routes targeting vulnerable pedestrians, especially women travelling alone.

Police recovered 475.5 grams of stolen gold ornaments and two motor cycles used in the crimes. The estimated value of the seized property is about ₹70.37 lakh.

Officials said the arrests were made with coordinated efforts of multiple police teams across Mandya district.

The accused are currently under investigation, and further legal action is being taken.

KUNDAPURA

A new chapter in rural skill development began with the inauguration of the SKF Industrial Training Center at Guddeyangadi near Yedadi-Matyadi in Kundapura taluk of Udupi District. The training center has been established through a joint initiative of the Dr. G. Ramakrishna Achar Charitable Trust and SKF Elixir India Private Limited with the aim of creating employment opportunities and self-reliance among rural youth.

The center was inaugurated by Dr. M. Mohan Alva from Moodbidri. Speaking at the event, he praised the inspiring journey of Dr. G. Ramakrishna Achar, who overcame hardships through determination and hard work. He stated that Dr. Achar has created thousands of employment opportunities across India and abroad through his enterprises and philanthropic initiatives.

Dr Prasad directed officials to protect flood-prone areas and regularly update vulnerable families with safety instructions

Officials urge monsoon safety measures in Kodagu

MADIKERI

Kodagu district in-charge secretary Dr. N.V. Prasad has called for necessary precautions and preparedness as early signs of the monsoon have begun in the district. He spoke at a meeting held on Tuesday during a capacity building programme of Pon-nampet Taluk Panchayat and reviewed preparedness measures across departments.

Dr. Prasad directed officials to take special care in vulnerable and flood prone areas and ensure that families living in such regions are regularly updated about safety instructions. He also instructed authorities to



strengthen facilities at relief and care centres so that essential services are available during emergencies.

He stressed the need to complete repair works of dilapidated school and Anganwadi buildings to prevent accidents during heavy rains. He also reviewed drinking water supply projects and asked officials to complete pending works under the Jal Jeevan Mission at the earliest. The secretary advised the Agriculture Department to guide farmers on availability of fertilizers, seeds, urea and

machinery so that the sowing season is not affected by monsoon conditions. District officials said a monsoon helpline centre has already been set up and nodal officers have been appointed to monitor rainfall related issues. District Collector S.J. Somashekhar said all necessary precautionary measures are in place to handle monsoon challenges.

The meeting also discussed progress in animal husbandry and horticulture departments. Senior officials from revenue, forest and panchayat departments attended and reviewed preparedness plans for the upcoming rainy season across Kodagu district.

Kadirenahalli underpass gets drainage plan

BENGALURU

Additional Commissioner Dr. Naveen Kumar Raju of Bengaluru South City Corporation conducted a surprise inspection at Kadirenahalli underpass after reports of rainwater logging

disrupted traffic movement in the area.

He inspected the underpass along with waste transfer points near Kadirenahalli Cross and Yalachenahalli Lake. Officials informed him that recent heavy rains had exposed weak drain-

age systems, leading to water accumulation and inconvenience to commuters.

Dr. Raju instructed engineers to immediately design and implement a permanent drainage solution to ensure smooth rainwater flow.

CNC honors Codava martyrs at memorial ceremony

MADIKERI

A delegation from the Codava National Council led by Chairman N.U. Nachappa Codava visited the Devattparamb Codava Genocide Memorial Site on 26 May 2026 to pay monthly tribute to Codava ancestors who lost their lives while defending their homeland and community. Members of the delegation offered floral tributes and conducted prayers in remembrance of the victims. During the ceremony, the organisation recalled the tragic events of 12 December 1785, when thousands of

unarmed Codava men, women, and children were allegedly massacred at Devattparamb. According to the CNC, forces of the Mysore Sultanate and soldiers associated with the French East India Company invited Codavas to what was presented as a peace gathering before carrying out the killings. The delegation stated that the attack followed repeated military campaigns by Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan to gain control over Codava territory, which was strategically important because of its access to the Malabar Coast and its valuable spice trade.

Health Officer urges blood test for every fever case

EARLY DIAGNOSIS ALERT



Government nursing college students also participated in spreading awareness in Anganwadi centres. Officials explained that dengue and chikungunya are caused by Aedes

mosquitoes, which breed in clean stagnant water and usually bite during the daytime. Common symptoms include sudden fever, eye pain and joint pain, while severe cases may

lead to bleeding, low consciousness and even life threatening conditions if not treated on time. Health experts advised people to maintain clean surroundings, avoid water stagnation, properly dispose of waste and take precautions against mosquito bites. They also urged households to clean water storage areas weekly to prevent mosquito breeding.

Senior Health Inspector T. Sreenivasamurthy appealed for public cooperation during door to door health surveys and larva inspection drives. He said community participa-

tion is essential for preventing mosquito borne diseases and maintaining hygiene in residential areas.

Nursing instructor Lavanya and students demonstrated awareness activities using pamphlets to educate the public. Anganwadi workers and local residents participated in the programme and supported the awareness drive aimed at reducing mosquito borne diseases in Chitradurga district through better hygiene and timely medical testing practices for all fever cases in the region.

QUICK READ

Surge in violence sparks outrage in Bangladesh

Dhaka

A terrifying spike in violence against women and children has triggered widespread public outrage across Bangladesh. Human rights organizations reported multiple horrific assaults across several districts, including Chuadanga, Jashore, and Cumilla. Local police have detained multiple suspects, including a twenty-year-old man in Chuadanga for assaulting an elderly woman, and a youth in Jashore for attacking a nine-year-old girl. Outrage further intensified in Cumilla after local village leaders attempted to cover up an assault through informal arbitration. Security experts warned of a severe breakdown in legal accountability, while UNICEF expressed deep concern, demanding an immediate end to the culture of impunity and calling for stronger child protection laws.

Train crash with school van in Belgium kills 4

Brussels

A train collided with a school minivan at a level-crossing in Bugenhout, killing four people. The victims included two special needs pupils, the van driver, and an adult chaperone. Two other students suffered severe injuries. Transport Minister Jean-Luc Crucke stated that security camera footage confirmed the crossing's safety barriers were fully down when the crash occurred. The vehicle was transporting seven special needs children to school. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen expressed deep grief over the tragedy. This horrific accident spotlights Belgium's dense rail network, which has seen numerous fatal level-crossing collisions since 2021.

PoJK protests intensify over soaring utility tariffs

As JAAC protests intensify across PoJK, angry leaders have rejected government talks, demanding economic relief and immediate regional autonomy

MUZAFFARABAD

Severe political tensions continue to rock Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) as the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) intensifies its massive public mobilization campaign.

The powerful movement is demanding immediate economic relief, fair utility tariffs, and greater political self-governance.

During a roaring public rally, angry JAAC leaders rejected all further talks with state officials. They stated that the federal government in Islamabad has completely ignored their long-standing demands despite giving multiple false assurances over time. The energetic demonstrators are demanding immediate relief on high electricity tariffs, cheap



er food prices, and the activation of promised subsidy packages.

Addressing a massive crowd of supporters, a local JAAC representative openly challenged the regional Assembly members. He ques-

tioned why local politicians oppose regional self-rule, loudly declaring to the cheering audience that the disputed territory belongs to Kashmir, not Pakistan. He also slammed the administration for failing to deliver promised

subsidies on thirty-six essential household items.

Furious JAAC leader Shaukat Nawaz Mir urged thousands of supporters to stay united and completely occupy the protest grounds. He led aggressive chants against pro-government agents, calling the massive civil movement the ultimate death of state-sponsored corruption.

For decades, PoJK has faced intense global criticism for political neglect and severe underdevelopment. Frustrated residents continue to protest against heavy resource exploitation, unequal distribution of wealth, and their complete lack of political representation. Activists warned that public anger will continue to escalate across the region unless Islamabad grants true autonomy to the local population.

Iran orders internet restoration after 87-day blackout

TEHRAN

The Iranian government has officially announced plans to restore international internet access across the country over the "coming days." The decision follows a formal directive from President Masoud Pezeshkian, aiming to end a severe, nationwide digital blackout.

Government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani confirmed the breakthrough during her weekly press conference. She stated that a specialized cyberspace task force recommended lifting the restrictions to prevent domestic injustice and economic discrimination. Following their conclusion, President Pezeshkian immediately notified the Ministry of Communications to execute the order and return online rights to the citizens.

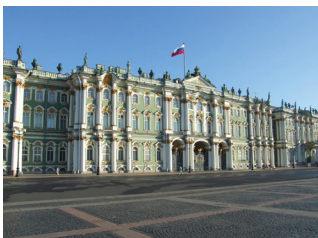
The country has been trapped under a near-total internet blackout for more than 87 days, according to reports. The strict digital blockade was initially launched on January 8 to suppress anti-regime protests, before being intensified on February 28 following joint U.S. and Israeli military strikes. The prolonged blackout crippled local businesses and blocked citizens from accessing vital safety information during foreign bombing



Iran will restore internet access following President Pezeshkian's order, amid high geopolitical tensions and ongoing peace talks with US

campaigns.

Simultaneously, geopolitical tensions remain high as Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei warned that the region will no longer serve as a protective shield for American military bases. Meanwhile, diplomatic peace talks continue between Washington and Tehran. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio criticized Iran's illegal tolling system in the Strait of Hormuz, demanding unrestricted maritime passage. Rubio noted that President Donald Trump is currently reviewing a preliminary draft for a potential peace deal, stating that a final decision will be reached within days.



Russian museum hosts historic Indian art show

ST. PETERSBURG

Russia's historic State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg will host its first dedicated contemporary Indian art exhibition starting June four. Titled "Sediments of Becoming," the groundbreaking event is presented in collaboration with Threshold Art Gallery. It features unique creations from eleven contemporary Indian artists, including Manjunath Kamath and Afrah Shafiq. Marking a first in the prestigious institution's two hundred sixty-year history, organizers describe the exhibition as a form of cultural archaeology that explores history. Curators Marina Schulz and Tuntty Chauhan emphasized that this landmark display represents a vital moment of artistic dialogue between India and Russia.

In Prague, the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts concluded a historic cultural tour, using traditional performances to challenge Beijing

ARTISTES USE TRADITIONAL DANCE TO PROTEST CHINA

PRAGUE

The Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) has successfully wrapped up a historic cultural tour in the Czech Republic, using traditional music and dance to fiercely challenge Beijing's political narratives.

The high-profile showcase, held at the prestigious Senate Garden in Prague, marked the premier cultural group's first visit to the country in nearly two decades.

Organized by Czech Senate Vice-President Jitka Seitlova, the Synopsis Foundation, and the Tibet Bureau Geneva, the event served as a peaceful protest against China's severe restrictions on Tibetan language and religious freedom. TIPA explicitly accused Beijing of attempting to distort and erase Tibetan identity on the global stage.

Through captivating classical opera performances, known as Ache Lhamo, and



ancient folk dances, the talented artists proudly presented Tibet as an independent, rich civilization with thousands of years of distinct history. Tibetan representative Thinlay Chukki stated that the performances stand as a powerful symbol of truth against Chinese political pressure.

The event highlights the deep, historic friendship between the late Czech President Vaclav Havel and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Solidifying this allyship, the Czech Senate recently passed

a crucial resolution supporting the Dalai Lama's right to independently choose his successor without foreign interference.

Over 300 spectators, including European senators, human rights activists, and students, attended the vibrant showcase. Moving the audience deeply, the successful cultural display successfully countered Chinese misinformation while beautifully preserving ancestral roots for young Tibetans living in the diaspora.

FRESH SECURITY CONCERNS AFTER N. KOREAN MISSILE LAUNCH

SEOUL

North Korea launched an unidentified weapon toward the Yellow Sea, sparking fresh security concerns across the region. South Korea's military confirmed the launch and is currently analyzing the details, though specific information remains limited.

This unexpected move follows a series of recent weapons tests by Pyongyang. Just last month, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un personally supervised the test-firing of advanced tactical ballistic missiles.

Those weapons utilized controversial cluster warheads, which scatter smaller bombs over large areas to maximize destruction. While over 120 nations have banned cluster

munitions under a global treaty, North Korea is not a member of the agreement.

Neighboring countries detected those earlier tests, though confusion arose over whether the missiles were launched from land or from submarines near the coast. Meanwhile, this sudden military action coincides with major diplomatic shifts happening elsewhere in the world. In the United States, President Donald Trump announced progress in ceasefire negotiations with Iran.

Trump shared that Iran has agreed to hand over or destroy its enriched uranium under international supervision. Senior officials from both nations recently met in Qatar to finalize this historic peace agreement.

India and US sign critical minerals pact

NEW DELHI

India and the United States signed a landmark bilateral framework to secure the mining, processing, and long-term supply of critical minerals and rare earth elements. The agreement is a strategic move to build resilient technology pipelines and reduce global dependence on dominant single-source suppliers like China.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announced the partnership following bilateral discussions and a Quad Foreign Minister's meeting in New Delhi. He emphasized that securing these resources is highly timely

and critical in a deeply contested global landscape.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio praised the strategic alliance, calling the agreement a tangible example of how both nations' national interests align. He noted that India and the U.S. share an urgent economic need to protect reliable, long-term access to the raw materials fueling today's innovation economy.

As China currently dominates the global processing market for rare earths, this Washington-New Delhi pact marks a major step toward creating an alternative, secure supply chain among democratic nations.



The comprehensive framework expands cooperation across the entire mineral lifecycle, focusing on:

- Joint exploration and advanced mining initiatives
- Processing, refinement, and material recycling
- Coordinated financial investments in eco-friendly mining infrastructure
- Diversifying supply networks for electric vehicles (EVs), clean energy tech, and defense manufacturing

Iwate builds tech and educational ties with India

IWATE

Historically celebrated as a "Rich Land," Japan's Iwate Prefecture is actively shifting its focus toward India to build deep industrial and educational ties. Iwate Governor Takuya Tasso announced plans to establish a robust technological partnership centered on semiconductor engineering and automotive manufacturing.

The prefecture's capital, Morioka, recently gained international spotlight after being featured by major U.S. media as a top global destination. Governor Tasso attributed this success to Morioka's clean environment, where three major rivers meet, alongside a rich balance of local history, culture, and active civic preservation.

Leveraging his background as a former central government bureaucrat, Governor Tasso has consistently driven international collaborations. The region has already set up highly successful global institutions, such as the Harrow International School Appi, which hosts over 300 international students. Having solidified ties with Brazil, China, and Russia, Iwate is now setting its sights on India's booming industrial landscape.

Iwate's abundant water resources and advanced transit infrastructure have turned it into an industrial powerhouse. The region hosts major production facilities for global tech giants like Kioxia and Tokyo Electron, alongside auto-

motive leaders Toyota and Denso.

To train the next generation of microchip talent, the prefecture launched "I-SPARK," a specialized training institute for future semiconductor engineers. Highlighting the blooming alliance, four professional interns from India's Gujarat state joined the curriculum in 2025, with a larger cohort expected to follow this year.

Governor Tasso confirmed his commitment to this economic corridor, stating he will personally visit Gujarat by March 2027 to finalize a mutual partnership framework. Local officials hope that fusing Iwate's industrial expertise with India's tech talent will pave the way for a highly resilient global supply chain.

ELITE K9S UNLEASHED

ELITE K9 TEAMS STAND OUT IN MEGHALAYA DRILL

SHILLONG

The Indian Army's elite canine warriors stole the spotlight at "Exercise PRAGATI 2026" in Meghalaya, proving themselves as invaluable assets in modern combat.

The highly trained dogs demonstrated their specialized skills alongside armed forces personnel from twelve friendly nations during high-intensity tactical drills.

According to defense spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Mahendra Rawat, the K9 teams excelled in high-risk scenarios, including explosive

detection, tracking, and intervention operations. The demonstration featured three standout dogs: Alan - a Belgian Malinois assault specialist, Deo - a Labrador trained to sniff out hidden bombs and Victor - an indigenous Rampur Hound.

Victor's participation marked a major milestone for India's "Atmanirbhar Bharat" self-reliance initiative. Indigenous breeds like the Rampur Hound are increasingly integrated into frontline roles due to their excellent climate adaptability, natural resilience, and high disease resis-

tance. Officials noted that these loyal animals possess the speed, instinct, and courage required to operate effectively across diverse terrains, ranging from blistering deserts to freezing high-altitude glaciers.

In a fascinating look at the future of warfare, the drill also featured high-tech robotic dogs. This display showcased how traditional animal instincts and cutting-edge technology can work together to boost battlefield effectiveness.

The two-week multinational exercise began on May 20 at the Umroi Military Station. It



brings together troops from nations including Bhutan, Malaysia, Nepal, and Vietnam to

strengthen regional cooperation. Amid the heavy machinery and international troops, the silent

four-legged warriors stood out for their unmatched discipline and mission readiness.

Messi suffers hamstring fatigue concern ahead of Argentina WC campaign

MIAMI

Inter Miami and Argentina superstar Lionel Messi has been diagnosed with a left hamstring issue after being forced off during his club's Major League Soccer match against the Philadelphia Union, raising concerns just weeks before Argentina begins its FIFA World Cup title defence.

Inter Miami confirmed on Monday that medical tests revealed "an overload associated with muscle fatigue in his left hamstring." The club did not disclose the exact nature of the examination, although such assessments typically involve imaging scans to determine the extent of the problem.

The MLS champions stated that Messi's return to action would depend on his recovery and medical progress.

"The timeline for his return to physical activity will depend on his clinical and functional progress," the club said in an official statement.

Messi was substituted in the 73rd minute of Inter Miami's thrilling 6-4 victory over the Philadelphia Union on Sunday night. The Argentine forward appeared uncomfortable moments earlier and was seen reaching toward the back of his left leg before signalling that he could not continue.

Despite the concern, Messi walked off the field without assistance and headed directly to the dressing room. Before his departure, he had played a key role in the match, providing two assists during the first half. The injury scare comes at an important time for Argentina, which is scheduled to begin preparations for the upcoming World Cup in the United States. The reigning champions will play warm-up matches against Honduras on June 6 in Texas and Iceland on June 9 in Alabama before the tournament begins.

Argentina has been drawn in Group J, where it will face Algeria, Austria and Jordan in the group stage. The team will be hoping its captain is fully fit before the campaign gets underway. Weather conditions during Sunday's match may also have contributed to the concern. Heavy rain fell throughout the second half, making the playing surface slippery, although Inter Miami has not linked the injury to the conditions. Messi remains one of the most influential figures in world football. The 38-year-old has appeared in five World Cups and famously led Argentina to the title in 2022.



Inter Miami star withdrawn after discomfort, recovery timeline remains uncertain

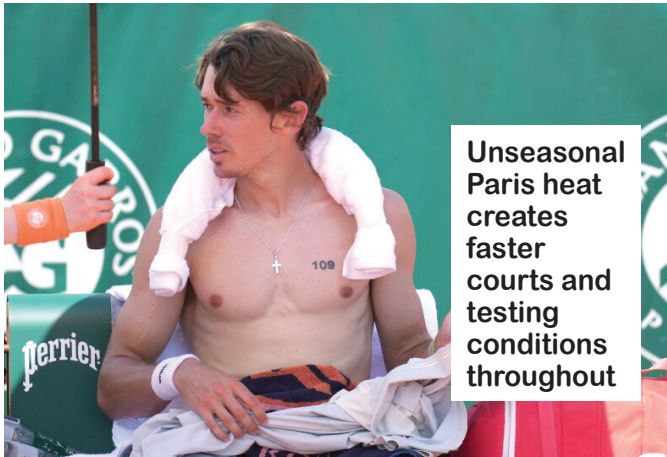
French Open hit by intense heat as temperatures soar

PARIS

A rare early-summer heat wave has gripped the French Open, forcing players and spectators to adapt to unusually high temperatures that are transforming conditions at Roland Garros and creating fresh challenges during the season's second Grand Slam.

Temperatures during the opening two days of the tournament have climbed to around 33 degrees Celsius, significantly above average for late May in Paris. Forecasts indicate that the hot spell is likely to continue throughout the first week, raising concerns about player welfare while also affecting the nature of competition on the clay courts.

Several players compared the conditions to those experienced during the Paris Olympics in 2024, which took place in the peak summer months of July and August. Four-time French Open champion Iga Swiatek noted that the intense heat had altered the behaviour of the ball and the speed of the courts, making this year's tournament feel markedly different.



Unseasonal Paris heat creates faster courts and testing conditions throughout

The soaring temperatures have prompted players to take extra precautions. Many have been seen placing ice towels around their necks during changeovers, while spectators have sought relief under sprinklers and water hoses used to maintain the clay surfaces between sets.

Australian player Daria Kasatkina described the conditions as among the hottest she had experienced at Roland Garros, saying the heat made concentration and energy management crucial factors in determining match outcomes.

The extreme weather has already had a visible impact on the tournament. Canadian player Gabriel Diallo cited the heat as a major reason for retiring from his opening-round match. Elsewhere, both Andrey Rublev and Ignacio Buse required medical attention during a lengthy encounter, while a ball girl also needed assistance after appearing af-

ected by the conditions.

Tournament organisers have implemented an extreme weather protocol similar to those used at the Australian Open and US Open. Cooling breaks can be introduced when heat-stress readings exceed specific thresholds, while play can be suspended if conditions become dangerous. Not all competitors are unhappy with the weather. Australian star Alex de Minaur said the heat favours an aggressive style of play by making the ball travel faster through the air. American player Alex Michelsen echoed that view, suggesting the quicker conditions suit power hitters.

As temperatures continue to soar, adapting to the heat may prove just as important as adapting to the clay in determining who advances deep into the tournament.

President says country welcomes arrangement after United States raises concerns

Mexico agrees to host Iran team base during FIFA World Cup 2026

MEXICO CITY

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has confirmed that Mexico will host Iran's national football team during the FIFA World Cup 2026 after the United States reportedly declined to accommodate the squad throughout the tournament.

Sheinbaum said Mexican authorities had no objections when approached by FIFA regarding alternative arrangements for the Iranian team. The decision means Iran will now establish its tournament base in the border city of Tijuana while continuing to play its group-stage matches in the United States.

"The United States doesn't want the Iranian national team to stay overnight in the United States," Sheinbaum told reporters. She added that FIFA subsequently contacted Mexico to explore the possibility of hosting the team.

"Can they stay overnight in



Mexico? And we said, 'Yes, no problem. We have no issue with that,'" she said.

The change comes amid continuing geopolitical tensions involving Iran, the United States and Israel. Iran's football federation had earlier announced that its originally planned base in Tucson, Arizona, would be shifted to Tijuana because of the prevailing circumstances. FIFA later confirmed the adjustment to

the team's World Cup preparations.

Iran is scheduled to play all three of its Group G matches in the United States despite being based in Mexico. The Asian side will open its campaign against New Zealand national football team in Inglewood, California, on June 15. It will then face Belgium national football team on June 21 at the same venue before taking on Egypt national football team in Seattle on June 26.

The arrangement highlights the unique logistical challenges associated with the expanded FIFA World Cup, which will be jointly hosted by the United States, Mexico and Canada. Teams are expected to travel extensively across North America during the tournament, making base camp planning a critical component of preparations.

Sheinbaum said Mexican authorities continue to work closely with FIFA to finalise operational and security arrangements ahead of the competition.

The 2026 edition will be the first World Cup to feature 48 teams, expanding from the traditional 32-team format. With matches spread across three host nations, organisers face unprecedented logistical demands as they prepare for what is expected to be the largest World Cup in history.

Iran's relocation to Tijuana is one of the first major operational adjustments linked to the tournament, underlining the complex political and practical considerations surrounding the global event.

Iniyam Panneerselvam claims double gold at Commonwealth Chess Championship

NEW DELHI

Indian Grandmaster Iniyam Panneerselvam delivered a dominant performance at the Commonwealth Chess Championship in Sri Lanka, clinching gold medals in both the Rapid and Blitz categories to emerge as one of the tournament's biggest stars.

The Tamil Nadu player showcased remarkable consistency across both formats, scoring 6.5 points from seven rounds in each event to secure the top podium position. His double triumph highlighted India's continued strength in international chess and added another significant achievement to his growing list of accomplishments.

In the Rapid section, Iniyam finished ahead of fellow Indian Grandmaster Srihari L R, who secured the silver medal. Grandmaster Mitrabha Guha completed an Indian sweep of the podium by taking bronze.

The Blitz competition saw Iniyam maintain his impressive form. He once again topped the standings with 6.5 points, while Grandmaster Rohith Krishna S claimed the silver medal. Srihari added another medal to his tally by finishing third and securing bronze in the fast-paced format.

While Iniyam dominated the Rapid and Blitz events, the Classical title went to Mitrabha Guha, who produced a strong performance over the

longer format of the game. Sri Lankan player Ranindu Liyanage finished second to claim the silver medal, while Srihari continued his impressive tournament by securing bronze.

The championship was held from May 16 to 26 and attracted a strong international field from across the Commonwealth. Players from India, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Mauritius, Maldives, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Malaysia, Singapore, Scotland and Canada participated in the event. A total of 96 players competed in the Open section, with contests held across Classical, Rapid and Blitz formats.



Yashas P storms to historic 400m hurdles gold at Federation Cup

RANCHI

Karnataka hurdler Yashas P produced a career-defining performance at the National Athletics Federation Cup, clocking the second-fastest time ever by an Indian in the men's 400m hurdles to strengthen his case for selection to the Commonwealth Games squad.

The 24-year-old won gold on the final day of the competition with a stunning effort of 49.00 seconds, becoming the fastest active Indian in the event. Only national record holder Dharun Ayyasamy, who ran 48.80 seconds in 2019, has gone faster among Indian athletes.

Yashas' performance came just a day after he breached the Commonwealth Games qualification standard, underlining his excellent form heading into a crucial phase of the season. He edged longtime rival Santhosh Kumar T of Tamil Nadu, who claimed

silver with a time of 49.06 seconds. Both athletes remain in contention for Commonwealth Games selection, pending approval from the Athletics Federation of India's selection committee.

The achievement is particularly noteworthy given that Yashas was overlooked for the Karnataka government's Target Olympic Podium programme, which provides selected athletes with annual financial support of ₹10 lakh through the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics cycle.

Karnataka enjoyed a productive final day overall. Distance runner Shivaji Parashu-

ram bounced back impressively to win the men's 5000m gold medal in 14 minutes and 14.43 seconds. The victory came after a difficult start to the competition, where he fainted after the 10,000m race and was later disqualified for a lane infringement.

In the women's 400m hurdles, Karnataka's Sinchal Kaveramma secured silver with a time of 57.77 seconds behind national star Vithya Ramraj, who won gold in 56.61 seconds. However, both athletes fell short of the Commonwealth Games qualifying mark.

Indian-origin golfer Manav Shah reaches US Open

NEW DELHI

Indian-origin golfer Manav Shah has completed a remarkable journey from aspiring medical student to major championship competitor after securing a place in the 2026 US Open, one of golf's most prestigious tournaments.

The 34-year-old will make his debut at the US Open next month after producing an impressive performance in the demanding 36-hole final qualifying event at Dallas Athletic Club. Shah finished five-under-par overall to book his place in the championship, which will be held at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club from June 18.

Born in California to parents who emigrated from India in the 1980s, Shah grew up in a Gujarati family where medicine was viewed as the preferred profession. Like many in his extended family, he was expected to pursue a career in healthcare and initially enrolled at the University of California, Los Angeles, as a pre-med student.

However, his passion

for golf eventually proved stronger than his interest in medicine.

"My extended family are in medicine. That was always the Gujarati line of work in our household," Shah said. "But I realised medicine probably wasn't going to be my thing when ev-

eryone after class went to the library and I was going to the golf course."

That decision led him onto a challenging professional path. Since turning professional in 2015, Shah has competed across various tours and qualifying events, steadily working toward the opportunity to play in one of golf's four major championships.

A key part of his development came through competing on the Asian circuit and in the Indian Golf Premier League, experiences that helped him reconnect with his cultural roots.

Shah said interacting with players from India and spending more time within Indian golfing circles strengthened his confidence and sense of identity. Although raised in the United States, he has maintained strong ties with India through regular visits to Gujarat and Mumbai, where his family originates.

"I've always been tied to the motherland," he said, describing India as a place that remains deeply important to him.

Looking ahead, Shah also voiced support for maintaining multiple pathways into professional golf amid ongoing debates surrounding the sport's structure and the divide between established tours and emerging circuits.

Spain WC squad named without Real Madrid players

MADRID

Spain have announced their 26-man squad for the FIFA World Cup 2026, with coach Luis de la Fuente naming a youthful but experienced group and, notably, excluding any players from Real Madrid for the first time in the tournament's history.

Teenage Barcelona winger Lamine Yamal has been included despite a hamstring injury, with the coach confident he will recover in time.

Veteran striker Alvaro Morata and midfielder Fermin López miss out due to fitness concerns.

Key players include Rodri, Pedri, Gavi, Dani Olmo, Nico Williams, Mikel Oyarzabal and goalkeeper Unai Simón. Defensive absences such as Dani Carvajal and Dean Huijsen highlight the lack of Real Madrid representation.

Spain, ranked second in the world, are placed in Group H with Cape Verde, Saudi Arabia and Uruguay.

They begin their campaign on June 15 against Cape Verde in Atlanta. Spain aim to win a second World Cup title in 2026 again strongly.

QUICK READ



SEBI explores DLT tokenisation for corp bond market

New Delhi

The Securities and Exchange Board of India has launched a pilot project to explore tokenisation of corporate bonds using distributed ledger technology (DLT), according to chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey. The initiative aims to test whether blockchain-based systems can improve liquidity, efficiency, and settlement speed in India's debt markets. SEBI said corporate bonds already trade on existing platforms, but DLT could enable near-instant settlement and better coordination among stakeholders. The regulator will assess operational and technological challenges before wider adoption. The Reserve Bank of India has issued draft guidelines, with final norms expected soon. SEBI and exchanges are preparing for implementation once regulatory clearance is granted. Pandey also noted AI-driven sectors are influencing global market valuations and valuation trends.

AI jobs apocalypse fears unlikely says Altman now

New Delhi

Sam Altman CEO of OpenAI said fears of an AI-driven jobs apocalypse have so far been overstated, speaking at a Commonwealth Bank of Australia conference in Sydney. He said entry-level white-collar job losses after ChatGPT in 2022 have been less severe than expected. He added that earlier predictions about social and economic disruption were wrong, even if AI progress has been roughly accurate. Companies including HSBC, Amazon, and Standard Chartered have noted AI is reshaping roles. He said human interaction remains essential in many jobs and cannot be fully replaced by machines, citing his Slack and email experiment. Altman emphasized careful optimism about AI's economic impact going forward in global markets.

DoT introduces QR login reforms under PM-WANI

New Delhi

The Department of Telecommunications has introduced QR-based login reforms under the PM-WANI framework to expand public Wi-Fi access. The system enables QR authentication for secondary devices and offers short-duration plans of 15, 30, and 60 minutes. Hotspot naming has also been standardised to improve usability and trust. Officials said implementation will be completed within eight weeks. Under the guidance of Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Minister of State Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani, the reforms aim to boost adoption of PM-WANI networks across transit hubs and public spaces. The initiative aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi vision for affordable digital connectivity nationwide digital inclusion goals achieved.

Quad nations expand indo-pacific trade, energy ties

Quad nations strengthened Indo-Pacific cooperation on trade, energy security, and maritime stability through new joint initiatives announced

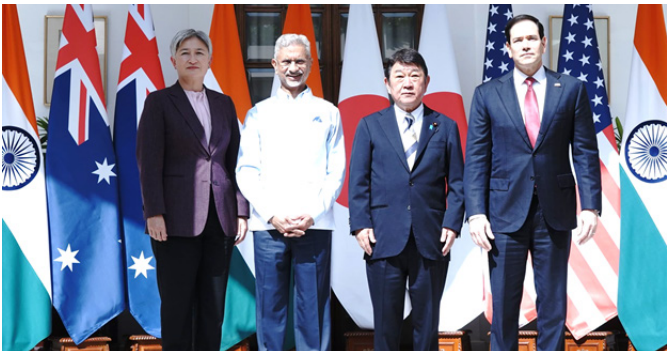
NEW DELHI

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue announced a series of new initiatives focused on trade, maritime cooperation and energy security, signaling a stronger push toward practical economic collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region.

The meeting was hosted by India in New Delhi as part of its current chairmanship of the grouping.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar joined US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi during the discussions.

The four-member grouping unveiled five major initiatives covering maritime surveillance, port infrastructure, re-



gional maritime coordination, critical minerals and energy security. The announcements reflected the Quad's growing emphasis on operational co-operation and regional economic resilience.

Speaking at the meeting, Jaishankar said the Indo-Pacific region would play an increasingly vital role in global trade, maritime commerce

and energy transportation in the coming years. He also underlined the importance of collective efforts against terrorism, stressing that democratic nations must adopt a zero-tolerance approach toward terror threats.

The leaders discussed the importance of strengthening supply chains and ensuring uninterrupted maritime routes

amid rising geopolitical tensions and global energy concerns. Rubio described the Quad as a "partnership of action" focused on delivering practical outcomes instead of remaining only a discussion platform.

Penny Wong highlighted concerns over instability in West Asia and its potential impact on energy flows through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical route for global oil transportation. Motegi reaffirmed the Quad's commitment to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific amid shifting global dynamics.

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue has steadily expanded cooperation across trade, technology, infrastructure and maritime security as the Indo-Pacific gains greater strategic significance.

Weak monsoon forecast for FY27 raises concerns over inflation, rural incomes, agricultural output, and overall demand recovery outlook

Weak monsoon forecast raises rural demand concerns

NEW DELHI

The upcoming monsoon outlook for FY27 is raising caution over India's rural economic recovery, with forecasts pointing to below-normal rainfall.

According to a report cited by investment platform smallcase, the India Meteorological Department has projected rainfall at around 92 per cent of the long-period average, signalling a weak monsoon season ahead.

A weaker monsoon could directly impact agricultural output and rural incomes, especially in regions dependent on rain-fed farming. Nearly 55 per cent of India's cultivated land relies on rainfall, making monsoon performance a critical driver of crop

production, food supply chains, and rural consumption trends.

The report warned that erratic rainfall patterns could increase food inflation pressures, particularly for vegetables and essential commodities. Since food accounts for nearly 46 per cent of the Consumer Price Index basket, any supply disruption may quickly translate into broader inflationary stress across the economy.

The impact of rainfall variability is expected to be significant for key crops such as rice, pulses, sugarcane, soybean, and oilseeds. Delays or uneven distribution of rainfall during sowing periods could reduce productivity and affect farm incomes, further slowing rural demand recovery.



The report also highlighted that rising climate variability is making rainfall patterns less predictable, increasing risks for agriculture-dependent sectors. While total rainfall levels remain important, the timing and geographic

distribution of monsoon showers are becoming even more crucial for economic stability.

On the macroeconomic front, higher food inflation could complicate the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy outlook, especially as markets expect gradual rate easing. Inflationary pressures could limit policy flexibility in the coming quarters.

Despite these concerns, agriculture still contributes around 15-16 per cent to India's GDP and supports nearly 45 per cent of the population. A good monsoon typically boosts rural demand, supports FMCG sales, strengthens tractor and two-wheeler markets, and improves earnings across rural-focused industries.

Eid rush surges across Kashmir markets

SRINAGAR

Markets across Srinagar and other towns of Jammu and Kashmir witnessed an extraordinary festive rush as residents flocked to shops and markets ahead of Eid al-Adha celebrations.

From early morning, busy commercial hubs remained packed with shoppers purchasing food items, clothes, bakery products, toys, and sacrificial animals for the upcoming festival.

The heavy footfall in markets resulted in traffic congestion on several roads in Srinagar, with vehicles moving slowly through crowded areas. People carrying shopping bags and essential supplies were seen navigating through packed streets while vendors tried to manage the swelling crowds. Temporary roadside stalls and pavement shops added to the festive atmosphere, although they also reduced pedestrian



space in many parts of the city.

Bakery shops, poultry outlets, butcher shops, and hosiery stores witnessed long queues throughout the day. Toy markets also attracted large numbers of children accompanying their parents for Eid shopping. Traders reported brisk business as families completed last-minute purchases before the festival.

Livestock markets remained among the busiest locations, with sheep and goats brought from regions such as Poonch and Rajouri, along with animals transported from Delhi and Rajasthan. Buyers

carefully inspected animals before making purchases for traditional Eid sacrifices.

Authorities deployed market inspection teams to monitor prices and ensure the quality of food products being sold during the festive season. Officials said there was no shortage of essential commodities in the Valley and warned traders against overpricing goods during the increased demand.

Eid al-Adha, also known as Bakr Eid, is celebrated by Muslims worldwide as a symbol of sacrifice, devotion, and compassion.

India launches investor portal to boost semiconductor growth

NEW DELHI

The government has strengthened its semiconductor strategy under the India Semiconductor Mission by launching a new "Investors Support" portal aimed at improving transparency, coordination, and investor confidence in the sector.

According to the Ministry of Electronics & IT, the initiative comes under the broader Semicon India Programme, which has already approved 12 fabrication or packaging projects and 24 semiconductor design projects across India.

The new digital portal, accessible through the official ISM platform, provides investors with consolidated information on government schemes, policy frameworks, approved projects, and regulatory requirements. It is designed as a single-window

system to streamline communication between investors and government authorities.

Officials said the platform will allow companies to register grievances or queries, which will be addressed through a structured coordination mechanism involving nodal officers from central ministries, state governments, and approved project partners. The system is expected to ensure time-bound resolution of investor concerns.

The ministry stated that the portal will act as a secure, role-based interface to simplify engagement between domestic and international investors and government agencies. It is intended to reduce procedural delays and improve clarity on approvals and compliance requirements.

Amitesh Kumar Sinha highlighted the importance of ac-

tive facilitation and handholding of investors, particularly foreign companies, to build a strong semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem in India. He urged all stakeholders to play a proactive role in addressing investor issues.

The launch event included a detailed walkthrough of the portal's features, onboarding process, and coordination structure. It also outlined the responsibilities of nodal officers and participating organizations involved in project implementation and investor support. India's semiconductor push is part of a broader strategy to develop a resilient and sustainable electronics manufacturing ecosystem. The government has been promoting policy incentives and strategic partnerships to attract global chipmakers and strengthen domestic capabilities.



Techno Electric shares fall after weak profit decline

MUMBAI

Shares of Techno Electric and Engineering Company witnessed a sharp decline of nearly 13 per cent during intra-day trade on Tuesday after the company reported a fall in its fourth-quarter profits for FY26.

The stock fell as much as 12.8% on the BSE to an intra-day low of around ₹1,194 per share before recovering slightly later in the session. It was still trading about 11.8% lower at ₹1,208.8 per share around mid-day.

The decline followed the company's financial results announced after market hours on Monday. Techno Electric and Engineering Company reported a consolidated net profit of ₹114.51 crore for the quarter ended March 2026. This represents a 15% drop compared to ₹134.64 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal year.

Despite the fall in profit, the company posted strong revenue growth. Revenue from operations rose 23.8% year-on-year to ₹1,010.04 crore, compared to ₹815.79 crore in the corresponding period last year.

Market participants reacted cautiously to the mixed set of numbers, with profit pressure outweighing revenue gains. The stock movement reflected investor concerns over margin pressure and earnings quality in the near term.

Techno Electric and Engineering Company is a well-established player in India's power infrastructure sector,

operating across engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC), as well as asset ownership and operations.

The company has a long history in India's power sector, including involvement in major projects with NTPC Limited and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited. It has executed hundreds of projects in India and overseas over the years.

Despite its strong project execution track record, the latest quarterly performance has led to short-term pressure on its stock price as investors reassess earnings momentum and profitability trends.

IN SHORT

- Techno Electric shares drop nearly 13% after Q4 results
- Profit declines 15% year-on-year in March quarter
- Revenue rises 23.8% despite fall in earnings
- Market reacts negatively to weak quarterly performance
- Stock partially recovers during intraday trading session

OIL RESERVE TIMING

South Korea weighs oil release amid supply risks

SEOUL

South Korea is carefully evaluating the timing of releasing crude oil from its strategic reserves amid growing concerns of a potential global supply crunch expected around August.

The move comes under an agreement among International Energy Agency member countries to stabilize oil markets following earlier geopolitical disruptions.

The country had earlier committed to releasing 22.46 million barrels of oil by June 9 as part of a coordinated plan involving 32 member nations

of the International Energy Agency. The initiative was designed to cushion market shocks caused by tensions in the Middle East earlier in the year.

However, South Korean officials now say the release will be treated as a last-resort measure. Industry ministry representatives noted that while earlier concerns over supply disruptions have eased slightly, risks remain if shipping routes such as the Strait of Hormuz face prolonged instability.

Deputy Minister for Trade, Industry and Resources Security Yang Ghi-wuk said the



government is closely monitoring global oil market conditions and will decide on the timing cautiously. He added that although oil inventories are tightening globally, South

Korea has secured alternative supply sources to reduce immediate risk.

According to the industry ministry, about 85 per cent of South Korea's crude oil re-

SYNOPSIS

- South Korea monitors oil
- Considers strategic release timing
- IEA warns supply risks
- Diversified crude imports rising
- Middle East tensions impact

quirements for July have already been secured. The country has also diversified its import sources significantly, reducing reliance on the Middle East.

Data shows that oil imports from North and South America have increased substantially, along with higher shipments from Asia and Africa.

This diversification is seen as a key factor supporting short-term supply stability.

Despite current stability, global agencies including the International Energy Agency have warned that oil inventories are depleting rapidly, raising the possibility of tighter markets later in the year. Some analysts caution that conditions could worsen if geopolitical tensions escalate again.

For now, South Korea maintains that it will align with international commitments while prioritizing domestic energy security and market stability.

Sooryavanshi eyes historic T20 double ton, Gayle record

NEW DELHI

Rajasthan Royals' teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has set himself an ambitious target after a record-breaking IPL season, declaring his intention to become the first cricketer to score a double century in T20 cricket and surpass West Indies legend Chris Gayle's highest-ever T20 score of 175 not out.

The 15-year-old prodigy made the bold statement during an appearance on former England captain Kevin Pietersen's YouTube show The Switch. When asked about celebrating personal milestones such as half-centuries, Sooryavanshi made it clear that he has his sights set on much bigger achievements.

"I want to score 200 in T20s. I want to break Gayle's record," he said.

Gayle's unbeaten 175 for Royal Challengers Bengaluru against Pune Warriors India in

IPL 2013 remains the highest individual score in T20 cricket. The explosive knock came off just 66 balls and included 13 fours and 17 sixes. His century in 30 balls is still the fastest in IPL history.

Sooryavanshi's confidence is backed by an extraordinary run of form. The left-hander has enjoyed a sensational IPL 2026 campaign, amassing 583 runs in 14 matches at an average of 41.64 and a remarkable strike rate of 232.27. His tally includes one century and three half-centuries, while his 53 sixes are the most by an Indian in a single IPL season.

The youngster has already shattered several age-related records. Last year, he became the youngest IPL player and later the youngest T20 centurion after smashing a 35-ball hundred against Gujarat Titans. He also holds the record for the fastest IPL century by an Indian.

Beyond the IPL, Sooryavanshi has dominated youth cricket. He finished as

the second-highest run-scorer in this year's Under-19 World Cup with 439 runs and set a tournament record with 30 sixes. He is also India's leading run-scorer in Under-19 ODIs. With records tumbling wherever he plays, Sooryavanshi's latest challenge suggests that cricket's next frontier—a T20 double century—may already be in his sights.

Teen sensation aims to become first batter to score T20 double century



Arshdeep wipes Instagram posts after PBKS exit

NEW DELHI

India pacer Arshdeep Singh has drawn attention on social media after removing a large number of posts from his Instagram account following Punjab Kings' early exit from IPL 2026.

The left-arm fast bowler endured a difficult campaign this season, picking up 14 wickets in 14 matches while conceding runs at an economy rate of over 10 per over. Punjab Kings failed to qualify for the playoffs, ending their campaign at the league stage despite entering the season with high expectations.

Soon after the team's elimination, fans noticed significant changes to Arshdeep's Instagram profile. The 27-year-old reportedly deleted or archived a majority of his posts, reducing the number on his account to just 44. Among the missing content was a widely shared reel featuring Indian batting star Virat Kohli, which had reportedly garnered more than 15 million views.

The reel, posted in December last year, captured a light-hearted exchange between the two cricketers. Arshdeep had jokingly told Kohli that a larger target might have allowed him to score another

century, to which the former India captain responded with a playful remark about the impact of dew conditions on bowlers.

The removal of the reel and several other posts has sparked speculation among fans, although neither Arshdeep nor his representatives have offered any explanation for the social media clean-up.

The development comes amid reports that stricter guidelines have been introduced regarding social media content involving Punjab Kings players. According to media reports, videos and promotional content featuring members of the squad may now need to be created and published exclusively through the franchise's official social media channels.

A team source was quoted as saying that players would be briefed about the new regulations and advised to comply with the guidelines issued by

the BCCI. However, the source clarified that no individual player was being specifically targeted.

While the reason behind Arshdeep's Instagram activity remains unclear, the move has become a talking point among cricket followers during the IPL off-season. With India's international assignments approaching, the pacer will be hoping to put a challenging IPL campaign behind him and regain his best form on the field.



India pacer sparks speculation after deleting posts following disappointing season

Pacer says missing campaign was not entirely his personal choice

YASH DAYAL DISPUTES RCB EXPLANATION OVER ABSENCE FROM IPL 2026 SEASON

NEW DELHI

Royal Challengers Bengaluru pacer Yash Dayal has broken his silence on his absence from IPL 2026, stating that the decision to miss the season was not entirely his own and offering a different perspective from the one previously shared by the franchise.

Ahead of the tournament, RCB Director of Cricket Mo Bobat had said that Dayal would not be available for the defending champions due to a "personal situation." However, the left-arm pacer suggested that the circumstances surrounding his absence were more complex than that explanation indicated.

Dayal said he continues to feel strongly connected to the Bengaluru franchise de-



spite not featuring this season. "Obviously, when you are sitting outside and watching the matches on television, it is difficult. But it is still my team. They retained me and did not bring in a replacement, which shows they value me as an important part of the squad," Dayal said.

He then addressed the rea-

son for his absence, saying the decision was not solely his own.

"The other thing is that my opting out of this season was not my personal decision. The decision is always made by the authority. I do not know what the exact reason behind RCB's decision was. I miss the team a lot," he said.

Despite not being part of the playing group this year, Dayal stressed that communication with the franchise remains intact. He revealed that he has been in regular contact with members of the management, including team mentor Dinesh Karthik, coaches and senior officials.

"There is no communication gap. Everything is clear and sorted. We stay in touch at intervals and the connection has not broken," he added.

Dayal's absence comes amid ongoing legal proceedings involving allegations against him. Authorities have registered separate cases, including one under provisions related to alleged sexual exploitation and another under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. The cricketer has not publicly addressed the merits of the allegations, and the matters remain under investigation.

For now, Dayal remains on RCB's retained list, with the franchise yet to announce any change to his status. While he watches from the sidelines, the pacer has made it clear that he still considers himself an integral part of the Bengaluru setup and hopes to return to competitive cricket in the future.

Parag's airport remark leaves Sooryavanshi momentarily stunned

MULLANPUR

A light-hearted exchange involving Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag and teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has gone viral on social media ahead of the IPL 2026 Eliminator against Sunrisers Hyderabad. Rajasthan Royals secured the fourth and final playoff berth with an impressive 30-run victory over Mumbai Indians in their last league-stage match. Following the win, the team travelled from Mumbai to Mullanpur, where they are set to face Sunrisers Hyderabad in a high-stakes knockout clash on Wednesday.

Upon arriving at the airport, players were greeted by photographers and fans eager to

catch a glimpse of the Royals squad. Much of the attention was focused on 15-year-old Sooryavanshi, whose remarkable performances this season have made him one of the most talked-about young cricketers in the tournament.

In a video that quickly gained traction online, photographers requested Parag and Sooryavanshi to pose together for pictures. However, the Royals skipper politely declined the request and responded with a humorous comment. "We aren't film stars," Parag said while walking away.

The remark appeared to catch Sooryavanshi off guard, with the teenager briefly displaying a puzzled expression before continuing to pose for

photographs. The moment has since been widely shared across social media platforms, with fans amused by Parag's candid response and Sooryavanshi's reaction.

Despite the playful incident, Parag has been one of Sooryavanshi's strongest supporters within the Rajasthan Royals setup. The captain has consistently backed the young batter, who has emerged as one of the breakthrough stars of IPL 2026 with a series of explosive innings.

The Royals enter the Eliminator with momentum on their side after sealing qualification in dramatic fashion. Against Mumbai Indians, they posted a challenging 205 for eight before restricting their opponents to 175 for nine.



Wasim Jaffer backs captaincy change at MI after poor season

MUMBAI

Former India opener Wasim Jaffer has suggested that Hardik Pandya should not continue as captain of the Mumbai Indians next season, following the franchise's disappointing IPL 2026 campaign.

Mumbai Indians endured one of their worst seasons in recent memory, finishing ninth in the 10-team standings with just eight points. Their campaign ended with a 30-run defeat to Rajasthan Royals, marking their 10th loss in 14 league matches and triggering discussions about the team's leadership and direction.

Hardik, who returned to lead the five-time champions, also struggled individually. The all-rounder managed only 146 runs in eight innings and picked up just three wickets, failing to make the impact expected from one of India's premier cricketers.

Jaffer said Mumbai Indians should retain Hardik as a key player but allow him to focus solely on his cricket rather than the added responsibility of captaincy.

"I will not make him the captain, but he will surely be retained. I want him to open up and get the best out of him," Jaffer said.

The former batter, however, admitted that identifying a replacement captain would not be straightforward. "At this stage, it would be hard to pick a captain," he added.

Despite the criticism, Mumbai Indians' batting coach Kieron Pollard defended Hardik after the team's early exit, insisting that the season's failure should not be placed solely on the skipper's shoulders.

"From a leadership perspective on Hardik, yes, it has not gone as well as he would have wanted as an individual. It might not have gone how we would have wanted as a management staff," Pollard said after the final league match.

He stressed that Mumbai's disappointing campaign was the result of collective shortcomings rather than individual mistakes.

"No one is going to sit here and point fingers. When you lose, you have to look at it from a collective perspective," Pollard added. While Mumbai Indians are yet to make any decisions regarding leadership for IPL 2027, Jaffer's remarks are likely to fuel debate over whether a change at the top could help the franchise bounce back after a forgettable season.



ASHWIN'S WARNING ON SPLIT HOME VENUES RETURNS AFTER PUNJAB KINGS COLLAPSE

CHANDIGARH

Punjab Kings' failure to qualify for the IPL 2026 playoffs despite a dominant start to the season has revived debate over the franchise's decision to split its home matches between two venues, a strategy former captain Ravichandran Ashwin had previously criticized.

Punjab appeared destined for a top-four finish after winning six of their first seven matches and spending 22 days at the top of the points table. However, a dramatic collapse saw the team lose six consecutive matches, ultimately finishing fifth with 15 points and extending its

long wait for a playoff appearance.

The disappointing end to the campaign has prompted renewed scrutiny of the franchise's decision to host matches at both Mullanpur and Dharamsala. While the move is often seen as a way to broaden a team's commercial reach and engage supporters in different regions, Ashwin had warned earlier in the season that changing home venues could disrupt a team's rhythm and ability to adapt to playing conditions.

Punjab enjoyed considerable success at their primary home ground in Mullanpur, winning three of their first four matches there. Their

only defeat at the venue came against Rajasthan Royals in late April. In contrast, the team struggled badly in Dharamsala, losing all three matches played at the picturesque hill venue. Ashwin argued that the differing pitch characteristics required significant adjustments from players who had become comfortable with conditions in Mullanpur.

"Punjab are not playing in Mullanpur; they are playing in Dharamsala, where the wicket is not that good to bat first on. The ball stays a little low in the first half, so it will take time for them to adapt," Ashwin had said during the season.

He also noted that changing venues could affect batting output, with players often needing time to understand new conditions.

The former Punjab skipper rejected the suggestion that the team's slump was simply another example of the franchise faltering under pressure. Instead, he pointed to the challenges created by moving away from their established base during a crucial stage of the tournament.

While several IPL franchises remain committed to a single home venue, others continue to divide matches across locations to expand their fan base and commercial footprint.