CITY HILIGHTS

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The Truth Speaks

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Farmers' livelihoods before politics: CM

He says all stakeholders need to find solutions to issues of sugarcane growers.

CH NEWS, BELAGAVI

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday held high-level meetings in Belagavi to address a brewing agrarian crisis, engaging separately with sugar factory owners, local MLAs, and farmer representatives to break an ongoing deadlock over minimum support prices (MSP) and pending industrial dues.

The high-stakes deliberations follow mounting pressure from agricultural unions and come in the wake of widespread concerns raised by farmers during the CM's recent visit to Kittur.

Addressing a meeting of sugar factory owners at Suvarna Soudha here, he said factory owners had failed to win the confidence of farmers, forcing the government to intervene amid growing protests. He said he had visited Kittur during the agitation to meet farmers and hear their grievances recently.

"Farmers' livelihoods are more important to us than politics. This is not a political meeting. There are other platforms for politics. We have gathered here to find a solution and help farmers survive," he said.

He urged sugar factory owners to take farmers into confidence and work with the state government to resolve the ongoing sugarcane price crisis, stressing that protecting farmers' livelihoods was the government's responsibility.

He said he had spoken to Union Minister Pralhad Joshi and the Maharashtra Chief Minister as part of efforts to find a solution, indicating that the crisis required coordination beyond the State government.

Shivakumar pointed out that Joshi, who handles the sugar portfolio at the Centre, was also from Karnataka but could not take decisions exclusively for the State, as the issue involved broader national considerations. "We must understand the ground realities and discuss the problems with an open mind. Our objective is to find a solution that safeguards farmers' interests."

The meeting was attended by the Advocate General and officials of the Finance Department, among others, signalling the government's efforts to examine the financial and legal aspects of the issue.



A packed hall at the meetings in Belagavi on Monday.

WHAT MILLS WANT

RESTRUCTURED MSP
To protect processors alongside growers

FINANCIAL RELIEF
On outstanding power arrears and utility taxes before crushing starts

> **"The state government will not take sides in the issues facing sugarcane farmers and sugar mills, and will work towards a solution that protects the interests of both stakeholders."**
> — D.K. Shivakumar, Chief Minister

WHAT GROWERS WANT

CANE PRICE
₹5,500 a tonne as the MSP for sugarcane

SUGAR PRICE
The minimum selling price of sugar raised to ₹60 a kg

FAIR WEIGHING
An end to lower cane weights, under-reported recovery and the 8% cut on machine-harvested cane

'Decision after discussing with everyone'

Addressing the media after the meetings, he said safeguarding the welfare of cultivators remains the administration's primary obligation, while acknowledging that the grievances of sugar mill owners must also be heard.

"I have asked the opinions of officers and MLAs, the MLAs and farmer representatives. The farmers' feelings have been expressed in Kittur. I've also listened to the factory owners' suffering. A decision should be made after discussing with everyone. The Centre should also be taken into confidence," the CM added.

The state is expected to finalise a roadmap following the conclusion of the Chief Minister's back-to-back stakeholder sessions in Belagavi on Monday.

Mills' MSP plea pending for 7 years: Jarkiholi

CH NEWS, BELAGAVI



Public Works Department Minister Satish Jarkiholi, who owns a sugar factory, on Monday said sugar mills, like farmers, were facing unresolved issues and urged the Union and state governments to address their concerns.

He told reporters after attending the meeting at Suvarna Soudha that sugar factories had been seeking a revision of the Minimum Selling Price (MSP) for more than seven years, but the demand remained pending despite several representations. He argued that a higher MSP would improve mills' liquidity and strengthen their ability to pay farmers.

He also highlighted outstanding payments owed to sugar factories by state power companies for electricity supplied to the grid through cogeneration units. Mill owners have sought a 20-year power purchase agreement with the Karnataka government, along with a reduction in water charges, he said.

Welcoming Shivakumar's initiative to hold separate discussions with farmers and factory representatives, he said the government should consider the concerns of both stakeholders and work towards a mutually acceptable resolution.

With Jarkiholi and local administrative teams coordinating discussions at the venue, the state government is attempting to formulate a balanced compromise package.

Rahul acquitted in defamation case over Shah remark

CH NEWS, SULTANPUR

A court in Uttar Pradesh's Sultanpur on Monday acquitted Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi in a defamation case over his 2018 remarks referring to Union Home Minister Amit Shah as an accused in a murder case.

Gandhi was present before the court at the time of the pronouncement of the verdict by Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Shubham Verma. The court said the remarks made by Gandhi were not defamatory in nature.

> *The court said the remarks made by Gandhi were not defamatory in nature.*

The criminal defamation case under Sections 499 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) against Gandhi was filed by BJP leader Vinay Mishra in 2018.

According to the complainant, Gandhi, in a statement made during the Karnataka elections, had referred to Shah as a murder accused. Gandhi had made the following statement in Bengaluru:



"People in India forget that the president of BJP is a murder accused. That's the truth. The party that talks about honesty, decency, has a person who has been accused of murder as president." Gandhi was referring to the Sohrabuddin encounter case, in which Shah was discharged by a special CBI court in 2014.

In 2023, Gandhi was convicted and sentenced to two ayears' imprisonment by a Gujarat court in another defamation case for his remark "all thieves have Modi surname", linking PM Modi with fugitives like Nirav Modi and Lalit Modi.

Senior Advocate R.S. Cheema with advocates Kashi Shukla, Tarannum Cheema, Prasanna S. and Akash Singh represented Gandhi.

Workers trapped at coal mine in Bengal

KOLKATA

Several workers were trapped around 50 metres underground at a coal mine in West Bengal's Paschim Bardhaman district on Monday after a technical glitch in the pulley system halted the movement of the lifting cage, a senior official said.

Eastern Coalfields Ltd (ECL) CMD Satish Jha said the incident happened at the Kumardihi A underground mine after a rope slipped off the pulley drum, disrupting the mechanism used to transport workers in the cage.

"There were no casualties, and food and water had been supplied to the trapped workers. Work was underway to bring them out safely," he said. "The workers are stranded at a depth of around 50 metres, while the pulley system extends to about 90 metres," he added.

CM Suvendu Adhikari said rescue operations were underway on a war footing. A team of policemen was deployed at the site, while senior district administration officials were also present, an official said.

Tell Modi to sack CEC, protests will stop in 30 seconds: Rahul Gandhi to traders

CH NEWS, NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has rejected an appeal by Delhi's business community to postpone the Opposition's November 1 rally at Ramlila Maidan amid the festival shopping season and instead asked them to talk to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, if they wanted a quick solution.

In a post on X, Gandhi said they can stop their protest in "30 seconds" only if PM Modi "sacked" Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Kumar has been the main target of the Opposition's protest over his handling of the special intensive revision (SIR) exercise and other issues, including taking alleged unilateral decisions even after the two election commissioners who work with him "objected on record" to several decisions taken by the poll body allegedly without their knowledge.

"To every trader in Delhi: We love you and hear you.



The government shut the metro, sealed our roads and locked down our capital. With a stolen vote nothing is safe – your shop, your savings, your children's future," the Congress MP who's also Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha wrote in Hindi on X.

"Tell Modi to sack accused no. 4, Gyanesh Kumar, and the protests will stop in 30 seconds," he said.

CTI's plea to Rahul

Gandhi's comments came days after the Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) wrote to him requesting that the Opposition bloc INDIA defer its November 1 protest until after November 10.

In a letter to Gandhi, CTI chairman Brijesh Goyal warned that holding a mass political gathering at Ramlila Maidan right before the festive peak could disrupt commercial activity worth Rs 10,000 crore across the national capital.

Goyal said the rally's venue is next to Old Delhi's busy wholesale and retail hubs, which typically record their heaviest customer footfall in the week leading up to the festival calendar. Dhanteras falls on November 6, followed by Diwali on November 8 and Bhai Dooj on November 10.

The November 1 rally is part of a long campaign by the Opposition alliance to demand the resignation of the chief election commissioner.

Modi govt using every possible trick to protect Gyanesh Kumar: Kharge



NEW DELHI: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday accused the Modi government of using every possible means to protect Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar despite what he described as "countless revelations of vote theft". In a post on X, Kharge said the Election Commission had refused to disclose information about the software used in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, citing "trade secrets". He reiterated his demand for Kumar's resignation. He urged people to join the 'Dilli Chalo' march on November 1 and attend a public rally against alleged "vote chori" at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi. He said the movement was not merely about protecting votes but also about safeguarding democracy.

NEW RAIL INSURANCE RULE

₹10 lakh rail cover for 45 paise!

CH NEWS, NEW DELHI

Passengers buying tickets from railway reservation counters will now also be able to avail themselves of travel insurance cover of up to ₹10 lakh for a premium of 45 paise.

This option will be available at all reservation counters across the country from October 27. Until now, the facility was available only to passengers booking tickets online through IRCTC.

Following a recent Supreme Court order, the Railways has arranged to provide the insurance option to passengers buying tickets offline as well. The facility will also be available at reservation counters in the Bhopal railway division. Opting for insurance will be voluntary.

The SC said that a large number of passengers buy tickets from station counters. The Railways had been given sufficient time to provide insurance facilities to these passengers, but no steps were taken in this regard. Therefore, from October 27, 2026, it has been made mandatory to provide the insurance option to those buying reserved tickets at counters as well.



What 45 paise buys

₹10 lakh	DEATH DURING THE JOURNEY
₹10 lakh	PERMANENT DISABILITY
₹7.5 lakh	PARTIAL DISABILITY
₹2 lakh	HOSPITAL EXPENSES

The judgment was delivered by a bench of Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Justice R. Mahadevan. The next hearing in the case will be held on November 16, 2026. Saurabh Kataria, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Bhopal, appealed to passengers to enter the correct mobile number while booking tickets and make digital payments.

Verdict on petition after Odisha rail accident

A petition was filed in the Supreme Court after the rail accident in Odisha in June 2023. It sought the implementation of a safety system to prevent rail accidents and the formation of a committee to investigate them. During the hearing, the court also took note of other issues related to passenger safety. These included foot overbridges at stations, installing fencing around the tracks and the lack of an insurance option for passengers who purchase tickets at counters.

Supreme Court to hear Karnataka's bike taxi appeal in mid-November

CH NEWS, NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed that the Karnataka government's appeal against the high court order permitting bike taxi operations in the state be listed in the week commencing November 16.

A bench of Justices Satish Chandra Sharma and N. Kotiswar Singh also allowed Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Congress-led state government, time to file additional documents in the matter. Mehta appeared virtually in the special leave petition filed by the state of Karnataka.

The state has engaged the Solicitor General to challenge the Karnataka High Court's January 23 judgment that lifted the ban on bike taxi services.

During the hearing, senior advocate Shashank Garg, appearing for the Bike Taxi Riders Association, submitted



that the Union government had issued circulars supporting the operators. "The Union of India has taken a stand in our favour, my Lord. There are circulars in our favour," he told the court.

The bench observed that Mehta could also appear for the Union government and place the correct position before it.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Uber, initially remarked that Mehta could represent only Karnataka as the Union government's documents favoured the bike taxi operators. He later clarified that there was no objection to Mehta's appearance.

Decisions on SIRs unanimous: EC tells SC

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Monday told the Supreme Court that all decisions relating to the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls were taken unanimously by its three members, rejecting allegations that Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar acted unilaterally or that the poll panel violated the law governing its decision-making process.

In a joint counter-affidavit filed on behalf of the ECI, Kumar and the two election commissioners, Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, the poll panel has also denied amending the statutory Form 6 used for enrolling new voters, arguing that the additional declaration required during the SIR was a separate document prescribed through its orders and not a modification of the form laid down under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.

The affidavit, filed on Monday through Deputy Election Commissioner Bhanu Prakash Yeturu, asserts that the three SIR orders issued on June 24, 2025, October 27, 2025, and May 14, 2026, were issued in accordance with unanimous decisions of the Commission and in compliance with Article 324 of the Constitution and Section 18 of the CEC and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023.

The response comes amid allegations, based on media reports, that Sandhu and Joshi objected to Kumar's decisions on at least 14 occasions over 10 months, including on matters relating to electoral-roll management, voter registration and information technology. The controversy has prompted petitions seeking judicial scrutiny of the Commission's internal decision-making, including whether its nationwide SIR exercise was lawfully authorised.

Over 4,500 run in Drug-Free Family Marathon



CH NEWS, MYSURU

The 'Drug-Free Family Marathon–2026' was organised on a grand scale at JSS Science and Technology University in Mysuru on Sunday under the joint aegis of the Anuvrat Samiti, Mysuru, and Life Is Calling.

More than 4,500 people participated in the marathon, pledging to spread awareness about freedom from drug addiction among the public, said Muskan Naulakha, president of Anuvrat Samiti, Mysuru.

Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar also participated in the marathon, lending his support to the campaign against addiction. He emphasised the importance of such initiatives in building a healthy and socially conscious society.

The event received support from the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, MY Bharat, the Karnataka State Police Department and the National Cadet Corps (NCC).



Office-bearers and members of various social, religious and Jain organisations extended their cooperation to the marathon. Those who participated included Terapanth Sabha president Madanlal Maru; JITO Mysuru Chapter Ladies Wing president Sarita Baghmar; Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana Mysuru Chapter president Rajan Baghmar; Pramod Chopra of the youth wing of the All India Shwetambar Sthanakvasi Jain Conference; Sthanakvasi Jain Yuva Sangh president Navratan Darla; and representatives of Sumatinath Jain Navayuvak Mandal, along with members of several other Jain organisations.

The primary objective of the marathon was to create awareness about the importance of building addiction-free families and a healthier society.

Values of Ramayana and Ambedkar continue to guide society: Yathindra

CH NEWS, MYSURU

The noble values embodied in the Valmiki Ramayana, one of the world's greatest epics, and the progressive thoughts of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar continue to serve as guiding lights for every member of society, said Urban Development Minister and Mysuru District In-charge Minister Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah.

Speaking after inaugurating the Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti celebrations organised at Kalamandira here on Monday, he said celebrating the birth anniversaries of great personalities helps convey their principles, ideologies and ideals to future generations. Such celebrations also inspire backward, oppressed and disadvantaged communities to achieve educational and social progress by drawing motivation from eminent personalities who have made significant contributions to their respective communities.

Recalling the contributions of Valmiki, the minister said Valmiki had gifted the world the Ramayana, the Adi Kavya. Through this epic, Valmiki effectively conveyed to society the ideals of Lord Rama, particularly his patience, sacrifice and spirit of renunciation. The most oppressed sections of society should make effective use of the right to reservation provided under the Constitution by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and empower themselves educationally and economically.



Presiding over the programme, Chamaraja MLA K. Harish Gowda said the Ramayana composed by Maharshi Valmiki comprises 24,000 verses spread across six khandas. It is not confined to any one religion or scripture but is a world-renowned epic that imparts philosophical teachings to all humanity. People across Asia continue to follow the noble ideals of the Ramayana.

Chamundeshwari MLA G.T. Devegowda said Valmiki beautifully portrayed the 24 divine qualities of Lord Rama and transformed the Ramayana into a world-famous literary masterpiece. Adopting its noble values in everyday life would help people lead better lives. Children in the modern era must familiarise themselves with the cultural values and teachings of the Ramayana. Education in schools and colleges should not be limited to academic marks; equal importance must be given to imparting strong moral values.

MLCs Dr. D. Thimmaiah, C.N. Manjegowda, Shivakumar K.R. and Raghu Kautilya, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Development Corporation chairman Narendra, and Deputy Commissioner G. Lakshmikanth Reddy were among those present.

Who said what

- → Yathindra: celebrations inspire oppressed communities to progress
- → G.T. Devegowda: schools must teach moral values, not just marks

? THE EPIC

Maharshi Valmiki's Ramayana comprises 24,000 verses across six khandas, MLA K. Harish Gowda said

Include Ramayana in textbooks, says Addanda Cariappa

The Ramayana should be included in school textbooks

CH NEWS, MYSURU

Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti was celebrated by the Vedavyasa Yuva Balaga at Kamsale Mahadevayya Circle at Chamundipuram in Mysuru on Monday.

Floral tributes were offered to the portrait of Maharshi Valmiki, and sweets were distributed among the public as part of the celebrations.



Addressing the gathering, former Rangayana director Addanda Cariappa said Maharshi Valmiki was an ideal figure in India's cultural heritage. To ensure that his life and contributions reached future generations, the Ramayana should be included in school textbooks.

Vedavyasa Yuva Balaga president Dayanand Nayak, former Mysuru City Corporation members M.V. Ramaprasad and M.D. Parthasarathy, Jagadish, BJP leaders Rakesh Bhat and Jayasimha Sridhar, BJP ST Morcha State Executive Committee member S. Thyagaraj, Mysore Cooperative Bank director K. Girish, Ramanuja Society director T.S. Arun, and leaders Sandesh Pawar, Gagan Gowda, Purushottam, Homma Manjunath, Cheluvaraj, Babu and Jattiprasad, among others, participated in the programme.



Yathindra flags off grand Valmiki Jayanti procession

CH NEWS, MYSURU

Urban Development Minister Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah flagged off a grand procession organised as part of Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti celebrations at the premises of the famous Kote Anjaneyaswamy Temple in Mysuru. He also paid floral tributes to the portrait of Maharshi Valmiki.



The ideals and life lessons of Maharshi Valmiki, who symbolises knowledge, equality and human values, continue to serve as a guiding light and source of inspiration for society, the minister said.

Through the epic Ramayana, Valmiki conveyed the universal messages of peace, equality and moral values. His teachings continue to guide people and remain a significant source of strength in empowering oppressed and backward sections of society.

MLAs G.T. Devegowda and Srivatsa, MLC C.N. Manjegowda, Deputy Commissioner G. Lakshmikanth Reddy, senior leaders of the Valmiki community, elected representatives and a large number of members of the public were present on the occasion.

Majestic school celebrates Valmiki Jayanti

CH NEWS, MYSURU

Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti was celebrated with reverence and enthusiasm at Majestic Primary and High School in Mysuru on Monday, in the presence of the school management, teachers, parents, guests, and students.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Amanulla Khan, Member of the School Management, highlighted the life and contributions of Maharshi Valmiki, traditionally regarded as the author of the Ramayana. He said that Valmiki's life teaches us that a person is defined not by the past, but by the positive change he brings within himself. Education should go beyond academic achievements and focus on developing good character, values, compassion, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Students must dream big, work hard, respect their parents and teachers, and always remain humble and kind.

The programme concluded with a message to draw inspiration from Maharshi Valmiki's life and promote knowledge, unity, kindness, and humanity in society.

Mysuru MCC cracks down on unauthorised flexes

CH NEWS, MYSURU

With its 'Flex-Free Dasara-2026' campaign receiving an encouraging response from the public, the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) has appealed to citizens, political representatives, organisations and traders not to put up unauthorised flex boards, banners, posters and other publicity materials anywhere in the city.

In a press release, MCC Commissioner M.K. Savitha expressed heartfelt gratitude to the people of Mysuru, elected representatives, organisations, business establishments and various government departments for their valuable cooperation in ensuring the successful conduct of Dasara-2026.

The rules

- **Permission:** mandatory before any publicity material goes up
- **Remove:** unauthorised flexes voluntarily
- **Penalty:** removal, fines and legal action under the Karnataka Open Places (Prevention of Disfigurement) Act, 1981



The positive public response to the 'Flex-Free Dasara' campaign helped Mysuru maintain a clean and beautiful appearance befitting its historic and cultural heritage. The initiative received appreciation from citizens, tourists and various stakeholders, reflecting the civic consciousness of Mysuru's residents, the commissioner said.

Building on this success, the MCC has appealed to the public to continue supporting the campaign and refrain from installing unauthorised flex boards, banners, posters and other publicity materials in the name of extending greetings to elected representatives or celebrating birthdays, festivals, anniversaries, jayantis and other personal or public occasions.

The civic body emphasised that maintaining the city's beauty, cleanliness, smooth traffic movement and heritage character must remain a continuous effort rather than a measure limited to the Dasara festival.

Prior permission mandatory

The MCC has made it clear that obtaining the necessary permission from the competent authority is mandatory before installing any publicity material. Those who have already put up unauthorised flex boards, banners or posters have been asked to remove them voluntarily without waiting for civic officials to intervene.

Violators face legal action

Warning of strict enforcement, the MCC said unauthorised publicity materials would be removed by the civic body and legal action, including the imposition of fines, would be initiated against those responsible under the Karnataka Open Places (Prevention of Disfigurement) Act, 1981.

The commissioner appealed to everyone to join hands with the MCC in preserving Mysuru as a clean, beautiful, flex-free city that continues to uphold its rich cultural and architectural heritage.



Team Mysuru felicitates Ramakrishna Ashrama monks

CH NEWS, MYSURU

Team Mysuru felicitated Swami Muktidananda Maharaj, who played a key role in developing the place where Swami Vivekananda once stayed into Viveka Memorial, a cultural centre, a learning hub for students and a landmark of Mysuru.

The felicitation was organised as Swami Muktidananda Maharaj was transferred from the Ramakrishna Ashrama in Mysuru to Bengaluru.

On the occasion, Team Mysuru also honoured Swami Yukteshananda Maharaj, who has recently taken charge as the new president of the Ramakrishna Ashrama in Mysuru.

Team Mysuru members Gokul Govardhan, Kiran Jayaram Gowda, Hireanna, Ramaprasad, Prasanna Raj Guru, Naveen, Raghavendra, Sunil, Hemanth, Karibasava Ravi and Bhargava were present.

SWR Mysuru Division marks Vigilance Awareness Week

CH NEWS, MYSURU

As part of the outreach activities, Mysuru Division of South Western Railway organised a special awareness programme at the Divisional Office in Mysuru to promote integrity, transparency, accountability and the prevention of corruption.

Shammas Hameed, Additional Divisional Railway Manager, Mysuru Division, administered the Vigilance Awareness Pledge to the gathering at the open hall of the Divisional Office. Branch officers, railway staff, Scouts and Guides, and students of Lalitha School participated in the programme.

To promote integrity, transparency, accountability and the prevention of corruption

Street play and paintings

As part of the awareness activities, the Scouts and Guides presented a street play (Nukkad Natak) highlighting the importance of honesty, integrity and the fight against corruption. A painting competition was also organised for students of Lalitha School to encourage them to express their ideas on vigilance and ethical values through art.



Hameed distributed prizes to the winners of the painting competition and appreciated the participants for their enthusiasm and active involvement.

The programme aimed to raise awareness about the importance of integrity and ethical conduct in public service and to encourage railway employees and students to contribute towards building a transparent, accountable and corruption-free society.

Dasara mismanagement angers Wadiyars

Royal family threatens to withhold Golden Howdah

CH NEWS, MYSURU

Expressing profound disappointment over the conduct of the 2026 Mysuru Dasara Mahotsava, Dr. Pramoda Devi Wadiyar of the erstwhile royal family has severely criticized the state government and the police department for gross mismanagement, lack of coordination, and glaring protocol violations. In a strongly worded press statement, she warned that recurring administrative lapses are forcing her to reconsider providing the iconic Golden Howdah (Chinnada Ambari) for the state's traditional Vijayadashami procession.



Her three proposals

1. Government cultural programmes only from the first to the ninth day of Navaratri
2. The palace left free of government interference on Ayudha Pooja and Vijayadashami
3. The Golden Howdah procession moved to the morning of the Rathotsava

In a press release here, she highlighted severe security breaches concerning the Golden Howdah, emphasizing that it remains the private property of the royal family, not the government. Despite explicit assurances of strict security from the Police Commissioner, police personnel and their families breached protocols to take selfies and photographs near the Howdah.

Furthermore, Dr. Pramoda Devi accused the police, specifically pointing to a Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) of the Law and Order division, of misbehaving with and physically pushing authorized royal representatives who held official duty passes when they attempted to safely retrieve the Howdah. The police unlawfully parked their vehicles in private areas reserved for the royal family and their guests, while arbitrarily placed police barricades directly obstructed their sacred religious rituals.

The comprehensive press release also addressed the recent controversy surrounding the 'Vajramushti Kalaga' (traditional wrestling). Dr. Wadiyar dismissed media reports claiming the event was halted for the first time in history, clarifying that it had been previously paused in the 1970s, 1980s, and during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. She expressed dismay that a lack of basic police coordination at the palace gates left members of the Jetti (wrestler) community stranded outside, causing unnecessary confusion despite prior instructions.

Adding to the royal family's distress, Dr. Wadiyar revealed that for the first time in 45 years, the identity of the elephant selected to carry the Golden Howdah was kept a secret from them. She was forced to personally inquire with forest officials just five days before the main event, a situation she described as causing immense and unnecessary stress.

To prevent future conflicts between the government's 'Nada Habba' (state festival) and the royal family's private religious observances, Dr. Wadiyar proposed three major structural changes. First, she suggested the government confine its cultural programs strictly from the first to the ninth day of Navaratri. Second, she firmly requested that the palace premises be left completely free of government interference on Ayudha Pooja and Vijayadashami days to allow the royal family to conduct their private rituals peacefully. Finally, she proposed that the government shift the Goddess Chamundeshwari Golden Howdah procession to the morning of the Rathotsava.



Reminding the state of a standing High Court order that protects her right to conduct these traditional rituals without hindrance, Dr. Wadiyar expressed deep sorrow that her 45 years of voluntary cooperation have been taken for granted. She urged the government to thoroughly consider her suggestions to ensure future Dasara festivities are celebrated with the dignity, respect, and grandeur they deserve.

Government won't surrender its role to Palace: Yathindra

CH NEWS, MYSURU

Urban Development and Mysuru District In-charge Minister Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah on Monday ruled out major changes to the conduct of Mysuru Dasara, asserting that the festival was organised by the government, while assuring that the traditions and rituals of the erstwhile Mysuru royal family would be respected.

Responding to questions on the suggestions and objections raised by the royal family regarding the conduct of Dasara, Yathindra said the government was willing to discuss their concerns and resolve genuine grievances through dialogue. However, he made it clear that proposals seeking to substantially alter the existing arrangements for the festival were not acceptable to him. "Whatever points they have mentioned in their letter, we are ready to sit down and discuss them if they speak to us directly. If they have any problems, we are also prepared to resolve them. The government will either send an official representative, including the Chief Minister, for discussions or issue an official response," he said.

Emphasising the government's responsibility for organising the annual festival, Yathindra said the Palace Board and the palace property largely belonged to the government, with certain portions allotted to members of the royal family for their residence. "The government is conducting Dasara. They have to provide the opportunity for the activities required by the government to organise the festival. At the same time, Mysuru Dasara has its own traditions, and the government is ready to facilitate the royal family's rituals in accordance with those traditions. Both sides must coordinate and work together," he said.

When asked whether the royal family had no authority despite being invited to participate in the celebrations, the minister rejected that interpretation, stating that the family had the right and opportunity to observe its traditional rituals.

He added that any disagreements arising during the arrangements should be resolved through discussions rather than confrontation.

> "Both sides must coordinate and work together."
>
> **Yathindra Siddaramaiah** District In-charge Minister



No to sweeping changes

Referring to the suggestions reportedly made by the royal family, Yathindra said some concerns, particularly those relating to difficulties allegedly faced because of the police, could be addressed. However, he ruled out proposals to substantially change the duration and nature of the celebrations. Suggestions involving extending the Ambari procession and Jumbo Savari arrangements to 60 days, or limiting the government-organised celebrations to seven days while leaving Ayudha Puja and Vijayadashami entirely to the Palace, could not be accepted. "Those changes are definitely not possible. That is my personal opinion, and I have not discussed the matter with the Chief Minister yet," he clarified.

Ambari belongs to Palace

On the question of the Ambari used to carry the idol of Goddess Chamundeshwari during the Vijayadashami procession, Yathindra said it belonged to the Palace and was taken by the government for the Jumbo Savari after paying for its use. The festival could be conducted smoothly only through mutual cooperation between the government and the royal family.

Responding to the objection that the royal family had not been informed in advance about the elephant selected to carry the Golden Howdah, the minister said the Forest Department itself had taken time to finalise the animal. According to him, Mahendra was initially considered for the responsibility, while Dhananjaya was also discussed as a possible choice. However, Mahendra was unable to continue walking while carrying the howdah during the trial, necessitating a change in the decision. "The decision was taken somewhat late, and that may be why the information was communicated late," he said.

Asked whether there was a rule requiring the Palace to be informed about the selection of the Ambari elephant, Yathindra said he was not aware of any such requirement.

Reiterating his position, the minister said the government was open to addressing legitimate concerns but would not agree to proposals that fundamentally altered its role in organising the historic festival. He called for better coordination between the government and the royal family to preserve Mysuru Dasara's traditions while ensuring the celebrations were conducted smoothly.

Take Pramoda Devi Wadiyar's statement seriously: Pratap Simha

CH NEWS, MYSURU

Former Mysuru-Kodagu MP Pratap Simha has said the government should take seriously the concerns expressed by Pramoda Devi Wadiyar, a member of the Mysuru royal family, pointing out that the Yadu dynasty continued the royal traditions after the Vijayanagara Empire.

> *"I do not want to blame anyone. The authorities should take steps to ensure that such lapses do not recur in the future."*
>
> **PRATAP SIMHA** Former Mysuru-Kodagu MP



He said minor discrepancies were bound to occur when lakhs of people gathered for an event like Mysuru Dasara. "I do not want to blame anyone. The authorities should take steps to ensure that such lapses do not recur in the future," he said.

Simha slams Kharge

Reacting to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's remarks, Simha said Kharge would have filed an atrocity case and launched protests across the state if similar remarks had been made against him. "You are a senior politician with 50 years of political experience. Before making such statements, introspect and consider how you would have reacted if someone had spoken about you in the same manner," he retorted.

Dalit girl's death

Responding to IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge's remarks on the RSS, Pratap Simha referred to the rape and murder of a minor girl during last year's Dasara period. He said the police had identified the accused within a day and the court had sentenced the offender to death and ordered compensation of ₹1 lakh.

Addressing Priyank Kharge, who previously held the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj portfolio and now holds IT-BT along with the Home Department, Pratap Simha questioned the government's response to the victim's case. "The deceased child ... belonged to the Dalit community, did she not? You have not said a word about the child or the compensation so far. Is your concern for Dalits limited only to people belonging to your own category?" he asked.

He urged Priyank Kharge to focus on issues affecting people's lives, respond to public concerns and strengthen the police department instead of repeatedly engaging in controversies.

"Address the problems that affect people's daily lives and work towards strengthening the police force. Do not keep indulging in such provocations every day," Pratap Simha said.

Dasara food mela generates 216 tonnes of waste in 15 days

CH NEWS, MYSURU

The 15-day Dasara Food Mela, organised at the Maharaja's College Grounds from October 11 to 25 as part of Dasara-2026, generated a total of 216.05 metric tonnes of waste, highlighting the massive scale of the culinary extravaganza that attracted thousands of food lovers every day.



According to a press release from the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC), the food mela offered visitors an opportunity to savour a wide variety of delicacies from different parts of Karnataka. The venue witnessed a daily footfall of approximately 70,000 to 80,000 people, making waste management a major task for the corporation.

To maintain cleanliness throughout the event, the waste generated at the venue was segregated into wet and dry waste and transported to the civic body's waste disposal facility on the same day for scientific disposal.

According to the waste collection figures, wet waste accounted for the largest share, with 1,81,830 kg collected during the 15-day event. Dry waste amounted to 27,895 kg, while 6,325 kg of empty water bottles were collected separately.

Waste in 15 days
Food mela, October 11-25

Wet waste	1,81,830 kg
Dry waste	27,895 kg
Water bottles	6,325 kg

Figures: Mysuru City Corporation

The total waste generated and collected during the food mela stood at 2,16,050 kg, equivalent to 216.05 metric tonnes.

Vande Mataram camp promotes national unity among youth: MP Yaduveer

Preserving unity amid diversity is the responsibility of every citizen

CH NEWS, MYSURU

The 'Vande Mataram Camp', organised at the Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering campus in Mysuru to promote patriotism, national unity and cultural exchange, provides an excellent platform for young people from different States to understand one another's cultures and traditions, said Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar.

He said young people arriving from different parts of India should preserve their own cultural heritage while respecting the cultures of other States, thereby strengthening the unity of the nation.

Organised to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the song 'Vande Mataram', the camp holds significance in familiarising young people with the sacrifices of freedom fighters, the spirit of patriotism and respect for the nation. Although India is home to diverse languages, religions, cultures and traditions, national unity is the force that binds everyone together. Young people should cultivate mutual respect and a spirit of cooperation and contribute to the progress of the country, he said.

In a democratic system, public opinion and voting are of great importance, and it is essential to follow constitutional means while bringing about changes in the country. It is the responsibility of young people to understand democratic values and grow into responsible citizens, he said.



Remembering the sacrifices made by previous generations, the youth should play a key role in building a strong, united and economically developed India. To realise the dream of a developed India, it is essential to nurture patriotism, social responsibility and a spirit of service among young people, he said.

As part of the camp, sports activities, cultural programmes, speeches and art competitions have been organised, providing young participants from different States an opportunity to showcase their talents and exchange ideas. The initiative aims to foster patriotism, cultural awareness, democratic values and a sense of national unity among the youth, he added.

India is a country characterised by diverse languages, traditions, customs, beliefs and cultural heritage. Despite this diversity, Indian identity has the strength to bring people together. Preserving unity amid diversity is the responsibility of every citizen, he said.

It is essential to instil a sense of nationalism, patriotism and respect for the country's cultural heritage among young people.

When youngsters from different States learn about one another's languages, cultures and traditions, national unity becomes stronger. Cultural exchange can help develop mutual understanding, cooperation and a sense of national belonging among the youth, he observed.

MLC Raghu R. Kautilya specifically urged the organisers to take the talented young participants from different States to one or two schools in Mysuru and facilitate interactions and cultural exchanges with students there.

He expressed the hope that such an initiative would help schoolchildren learn about the cultures, traditions and lifestyles of different parts of the country.

Vidyavardhaka College Principal Dr. B. Sadashivagowda, Nehru Yuva Kendra's M.N. Nataraj, Saroja and Reshma Chandran, among other dignitaries, were present at the programme.

Quick Read

Elderly woman living alone murdered, robbed

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 70-year-old woman living alone was brutally murdered and robbed in the Hosaguddadahalli area. The tragic incident occurred when an attacker struck her head and neck, stealing gold ornaments from a broken cupboard and causing her death from severe blood loss. The crime came to light when her tenant arrived and alerted local authorities. Police from the Byatarayanapura station quickly rushed to the scene to investigate. Officers are currently reviewing nearby security camera footage to track down the culprit and bring justice to the grieving neighborhood.

Leader urges Supreme Court appeal over reservation

CH NEWS, DEVANAHALLI

Former MP V.S. Ugrappa has strongly urged the state government to file a Special Leave Petition in the Supreme Court. This comes after the Karnataka High Court struck down the recent increase in reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Speaking to reporters, Ugrappa demanded constitutional protection by adding these demands to the Ninth Schedule. He also announced a peaceful protest during the upcoming Valmiki Jayanti, where community members will wear black armbands. The campaign aims to raise awareness and press both state and central leaders for swift, fair legal action.

Physicist Ashoke Sen wins Oskar Klein Medal

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Renowned theoretical physicist Professor Ashoke Sen has made history by becoming the first Indian to win the prestigious Oskar Klein Medal for 2026. The ICTS Bengaluru professor received this global honor for his revolutionary research on string theory and black holes. Awarded annually by Stockholm University and the Nobel Committee, previous winners include legendary scientists like Stephen Hawking and Peter Higgs. Professor Sen's groundbreaking work on string theory, S-duality, and black hole entropy has earned him worldwide acclaim. This monumental achievement adds another glorious chapter to India's rich scientific history and legacy.

Government warns IT firms over sidelining Kannadigas

The Karnataka government warned tech companies against sidelining local talent, while facing pressure over a stalled job quota bill.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The ongoing controversy surrounding the alleged marginalization of local talent in Bengaluru's booming technology sector escalated sharply as the state government issued a stern warning to corporate employers, declaring that discrimination against Kannadigas in employment will not be tolerated. The strong stance from the executive leadership comes amidst mounting public debate, even as critics point out that a legislative bill aimed at mandating private sector job quotas for locals has remained stalled for over a year and a half.

Addressing reporters in Bengaluru, Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi asserted that there can be no compromise on the self-respect, dignity, and employment rights of Kannadigas on their native soil. Emphasizing that Bengaluru's status as India's global technology capital rests heavily on the intellectual capacity and dedication of local youth, Tangadagi drew a sharp line between rejecting candidates due to legitimate skill gaps and outright denying employment solely because an applicant's mother tongue is Kannada. Echoing these sentiments, Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar stressed that the administration is fully committed to safeguarding local opportunities. The government urged citizens and job seekers to formally lodge complaints against any corporate entity found sidestepping local talent, assuring swift and stringent punitive measures.

However, the government's aggressive rhetorical posture has reignited intense scrutiny regarding its legislative follow-through. Political observers and worker advocates note that a proposed bill designed to legally mandate job reservations for Kannadigas in private industries has languished in administrative limbo for the past eighteen months. The initiative, initially spearheaded by Minister Santosh Lad during then Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's tenure to secure substantial employment percentages for locals, won initial Cabinet approval before encountering sudden roadblocks. Reports at the time suggested that opposition from influential ministerial quarters and intense corporate pushback stalled its passage.

> **"There is a clear distinction between rejecting a candidate for lacking qualifications and denying employment simply because their mother tongue is Kannada."**
> — **Shivaraj Tangadagi,** Kannada and Culture Minister

As corporate leaders continue to debate skill development requirements versus mandatory hiring quotas, the administration faces growing pressure to translate its verbal warnings into concrete, enforceable legal protections for local job seekers across Karnataka's industrial landscape.

Ugrappa says Valmiki funds diverted to other states



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka's ruling Congress administration faced an unexpected and sharp internal rebuke as veteran party leader and former Member of Parliament V.S. Ugrappa delivered a fierce, uncompromising critique regarding the handling of marginalized welfare funds and institutional corruption. Speaking candidly at a public function in Bengaluru during the Maharshi Valmiki Award presentation ceremony, Ugrappa openly accused authorities of allowing funds earmarked for the state's Scheduled Tribes development to be improperly diverted across state borders, warning that persistent financial irregularities would provoke a direct grassroots revolt against the government itself.

Addressing a packed gathering of community leaders, civil society members, and political figures, Ugrappa voiced profound outrage over the lingering fallout from financial scandals surrounding the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation. He questioned the systemic transparency governing tribal welfare allocations, demanding to know the precise metrics of land distribution and financial support extended to community members over the preceding three-year term. Escalating his rhetoric, the senior leader cautioned that any attempt to misappropriate, dilute, or divert welfare grants meant for society's most vulnerable populations would be met with fierce agitation, declaring that loyal party members and social activists would not hesitate to launch a statewide struggle against administrative negligence, regardless of political affiliations.

> *"If the misuse and diversion of Maharshi Valmiki Development Corporation funds continue, we will launch a fierce struggle against the government."*
> **V.S. UGRAPPA** former MP

Beyond financial accountability, Ugrappa raised several critical policy demands concerning historical dignity and constitutional protections for backward classes. He strongly urged the state government to officially rename the vital Bidar-Bengaluru National Highway in honor of Maharshi Valmiki as a lasting tribute to his socio-cultural legacy. Furthermore, he insisted that prestigious state accolades like the Valmiki Awards must be conferred strictly upon deserving, intellectual, and morally upright personalities rather than being compromised by political patronage.

Directing his attention toward broader legislative and constitutional rights, Ugrappa expressed deep concern over ongoing controversies regarding reservation quotas, questioning why current award recipients and elected representatives maintained a deafening silence on matters vital to social justice. He issued a direct appeal to all Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Members of Parliament and members of the Legislative Assembly to transcend partisan lines, unite on a common platform, and seek an urgent high-level delegation meeting with the Prime Minister. Additionally, he called upon the state government to immediately spearhead an all-party delegation to New Delhi to press the central authorities for robust constitutional protections, emphasizing that marginalized communities will relentlessly demand transparency, equity, and the full safeguarding of their statutory rights.

BEML builds South India's first Vande Bharat sleeper

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Marking a monumental technological leap in Indian railway infrastructure, the highly anticipated Bengaluru-Mumbai Vande Bharat Sleeper train is officially slated for its inaugural flag-off on November 1. As the very first high-speed sleeper variant to grace South India and only the second nationwide, this engineering marvel stands as a shining testament to domestic manufacturing capabilities, having been meticulously designed and constructed at Bengaluru's premier BEML facility. Connecting India's Silicon Valley directly to the financial capital, the premier overnight service will operate between Bengaluru's Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal (SMVT) and Mumbai's iconic Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), completing the scenic inter-state journey in approximately sixteen hours.



Exclusive on-the-ground reports and detailed previews showcase an extraordinary leap forward in passenger comfort, aesthetic sophistication, and modern rail engineering. The 16-coach rake boasts a total passenger carrying capacity of 823 travelers, structured across an optimized composition that includes eleven spacious 3-tier AC coaches, four refined 2-tier AC coaches, and an ultra-luxurious First AC coach. Every inch of the interior has been crafted to redefine overnight travel, featuring ergonomically contoured berths with advanced vibration-damping technology, plush cushioning, individual reading lamps, and conveniently integrated mobile charging ports at every passenger compartment.

Safety, hygiene, and accessibility remain central to the Vande Bharat sleeper design philosophy. The train is equipped with automated plug-type entry doors, robust crash buffers, comprehensive 24/7 CCTV surveillance, and state-of-the-art bio-vacuum restroom facilities with touch-free automated fittings. Sensor-based ambient corridor lighting and superior thermal and acoustic insulation further ensure a serene, hotel-like atmosphere while gliding across the terrain. As trial runs conclude and final preparations wrap up ahead of its grand November debut, railway enthusiasts and daily commuters alike are eagerly awaiting the commencement of a service that promises to transform interstate connectivity between Karnataka and Maharashtra.

The new sleeper train

COACHES	PASSENGERS
11 AC 3-tier, 4 AC 2-tier, 1 First AC	823
ROUTE	**FLAG-OFF**
SMVT Bengaluru to Mumbai CSMT	November 1, 2026



ICFAI Law School explores new labour codes

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

ICFAI Law School recently hosted a national conference focusing on India's four new labour codes.

Academics, legal experts, researchers, and students gathered at the Bengaluru campus to discuss the major legal changes shaping workers' rights, social security, and industrial relations.

The event brought together notable figures from the legal and academic fields. Former High Court Judge Shri B. A. Patil graced the occasion as the chief guest. Other distinguished speakers included Prof. Suresh V. Nadagoudar and Prof. Vijender Kumar, who shared deep insights into the evolving legal framework.

Leaders like Prof. Muddu Vinay, Prof. Pujari Ravisekhararaju, and Dr. Rajashree Patil guided the proceedings, emphasizing the need to balance economic growth with fair protection for workers. Discussions centered around how the new reforms will impact businesses and employees alike.

Organizers noted that the conference highlights the institution's ongoing dedication to legal research and tackling major contemporary issues. Attendees left with a clearer understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead as the country transitions into this modernized labour landscape.

RVIM hosts grand double celebration for students

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

RV Institute of Management recently marked a double celebration, bidding farewell to its graduating MBA and PGDBA batches of 2024 to 2026 while welcoming new students for the 2026 to 2028 academic terms under the banner of GENESIS 2026 to 2028.

The lively campus buzzed with joy as families, teachers, and industry leaders gathered to witness the special day. Dr. Purushottam Bung, the director of RVIM, officially opened the graduation ceremony. Speakers shared heartfelt advice to help the young minds step into the corporate world with confidence.

Prof. Ramesh B., a vice-chancellor, spoke to the graduates about staying ready for changing times. Following him, corporate leader Mr. Vikram P. Rao stressed the value of hard work, honesty, and a lifelong desire to learn. He urged future managers to embrace change and always aim for excellence.



The focus then shifted to welcoming the new batch. Chief Guest Dr. P. B. Kotur and Guest of Honour Mr. Jaswanth Sharanarthy inspired the freshers with motivational thoughts on how to make the most of their time in business school. They encouraged newcomers to build strong habits right from day one.

The president of the event, CA Dr. A. S. Vishnu Bharath, reminded everyone that true success comes from discipline, ethical leadership, and staying dedicated to one's studies. The memorable day wrapped up with a warm vote of thanks by Dr. K. Aparna Rao. She thanked the guests, parents, and staff for making the dual event a grand success.

MODI VALIDATES KHARGE

'Our work made its mark in Mann Ki Baat'

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge launched a sharp and sarcastic counter-offensive against opposition BJP leaders, asserting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's radio address has effectively validated his administrative achievements in the Kalaburagi district. Responding to persistent criticism and inquiries from state BJP leaders regarding regional development, Kharge remarked that rather than requiring formal defenses against political jabs, the central government itself has inadvertently highlighted his ministry's governance successes on a national platform.

Addressing reporters in Bengaluru, Kharge pointed out that Prime Minister Modi recently featured Kalaburagi's iconic geographical indication (GI) tagged togari bele (pigeon pea/tur dal) and traditional rotti during his popular Mann Ki Baat broadcast. Highlighting the global expansion of these regional delicacies, Kharge noted that targeted export initiatives have successfully transported Kalaburagi rotis and pigeon peas to international markets, including recent exports to the Maldives. He emphasized that these strategic agricultural branding measures have directly empowered local cultivators, securing thirty percent higher market prices for farmers while creating local value-addition channels by processing crops like green gram, tur, black gram, and horse gram into nutritious energy bars.



Key highlights

- **Global markets:** 30% higher prices for farmers; exports to the Maldives
- **Value addition:** Green gram and horse gram turned into energy bars
- **Sarcastic dig:** Critics told to listen to the PM's broadcast

Continuing his critique of the opposition, Kharge observed that while central authorities acknowledge local economic milestones such as the marketing of 'Kalaburagi Pulse', 'Bhima Pulse', 'Kalaburagi Khadak Rotti', and 'Kamalapura Red Banana', state-level BJP leaders remain blinded by partisan habits of constantly questioning his ministerial track record. He sarcastically suggested that before launching politically motivated attacks, opposition leaders should carefully tune into the Prime Minister's broadcast and consult their own consciences to speak their true Dil Ki Baat.

BMTC boosts employee accident insurance to ₹1 crore

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In a landmark welfare measure aimed at bolstering the financial security and social safety net of its workforce, the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has announced a major upgrade to its employee personal accident insurance scheme, doubling coverage from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore. The comprehensive financial package was formalized through a newly minted three-year Memorandum of Understanding signed by BMTC Managing Director Raghunandana Murthy and Union Bank General Manager H.T. Vasappa in collaboration with Union Bank of India.

Under the terms of the revised agreement, employees maintaining salary accounts with the banking partner will see their coverage significantly expanded. In the tragic event of an accidental death while on or off duty, the designated nominee of the employee will receive a substantial insurance payout of Rs 1 crore. Furthermore, identical Rs 1 crore protection has been extended to cover cases of total or partial permanent disability resulting from accidents. The agreement also incorporates added security layers, including supplementary compensation ranging from Rs 4 lakh to Rs 15 lakh facilitated via RuPay Platinum Debit Cards, alongside medical assistance provisions offering up to Rs 30,000 annually for employees requiring inpatient hospital treatment.

Beyond accidental coverage, the tripartite agreement extends crucial financial support to the families of transport workers who pass away due to natural causes or non-accidental circumstances.

Quick Read

Goat dispute ends in murder; man gets life imprisonment

CH NEWS, DODDABALLAPURA

The IV Additional District and Sessions Court in Doddaballapura has sentenced Ravi Kumar to life imprisonment for causing the death of Chandrashekhar during a dispute over a goat in Bisuvanahalli, Bengaluru Rural district. The incident occurred on August 23, 2021, when an argument broke out over tethering a goat that was allegedly troubling Chandrashekhar's three-year-old granddaughter. During the altercation, Ravi Kumar punched Chandrashekhar in the chest, causing him to collapse. He died while being taken to hospital. Although no external injuries were found, medical and histopathology reports supported the conclusion that physical trauma and emotional distress triggered a fatal cardiac event. The court sentenced Ravi Kumar to life imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹20,000. Other accused persons were also sentenced to imprisonment.

Centre limits role in Bedthi-Varada river linking project

Following a request from Karnataka and a December 2025 agreement, the NWDA began preparing a Detailed Project Report.

CH NEWS, UTTARA KANNADA

Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil has clarified that the Karnataka government is responsible for the implementation of the proposed Bedthi-Varada river-linking project, while the Centre's role is limited to technical assistance and guidance.

Highlights

- **States' job:** irrigation and river-linking projects are planned and managed by the states
- **DPR:** NWDA began it at the request of Karnataka's Water Resources Department
- **No approval yet:** preparing the DPR is not final approval
- **Objection:** MP Kageri urged the Centre to stop the project
- **Impact:** environmental effects need comprehensive consideration

In a written response to Uttara Kannada MP Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri, Patil stated that the planning, development and management of irrigation and river-linking projects fall primarily within the jurisdiction of the respective state governments. He said the Centre does not directly implement such projects.


सी आर पाटील
C R Paatil

जल शक्ति मंत्री
भारत सरकार
Minister of Jal Shakti
Government of India

D.O. No.N-54011/13/2026-BM Section-MoWR

Shri Vishweshwar Hedge Kageri Ji,

Kindly refer to your D.O. letter dated 30.07.2026 regarding your request for immediate intervention to discontinue the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the proposed Bedti–Hirevaddatti (Modified Bedti–Varada) Interlinking Project and to keep all further activities in abeyance.

The matter has been examined. It is submitted that the planning, development and management of water resources projects are undertaken by the respective State Governments, based on their administrative priorities and resource considerations. The role of the Central Government is to extend technical guidance and support wherever required, in accordance with established procedures and upon receipt of proposals from the concerned State Government.

In this context, it is informed that the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) has taken up preparation of the DPR of the above project at the request of the Water Resources Department, Government of Karnataka, and an MoU was executed on 23.12.2025 for this purpose. It has further been clarified that the DPR preparation by NWDA is an investigative and planning exercise, and does not constitute physical execution or final implementation of the project.

NWDA has further indicated that during the DPR preparation, all relevant technical, environmental and socio-economic aspects—including downstream river ecology, environmental flows, agriculture, fisheries, groundwater recharge and the requirements of communities dependent on the Bedti catchment—will be duly examined. The identification of the command area and beneficiaries, and assessment of actual water requirements for irrigation, drinking and industrial purposes, particularly in the drought-prone districts of Gadag and Haveri, will also be undertaken in consultation with the Government of Karnataka.

The Union Jal Shakti Ministry's written reply on the Bedthi-Varada river-linking project.

The minister explained that the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) began preparing a Detailed Project Report (DPR) following a request from Karnataka's Water Resources Department and an agreement signed on December 23, 2025. He clarified that the report preparation process does not amount to final approval of the project.

Kageri had urged the Union government to stop the proposed river-linking project, arguing that it could harm the environment and go against the interests of people living in the region. He also sought an immediate halt to the preparation of the DPR and suspension of further activities related to the proposal.

Patil said the concerns raised by the MP regarding environmental protection and public interest had been taken seriously. He also indicated that the effects on the downstream ecosystem, agriculture, fisheries, groundwater resources and the needs of people living in the Bedthi river catchment area would require comprehensive consideration.

The minister further stated that if the Karnataka government submits a report addressing the statutory requirements relating to forests, wildlife and environmental protection, the Union Ministry of Environment will examine it thoroughly.

The clarification comes amid concerns over the proposed diversion of water from the Bedthi basin to the Varada river. The project's environmental implications and its potential impact on local communities remain key issues in the debate over the proposal.

Vigilance awareness week launched at Kaiga Township

CH NEWS, KAIGA

Vigilance Awareness Week has been launched at Kaiga Township to promote public awareness about corruption and encourage people to report corrupt practices.

As part of the initiative, an anti-corruption awareness campaign was conducted on Monday in villages surrounding Kaiga. Officials reached out to local residents and explained the importance of maintaining transparency, integrity and accountability in public life.

Pamphlets on complaints

Officials engaged with local residents, emphasising the importance of transparency, integrity and accountability in public life.

Pamphlets containing information on ways to combat corruption and procedures for filing complaints were distributed during the campaign. Special emphasis was placed on explaining how citizens can submit complaints online to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) through the Public Disclosure and Complaint mechanism.

Complaint channels

The campaign aimed to familiarise villagers with the available complaint channels and encourage them to report suspected corruption through the appropriate authorities. Officials also highlighted the role of public participation in building a transparent and corruption-free society.

Officials take part

Kaiga Station Director Suprad Das, Vigilance Officer Mukesh and other officials and dignitaries participated in the awareness programme.

Positive response

DID YOU KNOW?
Citizens can submit corruption complaints online to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) through its Public Disclosure and Complaint mechanism.

The campaign received a positive response from villagers, reflecting local interest in initiatives aimed at promoting honesty and accountability. The programme formed part of the broader observance of Vigilance Awareness Week at Kaiga Township.

Outrage in Gadag as Tahsildar office demolition work begins

MALINGARAYA PUJAR, GADAG

Public outrage has erupted in Gadag after portraits of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi were reportedly left hanging on the walls of the old Tahsildar's office as demolition work began.

The old Tahsildar's office has been shifted to another location to facilitate the construction of a new building with modern facilities. Following the relocation, demolition work began at the old premises. However, the reported failure to remove the portraits of the national leaders before the demolition triggered criticism from local residents.

Portraits left on the walls

According to local reports, the portraits of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, and Mahatma Gandhi, a key leader of India's freedom movement, remained on the walls while preparations were underway to demolish the building using heavy machinery.


Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (representational picture).

Residents question officials' conduct

Residents expressed disappointment over the alleged negligence, questioning why the portraits had not been safely removed before the demolition began. They said that removing photographs of respected leaders, elders and other prominent personalities before vacating or demolishing a building was a basic responsibility.

"Even ordinary people take care to remove photographs when shifting houses. Why was this not done by officials working in a government office?" residents questioned.

The incident has sparked discussion across Gadag, with people demanding accountability from the officials concerned. Residents have urged the authorities to ensure that the portraits are handled respectfully and that such incidents do not recur during the demolition of government buildings.

Demand for action

Locals have called on the district administration to examine the circumstances surrounding the incident and determine whether there was negligence on the part of officials or contractors involved in the demolition.

They have also demanded appropriate action against those found responsible. The incident has renewed attention to the importance of careful handling of portraits and belongings when government offices are relocated or demolished.

Residents ask why the portraits were not removed before the building was demolished

The allegations and public concerns have yet to be addressed through an official response from the authorities concerned.

Holalu village celebrates grand deity procession

CH NEWS, MANDYA

A grand religious celebration was held at Holalu village in Mandya taluk as part of the Navaratri-Dasara festival. Devotees gathered at the Sri Balamuri Ganapathi Temple and participated in special rituals and a procession of five village deities.

Women, children and devotees fulfilling religious vows offered flowers to Sri Doddayya Swami, Sri Mantri Huchharayaswami, Sri Chikkayya Swami, Sri Eluramma Devi and Sri Huchhamma Devi. The Guddappas, who serve as custodians and priests of the deities, decorated the idols with flowers and prepared elaborate floral arrangements.

Special rituals and worship were performed by the Guddappas, Gadikaras and members of the Madivala Machideva community. A special puja was also conducted for Sri Doddayya Swami in the presence of the sacred Basava.


The procession of the five village deities at Holalu in Mandya taluk.

Later, the five deities were taken in a grand procession to the premises of the village presiding deity, Sri Doddammathayi. The procession moved through the village amid the rhythmic beats of tamate and nagari drums, creating a festive atmosphere.

As part of the celebrations, streets, temples and public spaces across Holalu were illuminated with electric lights. Decorative arches featuring images of deities, including Shiva, Ganesha, Lakshmi and Anjaneya, added to the festive appearance of the village. Religious celebrations continued throughout the night at the Rangamandira grounds.

Devotees gathered at the Sri Keshava Narayana Swamy Temple to offer special prayers to the five deities. A grand Jatra Mahotsava was subsequently held at the Sri Doddayya Swamy Temple.

Former MLA H.B. Ramu, former State Vokkaliga Sangha vice-president H.L. Shivanna, advocates Vijayakumar and H.C. Hariprasad, along with several community leaders and temple trust office-bearers, attended the celebrations.

Gadikaras from H. Malligere, Vadesamudra, Holalu and Chikkatammanahalli, along with residents of neighbouring villages, youth leaders and representatives of local organisations, also participated. Devotees expressed happiness and spiritual fulfilment after having darshan of the deities.



The Samruddhi Sports Academy skaters with their bronze medals.

Gangavathi skaters win 5 bronze medals at district-level meet

CH NEWS, GANGAVATHI

Three students from Samruddhi Sports Academy in Gangavathi taluk of Koppal district have won five bronze medals at the third Bengaluru District-Level Skating Competition held at BTM Layout in Bengaluru on October 24 and 25. With their performances, all three skaters have qualified for the state-level speed skating competition, bringing recognition to their academy and the region.

A student competing in the under-8 category won bronze medals in the 200-metre and 400-metre tenacity skating events.

Ranjith Kumar Shanmukappa, competing in the under-16 category, secured bronze medals in both the 200-metre and 400-metre skating events. Niranjan Kumar Shanmukappa, who participated in the under-14 category, won a bronze medal in the 400-metre tenacity skating event.

The three athletes collectively earned five bronze medals through their performances in the district-level competition.

Shanmukappa, founder and head coach of Samruddhi Sports Academy, congratulated the students on their achievements and said they had brought pride to the institution. He expressed confidence that their success would encourage other young athletes to take up skating and work towards competing at higher levels.

Assistant Coach Chiranjeevi Mohan Kumar also congratulated the medal winners and appreciated their efforts. The academy's president, office-bearers and the parents of the students extended their best wishes to the young skaters.

Medal haul

5	BRONZE MEDALS
3	SKATERS QUALIFY FOR THE STATE MEET

The achievement marks an encouraging step for the athletes as they prepare for the state-level competition. Their success highlights the importance of regular training, coaching and family support in helping young sportspeople develop their skills and compete successfully.

The academy's management expressed happiness over the results and wished the students success in their upcoming competitions.

VERIFYING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Chitradurga MLA inspects hospital over patient complaints

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

MLA K.C. Veerendra Puppy made a surprise visit to the Chitradurga District Hospital on Monday following complaints about inadequate medical care, alleged collection of money from patients for treatment and surgeries, and shortcomings in hygiene, food quality and hospital services.

During the visit, the MLA inspected various wards and interacted directly with patients to understand the problems they were facing. He enquired whether doctors and medical staff were available on time, essential medicines were accessible and patients were receiving proper treatment.

The visit assumes significance amid allegations that outpatients and inpatients were not receiving adequate care at the government hospital. The MLA sought to verify the complaints by speaking to patients instead of relying solely on information provided by hospital officials.

He specifically asked patients whether anyone had demanded money for treatment or surgical procedures that should be provided free of charge or according to government rules. He said appropriate action would be taken against those responsible if allegations of unauthorised collection of money were established.


The inspection of the district hospital kitchen in Chitradurga on Monday.

Veerendra instructed doctors and hospital staff to discharge their duties responsibly and ensure that patients received timely medical attention. He emphasised that healthcare was a service rooted in humanity and that poor and vulnerable people should not face discrimination while seeking treatment at a government facility.

He said patients visiting hospitals were already dealing with health problems and should not be subjected to unnecessary delays, repeated visits or neglect. Medical officers and staff were directed to respond promptly to patients' concerns and provide the required services without unnecessary inconvenience.

The MLA also stressed the need to maintain cleanliness, ensure food quality and improve the overall functioning of the hospital. He directed officials to address administrative shortcomings and maintain proper service standards regularly rather than waiting for complaints from the public.

Government hospitals play a crucial role in providing affordable healthcare to economically weaker sections and other sections of society. The MLA's inspection aimed to assess the situation on the ground and remind hospital authorities of their responsibility to provide accessible and accountable medical services. Further action on the complaints will depend on the findings of the inquiry and verification of the allegations.

"The public visits government hospitals with trust; they expect doctors and staff to work responsibly so that this trust remains intact."
– K.C. Veerendra Puppy
MLA, Chitradurga

Quality food for patients

MLA K.C. Veerendra inspected the district hospital kitchen, urging staff to prioritise nutritious, high-quality ingredients over low costs. Serving 600 to 800 people daily, he emphasised strict cleanliness and zero negligence to aid patient recovery.

Quick Read

Ancient coins found while burying turtle in Chitradurga

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Ancient coins were discovered inside a small pot in the courtyard of a house at Gopanahalli village in Challakere taluk when children dug the ground to bury a turtle. The pot was found in the courtyard of Rangamma's house, attracting attention among local residents. Following the discovery, Tahsildar Rahen Pasha visited the spot and inspected the site. The Archaeology Department has been informed about the discovery. Officials have taken the pot and coins into their custody for further examination to determine their age and historical significance.

'Kannada signboards must follow 60% rule'

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

Akhanda Karnataka Rakshana Samiti State Vice-President Nagaraj P. Banekar has urged authorities to strictly enforce the rule requiring 60% Kannada content on signboards across Kalaburagi district. In a press statement, Banekar said business establishments, hotels, hospitals, educational institutions and government offices must give priority to Kannada on their signboards. He alleged that the government directive was not being properly implemented in several parts of the district, including rural areas. He demanded that officials take appropriate action against establishments violating the rule and ensure effective implementation across all taluks. Banekar warned that the organisation's state committee would launch a phased agitation if authorities failed to act.

Congress plans Delhi rally againstalleged vote theft

AICC observer Deepti Mary Varghese stated that the protest would unite individuals dedicated to democracy and constitutional values.

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA



The Congress has announced a massive rally at Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi on November 1 as part of its ongoing campaign against alleged vote theft and irregularities in electoral rolls.

AICC observer Deepti Mary Varghese said the protest would bring together people who believe in democracy and constitutional values.

Speaking at a press conference at the District Congress office in Shivamogga on Monday, Varghese said the campaign, titled "Save Your Vote, Save the Nation", had reached a crucial stage. She said the movement began following allegations of electoral irregularities in Bengaluru's Mahadevapura Assembly constituency.

Varghese alleged that similar irregularities were being reported in Maharashtra, Haryana and Bihar. She also expressed concern over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, alleging that large numbers of eligible voters could lose their names from the lists. She said the Congress would oppose any attempt to deprive genuine voters of their democratic rights.

She further alleged that Form 6 was being misused and said the issue would be included in the party's campaign. Varghese accused the Election Commission of acting in favour of the BJP and questioned the decisions of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. She said the agitation would continue until he resigned.

She added that Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi had taken the campaign to the streets and that the Congress planned to expand it to ward, block and gram panchayat levels.

Minister S. Madhu Bangarappa, who was present at the press conference, addressed concerns over the quality of shoes distributed to schoolchildren in Karnataka. He said the shoes were of good quality and denied reports suggesting otherwise. However, he assured that any defective shoes would be replaced.

Responding to BJP criticism, Bangarappa accused the party of creating unnecessary confusion and questioned its reaction whenever Prime Minister Narendra Modi was mentioned.

Points

- → Varghese alleged nationwide voter list irregularities.
- → Congress opposed the SIR of electoral rolls.
- → Party demanded CEC Gyanesh Kumar's resignation.
- → Rahul Gandhi taking the campaign to the grassroots.
- → Minister Bangarappa defended the quality of school shoes.

Former minister Kimmane Ratnakar, District Congress president H.C. Yogish, several corporation and board chairpersons, party office-bearers and other Congress leaders attended the press conference.



Seelam announces Nov 1 protest against electoral roll revision

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

A protest will be held in New Delhi on November 1, demanding the cancellation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, said G.D. Seelam.

Seelam alleged that the electoral roll revision process was being used to facilitate "vote theft" and raised concerns over its impact on the democratic rights of citizens. He called for greater transparency in the preparation and revision of voter lists.

According to him, the proposed protest aims to draw attention to concerns surrounding the SIR process and demand accountability from the authorities responsible for conducting elections. The protesters are expected to press for the cancellation of the revision exercise and seek the resignation of Gyanesh Kumar.

Seelam alleged that electoral roll revision should not become a means of depriving eligible citizens of their voting rights. He stressed that every eligible voter must be able to exercise the constitutional right to vote without facing unnecessary obstacles.

The planned demonstration on November 1 is intended to bring these concerns to the national level. The demands include reviewing the current electoral roll revision process and ensuring that voter lists are prepared in a transparent and fair manner.

Seelam alleged that the electoral roll revision was being used for "vote theft," threatening citizens' democratic rights.

The issue has become a subject of political debate, with critics raising questions about the conduct and possible consequences of the SIR exercise.

The proposed protest is expected to focus on electoral transparency, accountability and the protection of voting rights.

Tata Motors expands advanced manufacturing facilities in Dharwad

DHARWAD



Tata Motors has strengthened its Dharwad manufacturing plant with a new-generation paint shop and advanced Body-in-White (BIW) and E-Axle assembly lines to increase production capacity and manufacturing flexibility.

The facilities were inaugurated by Managing Director and CEO Girish Wagh, along with senior company officials. The upgrades will enable the plant to manufacture conventional and zero-emission powertrains on the same campus.

The company also inaugurated an on-site crèche to support its workforce, with women accounting for over 30% of shopfloor employees. The plant is reportedly the first manufacturing facility in India to receive ISO 30415 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion validation.

Spread across 650 acres, the campus operates entirely on renewable electricity and holds Water Positive and Zero Waste to Landfill certifications. Established in 2012, the plant manufactures various commercial vehicles and supports North Karnataka's economy through a wide network of local suppliers and MSMEs.

Newlywed couple killed in Chikkaballapura road accident

CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPURA

A newlywed couple died on the spot after their electric bike collided head-on with an Eeco car on the Chintamani-Bengaluru road on Monday. The deceased were identified as Shanmukha (27) and his wife Mithula (24), residents of Chintamani. The couple had married just a few months ago. Three people travelling in the car, identified as Suraj, M.L. Kumar and Athula, sustained injuries and were admitted to a nearby hospital for treatment. Chintamani Rural Circle Inspector Shivaraj and his team visited the accident site. Police registered a case and launched an investigation to determine the cause of the collision.



Indriya launches Diwali campaign celebrating Love



HUBBALLI

Indriya, the fine jewellery brand from Aditya Birla Jewellery, has launched its Diwali campaign, 'Festival of Love', featuring real-life couple Aditi Rao Hydari and Siddharth.

Conceptualised by Ogilvy West and directed by Kopal Naithani, the campaign highlights intimate gestures and emotional connections that make festive celebrations meaningful. The film follows the couple preparing to host friends for Diwali, focusing on the affection shared amid festive preparations.

Alongside the campaign, Indriya introduced Padmika, a festive collection crafted in 22-karat yellow gold. Inspired by Goddess Lakshmi, prosperity and auspicious beginnings, the collection features lotus motifs and traditional Gulabi Meenakari pink enamel work.

Indriya CEO Sandeep Kohli said the campaign aims to strengthen emotional connections with customers, while the collection combines traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design. The initiative celebrates love, togetherness and festive elegance.

MP praises Modi's 25 years of public service

CH NEWS, UDUPI

Politics is not a profession but a commitment to serving the nation, said MP Kota Srinivas Poojary, praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi for completing 25 years in public service.

He was speaking at a felicitation programme organised by the Gurme Foundation, led by Kaup MLA Gurme Suresh Shetty, to honour Anganwadi workers, helpers and ASHA workers from the taluk.

Highlighting the contribution of Anganwadi workers, Poojary said Karnataka had around 70,000 Anganwadi centres with approximately 1.30 lakh staff members. These workers care for nearly 32 lakh children, treating them with the affection and concern they would show their own children. Their contribution to society was commendable, he said.

MLA Gurme Suresh Shetty said it was a matter of happiness that Karnataka had secured second place in the SIR process. He also said India's global image had changed significantly since 2021.

Referring to the country's economic growth, Shetty said India, which had earlier ranked 13th in the global economy, had risen to fourth place. He appreciated the dedication and hard work of Anganwadi and ASHA workers and stressed the importance of recognising their services.

Around 600 Anganwadi workers, helpers and ASHA workers from the taluk were felicitated at the programme in recognition of their contributions to public welfare.

Leader Lalaji R. Mendon, former BJP district president Mattaru Ratnakar Hegde and BJP district president Naveen Shetty Kuthyar addressed the gathering.

BJP Mahila Morcha state general secretary Shilpa G. Suvarna, former Zilla Panchayat member Geetanjali M. Suvarna, district secretary Srikanth Nayak, Mahila Morcha president Neeta Gururaj, Yuva Morcha president Sonu Pangala and Minority Morcha president Nazir Sheikh attended the event. Municipal president Mohini Shetty, vice-president Sarita Shivanand, Kaup Mandal BJP president Jitendra Shetty and Udyavar Mandal secretary Gopalakrishna Rao were also present.

Poojary said a service-oriented administration was functioning at the Centre under Modi's leadership, and described Modi as a leader who had chosen to work for the country despite the prevalence of family-based politics.

70,000	1.30 lakh	32 lakh
Anganwadi centres in Karnataka	staff members	children in their care

POLITICAL STATEMENTS CLASH

Beldale criticises Kharge's remarks on PM's father

CH NEWS, BIDAR

BJP state secretary and Bidar South MLA Dr. Shailendra Beldale has criticised AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge over his reported remarks concerning Prime Minister Narendra Modi's late father at an event in Patna, Bihar.

In a statement, Beldale said the remarks were inappropriate for a senior leader who had spent five decades in public life and held several important positions. He said leaders should maintain dignity while making public statements, particularly when referring to the families of political opponents.

He condemned Kharge's reported comments and demanded that he issue a public apology to Prime Minister Modi and the people of the country. He alleged that the incident reflected the political culture of the Congress party.

The BJP leader also referred to a reported incident in which a Congress worker was allegedly assaulted by others at the gathering after saying, "Modi isn't going anywhere."

He further questioned Kharge's response to the worker's remark and alleged that the incident raised concerns about the treatment of differing opinions within the party. Beldale reiterated that political leaders should exercise restraint in their public statements and respect democratic principles, even while criticising their opponents.

The comments by the BJP MLA add to the political exchange between the BJP and the Congress following the reported remarks at the Patna event. Kharge's comments and the alleged assault on the Congress worker were cited by Beldale as reasons for his criticism.

Political differences should be addressed through democratic discussion rather than confrontation



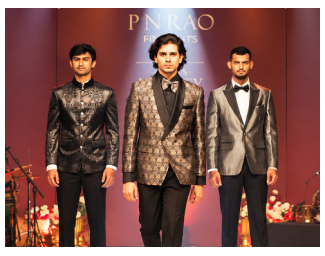
Dr. Shailendra Beldale

The statement was issued by Nagesh Siddha, media and coordination assistant to Dr. Shailendra Beldale, MLA for Bidar South.

Beldale said freedom of expression was an essential part of democracy and that people should be able to express their views without facing violence or intimidation. Condemning the reported assault, he said political differences should be addressed through democratic discussion rather than confrontation.

P N RAO unveils Kanjivaram-inspired suit collection

HUBBALLI



P N RAO Fine Suits has unveiled its new collection, "Weaves of Legacy — Timeless Art of the Kanjivaram," celebrating South Indian heritage through contemporary menswear. The launch featured a curated fashion show and live Carnatic music performance.

Inspired by Kanchipuram's temple architecture and traditional Kanjivaram silk, the collection incorporates motifs such as the Yazhi, peacock, lotus and elephant into modern suit designs, textures and detailing.

Founded in Bengaluru in 1923 by Pishe Narayan Rao, the heritage brand operates across Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Hubballi, Coimbatore and Chennai. Now managed by its third generation, the company is embracing a more experimental and design-focused identity for its Autumn-Winter 2026 collection.

Ketan Pishe, partner at P N RAO Fine Suits, said the collection reflects the brand's commitment to craftsmanship while bringing traditional artistry into modern tailoring.

The initiative combines cultural inspiration with contemporary elegance, reaffirming the brand's focus on bespoke suits for modern men.

Sugarcane farmers warn of statewide bandh

CH NEWS, GURLAPUR

Sugarcane farmer leader Shashikanta Guruji has warned of a statewide bandh in Karnataka if the government fails to meet farmers' demand for a minimum price of ₹5,500 per tonne of sugarcane.

Speaking while leading the sugarcane growers' protest in Gurlapur, he said farmers would announce their next course of action by Monday evening if their demands remained unfulfilled.

Guruji said details of discussions between the Chief Minister and sugar factory owners had not yet been made public. Farmers were waiting for a clear decision on their demand before deciding how to intensify the agitation. He said sugarcane growers and farmer leaders from different political backgrounds would meet at 7 pm or 8 pm on Monday to discuss the issue. The decisions taken at the meeting and the future course of the protest would be communicated to the media, he added.

He stressed that the farmers' association would not accept excuses or proposals that placed the entire financial burden on sugar factories. He claimed that a large number of farmers had participated in the protest and warned that the agitation could intensify if the issue remained unresolved.

Guruji said that if the deadlock continued for four or five days, farmers could launch a statewide bandh. He also warned of demonstrations involving the beating of traditional halagi drums outside the residences of MLAs to press for their support.

Quick Read

Employability skills training launched at Women's College

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

An employability skills training programme has been launched at Veeramma Gangasiri Women's College in Kalaburagi to help students improve their career prospects.

The initiative aims to equip students with essential skills required in the job market and prepare them for employment opportunities. Such programmes help young women develop confidence, improve their communication abilities and understand workplace expectations. The training is expected to support students in strengthening their professional capabilities and preparing for future careers.

Six-week blouse stitching training for women in Madikeri

CH NEWS, MADIKERI

The MSME Development and Facilitation Office (MSME-DFO), Mangaluru, under the Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, will organise a six-week Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) for women in Madikeri from Nov 2, 2026. The programme will provide practical training in blouse stitching and information on entrepreneurship, business opportunities, government schemes, enterprise registration, financial assistance and market access.

Women interested in learning tailoring, earning an income or starting their own tailoring businesses are encouraged to participate. For registration and further details, interested candidates can contact programme coordinator Suman S. Raju, Assistant Director, at 9448383720.

RSS leader killed after car hits bicycle in Udupi

CH NEWS, UDUPI

An RSS leader died on the spot after a car hit him while he was riding a bicycle near Kota Junction in Udupi district. The deceased was identified as Gurudas Shenoy. According to reports, the speeding car struck him while he was crossing the road with his bicycle. Following the collision, the car reportedly lost control and overturned. The car driver, identified as Pradeep Kanchan, sustained serious injuries and was shifted to a hospital in Brahmavar for treatment. Police are investigating the incident to establish the exact circumstances of the accident.

Vijayendra: Congress ignoring Siddaramaiah sting probe

He also criticised the state government over alleged corruption, farmers' issues, and the handling of the Mysuru Dasara celebrations.

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

Karnataka BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra has accused former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the Congress government of showing little interest in investigating the alleged sting operation involving him.

Speaking to reporters in Shivamogga on Monday, Vijayendra said Siddaramaiah had played a significant role in bringing the Congress to power in Karnataka but was now being treated unfairly within his own party.

He alleged that discussions about a purported "CD and pen drive factory" had created anxiety among Congress leaders. Referring to statements by Congress leaders, including Yathindra Siddaramaiah, Vijayendra demanded that the controversy be investigated and brought to a logical conclusion. The allegations surrounding the reported sting operation have not been independently established.



B.Y. Vijayendra

Chalavadi Narayanaswamy criticises Congress

Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy criticised Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge over his remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He accused Kharge of making controversial statements to appease Rahul Gandhi and claimed that such rhetoric was damaging the party's public image.

Narayanaswamy also criticised the state government over the Mysuru Dasara celebrations and expressed support for the concerns reportedly raised by royal family member Pramoda Devi Wadiyar. He alleged that established traditions and protocols had not been followed and demanded that the government apologise to her.

The BJP leaders' remarks reflect the continuing political confrontation between the ruling Congress and opposition BJP in Karnataka, with both sides facing questions over governance, political accountability and public statements.

BJP targets Cong government

Vijayendra also criticised the government's handling of Mysuru Dasara, alleging that the royal family was not adequately consulted during the organisation of events, including Yuva Dasara and Mahila Dasara. He claimed that the celebrations were affected by confusion and that the government had prioritised publicity over established traditions. Highlighting farmers' problems, Vijayendra alleged that the government had failed to provide adequate support amid drought conditions and electricity shortages. He demanded compensation for sugarcane growers facing difficulties and urged the government to address their demands.

Cabinet to discuss Shivamogga drought relief: Minister

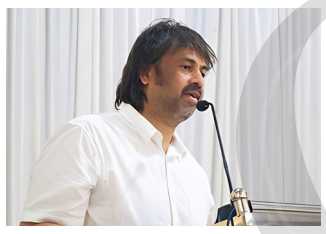
Emphasising that farmers face severe difficulties, he urged that drinking water supply be given top priority.

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

District in-charge Minister S. Madhu Bangarappa has said that the drought situation in Shivamogga district and the relief measures required for farmers will be discussed at the State Cabinet meeting scheduled for Oct 29.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, the minister said the declaration of drought had been delayed slightly, as the process had to follow the guidelines prescribed by the Central Government.

He stressed that farmers were facing serious difficulties and called for priority to be given to drinking water supply. He said the district's problems would be presented at the Cabinet meeting with supporting documents.



S. Madhu Bangarappa

He also referred to the Chief Minister's recent meeting with sugar factory owners at Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in Belagavi.

On the four-page statement issued by Rajamata Pramoda Devi Wadiyar regarding alleged mismanagement during this year's Mysuru Dasara celebrations, Bangarappa said the government would take note of her observations and suggestions.

Regarding the demand to bring Kannada-medium schools under the government grant-in-aid scheme, the minister said the issue would also be discussed at the Cabinet meeting. He said he personally supported the proposal but added that it required coordination among different departments. He assured that the government would take steps to protect Kannada-medium education, particularly in view of the protest planned for November 14.

On complaints concerning shoes distributed to schoolchildren, Bangarappa said there had been no major complaints about quality, although some issues had been reported regarding sizes. He also confirmed that shoes would be distributed to Pre-University Course students.

Responding to questions about the alleged sting operation involving former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the minister spoke about his working relationship with Siddaramaiah over the past three years and said Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had also given him an opportunity to continue his work.

> **"The Central Government must extend assistance to the State to tackle the drought. The Chief Minister will take up the issue. When there is no water, several other problems arise."**
>
> **— S. Madhu Bangarappa,** District in-charge Minister

On former minister K.S. Eshwarappa's proposed protest over houses under the Ashraya scheme, Bangarappa said he had already discussed the issue with him. He explained that the contractor had absconded and had been blacklisted. The government was exploring alternative arrangements to complete the pending housing work, he added.

The minister also criticised the BJP while responding to questions on the State's political developments.

Valmiki's Ramayana continues to guide society: MLA

CH NEWS, VIJAYAPURA

Maharshi Valmiki, revered as the Adi Kavi or first poet, made an invaluable contribution to Indian literature and culture through the Ramayana, which continues to guide society with its messages of truth, righteousness, sacrifice and human values, said Nagathan MLA Vitthal Katakadond.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti celebrations at Sri Hanumantharaya Rangamandira in Kachagal, Vijayapura. The programme was jointly organised by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Social Welfare Department, Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society and Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation.



Dignitaries inaugurate the Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti celebrations at Kachagal in Vijayapura

Katakadond said the Ramayana was not merely a great epic but also a work that teaches the importance of family relationships, devotion to duty, brotherhood, sacrifice and an ideal way of life. Its values have inspired generations and continue to offer guidance to people in modern society.

He said celebrations marking the birth anniversaries of great personalities should go beyond remembering their achievements. Their ideals must be adopted in everyday life and passed on to younger generations. Such programmes help promote equality, social harmony, mutual respect and human values.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr. Odram said students should develop knowledge, patience, practical skills and discipline to succeed in life. He urged them to follow the path of truth and righteousness and live with self-respect.

Vijayapura Sub-Divisional Officer Jufishan Haque said student life offered many opportunities and encouraged students to make effective use of them. He advised them to seek guidance from elders and teachers while planning their future.

Guest speaker Padmavathi Singari explained Valmiki's literary contributions and the significance of the Ramayana. She stressed the importance of dedication, reading, language learning, brotherhood and human values.

A puppet show based on Ekalavya's story was presented during the event. Children dressed in various costumes received prizes, while meritorious SSLC and PUC students and recipients of the Maharshi Valmiki State Award were felicitated.

Several district officials, public representatives, educational institution heads, wardens, students and representatives of various organisations attended the programme.



Officials at the preparatory meeting for the Agniveer recruitment rally in Chitradurga on Monday

Chitradurga readies for Agniveer rally from Oct 31

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

The district administration has made elaborate preparations for the Agniveer recruitment rally scheduled to be held at Onake Obavva Stadium in Chitradurga from October 31 to November 3.

Deputy Commissioner S. Ramya has directed officials to ensure all necessary arrangements are in place for the smooth conduct of the recruitment process.

She issued the instructions while chairing a preparatory meeting at the Deputy Commissioner's office on Monday.

A total of 957 candidates from 14 districts are expected to participate in the rally for Agniveer General Duty, Technical and Tradesman posts. The districts include Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru South, Kolar, Tumakuru, Mandya, Mysuru, Chamarajanagar, Chikkaballapura, Ballari, Hassan, Kodagu, Vijayanagara and Chitradurga.

Deputy Commissioner S. Ramya directed officials to ensure all necessary arrangements are in place for smooth recruitment.

Physical fitness tests, medical examinations and document verification will be conducted for 543 candidates on October 31 and the remaining 414 candidates on November 1.

Officials directed to ensure facilities

The Deputy Commissioner instructed the Health Department to deploy doctors, medical staff and a fully equipped ambulance at the venue. The Sports Department was directed to clean the stadium and restrict access for morning walkers during the recruitment process. Streetlights around the stadium must be functional as candidates are expected to report as early as 3 am.

Three teams comprising officials from the Education, Revenue and Sports departments will verify educational certificates, caste and residence certificates, and NCC and sports-related documents.

Accommodation for candidates and their parents must be arranged in nearby student hostels and community halls. BSNL has been asked to provide a reliable, high-speed internet connection for online registration and document verification, with the cost to be borne by the district administration.

Food arrangements will also be provided for candidates, Army officials and personnel on duty. The administration will arrange suitable bus services from railway and bus stations and display directional banners to help candidates reach the stadium.

Admit cards issued to 957 candidates

Colonel Pushparaj, who is overseeing the recruitment rally, said admit cards had been issued to all 957 candidates who qualified in the online examination. Candidates must report at the date and time mentioned on their admit cards.

The selection process will begin with admit card verification and Aadhaar-linked biometric registration. Candidates will then be grouped for running tests, followed by other physical fitness assessments. Those who qualify will undergo medical examinations conducted by Army medical officers. Document verification will follow as part of the recruitment process.



14 districts send candidates to the Chitradurga rally

Candidates must carry their admit cards, educational mark sheets, Aadhaar cards, caste and income certificates, residence certificates and recent passport-sized photographs. Colonel Pushparaj also requested adequate police deployment to maintain security.

District Superintendent of Police Kushal Choukse, Additional Deputy Commissioner B.T. Kumaraswamy, Sub-Divisional Officer Dr. K.J. Kantharaj and other district officials and Army personnel attended the meeting.

CHANGE OF NAME

It is for general information that I, SHIVA KUMAR C R S/o Late C M RAMANNA, R/o 00, Kanchugara, Suggikal Kote, Chikmagalur, Chikkamagalur, Karnataka-577101, declare that the name of mine and my wife have been wrongly written as C.R.SHIVAKUMAR and K.S.GEETHA in my minor son HONNU SAI PRASADA C S, aged 15 years in his Birth Certificate Registration No. 2011-B-3286. The actual name of mine and my wife is SHIVA KUMAR C R and GEETHA K S respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Murali Narasimha alias N Murali alias Murali Narasimha Bhat alias Murali N S/o Narasimha Bhat R/o Flat No, D-406, Mantri Greens, Sampige Road, Malleswaram, PO: Malleswaram, Dist: Bengaluru, Karnataka-560003 have changed my name to Murali Narasimha

Halumatha community to felicitate Nagaraj on Oct 29

CH NEWS, VIJAYAPURA

The Halumatha community will organise a felicitation ceremony for Rajya Sabha member and BJP national vice-president Prof. M. Nagaraj on October 29 in recognition of his appointment to the Upper House and his position in the party.

The programme will be held at 11 am at Sri Rajarajeshwari Kalyana Mantapa, near the satellite bus stand in Vijayapura, according to Raju Biradar, president of the Karnataka State Amateur Cycling Association and a leader of the community.

Several religious leaders and prominent members of the Halumatha community are expected to participate in the event. Those expected to attend include Sri Someshwara Swamiji of Mankapur, priest Mallingaraya Maharaja of Hulijanti Peetha, Appu Odeyar, the religious head of the Amoghasiddheshwara Temple in Arakeri, Madhuling Maharaja of Kucanur village in Jamkhandi taluk, and Mallingaraya priest of Nagathan.

Representatives of local institutions, including the municipal corporation, taluk panchayat and zilla panchayat, along with former members, district-level organisation leaders and other community representatives, are also expected to take part.

FARMERS' MEETING TENSIONS

Farmers clash over sugarcane prices at Belagavi meeting

CH NEWS, BELAGAVI

A meeting to discuss sugarcane prices turned chaotic at Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in Belagavi on Monday, as farmers belonging to the factions led by Kodihalli Chandrashekhar and Chunappa Pujeri clashed over the price to be demanded from sugar factories.

The situation became tense after an argument broke out during the meeting. Initially, some farmers reportedly expressed dissatisfaction over the lack of drinking water and tea in the hall.

Although Chunappa Pujeri managed to calm the gathering, tensions rose again during his speech.

The immediate trigger was Pujeri's reported statement that farmers should secure a price of Rs 4,500 per tonne of sugarcane. Members of the Kodihalli Chandrashekhar faction objected to the statement, alleging that Pujeri was demanding Rs 5,500 per tonne during the protest outside but advocating a lower price inside the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha.

Some farmers from Chandrashekhar's faction reportedly accused Pujeri of being a "suitcase agent", an allegation implying that he had accepted money. The remarks angered supporters of Pujeri, leading to a heated exchange that escalated into a physical confrontation between the two groups.

Police personnel intervened to control the situation and removed two farmers accused of instigating the clash. The situation eased after the police stepped in, allowing the meeting to proceed.

Earlier, sugarcane farmers had staged a protest by blocking the Pune-Bengaluru National Highway in front of the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, demanding a better price for their produce. The road blockade led to a heated exchange between protesters and police. More than 20 farmers who were sitting on the highway were taken into custody.

The clash highlights divisions among farmer groups over the price to be demanded for sugarcane. Farmers have been pressing for better returns amid continuing discussions with the government and other stakeholders over the pricing issue.

The price row

IN THE HALL	AT THE PROTEST
Rs 4,500 a tonne, Pujeri reportedly said	**Rs 5,500 a tonne, the rival faction says**
WHERE	**DETAINED**
Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, Belagavi	**More than 20 farmers on the highway**

BEYOND WINGBEATS: HOW WILD BIRDS USE NATURE TO FLY MORE EFFICIENTLY



Dr. Vijay Garg

Flight is one of nature's most remarkable achievements. Birds cross continents, soar above mountains and travel thousands of kilometres with astonishing precision. While their wings provide the power needed to fly, wingbeats alone do not explain their extraordinary endurance. Many wild birds use naturally occurring air currents, rising warm air and wind patterns to reduce the energy required for flight. By taking advantage of these invisible sources of lift, they demonstrate how nature can make movement more efficient. Recent scientific interest in bird flight is revealing important insights into how birds combine physical strength, environmental awareness and instinct to conserve energy. Their abilities offer valuable lessons not only for understanding wildlife but also for designing more efficient aircraft and improving our knowledge of aerodynamics.

The Sky as a Source of Energy

Birds do not always need to flap their wings continuously to remain airborne. Under suitable atmospheric conditions, the air itself can provide the lift they need. One important mechanism is thermal soaring, in which sunlight warms the ground unevenly, causing pockets of warm air to rise. These rising air columns, known as thermals, can carry birds upward with relatively little muscular effort. Large birds, including eagles, vultures and some storks, frequently exploit thermals. They circle within rising air, gaining altitude before gliding towards their next destination. By repeating this process, they can travel considerable distances while conserving energy. This strategy is especially useful for birds with broad wings and relatively large bodies. Their physical structure enables them to remain airborne efficiently, allowing them to benefit from rising air instead of relying exclusively on repeated wing beats.

Using Wind to Reduce Effort

Thermals are not the only natural resource available to flying birds. Wind flowing over hills, cliffs and mountain ridges can be forced upward, creating rising currents that birds use to maintain altitude. This technique, known as ridge soaring, is particularly valuable in landscapes where suitable wind conditions occur regularly. Some seabirds use another technique called dynamic soaring. By moving between layers of air with different wind speeds, they can gain energy from wind gradients. Albatrosses are particularly well known for using this method to travel across vast stretches of ocean with remarkably little flapping. These behaviours reveal that efficient flight depends not merely on wing design but also on selecting the right route, altitude and atmospheric conditions. Birds effectively use their surroundings as part of their flight system.

Instinct, Experience and Environmental Awareness

How do birds identify and exploit favourable air currents? Their flight behaviour reflects a combination of inherited abilities, sensory information and learning. Birds can respond to wind direction, visual landmarks and changes in their surroundings. Some species also appear to adjust their movements according to local weather and terrain. Migratory birds face particularly demanding journeys. They must balance energy expenditure, weather conditions, food availability and the need to reach breeding or wintering grounds at the appropriate time. Using supportive winds and rising air can reduce the physical cost of migration and



help them travel farther with limited energy reserves. However, birds cannot rely on free lift in every situation. Flapping remains essential during take-off, low-speed manoeuvres, flight through unsuitable air conditions and many other circumstances. Efficient flight results from switching between different strategies as conditions change.

Lessons for Aviation and Technology

Bird flight offers valuable inspiration for engineers. Aircraft designers continually seek ways to reduce fuel consumption, improve aerodynamic performance and extend flight range. Studying how birds exploit natural lift may help researchers develop better flight-planning systems, improve soaring technologies and refine autonomous gliders. Uncrewed aircraft could potentially use rising air currents to extend their endurance, reducing the need for battery power or other energy sources. Better understanding of atmospheric movement could also improve route planning for conventional aircraft, although aviation safety and operational requirements must remain the priority. The wider lesson is that efficiency does not always come from generating more power. Sometimes, it comes from recognising and using energy already available in the environment.

Protecting the Natural Systems That Support Flight

Birds depend on healthy ecosystems and suitable atmospheric conditions. Habitat loss, climate change, pollution and disturbance can threaten their survival and migration routes. Changes in weather patterns may also alter the availability or predictability of the air currents on which some soaring birds depend. Protecting wetlands, grasslands, forests, coastal areas and mountain habitats is therefore essential. Conservation efforts must also consider the risks posed by buildings, power lines and wind turbines, particularly along important migration corridors. Understanding birds' flight strategies can strengthen conservation planning by revealing how closely wildlife is connected to the physical environment. Wild birds demonstrate that flight is not simply a matter of beating wings harder or producing more muscular power. It is also an art of cooperation with nature. By exploiting thermals, ridge lift and wind gradients, many species conserve energy and travel extraordinary distances. Their abilities challenge us to think differently about efficiency. In nature, success often depends on adapting intelligently to available resources rather than expending maximum effort at every moment.

As scientists continue to investigate the secrets of bird flight, these remarkable creatures may help humanity develop technologies that are more economical, environmentally responsible and inspired by the natural world.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Beware of Cyber Scams

The sharp rise in digital fraud and cybercrime is alarming. Despite increasing internet usage, public awareness regarding financial scams remains dangerously low. Authorities must step up strict cybersecurity measures and launch mass awareness campaigns. Citizens should also practice extreme caution while sharing financial information online.

– R. Immanuel Raj

Time for Green Cities

The worsening climate crisis demands immediate, structured action in our cities. Expanding urban green spaces and adopting rooftop solar power must become top municipal priorities. Small community-driven initiatives like rainwater harvesting can significantly combat urban heat waves and water scarcity. We cannot afford further delays in protecting our environment. **– Ajith Kiran**

SOCIAL SECURITY AS A SHIELD OF PROTECTION AND THE BEACON OF INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT



LALIT GARGG

The true measure of a nation's progress cannot be determined solely by its economic growth rate, massive industrial projects, technological advancements, foreign investment, or rising per capita income. The real significance of development lies in ensuring that even the person standing on the lowest rung of society is protected against life's uncertainties; that workers have confidence in their future; that old age does not become synonymous with deprivation; and that illness does not push an entire family into the abyss of financial distress. Social security is the foundation of such humane development. It is not merely a system of government assistance but a fundamental pillar of human dignity, self-confidence, economic stability, and social justice. It is upon this foundation that a strong, equitable, and inclusive nation can be built. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Union Government has, in recent years, taken several steps to broaden the reach of social security through an expansion of welfare schemes. These initiatives have helped connect crores of people with various forms of financial, healthcare, food, and social assistance. Nevertheless, given the changing economic landscape and the needs of India's vast workforce, much more remains to be done.

According to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) 2025 report, the coverage of social protection in India has increased from 19 per cent in 2015 to 64.3 per cent, encompassing more than 940 million citizens. This expansion indicates that social protection has become an important component of the country's development priorities. However, the success of social security cannot be assessed merely by counting the number of beneficiaries. The more fundamental questions are: How many people receive adequate assistance when they need it most? How many families are able to recover from the crises of illness and unemployment? And how many workers can look forward to a dignified life in their old age? Alongside the wider reach of welfare schemes, their adequacy, quality, and continuity are equally important.

The significance of social security is particularly pronounced in a vast and diverse country like India, where a substantial proportion of the workforce is engaged in the informal sector. According to available labour-related estimates, approximately 87 per cent of the country's workforce belongs to the informal sector. Agricultural labourers, construction workers, domestic workers, street vendors, small shopkeepers, daily-wage earners, and people engaged in various service occupations keep the wheels of the Indian economy turning.

Yet, a large number of them lack access to regular wages, provident fund benefits, pensions, health insurance, and accident protection. Their lives are frequently overshadowed by uncertainty, as the availability of work and the loss of employment can occur without warning. In such circumstances, restricting social security primarily to the organised sector is simply not enough. Its protective reach must extend to those hard-working hands whose labour sustains the nation's production systems and service economy.

The government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has developed a comprehensive framework for delivering public assistance through Jan Dhan bank accounts, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), Aadhaar-based identification, and digital public infrastructure. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana has contributed significantly to bringing people previously excluded from banking into the formal financial system. Direct Benefit Transfer has helped reduce the role of intermediaries in numerous welfare schemes and facilitated the direct transfer of assistance to beneficiaries' bank accounts. These mechanisms have strengthened the potential for greater transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the implementation of social security programmes.

Healthcare protection is among the most sensitive and vital dimensions of social security. The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana has played an important role in extending health coverage to eligible families for hospitalisation and treatment. The initiative to bring senior citizens aged 70 years and above under the ambit of



healthcare coverage through the Ayushman Vay Vandana Yojana has also sought to ease medical anxieties during old age. Nevertheless, there remains a pressing need to increase public expenditure on healthcare, strengthen primary health centres, ensure the availability of specialist doctors in rural areas, and reduce the cost of medicines and diagnostic tests. When a serious illness wipes out a family's savings accumulated over many years or forces it to borrow heavily, it exposes the limitations of the existing social security framework. Healthcare can become a truly effective shield of protection only when the affordability of treatment is ensured alongside its availability.

In the sphere of financial security, initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, Atal Pension Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana address the needs of different sections of society. Through PM-KISAN, eligible farming families receive direct financial assistance. The Atal Pension Yojana seeks to provide people working in the informal sector with a source of regular income during old age. The Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and the Suraksha Bima Yojana offer life insurance and accident insurance, respectively, helping families cope with potential financial crises. Similarly, the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Yojana, popularly known as PM-POSHAN, advances the social objectives of nutrition and education by providing nutritious meals to school children.

Steps aimed at expanding the coverage of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) are also significant from the perspective of workers' long-term financial security. A provision has been made to increase the monthly wage ceiling for mandatory social security coverage from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000, effective September 17, 2026. If implemented as envisaged, this change could bring approximately 5.1 million additional employees within the ambit of the mandatory provident fund system. The proposed change is particularly significant for employees whose wages have placed them beyond the earlier threshold. Regular contributions to the provident fund help build a financial cushion for retirement, while pension and insurance benefits, wherever applicable under the relevant provisions, can provide additional support to workers and their families. However, any such expansion must also maintain a reasonable balance between employees' take-home pay, employers' costs, and the financial capacity of small enterprises.

The e-Shram portal has emerged as an important instrument for extending social security to workers in the informal sector. At the same time, the changing nature of the economy has introduced new challenges. Workers in the gig and platform economy including delivery personnel, cab drivers, and other service providers may find new employment opportunities, but their incomes, working hours, and long-term security often remain uncertain. Similarly, the needs of women, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens differ considerably and cannot be addressed through a uniform approach. Women workers need maternity benefits and safe working environments; migrant workers require access to essential services and welfare benefits across state boundaries; and construction workers need simple, accessible mechanisms to avail themselves of the benefits intended for them. India must therefore develop a flexible and portable social security framework in which a change of employer, workplace, or place of residence does not deprive an individual of their rightful entitlements.

Alongside these measures, particular attention must be given to making old-age and widow pensions more adequate in line with inflation, increasing public expenditure on healthcare, and simplifying access to contributory pension and insurance options for informal-sector workers. Panchayati Raj institutions, urban local bodies, and Common Service Centres should play a more proactive role in spreading awareness, facilitating registration, and helping eligible citizens access social security schemes.

The vision of a developed India can be realised only when social sensitivity and human dignity advance in step with economic growth. The expanding scope of social security under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership reflects an important policy shift in this direction. Yet, the next phase must go beyond the expansion of schemes. It must focus on effective implementation, adequate financial resources, and the assurance that benefits genuinely reach the last person in the queue.

MOBILE ADDICTION: A SILENT THREAT TO TEENAGERS



R.K. UPPAL

When smartphones begin to control young minds, the cost is measured not only in lost study hours but also in declining concentration, disturbed sleep, weakened relationships and missed opportunities. A silent crisis is unfolding in homes, classrooms and playgrounds. Millions of teenagers are growing up with smartphones in their hands, social media on their screens and digital entertainment competing for every moment of their attention. Technology has opened new doors to knowledge and communication, but its uncontrolled use is creating serious concerns for parents, teachers and society. The question is no longer whether teenagers should use mobile phones, but whether they are learning to control technology or allowing technology to control them.

The Growing Trap of Smartphone Addiction

For many teenagers, checking a mobile phone has become an automatic habit. A notification interrupts study, a short video leads to another, and a few minutes of browsing turn into hours of scrolling. Social media platforms, online games and endless streams of digital content are designed to keep users engaged. Young people, who are still developing emotional maturity and self-discipline, may find it particularly difficult to resist these attractions. Not every teenager who uses a smartphone frequently is addicted. However, when mobile use becomes difficult to control and begins to interfere with studies, sleep, relationships or everyday responsibilities, it deserves serious attention. Parents and educators must recognise these warning signs before unhealthy habits become deeply established.

Education under the Shadow of Screens

One of the most visible consequences of excessive mobile use is its impact on education. Teenagers need sustained attention, regular practice, curiosity and disciplined study habits to learn effectively. Constant notifications and



the temptation to check messages can break concentration and make deep learning more difficult.

A student may sit with a textbook for two hours but spend much of that time switching between lessons, messages, videos and social media. Physical presence at a study desk does not necessarily mean mental engagement with learning. The problem extends beyond examination results. Education should develop critical thinking, creativity, communication skills and the ability to solve problems independently. When young people become accustomed to instant digital entertainment, activities requiring patience and sustained effort may feel less attractive. Schools and colleges must therefore promote digital discipline alongside academic excellence.

Mental Health and Emotional Well-being

Teenage years are a sensitive period of emotional and psychological development. Excessive social media exposure may encourage unhealthy comparisons, fear of missing out and an excessive dependence on online approval. Carefully selected photographs, edited videos and carefully constructed online identities can create unrealistic expectations about beauty, popularity, wealth and success. Teenagers who compare their everyday lives with these idealized images may experience insecurity, dissatisfaction or feelings of inadequacy. Cyber bullying, hurtful comments and online harassment can intensify these difficulties. Sleep is another major concern. Late-night scrolling can delay bedtime, while notifications and continued engagement may interrupt rest. Insufficient sleep can affect attention, mood, memory and classroom performance. Although the effects differ from one individual to another, persistent sleep problems and emotional distress should never be dismissed as ordinary teenage behaviour.

The Disappearing World of Real Relationships

A troubling contradiction of the digital age is that people can be constantly connected online while becoming less attentive to those sitting beside them. Family conversations are interrupted by screens, meals are accompanied by scrolling, and face-to-face friendships may receive less time and attention. Outdoor games, physical exercise, reading, hobbies and community activities are also important for healthy development. When excessive phone use displaces these experiences, teenagers lose valuable opportunities to build confidence, teamwork, patience and interpersonal skills. Technology can connect people across continents, but it cannot entirely replace the warmth of personal interaction, the discipline of physical activity or the satisfaction of meaningful participation in the real world.

Where Are the Parents and Teachers?

Blaming teenagers alone would be unfair. Adults also spend considerable time looking at their phones, sometimes checking messages during conversations or using screens at every available opportunity. Young people often imitate what they observe at home. Parents cannot reasonably demand digital discipline from children while refusing to practice it themselves. The first step must be to establish healthy family habits. Parents should set reasonable screen-time boundaries, discourage phone use during meals and establish screen-free periods before bedtime. They should also encourage sports, reading, creative activities and regular family conversations. Schools have an equally important responsibility. Digital literacy should teach students not only how to use technology but also how to recognize misinformation, protect privacy, resist online manipulation and manage their time responsibly. Teachers should explain the consequences of excessive screen use without portraying all technology as harmful.

Technology Needs Discipline, Not Blind Rejection

A complete rejection of smartphones is neither practical nor desirable. Mobile phones support online learning, access to educational resources, emergency communication and the development of digital skills.

> **"The future of our teenagers depends not on how many hours they spend online, but on how wisely they use the opportunities technology provides."**
>
> **— R.K. Uppal**

The objective should be responsible use rather than an unrealistic attempt to eliminate technology from teenagers' lives.

A CLEARER VISION FOR DAILY EYE CARE

For centuries, vision correction was synonymous with frames perched on the bridge of the nose. However, the advent and evolution of eye lenses — both contact and intraocular — have fundamentally transformed how millions experience the world. Beyond serving as a corrective tool for refractive errors like myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism, optical lenses represent a monumental leap in medical engineering, personal convenience, and visual freedom. Yet, as their usage grows increasingly widespread, the need for balanced awareness surrounding long-term ocular health has never been more critical.

The most obvious triumph of modern contact lenses lies in their lifestyle flexibility. For athletes, professionals, and individuals with active routines, heavy spectacle frames can be restrictive, prone to fogging, or visually limiting due to peripheral distortion. High-water-content hydrogel and silicone hydrogel contact lenses offer an almost weightless alternative, allowing oxygen to permeate the cornea and maintaining natural peripheral vision.



Furthermore, surgical advances in intraocular lens (IOL) implantation have revolutionized cataract management and refractive surgery, offering permanent visual clarity to aging populations and reducing lifelong dependency on external glasses.

However, the convenience of eye lenses comes with a mandatory commitment to discipline and hygiene. Because a contact lens rests directly on the cornea — a delicate, non-vascularized tissue that relies on atmospheric oxygen and moisture — mishandling can lead to severe consequences. Corneal hypoxia, dry eye syndrome, allergic conjunctivitis, and severe microbial infections like Acanthamoeba keratitis remain persistent risks when hygiene protocols are ignored. Sleeping in daily-wear lenses, overusing disposable pairs beyond their intended lifespan, or using tap water instead of sterile saline solution are common habits that compromise ocular safety.

Moreover, the rise of cosmetic colored lenses and unregulated online sales poses a growing public health concern. Treating vision lenses as mere fashion accessories often leads users to overlook proper fitting by an optometrist. Ill-fitting lenses can scratch the corneal surface, creating micro-abrasions that serve as gateways for bacterial invasions. Eye care professionals repeatedly emphasize that no optical device should be purchased or worn without a professional assessment of corneal curvature and tear film stability.

As technology progresses, the future of eye lenses extends far beyond simple vision correction. Smart contact lenses embedded with micro-sensors are currently in development to monitor intraocular pressure for glaucoma patients or track glucose levels through tear fluid for those managing diabetes. These innovations highlight the lens not just as a visual aid, but as a sophisticated bio-monitoring platform.

> *"Clear vision should never come at the cost of long-term eye safety."*
> **MASILAMANI**

Ultimately, eye lenses are a remarkable testament to human ingenuity, offering unmatched freedom and clarity. To fully enjoy their benefits, users must balance convenience with caution. Regular eye examinations, strict adherence to sanitation, and a respectful understanding of corneal health are essential.

— MASILAMANI

WHY CATS ARE THE ULTIMATE MODERN COMPANIONS

In an increasingly chaotic world, humanity's search for comfort has led to a quiet revolution in our living rooms. For decades, the canine held an undisputed title as man's best friend, celebrated for enthusiastic welcomes and unyielding loyalty. Yet, as our urban lives become denser, busier, and more solitary, another companion has quietly stepped into the spotlight: the domestic cat. Rather than demanding our constant attention, cats offer something far more suited to the modern condition — a master class in calm, independence, and earned affection.

To appreciate a cat is to appreciate the art of subtle partnership. Unlike dogs, who offer unconditional approval from the moment they cross the threshold, a cat's trust must be negotiated. A feline does not shower you with praise simply because you walked through the door; it evaluates your presence, observes your energy, and chooses when to bridge the distance. When a cat finally leaps onto your desk, slowly blinks, and curls into a warm loaf beside your keyboard, it feels less like a routine interaction and more like a hard-won victory.

Beyond their emotional nuance, cats are uniquely engineered for contemporary lifestyle constraints. The modern worker often balances unpredictable hours, compact apartment living, and dense city environments. In this setting, the practical advantages of feline companionship are



undeniable. Cats require no midnight walks in freezing rain, nor do they demand expansive backyards. They maintain their own hygiene with meticulous devotion and are content to observe the world through a sunlit window while their human counterparts labor through nine-to-five shifts.

Critics often mistake a cat's self-reliance for apathy, mislabeling them as distant or aloof. But this critique misinterprets feline body language. A cat does not express love through noisy jubilation; it speaks in soft purrs, gentle headbutts, and the comforting weight of a quiet nap on your lap. Their purring itself carries therapeutic properties, known to lower human blood pressure and ease anxiety. In a society suffering from noise overload and constant stimulation, the serene, low-frequency presence of a cat acts as a natural balm.

Furthermore, cats teach us vital lessons about boundaries and mutual respect. In a culture accustomed to instant gratification, interacting with a feline forces us to slow down, read non-verbal cues, and accept that affection cannot be forced. If you rush a cat, it retreats; if you give it space, it approaches. Learning to share a home with a cat is an exercise in emotional intelligence.

Ultimately, cats do not fit into our lives by conforming to our every demand. Instead, they enrich our environments by remaining stubbornly, beautifully themselves. They bring an element of wild grace into our domestic spaces, reminding us that companionship does not require constant noise or total surrender of autonomy.

For the modern household seeking balance, tranquility, and a touch of mystery, the cat is not just a pet; it is the ideal partner for our times.

— BEN

WHY PRINTED NEWSPAPERS STILL MATTER IN A DIGITAL AGE

In an era dominated by relentless digital notifications, endless social media feeds, and bite-sized news alerts, the simple act of opening a physical newspaper might seem like a relic of the past. Yet, as the deluge of digital noise continues to fragment our attention spans, the traditional newspaper remains an irreplaceable cornerstone of informed citizenship, deep understanding, and personal well-being.

The most critical distinction

> **"In a noisy world desperate for clarity, the daily newspaper remains an essential anchor of truth, depth, and thoughtful insight."**
> **— ASHOK**

between reading news on a screen and turning the pages of a newspaper lies in intentionality and depth. Digital platforms are designed for speed and algorithms, often prioritizing sensation, clickbait headlines, and outrage to drive engagement. In contrast, a daily newspaper offers a curated, thoughtfully structured snapshot of world events, local news, culture, and commentary. Journalism in print goes through rigorous editorial standards, fact-checking, and ethical oversight before it hits the press. When you read a newspaper, you are engaging with verified facts rather than algorithmic echoes tailored to reinforce your pre-existing biases.

Furthermore, reading a printed newspaper encourages a rare state of deep focus. Online reading is inherently fragmented; hypertext links, popping advertisements, and incoming messages constantly pull the mind in multiple directions. Studies in cognitive science show that physical print enhances reading comprehension and retention. The tactile experience of holding paper, seeing stories visually organized by editorial importance, and turning pages creates a cognitive map that helps readers absorb and reflect on complex issues.

Newspapers also play a vital role in building local communities and strengthening democracy. While global platforms often eclipse neighborhood issues, local newspapers shed light on municipal governance, school board decisions, civic initiatives, and community events. They hold public officials accountable and give a voice to local citizens. Without robust journalism, democratic participation weakens, and regional issues remain overlooked.



Beyond political awareness, habituating oneself to daily newspaper reading enriches vocabulary, sharpens critical thinking, and broadens cultural horizons. From op-ed columns and science reporting to arts reviews and investigative feature stories, newspapers present diverse perspectives that challenge assumptions and cultivate empathy.

Ultimately, picking up a newspaper each morning is more than an old habit; it is a conscious decision to slow down, disconnect from digital distractions, and connect meaningfully with the world.

— ASHOK

THE FRAGRANT ILLUSION OF CLEAN INDOOR AIR

Walk into a modern living room, office lobby, or public restroom, and you are frequently greeted by a sharp burst of artificial lavender, tropical vanilla, or morning pine. Air fresheners have transformed from occasional household novelties into ubiquitous staples of modern living. We spray them to eliminate cooking odors, plug them into walls for continuous scenting, and mount automated diffusers in corporate hallways to project an image of pristine cleanliness. Yet, this reliance on synthetic fragrances raises a pressing question: are we genuinely cleaning our indoor environments, or are we merely masking pollution with a chemical facade?

The fundamental appeal of air fresheners rests on a sensory deception. Despite what marketing campaigns suggest, these products do not neutralize odor molecules or purify the ambient air. Instead, they overwhelm human olfactory receptors with potent synthetic compounds, effectively dulling our awareness of underlying stale air, dampness, or organic waste. By equating a strong, pleasant smell with hygiene, consumer culture has conflated olfactory distraction with genuine sanitation. Clean air, by its very definition, does not possess a scent; it is defined by the absence of pollutants,



pathogens, and oppressive odors.

Beyond the sensory trickery lies a more concerning issue regarding indoor air quality and public health. Modern synthetic air fresheners emit a complex cocktail of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including phthalates, formaldehyde, benzene, and synthetic musks. When sprayed into enclosed spaces with limited ventilation, these airborne chemicals accumulate rapidly. Exposure to high concentrations of VOCs has been linked by respiratory health experts to headaches, eye irritation, asthma flares, and long-term respiratory sensitivity. Furthermore, when these synthetic aerosols interact with ambient ozone naturally present indoors, they produce secondary pollutants like ultrafine particulate matter, compounding the potential health risks for vulnerable individuals, including children, elderly residents, and pets.

The environmental footprint of these products presents another layer of concern. Standard aerosol sprays rely on propellants and generate single-use metal or plastic canisters that frequently end up in landfills. Meanwhile, plug-in liquid refills consume continuous electrical energy while releasing non-biodegradable chemical residuals into the surrounding atmosphere. The widespread runoff from manufactured fragrance chemicals also enters municipal wastewater systems, posing challenges for aquatic ecosystems where synthetic musks fail to break down efficiently.

Addressing the issue does not require tolerating unpleasant living spaces, but rather shifting our approach toward true indoor environmental health. The most effective remedy for stale or unpleasant air remains fundamental hygiene and proper ventilation. Opening windows to allow cross-ventilation, utilizing exhaust fans in kitchens and bathrooms, and incorporating air-purifying HEPA filtration systems address the root causes of odor rather than disguising them. For those who prefer a natural scent, simple alternatives like fresh flowers, boiled spices, or essential oil diffusers offer far gentler options without saturating living quarters in synthetic VOCs.

It is time to re-evaluate our obsession with artificial fragrances. True cleanliness should be measured by fresh circulation and pure air, not by the density of synthetic perfume hanging in the room.

— DENNIS CHRISTOPHER

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF DAILY TURMERIC WATER

In an era dominated by synthetic dietary supplements, hyper-processed detox cleanses, and costly commercial wellness trends, authentic vitality often resides in the simplest traditional remedies. Long before modern pharmaceuticals populated medicine cabinets, ancient holistic healthcare systems like Ayurveda revered a humble, bright-yellow kitchen staple: turmeric (Curcuma longa). Today, the practice of consuming warm turmeric water on an empty stomach is experiencing a major resurgence. Rather than functioning as a fleeting fad, integrating turmeric water into one's daily morning routine represents a grounded, scientifically supported habit that addresses systemic inflammation, aids digestive efficiency, and enhances overall cellular health.

At the core of turmeric's medicinal potency is curcumin, a natural polyphenolic compound celebrated for its robust anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Modern life subjects the human body to constant oxidative stress, largely driven by environmental pollutants, ultra-processed diets, and elevated chronic stress levels. Over time, low-grade internal inflammation becomes the quiet underlying driver behind joint stiffness, gut dysbiosis, premature cellular aging, and metabolic sluggishness. Consuming turmeric water serves as an accessible daily countermeasure to this systemic stress by neutralizing harmful free radicals and suppressing key inflammatory signaling pathways within the body.

One of the primary physiological advantages of drinking warm turmeric water is its immediate impact on gastrointestinal health. Consumed early in the morning, the warm liquid stimulates the liver and gallbladder to produce bile, an essential fluid needed for breaking down fats and regulating smooth bowel movements. For individuals plagued by chronic indigestion, morning bloating, or hyperacidity, turmeric acts as a soothing agent for the gastric lining while improving overall gut motility. Moreover, by supporting normal liver function, turmeric assists the body's innate detoxification pathways without requiring restrictive juice diets or aggressive fasts.

Beyond the digestive tract, regular intake of turmeric water offers significant protective effects for immunity and dermatological health. Curcumin has been shown to modulate immune responses by enhancing antibody production, providing the body



with heightened defense against seasonal pathogens and infections. Furthermore, because cutaneous conditions are frequently connected to internal inflammation and metabolic waste balance, consistent daily consumption often yields noticeable aesthetic improvements. By reducing systemic oxidative stress, turmeric helps calm inflammatory skin conditions like acne, eczema, and rosacea, leading to a clearer, healthier complexion over time.

To maximize the therapeutic potential of turmeric water, proper preparation is key. Because curcumin exhibits low natural bioavailability, combining it with a small pinch of freshly ground black pepper is crucial. Black pepper contains piperine, an alkaloid that enhances curcumin absorption in the human bloodstream by up to 2,000 per cent. Mixing a half-teaspoon of organic turmeric and a pinch of black pepper into warm water — optionally finished with a splash of fresh lemon or a drop of healthy fat like coconut oil — creates an effective, bioavailable beverage.

Ultimately, simplicity is what makes health routines effective and sustainable over a lifetime. While commercial wellness trends routinely emerge and fade, relying on time-tested, natural compounds offers a grounded route toward preventative health. Incorporating a daily mug of golden turmeric water is a simple, cost-effective habit that delivers deep physical rewards across the immune, digestive, and cellular systems.

— BARBARA

THE UNBREAKABLE BOND OF ELDER SISTERS AND YOUNGER BROTHERS

In the intricate tapestry of family dynamics, few relationships possess the quiet strength, resilience, and enduring warmth of the bond between an elder sister and a younger brother. It is a unique synergy — one that bridges the gap between maternal care and fierce peer friendship. From early childhood squabbles over the television remote to navigating the complexities of adulthood, this partnership acts as a foundational pillar in a young boy's life and shapes the person he becomes.

From a very young age, an elder sister naturally steps into a role that is part guardian, part mentor, and part confidante. While parents provide essential guidance and authority, an elder sister offers a gentle buffer. She is often the first person a younger brother turns to when he makes a mistake he fears telling his parents about, or when he encounters his first real-life dilemmas outside the home. Through her, he receives non-judgmental counsel, learning empathy and emotional nuance long before he encounters them in the outside world.

Beyond emotional support, an elder sister serves as a vital bridge to understanding the broader world. For a younger brother, having an older sister offers early exposure to perspectives, feelings, and social dynamics he might otherwise struggle to grasp. She teaches him how to listen, how to respect boundaries, and how to communicate with clarity and sensitivity. Studies and social observations consistently show that men who grow up



with elder sisters tend to develop higher levels of emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills, making them more compassionate partners, friends, and colleagues later in life.

Conversely, this relationship plays a profound role in a younger brother's personal growth by fostering a protective instinct that is grounded in mutual respect rather than control. As the younger brother grows, the early dynamic of dependency gradually shifts into a balanced partnership of mutual protection and camaraderie. He becomes her steadfast defender, while remaining her lifelong ally. The banter and gentle ribbing that define their youth give way to a deep, unbreakable trust. They share a history — a vault of childhood memories, family traditions, and unspoken understandings that no one else can truly replicate.

Ultimately, an elder sister does not just help raise a younger brother; she helps mold him into a better man, leaving an indelible mark on his heart that endures through every stage of life.

— SHARON FAUSTINA J.

Quick Read



Police seize ₹ 4 crore cash from pickup truck

DURG

Police seized 4 crore in cash from a white pickup vehicle during a check under Khursipar police station limits in Chhattisgarh's Durg district on Monday. Additional Superintendent of Police Shobhraj Agrawal said officers intercepted the vehicle after receiving information about a large cash consignment. A detailed search uncovered a specially modified compartment at the rear containing the money.

The driver and another occupant are being questioned about the cash's source and intended destination. The Income Tax Department has been informed and may take further action based on the findings.

Three killed in firing, accused arrested

LUCKNOW

Three people were killed in a shooting incident in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow on Monday, police said. The accused was arrested at the scene, and a pistol was recovered.

Police Commissioner Tarun Gaba identified the victims as Shiva Tiwari, Shivendra Tiwari and Shrish Tiwari, who succumbed to their injuries.

Preliminary investigations suggest the firing followed a dispute over vehicle parking. Police said the accused had worked as a navigation officer in the Merchant Navy, though reports about his employment status remain unconfirmed.

Investigators are questioning the victims' family members and others, while forensic evidence is being examined. Further details are awaited.



4 burnt to death as car catches fire after tyre burst

DHAR

Four youths were burnt to death and another injured after their car caught fire and plunged into a ditch following a tyre burst in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district late Sunday, police said.

The accident occurred around 11.30 pm near Heera Dhaba on the Mhow-Neemuch four-lane road under Sadalpur police station limits. The car reportedly lost control after the driver-side tyre burst while crossing a culvert.

The deceased were identified as Bhim Dhakad, Chetan Dhakad, Aditya Tiwari and Abhishek Solanki, aged 19–20. Survivor Tushar Mandloi suffered 35–40 per cent burns and was referred to Indore for further treatment.

Former TN minister arrested in ₹100-crore school scam

Former Tamil Nadu education minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi was taken into custody after the Madras High Court rejected his anticipatory bail plea.

CHENNAI



Former Tamil Nadu School Education Minister and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leader Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi was arrested by Chennai police on Monday in connection with an alleged private school approval scam involving more than Rs 100 crore.

The arrest reportedly took place at an apartment in Aminjikarai, Chennai, after the Madras High Court rejected his anticipatory bail petition. Justice V Lakshminarayanan dismissed the pre-arrest bail plea as the Central Crime Branch (CCB) of Greater Chennai Police continued its investigation into the allegations.

The case concerns claims that money was collected from private school managements in the name of party funds in exchange for government approvals, permanent recognition and permission to upgrade institutions during the previous DMK regime, when Poyyamozhi served as education minister.

Investigators are examining the alleged roles of former DMK spokesperson BT Arasakumar and former legislator Muthukumar. Police suspect the two allegedly collected payments from school managements by claiming political influence and access to officials in the School Education Department.

According to a complaint filed by DC Ilangovan, secretary of the Federation of Associations of Private Schools in Tamil Nadu, institutions were allegedly promised several permissions in return for payments. These included permanent recognition, approval to upgrade schools, clearances from the Directorate of Town and Country Planning (DTCP), and other government authorisations.

However, several complainants alleged that the promised approvals were never obtained and that the money paid was not returned.

The case

177	PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN THE COMPLAINTS
₹100 cr+	ALLEGED COLLECTIONS, POLICE ESTIMATE

Police have examined allegations involving 177 private schools that reportedly made payments connected to the promised approvals.

Police sources have estimated that the total amount involved could exceed Rs 100 crore.The arrest follows the High Court's rejection of Poyyamozhi's anticipatory bail application, allowing the investigation to proceed with him in custody.

Himachal announces ₹3-lakh housing aid for Valmiki families



Himachal Pradesh plans financial support for eligible Valmiki community families, with the proposed scheme offering ₹3 lakh towards house construction.

SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Monday announced a proposed housing assistance scheme offering Rs 3 lakh to eligible families from the Valmiki community to support house construction.

Sukhu made the announcement while addressing a gathering at Krishna Nagar in Shimla on the occasion of Valmiki Jayanti. He later reiterated the government's plans while speaking to reporters, stating that work on the scheme had begun and that it would be launched soon.

"The Himachal Pradesh government has formulated a scheme for members of the Valmiki community, under which financial assistance of ₹3 lakh will be provided to eligible families for the construction of houses. The scheme will be launched soon," the chief minister said.

The state government plans to conduct a survey of households and families to identify eligible beneficiaries and assess their housing requirements. According to Sukhu, the exercise is targeted for completion by November 28, after which the implementation process can move forward.

The proposed initiative aims to assist families from the Valmiki community who have lived in the region for generations. It seeks to support households facing financial difficulties and help improve their living conditions through assistance for building homes.

Sukhu said the government was committed to supporting economically weaker sections and ensuring that eligible families received the benefits intended for them. The survey is expected to help officials determine the number of beneficiaries and understand their individual requirements before assistance is distributed.

During the programme, the chief minister also highlighted the contributions of Maharishi Valmiki and the continuing relevance of his teachings and ideals in society. Members of the Valmiki community and local residents attended the gathering.

As a mark of respect, community members weighed Sukhu against laddoos during the event.

The announcement forms part of the state government's proposed efforts to extend housing support to economically disadvantaged families within the Valmiki community. However, the scheme is yet to be formally launched, and the survey will play a key role in identifying eligible households.

Telangana seeks 152-metre height for Tummidihatti barrage

MUMBAI



Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy met his Maharashtra counterpart Devendra Fadnavis on Monday to discuss increasing the proposed height of the Tummidihatti Barrage across the Pranahita River from 148 metres to 152 metres.

In focus

barrage height under the 2016 agreement
148 m
the height Telangana now proposes
152 m
the proposed increase
4 m

The meeting took place at Sahyadri State Guest House in Mumbai, with Telangana Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy, chief secretaries and senior irrigation officials from both states participating in the discussions.

According to the Telangana Chief Minister's Office, the talks covered water availability, potential submergence, technical requirements and the impact of the proposed height enhancement on surrounding areas.

During the meeting, Uttam Kumar Reddy presented the historical, cultural and economic background of the erstwhile Adilabad district.

The minister said irrigation efforts in the region had continued since October 6, 1975, but several initiatives had failed to fulfil local aspirations. He argued that the 148-metre height envisaged under a 2016 agreement would not adequately meet the region's irrigation requirements.

Telangana proposed raising the barrage to 152 metres, citing the need to improve water delivery through gravity-based systems while addressing energy costs, environmental concerns and long-term operational sustainability.

Revanth Reddy emphasised the historical and cultural links between the two states and said the project could support the social and economic development of the region.

Fadnavis responded positively to Telangana's request but said technical, environmental and administrative assessments would be necessary before a final decision. He indicated that Maharashtra would support the project if it did not adversely affect the state or its residents.

The Maharashtra chief minister proposed forming a joint committee headed by the principal secretaries of the irrigation departments of both states. The panel will examine the proposed height, water availability, submergence, affected agricultural land, compensation requirements and possible alternatives.

Officials and technical experts from both states will prepare a roadmap and timeline for further consultations.

IAF releases special cover during Varanasi aerial display



VARANASI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) released a special postal cover during its aerial display at Namo Ghat in Varanasi on October 25, marking 94 years of service to the nation.

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh and Padmagandha Mishra, Postmaster General of the Varanasi Region, jointly released the cover during the IAF Day Aerial Display 2026, titled 'Wings over Ganges', according to the Central Air Command.

The event was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the chief guest. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath were also present.

The aerial display featured a range of military aircraft, including the Tejas, Light Combat Helicopter Prachand, IL-76, IL-78, C-295 and AN-32. Frontline fighter aircraft such as the SU-30MKI and Rafale also participated. Aircraft from the Indian Navy and Indian Army joined the programme, highlighting coordination among the three services.

The Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team brought the display to a close with precision manoeuvres and loops over the Ganga-facing ghats.

Squadron Leader Bhavesh Sharma, a member of the team, described the location as a major highlight of the performance. He said he flew in the fifth position, at the leftmost end of the team's signature nine-aircraft diamond formation.

"We were the show stoppers of today's aerial display and were the last ones to perform," Sharma told ANI, adding that the picturesque setting in front of the Ganga made the Varanasi event distinctive.

Wings over Ganges

WHEN	October 25
WHERE	Namo Ghat, Varanasi
FLYPAST	94 aircraft
MARKS	94 years of the IAF

Wing Commander Jaideep Singh, the IAF's public relations officer, said the aerial display was a significant occasion for the people of Kashi.

He said a total of 94 aircraft participated in the flypast, with formations involving around 31 aircraft.

The special cover release formed part of the Air Force's outreach programme, bringing its capabilities and history closer to the public. The event combined a ceremonial postal release with a large-scale aerial demonstration showcasing the operational strength and coordination of India's armed forces.

BRICS FORUM BEGINS DELIBERATIONS

BRICS forum to focus on accountable parliaments

NEW DELHI



The 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum will explore ways to make legislative institutions more effective, transparent, accountable and people-oriented, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said on Monday.

The two-day forum is being held at Samvidhan Sadan in Parliament, bringing together delegations from 11 BRICS member countries and 10 partner nations to strengthen parliamentary cooperation and democratic dialogue.

"Over two days, plenary sessions on Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability will explore ways to make parliamentary institutions more effective, transparent, accountable and people-oriented," Birla said while addressing the delegations.

He emphasised the need to connect young people's aspirations with opportunities, balance development with environmental sustainability and amplify the voice of the Global South.

Birla described the forum as an important platform for building mutual trust and cooperation among participating nations. As BRICS marks 20 years since its inception, he said the grouping represents nearly half of the world's population and holds considerable potential for global cooperation.

The forum's theme is "Fostering Parliaments for People-Centric Development". Discussions will focus on citizen-centred development, stronger democratic institutions and the role of legislatures in addressing global challenges.

The programme includes four thematic sessions covering resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also met visiting Speakers and heads of delegations from BRICS member and partner countries. Representatives from nations including Uganda, Cuba, Brazil and Russia arrived in New Delhi for the conference.

> *"Over two days, plenary sessions on Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability will explore ways to make parliamentary institutions more effective, transparent, accountable and people-oriented."*
> **OM BIRLA** Lok Sabha Speaker

The forum will also facilitate bilateral and multilateral discussions among delegates. Meetings of Parliamentary Friendship Groups involving 64 countries are expected to strengthen international parliamentary engagement.

Birla said the gathering reflected a shared commitment to parliamentary dialogue rooted in mutual respect and democratic values.

Man jailed for feeding wife blade capsules

PUNE

A Pune sessions court has sentenced a 45-year-old man to seven years of rigorous imprisonment for attempting to murder his wife by allegedly giving her capsules containing blade pieces under the pretext of administering medicine.

The sentence

- **Attempted murder:** 7 years RI, ₹50,000 fine
- **Cruelty:** 3 years RI, ₹20,000 fine
- **Terms:** to run concurrently

The accused, Somnath Sadhu Sapkal, was also sentenced to three years of rigorous imprisonment for cruelty. Both sentences will run concurrently, according to the court's October 23 order, made available on Monday.

Additional Sessions Judge Aniruddha Sulabha Subhash Gandhi convicted Sapkal under Sections 307 and 498A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), relating to attempted murder and cruelty. The court imposed fines of ₹50,000 and ₹20,000, respectively.

The case followed a complaint by Sapkal's wife, Chhaya, who alleged that the incidents occurred between October and November 2023. She reportedly experienced severe abdominal pain, and doctors removed a blade piece from her stomach through an endoscopic procedure.

Medical evidence

Medical evidence played a key role in the verdict. Dr Poonam Mantri, who treated the woman, testified that the blade piece posed a threat to her life.

The judge observed, "Feeding capsules containing pieces of a blade to the complainant amounts to an attempt to murder."

BJP slams Punjab CM over law and order

NEW DELHI

Intensifying its political offensive against the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) administration, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched a scathing attack on Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, holding his government directly accountable for a steep and alarming spiral in state crime rates, daylight executions, and total governance failure.

Addressing a high-profile national press conference in New Delhi, BJP National Spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia tore into the state machinery, asserting that the border state has been dragged backward into a reign of "Gundaraj" and



"Jungleraj". Pointing to a harrowing series of violent crimes that unfolded across Punjab within a compressed 24-to-36-hour window including a shocking double murder in Moga district, a brutal killing in Sangrur, and a gruesome assault in Ludhiana's Daba locality Bhatia argued that citizens are being slaughtered in broad daylight while the state administration remains a passive spectator.

Detailing the gravity of the breakdown, the BJP leader drew specific attention to the brazen Moga incident, where heavily armed assailants arrived in a black Scorpio utility vehicle lacking a registration number plate, brandished illegal firearms openly, and gunned down two young men in broad daylight. Mocking the Chief Minister's handling of public safety, Bhatia sarcastically dubbed him "Bhaagwant Mann" alleging that the Chief Minister consistently flees from accountability whenever major crises strike. He challenged the state administration to publish clear details regarding the FIR sections invoked, the status of investigative progress, and concrete arrest figures.

The opposition spokesperson further indicted the AAP leadership, questioning the conspicuous silence of party national convenor Arvind Kejriwal over the surging wave of homicides, drug trafficking networks, and suicide epidemics plaguing the state. He alleged that the ruling establishment indirectly shields criminals and perpetrators of violence, leaving common citizens unprotected and heavily oppressed. Contrasting the administration's apathy with personal priorities, Bhatia remarked that while ordinary families mourn victims of violent crime, the Chief Minister finds ample time for overseas travel and acquiring expensive luxury goods.

Reiterating the party's firm resolve, the BJP demanded an immediate resignation from Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, stressing that the saffron party remains fully committed to liberating Punjab from the clutches of anarchy and restoring a secure, fear-free, and drug-free environment for its people.

Quick Read

6-year-old girl allegedly raped, murdered; accused held

ONGOLE

A six-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered in Andhra Pradesh's Prakasam district late Sunday, police said. A 25-year-old man has been taken into custody for questioning. Police said the accused allegedly took her to an isolated place, sexually assaulted her and smothered her. Her body was later found near her house. Villagers caught the accused and handed him over to police. The incident triggered protests, with residents demanding strict action and a fast-track trial. Officials assured the family that charges under the POCSO Act would be pursued. The body was sent to Ongole's RIMS hospital for post-mortem examination.

Kolkata trio allegedly stripped naked at gunpoint

KOLKATA

An 18-year-old man, his father and a friend were allegedly forced to walk naked along a crowded road in Kolkata's Sarsuna on Sunday after being threatened at gunpoint by the family of a 13-year-old girl, police said. The incident reportedly occurred when the young man went to meet the girl during Lakshmi Puja. The accused allegedly assaulted the trio and threatened them with a pistol. The father alleged that the prime accused, Rahul Burman, asked him to either shoot his son or stab him with a heated knife. After he refused, the three were allegedly forced to strip and walk along the main road. Police have arrested three people, including the girl's parents and maternal uncle. Cases have been registered under multiple provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Retired army captain held for sharing secrets with Pakistani woman

VELLORE

A 52-year-old retired Indian Army captain has been arrested in Tamil Nadu's Vellore district for allegedly sharing sensitive military information with a woman suspected of being a Pakistani operative, police said on Monday. Identified as P Babu, he retired in 2022 after 28 years of service and later taught at the National Cadet Corps academy in Chennai. Investigators alleged that Babu communicated with the woman through WhatsApp after she claimed to be associated with the Defence Research and Development Organisation. He allegedly shared information about military activities, weapons procurement and stockpiles, and sought details from former colleagues. Police seized his smartphones and found that he had allegedly obtained five mobile connections to communicate with the woman. He has been booked under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Official Secrets Act and remanded to Vellore Central Prison.



Jamia stir goes on as alumni back students

NEW DELHI

Students protesting for the restoration of the Jamia Millia Islamia Students' Union (JMISU) on Monday refused to end their agitation, demanding a clear election schedule despite the university's latest efforts to resolve the over two-week-long standoff.

At a press conference organised by the Jamia Collective at Syeda Manzil in Jamia Nagar, students and alumni raised concerns over the absence of an elected union for nearly two decades, alleged surveillance of protesters and disciplinary action against participating students.

Student representatives associated with the Students' Federation of India (SFI) questioned the role of the university's security adviser, alleging that the position was being used to monitor protesters and facilitate communication between the administration and Delhi Police.

What the students want

- → Removal of the security adviser
- → The chief proctor's resignation
- → An inquiry into the alleged use of force
- → Disciplinary action withdrawn
- → A say in drafting the union's constitution

The protesters demanded the removal of the security adviser, the resignation of the chief proctor and an inquiry into the alleged use of force against students. They also sought the withdrawal of disciplinary proceedings and representation on the committee drafting the students' union constitution.

The university administration announced on Monday



that elections would be held within 15 days of approval of the union's constitution. It also revoked suspension and show-cause notices issued to students during the protest.

Earlier, the university had formed a committee to draft the constitution and shifted classes online on October 24, citing safety concerns amid rising tensions.

The agitation began earlier this month, with students demanding the restoration of the union, whose elections have not been held since 2006. Four students had been on an indefinite hunger strike over the issue.

DAC clears ₹2.12 lakh cr in defence purchases

NEW DELHI

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, on Monday approved capital acquisition proposals worth approximately ₹2.12 lakh crore to strengthen the operational capabilities of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force.

The Defence Ministry said the council granted Acceptance of Necessity (AoN), an in-principle administrative approval, for a range of military equipment and platforms.

For the Indian Army, the approved procurements include high-mobility vehicles, self-propelled tracked gun systems, light multirole helicopters, very short-range air defence systems, counter-unmanned aerial systems, surveillance unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and long-range kamikaze drone systems.

The light multirole helicopters will serve both the Army and the Air Force in reconnaissance, surveillance, combat, search and rescue, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. The short-range air defence systems will address emerging aerial threats, while counter-drone systems are expected to improve tank survivability on modern battlefields.

For the Indian Navy, the council approved the procurement of an Active Offboard Decoy System and other major naval platforms. The decoy system is intended to strengthen protection against modern anti-ship missiles. Indigenous naval platforms will also enhance the Navy's combat capabilities.

The Indian Air Force received approval for helicopters, air defence systems, weapons and mobile X-band Doppler weather radar systems. The radars will provide high-resolution, localised weather surveillance in forward areas, while special utility helicopters will support air transport requirements.

According to the Defence Ministry, approximately 82 per cent of the approved procurements will be sourced from Indian industry, supporting domestic manufacturing and defence self-reliance.



At a glance

TOTAL APPROVALS
₹ 2.12 lakh crore

FROM INDIAN INDUSTRY
About 82%

FOR
Army, Navy and Air Force

KEY EQUIPMENT
Helicopters, air defence, drones, radars, naval platforms

STATUS
Acceptance of Necessity, not final contracts

Adhikari urges people to back PM Modi, targets CJP

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Monday urged people to support Prime Minister Narendra Modi while launching a fresh attack on the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) and groups he described as "Dimagi Naxal" and the "tukde tukde" gang.

Addressing an event in West Bengal, Adhikari accused the previous Trinamool Congress (TMC) government of promoting appeasement politics and neglecting nationalism. He alleged that the former government had planned to turn the state into "Greater Bangladesh".

"The previous govt in Bengal had no understanding of nationalism, engaged in



> **"Stand with PM Modi, don't let 'Dimagi Naxal', 'tukde tukde' gang, cockroaches breed"**
>
> — **Suvendu Adhikari,** West Bengal Chief Minister

appeasement politics, and planned to turn the state into greater Bangladesh," he said.

He further claimed that the previous administration had composed a separate song for the state, designed a flag and adopted Bangladesh's "Joy Bangla" slogan.

At an event in Ramnagar on Sunday, Adhikari called for annual elocution, quiz and debate competitions in educational institutions to promote nationalism among students.

"Vices like cockroaches, bedbugs, tukde tukde gangs… which are trying to spread like the coronavirus… would not have required the spraying of 'Hit' (had they not tried to spread)," he said, referring to the insect-repellent brand.

Adhikari also criticised the Left parties and the TMC's 15-year rule, accusing both of undermining Bengal's cultural heritage.

He alleged that the previous government attempted to restrict National Cadet Corps enrolment in educational institutions and introduced the Jai Hind Vahini instead. He also said changes to school syllabi would begin next academic year and that the National Education Policy would be implemented in the state.

Adhikari made the remarks after meeting the family of a person who died in a stampede at Kolkata's Chorbagan Durga Puja pandal on October 17.

Centre clears plan for 200 army helicopters worth ₹20,000 crore



NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry on Monday approved a proposal worth ₹20,000 crore to procure 200 light multirole helicopters for the Indian Army and Air Force, aiming to replace the ageing Cheetah and Chetak fleets.

The proposal was cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) during its meeting on October 26. According to defence officials, the helicopters will be manufactured in India, with domestic companies leading the programme. The contract is expected to be divided between the lowest and second-lowest bidders.

Major contenders include Tata Group in partnership with European aerospace company Airbus, and the Adani Group partnering with Italy's Leonardo. US-based Bell Helicopters is also expected to offer its aircraft for the procurement.

The ministry had issued a Request for Information (RFI) for the long-pending programme last year. The procurement process has faced repeated delays and setbacks over the past two decades, with earlier tenders scrapped on several occasions.

India had selected Russia's Ka-226 helicopter in 2014 to replace its Cheetah and Chetak aircraft, but the programme failed to progress.

Around 400 Cheetah and Chetak helicopters are scheduled for retirement in the coming years, making replacement a priority for the armed forces.

200	20,000	400
light multirole helicopters	crore rupees cleared	Cheetahs, Chetaks to retire

IIT MANDI LAUNCHES MOBILE SCIENCE PROGRAMME FOR 50 SCHOOLS

MANDI

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi has launched the Department of Science and Technology-supported 'Science on Wheels' initiative to promote hands-on science education in 50 schools across Himachal Pradesh.

Developed in collaboration with Plaksha University and the Igniting Dreams of Young Minds (IDYM) Foundation, the programme aims to connect classroom learning with practical experiments for students from Classes 6 to 12.



The initiative will cover schools in Mandi, Kullu, Bilaspur, Hamirpur and Kangra districts. Each school visit will feature a six-hour interactive programme focusing on space technology, robotics, sustainability and water filtration.

IIT Mandi Director Laxmidhar Behera inaugurated the initiative at the institute's campus school. A key highlight of the launch was a live hydro-rocket demonstration, which explained scientific concepts such as force, pressure and motion through practical experimentation.

The programme is led by Rucha Joshi of Plaksha University, in collaboration with IIT Mandi and the IDYM Foundation, which is associated with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

The programme has previously been implemented in Chhattisgarh and Punjab before expanding to Himachal Pradesh. Through its mobile outreach model, it aims to encourage curiosity, critical thinking and scientific awareness among schoolchildren.

Chembarambakkam Lake: Vijay reviews flood preparedness

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Monday inspected Chembarambakkam Lake near Chennai to review flood prevention measures ahead of the northeast monsoon, as authorities monitored a developing weather system over the Bay of Bengal.

During the visit, Vijay assessed the reservoir's water level, inflow and preparations to manage heavy rainfall and prevent flooding in surrounding areas.

The lake's water level stood at 14.76 feet against its full capacity of 24 feet. Its water storage was recorded at 1.488 thousand million cubic feet (TMC), according to the information provided during the inspection.

The review comes as the northeast monsoon remains active across Tamil Nadu and neighbouring Puducherry, where continuous rainfall has been reported since Saturday night. Meanwhile, cyclone warning signals have been hoisted at nine ports, including Chennai, Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Karaikal, Pamban and Thoothukudi, following the formation of a depression over the Bay of Bengal.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast that the system could intensify further and cross the Andhra Pradesh and Yanam coasts between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam around the forenoon of October 28.

Wind speeds of 115–125 kmph, with gusts reaching 140 kmph, are likely during landfall, according to the weather forecast. The system is expected to move northwestwards and strengthen over the west-central Bay of Bengal. Heavy to very heavy rainfall is also likely in Puducherry, Karaikal and adjoining districts of Tamil Nadu.

Quick Read

China aiming to build military footholds in Southeast Asia

BEIJING

China is steadily expanding its area of influence in Southeast Asia through infrastructure, logistics networks and strategic partnerships aimed at establishing a military presence in the region, according to a report. It observes that instead of overtly establishing traditional overseas military bases, Beijing appears to be creating what could be described as a "dual-use network." Ports, airfields, logistics hubs and training centres are presented as civilian or cooperative projects; yet many possess the infrastructure necessary for future military applications.

Satcom players at same regulatory stage in India

NEW DELHI

The government has said security assessments are underway for all three licensed satellite communication operators, including Starlink, with all at broadly the same regulatory stage, even as a decision on spectrum pricing is close, according to a report. India's satellite internet debate is increasingly being viewed through the lens of what it delivers to end users — reliability, affordability and choice — even as attention remains on the regulatory timeline for new entrants, as per analysis. The discussion has intensified amid delays to Starlink rollout in India with Musk alleging that business interests have impeded the company's progress, it added. However, no evidence has been publicly provided to support those claims.



Fed to hit pause on rate hikes, but maybe not for long

NEW YORK

Federal Reserve policymakers have telegraphed they will not raise US short-term borrowing costs again this week, but with inflation concerns still front and centre, investors believe a rate-hike pause will not last for long.

Data due just one day after the Fed's anticipated decision to hold rates steady in the 3.75%-4.00% range will underscore why. Inflation picked up last month and broadened well beyond rising fuel prices, and US economic growth accelerated last quarter, government reports are expected to show, with gains powered by solid consumer spending and surging business investment driven by demand for AI.Meanwhile the labour market has been stable: The unemployment rate was 4.2% last month and weekly unemployment insurance claims are running lower than at any point in Fed Chairman Kevin Warsh's lifetime.Indeed, analysts say, were it not for a sharp rise in US Treasury yields in the weeks following the Fed's September rate hike, a second straight increase this week would have been in the cards. Financial markets responded by slashing bets on a rate hike. As of Friday, rate futures were pricing a 90% chance of a hold at the Fed's October 27-28 meeting.

GeM promotes AABHAR collection for artisans

It showcases Indian handicrafts, handlooms and regional products, connecting artisans with govt buyers while promoting cultural heritage and supporting rural entrepreneurs.

NEW DELHI

The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is promoting the AABHAR Collection, a dedicated digital storefront that showcases curated gift items and hampers reflecting India's rich cultural heritage, an official statement said on Monday.

The collection features handicrafts, handlooms, artisanal foods, pantry products and personal care items. It provides government buyers with gifting options for official ceremonies, conferences, state events, foreign delegations, employee recognition programmes, retirement functions and festive occasions.

By connecting their products with government procurement opportunities, the initiative aims to strengthen market access for local artisans, weavers, rural entrepreneurs and women-led enterprises.



The storefront

- **294** product catalogue listings
- **10** Central and State emporiums
- **7** more completing seller onboarding

"The 'AABHAR Collection' marks an important milestone in enhancing visibility of indigenous arts and crafts, showcasing the rich tapestry of Indian heritage and culture, and empowering underserved seller groups through the network of Central and State Handicraft and Handloom Emporiums," said Mihir Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, GeM.

The collection currently features 294 product catalogue listings from 10 Central and State handloom and handicraft emporiums. These include COTTAGE from the Central Cottage Industries Emporium, Khadi India from the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Garvi Gurjari of Gujarat, Himcrafts of Himachal Pradesh, Jharcraft of Jharkhand, Cauvery of Karnataka, Mrignayani of Madhya Pradesh, Marhati of Maharashtra, Purbashree from the North-east and Poompuhar of Tamil Nadu.

> **"The AABHAR Collection marks an important milestone in enhancing visibility of indigenous arts and crafts."**
> — **Mihir Kumar,** CEO, GeM

Seven additional government emporiums and organisations are at an advanced stage of completing the seller onboarding process, which would enable them to offer their curated products through the storefront.The initiative seeks to integrate India's artisanal ecosystem into the public procurement landscape under the Vocal for Local approach.

Govt allows E100 in flex-fuel vehicles



Ethanol demand and capacity, billion litres

E25 demand	17.9
Capacity	18.25
E20 demand	14.3

NEW DELHI

The government has amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, introducing provisions for vehicles using 100 per cent ethanol (E100) fuel in flex-fuel vehicles, with the changes taking effect from Monday.

According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, references to E85 fuel have been expanded in several emission standards and testing requirements to include E85 or E100. The amendment allows the standards to account for vehicles designed to operate on higher ethanol blends.

However, the government has clarified that E85 or E100 fuel must be used only in flex-fuel vehicles specifically designed by original equipment manufacturers (OEMs).

The amendments also revise certain vehicle and fuel classifications. The gross vehicle weight threshold in one emission table has been increased to 3,500 kg from 3,000 kg. Other changes update references to hydrogen-compressed natural gas (HCNG), petrol blended with up to 20 per cent ethanol (E20), biodiesel standards and technical details in emission-testing tables and notes.

The move comes amid efforts to expand ethanol use in India's transport sector. Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari has previously said that running a car entirely on ethanol could bring fuel costs down to the equivalent of around Rs 25 per litre.

Separately, a Brickwork Ratings report estimated that ethanol demand under an E25 blending scenario could reach 17.9 billion litres by financial year 2031 in its base case.

Govt backs Manastu Space with Rs 116 cr for innovation

NEW DELHI

The Technology Development Board (TDB), under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has signed an agreement with Navi Mumbai-based Manastu Space Technologies Private Limited to provide Rs 116 crore in financial support for the development of indigenous green propulsion technology for satellites and launch vehicles.



Project details

- **Support:** Rs 116 crore under the RDI Fund
- **Project cost:** Rs 277.63 crore
- **Technology:** hydrogen peroxide-based green propulsion
- **Thrust:** 5 mN to 300 N
- **Readiness:** TRL-6 to TRL-9
- **Funding:** optionally convertible debt

The funding, extended under the Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund, will support a project with a total estimated cost of Rs 277.63 crore. According to the Ministry of Science and Technology, the initiative aims to develop a scalable, integrated propulsion system covering thrust requirements ranging from 5 millinewtons to 300 newtons.

The programme seeks to advance the technology from Technology Readiness Level (TRL)-6 to TRL-9, taking it closer to full validation and deployment.

Manastu Space is developing an indigenous propulsion platform based on hydrogen peroxide combined with additives. The system integrates an engine and catalyst technology intended to offer improved performance and cost efficiency while reducing operational challenges associated with conventional propellants.

TDB Secretary Rajesh Kumar Pathak said indigenous propulsion technologies were important for strengthening India's capabilities across the space value chain.

He highlighted the growing need for propulsion systems that combine performance, reliability, operational safety and cost efficiency as the country's space ecosystem expands.

'PM Gati Shakti model paves way for people-centric infra'

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday highlighted that India's infrastructure planning has, in recent years, transitioned from individual projects into a more integrated people-centric approach aimed at better connectivity, ease of living and higher economic growth under the PM Gati Shakti model.

PM Modi shared an article on X, written by NITI Aayog member and former Cabinet Secretary, Rajiv Gauba, which underscores that the Prime Minister's 25 years in public office have reshaped how infrastructure is planned and delivered.

The article states that there is a fundamental difference between the coordination that governments have traditionally practised and PM Modi's Gati Shakti approach. Instead of discovering interdependencies when they spark a conflict on the ground, planners now identify them while projects are still on the drawing board.

"Before a road is designed, what else is slated for that



corridor? If a port is meant to serve a wider region, how will its hinterland be connected, and can these investments be sequenced so that one is ready the moment the other goes live? The Gati Shakti approach helped discover such interdependencies and mitigate conflicts, which helped plan projects in such a way that it optimised the costs", according to the article.

> *"The Gati Shakti approach helped discover such interdependencies and mitigate conflicts, which helped plan projects in such a way that it optimised the costs."*
> **RAJIV GAUBA** NITI Aayog member, in his article

In over 25 years in public life, first as Gujarat chief minister and then Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has led a major expansion of infrastructure. The transformation of Gujarat's infrastructure during his tenure as CM is an important part of the state's development story. At the national level, too, the transformation has been truly momentous.

India's airport network has more than doubled.

'Q commerce to need 75 mn sq ft of logistics space by 2030'

NEW DELHI

India's fast-growing quick commerce sector is expected to require nearly 75 million square feet of urban logistics space by 2030 because of the rapid expansion of dark stores and supporting warehousing infrastructure, a report said on Monday. A report by CBRE South Asia estimates that the sector will need about 42 million square feet of in-city dark stores and another 33 million square feet of mother hubs by the end of the decade.

Mother hubs are large warehouses typically located on city outskirts that stock inventory and replenish multiple dark stores through a hub-and-spoke distribution model, it added. India's quick commerce ecosystem has expanded to around 7,800 dark stores in 2026 and currently occupies nearly 27 million square feet of logistics space across more than 100 cities.



Around 65-70 per cent of the existing dark-store network remains concentrated in the country's top eight metropolitan markets, but operators are increasingly expanding into tier-II and tier-III cities.

Quick commerce-related warehousing demand recorded a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 81 per cent between 2021 and 2025, accounting for about 4 to 5 per cent of total logistics leasing activity across India during the period, it added. In addition, annual space absorption linked to quick commerce increased from 3.1 million square feet in 2024 to 4.3 million square feet in 2025.

City-wise, Delhi-NCR emerged as the largest market and accounted for 21 per cent of total quick commerce warehousing demand between 2021 and the first half of 2026, followed closely by Mumbai at 20 per cent and Bengaluru at 17 per cent. Hyderabad contributed 16 per cent and Chennai 11 per cent.

Who leads q-commerce warehousing
share of demand, 2021 to H1 2026



Figures: CBRE South Asia

Gulf war risk: Indian exporters get extended safety net

NEW DELHI

The Department of Commerce has extended the timelines under 'Component II of RELIEF (Resilience & Logistics Intervention for Export Facilitation)', a time-bound intervention under the Export Promotion Mission (EPM), until March 31, 2027, to provide risk coverage to export shipments due to the continuing Middle East conflict, according to an official statement.

The extension has been undertaken in view of continued geopolitical disruptions in West Asia and their impact on maritime logistics across the Gulf and adjoining regions.

'Component II' of the initiative aims to encourage exporters to obtain Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) cover



for upcoming shipments to specified regions by providing 95 per cent risk coverage.

The benefit is available for standalone and whole turnover policies obtained on or after March 16, 2026. Under this component, the premium payable by eligible exporters is protected against increases beyond pre-disruption levels during the eligible period.

Exporters seeking coverage under the RELIEF initiative are required to submit claims and supporting documents through the ECGC customer portal. Guidance on generating user IDs and passwords, completing exporter registration and submitting claims under the initiative is available through dedicated video tutorials on ECGC's official YouTube channel, said the statement.

Launched on March 19, 2026, RELIEF is a targeted intervention to support Indian exporters facing extraordinary freight cost escalation, higher insurance premium and war-related export risks arising from disruptions in the Gulf and the wider West Asian maritime corridor.

There have been reports of ships being hit in drone and missile attacks around the Strait of Hormuz. The war danger has also spread to the Red Sea area following the Houthis launching attacks in Yemen to take over vast swathes of territory along the coastal region.

ENERGY SUPPLY PRESSURE

India's natural gas import bill jumps 23%

NEW DELHI

India's natural gas import bill rose 23 per cent to $8.5 billion during April-September of the current financial year from $6.9 billion in the corresponding period last year, as global energy prices increased amid the conflict in West Asia, according to government data.

Figures compiled by the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) show that the increase was primarily driven by higher international prices, alongside a rise in imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) volumes. India imported 18,189 million standard cubic metres (MMSCM) of LNG during the six-month period, up 4.4 per cent from 17,414 MMSCM in the year-ago period.A senior official said disruptions to shipments through the Strait of Hormuz forced oil marketing companies to source more LNG from the United States, adding to transportation costs.

Domestic natural gas production also weakened, declining 4.4 per cent to 16,804 MMSCM during the first half of the financial year, compared with 17,585 MMSCM in the same period last year.

Meanwhile, overall natural gas consumption remained broadly stable at 34,769 MMSCM, against 34,773 MMSCM in the year-ago period. However, India's dependence on imported gas increased to 52.3 per cent from 50.1 per cent, highlighting the growing role of overseas supplies in meeting domestic demand.

September figures showed the import bill remaining broadly unchanged at $1.2 billion despite an 8.5 per cent fall in import volumes to 2,957 MMSCM from 3,233 MMSCM a year earlier.

Quick Read



Ukraine has repeatedly struck Oleshky: Russia

MOSCOW

Russia's Defence Ministry on Monday accused Ukraine of repeatedly hitting the Russian-controlled town of Oleshky in southern Ukraine with artillery and drones ahead of a planned local ceasefire this week, saying the attacks had blocked deliveries of food and medicine and stopped people from leaving.

Ukraine and Russia said on Friday they had agreed to a ceasefire in Oleshky from October 27, allowing aid deliveries and the evacuation of residents through humanitarian corridors.

The ministry said in a statement that Ukraine had shelled the town 18 times and carried out more than 120 drone attacks on it and the main roads around it in the week since October 19. The claim could not be independently verified, and there was no immediate response from Ukraine, which has in the past accused Russia of keeping aid out and people in.

Bolsonaro refuses to recognise Lula win

SAO PAULO

Right-wing Brazilian Senator Flavio Bolsonaro, son of jailed former President Jair Bolsonaro, has followed his father's lead and refused to concede defeat to leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who won a historic fourth term in the presidential election. The senator questioned a ruling by a Supreme Court justice appointed by Lula that kept voting open for two more hours over alleged irregularities in voter transport, and said he would seek to have the result annulled. "It is impossible to recognize the election results, given the circumstances under which things unfolded," Bolsonaro told journalists.

Jordan arrests 3 suspects over deadly church attack after shootout

AL-JUDAYYDA

Jordanian security forces arrested three armed suspects after a shootout on Monday over an attack on a church that killed nine people in the US-allied country, state television said. Friday's attack, during a funeral at a Greek Orthodox church in the village of Hamoud, about 120 km (75 miles) southwest of the capital, Amman, also wounded 40 others and alarmed the Christian community. Witnesses said the gunfire went on for several minutes. Reuters video footage showed a building scarred by the exchange of fire in the village of al-Judayyda, in Karak governorate.

Houthis claim attacks on Saudi oil sites, Riyadh airport

SAUDI ARABIA REPORTS DEBRIS IN MECCA AND MEDINA, BUT THE IRAN-BACKED GROUP DENIES TARGETING THE HOLY CITIES.

MECCA

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi movement said on Monday it had attacked Saudi Arabia's East-West crude oil pumping stations and Riyadh airport, escalating tensions and threatening oil supplies amid a widening regional conflict.

Counter claims on Saudi 'attack'

- Houthis claim attacks on Saudi oil pumping stations and Riyadh airport.
- Saudi-led coalition says it destroyed missile launchers and storage facilities in Yemen.
- Riyadh airport had resumed operations at two terminals following an earlier deadly attack.
- Saudi, Turkish and Pakistani officials were expected to meet Iranian representatives in Tehran.
- Escalating hostilities threaten oil infrastructure and shipping routes across the region.



The claims came after the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen announced it had destroyed two ballistic missile launchers in Sanaa, including one allegedly used to fire a missile towards Riyadh. The coalition said the missile had been intercepted. Saudi authorities had not immediately confirmed the latest Houthi claims.

The Houthis have increasingly targeted Saudi airports, ports and oil installations with ballistic missiles and drones, placing pressure on the kingdom as hostilities spread across the region.

The group also claimed responsibility for striking King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. Two terminals at the airport resumed operations following an earlier attack claimed by the Houthis this month that reportedly killed 13 people, the kingdom's deadliest such incident in more than a decade.

Meanwhile, senior officials from Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan were expected to meet Iranian officials in Tehran on Monday to discuss regional coordination.

The Saudi-led coalition also announced military operations against Houthi positions in Yemen, destroying five tunnels used to store ballistic missiles, four missile launchers and a missile storage facility.

Coalition says it destroyed

5	TUNNELS STORING BALLISTIC MISSILES
4	MISSILE LAUNCHERS
1	MISSILE STORAGE FACILITY

Oleshky residents doubt truce will hold



KYIV

A temporary ceasefire scheduled to begin on Tuesday in Russia-occupied Oleshky, Ukraine, has raised hopes of humanitarian evacuations and aid deliveries, but residents who fled the town remain deeply sceptical about its prospects.

Vitaly, 55, recently escaped Oleshky with his wife, Iryna, their 13-year-old son, Vlad, and their cat after fearing starvation amid worsening conditions. The family endured a gruelling journey through Russia and Belarus before returning to Ukrainian-controlled territory. They are now temporarily staying in an apartment in the Kyiv region.

Russia and Ukraine agreed to the temporary truce following mediation by US First Lady Melania Trump, with additional involvement from Pope Leo. The agreement, announced by the White House on Friday, is intended to allow civilians to leave the besieged town and enable essential supplies to enter.

A temporary ceasefire in occupied Oleshky aims to enable evacuations and aid deliveries, but residents who escaped remain doubtful about its durability.

However, Vitaly doubts the arrangement will last or significantly improve conditions for those still trapped. He declined to provide his surname because relatives remain in Russian-occupied territory.

"Regarding the truce, I'm very sceptical about all this," Vitaly said, expressing doubts about the agreement's ability to protect residents. With supplies dwindling and the Dnipro River blocking the route north, some residents have reportedly walked around 20 kilometres to neighbouring villages to obtain food and water. Locals call the dangerous journey the "road of death".

France braces for fresh stir after unrest

PARIS

French authorities are preparing for further street unrest next weekend after demonstrations over the cost of living and public services prompted a major security operation across the country, Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said on Monday.

> **"There are demands that must be heard and answered. To answer them, there is a prerequisite: a return to calm."**
>
> — **Maud Bregeon,** Govt spokeswoman

The government deployed 70,000 police officers for nationwide demonstrations in an effort to prevent a repeat of violence that erupted nine days earlier across dozens of cities. Although the security operation helped contain the unrest, sporadic clashes continued, particularly in Paris, Marseille and Lyon.

70,000 police officers deployed

1,435 arrests on Saturday

Asked whether further disturbances were expected during demonstrations planned for October 31, Nunez told BFM TV that authorities anticipated another difficult weekend.



"Halloween evening is traditionally always a bit lively. We expect it to be complicated again," he said.

The protests initially emerged from student discontent but have since expanded to include trade unions and Yellow Vest activists. The movement has highlighted public frustration over rising living costs, fuel prices and pressure on public services, creating a broader challenge for President Emmanuel Macron's government.

Nunez said police arrested 1,435 people nationwide during Saturday's demonstrations. He also highlighted what he described as a new development: organised far-right groups confronting far-left activists in several cities.

Authorities had received calls from nationalist and identity-based movements urging supporters to demonstrate in defence of businesses. In cities including Nice and Montpellier, such groups reportedly arrived in organised formations and targeted far-left activists.

Government spokeswoman Maud Bregeon said the state had maintained control during the weekend's demonstrations, while acknowledging that protesters had raised legitimate concerns.

She stressed that restoring calm was necessary before meaningful negotiations could take place.

The government was also expected to announce measures addressing student concerns over education and university admissions following a nationwide consultation.

Drone strikes cut power across southeast Sudan

CAIRO

Drone strikes by paramilitary forces hit power stations in southeast Sudan on Monday, cutting electricity across the region, the state power company said. It blamed the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, which have been at war with the army for about three and a half years, for knocking out power in four states that make up roughly half of the territory now held by the military.

The Rapid Support Forces did not immediately respond to a request for comment, and the account from the Sudan Electricity Holding Company could not be independently verified. Power went out in Sennar, Al Qadarif, White Nile and Gezira states, putting the stability of the entire national grid at risk, the company said.

The strikes hit stations in the towns and areas of Sinja, El Hawata, Al Fao and Mashkour, as well as Al-Junaid in Gezira State, causing "severe damage" and "major destruction" to equipment, it said.

The United Nations has warned that attacks on power infrastructure put health and other services at risk for millions of people already hit hard by the conflict.

Power cut

STATES HIT
Sennar, Al Qadarif, White Nile, Gezira

BLAMED ON
Rapid Support Forces

Norway joins list of countries Trump has abused

PORT HURON

US President Donald Trump escalated his criticism of Norway, describing the country in vulgar terms and saying Norwegian immigrants were unwelcome in the United States because he had not received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Trump made the remarks at a political rally in Port Huron, Michigan, ahead of next week's midterm elections. He also blamed immigration for recent unrest in France, arguing that the United States should be selective about the countries from which it accepts immigrants.

Trump said he would welcome immigrants from certain countries but exclude Norwegians because the Nobel Peace Prize had not been awarded to him.

"So I don't want anybody from Norway," Trump said, linking his position to the decision not to recognise him with the prestigious international award.

He subsequently described Norway as a "shit house country", using language he has previously directed at Haiti, Libya, Somalia and Yemen. His comments did not indicate that his administration was preparing to introduce any new official restrictions on Norwegian immigrants.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide responded by emphasising the independence of the Nobel Committee, which is based in Oslo but operates independently of the Norwegian government.

"He knows very well that the Nobel Committee is independent. We have reminded them of that, if anyone is wondering, and that is still the case," Eide told Norwegian broadcaster on Monday.

Oil spill off UAE widens, more beaches closed

DUBAI

An oil spill from a damaged tanker off the United Arab Emirates has spread, satellite images showed, forcing more beaches to close and raising environmental concerns.

Images dated October 24 from the European Union's Copernicus satellite observation network show the slick has grown over the past few days and is nearing the shores of the northern emirate of Umm Al Quwain, with dark layers of oil spreading at sea and along its coastline.

Since the US-Israeli war with Iran began, attacks on merchant ships in Gulf shipping lanes have raised the security risks for maritime traffic and deepened fears about the conflict's toll on the environment.



The UAE said on Friday that work was under way to contain oil leaking from a tanker offshore, and that its Ministry of Climate Change and Environment was carrying out an environmental assessment.

Authorities have not named the tanker or said what caused the spill. But experts said the oil was coming from a tanker called the Gem No.2, which shipping sources said had been hit by an unidentified projectile last month, causing a fire that was later put out.

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment said on Friday that all beaches and coastal areas around the city of Umm Al Quwain had been closed temporarily, while authorities in neighbouring Sharjah shut Al Hamriyah Beach as a precaution.

'Ebola scientists to probe Nigeria case origin'

LONDON

A team of leading Ebola scientists will go to Nigeria to help find out how the country's first patient in more than a decade was infected, Africa CDC Director-General Jean Kaseya said.

They will try to establish how the woman, the Ugandan-born wife of a Swiss diplomat based in Abuja, contracted the Bundibugyo species of Ebola. Her travel documents show she had not been to the epicentre of the outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kaseya said in an interview in London.

Tracing how she fell ill matters to make sure the deadly Bundibugyo outbreak, already the second-largest Ebola epidemic on record, is not spreading unseen in places yet to be found, and to help trace and isolate all her contacts.

"We have so many unknowns," said Kaseya. "I'm bringing a group of scientists in Abuja because… we need to be led by science."

One theory the scientists will examine is a possible link between the patient in Nigeria and Kenya's first case, reported earlier this month in a man who had travelled from Congo. On Friday, genomic sequencing showed that the viruses that infected the two were closely related.

The patient in Nigeria had holidayed in Uganda and passed through Entebbe Airport on October 3. The Kenyan patient, who has since died, was probably at the airport at the same time, as their flights were about 40 minutes apart, though they did not leave from the same gate and it is not clear whether they had any contact, Kaseya said.

BORDER TENSIONS

North Korea displays artillery near border

GIMPO

Tensions between North Korea and South Korea intensified on Monday after three North Korean armoured vehicles, identified as self-propelled howitzers, were observed near the heavily fortified border, while Pyongyang renewed accusations against Seoul over a disputed landmine incident.

A witness observed the three vehicles from a South Korean observatory overlooking the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ). Their gun barrels were pointed south, while approximately 20 to 30 North Korean soldiers were seen carrying out fencing work inside the buffer zone.



> *"By deliberately displaying it, North Korea is signalling through action, not words, that it intends to enforce its border policy through force rather than dialogue or negotiation."*
>
> **LIM EUL-CHUL** Professor, Kyungnam University

South Korean media identified the vehicles as 122-mm self-propelled howitzers, describing their visible deployment near the frontier as unusual. The display comes amid growing friction over border security and competing claims concerning military activities in the area.

Lim Eul-chul, a professor at Kyungnam University in Seoul, said the conspicuous positioning of the artillery could be intended to communicate Pyongyang's determination to enforce its border policy through military strength rather than negotiations.

He also suggested that the display could serve as a warning to Seoul against escalating tensions and help deter an accidental confrontation along the sensitive frontier.

The latest developments followed a letter sent by North Korea's representative to the United Nations Security Council. According to North Korean state media, Pyongyang accused South Korea of fabricating a September landmine incident to portray North Korean border construction as a military incursion.

CITY HILIGHTS
SPORTS
TUESDAY ▸ OCTOBER 27, 2026 IBCWORLDNEWS.COM



Real Madrid Secure Thrilling El Clásico Win Over Barcelona

Madrid ended Barcelona's impressive league winning streak as Mbappé delivered a decisive performance, strengthening the visitors' position in the championship race.

BARCELONA

Kylian Mbappé scored twice as Real Madrid defeated Barcelona 2-1 at the Camp Nou on Sunday, ending the hosts' nine-match winning run in La Liga and strengthening Madrid's position in the title race.

Madrid took the lead in the 41st minute when Mbappé finished a move following a low delivery across the penalty area from Yan Diomandé. Barcelona defender Gerard Martín attempted to intercept the ball but inadvertently redirected it against Mbappé and into the net, giving the visitors the advantage.

Barcelona responded with greater intensity after the interval, putting Madrid's defence under sustained pressure. Their efforts produced an equaliser around the hour mark when Raphinha converted with a low finish. The Brazilian found space after Lamine Yamal played a short corner to Pedri, who delivered an angled pass into his path.

The goal energised the home crowd, with Barcelona seeking to take control of the match. Andriy Lunin made an important save to deny Martín's header, while Madrid looked to exploit openings through counterattacks.



Both teams created chances during an increasingly competitive second half. However, Madrid found the decisive breakthrough in the closing stages through another clinical finish from Mbappé.

Jude Bellingham produced a skilful move to release Eduardo Camavinga, who advanced before pulling the ball back for Mbappé. The French forward completed his brace, restoring Madrid's lead and silencing the home supporters.

Barcelona attempted to respond but could not find another equaliser. The defeat ended their run of nine consecutive league victories and marked their first loss in any competition since returning to the Camp Nou a year earlier.

Madrid's defensive discipline proved important against a Barcelona side that had been averaging 4.3 goals per game, according to the report. The visitors absorbed pressure while remaining dangerous whenever opportunities emerged on the counterattack.

Former Madrid manager José Mourinho praised the contest, saying: "The world that loves football will have stopped to watch this and they won't have gone disappointed; this was two teams that played to win."

The victory provides Madrid with renewed momentum as the season progresses, while Barcelona will look to recover from the setback. Mbappé's finishing and Madrid's ability to withstand pressure proved decisive in one of European football's most closely watched rivalries.

Antonelli dominates US grand prix to close in on title

AUSTIN

Kimi Antonelli strengthened his bid to become Formula One's youngest-ever world champion with a commanding victory at the United States Grand Prix at the Circuit of the Americas on Sunday.

Mercedes' young driver is on the verge of a historic championship triumph after another commanding performance strengthened his grip on the season's standings.

The Mercedes driver started from pole position and maintained his advantage throughout the race, securing his ninth Grand Prix victory of the season. His one-stop strategy proved decisive, allowing him to finish 13.078 seconds ahead of Charles Leclerc, who claimed second place.

Antonelli now holds a 123-point lead at the top of the drivers' standings and needs only two more points to clinch the championship at the upcoming Mexico Grand Prix. His dominant performance has brought him closer to securing the title as the season approaches its decisive stages.

"The car felt great today, and I was able to control the race, but it definitely wasn't easy. There was pressure throughout, and I knew I couldn't afford to make a mistake. I just tried to stay calm, focus on each lap and execute the race," Antonelli said after the victory.

Leclerc secured second place for the second consecutive race after overtaking Max Verstappen in the closing stages. Verstappen recovered from a poor start to move into second, but power unit issues later hampered his challenge.

Red Bull's decision to adopt a two-stop strategy failed to deliver the desired result. Leclerc capitalised on Verstappen's difficulties to claim the runner-up position before Valtteri Bottas's stoppage neutralised the race. The outcome also ended Verstappen's championship hopes for the first time since 2020, according to the report.



Lewis Hamilton finished fourth despite complaining about balance problems during the race. His result, combined with George Russell's eighth-place finish, brought him within one point of Russell in the overall standings. Russell received a five-second penalty for leaving the track and gaining an advantage at the start.

Hamilton's fourth-place finish proved valuable in the battle for second overall, keeping the competition between the two drivers close. With the championship fight approaching its conclusion, every remaining point could influence the final standings.

Lando Norris finished fifth, followed by Isack Hadjar and Oscar Piastri. Liam Lawson and Pierre Gasly completed the top 10, rounding off a competitive race at the Texas circuit.

Attention now shifts to the Mexico Grand Prix, scheduled for October 30 to November 1. Antonelli could secure the drivers' championship there, marking a significant milestone in his title challenge. His latest victory has placed him in a commanding position, leaving rivals with limited opportunities to close the gap before the season concludes.

India Creates History with Record 200th T20I Win

CHRISTCHURCH

India became the first team to register 200 victories in men's T20 Internationals after defeating New Zealand by four wickets in a thrilling second match of the five-game series at Hagley Oval on Sunday.

Chasing a target of 181, India recovered from 70 for five to reach 181 for six, thanks to an unbeaten 69-run partnership between Tilak Varma and Nitish Kumar Reddy. The victory gave India a 2-0 lead in the series, with three matches remaining.

India have now won 200 of their 300 T20 Internationals since making their debut in the format in 2006. They have lost 83 matches, while the remaining fixtures ended in ties or no results. Among Full Member nations, India boasts a winning percentage of 71.20.

Varma remained unbeaten on 47, while Reddy scored an explosive 26 off just 13 deliveries. With 11 runs required from the final over, the pair maintained their composure and completed the chase off the penultimate ball.

Their partnership also established a new Indian record for the seventh wicket in T20 Internationals, surpassing the previous mark of 63 runs set by Dinesh Karthik and Krunal Pandya against New Zealand in 2019.

Earlier, New Zealand posted 180 for five after being asked to bat. The hosts struggled initially as Arshdeep Singh dismissed Tim Seifert, Bhuvneshwar Kumar removed Daryl Mitchell and Prince Yadav bowled Finn Allen for 16. New Zealand reached 41 for three at the end of the Powerplay.

Glenn Phillips and Bevon Jacobs then revived the innings with a 116-run partnership. Phillips scored 70 off 43 balls, hitting eight boundaries and four sixes, while Jacobs contributed 58 from 46 deliveries.

Phillips departed in the 18th over, followed by Jacobs. Michael Bracewell added late impetus with a boundary and a six from his only two deliveries, taking New Zealand to 180 for five.

India began their chase with a 40-run opening partnership between Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma. However, wickets fell regularly as Jacob Duffy and Mitchell Santner led New Zealand's fightback. Naman Dhir scored a brisk 31 off 17 balls before his dismissal left India struggling at 70 for five.

Varma steadied the innings before Reddy joined him to complete the historic chase. The teams will meet again in the third T20I in Wellington on October 27.





JALANDHAR

India will begin their title defence at the men's Asian Champions Trophy 2026 on Tuesday, with captain Harmanpreet Singh stressing that the team will respect every opponent as the continental tournament gets underway in Punjab.

The six-team competition begins on October 27, bringing together India, Japan, China, Malaysia, South Korea and Bangladesh. Matches will initially be held at the Olympian Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium in Jalandhar before the tournament moves to Mohali for the knockout stages.

"Every team is here to compete and win the tournament. All the teams are strong, and we do not want to take any opponent lightly. Everyone has come here to give their best," Harmanpreet said, according to a Hockey India release.

"We have gained a lot of experience and matured as a team. We will approach every match with the same mindset and give every opponent the respect they deserve," he added.

India enters the competition after successfully defending their Asian Games gold medal in Japan under coach Craig Fulton. The team will seek to maintain that momentum and extend its record in the Asian Champions Trophy.

India have won the title five times, in 2011, 2016, 2018, 2023 and 2024. Their 2018 triumph was shared with Pakistan. Their latest victory came in Hulunbuir, China, where Jugraj Singh scored the decisive goal in a 1-0 final win against the hosts. India will aim to secure a third consecutive title after winning the previous two editions.

However, the hosts suffered a setback before the tournament, with former captain and midfielder Manpreet Singh ruled out because of a calf injury. Vivek Sagar Prasad has replaced him in the squad.

Malaysia, runners-up to India at the Asian Games, are expected to challenge the hosts, with their league-stage meeting scheduled for November 1. South Korea, Japan and China will also seek strong campaigns, while Bangladesh will face India in the tournament opener.

The league stage runs until November 2, with each team playing the other five sides once. The top four teams will qualify for the semi-finals, scheduled for November 4 in Mohali. The bronze-medal and gold-medal matches will take place on November 5. India's remaining league fixtures are against China on October 29, Japan on October 30, Malaysia on November 1 and South Korea on November 2.

Entry will be free for spectators at both venues. The opening ceremony in Jalandhar will feature Bhangra, Giddha, Gatka demonstrations and a musical performance with a laser show.

IPL 2027 mini-auction scheduled in Goa on Dec 16

NEW DELHI

The Indian Premier League (IPL) 2027 mini-auction will be held in Goa on December 16, with franchises preparing to strengthen their squads ahead of the next season. The auction will take place nearly a month after the player retention deadline of November 15.

According to Cricinfo, cited by ANI, the day-long auction will coincide with the second One-Day International between India and Sri Lanka in Bengaluru. Following the retention deadline, the IPL will provide franchises with the registered player pool for shortlisting. The final list, including the order of player sets, is expected to be shared during the week before the auction.

The trade window has already witnessed two major player exchanges since the conclusion of the 2026 season. Lucknow Super Giants traded captain Rishabh Pant to Delhi Capitals in June in exchange for wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav. More recently, Delhi Capitals traded fast bowler T Natarajan to Sunrisers Hyderabad for uncapped leg-spinner Zeeshan Ansari.



Under IPL regulations, the trade window opens a month after a season concludes and remains active until a week before the auction. It reopens afterwards and continues until a month before the next season begins.

The IPL has yet to finalise the dates for the 2027 tournament. However, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia indicated after the board's annual general meeting in September that the season could begin towards the end of March.

The December event will be the final mini-auction in the current IPL cycle. A mega auction is scheduled ahead of the 2028 season, marking the beginning of the league's next media rights cycle. The Board of Control for Cricket in India has not yet issued the tender for those rights.

In 2022, IPL media rights were sold for Rs 48,390.5 crore, approximately USD 6.2 billion, highlighting the tournament's commercial scale. Royal Challengers Bengaluru enter the next season as defending champions after defeating Gujarat Titans in the 2026 final in Ahmedabad.

Franchises will now focus on retention decisions and player selection as preparations for the auction gather pace.

PV Sindhu leads India's challenge at Hylo open 2026

SAARBRÜCKEN

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu will lead India's campaign at the Hylo Open 2026 in Germany, beginning Tuesday, after finishing runner-up at the French Open last week. World No. 11 Sindhu is seeded second and will aim to convert her recent form into another title-winning performance.

Sindhu lost to South Korea's A Se-young, the reigning Olympic and world champion, in the French Open final. Her recent performances have included a semifinal appearance at the Malaysia Open in January, another semifinal at the Australian Open in June and victory at the Japan Open in July.

Eight other Indian players will compete in the women's singles draw, including Ashmita Chaliha, Devika Sihag, Isharani Baruah, Aakarshi Kashyap, Anmol Kharb, Malvika Bansod and Unnati Hooda. Meghana Reddy Mareddy is also listed in the qualifying entry.



Ashmita arrives after a notable French Open campaign, where she defeated Japan's three-time world champion Akane Yamaguchi in the second round. The Indian had earlier won the Korea Masters this year. Devika faces a difficult opening-round test against Thailand's top seed and world No. 8 Pornpawee Chochuwong.

In the men's singles, Lakshya Sen will spearhead India's challenge. The 2019 Hylo Open champion will look to regain form after conceding a walkover in Paris and suffering first-round exits in six of his previous seven World Tour tournaments this year.

Sen will be joined by Kiran George, Ayush Shetty, Tharun Mannepalli and former world championships bronze medallist HS Prannoy. S. Sankar Muthusamy Subramanian is listed in qualifying.

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