CITY HILIGHTS

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The Truth Speaks

SATURDAY ▸ NOVEMBER 28, 2026 ▸ VOL: 12 ▸ ISSUE: 133 ▸ PAGES 14 ▸ ₹2.00



P12 SEBI targets 5-day FPI onboarding

P13 Putin ready for Ukraine peace deal: Trump



P14 Spence ruled out of England Women A tour of India



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CM: NEVER PUT A LABEL OF CASTE ON KANAKADASA

Shivakumar says don't fight over caste, walk Kanakadasa's path of humanity.

HAVERI

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday said Kanakadasa should not be viewed through the lens of caste, and efforts should be made to spread his teachings, devotion and messages among people from all sections of society.

Speaking to reporters at the Haveri helipad, he said it was wrong to associate Kanakadasa's name exclusively with a particular caste. "Kanakadasa had taught people to rise above caste considerations and follow the path of devotion."

Having earned the grace of Lord Krishna, Kanakadasa guided people from different sections of society, he said.

Asked whether Kuruba community MLAs would be given ministerial positions, he said, "Only you are saying this, nobody has raised this matter with me. There might have been some discussion in the past, but right now there are many aspirants for ministerial positions."

He claimed that he was the one who brought Shivannanavar into the Congress.

On the Varada-Bedti river-linking project, the CM said, "We have already given our consent to the project. Three Chief Ministers have already held discussions regarding this matter."

To a query on problems faced by Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), he said they understood the situation, although certain organisations were putting pressure on them. "They are good people too, and we understand their predicament," he said, urging the Central government to release funds for ASHAs first.



'Haveri Medical College to be named after Kanakadasa'

HAVERI: Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday said Haveri Medical College would be renamed after Kanakadasa and sanctioned Rs 5 crore for a student hostel following a request from the seer. The announcements were made during the Sri Bhakta Kanakadasa Jayanti celebrations at Kaginele in Byadagi taluk. Expressing happiness over his visit to Kaginele for the celebrations, Shivakumar said, "It is my privilege to have had the darshan of Kanakadasa's Aikya Sthala and to participate in his Jayanti celebrations." He also said approval had been granted for a project to fill 130 lakes in Haveri district. Plans were also being considered to prepare a master plan for the comprehensive development of Kaginele. Noting that the people of Haveri district had strengthened the government by electing six MLAs, he appealed to people to cooperate in efforts to take society forward together.



Strength of rural economy lies in sweat of shepherds: DKS

Haveri: Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday said the strength of rural economy lies in sweat of shepherds. In an X post, he said, "Today, while en route to Kaginele in Haveri district to attend the Kanakadasa Jayanti celebrations, I spent some quality time with shepherds from the Kuruba community. I listened to their joys and challenges, learned about the difficulties they face in sheep rearing, and received their representations." "The affection and warm hospitality shown by the shepherds were truly touching. I was deeply moved by their gesture of gifting me a lamb and honoring me by draping a *kambali* (traditional wool blanket) over my shoulders," he added.

Several dignitaries, including Minister Shri Rudrappa Lamani, and MLAs Shri Prakash Koliwad, Shri Srinivas Mane, and Shri Basavaraj Neelappa Shivannavar, were present with the CM.

Cabinet clears Delimitation Bill

Proposes 50% more Lok Sabha seats for every state; ceiling to remain till 2050.

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Friday cleared the Constitution Amendment Bill to implement reservation for women in Parliament and state legislatures through a delimitation exercise that would increase Lok Sabha seats in all states by 50%, sources said.

The current inter-state ratio of constituencies in both Houses, based on the 1971 population, will be sealed till 2051, sources said. The fresh Bill seeks to use the 2011 Census to redraw the increased seats, the sources said.

The Bill, which was introduced during a special session in April but failed to clear the Lok Sabha with a two-thirds majority, did not have the provision for the 50% increase in the number of seats in all states.

The government announced on Thursday that it has requested the presiding officers of both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha to reconvene to transact essential government business.

Four-day special session from Monday

The Lok Sabha will meet for a four-day special session starting Monday, November 30, and the Rajya Sabha will meet on December 2.

Government sources have said that the special session, which is an extension of the Monsoon Session that was adjourned sine die on August 13 but was not prorogued, is for a fresh push to the delimitation package, which includes implementation of 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and the state legislatures as well as the expansion of the Lok Sabha.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, met at 1 pm on Friday and cleared a few amendments to ensure that no state loses its representation in the Lok Sabha in proportion to other states after delimitation, sources said.

MK Stalin, leader of the DMK, one of the parties expected to extend support to the Bill in its latest form, reiterated on Friday that Tamil Nadu's existing share of seats in the Lok Sabha should not be reduced. "If the number of parliamentary constituencies is increased, under no circumstances should Tamil Nadu's existing 7.18% share of seats in the lower house be reduced… The existing proportion of parliamentary representation among States, as determined on the basis of the 1971 Census and frozen earlier, must remain frozen for another 25 years," Stalin posted on X.

Sources in the DMK said the party, which had opposed the Bill in its earlier form, is expected to extend its support if their conditions are met.

Besides the DMK, NCP's Sharad Pawar-led faction and a few other smaller parties are expected to support the Bill, sources said. Government sources said they are assured of a two-thirds majority in both Houses of Parliament.

The Opposition I.N.D.I.A. bloc is against the legislation and will be meeting on Saturday to discuss its strategy.



Women's Reservation and Delimitation Bill: Key highlights

- Union Cabinet clears fresh Constitution Amendment Bill to implement 33% reservation for women in Parliament and State Assemblies.
- Lok Sabha seats in all states to be increased by 50% through delimitation.
- Fresh delimitation exercise to be based on the 2011 Census.
- Existing inter-state proportion of parliamentary representation, based on the 1971 Census, to remain frozen until 2051.
- Govt proposes safeguards to ensure no state loses its proportional representation after delimitation.
- 4-day special Lok Sabha session to begin on Nov 30; Rajya Sabha to meet on Dec 2.
- Earlier version of the Bill, introduced in April, failed to secure the required two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha.
- DMK chief MK Stalin insists TN's existing 7.18% share of Lok Sabha seats must be protected.
- DMK may support the revised Bill if its conditions are met.
- Sharad Pawar-led NCP faction & smaller parties are also expected to support the legislation.
- Opposition I.N.D.I.A. bloc to meet on Saturday to discuss its strategy.
- Govt sources claim to have the required two-thirds majority in both Houses.

Cong issues whip to MPs ahead of Parl sepcial session

New Delhi: After issuing a whip to Congress MPs in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha to be present in their Houses when it meets for the special sitting next week, party president and Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge has invited all Opposition floor leaders to attend a meeting at his residence on Saturday to chalk out a joint strategy. The meeting is being convened in view of the government's likely move to reintroduce a constitutional amendment bill in Parliament, involving delimitation, sources said. While I.N.D.I.A bloc parties' floor leaders in Parliament will be present, non-I.N.D.I.A bloc Opposition parties such as the DMK, the AAP and the BJD, among others, have also been invited for the meeting, sources said. The meeting would be held at 11.30 am at Kharge's 10, Rajaji Marg residence on Saturday, they added.

One vacant cabinet post must go to woman, another to BC candidate: Siddu

BENGALURU

Former chief minister Siddaramaiah has demanded that of the two vacant ministerial posts, one should be allocated to a woman and the other to a representative from the backward classes.

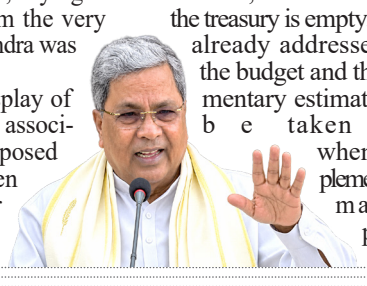
He was addressing the media after garlanding a statue of Kanakadasa on the occasion of Kanaka Jayanti at his residence here on Friday.

On the issue of the CID granting a 'clean chit' to former minister B Nagendra in connection with the multi-crore corruption scandal at the Valmiki Development Corporation, Siddaramaiah defended him, saying he had maintained from the very beginning that Nagendra was innocent.

Regarding the display of unity with his close associates in Mysuru, he posed the question: "When have we ever fought? When have we ever drifted apart?"

When asked about ASHAs protest, he said, "I am not the chief minister. DK Shivakumar is the head of the government. I trust that he will resolve the problems faced by the ASHA workers soon."

On claims that funds have been depleted due to the 'Guarantee' schemes, he asked, "Who says so? There are no funds available this year to launch new programnes; perhaps they can be introduced next year. To launch a new scheme, an allocation must be made in the budget or included in the supplementary estimates. Funds have to be provided, after all. However, this does not mean the treasury is empty. We have already addressed this in the budget and the supplementary estimates. It will be taken care of when the supplementary estimates are presented."



'Hasina has become a 'thorn' in Bangladesh-India ties'

DHAKA

Sheikh Hasina has become a "thorn" in Bangladesh-India relations, with New Delhi beginning to realise the strain her presence in the country is causing to bilateral ties, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir has said.

Comparing the deposed prime minister to an unwelcome guest who suddenly walks into someone's home, Kobir said India is in a difficult position as it could neither send her away nor avoid dealing with her presence. "Hasina has become a thorn in Bangladesh-India relations," he told reporters at the foreign ministry on Thursday.

His remarks came a day after India refrained from commenting on Hasina's plan to return to Bangladesh on December 16.

"She has become an irritation, and they understand that this is a problem for the relationship," Kobir said.

Kobir reiterated that Hasina could return only under the extradition treaty between India and Bangladesh, either in handcuffs or under strict surveillance.

"She is a criminal. There is one policy for criminals and another for ordinary citizens. She falls under the criminal category. She will come only through the extradition treaty. It is not a matter of her returning; she will be handed over," he said.

Hasina's presence in India has emerged as a contentious issue in bilateral ties since her departure from Bangladesh.



> Hasina could return only under the extradition treaty between India and Bangladesh, either in handcuffs or under strict surveillance.
>
> - Humaiun Kobir, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ethanol row: Karnataka issues notice to IOL

BENGALURU

Karnataka has issued a show-cause notice to Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) after an inspection at its Devanagonthi terminal near Bengaluru found that one measuring device dispensed 14 litres more ethanol than it should have in a 3,000-litre test.

Officials also found that petrol measuring equipment dispensed four to six litres less than it should have for the same quantity.

The Legal Metrology Department said the discrepancies were outside permissible limits. It directed IOCL to stop using the equipment for commercial transactions until its accuracy and compliance with legal requirements were established.

Officials used a verified standard measure during the November 25 inspection. A second ethanol measuring device dispensed three litres more than it should have in a 3,000-litre test, the notice said.

Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Minister Rizwan Arshad said on Friday that the department had begun inspecting oil company terminals, where ethanol is blended with petrol, after the state alleged that the ethanol content in some fuel samples exceeded the prescribed 20 per cent limit.

The notice, issued under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, asks IOCL to explain the discrepancies and detail the steps it has taken to correct them. The company has seven days from receiving the notice to submit a written response, verification certificates and records of calibration and maintenance. The department said it could take further action if the explanation was unsatisfactory.

More on page 4

'TIME TO DEAL WITH IRON HAND'

SC raps TN govt, orders lamp lighting at Deepathoon today

Issues contempt notice to TN authorities; sacks Temple Board trustees.

CHENNAI

A furious Supreme Court on Friday issued a contempt notice to the Tamil Nadu chief secretary and other officials for "willful and brazen" violation of its order on the lighting of the Karthigai Deepam and said the executive authorities acted on the diktat of their political bosses.

SC takes strong stance on non-compliance

The top court also suspended the board of trustees of the Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy temple in Madurai and ordered the lighting of the lamp at the disputed Deepathoon stone pillar atop the Thirupparankundram hill on Saturday using the flame lit at Uchipillaiyar mandapam on November 24.

Asking the Tamil Nadu chief secretary to appear personally before the court, a bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Vipul M Pancholi directed him to file an affidavit detailing emails, calls exchanged and messages exchanged between officials.

"The wilful non-compliance of orders of the court, especially by the executive authorities, cannot go unnoticed and it has to be dealt with an iron hand," the bench said.

It issued contempt of court notices to the Tamil Nadu chief secretary, director general of police, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments secretary and commissioner, Madurai district collector, commissioner of police, superintendent of police, temple authorities and others.

"An order of this court is not an invitation to negotiate. It binds the state, its officers and every statutory or religious institution functioning under the State's law until this Court itself modifies it. Any attempt to pollute the stream of justice by any person, howsoever high he may be, would not be tolerated. This is the message which we intend to convey in this order," the apex court said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Archaeological Survey of India, told the bench that the ASI was informed by the temple trustees that no instruction regarding their entry was received from higher officials.

"My respectful submission is... this is a case of aggravated contempt and administrative arrogance. The government has been opposing from the beginning," the SG said.



SC order in a nutshell

- Supreme Court issues contempt notices to Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary, DGP and Madurai Collector for violating its November 20 order.
- Suspends the board of trustees of Arulmigu Subramaniaswamy Temple & orders lighting of the lamp at Thiruparankundram Deepathoon on Saturday.
- Hands over security of the temple and Thiruparankundram hill to the CRPF following Tamil Nadu Police's failure to implement court orders.
- Apex court criticises officials, citing administrative chaos and disregard for judicial authority.
- Tamil Nadu government apologised on Wednesday for the failure to light the ceremonial lamp on November 24, blaming temple authorities despite the court's permission.



QUICK READ

Ex-CJI flags alleged community bias in judicial appointments

NEW DELHI

Former Chief Justice of India B R Gavai has written to President Droupadi Murmu alleging a growing disregard for diversity, inclusion and merit in judicial appointments and transfers, claiming that recent collegium recommendations have increasingly favoured one particular community at the expense of marginalised sections. In his letter, Gavai has urged the President to intervene, saying the situation calls for corrective measures involving the executive, Parliament and judiciary. He has claimed that a community accounting for less than five per cent of India's population has secured more than 40% representation in the Supreme Court in the recent past. "Candidates belonging to one particular section of the society are being favoured for recommendation/elevation to the exclusion of everyone else including marginalised communities including SC/STs, OBCs, minorities, women and even persons from forward sections of the society who are not from a particular community," he wrote.

Sabarimala post office keeps faith and postal history alive

PATHANAMTHITTA

Pilgrims visiting Sabarimala can send home a postcard bearing a postmark of the shrine's 18 sacred steps or book a Speed Post delivery of Ayyappa prasadam at a counter that stays open round the clock. The Sannidhanam post office operates only during the Mandala-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season. Established in 1963, it has a PIN code of its own, 689713. Its special postmark, introduced in 1974, depicts the 18 sacred steps with the idol of Lord Ayyappa above them. Letters and postcards sent from the post office carry the design. Pilgrims often mail postcards to themselves as keepsakes or send them to friends and relatives, district authorities said. Once the temple closes at the end of the Makaravilakku season, the device used to apply the postmark is kept at the Pathanamthitta postal division office until the next pilgrimage season. India Post and the Travancore Devaswom Board have opened a round-the-clock 'Swami Prasadam' booking counter for 2026–27 season.

Quick Read

Land encroachment fight ends in fatal shooting

CH NEWS, HOSKOTE

A bitter dispute over government land turned deadly near Hoskote when a young man was shot dead in Solur. Trouble started while officials were identifying plots for the Ashraya housing scheme and found that a local resident, Ramesh, had unlawfully occupied nearly ten guntas of public property. When efforts began to clear the encroached area, a fierce argument broke out between Ramesh and 25-year-old Likhith Gowda. In a fit of rage, Ramesh allegedly pulled out his licensed gun and fired at Gowda, killing him instantly. Hoskote police rushed to the village and promptly arrested the shooter.

Bengaluru stays dry as coast expects rain

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Parts of coastal and hilly Karnataka are set to see light to moderate showers over the next two days before sunshine returns statewide. Weather officials say Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, and six Malenadu districts including Kodagu, Chikkamagaluru, and Mysuru, will likely get rain for the next two days. Meanwhile, North Interior Karnataka and Bengaluru will stay mostly dry, though residents should watch local updates. By November 29, clear and dry skies will take over every district across the state, giving farmers and coastal residents a welcome break from wet weather.

IIM Bangalore invites research associate job applications

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Job seekers dreaming of working at a premier academic institution have an exciting new chance. The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore has announced openings for Research Associate roles across several departments. Graduates holding a recognized Bachelor's or Master's degree can apply online without paying any application fee. Selected candidates will work right here in Bengaluru and receive a competitive monthly salary. The institute will shortlist applicants based on their academic qualifications before holding final selection interviews. Interested individuals should check full guidelines on the official website, iimb.ac.in, and submit their forms before the December 10 deadline.

Council proposes Ambedkar portrait currency bill

Karnataka lawmakers will debate a historic bill proposing Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's portrait alongside Gandhi on Indian currency notes.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A push to place Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's portrait alongside Mahatma Gandhi on Indian currency notes is set to take center stage during the upcoming winter legislature session in Belagavi. Legislative Council Chairman Saleem Ahmed announced that arrangements are ready to introduce a Private Member's Bill on the matter when the session opens on December 2 at the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha.

Addressing reporters at a Vidhana Soudha committee room, Ahmed said the Upper House has cleared space for more than three Private Member's Bills this session. Among them is a proposal by Congress MLC B.S. Shivanna urging the Central Government and the Reserve Bank of India to print Dr. Ambedkar's image on all rupee denominations, including high-value notes. Once tabled, the Upper House will formally forward the bill to the President of India and the RBI.

In his proposal, Shivanna notes that Dr. Ambedkar was not only the chief architect of the Indian Constitution and a Bharat Ratna recipient, but also a towering economist whose research laid the foundational framework for establishing the RBI itself. Honoring him on everyday banknotes, Shivanna argues, keeps his social and financial legacy alive across generations. He also pointed out that major democracies like the United States and the United Kingdom routinely feature multiple national leaders and economic thinkers on their currency, suggesting India should adopt a similar approach.

Beyond the currency bill, Ahmed shared that the Upper House will also take up Private Member's Bills seeking full waivers on student education loans and stronger support measures for persons with disabilities.



From left: B.R. Ambedkar, Council Chairman Saleem Ahmed, MLC B.S. Shivanna

In the Council

OPENS	December 2, winter session
WHERE	Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, Belagavi
BILLS	More than three Private Member's Bills
ALSO	Education-loan waivers; support for persons with disabilities

For millions of citizens who view Dr. Ambedkar as a symbol of equality and modern nation-building, seeing his face on Indian banknotes carries deep emotional weight. If the legislature backs the move and sends it to New Delhi, Karnataka could spark a nationwide conversation on how India honors the visionaries who shaped its democracy and economy.

Educated Women Must Empower Others, Says Karnataka Governor

BENGALURU



Karnataka Governor Dr Sudha Yadav has called upon educated women to use their knowledge, experience and professional networks to improve the lives of marginalised women.

Addressing women alumni of the Indian School of Business (ISB) and members of the ISB Women Network at Lok Bhavan, she said women's empowerment becomes meaningful when women support one another.

The Governor praised ISB's contribution to management education since its establishment in 2001. She noted that women constitute 47 per cent of its student population and that the institution has a global network of more than 6,800 women alumni.

Citing the example of an MBA graduate from Rajasthan who left a corporate career to become a village sarpanch, Dr Yadav highlighted initiatives promoting girls' education, sports, sanitation and a plastic-free village.

Success, she said, should be measured by how people use their knowledge and experience to transform society. She urged women to balance their professional ambitions with social responsibility and approach their work with dedication, integrity and patience.

The Governor stressed the need to recognise talented women in rural and tribal communities who may not have had access to formal education. Establishing schools and providing education to children in tribal areas were among the noblest forms of service, she said.Women's empowerment, she added, must extend beyond employment and financial independence to include health, education, skill development and dignified living. Skills such as embroidery, knitting and garment-making could provide opportunities for self-reliance when supported with training, resources and market access.

Recalling a visit to Chitradurga district, Dr Yadav described meeting a self-help group member who made millet ice cream. She said difficulties involving storage, transport, training and market access often prevented innovative products from reaching customers.

She urged ISB alumni to use their entrepreneurial expertise and networks to help women overcome such barriers and connect with wider markets.

The Governor said women's active participation was essential to achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. She also recalled the aspirations of mothers who, despite lacking formal education themselves, dreamed of educating their daughters.

The next generation, she said, could honour those dreams by creating opportunities for other women and helping families and communities progress.

ASHA workers' protest enters 11th day

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



ASHA workers at the protest site on the 11th day of their agitation.

Karnataka's Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers entered the 11th day of their protest in Bengaluru on Friday, refusing to budge despite growing exhaustion and illness at the demonstration site. Over the past 10 days, more than 20 protesting workers have fallen unwell while staying outdoors around the clock to demand a Rs 15,000 pay hike and an official written order from the state government.

Concern at the protest camp deepened early Friday morning when 38-year-old worker Ganga suffered a sudden health emergency around 2.30 am. Fellow demonstrators arranged an ambulance and rushed her to KC General Hospital in Bengaluru for urgent medical care. Even as fatigue takes a toll on those who spend their lives caring for rural mothers and newborns, protesters remain determined to hold their ground until their voices are heard.

Eyes on the CM

Attention now turns to Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who recently returned from an official visit to Japan. While still in Japan, Shivakumar had spoken to the protesters over a video call and urged them to call off their agitation. However, his later remarks drew sharp pushback from the crowd after he warned them against letting political interests steer their strike and questioned why they were not pressing the Central Government for funds.

No written guarantee

Meanwhile, the state administration has signaled reluctance to issue a written guarantee. Officials noted that handing out formal written commitments to one group could prompt employees across multiple departments with pending grievances to demand similar pledges, straining administrative rules. Although the government is reportedly weighing an increase in monthly pay, no figures or timelines have been shared.

The stir on day 11

- → **Health:** more than 20 workers have fallen ill in 10 days
- → **Demand:** a Rs 15,000 pay hike and a written government order
- → **Government:** reluctant to give a written guarantee; no figures yet

For the workers, spoken promises are no longer enough.

Union State Secretary Nagalakshmi urged leaders to discuss the revised amount openly and issue a clear government order, insisting no one will leave the venue without written proof.

RAVIKUMAR BACKS ASHAS, SEEKS KHADER'S EXIT



BJP MLC N. Ravikumar

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Member of the Legislative Council N. Ravikumar launched a sharp, sarcastic attack on Karnataka Health Minister U.T. Khader over his recent remarks dismissing the ongoing strike by Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers. Speaking to reporters at the BJP state office in Bengaluru, Ravikumar demanded that Khader resign from his post if he truly believes public departments run smoothly without frontline staff.

The political clash comes as thousands of ASHA workers enter the 11th day of their indefinite day-and-night protest at Bengaluru's Freedom Park, braving winter cold and rain to demand fair wages. Ravikumar criticized the state government, noting that neither the Chief Minister nor the Health, Labour, and Women's Welfare ministers have held meaningful talks with the agitating health workers.

Khader's logic turned

Pointing to Khader's controversial claim that healthcare services continue smoothly without ASHA workers, Ravikumar turned the Minister's own logic back on him. He sarcastically asked why Khader continues to draw a government salary, travelling allowance, and dearness allowance when his constituency and department supposedly function fine even in his absence.

The BJP legislator also condemned recent government statements portraying the workers' strike as blackmail or intimidation against Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar. Ravikumar argued that underpaid community health workers seeking basic financial survival cannot possibly threaten powerful leaders. He reminded the ruling party that former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had previously promised Rs 10,000 to the workers, a commitment that remains unfulfilled.

Dismissing Agriculture Minister P.M. Narendraswamy's suggestion of honoring workers with garlands as

Ravikumar accused the government of handing ASHA workers a garland of thorns

hollow rhetoric, Ravikumar accused the administration of handing them a garland of thorns instead. He urged the government to treat the workers with dignity and immediately approve a fixed monthly honorarium of Rs 15,000. Finally, the opposition leader warned that if the state fails to resolve their grievances soon, a massive protest will be staged outside the legislature during the upcoming Belagavi winter session.

Fusion of art & culture: Cubbon Park's flower show highlights

- MIR AKBAR ALI
CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Garden lovers and families across the city have a colorful new reason to stroll under the tall green canopy of Cubbon Park. The Department of Horticulture is hosting its 13-day Flower Festival 2026, widely known as Hoogala Habba, from November 25 to December 7. Celebrated to mark Kannada Rajyotsava and Children's Day under the theme "A Fusion of Art and Culture," the floral trail stretches from near Fountain Circle through the Bandstand grounds all the way to Balabhavan.

Around 15 lakh cut flowers and nearly 1.25 lakh potted ornamental plants have turned the park walkways into a living gallery. Visitors can admire intricate floral models of Mother Bhuvaneshwari, a map of Karnataka, Hoysala temple architecture, the Gandaberunda emblem, and tributes to brave women of the Kannada land. Playful installations designed for children include a flower-draped Namma Metro train, India Gate, peacocks, a panda, a starfish, an elephant, a butterfly, cartoon characters, and a vibrant carpet woven from fresh flowers and vegetables.

Plant enthusiasts can also explore dedicated sections of cacti, succulents, bonsai, rare trees, and lush foliage, alongside stalls selling farm and garden produce. Creative workshops and showcases feature Japanese ikebana, Thai floral craft, janur leaf art, and fruit and vegetable carving.



Women and children can join in rangoli, painting, and fancy dress contests, while the Bandstand hosts lively music and dance shows curated with the Department of Kannada and Culture and Heritage Beku, Bengaluru. A police band performance and a historical art exhibition at Rumale Art Gallery add even more charm to the outing.

Weekday entry tickets cost ₹50 for adults and ₹20 for children under 12, while weekend and government holiday rates are ₹80 for adults and ₹20 for children. Those driving in can use pay-and-park lots near NGO Circle, Queen's Park, the High Court, Shree Kanteerava Stadium, and St. Joseph's School, making a winter walk among the blooms easy for everyone.

POLL PREDICTION

Assembly polls likely in 2029, predicts Somashekhar

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka's political circles were stirred when Yeshwanthpur MLA S.T. Somashekhar declared that the next state Assembly elections will take place in 2029 rather than 2028. Although the current government's five-year term is scheduled to conclude in May 2028, the senior legislator argued that upcoming constituency boundary changes will push the polling calendar forward by a year.



Yeshwanthpur MLA S.T. Somashekhar

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Somashekhar brushed aside questions about a recent strategy meeting held between the BJP and the JD(S). "What meeting took place yesterday? The BJP-JD(S) affairs have nothing to do with me. Why would I attend such a meeting?" he asked, distancing himself from opposition alliance talks. Notably, the BJP had expelled Somashekhar for six years in May 2025 over anti-party activities, leaving him politically unattached to their current coordination.

Explaining his 2029 prediction, the MLA pointed directly to the national delimitation process, noting that even the Prime Minister has spoken on the subject. With the constitutional freeze on redrawing electoral seats lifting after the first census following 2026, debates over expanded state and parliamentary constituencies have already sparked intense speculation across Karnataka. "So, what is the urgency now?" Somashekhar remarked, suggesting that political parties have plenty of time before facing voters again.

During the same interaction, Somashekhar also spoke warmly about his longstanding bond with the Chief Minister. Calling him a close associate of 25 years, the MLA credited the Chief Minister with supporting both his political journey and his work in the cooperative sector, adding that their friendship rests on deep mutual trust.

When will Karnataka vote?

TERM ENDS	HIS FORECAST
2028	2029
The government's five-year term ends in May	Delimitation will push the polls by a year

For everyday voters and party workers gearing up early for election season, Somashekhar's remarks add fresh intrigue to Karnataka's political calendar. While official election dates remain governed by constitutional timelines, his confident forecast signals that delimitation debates and shifting political loyalties will shape state politics well before ballots are cast.

CH Observer

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Across Bengaluru, overflowing garbage dumps are turning busy roads and school gates into hazardous zones. From toxic waste endangering stray animals under the Banaswadi railway station on Hutchins Road to rotting trash piled directly outside Jyothi School in Kammanahalli and Viswakalaniketan Model English School in Kumarapark West, civic neglect is putting schoolchildren, commuters, and animals at serious risk every single day.

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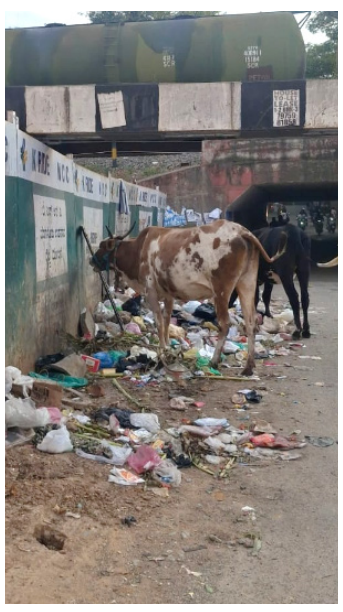
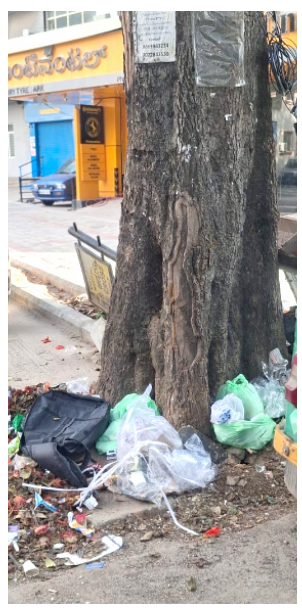




Left: Hutchins Road: garbage dumped under the Banaswadi railway station, where animals are eating the toxic waste. It shows the heartlessness of authorities who let garbage rot on the main road, making the people and animals around it sick.
Right: Kammanahalli: bags of garbage left unattended opposite Jyothi School, 46, Nehru Road, Yadava Layout, Peace Layout. The worst part is that the school is right next door and the garbage has piled up, making the place very unhygienic for children and daily commuters.



Kumarapark West: garbage left unattended right in front of Viswakalaniketan Model English School, 5th Cross, Railway Parallel Road. The spot is always filled with garbage, and being right in front of a school makes it disgusting. It shows how lethargic the sanitary workers are to leave garbage at the school gate.

BNCC officials pay tribute to Kanakadasa

Honoring poet-reformer Kanakadasa's timeless ideals of equality and service, Bengaluru North City Corporation observed Kanakadasa Jayanti with reverence.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bengaluru North City Corporation observed Kanakadasa Jayanti with deep reverence, celebrating the life and timeless teachings of the revered 16th-century poet, philosopher, and social reformer. Held inside the main conference hall of the Commissioner's Office, the solemn commemoration brought together senior civic officials and administrative staff to honor one of Karnataka's most beloved spiritual figures.

Leading the tribute, Bengaluru North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar offered fresh flowers before a decorated portrait of Shri Kanakadasa. Following the floral offering, attendees stood together in quiet reflection, acknowledging the profound impact the saint's life and poetry continue to have on modern society.

Several senior officials joined the Commissioner for the commemorative gathering. Among those present were Additional Commissioner for Development Mona Roat, Chief Engineers Dr. Raghavendra Prasad and Yamuna, and Deputy Commissioner Amaregouda Malipatil. Employees and representatives from multiple municipal departments also participated in the program, underscoring a shared civic commitment to preserving Karnataka's rich cultural and literary heritage.



Tribute to Kanakadasa at the North corporation's office.

During the observance, officials recalled Shri Kanakadasa's enduring messages of pure devotion, social equality, and universal humanity. As a leading voice of the Haridasa movement, the saint used simple, accessible Kannada compositions and soulful keertanas to challenge caste discrimination and promote fairness, compassion, and moral integrity among everyday people. Speakers noted that his poetic works remain deeply relevant today, serving as a guiding light for public servants dedicated to serving diverse urban communities without bias.

Across Karnataka, government offices, educational institutions, and cultural organizations marked the day with tributes and reflections on the saint's legacy. At the Bengaluru North City Corporation, the respectful gathering concluded with officials reaffirming their dedication to upholding Shri Kanakadasa's ideals of inclusivity, selfless service, and harmony in their daily administrative duties toward the citizens of Bengaluru.

The tribute

WHERE	Main conference hall, Commissioner's Office
LED BY	Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar
TRIBUTE	Fresh flowers before a decorated portrait
JOINED BY	Senior officials and staff of several departments

The messages recalled

- Pure devotion
- Social equality
- Universal humanity

THE SAINT-POET

Kanakadasa, the 16th-century poet, philosopher and social reformer, was a leading voice of the Haridasa movement. His simple Kannada compositions and soulful keertanas challenged caste discrimination.

North Corporation logs 42 civic grievances



Taking calls at the weekly phone-in.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Citizens across northern Bengaluru brought their everyday neighborhood problems directly to civic leaders on Friday during the 62nd weekly Commissioner's Phone-in Programme hosted by the Bengaluru North City Corporation. Conducted under the supervision of Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar, the interactive session logged 42 distinct grievances across 39 phone calls, even though a crane damaged a BSNL cable near Amrutha School and temporarily disrupted one control room telephone line.

Friday's phone-in

42	GRIEVANCES FROM 39 CALLS
1,391	ACTIVE COMPLAINTS ON SAHAAYA 2.0

The majority of Friday's complaints centered on property paperwork, waste disposal, and damaged roads. e-Khata services and solid waste management topped the list with seven complaints each, followed closely by potholes with six grievances. Residents also flagged four unauthorized constructions, four tree-related issues under the Forest Department, three electrical faults, and three park maintenance concerns, alongside complaints involving footpath encroachments, stormwater drains, construction debris, and stray dog vaccinations.

Every grievance reported during the call-in, as well as complaints submitted via WhatsApp, email, social media, or in person, is logged onto the 'Sahaaya 2.0' software platform and tracked through the Integrated Command and Control Centre. According to the latest Sahaaya 2.0 report, the corporation currently tracks 1,391 active department-level complaints, led by 561 road engineering cases, 366 stormwater drain issues, and 151 garbage management grievances.

Overall data highlights steady civic progress since administrative restructuring under the Greater Bengaluru Authority. Between January 2023 and November 26, 2026, more than 2.10 lakh complaints were registered on the platform, with over 2.09 lakh successfully resolved and 1,317 remaining pending.

Commissioner Sunil Kumar directed departmental engineers and officers to prioritize pending cases and ensure prompt local solutions. Officials were specifically instructed to coordinate closely with the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) so that roads dug up for water and drain works are repaired quickly without causing daily hardship to commuters. Civic authorities continue encouraging residents to use the weekly Friday phone-in to report neighborhood issues directly.

BCCC recalls Kanakadasa's message of equality



Floral tributes to Kanakadasa at the Central corporation's office.

Honoring poet-philosopher Sri Kanakadasa's enduring message of social equality and devotion, Bengaluru Central City Corporation officials paid floral tributes during his birth anniversary.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Central City Corporation respectfully commemorated Sri Kanakadasa Jayanti, celebrating the birth anniversary of the revered 16th-century poet, philosopher, and social reformer. Held at the Commissioner's office on the 10th floor of the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Building, the dignified gathering brought together civic administrators and municipal employees to honor the saint's enduring legacy across Karnataka.

Joint Commissioner Hemanth Sharan led the official ceremony by offering fresh floral tributes before a portrait of Sri Kanakadasa. Following the tribute, officers and staff members stood together in solemn respect, reflecting on the timeless wisdom and spiritual devotion that defined the legendary Haridasa saint's remarkable life.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Srinivas joined the Joint Commissioner at the function, alongside senior officials and personnel from various departments of the Central City Corporation. Their active presence highlighted the civic administration's collective commitment to honoring Karnataka's rich cultural roots and values of public service.

During the observance, speakers recalled Sri Kanakadasa's powerful principles, progressive ideals, and lifelong message of social equality. Through simple yet profound Kannada poetry and soulful devotional compositions, the saint challenged rigid social divisions and championed universal brotherhood, compassion, and human dignity. Officials noted that his teachings continue to inspire generations, reminding public servants to treat every citizen with fairness, humility, and respect regardless of background.

Across Bengaluru and throughout Karnataka, government departments, civic bodies, and cultural groups marked the occasion with similar tributes celebrating the saint-poet's contributions to Kannada literature and social harmony. At the Bengaluru Central City Corporation, the event concluded with attendees reaffirming their dedication to carrying forward Sri Kanakadasa's ideals of inclusivity and selfless service in their daily civic responsibilities toward the city's residents.

TAINTED WATER CRISIS

Residents blame BWSSB as sewage taints Cauvery water

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Families in Kavita Layout of Hampi Nagar, part of Ward 143 in the Vijayanagar Assembly constituency, are enduring severe daily distress after raw sewage mixed into their Cauvery drinking water supply. For the past three to four days, taps meant to deliver clean household water have instead poured out black, foul-smelling liquid, turning basic cooking, bathing, and drinking into an ordeal for residents across the neighborhood.

Locals blame the crisis on carelessness by officials and contractors of the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board during recent sewage pipeline laying work, a civic project carried out at a cost of lakhs of rupees. Residents say improper handling during installation damaged or breached nearby drinking water lines, allowing dirty wastewater to seep directly into the domestic supply network.



Discoloured drinking water.

Trying desperately to cope, several households hired workers to scrub and disinfect their underground sumps and rooftop Sintex tanks at their own expense. Yet their relief lasted only until the next water supply cycle, when polluted water flowed back into freshly cleaned tanks and ruined them all over again. Many families are now forced to spend extra money on bottled water cans just to meet basic kitchen needs.

Frustration has grown sharper because residents claim repeated complaints to BWSSB officials have gone unanswered, leaving affected streets without emergency tanker support or clear repair timelines. With children and elderly family members living in the area, fear is spreading that continued exposure to contaminated water could quickly trigger serious waterborne infections and stomach illnesses.

WHAT RESIDENTS WANT

Seal the leak and restore safe Cauvery water

- Senior civic and water board officials to step in now
- Flush the pipeline network

For taxpaying citizens who depend entirely on municipal pipelines for safe water, paying out of pocket to clean tanks while official calls go ignored feels deeply unfair. Residents are urging senior civic and water board authorities to step in immediately, locate and seal the pipeline leak, flush the network, and restore clean, safe Cauvery drinking water before a public health emergency breaks out.

Half of city's sewage goes untreated; 45 new STPs planned



A sewage-laden drain in the city.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Nearly half of the wastewater Bengaluru generates every day still goes untreated or poorly processed, leaving city lakes and drains vulnerable for at least three more years, according to the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board. While the metropolis produces roughly 2,580 million litres per day (MLD) of sewage, BWSSB's 34 existing treatment plants can handle only 1,348.5 MLD, leaving a daily gap of 1,231.5 MLD.

To close this dirty backlog, BWSSB plans to add 45 new sewage treatment plants with a combined capacity of 1,163 MLD in phases between December 2026 and September 2029. Only 117 MLD of capacity will arrive by the end of 2026, whereas the biggest boost, 335 MLD across four plants, will not come online until the final stretch. Funding relies on global and national partners, including the World Bank (nine plants at Rs 1,000 crore), the Urban Challenge Fund (nine plants at Rs 1,350 crore), and JICA (14 plants at Rs 968 crore). Because treatment quality matters as much as volume, an independent audit and an Indian Institute of Science review are underway alongside live pollution board compliance tracking.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru's drinking water balance remains fragile. Current demand stands at 2,650 MLD against a 2,720 MLD supply, yielding a slim 70 MLD surplus only because borewells pump roughly 800 MLD alongside 1,920 MLD from the Cauvery River. Without groundwater, the city would face an immediate 730 MLD shortfall.

Looking toward a projected 3,600 MLD regional deficit, BWSSB has outlined a Rs 25,500-crore roadmap through 2037 to unlock up to 4,500 MLD in extra supply and savings. Key pillars include Cauvery Stage VI and Yettinahole projects, a 150-kilometer purple pipeline network for industrial and farm reuse, lake rejuvenation, leak reduction, and 4,000 kilometers of new sewer lines. For citizens watching neighborhood lakes froth and borewells run dry, turning these blueprints into timely action is vital for Bengaluru's livable future.

1,231.5
MLD of sewage a day beyond the 34 plants' capacity

Quick Read

Police remotely stop car to nab kidnappers

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Whitefield police used smart technology to catch four kidnappers within just 12 hours of a daytime crime. The gang had stopped a bike rider near Nallurahalli Metro Station, forced him into their rented car, beat him, and stole ₹7,600 online before letting him go. After the victim reported the ordeal, officers quickly traced the getaway vehicle to a rental agency. Working with the company, police tracked the car near Bellandur and remotely switched off its engine via GPS. Before the stunned suspects could restart the stalled vehicle, officers arrived and arrested everyone inside.

Young nurse brutally killed inside lodge

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A quiet morning turned tragic in Cottonpet when a young nursing graduate lost her life inside a local lodge. Police arrested her partner, Gokul, after a heated fight ended in a fatal stabbing. Both hailed from Kerala and had arrived in the city looking for jobs. Investigators believe Gokul carried a hidden knife into their room, suggesting he planned the attack over suspicions about another man. Despite doctors rushing to save 22-year-old Ganga at Victoria Hospital, her injuries proved fatal. Officers are now questioning the suspect while they await the arrival of her grieving parents in the city.

Youth arrested over bomb threat to CM

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Police have arrested a 20-year-old man for making a fake bomb threat against the Chief Minister using an unsuspecting driver's phone. The incident began when an auto driver arrived for a routine ride booking near the Chief Minister's home. When the driver called his passenger, the caller asked him to pass the phone to gate security. Once connected, the voice claimed bombs were planted at the residence, convoy, and Vidhana Soudha. Shocked officers quickly searched the vehicle before realizing the driver was innocent. Using app booking records, Sadashivanagar police tracked down and detained the suspect, Karthik.

Recording ₹293.6 crore profit, BESCOM plans consumer refund

Bengaluru power consumers could soon enjoy lower monthly bills as BESCOM proposes a 35-paise per-unit tariff refund.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Households and businesses across Bengaluru finally have a solid reason to smile about their monthly utility expenses. Starting in April 2027, customers under the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM) could receive a welcome refund of 35 paise for every unit of power they use.

This relief comes after electricity supply companies across Karnataka decided to share a portion of their recent financial gains directly with everyday citizens. While most power utilities across the state plan to return 16 paise per unit to their users, BESCOM has proposed a much larger benefit for residents living across Bengaluru city and its seven neighboring districts. Once approved, this 35-paise discount will automatically lower monthly bills for a full 12-month period.

However, the news is not equally bright for every corner of the state. Families living in seven districts of North Karnataka under the Hubli Electricity Supply Company (HESCOM) will unfortunately miss out on this cash back. Because HESCOM failed to turn a profit during the previous financial year, officials expect the utility to ask for a slight price increase of a few paise per unit instead of offering discounts.

BESCOM's generous proposal is backed by a strong financial turnaround. State Energy Minister K.J. George previously revealed that the utility recorded an impressive profit of ₹293.6 crore during the 2025-26 financial year. Officials achieved this rare surplus by buying electricity at lower rates, collecting unpaid dues, improving meter reading accuracy, and cutting power distribution losses below 10 percent.

With lower operating expenses and smoother management, most state power companies have recovered from past financial struggles. Still, consumers will need to wait a little longer before seeing extra savings on their statements. The proposed refund must first receive final approval from the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission during its upcoming tariff review. If cleared by regulators, the lower rates will bring steady, year-long financial relief to millions of power users beginning April 2027.

HOW THE TURNAROUND HAPPENED

- **Cleaner meter readings:** better tracking and accurate readings cut billing errors and missed units
- **Stronger bill collection:** teams recovered pending dues and improved payment follow-ups
- **Lower power costs:** buying electricity at better rates trimmed overall expenses
- **Fewer power losses:** distribution losses dropped below 10 percent

KEA invites applications for 814 lecturer posts

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Job seekers aiming to teach in Karnataka's pre-university colleges now have a clear deadline to mark on their calendars. The Karnataka Examination Authority has released an official notice to hire 814 lecturers across multiple subjects for the Department of School Education (Pre-University). Online registrations are already open, giving aspiring educators across the state a fresh chance at government teaching roles.

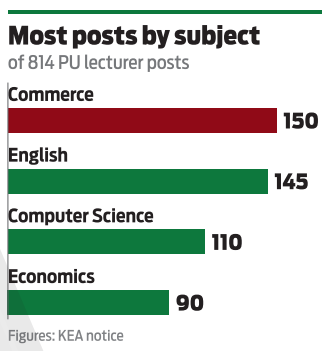
According to KEA Executive Director H. Prasanna, candidates must submit their online forms by December 25. Those who apply on time will have one extra day, until December 26, to complete their fee payment. To qualify, applicants need both a postgraduate degree and a Bachelor of Education degree in their chosen field. Officials also confirmed that the written recruitment exam will take place in March.

Out of the 814 total openings, 778 posts fall under the residual cadre, while 36 seats are reserved for the Kalyana Karnataka cadre. The vacancies span 14 popular academic streams, offering opportunities for graduates from arts, commerce, and science backgrounds alike.

Commerce leads the list with 150 openings, followed closely by English with 145 posts and Computer Science with 110 positions. Economics has 90 vacancies, while Kannada accounts for 89 seats and History offers 50. The science subjects, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology, carry 30 posts each. Political Science and Sociology offer 25 positions apiece, and Geography rounds out the list with 10 openings.

For many postgraduates who spend years preparing for teaching careers, a recruitment drive of this size brings welcome relief and renewed hope. Waiting until the final days often leads to website rush and stress, so early registration is the safest path forward. Full details on age rules, subject norms, and exam steps are listed on the official KEA website, where applicants can complete their forms before the December window closes.

Most posts by subject
of 814 PU lecturer posts



Figures: KEA notice



Bioenergy Chief meets Union Minister for welfare

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board Chairman S. E. Sudheendra held a key follow-up meeting in Bengaluru with Union Minister of Labour and Employment and Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya. The discussions focused on accelerating the growth of India's bioenergy sector while ensuring strong welfare protections for workers employed across the green fuel industry.

Building on their earlier conversations, Chairman Sudheendra, who also serves as Vice President of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, highlighted that a thriving bioenergy ecosystem plays a dual role in national development. Beyond speeding up India's transition toward clean, renewable energy, the sector offers immense potential for creating steady rural and industrial jobs. He stressed the urgent need to provide social security and improve overall livelihoods for laborers involved in feedstock collection, biofuel processing, and daily green energy operations.

Appreciating the detailed suggestions, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya acknowledged the vital link between expanding green energy capacity and safeguarding worker rights. To take these ideas forward, the Union Minister has invited Shri Sudheendra for a dedicated follow-up meeting in New Delhi next week. During this upcoming session, both leaders will examine the proposals in depth and map out practical policy steps through closer Centre–State coordination. This collaboration aims to build a cleaner, stronger, and worker-friendly bioenergy economy across the country.

Ashray-Akruti hosts Indian sign language workshop

CH NEWS, Bengaluru

Special educators across Karnataka recently gained practical skills to make classrooms more inclusive for children with hearing loss. Hyderabad-based non-profit Ashray-Akruti organized a full-day workshop on Indian Sign Language and modern teaching trends at Citrine Hotel in Seshadripuram on November 25.

Conducted under the Sign Call Project with financial backing from Qualcomm, the event focused on helping teachers use sign language consistently every day. Organizers emphasized that standardizing sign language practices across institutions improves daily communication, boosts student participation, and builds an equal learning environment for young learners.



Instead of relying only on traditional lectures, trainers used interactive exercises and hands-on activities. This practical approach allowed participants to practice real classroom scenarios and sharpen their communication techniques. Educators from 13 special schools across Karnataka joined the training, showing a strong shared commitment to improving education quality for hearing-impaired students.

Several respected leaders from the disability and education sectors attended and guided the sessions. Notable guests included Bengaluru Urban District Disabled Welfare Officer Krishnamurthy K., Qualcomm Community Engagement Specialist Karthik Vasagan V., Fourth Wave Foundation's Thiraviyam, non-profit consultant Ananth Arumugam, GiftAbled Co-Founder Prathana Prateek Kaul, and inclusive education expert Kasturi Sridhar.

Through ongoing initiatives like the Sign Call Project, Ashray-Akruti continues supporting teachers and removing communication barriers so every child with hearing impairment can learn with confidence.

Excess ethanol in petrol: State serves notice to IOCL

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has served a formal show-cause notice to the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) fuel terminal in Devanagonthi after state inspectors discovered that ethanol blending in petrol exceeded the legally permitted twenty percent limit. The regulatory action follows surprise verification checks conducted across major oil marketing company facilities where fuel mixing takes place before distribution to retail pumps.

During an official audit at the Devanagonthi storage facility on the outskirts of Bengaluru, enforcement teams from the Department of Legal Metrology detected noticeable discrepancies in fuel composition. Using government-calibrated measuring instruments, officials found that the terminal was mixing an extra 14 liters of ethanol into every 3,000-liter batch of fuel. At the exact same time, the actual volume of pure petrol supplied in that batch was reduced by four to six liters.

Minister Rizwan Arshad brought the violation to public attention by sharing details of the enforcement drive on social media.

Authorities confirmed that the formal notice was issued under strict provisions of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, which protects consumers from inaccurate measurements and unauthorized changes in commercial products. Maintaining precise ethanol ratios is crucial for vehicle owners, as excess blending beyond approved limits can impact engine performance and fuel efficiency in older cars and two-wheelers.

Following the field findings, regional officials representing the Legal Metrology Department across both the Bengaluru and Mysuru divisions have demanded complete operational records from the facility.

Ex-judge leads Western Ghats boundary review



Caught between forest conservation and farming livelihoods, Karnataka forms a new judicial and village-level panel to review the controversial Western Ghats Kasturirangan Report.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka has formed a high-level committee under retired High Court Justice John Michael D'Cunha to examine flaws in the Kasturirangan Report on the Western Ghats. The nine-member panel will review the report's provisions, check ground realities, look into pending land grant applications, and suggest changes to shrink the proposed Ecologically Sensitive Area. Alongside it, four-member village-level committees led by Panchayat Presidents will inspect local areas, listen to residents, and finalize village maps.

For families living near these green hills, the debate has caused years of worry over daily livelihoods. Across six states, the Centre's draft notification proposes marking 56,825.7 square kilometers of the Western Ghats as an Ecologically Sensitive Area, with Karnataka holding 20,668 square kilometers, or 36.4 percent. Within this zone, mining, large construction, thermal power plants, and polluting red-category industries face strict curbs.

Two-tier review

A nine-member panel under Justice John Michael D'Cunha reviews the report. Four-member village committees led by panchayat presidents inspect local areas and finalize village maps.

Years of resistance

Since the first draft notification in 2014 through the seventh one issued in July this year, leaders across Karnataka's ruling and opposition parties have resisted the Centre's plan. In September, both houses of the state legislature held a special three-day session and passed unanimous resolutions. Lawmakers asked the Centre to restrict the sensitive zone strictly to notified forests while keeping out farms, villages, and plots awaiting land title deeds.

A trust deficit

Civil society groups and environmentalists see the issue differently. They argue that political leaders failed to build trust with local residents or publish a Kannada translation of the Kasturirangan Report. Without clear facts in their own language, many farmers came to fear that regular farming and horticulture would be banned, even though the draft rules already exempt those activities.

By pairing Justice D'Cunha's panel with village-level checks, the state government hopes to present a grounded alternative to New Delhi. For thousands of hill-region residents caught between forest protection and family farms, the coming field surveys will decide how fairly both nature and livelihoods are balanced.

LOW VISIBILITY RULES

Winter fog alert: KSRTC issues safety advisory to its bus drivers

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

With dense winter fog expected to reduce visibility across highways and rural routes, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has issued urgent safety instructions to all its bus drivers. The state transport authority emphasized that protecting passengers, pedestrians, and fellow motorists must remain the top priority during early morning and late-night journeys.

Under the new winter advisory, drivers must complete thorough mechanical inspections both before starting and after finishing every trip. Crew members are required to verify that headlights, brake lights, turn indicators, wipers, and tire pressure are in proper working order before leaving the depot. If a driver notices any technical defect, they must report it immediately to officials and avoid operating the vehicle until mechanics resolve the issue.

When encountering thick fog, rain, or poor visibility, KSRTC has instructed staff to switch on low-beam headlights and drive at steady, controlled speeds. Drivers must keep a generous safety gap behind other vehicles so they have enough room to stop smoothly during sudden emergencies. The circular strictly warns against risky lane changes, unnecessary overtaking, abrupt braking, and sudden bursts of acceleration, especially along winding mountain ghat roads and slippery stretches.

Fog rules for drivers

- ✓ Low-beam headlights, steady speed
- ✓ A safe gap behind other vehicles
- ✓ Full stop until passengers board or alight
- ✗ No overtaking or risky lane changes
- ✗ No parking on highways
- ✗ No driving while tired

The guidelines also highlight the need for extreme alertness around vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, two-wheeler riders, and school buses. Drivers must bring their vehicles to a complete standstill at bus stops and wait until every passenger has safely boarded or stepped down before moving again. Furthermore, parking buses in unauthorized spots along state or national highways is strictly prohibited to prevent rear-end collisions in low visibility.

Finally, the corporation reminded staff never to get behind the wheel while tired or sleep-deprived, urging drivers on long-distance routes to take proper rest breaks. By strictly following traffic laws and staying patient in challenging winter weather, KSRTC aims to ensure safe, accident-free travel for thousands of daily commuters throughout the season.

Quick Read

2 leopards spotted in Hassan, residents alarmed

CH NEWS, HASSAN

Two leopards were spotted in broad daylight on a public road near Nidudi village in Hassan taluk, triggering fear among local residents. While wild elephants continue to trouble the Malenadu region, leopard sightings have become a growing concern in the district's plains. The animals have reportedly entered the village at night and preyed on stray dogs and livestock. Their presence in agricultural fields during daytime has further heightened concerns among farmers. Residents have urged the Forest Department to capture the leopards and relocate them to prevent possible attacks and ensure public safety.

Election announced for Tagachaguppe milk society

CH NEWS, MAGADI

The election for the Board of Directors of the Tagachaguppe Women's Milk Producers' Cooperative Society will be held for a five-year term, Returning Officer K.T. Umesh has announced. Nomination papers can be filed until 3 pm on December 4. Scrutiny will take place on December 5, while candidates can withdraw their nominations by 3 pm on December 6. Election symbols will subsequently be allotted, and the final candidates' list published. If required, polling will be held at the society's office from 11 am to 2 pm on December 11, followed by vote counting and declaration of results.

Haridasa Sankirtana to be held on Nov 29

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

A Haridasa Sankirtana programme organised by Pavamana Pratishthana to mark the month of Kartika will be held on Nov 29 at 5 pm at SBJ Mini Hall in Bharamasagara. Vidwan Dr. Raichur Sheshagiri Das will present the devotional musical programme. An All India Radio 'A' Grade artist, he has performed over 3,000 concerts in India and abroad and released more than 100 audio albums. He has received several honours for his contribution to Dasa Sahitya and devotional music. Following the programme, the foundation will confer the 'Dasagana Sarvabhouma' award on him, secretary Vijayalakshmi announced.

Private Bus And Milk Tanker Collide At Magadi Junction

Magadi

A private bus and a Nandini milk tanker collided near Hosa Pete Circle, a major junction in Magadi town, leaving more than ten passengers injured. Fortunately, no fatalities were reported.
The milk tanker was travelling towards Ramanagara via Gudemaralahalli when the Bengaluru–Magadi private bus rammed into it.

Govt offices default on ₹103 crore power bills

CESC HAS INITIATED STRICT RECOVERY MEASURES AFTER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN CHAMARAJANAGAR DISTRICT ACCUMULATED OVER ₹103 CRORE IN ELECTRICITY BILL ARREARS.



A CESC office and a power line. Government departments in Chamarajanagar district owe the utility over ₹103 crore.

In a nutshell

- → Government departments fail to pay bills.
- → Outstanding dues keep increasing for months.
- → CESC officials disconnect power to offices.
- → Disconnections affect public drinking water supply.

CH NEWS, CHAMARAJANAGAR

Government departments in Chamarajanagar district have accumulated electricity bill arrears exceeding ₹103 crore, prompting the Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation (CESC) to initiate strict recovery measures.

The failure of government offices to clear their outstanding dues has now affected essential public services, leaving ordinary citizens to bear the consequences.

Despite repeated instructions and reminders from CESC officials, several government departments have failed to pay their electricity bills for months. The outstanding amount continues to increase, raising serious questions about financial discipline and accountability within the government administration.

Unable to recover the dues through repeated requests, CESC officials have started disconnecting electricity connections to several government offices. The action has reportedly affected not only administrative establishments but also facilities responsible for supplying clean drinking water to the public.

The situation has triggered concern among residents, particularly in areas where drinking water supply units have been affected by power disconnections. People are questioning why they should suffer because government departments have failed to settle their electricity bills. If water supply installations remain without electricity, residents could face difficulties in accessing an essential service.

The development has also raised questions about the functioning of government departments and coordination between administrative offices. Although electricity is consumed regularly and bills are generated every month, payments have not been made on time. It remains unclear whether the delay is due to inadequate fund allocation, administrative negligence or a lack of coordination among departments.

CESC, which routinely disconnects electricity connections of ordinary consumers for non-payment, has now adopted similar measures against government establishments. Officials appear determined to recover the huge outstanding amount rather than allow the arrears to accumulate further.

However, the disconnection of electricity to essential public service facilities has highlighted the need for a balanced approach. Government departments must clear their pending dues without disrupting services meant for citizens.

The government and concerned departments must explain when the ₹103 crore arrears will be cleared and how uninterrupted drinking water and other essential services will be ensured.

Lakkundi Utsav Faces Uncertain Future Despite ₹2 Crore Grant



One of the historic Chalukyan temples at Lakkundi in Gadag district.

MALINGARAYA PUJAR, LAKKUNDI

The historic Lakkundi Utsav, which showcases the rich cultural heritage, art and history of Gadag district, has remained suspended for the past three years.

Despite the state government releasing a grant of ₹2 crore for organizing the festival, the district administration has reportedly not initiated preparations, triggering disappointment among local artists, writers and residents.

The festival was last organized in February 2023 on a grand scale. People had expected it to become an annual event, but it was not held in 2024 or 2025. With 2026 nearing its end, there are still no clear indications of the festival being organized this year.

₹2 crore grant, yet no preparations

According to reports, the state government released ₹2 crore in March 2026 for conducting the Lakkundi Utsav and deposited the amount in the Deputy Commissioner's account. However, despite the availability of funds, preliminary meetings and other arrangements have reportedly not begun. This has raised questions about the delay in organizing the event.

Artists fear further postponement

The festival is traditionally organized during January or February. Local artists and cultural enthusiasts fear that the event could again be postponed on the grounds of drought or administrative reasons. They are demanding that the authorities announce the festival dates and begin preparations immediately.

Lakkundi, popularly known as the land of a hundred temples and a hundred wells, is renowned for its magnificent Chalukyan architecture, ancient temples and sculptures. The festival provides a platform for folk artists, theatre performers, musicians and writers while promoting the historical village as an important tourist destination.

Festivals such as Hampi Utsav, Kittur Utsav, Chalukya Utsav and Kadamba Utsav are being organized in different parts of Karnataka.

Residents and cultural organisations have urged the District In-charge Minister, local MLAs and the Deputy Commissioner to utilize the available ₹2 crore grant and organize Lakkundi Utsav grandly in January or February 2027. They say the festival is important for preserving Gadag's cultural identity and promoting tourism.

Artist Ningappa Guddad said: "Festivals are flourishing in the rest of the districts of the state. However, Lakkundi, which has a historical background, is being ignored. If the festival is held, it will not only bring respect to the artists, but also give a big boost to Lakkundi's tourism. The district administration should immediately convene a preliminary meeting."

> **"Festivals are flourishing in the rest of the districts of the state. However, Lakkundi, which has a historical background, is being ignored."**
> — **Ningappa Guddad,** Artist

Hold Lakkundi festival early in 2027

Supporting hundreds of local folk, theatre and music artists, the Lakkundi festival has been stalled for three years despite a ₹2 crore grant with the Deputy Commissioner. Authorities must celebrate it in early 2027 without excuses.

KRS Dam water level declines rapidly, raising summer shortage fears

CH NEWS, MANDYA

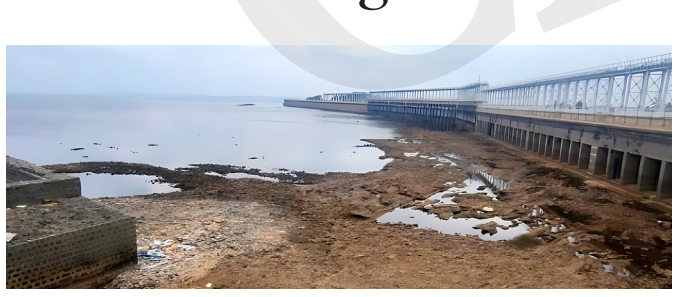
The water level at the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) Dam in Mandya district is declining rapidly, raising concerns over a possible drinking water crisis during the coming summer.

The reservoir is reportedly losing nearly one foot of water every day as inflows remain low and outflows continue at a higher rate.

The water level, which stood at 95 feet on Thursday, dropped to 94 feet on Friday. The dam currently holds 18.882 TMC of water. However, around 6 TMC is classified as dead storage, leaving approximately 12 TMC available for use.

According to the latest figures, the reservoir is receiving an inflow of 767 cusecs, while the outflow stands at 4,604 cusecs. The significant difference between inflow and outflow has raised concerns about the dam's ability to meet increasing water requirements in the months ahead.

The falling storage level has become a matter of concern for farmers and residents dependent on the Cauvery River. If the present trend continues without sufficient rainfall or an improvement in inflows, water availability could become increasingly difficult during the peak summer season.



The KRS reservoir in Mandya district, where the water level fell to 94 feet on Friday.

KRS reservoir now

94 ft level on Friday	**12 TMC** usable, of 18.882
767 cusecs inflow	**4,604** cusecs outflow

The KRS reservoir is a major source of water for several parts of southern Karnataka. Its supplies support drinking water requirements in urban and rural areas, including Bengaluru, Mysuru and Mandya, apart from meeting agricultural and other needs.

Farmers are particularly worried that reduced water availability could affect irrigation activities and standing crops. Residents in towns and villages dependent on the Cauvery may also face restrictions if the reservoir's storage falls further.

The situation highlights the importance of careful water management and monitoring of releases. Authorities may have to balance drinking water requirements, irrigation demands and other essential needs if inflows remain weak.

With summer approaching, people are hoping for improved rainfall and inflows to prevent a serious water shortage across the Cauvery-dependent regions.

Herd of 38 wild elephants returns to Belur, leaving villagers worried

CH NEWS, HASSAN

The movement of wild elephants between Hassan and Chikkamagaluru districts has triggered fresh anxiety among residents, particularly in villages bordering forest areas.

A herd of 38 wild elephants, which had earlier been driven from Hassan towards Chikkamagaluru, has now returned to Belur taluk, raising concerns among local residents.

The elephants were reportedly driven towards the Belur region under the leadership of the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) and the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Chikkamagaluru district. The operation, however, faced opposition from Forest Department officials and Elephant Task Force (ETF) personnel from Hassan district.

Officials from Hassan reportedly objected to the decision to move the herd into their jurisdiction, expressing concerns over the potential danger to residents and agricultural activities. Despite their objections, the Chikkamagaluru Forest Department officials continued the operation and successfully drove the elephants towards Belur.

Life convict commits burglary during parole, marries doctor

CH NEWS, TUMAKURU

A life convict serving a sentence for rape and murder allegedly committed a house burglary while on parole and later married a female doctor during the same period.
The accused, Prashanth Mogaveera, has now been arrested in Ankola and sent back to prison.

District Superintendent of Police C. Gopal said the burglary occurred in Sira town in 2025. During the investigation, police received information that a person released from prison on parole was involved in the crime.

Parole not honoured

Prashanth was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2011 in connection with a rape and murder case registered within Kundapura Police Station limits. After spending 12 years in prison, he was granted one month's parole in November 2025.

BALAKRISHNA URGES ASHA WORKERS TO END STRIKE

CH NEWS, RAMANAGARA

MLA H.C. Balakrishna has appealed to protesting ASHA workers to withdraw their ongoing strike and give the state government sufficient time to address their demands.

He made it clear that providing a written assurance to the workers was not possible, warning that such a move could encourage other organisations and groups to demand similar commitments from the government.

Speaking to reporters in Ramanagara, Balakrishna said former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had already assured ASHA workers that their grievances would be considered and appropriate steps would be taken.

No written assurances

He questioned how a government could function if it started issuing written assurances to every group that launched a protest. According to him, the government could not make written commitments to everyone whenever an agitation was organized. He urged ASHA workers not to remain rigid in their approach and instead place their confidence in the Chief Minister.

Balakrishna further pointed out that resolving the workers' issues would take some time and appealed to them to temporarily call off their agitation in the interest of finding an amicable solution. He also referred to the situation in Gujarat, stating that ASHA workers there receive ₹2,400 and suggested that Karnataka could consider a similar arrangement while examining the demands.



H.C. Balakrishna, MLA

Centre's share

He also questioned the Centre's contribution towards meeting the financial requirements of state welfare programmes. Stating that the Central government collects around 60 per cent of the state's tax revenue, he argued that Karnataka should receive an appropriate share of the funds.

He maintained that the Centre must also take responsibility and contribute financially towards addressing the demands of ASHA workers. Balakrishna reiterated that the state government was willing to examine their concerns but needed adequate time to arrive at a decision.

PUBLIC NOTICE
LOSS OF ORIGINAL DEED

Notice is hereby given that the original Sale Deed dated 26/10/1983, registered as Document No.945- 1983-84 executed by S G Srikanth in favor of Sri H S Palaksha at Devenahalli Sub-Registrar Office pertaining to property situated at Sy No. 65, Site No. 67, Katha No. 534:67, of Kadaganahalli Village, Jala hobli, Devanhalli taluk, Bangalore - 562 157. has been lost/misplaced. A police complaint/NCR No. 2556866/2026 dated 25.11.2026 has been filed at K G Halli Police Station. Any person having any claim, objection, or information regarding the document may contact

Prakasha H Advocate
at 9916388026/ Ward. No. 8TG,
Tank road Chikkaballapur

NAME CHANGE

I, **SADIQUE BEGUM**, W/o. Anwar Ghatti Mohammed, Resident of No.76/2, Haines Road, Shivajinagar, HKP Road Post, Bengaluru-560051, Karnataka, India, have changed my name to **SADIQA BEGUM**, vide Affidavit dated: 24.11.2026 before notary PRASAD SHETTY.K.B., Bengaluru.

IN THE COURT OF THE 1st ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA
CMis.No.790/2026

Petitioner: Sri.Narayanaswamy.D S/o Late Dyavanna Aged about 63 years, R/at Kuruvigere Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. V/s
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death The Tahshildar Doddaballapura Taluk Doddaballapura.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of petitioner No.1 & 2 and brother of petitioner No.3 & 4 by name LATE MADAN.N S/O LATE NARAYANASWAMY.D who died on 14.03.2024 at Kuruvigere Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 30.12.2026 In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Execution & Signatures
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 25th day of November 2026.

By Order of the Court:
Chief Ministerial Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Advocate: **R.D.Prakash**, Near Mathsyar Darshini Hotel, Court Road Doddaballapur Town-561203

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **Gutta Harish Kumar Naidu and Uppara Nagarajua,** Office at, No. 71/1, Sanvi Aero Gardens, Kannamangala Gate, Devanahalli Taluk 562110, Bangalore Rural.
1. The property bearing Sy. No. 17/1 measuring 1 acres 12 guntas, standing in the name of K.R. Rajanna son of B. Rudrappa.
2. The property bearing Sy. No. 17/2 measuring 1 acres 12 guntas, standing in the name of K.R. Prabhu son of B. Rudrappa.
3. The property bearing Sy. No. 17/3 measuring 1 acres 13 guntas and karab of 01 guntas, standing in the name of K.R. Basappa son of B. Rudrappa.
The above properties are situated at Kuduvathi village Nandi hobli, Chickballapur taluk.
Which is more fully described in the schedule and hereinafter called the schedule property anybody having right, title, claim, demand whatsoever rights in accordance with law in respect of schedule property is here by called upon submit their objections in writing together with documentary proof to establish to their claim, this should reach to undersigned within 7 days from the date of this notice, if any objections, claims or not received in this stipulated time, it shall be presumed that no one has got any right, title, claim upon the schedule property, failing which the negotiation shall be completed without any reference to such claims and the claims with any shall be deemed to have been given up to waived and my client will proceed to completed the sale transaction.

M.V. SRINIVASA CHAR, M.Com., LL.B. ADVOCATE
Opp. S.B.I. Bank, M.G. Road, CHICKBALLAPUR-562 101.
E-mail: srinivasa.char80@gmail.com
Mob: 8088988839 & 9019388855

Intending buyer's name and address:
Gutta Harish Kumar Naidu and Uppara Nagarajua, Office at, No. 71/1, Sanvi Aero Gardens, Kannamangala Gate, Devanahalli Taluk 562110, Bangalore Rural.
Mob: 8088988839 & 9019388855

NAME CHANGE

I, **SRINIVASA GOWDA**, S/o. Venkataramaiah, resident of No. 282, Shampura Main Road, Muni Marapp Layout, D. J. Halli, A C Post, Bangalore -560045, have changed my name to **V SRINIVASA**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 24.11.2026 before notary CHANDRA SHEKAR.M, Bengaluru

Document Lost

Chikkammanni wife of Puttaswamy, residing at Antharasanthe hobli, Begur Village, H.D. Kote Taluk, Mysore District, do sofemaly declare in the name of God as follows GOVERNMENT am a permanent resident of the above address. The reason for this is that I, Chikkammanni WO Puttaswamy, have applied for a Loan against the property at Equitas Small Finance Bank Hunsur Branch, Mysore District, H.D. Kote taluk, Kasaba Hobli, Housing Board Colony, Property No.:-8400857075 Municipal Registration No.:4799/31. Property Measurements East West:-10.66 meters North South:-15.24 meters, the original document of the clean purchase Deed of the Site has been lost at the Mysore City Bus Stand. The registration number of the said clean purchase deed is HDK-1-00689: 2010-11. And in this regard, I have filed a complaint online with H.D Kote Police Station, the said complaint number is:- 2547525 and last report number is:-2547525/2026 and I have published the matter in Kannada and English newspapers that the said documents have been losted. But since the said purchase deed is not available. I have made this affidavit. If it is found hat any false or incorrect statement has been made in the above matter, legal action will be taker I swear and sign in the name of God that all the above points are true to he best of my belief and knowledge
Location: HD KOTE
DATE: 21/11/2026
DINESH B.Com LLR
Hunsur mysore district
Reg no-8707
Mobile No. 968661597
Mobile No. 7483468067

Quick Read

Tax Collector selection list announced

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

The provisional selection list for direct recruitment of Tax Collectors in nine Gram Panchayats across Chitradurga district has been announced. Candidates can submit objections by December 17, 2026. The selection was finalized following the computer literacy test. The list is available on the Zilla Panchayat website, chitradurga.nic.in, and at the respective Gram Panchayat offices. Candidates wishing to raise objections must submit them in person at the Zilla Panchayat office before 5 pm on December 17. The vacancies cover nine Gram Panchayats across Challakere, Chitradurga, Hiriyur, Holalkere and Hosadurga taluks.

KaRaVe to appoint new office-bearers on Nov 29

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

The Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KaRaVe), Praveen Shetty faction, will hold a meeting on November 29 at 1 pm at Kannada Bhavana in Kalaburagi to appoint new office-bearers. Kalyana Karnataka president Abhishek Balaji said the state president had dissolved the existing Kalaburagi district and taluk units. The meeting will be led by North Karnataka president Sharanu B. Gadduge. The organisation's central office will oversee the selection process. A new district president, taluk presidents and other office-bearers will be appointed during the meeting, Balaji stated in a press release.

Postal Pension Adalat scheduled for Dec 4

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

The Chitradurga Postal Division will conduct a Divisional Pension Adalat and Postal Adalat on December 4 to address grievances. The Pension Adalat will be held from 12 noon to 12.45 pm, followed by the Postal Adalat from 1 pm to 1.30 pm at the Superintendent of Post Offices' office in Kamana Bavi Layout, Kote Road. Retired postal employees, family pensioners and postal customers can submit complaints by December 3 through letters or email to dochitradurga.ka@indiapost.gov.in. They can also attend in person on December 4. Superintendent K.R. Usha stated that no allowances would be provided to participants.

Kanakadasa Jayanti Celebrated With Deep Reverence

Hubballi

Representatives of various organisations paid floral tributes to saint Kanakadasa on his birth anniversary, remembering his invaluable contributions to Kannada literature and the Haridasa tradition. Speakers highlighted his profound spiritual teachings, rational thinking, social concern and message of universal welfare beyond caste, creed and religion.The tribute programme was organised by the Horakeri Master Education Foundation.

Kanakadasa reached masses through Dasa Sahitya

MINISTER T. RAGHUMURTHY HIGHLIGHTED 16TH-CENTURY SAINT-POET KANAKADASA'S KEY ROLE IN BRINGING DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE AND SOCIAL MESSAGES TO ALL SECTIONS OF SOCIETY.



At the Kanakadasa Jayanti celebrations in the Deputy Commissioner's office hall, Chitradurga

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Saint-poet Kanakadasa played a significant role in taking devotional literature and social messages to ordinary people from all sections of society through his Dasa Sahitya and keertanas during the 16th century, said Tribal Welfare Minister and District In-charge Minister T. Raghumurthy.

He was speaking after offering floral tributes to Kanakadasa's portrait during the Jayanti celebrations held at the Deputy Commissioner's office hall on Friday. The programme was jointly organised by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Department of Kannada and Culture and City Municipal Council.

Raghumurthy said Kanakadasa's contribution to society was comparable to the 12th-century Vachana movement, which spread progressive ideas among people. Although he was once a chieftain, Kanakadasa later dedicated his life to devotion and social reform. His devotion was demonstrated through the famous Kanakana Kindi episode at Udupi. The Minister said the values reflected in his writings should also find a place in the administrative system.

Kanakadasa's keertanas offered valuable lessons for both personal and professional life, Deputy Commissioner S. Ramya told government employees

Responding to the demand for a Kanaka Bhavana in Chitradurga, he assured community leaders that he would discuss the matter with the Chief Minister and concerned ministers to secure financial assistance.

Kanaka Jayanti in Chitradurga

WHERE	Deputy Commissioner's office hall
BY	District administration, Zilla Panchayat, Kannada and Culture Department, City Municipal Council
WORKS	Mohana Tarangini, Hari Bhaktisara, Nalacharitre, Ramadhanya Charitre
MUSIC	Gangadhar and team

Chitradurga Urban Development Authority Chairman M.K. Tajpeer said people must overcome ego and pride arising from wealth, power and social status. He suggested establishing a revolving fund in Kanakadasa's name to support higher education for deserving students from economically weaker sections.

District Kuruba Association Secretary B.T. Jagadish sought land for a community hall at a concessional rate. He also requested additional hostel facilities, support under the Sarathi scheme and improved infrastructure for the community.

Kannada Subject Inspector C. Ranganayak highlighted Kanakadasa's literary contributions, including Mohana Tarangini, Hari Bhaktisara, Nalacharitre and Ramadhanya Charitre. He described the saint-poet as a rational thinker who challenged social inequalities and promoted an egalitarian society.

Several district officials and community representatives attended the programme. Gangadhar and his team presented devotional music.

PRALHAD JOSHI MARKS BIRTHDAYWITH SIMPLICITY

CH NEWS, HUBBALLI

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi celebrated his 64th birthday on Friday with simplicity, receiving greetings from President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and several other prominent leaders.

In their birthday messages, President Murmu and Prime Minister Modi appreciated Joshi's commitment to public service, integrity and transparent approach to work. They wished him continued success in his responsibilities and future endeavours.

64th birthday for Pralhad Joshi, who asked supporters not to spend on bouquets or banners

Leaders send wishes

Several Union Ministers, chief ministers, political leaders and party workers also conveyed their greetings. Among them were Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Kiren Rijiju, S. Jaishankar, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Himanta Biswa Sarma and H.D. Kumaraswamy. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu also wished him.

Karnataka BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra, former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, Jagadish Shettar, Prabhakar Kore, Tejasvi Surya and Pratap Simha were among those who extended their greetings.

Birthday marked with simplicity

Joshi had earlier appealed to supporters and party workers not to spend money on bouquets, banners or other celebrations for his birthday. Staying true to that appeal, he marked the occasion in a simple manner and continued his public responsibilities.

MP since 2004

Born on November 27, 1962, in Vijayapura, Joshi has represented the Dharwad Lok Sabha constituency since 2004. Over the years, he has held important responsibilities in the party organisation and the Union Cabinet, including the portfolios of Parliamentary Affairs and Coal. He currently handles key responsibilities related to Education, Food and Consumer Affairs, and Renewable Energy.

Thanking the President, Prime Minister, Union Ministers, party leaders, workers and well-wishers for their greetings, Joshi said their affection encouraged him to continue serving the nation.

He expressed his commitment to contributing to Prime Minister Modi's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' and strengthening the party organisation through dedicated public service.

Restrict 371(J) promotions to local cadre employees: Patil

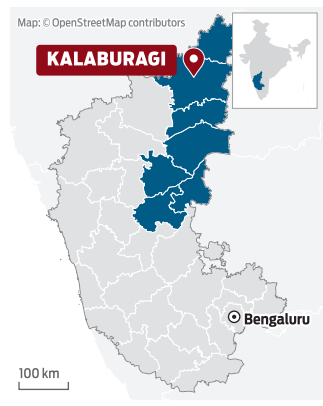
CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

M.S. Patil Naribol, president of the Kalyana Karnataka Separate State Movement Committee, has urged the State Government not to grant seniority and promotion benefits under Article 371(J) to employees recruited under quotas meant for other districts, even if they were born in the Kalyana Karnataka region.

Addressing a press conference, Patil said the benefits of reservation in seniority and promotions under Article 371(J) should be restricted to employees recruited under the Kalyana Karnataka local cadre. He stressed that employees must produce the prescribed 371(J) certificate to claim these benefits.

He argued that extending such advantages to employees recruited under the general category or quotas meant for other districts would affect the employment and promotion opportunities of local candidates in the region.

Referring to the Forest Department, Patil alleged that forest guards recruited under the non-Kalyana Karnataka cadre in the Kalaburagi Forest Circle were being transferred to the local cadre and subsequently granted seniority and promotions.



Kalyana Karnataka: the region covered by Article 371(J)

At a glance

- Extending quotas harms local candidates' opportunities.
- Non-local forest guards get local promotions.
- Government asked to prevent Article 371(J) irregularities.
- Committee warns of protests over inaction.

Describing the alleged practice as unjust, he demanded that the Forest Department immediately withdraw the decision. He also appealed to ministers and legislators from Kalyana Karnataka to raise the issue with the State Government and ensure that the concerns of local employees were addressed.

Patil further demanded that the government frame clear rules and introduce appropriate legislation to prevent such alleged irregularities in the implementation of Article 371(J).

Warning of an agitation, he said the committee would launch protests if the government failed to respond to their demands.

Bahujan Samaj Party's Huchcheshwar Vathar, Sri Rama Sene district president Lakshmikant Swadi, Mahesh Kembhavi, Channaveer and Sharanabasappa were present at the press conference.

Dharmasthala extends ₹2 lakh aid for Bilaguli temple renovation

CH NEWS, MANDYA

Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala has extended financial assistance of ₹2 lakh towards the renovation of Sri Basaveshwara Temple at Bilaguli village in Mandya taluk.

A cheque was handed over to the temple development committee as part of the support.

B.M. Shivakumar, president of the Sri Basaveshwara Temple Development Committee, along with other office-bearers, had earlier visited Dharmasthala and submitted a request for financial assistance to Dharmadhikari Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade. Responding positively, Heggade assured them of support.

Total support doubles

The institution had earlier provided ₹2 lakh during the temple's foundation-laying ceremony. With the latest assistance of another ₹2 lakh, the total financial support extended by Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala has reached ₹4 lakh.

Suresh Shetty, Mandya taluk project officer of the Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP), handed over the latest cheque to Shivakumar. Conveying Heggade's message, Shetty said the Dharmadhikari had expressed happiness over the temple renovation initiative and wished the committee success in its efforts.

He also highlighted Dharmasthala's continued support for various community-oriented activities, including the construction of community halls, buildings for milk producers' cooperative societies and other public facilities. He described such initiatives as meaningful contributions to society.

₹4 lakh from Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala for the Bilaguli temple: ₹2 lakh at the foundation-laying, ₹2 lakh now

Speaking on the occasion, Shivakumar expressed gratitude to Veerendra Heggade on behalf of the temple committee and the villagers for fulfilling his assurance and providing a total of ₹4 lakh towards the renovation.

Temple honorary president Sidda Basavayya, vice-president B.M. Prabhuswamy, secretary M. Mahadeva, SKDRDP supervisor Satish, village leaders, self-help group members and other villagers were present.

Narendrababu seeks action against Kolar fake layout racket

CH NEWS, KOLAR

K. Narendrababu, Kolar district president of the All India Advocates Association, has submitted a complaint to the Deputy Commissioner, demanding strict action against illegal constructions, fake residential layouts and unauthorised sale of sites within Kolar City Municipal Council limits and surrounding areas.

In his complaint, Narendrababu urged the authorities to take action against existing and ongoing illegal constructions, forged layouts, unauthorised site sales and the encroachment and sale of government land. He also demanded that suo motu cases be registered under the Goonda Act against those involved.

He alleged that a racket had been operating in and around Kolar for several years, cheating people by preparing forged sale agreements for sites belonging to others. The activities have reportedly caused financial losses to ordinary citizens and affected people seeking to purchase plots through legal means. He also called for investigations and legal action against any government officials or elected representatives found to be involved.

Many victims have lost savings set aside for their children's education and marriages

Narendrababu further demanded that if the government considers regularising unauthorised sites, allotments to Dalits and backward-class communities should follow the prescribed reservation roster system.

He said an earlier representation had failed to bring any action from the district administration. Several victims are reportedly visiting police stations but struggling to register complaints due to a lack of official documents. Many have lost savings set aside for their children's education and marriages.

Meanwhile, Mohammed Minhajul Sheik alleged that a person named Tanveer cheated him by promising to sell two sites and collecting ₹6 lakh. Tanveer allegedly gave him a forged sale agreement bearing the falsified signature of the registered owner, Asifa Khanum.

Mujamil Pasha, Mohammed, Anjuntaz and Chennamma of Arabikottanuru were present when the complaint was submitted.

MP DEFENDS BJP, RSS

Jigajinagi urges Emergency history in Constitution curriculum

CH NEWS, VIJAYAPURA

BJP MP Ramesh Jigajinagi has criticised Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge and Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar over their allegations that the BJP and RSS are attempting to weaken the Constitution.

He said Congress should introspect on its own record, particularly the imposition of the Emergency in 1975.

Emergency lessons

Reacting to Shivakumar's proposal to include the Constitution in school textbooks, Jigajinagi said the curriculum should also cover the dark chapter of the Emergency imposed by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Congress government. Students must learn about the restrictions on fundamental rights, suppression of press freedom and weakening of democratic institutions during that period, he said.



Ramesh Jigajinagi

"Congress leaders should examine their own political legacy before accusing others of undermining constitutional values."
RAMESH JIGAJINAGI BJP MP

Jigajinagi argued that Congress leaders cannot present themselves as defenders of the Constitution while ignoring their party's history. He pointed out that opposition leaders were jailed, media freedom was curtailed and the independence of constitutional institutions was undermined during the Emergency.

He also criticised Congress leaders for frequently speaking about equality and social justice while, according to him, obstructing the Women's Reservation Bill. He challenged them to support Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts to ensure greater political representation for women rather than limiting themselves to public statements.

The BJP MP also questioned former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's political approach, particularly his emphasis on the AHINDA coalition of minorities, backward classes and Dalits. He alleged that the former Chief Minister had renewed his focus on the Constitution and AHINDA politics at a time when his own political position was uncertain.

He added that the Emergency should form an important part of any effort to educate students about the Constitution, ensuring that future generations understand both its ideals and the threats it faced.

Quick Read

2 sentenced for attacking girl's father in Shivamogga

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

The Shivamogga District Court has sentenced two men to imprisonment for attacking the father of a 16-year-old girl after he opposed her sexual assault.The court also imposed fines and ordered compensation for the victim.According to the case, a 27-year-old man had sexually assaulted the minor within the limits of Shivamogga Rural Police Station. When her father objected, the accused, along with an accomplice, attacked him with a knife, causing serious injuries.The then PSI Shivaprasad registered a case, conducted the investigation and filed a charge sheet before the Fast Track Special Court-I.Judge Ninganagowda B. Patil sentenced the first accused to four years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹1.21 lakh under the POCSO Act. The second accused received three years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of ₹41,000.The court directed that ₹1 lakh from the fines, along with ₹10,000 in government compensation, be paid to the victim. Government Prosecutor Sridhar represented the prosecution.In a separate dowry harassment case, Mohammed Irshad of Tippu Nagar was sentenced to three years of simple imprisonment and fined ₹10,000 under Section 498A of the IPC for harassing his wife, Asma Farheen. Additional sentences were imposed under other IPC sections. The remaining accused were acquitted.

Complaint filed against Pratap Simha over remarks

Gonikoppa's Kodagu Hindu Malayali Samaj filed a complaint seeking legal action against former MP Pratap Simha for allegedly insulting Malayalis.



The Kodagu Hindu Malayali Samaj's complaint being handed over to the police

CH NEWS, MADIKERI

A complaint has been filed against former Member of Parliament Pratap Simha over alleged derogatory remarks targeting the people of Kerala and the Malayali community.

The complaint was submitted by the Kodagu Hindu Malayali Samaj, based in Gonikoppa, Kodagu district, demanding legal action against the former MP for his alleged statements.

According to the complainants, Pratap Simha made objectionable and abusive remarks about the Malayali community while addressing a public event. They alleged that his statements were intended to provoke negative sentiments against the people of Kerala and had hurt the feelings of members of the Malayali community.

The organisation expressed strong displeasure over the alleged remarks, stating that such statements were unacceptable and could create unnecessary divisions among communities. It maintained that the comments had deeply hurt the dignity, honour and self-respect of Malayalis living in Kodagu and other parts of Karnataka.

The representatives of the Kodagu Hindu Malayali Samaj said that members of the Malayali community had been living peacefully in Kodagu for several years and had made significant contributions to the social, cultural and economic development of the region. They stressed that the community deserved respect and should not be subjected to insulting or inflammatory comments.

In its complaint, the organisation urged the concerned authorities to take the allegations seriously and initiate appropriate legal proceedings against Pratap Simha. It also sought action to ensure that public representatives and political leaders exercise responsibility while making statements about any community.

The complainants emphasised that freedom of expression should not be misused to hurt the sentiments of a particular community or damage social harmony. They called for appropriate action in accordance with the law and urged authorities to prevent similar incidents in the future.

The complaint has brought the alleged remarks into focus, with the organisation seeking justice and protection of the Malayali community's dignity.

The complaint

- **Remarks:** Simha allegedly insulted the Malayali community.
- **Kerala:** Remarks provoked negative sentiments against Keralites.
- **Dignity:** Comments deeply hurt Malayali self-respect.
- **Harmony:** Samaj warned against creating communal divisions.
- **Kodagu:** Community peacefully contributed to Kodagu's development.
- **Demand:** Authorities urged to initiate legal action.

Released MES Leader Raises 'Jai Maharashtra' Slogans Again

CH NEWS, BELAGAVI

MES leader Shubham Shelke reignited Belagavi's linguistic and regional tensions by shouting "Jai Marathi, Jai Maharashtra" upon exiting Hindalga Prison.

Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) leader Shubham Shelke has triggered fresh controversy in Belagavi after raising slogans of "Jai Marathi, Jai Maharashtra" immediately after his release from Hindalga Central Prison.

His actions have reignited debate over linguistic and regional tensions in the border district.

Shelke, who had been in judicial custody for the past 36 days at Hindalga Central Prison in Belagavi taluk, was released recently. Soon after walking out of prison, he reportedly raised slogans supporting Marathi identity and Maharashtra, drawing attention from political circles and the public.

Following his release, Shelke also shared a selfie video on social media, announcing that he had come out of jail after spending 36 days behind bars. In the video, he said that he would meet everyone soon. However, his decision to raise the slogans immediately after his release has attracted criticism and sparked another round of controversy in the region.

A case had been registered against Shelke at the Khadebazar Police Station in Belagavi in connection with an alleged offence under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. He was subsequently lodged in Hindalga Central Prison and remained in judicial custody for 36 days before securing his release.

His latest actions have once again brought the activities of MES leaders into the spotlight. The organisation has long been associated with the demand for the merger of Marathi-speaking areas of Karnataka with Maharashtra, a sensitive issue that has repeatedly triggered political and linguistic disputes between the two neighbouring states.



Belagavi: the border district

Belagavi, which has a significant Marathi-speaking population, has frequently witnessed tensions over language, regional identity and the border dispute. Statements and activities by MES leaders have often attracted strong reactions from various sections of society.

Shelke's slogans following his release have therefore added a fresh dimension to the ongoing debate. His conduct has prompted discussions about the need to maintain peace and communal harmony in the sensitive border region.

The incident is likely to draw further attention to the activities of MES leaders and the continuing Karnataka-Maharashtra border dispute.

Candlelight march raises awareness against child marriage

CH NEWS, KARWAR

A candlelight procession was organised in Karwar to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Child, Early and Forced Marriage.

The programme aimed to create public awareness about the harmful consequences of child marriage and encourage collective efforts to prevent the practice.

The event was jointly organised by the Directorate of Child Protection, Bengaluru, the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, District Legal Services Authority, District Child Protection Unit, Uttara Kannada, and Just Rights for India, represented by the Spandana Association, Belagavi.

Divyashree C.M., Senior Civil Judge and Member Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority, inaugurated the programme. Deputy Superintendent of Police B.S. Lokapura, District Child Protection Officer Kumar, Child Welfare Committee Chairperson Sapna and Just Rights for India head Jayashree participated.

Anganwadi workers, paralegal volunteers and high school students also took part in the awareness programme. On the occasion, District Child Protection Officer Kumar administered a pledge to participants, urging them to work towards preventing child marriage and protecting children's rights.

The candlelight procession commenced at Gandhi Park and passed through Ambedkar Circle and Shivaji Circle before returning to Gandhi Park.

Participants highlighted the importance of education, community awareness and coordinated efforts by government agencies and civil society organisations to eliminate child marriage. The programme called upon citizens to remain vigilant and support initiatives aimed at safeguarding children and ensuring their right to a safe future.

THE ROUTE

- **Gandhi Park** — Start
- **Ambedkar Circle**
- **Shivaji Circle**
- **Gandhi Park** — Back to the start

Kanakadasa's teachings continue guiding society: MLA H.K. Patil

CH NEWS, GADAG



At the Kanakadasa Jayanti celebrations in Gadag on Friday

> **"Kanakadasa had made an immense contribution to society through his literary works, devotional compositions and philosophical thoughts."**
>
> — **H.K. Patil,** MLA

The teachings and literary contributions of saint-poet Kanakadasa continue to guide society towards equality, humanity and a meaningful social life, said MLA H.K. Patil. He was speaking during the celebration of Kanakadasa Jayanti organised in Gadag on Friday.

The district administration, Zilla Panchayat and Department of Kannada and Culture jointly organised the programme to commemorate the great devotee-poet. The celebrations were held at Bhakta Kanakadasa Circle near Hatalageri Naka in Gadag city, where floral tributes were offered to his portrait.

He observed that Kanakadasa's vachanas, keertanas and poems conveyed valuable messages about human values and social responsibility. His writings showed people the right path and explained how individuals should conduct themselves in society. Patil described Kanakadasa as a great personality whose literary and philosophical contributions continue to inspire generations.

Students present devotional songs

As part of the celebrations, students of KVSR School in Gadag rendered devotional songs composed by Kanakadasa. Their performances received appreciation from the dignitaries and members of the public present at the programme.

Former Zilla Panchayat president Vasanna Kuradagi, Pakkirappa Hebasur, Rudranna Gulaguli, Ravi Dandina, Krishnagowda H. Patil, Dr. G.B. Bidanal, B.B. Asuti, Ashok Mandali and several other leaders participated in the event.

Deputy Commissioner C.N. Sreedhara, Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr. Duragesh K.R. and Zilla Panchayat Deputy Secretary C.R. Mundaragi were also present, along with officials from various departments and prominent personalities.

The programme highlighted the enduring relevance of Kanakadasa's teachings and his contribution to Kannada literature, devotion and social reform.

Sports help police personnel maintain fitness: DC

CH NEWS, KARWAR

Sports play an important role in maintaining physical fitness and reducing mental stress among police personnel, who work under demanding conditions and handle sensitive responsibilities, said Deputy Commissioner Harshal Bhoyar.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Uttara Kannada District Police Annual Sports Meet at the Police Parade Grounds in Karwar on Friday.

Bhoyar said police personnel regularly face heavy workloads while performing duties in sensitive border areas and along the coastal region. Amid these demanding responsibilities, the annual sports meet provides an excellent opportunity for officers and staff to focus on their physical well-being and mental health.

He observed that the sports meet allows police personnel to temporarily step away from their routine duties and participate in various sporting activities. Such events not only improve physical fitness but also help reduce workplace stress, strengthen team spirit and promote coordination among colleagues.

The sports meet

- **Three days** from November 27
- **Police Parade Grounds,** Karwar
- **DAR, Karwar, Sirsi, Bhatkal, Dandeli** divisions and the women's team
- **Six boxing achievers** of the district felicitated

Highlighting the favourable conditions in the district, he said the local climate and available sports facilities provide an ideal environment for conducting the competitions. He encouraged all participants to take part enthusiastically and develop their sporting abilities through teamwork and dedication.

Recalling his professional journey, Bhoyar said he was selected for the Police Service through the UPSC examination in the 2014 batch and served in the Jammu and Kashmir cadre as an Assistant Superintendent of Police. Although he was subsequently selected for the Indian Administrative Service in 2016, the training and experiences gained during his police service remained memorable.

District Superintendent of Police Deepan M.N., Kaiga CISF Commandant Ajay Kumar Jha and Additional Superintendent of Police Krishnamurthy attended the inauguration. Former sports meet champion Nagaraj Horagundi lit the ceremonial sports torch.

Boxing achievers from the district, Darshan Siddi, Pavan Siddi, Dinesh Siddi, Kumar Sonal, Arpita and Neha, were felicitated.

The three-day sports meet, beginning November 27, features participants from the District Armed Reserve (DAR), Karwar, Sirsi, Bhatkal and Dandeli divisions, along with the women's police team.

KANAKADASA VALUES HIGHLIGHTED

Kanakadasa's ideals remain guiding light for life:DC

CH NEWS, VIJAYAPURA



Lighting the lamp at the Kanakadasa Jayanti celebrations in Vijayapura on Friday

> **"Kanakadasa's contribution should not be remembered only through annual Jayanti celebrations. Instead, people should follow his ideals and incorporate his teachings into their everyday lives. His philosophy could inspire love, mutual respect, coexistence and human values in society."**
>
> — **Dr. Ozarama** Additional Deputy Commissioner

The ideals of saint-poet Kanakadasa, who spread the values of devotion, humanity and equality through his life and literary works, should guide everyone in their daily lives, said Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr. Ozarama.

He was speaking at the Kanakadasa Jayanti celebrations organised on Friday at Sri Hanumantaraya Rangamandira in Kandagul. He said Kanakadasa held a distinguished position in the Bhakti tradition and demonstrated how devotion and human values could be brought together for the welfare of society.

Lecturer Dalavayi, who spoke on the occasion, described Kanakadasa as a great social reformer who questioned caste discrimination and social inequalities through his literature and devotional compositions. His keertanas, ugabhogas and other literary works encouraged rational thinking and promoted equality and humanity.

He pointed out that Kanakadasa's devotional songs were not merely expressions of religious faith but also powerful critiques of social discrimination. Through compositions such as 'Do Not Fight Over Caste', he emphasised that a person's worth should be determined by character and conduct rather than birth.

Highlighting his literary achievements, Dalavayi referred to major works such as Mohana Tarangini, Nala Charitre, Ramadhanya Charitre and Haribhaktisara. These works reflect different aspects of human life, social conditions, cultural traditions and spiritual philosophy, making valuable contributions to Kannada literature.

He added that Kanakadasa combined spiritual knowledge with practical experiences of life and used literature as a medium for social transformation. His writings continue to offer guidance to contemporary society.

Mayor Madivalappa Karadi, District Guarantee Schemes Implementation Committee chairman Vasantha Honamode, Corporation members Premananda Biradara and Rahul Jadhav, and several district-level officials and representatives of various organisations attended the programme.

The speakers urged people across communities to respect great personalities and follow their ideals in everyday life, describing this as the true tribute to Kanakadasa.

A BAN IS NOT A PLAN

Karnataka's promised social media ban for under-16s has run into the Supreme Court. The State should now do the harder work of making the internet safer for children — chatbots included.



ABRAHAM



In March, Karnataka became the first Indian State to announce that children under 16 would be barred from social media. The line, in then Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's 2026-27 Budget speech, was welcomed by many anxious parents and made headlines around the world. Within hours, Andhra Pradesh promised to keep children under 13 off social media within 90 days. Eight months on, Karnataka's ban exists only as a sentence in a Budget speech: there is no Bill, no rules and no system to verify anyone's age. Last month, State officials were reported as saying the matter "comes under the Centre's domain", and that Karnataka would seek the Centre's advice.

The Supreme Court has since narrowed the road further. On October 15, a Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and K. Vinod Chandran held that the right to access and use the internet is a fundamental right under Article 21 read with Article 19(1)(a) — and that children hold it too, whatever their age. The court declined to endorse blanket bans, warning that keeping children off the internet because platforms fail them would "mistake the victim for the problem". Verifying the age of every user, it noted, means continuously collecting sensitive data, with a disproportionate risk of misuse and surveillance. Bans could also drive children towards unregulated corners of the web and make them less likely to tell a trusted adult when something goes wrong.

None of this means the worry was misplaced. Parents and teachers see what endless scrolling does to sleep, attention and self-esteem; cyberbullying, sextortion and online scams reach children in small towns as easily as in Bengaluru. But a ban was always the easy headline. Enforcing it would have meant checking the age of every user in the State; a borrowed phone or a VPN would have defeated it; and internet location data is too imprecise to police a border that Karnataka shares with six States. Australia, whose under-16 law took effect last December, has already run into enforcement problems.

The larger problem is that the debate has been fighting the last war. While politicians argued about Instagram and YouTube, children were moving to AI chatbots — for homework, but increasingly for advice and company. A survey of 1,950 children aged 10 to 17 by Australia's eSafety Commissioner, published in August, found that 78 per cent had used an AI assistant. More than half of those who used such tools did so for personal or social reasons, a third had shared personal or sensitive information with them, and one in five reported a potentially harmful or inappropriate interaction.

In the United States, Common Sense Media has found that nearly half of children aged nine to 12 have used an AI chatbot or companion. Indian data is thin, but there is little reason to think Indian children are different — and the State's own push for AI in classrooms will bring many more of them to these tools.

Chatbots raise problems that a social media age gate does not touch. They are always available, endlessly patient and inclined to agree with whoever is typing. They can be wrong with complete confidence, and some have drawn young users into romantic role-play or responded badly to talk of self-harm. No ban on "social media", however it is defined, would reach them.That harder work is what Karnataka should now take up.

First, regulate design, not birthdays. The Supreme Court has itself listed the safeguards that matter: a dedicated "child mode", private accounts by default, no contact or messages from unknown adults, moderated advertising and content, and parental consent for preteens through proportionate verification. The data protection law, whose child-protection duties take effect in May 2027, will require verifiable parental consent before a child's data is processed and will bar tracking, behavioural monitoring and targeted advertising aimed at children. Bengaluru hosts engineering centres of many of the world's largest platforms; the State should press them to meet these standards here now, not in 2027.

Second, put digital safety on the timetable. The court has asked the Centre to build digital safety and age-appropriate sex education into the core curriculum through the NCERT and State councils, with teacher training and parent awareness. Karnataka need not wait. A Kannada-medium module on online safety, scams, misinformation and AI could be ready for the next academic year, with School Development and Monitoring Committees carrying the message to parents.

Third, set clear rules for the screens the State does control. Officials have said Karnataka will regulate the use of computers in schools and colleges. That should mean a consistent, published policy on phones in classrooms and supervised device use, not school-by-school improvisation.

Fourth, write rules for chatbots before they reach every classroom. Any AI tool the State buys for children should disclose that it is a machine, refuse romantic or sexual role-play with minors, respond to signs of distress by pointing children to human help, collect as little data as possible, and submit to independent audits. New York and California have already begun placing similar duties on companion chatbots.

Fifth, make help easy to find. Every school should display the Tele-MANAS mental health helpline (14416) and the cybercrime helpline (1930), and every teacher should know what to do when a child reports abuse online.

Karnataka was right to worry and wrong to reach for the easiest lever.Children do not need to be locked out of the internet; they need a safer one, and adults who understand it. The Centre is due to report its progress on the court's directions before the next hearing on December 10. Karnataka should have a plan of its own ready by then — not a slogan.

THE GROWING WEB OF DIGITAL FRAUD





DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

The digital revolution has given new impetus to India's economy, banking system, and civic life. Today, sending money, paying bills, making purchases, and accessing government services through mobile phones is easier than ever before. UPI, internet banking, and digital wallets have brought financial transactions within the reach of the common man. But with this convenience, a serious challenge has also rapidly emerged—cyber fraud. While technology has simplified economic activities, it has also provided criminals with new avenues to access people's hard-earned money. Today, cybercrime is not just a technical problem, but a serious question concerning economic security, social trust, and institutional accountability.

Phishing and identity fraud are dangerous forms of cybercrime. Criminals contact people posing as bank officials, government employees, police officers, or representatives of reputable institutions. They create fear and confusion by citing demands for KYC updates, bank account closures, receipt of contraband in parcels, or a government investigation. The most worrying example is fraudulent practices such as digital arrest. In this, criminals pose as officers from the police, CBI, ED, or other investigative agencies and hold people mentally hostage via video calls. They extort lakhs of rupees from them by threatening them with arrest, legal action, and social stigma.

The misuse of technology has exacerbated this challenge. Deepfake videos and fake voices, created with the help of artificial intelligence (AI), are now capable of impersonating a person's identity. Criminals can call in the voice of a relative, acquaintance, senior official, or trusted individual, asking for emergency financial assistance. While it used to be relatively easy to identify fraud through misspelled messages and suspicious emails, advanced technology has now made criminals' deceptions more convincing.

Another major problem is mule bank accounts. These are bank accounts used to transfer money obtained from cybercrime from one account to another. Unemployed youth and economically vulnerable individuals are often lured into using their bank accounts by offering commissions. In some cases, people hand over their accounts and ATM cards to others without complete information. By creating these chains, criminals attempt to conceal their true identities and source of funds. Furthermore, international cybercrime networks, fake SIM cards, fake identities, and cross-border digital transactions are increasing difficulties for investigating agencies.

The battle for cybersecurity cannot be won solely with technical tools and legal provisions. Citizen trust, institutional activism, and government accountability are essential. The dream of a Digital India will only be realized when citizens can access digital services without fear. Victims must receive swift justice and financial relief, along with stringent action against cybercrime. The success of digital development should not be measured solely by the number of people who have adopted online transactions, but also by the safety of their hard-earned money. Technology should be a tool for convenience, not fear and exploitation—this should be the true identity of a secure Digital India.

> "Technology should be a tool for convenience, not fear and exploitation."
>
> – Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

DELIMITATION BILL 2026: AN INJUSTICE TO THE SOUTH? A THREAT TO THE EXISTENCE OF REGIONAL PARTIES?



- B. R. NAIDU
CHAIRMAN

In India's parliamentary democracy, 'Delimitation' is not merely a process of changing geographical boundaries; it is an extremely sensitive issue that determines the balance of political power and the nature of the country's federal system.

The 'Delimitation Bill, 2026', introduced by the Central Government in April 2026, along with the 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill, has triggered intense political and constitutional debates across the country, particularly in South India.

Here is a comprehensive analysis of the nature of this Bill, the government's arguments, the concerns of opposition parties, its impact on Karnataka, and the future of regional parties, based on the views of various political analysts, constitutional experts, and government documents.

According to Article 82 of the Constitution, Lok Sabha constituencies must be redistributed based on population after every census.

However, several amendments were introduced by previous governments to ensure that states that had effectively implemented population control measures would not face injustice in terms of political representation.

Following the first three censuses after Independence (1951, 1961 and 1971), Delimitation Commissions were established, and the number of Lok Sabha seats was fixed at 543.

In 1976, the government led by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, through the 42nd Constitutional Amendment, froze the redistribution of seats based on the 1971 Census for a period of 25 years (until 2001), keeping in mind national unity and federal equality.

Later, in 2001, the government led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, through the 84th Constitutional Amendment, extended this freeze for another 25 years, that is, until the first census conducted after 2026.

Now, even before the completion of the new census, there is a proposal to conduct delimitation based on the 2011 Census.

The Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, explained in Parliament the model of increasing the total number of Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 816, an increase of approximately 50 per cent.

Additionally, the implementation of 33 per cent women's reservation has been linked to this delimitation process. (It is noteworthy that although this Bill was rejected by the Lok Sabha Committee in April 2026, it is certain to come into the spotlight again.)

According to the Central Government, if the formula of increasing seats by 50 per cent is adopted, the number of seats in the southern states will not decrease. According to the figures presented by Home Minister Amit Shah, the total number of seats in the five southern states will increase from 129 to 195, and their share in Parliament will slightly increase from 23.76 per cent to 23.87 per cent. Karnataka's seats will increase from 28 to 42, accounting for a 5.14 per cent share.

However, we must first understand the risks hidden behind these figures.

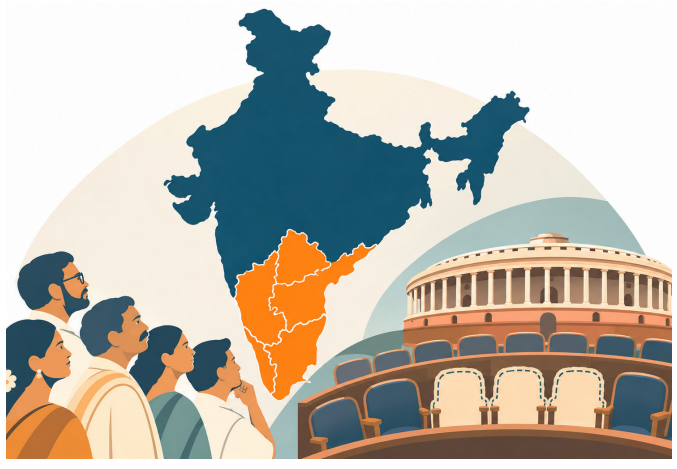
According to researchers at the Carnegie Endowment, over the last two decades, the economic output (GDP) and tax contributions of southern states such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala have grown faster than those of northern states.

If political representation is determined solely on the basis of population, there is a fear that the political voice of states like Karnataka, which contribute significantly to the country's treasury through taxes, will become weaker, while concerns also arise that Finance Commission grants may flow towards northern states.

In particular, using the 2011 Census as the basis would amount to a serious injustice to Karnataka. In 2011, Bengaluru's population was around 6–7 million, whereas by 2026, it has crossed 14 million. Similarly, Karnataka's population has increased from 50 million to more than 70 million. Using outdated data would mean that rapidly urbanising cities like Bengaluru would not receive adequate representation.

If a purely population-proportional formula is implemented in the future, Kerala, which has controlled its population, may see a 0 per cent increase in seats, while Tamil Nadu may receive only a 26 per cent increase. In contrast, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, which have not controlled their population growth, may see an increase of 79 per cent in their seats.

According to a report by the Carnegie Endowment, although the Central Government has verbally assured that 'the number of seats in every state will be increased by 50 per cent', this formula has not been explicitly codified in the draft Bill. This has raised doubts among the southern states.



During the redrawing of constituency boundaries, there is a risk of dividing or grouping voters in a manner that favours a particular political party. This practice is known as 'Cracking' and 'Packing'. Similar allegations were raised during the delimitation exercise in Jammu and Kashmir. Furthermore, the rule that the orders of the Delimitation Commission cannot be challenged in any court raises questions about transparency.

Increasing the number of Lok Sabha members to more than 800 may also make the quality of parliamentary debates and the management of parliamentary proceedings more difficult.

According to political analysts, any delimitation process that is based on population or gives greater importance to Hindi-speaking states will provide the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with a long-term strategic advantage.

For example, the BJP has traditionally been strong in states such as Uttar Pradesh (80 to 120 seats), Bihar (40 to 60 seats), Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. If the number of Lok Sabha seats in these states increases significantly, the BJP may gain the ability to form a clear majority government at the Centre solely through its strength in northern India, even without winning a single seat in South India.

As the seat strength of northern states increases, the dependence on southern states or alliance partners for important decisions, such as constitutional amendments, will decrease. This can be described as the imposition of 'Majoritarianism'.

Furthermore, delimitation poses a greater challenge to the existence of regional parties than to national opposition parties.

Regional parties such as the DMK in Tamil Nadu, the TMC in West Bengal, the BRS in Telangana, the TDP/YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh, and the JD(S) in Karnataka are largely confined to their respective states. When the total size of Parliament increases to 816, even if these parties win 30–40 seats in their respective states, their bargaining power to become 'Kingmakers' in the formation of a government at the national level will decline.

If regional parties become weaker, there may be no one left to raise their voices against the Centre on issues concerning the rights of states, linguistic identity, and tax distribution. Since the BJP does not have a strong political base in states such as Tamil Nadu and Kerala, any reduction in the political representation of these states will directly weaken the influence of regional parties.

The proposal in the Bill to allocate women's reservation through a 'lottery' system for a period of 15 years is also significant. Changes in constituency boundaries and reservation arrangements may displace the existing political positions of sitting MPs and local leaders, potentially leading to internal disagreements and divisions within regional parties.

Overall, although delimitation aims to uphold the democratic principle of 'One Person, One Vote, One Value', the hope is that it should not come at the cost of 'Federal Equity' in a diverse federal nation like India.

In 1976 and 2001, the governments of those times postponed delimitation in the interest of national unity, setting aside political gains. Even today, instead of making decisions solely on the basis of population statistics, it is essential to formulate a transparent formula by considering the economic contributions of states, their achievements in population control, and the consensus of all states. This is crucial for the survival of India's democracy.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

GST and Its Impact on Common People

The recent changes in the Goods and Services Tax system have brought relief to some consumers and businesses, but many people still find GST difficult to understand. Small shop owners and ordinary customers often struggle to identify the correct tax rates and understand how the system affects prices. Clear information should be made available in simple language through public notices, newspapers and official websites. The government should also ensure that tax rules remain stable and easy to follow. A transparent and user-friendly GST system can reduce confusion, support small businesses and help people understand what they are paying for in a fair manner.

– Hepsiba S.

Media Literacy in the Digital Age

Media literacy has become essential as people increasingly depend on social media and online platforms for news. False information, misleading headlines and edited videos can spread quickly and influence public opinion. Many users share content without checking whether it is true. Schools and colleges should teach students how to verify sources, identify manipulated content and distinguish facts from opinions. Media organisations also have a responsibility to report accurately and correct mistakes. People must pause before forwarding unverified messages. A society that understands how media works is better equipped to make informed decisions and resist misinformation in its everyday digital life.

– Joiella Arpita Mandana

THE QUIET LANGUAGE BARRIERS OF EVERYDAY BENGALURU

When I moved to Bengaluru as a student, I looked forward to getting to know the city. I loved seeing even international brand names written in Kannada. Those signs made visible a language that, according to the 2011 Census, was the mother tongue of about 44.5 per cent of Bengaluru Urban district's population. They also made me curious about the Kannada I would hear and see in my new neighbourhood.

Friends often asked if I had run into language trouble, especially with auto-rickshaw drivers. Usually, I said no. When we spoke different languages, a gesture, a smile or a little patience often got us through the conversation. I thought most everyday exchanges would go that way. Then a postman arrived with the first parcel my parents had sent me.

I needed the parcel urgently. We started speaking in Hindi, and I thought we understood each other. As the conversation grew more complicated, he switched to Kannada. I could no longer follow what he needed from me, and I could not explain what I needed from him. I grew frustrated enough to say I might



file a complaint. In the end, I handed my phone to someone who could help us understand each other. Only then did I get my parcel.

After that, I paid more attention to the small tasks I could manage only by asking for help. For weeks, I passed a red building without

> **"When we spoke different languages, a gesture, a smile or a little patience often got us through the conversation."**
> — PRABRITA SAHA

knowing what it was because its sign was entirely in Kannada. One day, I asked someone coming out and learned it was a public library. On buses, conductors sometimes answer my first question in Hindi and switch to Kannada when I ask for more details about a route. That is the moment when I most need to understand the answer.

Kannada is Karnataka's official language, and I want to learn enough of it to take part in more of the life around me. For newcomers like me, basic greetings and questions about directions are a practical place to start. A translation app can help when we get stuck. There are also small things public services can do. A conductor can point out a stop on a route map, and a postal worker can show a customer where to sign. In both cases, taking a moment to check that the other person has understood can save time and frustration.

I think about how quickly the parcel delivery became tense. We were trying to finish the same task, and once someone helped us understand each other, we could get on with it. I wish I had asked for help before mentioning a complaint. The next time I struggle to make myself understood, I can slow down, try a few words of Kannada and ask the other person to show me what they mean. The red building in my neighbourhood reminds me what can happen when I do ask. A place I had walked past for weeks turned out to be a library I could walk into.

— PRABRITA SAHA

ARE INDIA'S YOUNG ATHLETES GETTING THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVE?

India has never lacked sporting talent. From international champions to young athletes competing at district and national levels, the country continues to demonstrate remarkable potential across sporting disciplines. However, an important question deserves serious consideration: are young athletes receiving the recognition, opportunities and institutional support they genuinely deserve?

Sport is more than a competition for medals. It represents discipline, perseverance, teamwork, physical well-being and the ability to overcome challenges. For thousands of young Indians, sport is also a potential career. Yet, the journey from identifying talent to achieving professional recognition is often demanding, particularly for athletes who come from financially disadvantaged backgrounds or regions with limited sporting infrastructure.

One of the major concerns is the unequal availability of sporting facilities. While metropolitan cities may offer access to professional coaching centres, academies and competitive platforms, several rural and semi-urban communities continue to face limitations in training infrastructure, qualified coaches and access to recognised competitions. Talent should not be determined by geographical location or financial circumstances. Every deserving athlete should have a fair opportunity to develop their abilities.

Another concern is the limited recognition given to achievements outside popular sporting disciplines. Cricket enjoys considerable public attention in India, but athletes representing the country in athletics, hockey, football, wrestling, badminton, swimming, boxing and other sports also contribute significantly to India's sporting identity. Recognition should be based on dedication and achievement rather than the commercial popularity of a particular game.

The contribution of young athletes is not measured exclusively by international medals. A student representing a district, a footballer competing in a state championship or a young swimmer qualifying for a national event has already demonstrated commitment and determination. Such achievements deserve encouragement from educational institutions, sports organisations, local communities and the wider public.

India has taken steps towards strengthening its sporting ecosystem. The Khelo India programme focuses on grassroots participation, talent identification, sports infrastructure and athlete development. Its expanded 2026–2031 phase aims to support 9,000 Khelo India Athletes and 18,000 Emerging Khelo India Athletes across 30 priority sports disciplines. The proposed support includes coaching, accommodation, nutrition, equipment, medical assistance and academic support. These initiatives reflect an important policy direction towards building a stronger sporting culture.

Similarly, the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), introduced in 2014, provides selected athletes with assistance for specialised training, international competitions, coaching camps and equipment. Its Development Group also seeks to support promising junior athletes. Such programmes demonstrate that institutional mechanisms for



sporting development exist. However, their effectiveness must also be assessed through accessibility, transparent selection, consistent implementation and the opportunities available to athletes beyond the elite level.

From a legal and administrative perspective, sports development requires accountability and fairness. The National Sports Development Code of India, 2011, provides a framework for the functioning of recognised National Sports Federations. The government has also emphasised impartial and transparent selection procedures in sporting representation. These principles are essential because every athlete deserves a fair opportunity to compete under established rules, without arbitrary discrimination or undue influence.

Another important responsibility is safeguarding young sportspersons. Training institutions and sports organisations must provide safe environments, appropriate supervision and access to medical assistance. Athletes should be protected from harassment, exploitation, discrimination and unsafe training practices. For minors, particular attention must be given to child protection, parental involvement and their educational development. Sporting ambition must never come at the cost of a child's safety, dignity or right to education.

Educational institutions also have a significant role to play. Students who represent their schools, colleges, districts or states should receive reasonable academic consideration, subject to institutional rules. Scholarships, flexible academic arrangements, career guidance and opportunities for higher education can help athletes pursue sporting ambitions without being forced to choose between education and sport.

Furthermore, the contribution of women athletes and para-athletes deserves sustained recognition. Equal access to facilities, training opportunities, competitions and institutional support should remain a priority. Recognition must extend beyond ceremonial appreciation and translate into meaningful opportunities for participation and professional growth.

Ultimately, the responsibility does not rest with the government alone. Sports federations, educational institutions, private sponsors, local authorities, media organisations and citizens all have a role in creating an environment where talent can flourish. Media coverage should extend beyond medal ceremonies to highlight the dedication, preparation and achievements of emerging athletes.

India's sporting future cannot be measured only by the number of medals won at international competitions. It must also be measured by how effectively the country identifies talent, supports young players and creates fair opportunities for their development. A nation that celebrates its champions must also recognise those who are still striving to become one.

Young athletes do not merely need applause after victory; they need opportunity, support and recognition throughout their journey.

Investing in them is not simply an investment in sports; it is an investment in the confidence, discipline and future of the nation.

— J. MARION JONES

SHOULD JOB SECURITY COME AT THE COST OF FAIR COMPENSATION AND MENTAL WELL-BEING?

In today's competitive employment environment, securing a stable job is often considered a significant achievement. For many individuals, particularly fresh graduates and young professionals, employment represents financial independence, responsibility and the opportunity to build a better future. However, an important question deserves attention: should job security come at the cost of fair compensation, personal time and mental well-being?

A stable job undoubtedly provides financial security, but stability should not become a reason for employees to accept unreasonable working conditions. In some workplaces, employees are expected to work beyond their



regular hours to meet deadlines and organisational requirements. While occasional additional work may be unavoidable, concerns arise when overtime becomes a regular expectation without proper recording or appropriate compensation. Employees' time and effort deserve fair recognition in accordance with applicable laws and employment terms.

The workplace hierarchy also requires greater accountability. Seniority should bring responsibility, leadership and guidance rather than an opportunity to exercise undue authority over junior employees. A healthy professional environment must encourage mutual respect and constructive communication. When responsibility for mistakes is unfairly shifted to junior employees, it undermines trust and creates an atmosphere of uncertainty rather than cooperation. Accountability should apply equally at every level of an organisation.

The challenges faced by freshers are equally significant. Entering the professional world can be overwhelming, particularly for individuals with limited practical experience. Proper training, guidance and supervision are essential for their professional development. However, inadequate mentorship and insufficient training can leave new employees struggling to fulfil responsibilities for which they have not been adequately prepared. Organisations must recognise that investing in employee development contributes to long-term productivity and growth.

Another concern is the diminishing boundary between professional responsibilities and personal life. Although occasional assistance during urgent situations may be necessary, repeatedly expecting employees to remain available during approved leave or personal emergencies defeats the purpose of taking time off. Employees need reasonable personal time to attend to their responsibilities outside the workplace.

Furthermore, compensation does not always appear proportionate to the workload, skills and responsibilities assigned to employees. Fair remuneration, timely recognition and transparent opportunities for career advancement are essential to maintaining employee motivation. An individual's contribution should not be overlooked simply because of their designation or position within the organisation.

Continuous workplace pressure, excessive workloads and inadequate recognition can gradually affect an employee's confidence, motivation and mental well-being. Financial stability loses much of its value when individuals are constantly exhausted and unable to maintain a healthy personal life.

Ultimately, job security and mental peace should not be competing priorities. Employers and employees share a responsibility to build professional environments founded on fairness, accountability and mutual respect.

A job should provide more than a monthly salary; it should offer an environment where individuals can work with dignity, receive fair compensation, grow professionally and maintain a healthy personal life.

— J. SHARON ROSE

THE GOVERNMENT MISSPELT YOUR NAME. WHY IS IT YOUR JOB TO PROVE WHO YOU ARE?

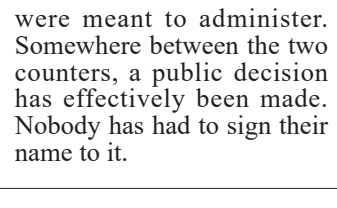
Imagine discovering, a week before a scholarship deadline, that your name has two spellings. You have always been Meera. Your school certificate says Meera. Your father chose the name and can tell you why. But on one government record, somebody typed Mira. The scholarship clerk sees the difference and asks you to return when the documents match. He will have forgotten the encounter by lunchtime. You will spend the next week wondering which office can give you back your second 'e'.

The clerk has a reasonable concern. Public money should reach the person entitled to it, and a similar name can belong to somebody else. Meera understands that. What she cannot understand is why, once she has shown the discrepancy to a public official, the entire job of tracing and correcting it becomes hers. She knows how to spell her name. She has no way of knowing who entered it, which database supplied it, or whose signature can put it right.

Indian names give an official plenty of opportunities for an honest mistake. A vowel written one way in English can be rendered differently by another translator. An initial that fits neatly on a school register can become troublesome on a form that demands a surname. A space may disappear when a handwritten entry is typed into a computer. A difference worth checking can arise even when the citizen and the official filling out the form have both acted in good faith.

The real expense of a correction rarely appears on a receipt. Suppose Meera's mother accompanies her to the office that issued the record. Two bus fares and a morning away from work may seem manageable. At the counter, they learn that the person who can authorise the change comes on Thursdays. By the second visit, the family has paid twice for travel. The mother has asked twice for leave. Neither has received an answer to the question that now matters most. Will the scholarship office keep Meera's application open?

That question exposes a flaw in the way public offices divide responsibility. The scholarship clerk can reasonably say he cannot alter another department's record. The issuing office can reasonably say it needs time to check the original entry. Both can follow their procedures while a student loses the opportunity those procedures



were meant to administer. Somewhere between the two counters, a public decision has effectively been made. Nobody has had to sign their name to it.

A fairer arrangement would begin at the counter where the discrepancy is discovered. Give Meera a dated acknowledgement identifying the disputed entry, the office responsible for checking it and the date by which she should hear back. Let her submit supporting documents there once. If another department holds the original register, the officials concerned should request it directly. A citizen can reasonably be asked to provide evidence she possesses. Asking her to carry messages between two offices adds another journey without settling anything about her identity.

Deadlines need particular care. A scholarship authority could record the application on the day it was presented and hold it pending verification. Payment would still depend on a satisfactory identity check. Meera would keep her place in the process while the issuing office did its work. If the evidence remained insufficient, she would receive a written explanation and a chance to respond. That would give the clerk a defensible decision and the applicant something more useful than an instruction to come back later.

— HEPSIBA S.

IS POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY STRONG ENOUGH IN THE WORLD'S LARGEST DEMOCRACY?

> *"Public office is a responsibility entrusted by the people, not an unrestricted privilege."*
> HANNAH

India, the world's largest democracy, is built upon the principles of constitutional governance, public representation and the rule of law. Citizens elect their representatives with the expectation that public authority will be exercised responsibly and in the larger interest of society. However, democracy requires more than periodic elections. It demands continuous accountability, transparency and responsibility from those entrusted with political power.

Political accountability is an essential element of democratic governance. Elected representatives are responsible not only for making policies but also for explaining their decisions, addressing public concerns and ensuring that public resources are utilised appropriately. The Constitution of India establishes important mechanisms for this responsibility. Article 75(3) provides for the collective responsibility of the Union Council of Ministers to the Lok Sabha. This principle ensures that the executive remains answerable to the elected House of the People.

India also has institutional safeguards designed to strengthen accountability. The Right to Information Act, 2005, enables citizens to seek information from public authorities, promoting transparency in administration. Similarly, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India examines public expenditure and submits audit reports through constitutionally prescribed procedures. These mechanisms demonstrate that accountability is not merely a political expectation but an important component of India's constitutional framework.

Nevertheless, the existence of laws and institutions alone cannot guarantee effective accountability. Their functioning depends upon proper implementation, institutional independence, timely responses and public awareness. Parliamentary discussions, legislative scrutiny and questions raised by elected representatives must remain meaningful avenues for examining government decisions. Equally, allegations of wrongdoing must be investigated through lawful procedures, with fairness and the presumption of innocence respected.

Another important aspect is the responsibility of citizens. Voting is a fundamental democratic exercise, but informed participation should continue beyond election day. Citizens must remain aware of public policies, development commitments, government expenditure and the performance of their representatives. Responsible journalism and access to reliable information further strengthen this process.

Political accountability should also be understood as a shared constitutional responsibility. Governments must provide explanations, institutions must perform their duties independently and citizens must exercise their democratic rights responsibly. Criticism of public decisions should be based on evidence rather than misinformation or personal hostility.

Ultimately, the strength of a democracy is not determined solely by the number of people who vote, but also by how effectively public power is scrutinised and exercised. India's democratic institutions provide a foundation for accountability; strengthening their functioning requires continuous commitment from every stakeholder.

In a constitutional democracy, public office is a responsibility entrusted by the people, not an unrestricted privilege. Accountability must therefore remain a continuous obligation, not merely an expectation raised during elections.

— HANNAH

Quick Read

Man, 55, booked under POCSO for molesting girl

FARIDABAD

A 55-year-old man has been booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act for allegedly molesting a six-year-old girl in Faridabad, police said on Friday. The incident occurred on Wednesday night. According to the complaint, the accused allegedly grabbed the girl while she was playing outside her home and engaged in inappropriate acts. Her mother arrived at the scene, witnessed the incident and forced the accused to flee. Police registered a case following the mother's complaint and launched a search to trace the absconding accused.

Man killed in hammer attack at home

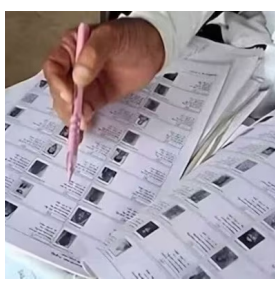
HYDERABAD

A man, Mohammed Abdul Raheem, was killed after an unidentified attacker struck him with a hammer at his residence in Habeeb Nagar Colony, Hyderabad, on Friday, police said. The assailant reportedly entered the house and attacked Raheem when his wife opened the door. He died at the scene. Bandlaguda police reached the residence after receiving information about the murder and began an investigation. Police have formed teams to identify and apprehend the accused.

Delhi police rescue 29 women in spa raids

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police rescued 29 women and arrested or apprehended 15 people during coordinated raids at four spa centres on November 26 over alleged prostitution activities. Teams from Nabi Karim, Paharganj and Karol Bagh conducted the operations using decoy customers to verify intelligence inputs. Four cases were registered under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act. The raids resulted in six women being rescued from A-One Spa, three from Organic Spa and 20 from two Karol Bagh establishments. Those apprehended included spa owners, managers, a receptionist and customers.



Bengal voter roll: final list on Feb 8

KOLKATA

The West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) on Friday announced a revised schedule for the Special Summary Revision (SSR) of the 2027 photo electoral rolls, with the final voters' list scheduled for publication on February 8. The exercise will allow eligible citizens to enrol, correct personal details and raise objections regarding entries in the electoral roll. According to a press note issued by the CEO's office, the integrated draft electoral rolls will be published on December 15. Citizens can submit claims and objections between December 15 and January 14, 2027.

ALLAHABAD HC ORDERS FRESH UPPCS 2025 SELECTION PROCESS

The Allahabad High Court directed UPPSC to revise UPPCS 2025 prelims results, ensuring reserved-category candidates meeting open-category merit are considered.

PRAYAGRAJ

The Allahabad High Court has directed the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission (UPPSC) to revise the UPPCS 2025 Preliminary Examination results, ruling that the merit list must follow reservation rules. Reserved-category candidates who scored more than the last selected candidate in the unreserved category must be considered for open-category selection. The commission has been asked to declare the results afresh.

The court sought category-wise details of marks obtained by selected candidates. The Preliminary Examination will not be held again, according to candidates' counsel, Abhishek Shukla. Revised results will use marks from the examination already conducted. The Mains Examination will be held afresh based on the revised merit list, and interviews will follow the new Mains results.



Candidates after an examination. File photo

Reserved-category candidates had filed the petition, alleging that they were denied consideration in the open category despite securing higher marks. They argued that the open category is not reserved for any particular class and should include candidates from all categories on merit. Justice Manish Kumar Nigam, sitting as a single judge, delivered the order.

The UPPCS 2025 recruitment aims to fill 814 posts. A total of 6,26,387 candidates applied for the Preliminary Examination, while 2,65,270 appeared. Based on the results, 11,727 candidates qualified for the Mains. Of these, 10,284 appeared for the Mains, and 2,297 were shortlisted for interviews.

UPPCS 2025

posts to be filled **814**

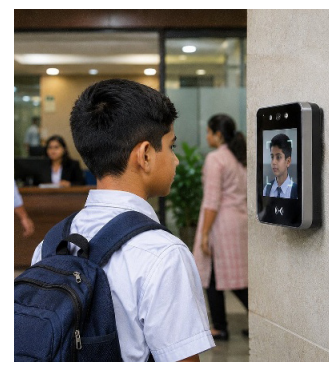
applied for the prelims **6,26,387**

took the prelims **2,65,270**

qualified for the Mains **11,727**

shortlisted for interviews **2,297**

Bengal schools to adopt biometric attendance from 2027



A face-recognition attendance terminal. Representational image

KOLKATA

The West Bengal government will introduce an AI-powered biometric attendance system for teachers and students across all state-run and state-aided schools from January 2, 2027, School Education Minister Dipak Barman announced on Friday. The system aims to record actual attendance and reduce discrepancies associated with the existing manual process.

The state has around 69,000 primary, secondary and higher secondary schools that are either operated or financially supported by the government. According to Barman, these institutions have approximately 16 million students and 400,000 teachers. Until now, student attendance has been recorded through roll calls, while teachers have marked their presence by signing registers.

> *"A modern attendance registration system is necessary."*
> **DIPAK BARMAN** School Education Minister

Out of sympathy

Barman said a modern attendance system was necessary to ensure accurate records. He pointed out that some teachers allegedly marked absent students as present out of sympathy, fearing that low attendance could prevent them from appearing for board examinations. The minister said the new system would help authorities identify the actual number of students attending classes and those remaining absent.

West Bengal will introduce AI-powered biometric attendance in 69,000 government and aided schools from January 2, 2027, covering teachers and students.

150 schools first

The government plans to install the biometric system in 150 schools initially to evaluate its performance before expanding it across all institutions. Barman said the technology would be introduced for both teachers and students from January 2. The system is expected to replace the traditional methods of recording attendance currently followed in government-run and aided schools.

However, a state official acknowledged that completing the installation within the proposed deadline could be challenging because several schools in districts lack adequate infrastructure. The government is aware of these limitations, the official said. Teachers' unions in West Bengal had not issued any statement on the proposed system by Friday afternoon.

VCK chief calls for protests against delimitation bill

COIMBATORE

Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) leader Thol. Thirumavalavan has called for protests across Tamil Nadu against the proposed Delimitation Bill ahead of the upcoming Parliament session. He said the legislation should not be implemented and urged parties to oppose it.

Speaking to reporters, Thirumavalavan alleged that the BJP planned to introduce the bill during the session and was seeking support from several parties, including the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). He claimed the proposal could pave the way for 'One Nation, One Election' and eventually a presidential form of governance. He also alleged that the move reflected the RSS's political ambitions.



VCK chief Thol. Thirumavalavan speaks to reporters

The VCK chief said delimitation should be viewed as a national issue, not just a Tamil Nadu concern. He referred to analysts' concerns that the proposal could help the BJP retain power by winning mainly in northern states. Thirumavalavan expressed confidence that the DMK would lead opposition to the bill, adding that unity among the Congress, INDIA bloc partners and other parties could defeat it. He appealed to the DMK to uphold its commitment to social justice and democracy, while saying he had not spoken directly with its leaders and did not know the party's official position.

The Lok Sabha Secretariat announced that the second part of the Eighth Session of the Eighteenth Lok Sabha would begin on November 30 and was likely to conclude on December 3, depending on business. The government has not specified which bills will be taken up, but delimitation and women's reservation have triggered political debate ahead of the session.

TVK MLA arrested over harassment complaint

CHENNAI

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) legislator C Arul Vignesh was arrested over a sexual harassment complaint filed by a woman IAS officer in Tamil Nadu. The arrest followed questions from the Madras High Court about the government's delay in acting on allegations brought to its attention in July.

The officer accused Vignesh of sending sexually explicit WhatsApp messages, making inappropriate advances and visiting her residence while intoxicated. Vignesh has denied the allegations, calling them politically motivated. He questioned how he could have entered the residence, citing its security guards and CCTV cameras.

The complaint drew attention in November after DMK MP Kanimozhi raised the issue. On November 12, the DMK and AIADMK approached senior officials seeking an investigation. The National Commission for Women also asked the state police chief to preserve digital evidence and report on the action taken.

The officer filed a police complaint on November 23. The next day, the Madras High Court was informed that an FIR had been registered under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita provisions covering sexual harassment, stalking and acts intended to insult a woman's modesty. Justice V Lakshminarayanan questioned the government's response and directed the formation of an Internal Complaints Committee with independent members. The court stressed that the officer's identity must be protected.



TVK MLA C Arul Vignesh

"We will not rest until a fair investigation is conducted in accordance with the law and everyone responsible for the wrongdoing is brought to justice."
— **MK Stalin,** DMK chief

Tiruppur Superintendent of Police Srishti Singh was appointed to lead the investigation, with Inspector General N Kamini overseeing it. Police summoned Vignesh on November 25 and questioned his aides before arresting him. DMK chief MK Stalin alleged the officer faced online targeting and pressure to compromise. He demanded accountability.

Six Dehradun restaurants sealed over green norms

DEHRADUN

The Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board has sealed six restaurants, including a KFC outlet, on Dehradun's Rajpur Road for allegedly violating environmental norms. The action was taken on November 25 after the establishments failed to provide satisfactory responses to show-cause notices issued by the authorities a month earlier, a board official said on Friday.

Naresh Goswami, the board's regional officer, said notices had been served on all six establishments over alleged violations. The restaurants were given an opportunity to explain their position, but their replies were not considered satisfactory. Following this, the administration proceeded to seal the outlets, he said, adding that the action was carried out in accordance with the board's directions.

Sealed on Rajpur Road

- **KFC:** run by Safeyure Food India
- **Mojo:** Resto Bar and Party Lounge
- **Lifestyle:** also identified as Playboy
- **Level One:** Resto
- **AS 4:** Integrated Facility Management Services
- **Diablo:** Restaurant and Bar

The six outlets

Officials also disconnected the electricity supply to the establishments before sealing them. The six premises named by the board are KFC, operated by Safeyure Food India; Mojo Resto Bar and Party Lounge; Lifestyle, also identified as Playboy; Level One Resto; AS 4 Integrated Facility Management Services Pvt Ltd; and Diablo Restaurant and Bar. All six establishments are located on Rajpur Road in Dehradun.

The notices were issued around a month before the sealing operation, giving the restaurants time to respond to the concerns raised by the pollution control authorities. However, according to Goswami, the responses submitted by the establishments did not satisfy the board. The administration then took action against all six outlets on November 25, following the board's instructions.

Power cut first

Goswami said the electricity connections were disconnected before the premises were sealed. The official did not provide details of the specific environmental violations attributed to each outlet. He also did not state whether any further action or inspections were planned in the area, according to the board official.

Navy receives last GRSE-built stealth frigate Vindhyagiri

NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy has taken delivery of Vindhyagiri, the third and final guided-missile frigate built by Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) under the Project-17A programme. The delivery was announced by GRSE on Friday, completing the shipyard's role in the construction of the advanced stealth frigates. The Navy is expected to commission the warship within two months.

GRSE said the handover marked the successful completion of its P17A frigate-building programme and would strengthen India's maritime capabilities. The seven-ship project is valued at around ₹45,000 crore. Four frigates — Nilgiri, Udaygiri, Taragiri and Mahendragiri — were built by Mumbai-based Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, while Himgiri and Dunagiri were constructed by GRSE.

With Vindhyagiri's delivery, all seven frigates under the programme have been delivered to the Navy. The six other vessels have already been commissioned, improving the force's operational capabilities and combat readiness in the Indian Ocean Region.

Each P17A frigate

6,670 t displacement	**149 m** length
28 kn top speed	**225** crew

The P17A, also known as the Nilgiri class, is the successor to the Shivalik-class P17 stealth frigates. The vessels feature 75 per cent indigenous content and carry advanced weapons, sensors and systems. They are designed for fleet air defence, anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare, maritime interdiction, surveillance, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations across multiple operational environments. Each frigate displaces 6,670 tonnes, measures 149 metres and can reach speeds of up to 28 knots, with a complement of 225 personnel. Its equipment includes BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, the Barak-8 surface-to-air missile system and MF-STAR surveillance radar.

IPS RESHUFFLE

Uttar Pradesh transfers 28 senior IPS officers

LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has transferred 28 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in a major reshuffle, changing postings of police commissioners, Additional Directors General of Police (ADGPs) and Deputy Inspectors General (DIGs). The reshuffle includes IPS and State Police Service personnel.

Mohit Agarwal, a 1997-batch officer, has been appointed Police Commissioner of Prayagraj, moving from Varanasi. Piyush Mordia, the outgoing Prayagraj commissioner, becomes ADG (Establishment) in Lucknow. Ramit Sharma moves from ADG Bareilly Zone to ADG Lucknow Zone, while Praveen Kumar takes charge in Bareilly. Laxmi Singh moves from Gautam Buddh Nagar Police Commissioner to Ghaziabad, while J Ravinder Goud takes over in Gautam Buddh Nagar. Kiran S, IGP Lucknow Range, becomes Police Commissioner of Varanasi.

At the DIG level, Prabhakar Chaudhary moves from Aligarh Range to Lucknow Range. Abhishek Singh shifts from Saharanpur to Agra, Shailesh Kumar Pandey from Agra to Aligarh, and Ashish Tiwari from Technical Services to Saharanpur. Gaurav Grover, SSP Ayodhya, becomes SSP Moradabad, while Satpal moves from Moradabad to Ayodhya.



The order covers police commissioners, ADGPs and DIGs

Suniti has been appointed SP, Police Headquarters, while Akash Tomar becomes SP of the Dr BR Ambedkar Police Academy in Moradabad. Amit Kumar becomes SP, Economic Offences Wing, Lucknow. Dinesh Tripathi moves from Kanpur Nagar to become DCP Prayagraj, while Kuldeep Singh Gunawat takes charge as DCP Kanpur Nagar. Preeti Yadav becomes Commandant of the 15th Battalion PAC, Agra.

Who goes where

PRAYAGRAJ CP **Mohit Agarwal**	VARANASI CP **Kiran S**
GHAZIABAD CP **Laxmi Singh**	GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR CP **J Ravinder Goud**
ADG LUCKNOW ZONE **Ramit Sharma**	ADG BAREILLY ZONE **Praveen Kumar**

State Police Service officers have also received new assignments in training, prison administration, intelligence and the Provincial Armed Constabulary. The government revised three earlier orders: Punit Dwivedi will be Additional DCP Ghaziabad, Neetu Additional DCP Lucknow, while Amit Kumawat's transfer to Ghaziabad has been cancelled.

Quick Read

Hotel worker arrested for spitting on roti

MEERUT

A hotel employee was arrested in Meerut after a video purportedly showing him spitting on a roti during food preparation went viral on social media, police said on Friday. The incident allegedly occurred on Thursday in the Mahalka outpost area. Circle Officer Pankaj Lavania said the accused, a resident of Mahalka village, was identified during the investigation. Police took cognisance of the video and began an inquiry after it circulated widely online. The investigation reportedly confirmed that the incident took place while food was being prepared at the hotel. The accused has been arrested, and further legal proceedings are underway, the officer added.

Woman arrested with marijuana worth ₹ 40,650

MUMBAI

A 48-year-old woman was arrested in Mumbai's Borivali area after police seized 813 grams of marijuana worth Rs 40,650 from her possession. The accused, identified as Lata Kale, was apprehended on November 15 following a tip-off about a planned drug sale near Kora Kendra Ground No. 4 in Satya Nagar. Borivali Police laid a trap and intercepted her at the location. Officers also recovered Rs 3,100 in cash. Kale was booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Police said nine alleged drug peddlers have been arrested this year, with drugs worth Rs 5.39 lakh seized. Action has also been taken against 72 people for drug consumption.

Man held for killing brother-in-law over gate delay

BHOPAL

A 19-year-old youth was allegedly killed by his drunken brother-in-law following an argument over a delayed gate opening in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind district in the early hours of Thursday. The incident occurred in Prakash Nagar, Gohad town, around 2-3 am. The accused, Anand Nigam, had returned from a wedding and allegedly became angry when the gate of his in-laws' house was not opened immediately. He reportedly picked up a stone slab and struck his brother-in-law, Suraj Jatav, on the head, killing him on the spot. Nigam fled after the attack but was arrested following a police search operation. Suraj's body was handed over to his family after a post-mortem examination. Further investigation is underway.

Madras HC rejects Vijay's plea against election petition

The Madras High Court dismissed Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's plea to reject an election petition challenging his Perambur Assembly victory.

CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Friday dismissed Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's plea seeking rejection of an election petition challenging his victory from the Perambur Assembly constituency. Justice V Lakshminarayanan dismissed Vijay's petition, which sought to have the challenge filed by voter S Dinesh rejected.



The Madras High Court, where the election petition is being heard.

What the order means

Q What did the court decide?
A It dismissed Vijay's plea to reject the election petition filed by voter S Dinesh.

Q Are the allegations proved?
A No. The petition remains before the court, with its allegations yet to be adjudicated.

Dinesh, a voter from Perambur, filed the election petition challenging Vijay's election. He alleged that the Chief Minister had deliberately and wilfully suppressed material information, misrepresented facts and made false declarations about his immovable properties. These allegations form the basis of the challenge before the High Court.

Vijay approached the High Court seeking rejection of Dinesh's petition. Justice Lakshminarayanan considered the plea and dismissed it on Friday. The court's decision means Vijay's request to dismiss the election challenge at this stage has not been accepted. The allegations made by Dinesh have not been established by this order.

The case concerns Vijay's victory in the Perambur Assembly constituency.

The High Court delivered its order on November 27. The election petition filed by Dinesh remains before the court, with its allegations yet to be adjudicated.

Mumbai steps up security for Diljit concert

Over 500 police personnel guard Mahalaxmi Racecourse after an email threatening attacks on the concert venue and Metro stations.

MUMBAI

More than 500 police personnel were to be deployed at Mumbai's Mahalaxmi Racecourse for singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh's concert on Friday after authorities received an email threatening attacks at the venue and Metro stations. The warning prompted security arrangements, including additional personnel, checks and surveillance, officials said.

Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad teams have searched the concert venue, while entry checks were to be conducted at all five gates instead of the three planned. Private security personnel have also been engaged to assist the police. Dog squads and an Anti-Narcotics Cell team were to remain at the venue during the event.

The threat email, received on Thursday, warned of blasts, grenade attacks and improvised explosive devices at the mayor's office, Metro rail stations and the concert. It was sent on the anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. The sender identified herself as Hannah Meler and included references to Khalistan, the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and violence linked to the programme involving Dosanjh and event associates.

Police said the deployment would include around 200 constables, 150 women constables and 75 officers, along with personnel in plain clothes stationed around the singer. A no-car zone covering a radius of 500 to 700 metres around the racecourse was to be enforced, and parking was not to be allowed at the venue.

Organisers have been instructed not to reveal the singer's hotel details or arrival time as part of the security protocol. They have also prohibited posters, banners, signs and flags inside Mahalaxmi Racecourse. The concert is part of Dosanjh's RuPay AURA India Tour 2026.

SC WARNS RAJASTHAN OVER RIVER POLLUTION

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday criticised the Rajasthan government over pollution in the Jojari-Bandi-Luni River ecosystem and warned that it could initiate suo motu contempt proceedings against officials if corrective action was not taken. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said bureaucratic delays would not be accepted.

The bench was hearing a suo motu case concerning pollution in the Jojari, Bandi and Luni rivers, which flow through Jodhpur, Pali and Balotra before converging near Balotra. The judges expressed displeasure with the state's response and asked Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for Rajasthan, to ensure concrete action.



The Supreme Court of India.

Senior advocate Balbir Singh, assisting the court as amicus curiae, referred to an October 26 order barring fresh permissions for industrial units along or near the river system until the high flood line and buffer zones were scientifically identified. He also said a special investigation team had been formed to probe organised illegal bajri mining affecting the rivers and their tributaries. The state's report mentioned that some FIRs had been registered.

The bench warned that officials and the government could face consequences if they failed to submit a concrete action plan. It also highlighted drinking water shortages in Balotra and suggested laying a pipeline of about 100 km from the Narmada canal to supply the region.

The matter has been listed for orders on December 10. In August, the court directed Rajasthan to establish an Integrated Coordination Group led by the chief secretary to coordinate action against river pollution. In November last year, it formed a high-level oversight committee to identify pollution sources, monitor remedial work and recommend long-term measures.

India expands AI tools for early disease detection

NEW DELHI

India is expanding artificial intelligence-based healthcare solutions for early detection and management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), with AI-powered oral cancer screening tools already deployed across nine states. Union Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava reviewed the initiatives at an event at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, on Friday.

The event, titled 'AI Leadership for India in Non-Communicable Disease Care', focused on technology in healthcare. Srivastava reviewed the progress and roadmap of the Translational AI for Networked Universal Healthcare (TANUH) AI Centre of Excellence, including plans for rapid evidence generation. The discussions also examined how these tools could support wider healthcare delivery across India.

Discussions covered AI tools for early detection of breast and oral cancers. A clinical decision support system for diabetes and hypertension is also being deployed through the National Health Authority. These solutions are intended to help healthcare workers identify risks and support timely intervention.

Srivastava met IISc's senior leadership to discuss ongoing initiatives and visited the site of the Tata IISc Medical School's Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital. The projects aim to make healthcare more accessible and evidence-driven through technology and innovation.

Spectral CT at NIMHANS

Earlier on Friday, she visited the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) in Bengaluru and inaugurated an advanced Spectral CT facility to strengthen emergency diagnostics, particularly for stroke and neurovascular conditions. She also reviewed mental health programmes, including Tele-MANAS, which has crossed 50 lakh calls, addiction treatment, suicide prevention and the Karnataka Brain Health Initiative.

On Thursday, Srivastava addressed a national-level workshop on the National Health Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission. She stressed strengthening Metropolitan Surveillance Units to improve disease monitoring, detect outbreaks early and coordinate public health responses.

? DID YOU KNOW?
Tele-MANAS, one of the mental health programmes Srivastava reviewed at NIMHANS, has crossed 50 lakh calls.

Ambedkar warns delimitation could deepen north-south divide

NEW DELHI

Prakash Ambedkar, president of the Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi and grandson of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, has warned that the Centre's proposed delimitation bill could deepen divisions between northern and southern states. Citing projected seat allocations of 120 for Uttar Pradesh and 54 for Tamil Nadu, he cautioned that differences between the two regions could have serious consequences for national unity.

His remarks come as the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government prepares to introduce the delimitation bill during Parliament's upcoming special session, beginning November 30. The proposed legislation has triggered concerns over the possible redistribution of Lok Sabha seats among states and its impact on their political representation.

Ambedkar said the government's decision to push the legislation during the special session could reopen existing tensions between northern and southern states. He argued that the country had made considerable efforts over the years to bridge regional differences, but disputes over policies and language dominance continued to emerge.

> **"After a lot of concerted and continuous efforts, we have succeeded in bridging the wedge between North and South states."**
> — Prakash Ambedkar, President, Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi

"After a lot of concerted and continuous efforts, we have succeeded in bridging the wedge between North and South states," Ambedkar said. He added that differences between the regions could become more pronounced if the delimitation proposal moved forward without addressing concerns raised by southern states.

He warned that the consequences could extend beyond political disagreements and create a lasting division between the two regions. According to him, the proposed exercise could bring regional tensions to the forefront and affect relations among states.

Railways complete 6.59-km tunnel breakthrough in Uttarakhand

RUDRAPRAYAG

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) on Friday achieved a major engineering milestone in the Rishikesh-Karnaprayag railway project by completing the breakthrough of Tunnel-14, measuring approximately 6.59 km, in Uttarakhand's Rudraprayag district. The achievement marks progress in the construction of the railway link, which is expected to improve connectivity across the state's mountainous regions.



A stretch of the Rishikesh-Karnaprayag rail line.

The excavation was carried out under challenging geological conditions, including loose soil beneath inhabited areas and unstable slopes. Engineers also had to ensure that blasting activities did not pose risks to nearby settlements. The project required specialised construction methods to maintain stability and safety while progressing through difficult underground terrain.

According to RVNL, one of the major challenges involved excavating a 110-metre stretch of the triple-track tunnel through loose soil at Portal-1, identified as T14P1. The section had an overburden of only 20 to 30 metres, meaning the amount of earth and rock above the tunnel was relatively limited. This increased the complexity of excavation, particularly as the tunnel passed beneath inhabited areas.

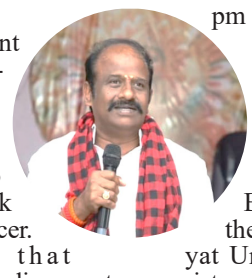
To overcome the difficult ground conditions, engineers adopted specialised techniques, including pre-excavation and multi-drifting. These methods helped strengthen the surrounding ground and allowed excavation to proceed in stages.

The breakthrough is an important step in the construction of the Rishikesh-Karnaprayag rail link, which is being developed to improve transport access to Uttarakhand's hill districts. The railway project involves extensive tunnelling through challenging Himalayan geology.

DMK MLA booked over threat complaint by woman officer

KALLAKURICHI

A case has been registered against Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) MLA Vasantham K Karthikeyan for allegedly harassing and threatening a senior woman government official over the phone in Kallakurichi district, Tamil Nadu, police said on Thursday. The legislator represents the Rishivandiyam constituency and has been booked under the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Women Act.



The complainant is an official attached to the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihoods Mission who also served as a Block Development Officer. She alleged that Karthikeyan spoke disrespectfully to her and threatened her during a phone call. Police said the call was made at 8.32 pm on October 18.

According to the complaint, the conversation concerned the appointment of a worker under the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme in the Tirukoilur Panchayat Union. The case was registered following the officer's complaint.

Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin defended the legislator, citing a worker's complaint and a counter-complaint previously filed by Karthikeyan. The complaint concerns an alleged intervention in a local appointment, and police registered the case under the state law on harassment of women. The allegations against the MLA have not been established in court.

HOTEL HYGIENE NOTICES

Gujarat issues notices to 175 hotels over poor hygiene

AHMEDABAD

Gujarat has issued notices to 175 hotels over unhygienic kitchens, dirty premises and unhealthy food during a statewide food safety campaign, Health Minister Praful Pansheriya said on Thursday. The action was taken under Operation Health, which covers hotels along major highways. The notices require the establishments to address the shortcomings identified by inspecting teams.



The drive checked kitchen hygiene, cleanliness and food quality.

The Food and Drugs Department inspected 691 hotels as part of the drive. Pansheriya said 516 other hotels were directed to make improvements. Suspicious food found at 14 establishments was destroyed, while samples were sent to a laboratory for testing. Further action will depend on the results.

The inspections focused on kitchen hygiene, cleanliness and the quality of food served to customers. The minister said the campaign was part of a statewide effort to monitor food safety at hotels located along major highway routes.

Information boards have also been made mandatory at ice cream parlours to prevent frozen desserts from being sold as ice cream, Pansheriya said. The measure is intended to help customers distinguish between products and ensure that businesses follow applicable requirements. The department will take action if samples fail safety tests.

Depending on laboratory findings, action against hotel operators could range from filing court cases to permanently sealing establishments, the minister said. The minister shared details of the operation in a post on X.

691	175	516	14
hotels inspected	served notices	told to improve	had food destroyed

Quick Read



TRAI expands 1601-series numbers to more sectors

NEW DELHI

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Friday issued a direction extending the use of the 1601-series to eligible entities in sectors other than BFSI and government, exclusively for making service and transactional voice calls to their customers. The series is allocated by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and under the second phase of implementation of 1601-series, entities will be eligible for the allocation of numbers subject to the specified eligibility criteria, the statement from the Ministry of Communications said.

Domestic savings anchor markets amid global turmoil

NEW DELHI

Foreign investors have bought Indian equities for 16 straight sessions, with record November inflows of about Rs 1.29 lakh crore, but domestic savings continue to act as the markets' anchor, a report said on Friday. The report from PL Capital said that even as foreign flows strongly rebound, foreign ownership of Indian equities remains at a 21-year low of about 14.7 per cent, suggesting that overseas investor positioning is still relatively light and domestic SIP contributions have stayed above Rs 32,000 crore a month for three straight months. FII inflows in November 2026 are at nearly double the previous monthly record seen in November 2020. The 16-session buying streak is the longest since 2023.



Centre revises investment rules for exempted PF trusts

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has notified a revised investment framework for provident fund accumulations managed by exempted establishments and allowed their trusts to invest between 5 per cent and 15 per cent of their portfolio in equities while introducing stricter safeguards for retirement savings.

The new rules that were issued through a Gazette notification replace the investment pattern notified in 2015 and will apply to establishments and employees exempted from the statutory Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) system. Investments in short-term debt instruments have been capped at 5 per cent, while asset-backed and other permitted investments can account for up to 5 per cent of the portfolio.

For equity exposure, the ministry has prescribed a 5-15 per cent range.

SEBI targets 5-day FPI onboarding

SEBI plans to reduce foreign investor onboarding to five business days through digital reforms, while reviewing disclosure rules

MUMBAI

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is planning to cut the time required for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to complete onboarding from several months to five business days, as part of efforts to simplify procedures and strengthen the competitiveness of the country's capital markets.

SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey announced the proposed changes while addressing the 17th Capital Markets Conference organised by ASSOCHAM on Friday. He said the regulator intends to use digital workflows and better system integration to speed up registration and make the process more efficient for overseas investors. The proposal is part of SEBI's wider effort to improve ease of access to India's financial markets.

Pandey also said SEBI has proposed withdrawing the additional disclosure framework currently applicable to FPIs. The move is intended to bring India's regulatory environment closer to international



> We are aiming to reduce foreign portfolio investor onboarding time to five business days through digital workflows and greater system integration."
>
> – Tuhin Kanta Pandey
> SEBI Chairman

standards. Over recent months, the regulator has been working to simplify compliance requirements and reduce procedural hurdles for foreign investors seeking access to domestic markets.

Under the SWAGAT-FI initiative, which stands for Single Window Automatic and Generalised Access for Trusted Foreign Investors, around 740 FPIs have already registered. These investors account for nearly 17 per cent of total FPI assets under custody. The initiative offers trusted, low-risk investors a single-window registration mechanism, simplified compliance requirements and longer intervals between Know Your Customer (KYC) reviews. The framework is aimed at making the process easier for investors considered to have a lower risk profile.

FPI reforms in a nutshell

- → Around 740 FPIs under SWAGAT-FI: nearly 17% of FPI assets under custody
- → Additional FPI disclosure requirements to go
- → A single penalty for identical compliance violations
- → IPO, SME IPO and broker compliance frameworks under review

SEBI is also reviewing the Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements (LODR) framework to remove repetitive disclosures that companies submit to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. In another proposed change, the regulator is considering introducing a single-penalty mechanism instead of allowing multiple stock exchanges to impose separate fines for the same compliance violation. The proposed measures indicate a broader attempt to reduce duplication, improve regulatory efficiency and make compliance less burdensome for market participants.

Nov 30 ITR deadline for transfer pricing cases

NEW DELHI



Important filing details

ASSESSMENT YEAR	2026-27
FINANCIAL YEAR	2025-26
ITR DEADLINE	November 30
FORM 3CEB	October 31
PROVISION	Section 92E

Taxpayers covered under transfer pricing regulations have until November 30 to file their Income Tax Returns (ITRs) for Assessment Year (AY) 2026-27, under the provisions of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

The deadline specifically applies to taxpayers required to furnish a transfer pricing report under Section 92E, along with certain partners of eligible firms and their spouses in cases where Section 5A provisions are applicable.

The November 30 deadline is separate from the regular filing deadlines for other categories of taxpayers.

It covers entities and individuals involved in reportable international transactions or specified domestic transactions during the financial year 2025-26.

Under Section 92E, eligible taxpayers must obtain an accountant's report in Form 3CEB. The report provides details of relevant transactions and certifies compliance with applicable transfer pricing regulations.

Tax experts have highlighted that submitting Form 3CEB does not complete the income tax filing requirement. Taxpayers who submitted the report by the earlier October 31 deadline must still file their ITRs by November 30.

Taxpayers are also advised to reconcile the information reported in Form 3CEB with their audited financial statements, books of accounts and tax computations before submitting their returns to avoid inconsistencies.

RBI flags low FTA benefits utilisation

MUMBAI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra said on Friday that Indian exporters, particularly micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), are not fully utilising the benefits available under the country's free trade agreements (FTAs).

Addressing the SME Finance & Investment Summit, Malhotra highlighted that only 20-30 per cent of eligible Indian exports are currently taking advantage of tariff concessions under FTAs.

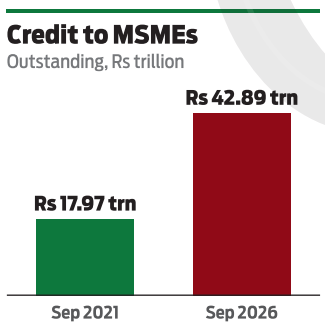
In comparison, partner countries exporting to India record utilisation levels of 60-70 per cent.

He said the gap represents a significant untapped opportunity for Indian businesses and urged MSMEs to expand beyond domestic markets by leveraging the country's growing network of trade agreements.

Malhotra encouraged businesses to understand the FTAs



Credit to MSMEs
Outstanding, Rs trillion



Figures: RBI Governor

relevant to their products and invest in quality, standards and certification to improve their access to international markets.

He also highlighted that India's expanding FTA ecosystem, which includes dedicated provisions for small and medium enterprises, offers opportunities to enter new markets, access quality inputs at lower costs and become part of global value chains.

According to the RBI Governor, labour-intensive MSME sectors could play an important role in ensuring that the benefits of international trade reach a wider section of businesses and workers.

Malhotra also discussed improvements in credit availability for the MSME sector. Bank lending to MSMEs increased 27 per cent year-on-year in the 12 months ended September 2026, compared with 19.4 per cent growth in overall bank credit.

Outstanding credit to MSMEs increased from Rs 17.97 trillion in September 2021 to Rs 42.89 trillion in September 2026, registering a compound annual growth rate of approximately 19 per cent.

POWER SECTOR OFFERS ₹200 LAKH CRORE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

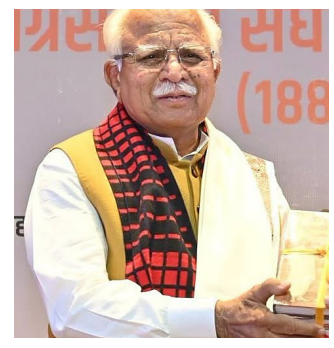
NEW DELHI

The country's power sector presents an investment opportunity of Rs 200 lakh crore over the next two decades, Union Power Minister Manohar Lal said on Friday, adding that all stakeholders have to work together to make this possible.

Addressing the two-day 'Power Ministers' Conference' here, the minister said, "we have to work together with the private sector to ensure that we accomplish this goal".

Manohar Lal emphasised the need for the Centre and States to work together to develop the power sector. He said that India has made significant progress in expanding generation capacity, integrating renewable energy and strengthening the national grid.

"The next phase of our journey requires us to move towards a more integrated approach to power sector planning, where generation, storage, transmission and distribution are planned as interconnected elements of a single system," said the minister.



Rs 200 lakh crore

investment opportunity in the power sector over the next two decades

The minister also stated that through collaboration with states and initiatives from the Ministry of Power, DISCOMs have achieved profitability after a prolonged period.

He said that "we need to ensure that the financial position of our DISCOMs is strengthened and necessary changes in policy, operations and regulation should facilitate the continuation of this turnaround".

Minister of State for Power, Shripad Yesso Naik, asked the participating states and UTs to share their experiences during the conference, including difficulties in implementation, regulatory issues and areas where further support or intervention from the Central Government may be required.

India well on track to achieve $1 trillion export target this fiscal: Goyal

NEW DELHI

India is well on track to achieve its $1 trillion export target, which had appeared unimaginable and aspirational when it was set in May this year, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Friday.

Gross fixed capital formation had increased by about 12 per cent, while exports had already reached $570 billion in the first seven months of the year. Credit growth of about 19 per cent was another positive indicator, particularly for credit markets, the minister said while addressing the 'India Debt Capital Market Summit 2026'.

He highlighted India's economic performance, sustained reforms, expanding trade opportunities and the growing importance of debt markets in



supporting the country's development ambitions.

The minister said India had delivered 7.8 per cent growth in the first quarter of the current financial year and expressed confidence that the country was on track to maintain its growth momentum in the second quarter as well.

Goyal said India had shown resilience amid two ongoing wars, an oil price shock, uncertainties surrounding tariffs and global trading opportunities, disruptions to sea routes and sporadic attacks affecting air travel. Despite these challenges, the world's trust in India's growth story had remained constant, and the country had delivered on that trust.

According to a statement, he said India had continued to reform processes, introduce policies, improve ease of doing business and maintain an open-door policy to engage with businesses and stakeholders.

The government is planning for the next 20 to 25 years, with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 firmly embedded in the system and the ambition of becoming a $30 trillion economy.

The minister further stated that India had continued to finalise free trade agreements (FTAs) and reform the GST system to make it simpler and reduce tax rates, thereby boosting consumption.

India pushes PNG adoption, assures no disruption in cooking fuel supply

NEW DELHI

Households across India can expect an uninterrupted supply of cooking fuel as the government pushes a phased transition from liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to Piped Natural Gas (PNG) in areas where PNG infrastructure is available, according to a statement on Friday.

The transition is being implemented under the Control Order issued by the government on March 24, 2026, and in line with directions of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB).

Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and City Gas Distribution (CGD) firms are coordinating to ensure a smooth migration for consumers.

The government said LPG supplies will continue during the 90-day transition period



Switching to PNG

- **Apply** for a PNG connection within 90 days of the notice
- **LPG continues** until the PNG connection is commissioned
- **No application:** LPG supply stops after 90 days

and until a consumer's PNG connection is commissioned, ensuring that households do not face any disruption in cooking fuel availability.

"Households across India can look forward to a smooth, uninterrupted cooking-fuel supply as the country transitions from LPG to Piped Natural Gas (PNG)," according to the official statement.

"LPG supply will continue during the 90-day transition period and until the PNG connection is commissioned, ensuring no gap for consumers," as per the statement.

According to the advisory, consumers residing in areas covered by PNG networks and who have received communication from their OMC and the concerned CGD company must apply for a PNG connection.

If an eligible consumer does not submit an application within 90 days of receiving the notice, LPG supply will be discontinued after the stipulated period.

Highlighting the benefits of PNG, the government said the fuel provides a continuous 24x7 supply directly through pipelines, eliminating the need for cylinder replacements.

INVESTMENT PUSH

Gujarat woos UP investors ahead of Vibrant Gujarat 2027

LUCKNOW

The Gujarat government on Friday organised a roadshow in Lucknow to strengthen investment ties with Uttar Pradesh and invite businesses from the state to participate in the upcoming Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2027.

The 11th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit will be held at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar from January 10 to 12, 2027. The summit will be organised under the theme 'Viksit Gujarat – Shaping Global Future'.

The Gujarat delegation was led by Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Minister Raman Solanki, accompanied by Alok Kumar Pandey, Secretary of Tribal Development and the roadshow's nodal officer. Uttar Pradesh Energy and Urban Development Minister Arvind Kumar Sharma attended the main programme.

Addressing the gathering,



Solanki highlighted the complementary strengths of Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh and emphasised the potential for greater cooperation between the two states. He identified

> Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh are not competitors but complementary growth engines contributing to India's development goals."
>
> — Arvind Kumar Sharma, UP Energy and Urban Development Minister

opportunities across electronics, defence, aerospace, food processing, textiles, information technology, logistics, advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, renewable energy, global trade and financial services.

Sharma said Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh should not be viewed as competitors, describing them instead as complementary growth engines contributing to India's development objectives.

The roadshow is part of Gujarat's efforts to attract investors and strengthen business partnerships ahead of the 2027 summit.

Quick Read

Report finds China enslaved Uyghur workers

WASHINGTON

A report commissioned by Anti-Slavery International concludes that Chinese authorities' use of forced labour against Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim communities constitutes enslavement, a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute. It finds that authorities treated detainees as their own property in internment camps and that labour transfers, now the main mechanism, often involve threats of detention and violence. The report links forced labour to torture, sexual violence and persecution. It concludes that the policies formed part of a widespread and systematic attack on civilians and calls for corporate action.

EU leaders divided over Ukraine loan

BRUSSELS

EU leaders ended their summit without agreeing on a proposed loan of 45 billion euros for Ukraine in 2027 or the bloc's budget for 2028 through 2034. Talks will resume at the December summit. European Council President Antonio Costa said 24 of 27 member states backed the plan. It would provide 20 billion euros for Ukraine's budget and 25 billion euros for military aid. Bulgaria reportedly agreed to contribute only to the civilian portion. Member states also differed over how much to spend on defence, farming, industry and regional development.

Powerful Thanks giving storm batters eastern US

WASHINGTON

A Thanksgiving storm swept across the eastern United States on Thursday, leaving more than 724,000 customers without power and disrupting holiday travel, CNN reported. Heavy rain flooded coastal communities, while parts of Missouri received more than a foot of snow. Virginia reported more than 200,000 outages. High winds damaged work platforms above the Commodore Barry Bridge, forcing officials to close the link between Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Flooding prompted rescues in New York City, where the storm postponed the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Hundreds of flights were delayed or cancelled.

Putin ready for Ukraine peace deal: Trump

The US President says Russian President Vladimir Putin wants an agreement to end the Ukraine war, raising hopes for negotiations.

WASHINGTON, DC

A National Park Service account used to pay for President Donald Trump's renovation projects in Washington received about $300 million from an unknown source in September, as per reports. The Trump administration has not said where the money came from or which projects it will fund.

The projects include the White House ballroom and work on the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool.

Tony Irish, a longtime Interior Department lawyer, drew attention to the jump in donations. The department had expected about $50 million in September, but the account received about $347 million that month. The September total was nearly seven times what the department had expected. The single donation made up most of the money



US President Donald Trump with Russian President Vladimir Putin (file photo)

the account received that month. Irish told the newspaper that without greater transparency, it was unclear whether donors were seeking government benefits.

Neither the White House nor the Interior Department agreed to name individual donors. An administration spokesperson defended Trump's efforts to improve the capital. The spokesperson praised Trump's record as a builder and said he had made Washington safer and more attractive.

The Washington Post reported that Apple, Nvidia, Google, Microsoft and defence contractor Lockheed Martin were among major contributors to Trump's renovation efforts in the capital. The identity of the $300 million donor remains undisclosed.

> **"My priority was to stop the loss of life and maintaining cordial relations with Putin could help negotiations."**
> — **Donald Trump,** US President

How the fund works

The National Park Service account was set up to collect donations for national parks. It used to receive less than $100 million a year and has taken in about $790 million since Trump returned to office in 2025. The Trust for the National Mall separately raises pledges for the White House ballroom.

JSFM chief accuses Pakistani agencies of rights violations

LONDON

Sohail Abro, chairman of the Jeay Sindh Freedom Movement (JSFM), has accused Pakistani security agencies of targeting political activists who speak about the rights of Sindh and its people.

According to the organisation, Abro alleged that activists face enforced disappearances, intimidation and pressure for opposing the alleged exploitation of the province's natural resources. He also raised concerns about reported extrajudicial killings and forced religious conversions.

In a statement, the JSFM chairman described these incidents as part of a wider pattern of action against people involved in peaceful political activities. The allegations have not been independently established.

The movement says its campaign focuses on protecting Sindh's resources and safeguarding local communities. It has called on international organisations and human rights institutions to examine these concerns and seek accountability.

JSFM has urged authorities to disclose the whereabouts of people reported missing and ensure their safety.



A JSFM video statement (file photo)

JSFM's appeal

The movement has appealed to the United Nations, Amnesty International, the European Parliament, the British Parliament and other human rights organisations. It wants information about missing activists, independent investigations and accountability.

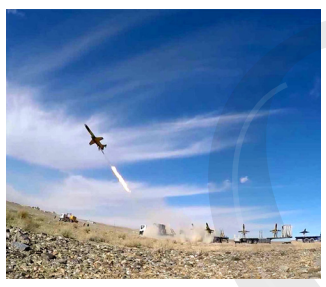
Bahrain condemns Houthi attacks on Saudi refinery

MANAMA

Bahrain has strongly condemned the continued Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia's civilian and economic infrastructure, particularly the oil refinery in the Jazan region. The attack reportedly killed one Nepali worker and injured several others.

In a statement posted on social media, Bahrain's Foreign Ministry described the attacks by the Iran-backed Houthi group as a serious threat to regional security and international trade.

The ministry stated that missile and drone attacks targeting energy facilities and commercial ports violated Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and international law. It warned that such incidents could affect global energy supplies, international trade and stability across the region.



A missile launch (file photo)

Bahrain reaffirmed its full support for Saudi Arabia and recognised the Kingdom's right to defend itself against attacks in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

The ministry also called on the United Nations Security Council to take decisive measures to stop the attacks and ensure accountability for those responsible.

The Jazan refinery attack occurred when a hostile aerial projectile struck the facility, causing a fire. Saudi Arabia's Energy Ministry confirmed that emergency teams brought the fire under control, while some refinery operations were temporarily suspended.

SERBIAN STUDENTS DELAY GOVT FORMATION UNTIL JAN

BELGRADE

Student-backed candidates won the October 25 election, ending longtime leader Aleksandar Vucic's rule after nearly two years of anti-corruption protests. The movement has yet to name a prime minister or cabinet.

Officials say a government may not take office until late December or early next year. The delay matters because Serbia faces several deadlines.

The country's only oil refinery faces the expiry of a United States Treasury operating licence on December 11. Parliament must approve the 2027 budget by December 20, while Serbia's gas contract with Russia ends on December 31.

Missing the budget deadline could lead to temporary financing from January. A delay in extending the gas agreement could create uncertainty over winter supplies. Serbia relies on Russia for about 80 per cent of its natural gas.

Student List deputy Oliver Toskovic said the movement has the structure of a government and plans to reduce the number of ministries from 25. He said leaders do not want to appoint a government hastily.

Parliamentary faction head Jovo Bakic said formation would not happen before the second half of December. Under the Constitution, the movement has until February 15 to form a government or face another election.

Deadlines ahead

- **DECEMBER 11** — US licence for the only oil refinery expires
- **DECEMBER 20** — Parliament must approve the 2027 budget
- **DECEMBER 31** — Gas contract with Russia ends
- **FEBRUARY 15** — Last day to form a government, or another election

Trump approves disaster aid for flood-hit Florida



US President Donald Trump

FLORIDA

US President Donald Trump has signed a major disaster declaration for Florida after weeks of severe storms and record-setting rainfall caused flooding. He announced the decision on Thursday during a Thanksgiving call with US military personnel from his Mar-a-Lago residence.

Federal assistance is available to residents in six counties: Brevard, Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie.

Support may include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, plus low-interest loans for uninsured property losses.

Federal funds will help local authorities remove debris and take emergency protective measures. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will coordinate recovery support. More areas may be considered after damage assessments.

Trump described the rainfall as record-setting and promised faster funding. He said residents faced urgent financial difficulties. He credited cooperation with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and the state's congressional delegation.

Congresswoman Lois Frankel welcomed the decision, saying families had lost homes, vehicles and personal belongings. Palm Beach County officials estimate around 53 million US dollars will be needed for recovery, including family assistance and cleanup costs.

Federal aid: details

WHERE	Brevard, Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties
AID	Grants for temporary housing and repairs; low-interest loans for uninsured losses
FIRST	Contact your insurer
APPLY	DisasterAssistance.gov, the FEMA app or 1-800-621-3362

Sara Duterte rejects resignation amid impeachment trial

MANILA

Philippine Vice President Sara Duterte said on Friday that resigning from her position was out of the question despite an ongoing impeachment process involving allegations of unexplained wealth.

Duterte, daughter of former President Rodrigo Duterte, made the statement during a press conference in Manila. The impeachment proceedings have brought renewed attention to her financial affairs and political future.



Philippine Vice President Sara Duterte

Philippine prosecutors have reportedly narrowed their case against the Vice President to one allegation involving unexplained wealth, dropping three other charges previously considered in the proceedings.

The allegations have placed Duterte under increased political scrutiny. However, she has rejected calls for her resignation and maintained her position as the country's second-highest elected official.

Duterte has also remained an important figure in Philippine politics. Opinion polls have identified her as a leading potential presidential contender for the 2028 national elections.

Her political position has attracted attention because of the continuing developments surrounding her family. Her father, Rodrigo Duterte, served as President from 2016 to 2022 and has faced international legal scrutiny over his administration's anti-drug campaign.

The impeachment process is expected to remain a significant political issue as lawmakers examine the allegations and determine the next steps. Duterte's response indicates that she intends to continue serving while the proceedings move forward.

Ra'am's Abbas to clarify Hamas stance amid coalition talks

JERUSALEM

Ra'am party chairman Mansour Abbas is expected to publicly identify Hamas as a terrorist organisation during a television interview scheduled for Saturday evening. The announcement could remove a major obstacle to his party joining a proposed coalition government led by Gadi Eisenkot.

According to Israeli media reports, Abbas will discuss the definition of Hamas in an interview with journalist Dana Weiss on Channel 12. Confirming the programme, Abbas said he would address the issue and urged media organisations to report his actual statements rather than comments attributed to him.

Abbas has previously condemned terrorism, including Hamas's October 7, 2023, attack on Israel.

However, he had avoided directly describing Hamas as a terrorist organisation, explaining that maintaining a channel of communication could help him influence developments and protect his family.

> **DID YOU KNOW?**
> Ra'am, also known as the United Arab List, became the first independent Arab party to join an Israeli governing coalition in 2021.

Eisenkot has made recognition of Hamas as a terrorist organisation a key condition for parties seeking to join his proposed coalition. A public declaration by Abbas could therefore improve Ra'am's chances of participating in the government.



Ra'am party chairman Mansour Abbas

CONSTRUCTION QUALITY UNDER CHECK

KARACHI BUILDING COLLAPSE DEATH TOLL RISES TO 7



Rescue workers search the rubble of a collapsed building

KARACHI

Rescue workers recovered three more bodies from the rubble on Friday, officials said. The building collapsed on Wednesday in Karachi's Administration Housing Society, near Baloch Colony.

Rescue 1122 teams continued searching for people who may still be trapped. A spokesperson said two teams remained at the site.

Officials said the number of people inside when the building collapsed was not yet known.

Police registered a first information report against the owners, alleging that poor-quality materials were used and construction exceeded the approved building plan.

The owners and builder were reported to have remained absconding since the incident.

The Sindh government removed the head of the Sindh Building Control Authority over alleged negligence.

Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah ordered action against officials suspected of allowing unauthorised construction.

Authorities also sealed 14 other under-construction buildings in the housing society, saying they were illegal and would be demolished.

The incident has renewed concerns about building safety and enforcement of construction rules in Karachi.

Karachi Metropolitan Corporation data shows that more than 45 collapses involving illegal or severely damaged buildings have occurred in the city over two decades.

At least 160 people have died in these incidents.

7	14	45+	160+
dead so far	other buildings sealed	collapses in two decades	killed in them

Blundell, Phillips lift New Zealand against India

Tom Blundell and Glenn Phillips took New Zealand to 246 for five after India struck three times in 16 balls.

CHRISTCHURCH

Blundell was unbeaten on 53 and Phillips on 36 at stumps on Friday, the opening day of the second and final Test at Hagley Oval. They added 62 for the sixth wicket after India had reduced New Zealand from 110 for one to 110 for four without conceding a run.

India captain Shubman Gill chose to bowl after winning the toss, hoping to use moisture in the pitch after two days affected by rain. New Zealand reached 77 for one at lunch after debutant Gurnoor Brar dismissed Devon Conway for 31 with the last ball of the morning session.

Latham had earlier been dropped by K.L. Rahul at second slip on 29 off Akash Deep. The New Zealand captain went to lunch unbeaten on 42 runs.

Akash Deep removed captain Tom Latham for 59 and Rachin Ravindra for a duck in the second session. Between those wickets, Anshul Kamboj dismissed Henry Nicholls for 16. India took three wickets for 54 runs in 24 overs during the session.

Daryl Mitchell and Blundell added 74 for the fifth wicket before Washington Sundar dismissed Mitchell for 31. Blundell reached his half-century in the penultimate over, steering Jasprit Bumrah through point in his 50th Test.



INDIA'S BOWLING FIGURES

Akash Deep led India's attack with two wickets for 52 runs from 21 overs. Brar, Kamboj and Sundar took one wicket each. Bumrah gave away 37 runs from 19 overs without taking a wicket. India took the second new ball as soon as it was available, but Akash and Bumrah went wicketless in four overs with it before stumps.

Rohit Sharma to lead Mumbai Indians

Mumbai Indians have appointed Rohit Sharma as captain for IPL 2027, bringing back their five-time title-winning leader ahead of the franchise's landmark 20th season celebration next year.

MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians on Friday announced that Rohit Sharma will captain the franchise in the 2027 Indian Premier League (IPL) season, as the five-time champions prepare to celebrate their landmark 20th season.

The announcement marks the beginning of a new chapter for the franchise, with one of its most successful and popular leaders returning to the captaincy. Rohit has been closely associated with Mumbai Indians since joining the team in 2011 and has played a significant role in establishing its winning culture.

Under his leadership, Mumbai Indians secured five IPL titles, making him one of the most successful captains in the tournament's history. His ability to guide the team through challenging situations, nurture young players and build strong relationships within the squad has made him an integral part of the franchise.

The franchise said Rohit's connection with its supporters, popularly known as the Paltan, has remained a defining part of his journey with the team. His return to leadership is expected to generate excitement among fans ahead of the upcoming season.

Mumbai Indians co-owner Nita Ambani expressed happiness over the decision, recalling Rohit's journey with the franchise since 2011.

"We bid for Rohit in 2011, and from that moment, he became part of our Mumbai Indians family," Nita Ambani said.

She also described his development from a young cricketer into a champion, leader and family man as a privilege to witness.

Welcoming his return, Ambani said she hoped the new chapter would bring more memorable moments for Rohit, the team and its millions of supporters.

The franchise will now look towards its 20th season with Rohit once again leading the Blue and Gold.



ROHIT AND MUMBAI INDIANS

2011 joined the franchise
5 IPL titles as captain: 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2020
2027 captain again, in the franchise's 20th season

Australia suffer record low against England

BRISBANE

Australia suffered a major batting collapse against England on Friday, recording their lowest-ever all-out total in a home T20 International during the third match at the Gabba.

The hosts were bowled out for just 108 in their innings after England fast bowler Jamie Overton delivered a devastating performance, claiming his maiden international five-wicket haul. His figures of 5-12 in four overs played a crucial role in dismantling Australia's batting line-up.

The total became Australia's lowest all-out score in a home T20I, surpassing their previous record of 111 against New Zealand in Sydney during their unsuccessful T20 World Cup title defence in 2022. However, their overall lowest T20I total remains 62, recorded against Bangladesh in Mirpur in August 2021.

Series debutant wicket-keeper-batter Sam Harper was Australia's highest scorer, contributing 26 runs from 14 deliveries. Opener Jake Fraser-McGurk provided an aggressive start with 22 off 11 balls. However, they were the only Australian batters to cross the 20-run mark, while five players were dismissed for single-digit scores.

Overton struck during the middle overs, removing Fraser-McGurk, Nikhil Chaudhary, Tim David, Joel Davies and Ben Dwarshuis to leave Australia struggling to build a competitive total.

England comfortably chased the revised DLS target of 93 after rain reduced their innings to 16 overs. Jordan Cox remained unbeaten on 33 from 14 balls, while opener Aneurin Donald scored 32 from just 13 deliveries.

Australia's Riley Meredith claimed three wickets for 30 runs, but his efforts could not prevent England from securing victory. With this result, England moved ahead 2-1 in the five-match series.



KEY PERFORMANCE

Jamie Overton: 5 wickets for 12 runs.
Sam Harper: 26 runs off 14 balls.
Jordan Cox: 33 not out off 14 balls.

AUSTRALIA'S LOWEST T20I TOTALS

108 all out Against England, Gabba, 2026.
111 all out Against New Zealand, Sydney, 2022.
62 all out Against Bangladesh, Mirpur, 2021.

MARQUEZ'S FINAL RIDE

Marc Marquez announces MotoGP retirement



PARIS

Eight-time MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez announced on Friday that he will retire after the 2026 season finale, bringing an end to his illustrious motorcycle racing career at the Valencia Grand Prix.

The 33-year-old Spaniard made the announcement days after securing his record-equalling eighth premier-class championship in Portugal, drawing level with legendary Italian rider Giacomo Agostini. His retirement marks the conclusion of an extraordinary journey that has seen him establish himself among the most successful riders in the history of the sport.

Marquez confirmed his decision through a video recorded inside the Ducati garage in Valencia, where he will compete in his final professional race this weekend.

"Thank you to everyone who's been part of the journey. I hope you've enjoyed it as much as I have. We made history."
— Marc Marquez

"Thank you to everyone who's been part of the journey. I hope you've enjoyed it as much as I have. This will be my last race in MotoGP. We made history," Marquez said.

The Spaniard began his most successful championship journey with Honda, winning six MotoGP titles before switching to Ducati. He later joined the Italian manufacturer and extended his contract until 2028 in June, making Friday's announcement unexpected.

Marquez had been anticipated to lead MotoGP into its new 850cc era. However, the arrival of compatriot Pedro Acosta at the factory Ducati team had already been viewed as a symbolic changing of the guard.

Emotions ran high inside the Ducati garage and among spectators at the Circuit Ricardo Tormo following the announcement. Jorge Martin, Marquez's main rival for the 2026 championship, also appeared stunned.

Ducati officially confirmed the development, stating that Valencia would be Marquez's final appearance as a professional rider and with the Ducati Lenovo team.

"Marc Marquez has decided to retire from MotoGP, and the 2026 Valencia Grand Prix will be his final race as a professional rider and with the Ducati Lenovo team."

ATP plans unified commercial rights strategy



ATP partnership revenue reached $110 million in 2026, but officials believe unified commercial rights could unlock further financial opportunities.

LONDON

The ATP has recorded a historic increase in partnership revenue, crossing the $100 million mark for the first time in 2026, but the organisation believes greater commercial opportunities remain untapped.

The men's professional tennis governing body generated $110 million in partnership revenue this year, representing a 49 per cent increase compared with the previous year. The figure also marks a significant rise from the $35.4 million recorded in 2022, highlighting the growth of the tour's commercial business.

However, ATP chief business officer Daniele Sano believes the organisation needs to address the fragmented structure of tennis' commercial rights to unlock further revenue opportunities.

"We leave on the table a lot of money," Sano said, pointing to the financial potential that remains untapped because different organisations control various commercial aspects of the sport.

Earlier this month, the ATP approved the creation of ATP Ventures, a new entity designed to consolidate the tour's different media, data and sponsorship rights arrangements from the beginning of 2028.

Sano said the initiative would strengthen the organisation's position in the commercial market by allowing it to present a unified approach to potential partners.

"This will allow us to be stronger in the market and speak in one voice rather than three," he said.

Unlike sports such as Formula One, tennis does not have a single commercial rights holder. The ATP and WTA independently operate the men's and women's professional tours, while World Tennis oversees the sport globally and manages team competitions, including the Davis Cup.

The four Grand Slam tournaments also operate independently, adding another layer to the sport's fragmented commercial structure.

Spence ruled out of England Women A tour of India

PUNE

England Women A have lost Surrey wicketkeeper-batter Jemima Spence to a left knee injury on the eve of their all-format series in India, with wicketkeeper-batter Ellie Threlkeld named as her replacement for the T20 leg.

"Jemima injured her left knee during a fielding session and following a scan it was confirmed that she would be unable to take any further part in the tour," the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said in an injury update on Friday.

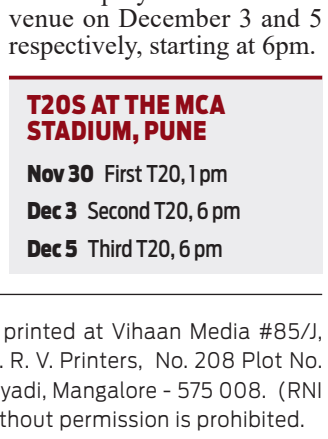
Jemima has since flown back home. Confirming her replacement, the ECB added, "Lancashire's Ellie Threlkeld has been called up to the T20 portion of the tour and joins the squad earlier than planned."

Surrey also confirmed her rehabilitation would be handled in-house. "Spence will be welcomed back to the Kia Oval where Surrey's medical team will oversee her recovery," it said.

Ellie was part of the England squad for the historic Lord's Test against India in July, though she did not feature in the playing XI. By the age of nine, Ellie was turning out for Liverpool's football set-up and Lancashire's cricket teams, and kept both going until she turned 18.

Forced to choose then, she picked cricket. Football did not disappear entirely, as she spent four years with Wigan Athletic while completing a psychology degree at university. She signed her first professional contract with Lancashire in 2020 and has led her side as club captain ever since, including guiding them to a domestic double in 2025.

Ellie is a qualified sport psychologist and works with Lancashire's boys' cricket programme and Sale Sharks Women. The England Women A tour of India gets under way with the first T20 at the Maharashtra Cricket Association (MCA) Stadium in Pune on November 30, with a 1pm start. The remaining two T20s will be played at the same venue on December 3 and 5 respectively, starting at 6pm.



T20S AT THE MCA STADIUM, PUNE

Nov 30 First T20, 1 pm
Dec 3 Second T20, 6 pm
Dec 5 Third T20, 6 pm

Kadhe, Banthia qualify for Aus Open 2027

CHENGDU

The Indian pair Arjun Kadhe and Siddhant Banthia booked their spots in the upcoming Australian Open 2027 after winning the Asia-Pacific Wildcard Play-Off here on Friday. The second-seeded Indians Kadhe and Banthia defeated top seeds Kaito Uesugi and Takeru Yuzuki 7-6(4) 6-4 to earn the 2027 Australian Open Wildcard.

With the win, Banthia secured himself a Grand Slam debut, while Kadhe will be making his debut at the Australian Open.

While Kadhe appeared in each of the four Grand Slam tournaments at the junior level, he was part of the Wimbledon and US Open in 2025, where he suffered a first round exit. He won his first ITF singles title in November 2017 at Thu Dau Mot City in Vietnam.

Banthia, meanwhile, has a career-high ATP doubles ranking of world No. 115 achieved on September 21, 2026. He is the current No. 4 Indian doubles player.

In China this week, two singles and two doubles wildcards were to be determined when the AO 2027 Asia-Pacific Wildcard Play-off concludes in Chengdu. Notably, Banthia, Kadhe and Ramanathan were the only Indians in the fray at this tournament



across both genders, singles and doubles.

The action began on November 23 at the Sichuan International Tennis Centre, where Japan's Sho Shimabukuro is the highest-ranked entrant in either the men's or women's singles draws of 16 players.

The highest-ranked doubles player in the men's event was Japan's Uesugi, currently 84th in the ATP doubles rankings, teaming with Yuzuki.

City Hilights (English Daily) published by P. Sunil Kumar (Publisher) on behalf of Immaculate Broadcasting Consortium World News (P) Ltd., No. 18, JRV Court, Queens's Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and printed at Vihaan Media #85/J, Industrial suburb 2nd stage, Yeshwantpur Extension,Bangalore-560022, Printed at No-7/2 plot no.CA-3/1,28(p)&29(p) Kapanoor 2nd Stage Industrial Area Kapnoor Village Kalaburagi -585104. Printed at S. J. R. V. Printers, No. 208 Plot No. B-019 KSSIDC Industrial Area, Irfan Ahamed Khan Pathan, 4th Main Road Gamanagatti, Hubballi-Dharwad – 580025. and Elegant Offset Printers Pvt. Ltd. No. 5-61/1, Shed No. M-6, Yeyyadi Industrial Estate, Yeyyadi, Mangalore - 575 008. (RNI No: KARENG / 2015 / 63243), Regd. No. BGGPO-2581/2017-2019 Posted at Bengaluru PSO-560026 Email - cityhilights.news@gmail.com Phone: 080-41209042. Copyright. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.