

NITI Aayog
clears
4,100
grievances

P12

Bangkok
floods force
thousands
into shelters

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Vithya Ramraj
Breaks Usha's
42-Year
Record

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CM seeks flexibility in Coastal Zone Plan, Western Ghats ESA

Karnataka has sought survey-number-wise verification of CZMP maps using revenue records, the latest satellite imagery and ground checks.

NEW DELHI

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday urged the Centre to accommodate the state's unique ecological, livelihood and developmental needs while revising the Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) and notifying the Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA).

In a letter to Union Environment and Forests Minister Bhupender Yadav, Shivakumar highlighted representations from fishing communities, coastal residents and local bodies about inaccuracies in the approved CZMP.

These include errors in CRZ classification, survey boundaries, existing settlements, fishing infrastructure and traditional livelihood areas in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada districts.

Thousands of families in these areas depend on traditional fishing, allied activities, coastal agriculture and long-established settlements, the Chief Minister noted.

Karnataka has sought survey-number-wise verification of CZMP maps using revenue records, the latest satellite imagery and ground checks. It has also sought recognition for fish landing centres, boat repair yards, net-mending zones and processing facilities, along with permission for the repair and

Karnataka is not seeking dilution of safeguards for mangroves, sand dunes or turtle nesting sites, but an accurate mapping and a balanced approach that protects both the environment and traditional livelihoods.

-DK Shivakumar, CM

improvement of long-standing coastal settlements and community structures within the CRZ framework.

The state further requested suitable provisions for traditional land-use systems and community-oriented tourism under environmental safeguards, citing Goa's experience as evidence that state-specific needs can be accommodated without weakening environmental protections.

On the Western Ghats ESA, Shivakumar reiterated concerns over the inclusion of agricultural lands, plantations and habitations under the Kasturirangan Report. He proposed physical verification and ground-truthing before finalisation and said similar representations had been made to the Prime Minister.

Clarifying that Karnataka is not seeking dilution of safeguards for mangroves, sand dunes or turtle nesting sites, Shivakumar stressed the need for accurate mapping and a balanced approach that protects both the environment and traditional livelihoods.

DKS meets Union ministers, seeks expedition of key infra projects in state



NEW DELHI: Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has urged the Centre to expedite clearances for Bengaluru infrastructure projects and key irrigation and water schemes, including the ₹16,745-crore Mekedatu project. In separate meetings with Union ministers Rajnath Singh and CR Patil in New Delhi, he sought Defence land approvals for roads, a public park and the Bengaluru Urban Vehicular Twin Tunnel Project, besides early decisions on several water-resource matters. He also sought Central assistance and faster clearances for the Upper Bhadra Project, the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II award and other irrigation and water-management schemes. He also sought Central assistance for the Upper Bhadra Project, whose revised cost estimate of ₹21,167.93 crore was appraised at the Ministry of Jal Shakti's Advisory Committee meeting on March 20. The state has also sought a review of its proposed share and asked the NWDA to ensure an equitable allocation comparable with that proposed for other beneficiary States, taking into account Karnataka's requirements and interests in the Krishna and Cauvery basins.

Karnataka's proposal include:

Granular mapping errors: Stakeholders reported extensive errors related to survey boundaries, traditional livelihood localities, and existing human settlements. The state wants a survey-number-wise physical verification using GIS data, authentic revenue records, and recent satellite imagery rather than relying on faulty base maps.

Infra recognition: Karnataka has requested formal recognition and protection for essential fishing infrastructure within the Coastal Regulation Zone framework. This includes fish landing centers, boat repair yards, net-mending zones, and processing units.

Settlement protection: The state wants clear provisions for repair, improvement, and reconstruction of long-standing coastal community settlements without bureaucratic delays.

Balanced environmental approach: Shivakumar clarified that Karnataka is not seeking to dilute protections for highly sensitive ecosystems like mangroves, sand dunes, or turtle-nesting sites. Instead, it seeks to safeguard traditional livelihoods and promote community-oriented tourism, drawing a parallel to flexible frameworks already permitted in Goa.

Cong CWC meet today to chalk out strategy for CEC's ouster

NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has called a meeting of the party's Working Committee on Tuesday to discuss the reported differences within the Election Commission over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and challenge the party's strategy for seeking chief election commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's removal.

He said the Election Commissioners had raised concerns over the SIR process, changes relating to Form 6 for enrolment of new voters, additions and deletions from electoral rolls, and centralised control of the electoral-roll database.

Calling the issue "very serious", Kharge said it concerned what he described as the survival of democracy and needed to be taken up on priority.

"I have called a Working Committee meeting for tomorrow, where we will dis-



cuss the issue and all the Working Committee members will give their suggestions," he told reporters.

"We are going to fight this seriously. This issue concerns the entire country, the existence of our democracy and the survival of our country. That is why we are very serious about this issue."

Kharge also alleged that the Election Commission was acting in line with the BJP's interests, citing a claim involving the CEC and a former Kerala chief secretary. He said Kumar should resign and that the Congress would pursue action for his removal.

We are going to fight this seriously. This issue concerns the entire country, the existence of our democracy and the survival of our country. That is why we are very serious about this issue.

-Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress president

Cong demands annulment of 2024 Varanasi LS poll result

Lucknow: Congress leaders and workers on Monday held a demonstration in Varanasi, the Lok Sabha constituency of PM Narendra Modi, against alleged 'irregularities' in the 2024 Varanasi LS election and allegations of 'vote theft' and demanded annulment of the Varanasi LS poll. Hundreds of Congress workers led by district unit president Rajeshwar Singh Patel and Mahanagar Congress Committee chief Raghavendra Chaube also demanded 're-election' and an impartial, independent probe into the allegation pertaining to the election process in Varanasi. "Large scale irregularities had taken place in the Varanasi LS poll in 2024...we demand cancellation of the election and re-poll besides a fair probe into the same," Patel said.

BJP veteran Awadhesh Singh steps down as Bihar legislative council chairman

PATNA: Senior BJP leader Awadhesh Narayan Singh on Monday resigned from the post of Chairman of Bihar Legislative Council, in what is said to be part of power-sharing arrangements between his party and ally JD(U), an official said. Singh, who was appointed to the post in June, 2024, has tendered his resignation, said Shiv Gopal Mishra, the secretary of the Vidhan Parishad secretariat. The BJP leader had succeeded JD(U)'s Devesh Chandra Thakur, who vacated the post upon getting elected to the Lok Sabha from Sitamarhi. A multiple-term MLC from Gaya Graduates seat, Singh was first elected as chairman of the Upper House in 2012 and he held the post till 2017. Speculations are rife that with eighth-term BJP MLA Prem Kumar as the assembly Speaker, the coalition would now back JD(U) leader Ram Bachan Rai, currently the Deputy Chairman of the legislative council, for the top post.

YUVA SAMBRAMA BEGINS



Urban Development and Mysuru District In-charge Minister Dr Yatindra Siddaramaiah inaugurates Yuvva Sambrama as part of Mysuru Dasara 2026 at Manasa Gangotri Open Air Theatre in Mysuru on Monday. Playback singer Vijay Prakash and actor Sapthami Gowda look on. ➤ Hampa Nagaraju

K'taka HC orders Rs 2.82 cr to man paralysed by tree fall

BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has awarded Rs 2.82 crore compensation to a Bengaluru resident who had to live with paraplegia, unable to move both the upper and the lower limbs, caused by the falling of the branch of the Gulmohar tree in 2024.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj passed this order invoking the public law remedy, observing that there is material distinction between an unexpected accident and a known danger which remains unaddressed.

The petitioner G Chandan, a

resident of Nagarabhavi, worked at a private company. On March 7, 2024, he was walking on the road when at around 10 am, the branch of the tree, situated inside the compound of Good Shepherd Convent on Convent Road here.

Partly allowing his petition, originally seeking Rs 5 crore compensation, the court has directed the Commissioner, BBMP (now GBA), and the DCF, Forest Unit, BBMP to pay Rs 2.77 crore (after adjusting Rs 5 lakh already paid by the civic agency) 12 weeks along with 6 % interest.

It was submitted on behalf of the petitioner that he was 39 years as on the date of the incident and incurred Rs 26.82 lakh towards medical expenses. Apart from BBMP (Rs 5 lakh), the school management had paid Rs 3 lakh and undertook to fulfil its earlier promise of providing free education to the petitioner's daughter until she passes class 12. The disability certificate, issued by Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital, assessed the disability at 85%. The court conceded the petitioner's contention that his functional disability is 100%

UPI CHARGES FROM OCT 15?

SC refuses to stay MDR on UPI payments above Rs 2,000

...seeks Centre's affidavit

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday sought a detailed affidavit from the Union government explaining the basis for levying charges on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions above Rs 2,000 from individuals to merchants, while refusing to stay the decision.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana issued notice to the Centre, RBI and others on a writ petition filed by advocate Anjan Datta

challenging the Gazette notifications issued by the Ministry of Finance on September 14 and 15 that announced charges on commercial UPI transactions exceeding Rs 2,000.

Additional Solicitor General N Venkataraman, appearing for the Centre, submitted that the charges would take effect only from October 15. He said 96 per cent of transactions would remain unaffected and that charges for essential services had been capped at Rs 5.

"It is neither a tax nor a fee," the ASG stated, describing it as a settlement fee between payment aggregators and banks to meet the costs of electronic transactions and



keep the ecosystem efficient. "We need these facts on affidavit. It's more of a technical issue."

Justice Bagchi sought to know the executive basis for the charge if it was neither a tax nor a fee, asking, "Is it tax or a fee? If not a fee, what is the executive basis for making this expropriation? What is the service?" The ASG clarified that the government was not taking a single rupee and that

the arrangement was not an expropriation.

Justice Bagchi also referred to Section 269SU of the Income Tax Act, which mandated certain merchants to provide electronic payment facilities, and questioned the legal character and incidence of the receipt under the new framework.

When the bench issued notice to the Centre, the Reserve Bank of India and the National Payments Corporation of India, the petitioner's counsel sought a stay, contending that the move could lead to an increase in black money transactions. The court, however, declined to grant interim relief.

The petition, filed against the

Union Government, RBI, NPCI and the UPI & Services Steering Committee, contends that businesses may pass on the additional costs to consumers.

Under the new framework, a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) of 0.4% will apply to specified person-to-merchant UPI transactions above Rs 2,000, with a maximum charge of Rs 300 for transactions of Rs 75,000 or more. Essential and thin-margin sectors such as railways, telecommunications, insurance, fuel and agricultural inputs will attract a flat Rs 5 MDR. Capital market transactions will face a lower rate of 0.02%, capped at Rs 300.

Quick Read



Suburban rail switches to railway signalling system

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru's suburban rail project has shifted from the proposed metro-style Communication-Based Train Control system to the railway-oriented European Train Control System (ETCS) Level 2. K-RIDE has secured approval to use ETCS Level 2 across all four corridors, citing its suitability for longer routes and fewer stations. The system monitors train speed, location and movement authority, with onboard computers capable of triggering automatic braking when required. A K-RIDE official said replacing CBTC with ETCS Level 2 would support global practices in railway signalling safety and operational efficiency. Construction is progressing on the 27-km Mallige Corridor and 46-km Kanaka Corridor, while services on the Mallige route are expected by 2028.



Manual traffic signals add to cops' woes

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Traffic police personnel in Bengaluru are facing difficulties as they are required to operate traffic signals manually for extended periods. Karnataka State Police Complaints Authority member Mohan Kumar Danappa has written to the Director General and Inspector General of Police, urging authorities to ensure signals function automatically and renew annual maintenance contracts (AMCs). He said constables working for nearly eight hours under heat, dust and pollution face health and workplace challenges, including inadequate access to drinking water. While Bengaluru Additional Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Karthik Reddy said all signals in the city are functioning and the AMC is in force, Danappa said complaints of defunct signals had been received from areas including Kengeri and Sahakaranagar.



Case timeline

- 1 Nearly 1.5 months: Prashanth remained absconding
- 2 Lookout notice: Issued against the accused
- 3 3.30 am: Detained at Bengaluru airport
- 4 Travel route: Azerbaijan → Sharjah → Bengaluru

“We have taken Prashanth into custody and will produce him before the court for further interrogation.” Official

SC to hear review plea in ISKCON temple case

The apex court will revisit a dispute between two ISKCON entities over the Bengaluru temple's ownership.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a review plea challenging its 2025 verdict on ownership of the Hare Krishna temple in Bengaluru.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joyimalya Bagchi and V Mohana on Monday said the review plea, along with other interim applications, would be listed before a bench a week after October 5.

The plea was mentioned by senior advocate Shyam Divan and advocate Kartik Seth, appearing for ISKCON Mumbai. They sought listing of the review petition before a bench, following an earlier direction for its consideration.

The dispute concerns control and ownership of the



“After having carefully gone through the review petitions, the judgment under review and the material annexed therewith, I am satisfied there is no error apparent on the face of record.”

- JUSTICE A G MASIH

Hare Krishna temple and educational complex in Bengaluru. On May 16, 2025, the Supreme Court had set aside

a Karnataka High Court order and held that the property belonged to ISKCON Bangalore.

The top court had noted that the trial court had found no evidence supporting ISKCON Mumbai's claim of possession of the disputed Schedule 'A' property. The subsequent review proceedings resulted in a split

LEGAL DISPUTE

ISKCON BANGALORE

Karnataka-registered society; says it has independently managed the temple for decades.

VS

ISKCON MUMBAI

Has claimed rights over the property and argued that ISKCON Bangalore functioned as its branch.

Minister questions ECI functioning, seeks answers from CEC

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka Minister Ajay Dharam Singh has questioned the Election Commission's decision-making process amid reported differences within the poll panel.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, Singh alleged that decisions were being taken unilaterally by Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and sought answers from him. Singh also said the Congress was not alone in raising concerns and claimed that Opposition parties were united on the issue.

The minister referred to reports that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had recorded objections on several matters over the past 10 months. An investigation reported at least 14 such objections concerning issues including electoral



rolls, voter registration and the poll panel's technology systems.

“Because when there's no consensus amongst them, when there's an Election Commission consisting of three individuals, and out of which two individuals do not even know, and they've written about 14 letters in the last 10 months... What does this go to show?” Singh said.

He alleged that the reported objections raised questions about unilateral decision-making

and said the Chief Election Commissioner should respond.

“That there are unilateral decisions being taken by Gyanesh Kumar, and he has to answer because this is a democratic process.

You cannot act unilaterally,” Singh said.

The Election Commission, however, has said differing views and observations are part of institutional deliberations and maintained that its key decisions over the period were unanimous. Its response followed reports about the 14 objections.

Singh said the poll panel was accountable to the people and should address the questions being raised about its functioning.

The controversy comes amid the ongoing debate over the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls.

ED attaches assets worth ₹442 crore in RummyCulture case

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Enforcement Directorate has provisionally attached properties worth ₹442.35 crore in its money laundering probe linked to online gaming operations.

The ED's Bengaluru Zonal Office attached movable and immovable properties worth around ₹442.35 crore under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the RummyCulture app case involving Gameskraft Technologies Pvt. Ltd. and associated entities.

The attachment was made through a Provisional Attachment Order issued on September 25 under Section 5(1) of the PMLA.

According to the agency, the attached assets include fixed deposits, commercial shops, a villa and several residential properties. These properties are held in the

names of family members, private family trusts and entities associated with shareholders of Gameskraft Technologies.

The ED initiated the money laundering investigation following multiple FIRs registered by law enforcement agencies in Telangana in connection with alleged cheating offences under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. The offences are listed as scheduled offences under the PMLA.

The agency had earlier conducted searches at Gameskraft Technologies' offices and the residential premises of its directors and key employees between May 7 and 14, and again on June 20 and 21.

During the searches, officials seized documents, digital devices and electronic records which, according to the ED, provided crucial evidence for the investigation.

The probe has so far found



that Gameskraft Technologies and RummyTime Technologies operated online real-money gaming platforms featuring rummy games and tournaments. The platforms operated under brands including RummyCulture, RummyPrime, Playship and RummyTime.

According to the ED, the platforms had around three crore users across the country. The investigation into the alleged money laundering and related offences is continuing.

Case timeline

- 2009 Trial court ruled in favour of ISKCON Bangalore
- 2011 High Court reversed the trial court ruling
- MAY 16, 2025 SC ruled in favour of ISKCON Bangalore
- NOV 2025 Review bench delivered split verdict
- MONDAY SC agreed to list review plea
- NEXT HEARING A week after October 5

verdict in November 2025. Justice J K Maheshwari, who has since retired, found that ISKCON Mumbai had made out a case for review, while Justice A G Masih found no apparent error in the earlier judgment and dismissed the review petitions.

With the judges differing, the matter was placed before the Chief Justice for directions.

Lorry catches fire after collision with biker

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A two-wheeler rider was injured and hospitalised after his bike collided with a lorry on Kanakapura Main Road, opposite Adigas Hotel, on Monday afternoon.

The accident occurred around 12.30 pm, following which the front portion of the lorry suddenly caught fire, sending thick smoke into the air and briefly disrupting traffic on the busy stretch.

The injured rider was rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment, Talaghattapura traffic police said. The lorry driver sustained minor injuries and managed to escape from the spot, police added.

Fire and Emergency Services personnel reached the location soon after the incident and brought the blaze under control. Traffic police cordoned off the area to facilitate firefighting and the removal of the damaged vehicles.

Traffic movement was affected for a short while as vehicles were diverted to alternative routes. Normal traffic flow was restored after clearance operations were completed.

Police said they are investigating the exact sequence of events that led to the collision and the subsequent fire. A senior traffic police officer said statements from witnesses were being collected and CCTV footage from the surrounding area was being examined.

The footage and witness accounts are expected to help police establish how the collision occurred and determine what caused the lorry's front section to catch fire.

No further details about the condition of the injured rider were immediately available.



Elephant tramples man to death near BM Kaval forest



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 60-year-old man was killed after an elephant entered a residential area near BM Kaval forest.

Nagaraj was walking with his daughter around 5 am on Monday when the elephant attacked him at Malhar Avenue, a road in a layout off Mysuru Road, about 2 km from Rajarajeshwari Medical College.

The elephant is suspected to have strayed from Bannerghatta forest and was moving towards BM Kaval forest when it entered the locality. It reportedly broke through a compound wall at Malhar Avenue before the fatal incident.

Following the attack, the elephant remained inside the BM Kaval forest. CCTV footage from the area showed the animal running through the locality.

Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Ramalinga Reddy visited the hospital and expressed condolences to the bereaved family. He announced compensation of Rs 20 lakh to the family.

“Forest staffers had tracked the elephant till 1 am in the night and thought it would not enter the habitations. We will ramp up our vigilance further to ensure such incidents do not recur,” Reddy

A morning walk turned fatal when a stray elephant attacked a 60-year-old man near Mysuru Road.

said. The minister said around 100 forest personnel from Ramanagera, Bannerghatta and Bengaluru Urban divisions were coordinating efforts to track the elephant. Four kumki elephants, trained for rescue and capture operations, will be brought from Dubare camp by Tuesday morning, he said.

The Forest Department has advised residents in the affected area not to venture out during late evenings and early mornings until the elephant is rescued from BM Kaval forest.

Officials are monitoring the animal's movement and coordinating the rescue operation to prevent further incidents. Residents have also been urged to follow warnings issued by forest personnel and avoid approaching the elephant.

Key Highlights

- Victim: Nagaraj, 60
- Time: Around 5 am
- Location: Malhar Avenue, near BM Kaval forest
- Personnel: 100 forest staffers
- Kumki elephants: Four from Dubare
- Compensation: Rs 20 lakh

BMTC to equip 50 buses with ADAS for safety



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) will install Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS) technology in 50 buses as part of a pilot project aimed at improving passenger and road safety.

According to officials, the system will monitor driver alertness and behaviour while detecting potential hazards and issuing warnings in real time. BMTC has floated a tender for the 50-bus project, with the selected agency required to operate and maintain the complete system for two years from the Go-Live date.

The ADAS setup will include a road-facing camera, a driver-facing Driver Monitoring System camera and two side cameras. Sensors, an on-

The technology will monitor drivers and road conditions while providing real-time warnings to help reduce safety risks.

board controller, storage, software and connectivity will also form part of the system.

The driver-monitoring camera will detect drowsiness, distraction, mobile-phone use and smoking. The road-facing system will identify forward collision risks, lane departures and pedestrian collision risks, among other safety events.

A central backend and dashboard will allow BMTC officials to monitor safety events and access information generated by the systems installed in the buses. The technology will also support integration with BMTC's existing systems through APIs.

The corporation has proposed a rental model instead of purchasing the equipment. The selected bidder will provide the complete installation, software, connectivity, maintenance, repairs and technical support for an all-inclusive monthly rental.

BMTC had earlier seen similar technology installed in 10 buses in 2023 under a private company's corporate social responsibility initiative. Officials clarified that it was not a BMTC project. The corporation will assess the effectiveness of the new pilot before deciding on wider deployment.

ADAS features

- 50 buses: Pilot project
- Driver camera: Drowsiness and distraction
- Road camera: Collision and lane risks
- Side cameras: Areas along-side buses
- Alerts: Real-time driver warnings
- Dashboard: Central monitoring by BMTC

DRUG RACKET ARREST

Fake drug racket kingpin held at Bengaluru airport

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing a fake drug racket has arrested alleged kingpin Prashanth R Babu, who had been absconding for nearly one-and-a-half months.

Prashanth was detained by airport authorities at Kempe-

gowda International Airport around 3.30 am on Monday after arriving in Bengaluru from abroad. A lookout notice had already been issued against him, with airport authorities instructed to alert the SIT and take him into custody if he arrived at any airport.

The accused is suspected

to have arrived in Bengaluru from Sharjah after travelling from Azerbaijan, police said. An investigation team reached the airport soon after he was detained and took him into custody.

Prashanth was subsequently brought in for questioning as part of the investigation into the racket. Police are

probing his alleged role in the network and his links with others involved in the case.

A senior officer said the accused would be produced before a court and subsequently taken into custody for further interrogation. Investigators are expected to question him about the procurement, movement and

distribution of the suspected fake drugs and identify other persons connected with the racket.

The arrest comes as the SIT continues its investigation into the case following the seizure of narcotics and e-cigarettes in an earlier operation. Officials are also examining the accused's

movements and possible overseas links.

Police said further details would emerge after the interrogation and investigation progresses.

NEXT STEP

- Court production and further interrogation

Sewage and waste disposal issues were also discussed. Officials were directed to identify illegal garbage dumping locations and take appropriate action. Representatives from BWSSB, KRIDL, the stormwater drain department, traffic police and other departments attended the meeting.

Quick Read



Karnataka secures 85 lakh tonnes of extra coal

Coal in numbers

hydel output now (normally -40 MU)

<10 MU

thermal output a day

100+ MU

coal rakes a day, down from 15

10-11

extra rakes a day from the new allocation

8.5

stock on Sept 23: about three days

1.8 lakh t

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka has secured an additional 85 lakh tonnes of coal to maintain power generation amid drought-like conditions, rising electricity demand and depleted hydel output. Hydel generation, which normally reaches around 40 million units (MU) during the monsoon, has fallen below 10 MU due to poor rainfall. Thermal plants have consequently increased generation to more than 100 MU a day. Coal supplies to Raichur, Ballari and Yermarus thermal power stations recently fell to 10-11 rakes daily from 15, with each rake carrying about 4,000 tonnes. The additional coal allocation is expected to provide 8.5 extra rakes daily. The three plants had only 1.8 lakh tonnes of coal on September 23, enough for about three days at 85% PLF.



Karnataka seeks fairer medicine pricing in private hospitals

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka's drug regulator has asked the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) to examine how private hospitals bill patients for medicines and consumables purchased at discounted institutional rates. The proposal follows price verification of 256 products, which found significant differences between hospitals' acquisition costs and printed MRPs. The Food Safety and Drug Administration has proposed that patient charges be capped at the lowest of the statutory price, printed MRP, or the hospital's net acquisition cost plus a prescribed margin and taxes. The regulator has suggested possible service margins of 20%, 25% or 30%, subject to consultation and a cost study. The proposal also seeks greater transparency, with hospital bills showing the MRP, acquisition cost, permitted margin, taxes and final price.

Proposed cap: the lowest of

1 the statutory price

2 the printed MRP

3 the hospital's net acquisition cost plus a prescribed margin and taxes

Congress to launch padayatra against Election Commission

Congress plans a statewide march highlighting Election Commission issues while raising farmers' concerns during the campaign.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

KPCC president B.K. Hariprasad on Monday announced that the Congress would undertake a statewide padayatra against the Central Election Commission, beginning from Shikaripura in Shivamogga district on September 30.

The march, titled 'Bharat Jodo Padayatra-2', will cover 84 Assembly constituencies where the Congress lost in the previous election. Around 10 km will be covered in each constituency, Hariprasad said.

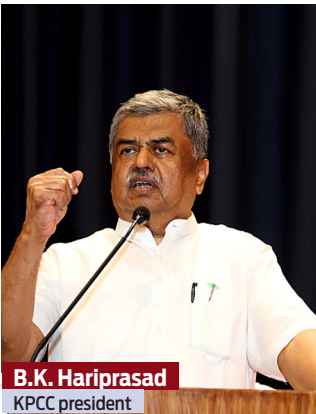
The padayatra will begin from Shikaripura, the home constituency of BJP state president B.Y. Vijayendra,

and continue until October 20.

Hariprasad said the concluding programme would be held in a North Karnataka constituency. The venue will be announced after the march covers 42 of the 84 constituencies.

Issues concerning the Election Commission will form a major part of the campaign. Hariprasad has also raised questions about Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. He said former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar would actively participate in the padayatra.

He said the march would



also focus on the drought situation and other problems faced by farmers, which would be brought to the government's attention.

PADAYATRA PLAN

- Shikaripura Starts September 30
- 84 constituencies About 10 km in each
- North Karnataka Finale; march ends October 20

"People did not have complete information about the BJP during the previous election. Now, people have information and are becoming aware."

B.K. HARIPRASAD KPCC president

Renukaswamy murder case: Pradosh appears in court to record statement

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Pradosh S. Rao, one of the accused in the case, was produced before the 59th City Civil and Sessions Court on Monday amid tight security. The proceedings began with the recording of his statement after he agreed to become an approver.

Given the sensitive nature of the case, the judge ordered in-camera proceedings and directed everyone except lawyers connected with the case to leave the courtroom. Police

The court has begun recording the statement of Pradosh, who turned approver in the Renukaswamy murder case involving actor Darshan.

deployed additional personnel around the court premises.

Meanwhile, key accused actor Darshan Thoogudeepa and Pavithra Gowda appeared before the court through video conference.



Pradosh had earlier submitted a written account of the events surrounding Renukaswamy's murder to the investigating officers. The Special Public Prosecutor is now expected to question him in detail and place relevant information and evidence before the court.

Following the prosecution's examination, lawyers repre-

senting Darshan, Pavithra Gowda and the other accused are expected to cross-examine Pradosh.

"The statement will be formally recorded before the court and the relevant information available with the approver will be brought on record," a source familiar with the proceedings said.

SECURITY TIGHTENED

Following Pradosh's decision to turn approver, security around his barrack at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison has been strengthened. Officials have checked the CCTV camera outside his barrack and are maintaining round-the-clock surveillance. Authorities are also monitoring food, snacks and drinking water brought from outside, besides collecting details of people visiting him.

HC orders fresh hearing in 14-year-old compensation case

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The High Court has set aside a trial court order rejecting a compensation claim filed by elderly parents who lost their son in a road accident 14 years ago, directing fresh consideration within six months.

A Division Bench comprising Justice Ashok S. Kinagi and Justice Subrahmanya Rangaraj heard the appeal filed by Mallikarjun Gayagavalli and Sumangala Gayagavalli of Vijayapura.

The Bench observed that the Motor Vehicles Act is a social welfare legislation intended to provide relief to accident victims and their families. It said an overly technical approach in such cases could defeat the purpose of justice.

The court noted that the records included Sumangala's voter identity card, showing her as a voter in Basavana Bagewadi. It held that her residence proof could not have been rejected merely for want of additional documents.

The Bench also pointed out that 14 years had elapsed since the accident and said forcing the elderly parents to



Case background

- APRIL 24, 2012 A speeding lorry allegedly hits Somashekhar Gayagavalli's motorcycle near Takli, Maharashtra
- FEBRUARY 26, 2013 He dies during treatment; his parents seek ₹16 lakh
- OCTOBER 27, 2021 Vijayapura court dismisses the claim on technical grounds
- NOW HC orders a fresh hearing within six months

approach another court at this stage would cause injustice. It set aside the trial court order and directed a fresh hearing based on the merits and evidence.

Tipper runs over scooter, kills woman on Kanakapura Road

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 57-year-old woman was killed after a speeding tipper lorry collided with the scooter on which she was travelling as a pillion rider near Pattaredepalya in Kaggalipura on Kanakapura Road on Monday.

The accident occurred around 11 am when Nagarathna and her husband were returning home, according to Kaggalipura police. The tipper rammed their two-wheeler and ran over Nagarathna, killing her on the spot. Her husband suffered minor injuries.

Police said the tipper driver was taken into custody and a case was registered for negligent driving causing death. A police officer said the lorry was speeding when the collision occurred.

The accident triggered protests by local residents and farmer groups, who have been demanding a bypass at Kaggalipura to ease traffic congestion and prevent accidents on the busy stretch.

Activists of the Rajya Raitha Hitarakshana Sangha staged a sit-in at the accident spot, demanding immediate

measures to improve road safety.

Nadeem Pasha, president of the organisation, said the death highlighted the need for a bypass and stricter regulation of heavy vehicles.

"Right before our eyes, another innocent life was lost due to the lack of a Kaggalipura bypass. This is a tragedy that is unbearable to watch," Pasha said.

The protest came a day after activists held a padayatra, with participants dressed as accident victims and carrying placards to highlight the risks posed by speeding traffic.

Pasha alleged that heavy vehicles, including tippers and lorries, frequently speed through Kaggalipura, posing a serious risk to pedestrians, two-wheeler riders and residents.



DIARY TRAIL

Diary lists pending payments in KPSC recruitment scam

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A diary allegedly maintained by accused Basavaraj Kannale has emerged as a key piece of evidence in the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) veterinary officers' recruitment irregularities case, with investigators examining entries that reportedly record payments pending from candidates.

The diary was reportedly recovered during a search of Kannale's residence by Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials. The handwritten entries in Kannada allegedly

contain details of amounts due from eight candidates in connection with the recruitment process.

The names mentioned in the diary include Manjunath, Pooja, Ashwin Kumar, Mohan Kumar, Sangamesh, Padmavathi and Harish. According to the entries, Manjunath, Pooja, Ashwin Kumar, Sangamesh, Padmavathi and Harish allegedly owed ₹10 lakh each, while Mohan Kumar was shown as owing ₹5 lakh.

Investigators are now verifying the identities of the persons named in the diary and checking whether the entries

correspond with bank transactions and other financial evidence gathered during the probe.

The investigation has also revealed that candidates were allegedly accommodated at villas near Devanahalli ahead of the veterinary officers' examination. Previous investigations have indicated that candidates were allegedly provided leaked questions and trained to answer them before appearing for the examination.

"Investigators are examining the financial transactions and other evidence to estab-

KPSC VETERINARY RECRUITMENT CASE

The KPSC case concerns alleged irregularities in the recruitment of veterinary officers. Investigators have examined claims of question-paper leakage, payments by candidates and the role of intermediaries. The CID has questioned several candidates and traced financial transactions, while the ED is examining the money trail. Investigators have also found evidence that candidates were allegedly accommodated at villas near Bengaluru before the examination. The allegations remain under investigation.

lish the role of those connected with the alleged recruitment irregularities," an official familiar with the probe said.

The CID and ED are separately examining the alleged

Three central teams to assess Karnataka drought: Parameshwara



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Three Union government teams will visit Karnataka to assess drought conditions and verify the State's assessment of affected areas.

The teams will cover different regions as Karnataka prepares a final memorandum seeking drought relief from the Centre.

Deputy Chief Minister and Revenue Minister G. Parameshwara said one team would cover Tumakuru, Chitradurga and Davanagere, another would visit North Karnataka, while the third would assess the Mysuru region, including Mandya, Mysuru and Chamarajanagar.

CENTRAL TEAMS	
TEAM 1	Tumakuru, Chitradurga, Davanagere
TEAM 2	North Karnataka
TEAM 3	Mysuru, Mandya, Chamarajanagar
AIM	Ground verification and official consultations
SO FAR	177 taluks declared drought-affected
REPORT	State memorandum planned in October

Field visits will verify crop losses, water scarcity and relief requirements across drought-hit regions before Karnataka's final memorandum.

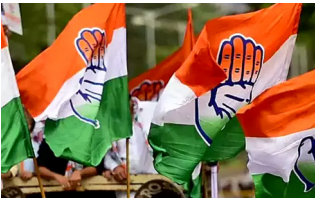
The teams are expected to visit drought-affected taluks, interact with Deputy Commissioners and local officials, and compare the State's assessment with ground realities. Parameshwara said the State had followed the prescribed criteria while declaring drought-hit taluks.

"Drought is not an issue confined to any political party. Natural disasters do not distinguish between parties," Parameshwara said, reiterating the need for an all-party delegation to seek greater assistance from the Centre.

Ground-truthing is currently underway, and the State plans to prepare its final memorandum after the monsoon period ends on September 30. The report will detail crop and other losses and the relief sought from the Union government.

The State has already sought Central assistance for drought relief, with 177 taluks declared drought-affected as of September 24. Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar has also sought early release of part of the assistance requested under the Kharif 2026 drought memorandum.

Congress stages protests across Karnataka against CEC



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Congress workers staged protests in several parts of Karnataka on Monday demanding the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over allegations concerning the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The protests were held in Mangaluru, Chitradurga, Vijayapura, Kalaburagi and Mandya, with party workers raising slogans against the Centre and the Election Commission. The Congress also demanded Kumar's resignation and arrest. The party has alleged that the electoral-roll revision could result in eligible voters being excluded.

In Mangaluru, the Dakshina Kannada District Congress Committee organised a foot march from Mahaveer Circle in Pumpwell to the Deputy Commissioner's office at Padil, followed by a protest meeting. District Congress president Padmaraj R Poojary, MLCs Ivan D'Souza and P V Mohan, and former MLA J R Lobo participated.

In Chitradurga, Congress workers wore black bands and protested after garlanding the statue of B R Ambedkar. District in-charge minister T Raghunurthy, former minister H Anjaneya and MLC D T Srinivas joined the protest.

Where they protested

- Mangaluru: march from Pumpwell to the DC's office
- Chitradurga: black bands at the Ambedkar statue
- Vijayapura: M B Patil's rally; effigy burned
- Kalaburagi: march to the DC's office
- Mandya: demand to end the SIR exercise

In Vijayapura, Industries Minister M B Patil led a rally from Ambedkar Circle to the Deputy Commissioner's office. Protesters burned an effigy of Kumar and submitted a memorandum addressed to the President.

Patil alleged that the Centre was misusing the Election Commission during the SIR exercise. He said the party had no objection to removing duplicate voter entries but would oppose any deletion of genuine voters.

In Kalaburagi, Congress workers marched to the Deputy Commissioner's office, while a similar protest was held in Mandya, where workers demanded an end to the SIR exercise.

Karnataka Congress president B K Hariprasad also criticised the Election Commission, alleging that large numbers of voters had been excluded from electoral rolls and that verification was inadequate in some localities.

The Election Commission, meanwhile, has described SIR as part of its mandate to maintain the integrity of electoral rolls.



IN THE DIARY

Amounts allegedly pending

Manjunath	₹10 lakh
Pooja	₹10 lakh
Ashwin Kumar	₹10 lakh
Mohan Kumar	₹5 lakh
Sangamesh	₹10 lakh
Padmavathi	₹10 lakh
Harish	₹10 lakh

Quick Read

Hosadurga Bus Stand shop auction has been postponed

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

The auction of commercial shops at the new bus stand in Hosadurga has been postponed due to various reasons. The Hosadurga Town Municipal Council had earlier published an advertisement about the auction in the Vijayavani daily newspaper on September 10. According to a notification issued now, the auction process, which was scheduled to be held on September 30, has been postponed. The Town Municipal Council has informed the concerned parties about the change in the auction schedule. Further details regarding the new date and other arrangements will be announced later.

National Lok Adalat settles 61,367 cases in Udupi

CH NEWS, UDUPI

A total of 61,367 cases were settled through compromise in a single day during the National Lok Adalat held on September 19 across courts in Udupi, Kundapura, Karkala and Byndoor. Held under the direction of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Bengaluru, the Lok Adalat awarded compensation of ₹14,45,52,485. The settled cases included 261 cheque bounce cases, 79 bank and money recovery cases, two matrimonial cases, 3,190 civil cases, 47 MACT cases, one labour dispute, three finance-related cases, 12 other criminal cases and 57,772 pre-litigation cases. The Office of the Principal District and Sessions Judge said the programme was successfully conducted with the cooperation of courts, legal services committees, Bar Associations, government departments, police, banks, insurance companies and litigants.

CASES SETTLED	
Pre-litigation	57,772
Civil.....	3,190
Cheque bounce	261
Bank and money recovery	79
MACT.....	47
Other criminal.....	12
Finance-related.....	3
Matrimonial.....	2
Labour dispute.....	1
Total.....	61,367
Compensation awarded	
₹14,45,52,485	

South-East Graduates' poll helplines set up

CHIKKABALLAPURA: Deputy Commissioner G. Prabhu said helpline centres have been established at district and taluk levels to provide information and guidance regarding the 2026 Karnataka Legislative Council South-East Graduates' Constituency election.

The notification will be issued on September 29. The district has 25,584 registered voters, including 14,597 men and 10,987 women. Eligible graduates can submit Form-18 by September 29 for inclusion in the voters' list.

Nominations can be filed until October 6, scrutiny will be held on October 7, and withdrawal is allowed until October 9. Voting will take place on October 23 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with counting on October 27.

The Deputy Commissioner's Office helpline is 08156-277002. Taluk helpline numbers are also available for voters seeking assistance.

Officials told to resolve senior citizens' grievances quickly

Prabhu urged officials to identify neglected senior citizens, counsel family members on respectful care, and pursue legal action if persuasion fails

CH NEWS, CHIKKABALLAPURA

Deputy Commissioner G. Prabhu directed officials to listen carefully to the problems and grievances of senior citizens and provide solutions on the spot whenever possible.

He was speaking after inaugurating sports and cultural programmes organised to mark Senior Citizens' Day at the Sir M. Visvesvaraya District Stadium on Monday.

Prabhu said officials must identify cases where senior citizens are not being properly cared for by their children, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law or other family members.

The concerned family members should be called and advised to provide respectful care. If the issue is not resolved through persuasion, necessary action should be taken under the available legal provisions.

He stressed the need to use legal measures to ensure maintenance and support for



senior citizens. These may include deductions from the salaries or income sources of children or concerned persons, or entries regarding outstanding maintenance in property records.

He also directed officials to guide senior citizens on legal options to reclaim their property when necessary and ensure that free legal aid is provided. He said such cases could be resolved at the Assistant Commissioner level and should be settled quickly with the support of panel lawyers.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed the District Department for the Empowerment of Differently-Abled and Senior Citizens to conduct meetings once every two months to hear grievances and prepare a list of issues. Officials should identify the concerned departments and coordinate with them to find solutions.

Free legal aid available

Prabhu said women, senior citizens and eligible people with an annual income below ₹3 lakh can obtain free legal aid through the District Legal

The DC's directions

- 1 Identify senior citizens not properly cared for by their families
- 2 Counsel family members to provide respectful care
- 3 Act legally if persuasion fails: deductions from salaries or income, or entries in property records
- 4 Settle cases at Assistant Commissioner level with panel lawyers
- 5 Meet every two months to hear grievances

Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committees. He urged people to approach legal service organisations instead of unauthorised persons for assistance.

During the programme, walking sticks and identity cards were distributed to senior citizens.

Hundreds of senior citizens participated enthusiastically in sports events and cultural activities held at the district stadium.

Farmers demand loan waiver and higher sugarcane prices



Siddanagouda M. Patil highlighted severe drought, crop losses and unemployment, demanding ₹25,000 per acre compensation and easier loans for farmers

CH NEWS, VIJAYAPURA

The Vijayapura district unit of the Karnataka State Farmers' Association submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi through the Deputy Commissioner, demanding farm loan waivers and a support price of ₹6,000 per tonne for sugarcane.

Speaking on the occasion, Siddanagouda M. Patil said the district is facing a severe drought due to inadequate monsoon rainfall. He said agricultural labourers have been left without work and crops such as tur, cotton, maize and bajra have been destroyed.

He said the government's announced compensation of ₹2,500 per acre was insufficient and demanded a minimum of ₹25,000 per acre. He also said farmers were facing difficulties in obtaining loans for seeds and fertilisers.

The association demanded that agricultural loans be waived, with the Central and State governments sharing the burden equally, and that bank recovery proceedings be stopped. It also sought

compensation for crop losses and direct payment of insurance compensation into farmers' bank accounts.

The farmers demanded drinking water and fodder for people and livestock, additional rations, and immediate payment to farmers for paddy, jowar and ragi procured through purchase centres.

Mahadevappa Teli demanded that the State fix a sugarcane price above the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP). He also sought effective implementation of the Namma Hola Namma Daari scheme, national project status for the Upper Krishna Project and speedy completion of dam-height works.

Layappa Ingale demanded inclusion of Vijayapura district under the Kalyana Karnataka region for benefits under Article 371(J). He also sought urgent completion of canal works and at least seven hours of electricity for agricultural pump sets.

The farmers also demanded measures to permanently address drought, regular filling of water bodies and tanks, and other agricultural support.

Rain fails, Jevargi farmers fear loss of tur, cotton crops

CH NEWS, KALABURAGI

Farmers in Jevargi taluk, who had sown tur and cotton crops with high hopes of a good monsoon, are now facing severe distress as the prolonged dry spell has caused the standing crops to wither. Villages including Kolkuru, Haraval, Mandeval, Jeratagi, Ankalagi, Ghanwar, Andola, Naribol and Kellur have received inadequate rainfall, leaving crops struggling for moisture. In several areas, the growth of germinated crops has been severely affected, forcing some farmers to consider destroying their crops.

The crops particularly needed rainfall during the flowering and pod-setting stages. However, the failure of timely rains has left standing tur and cotton crops wilting under the scorching sun.

Farmers are making efforts to save the crops by drawing water from nearby streams and borewells. However, declining groundwater levels and reduced water availability in borewells have added to their problems. In areas without conventional irrigation facilities, farmers have hired sprinkler irrigation pipes or connected old pipelines to provide water to their crops. But even these temporary measures have become diffi-

cult due to the shortage of water.

Farmers said the water level in agricultural wells and borewells has been steadily declining, leaving them helpless as crops dry up before their eyes.

The situation has also raised concerns over drinking water availability in rural areas, where several villages depend mainly on borewells. With groundwater levels falling and electricity supply posing additional difficulties, villagers fear that drinking water shortages could worsen in the coming days.

Farmers are now praying for rain, with special prayers being held at temples, mutts, mosques and dargahs. Having borrowed money to purchase seeds and fertilisers and sow their crops expecting good yields, farmers say the failure of rains has compounded their financial burden. According to Chandrakant Jeevanagi, Assistant Director of Agriculture, Jevargi, crop yields in the taluk are expected to decline by more than 80 per cent due to the lack of rainfall. He advised farmers not to spend unnecessarily on fertilisers and costly pesticides for tur and cotton crops if rainfall occurs, considering the prevailing crop condition and moisture availability.

80% More than 80 per cent fall expected in the taluk's crop yields for lack of rain, says the Assistant Director of Agriculture

Udupi plans to promote agri-tourism alongside coastal attractions

CH NEWS, UDUPI

Zilla Panchayat CEO Prateek Bayal said there is a proposal to give greater emphasis to agri-tourism by combining rural life and agricultural culture with Udupi's natural beauty, religious sites and beaches.

He was speaking after inaugurating the 'Udupi Tourism Influencers & Stakeholders Meet - 2026' at Palace Garden, Kapu. The event was organised by the Department of Tourism in association with the Association of Coastal Tourism to mark World Tourism Day.

Bayal said tourism should offer more than sightseeing and tourists should get opportunities to experience rural life, farming activities, local food and coastal culture. He said discussions were held on including village walks, farm



visits and traditional farming experiences in tourism packages.

He said folk arts, Yakshagana, local culture and rural heritage could provide tourists with unique experiences. Agri-tourism could also create economic opportunities for farmers, rural entrepreneurs, women's self-help groups and artists.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Abid Gadyal said local tourist attractions and the unique features of rural and agricultural life should be promoted effectively.

He said cooperation among local people and tourism stakeholders could help the sector grow.

Coastal Tourism Association president Manohar Shetty said Udupi has significant potential in coastal tourism and called for greater promotion of its beaches, religious and cultural sites and natural beauty.

Assistant Director of Tourism Vinodhya stressed the role of influencers and content creators in promoting Udupi through social media.

Gaurav Shenava spoke about agri-tourism. Twenty tourism influencers from the district were felicitated during the programme.

At a glance

■ **Event Theme:** World Tourism Day celebration featuring the 'Udupi Tourism Influencers & Stakeholders Meet - 2026' at Kapu.

■ **Core Proposal:** Zilla Panchayat CEO Prateek Bayal announced plans to prioritize agri-tourism by blending rural culture with coastal beauty.

■ **Key Strategy:** Leveraging social media influencers and content creators to promote local heritage, village walks, and traditional farming experiences.

PRESERVING ANCIENT HISTORY

Showcase Chitradurga's heritage: Kumaraswamy

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Additional Deputy Commissioner B.T. Kumaraswamy said greater efforts should be made to preserve and showcase Chitradurga's prehistoric heritage to the world, noting that tourism can strengthen the economic resources of the

state and district.

He was speaking at a World Tourism Day programme organised by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat and Department of Tourism at the Deputy Commissioner's office hall.

Kumaraswamy said Chitradurga is known not only for its seven-layered fort and recorded history but also for its prehistoric background. He said the region reflects early human life, including communal living, the discovery of fire and the creation of rock art.

He pointed to the rock paintings found in the Chandravalli caves and on the rocks at Huligundi as evidence of the region's ancient heritage. He urged people to preserve these heritage sites and pass their history on to future generations.

He said tourism is an important source of revenue and can help strengthen



bonds among people. Countries and States that preserve their natural and historical resources for tourists can see their economies grow, he added.

Kumaraswamy said Karnataka is giving greater importance to tourism policies and regulations. He also stressed the need for tourist guides to provide accurate information and for tourists and staff to maintain cleanliness at tourist places.

He recalled how the stories of Veera Madakari Nayaka and Veera Vanite Obavva, T.R. Subba Rao's Durgastamana and the film Nagara-

havu helped make Chitradurga known widely. He also praised Jyothiraj, popularly known as Kothi Raja, and local tourist guides.

Assistant Director of Tourism Manjunatha Reddy said this year's theme is 'Reimagining Tourism through Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence'. He said cleanliness drives and sapling-planting programmes were held at tourist, heritage and religious sites.

Fruits were distributed to tourists visiting Chitradurga Fort. Tourist guides, Pravasi Mitras and department staff attended the programme.

Senior citizens urged to participate freely in competitions



CH NEWS, UDUPI

Senior citizens should participate freely and without hesitation in sports and cultural competitions, as age applies to the body and not the mind, said Nitin Yashwant Rao, Member Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority.

He was speaking at the World Senior Citizens' Day celebrations held at the Mahatma Gandhi District Stadium in Ajjarkadu on Monday. Sports and cultural competitions were organised under the centrally

Age applies to the body and not the mind

sponsored Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana.

Rao said every citizen has a responsibility to treat senior citizens with respect and care. He urged children to allow their parents and elders to live with the family instead of sending them to old-age homes. He said the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, provides protection to senior citizens.

Govt of Karnataka

TALUKA GENERAL HOSPITAL HANGAL

Tq : HANGAL Dist : HAVERI

Email : mothhnl22@gmail.com ph : 08379-262222

Sl.No : TGGH/Tender/03/2026-27 Date : 28/09/2026

Publication of E-Tender

E-tender is invited for the purchase of medicines and equipment required for Taluk Hospital Hanagal Dist Haveri for the year 2026-27 from registered eligible institutions/ reputable original manufacturers/authorized representatives/authorized distributors as per the Karnataka Public Procurement Transparency Act-99/2000 and the conditions issued by the Government from time to time. Eligible tenderers may submit their tender through K.P.P. Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Further details can be obtained from the above address.

Tender Schedule : Tender Upload Start Date : **24/09/2026**. Tender Amount Rs. **50.00** Lakhs, E.M.D. Amount Rs. **1.00** Lakhs. Last Date and Time for Uploading Tender : **08/10/2026** Upto 4.00 PM, Technical Bid Opening Date : **09/10/2026**. Date for Submission of Samples of Materials to be intimated later. P-Bid Meeting of Tenderer has been called on **29/09/2026** at 11.30 AM at Taluka Hospital, Hanagal.

Sd/- Administrative Medical Officer,
Taluk General Hospital Hanagal
DIPR/Haveri/362/KSMCA/2026-27

Quick Read



Kotagudda Sahana School receives eco-school award

CH NEWS, PAVAGADA

Sahana English Medium School in Kotagudda, Pavagada taluk, has received the 'Eco-School Award' for its efforts to promote environmental awareness among students. The school has been regularly conducting educational and environment-related activities to encourage cleanliness, healthy lifestyles, and awareness about water and environmental conservation. The Tumakuru Science Centre selected the school for the award in recognition of its efforts to develop environmental concern and scientific thinking among children, along with its eco-friendly activities and educational programmes. The award is presented in memory of Smt. Arasamma and Sri D.C. Chikkanna. Social Science teacher Jinish, along with students, received the award on behalf of the school. The honour recognises the continued efforts of the school management, headmaster, teachers, students and parents towards environmental protection.

Gadag water supply to face temporary disruption

CH NEWS, GADAG

Drinking water supply to Gadag-Betageri twin cities will be temporarily disrupted for one to two days due to repair work on the main pipeline near Mevundi bus stand, which supplies water from Hammigi to Dambal. The Gadag-Betageri City Municipal Council has arranged tractor-mounted tankers to provide water free of charge to residents facing shortages. Residents can contact Vasantha Kumar Melmani (7259961320), Parashurama Bevinamarada (8880792404), Ramesh Koni (8660283991), Helpline (0837278504), Assistant Executive Engineer (8050774537), or City Commissioner (9663911682) for tanker services. Commissioner Rajaram Pawar has requested residents to cooperate with the municipal authorities during the repair work.

Belagavi Division Dasara Sports Meet begins in Gadag

CH NEWS, GADAG

The Belagavi Division-level Dasara Sports Meet featuring hockey and volleyball will be held on September 29 and 30 at the K.H. Patil District Stadium in Gadag. The events will begin at 10 a.m. The sports meet is being organised jointly by the Gadag District Administration, Zilla Panchayat and the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Gadag. Deputy Commissioner C.N. Sreedhar will inaugurate the event. Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Mukul Jain and Superintendent of Police Mithun H.N. will attend as chief guests. Dr. Sharanu Gogeri, Assistant Director of the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, has welcomed participants and the public to the event.

Prakash Raj calls SIR attack on democracy

Prakash Raj alleged that the Election Commission removed 13 crore voters, questioning whether proper notices were issued before deleting names

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Actor and social activist Prakash Raj has criticised the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of electoral rolls, alleging that it is a systematic attack on democracy, the Constitution and citizens' right to vote.

He was speaking at a press conference and consultative meeting with pro-people organisations and citizens of Dakshina Kannada district at Hotel Ocean Pearl in Mangaluru.

Prakash Raj alleged that the Central Election Commission had taken away the voting rights of 13 crore voters across the country. He questioned whether proper notices were issued before names were removed from electoral rolls. He said Karnataka has 5.5 crore voters and questioned the need to complete the SIR exercise within a month when Assembly elections are still two years away. He alleged that 1.08 crore votes in Karnataka were being targeted under the Absent, Shifted, Duplicate, Dead and



Others category. He also raised concerns over voters being removed under "Unmapped" and "Logical Discrepancy" categories. He said poor people, transgender persons, migrant workers and youths working in Gulf countries could be affected. Prakash Raj also alleged misuse of Form 7 applications to remove voters' names. He referred to claims of pre-printed forms being brought to a polling booth in Belagavi North and alleged that applications were being used against Muslim, Chris-

tian, tribal and poor voters. He further criticised the centralisation of the process through ECI-Net and raised concerns over changes in the appointment of Election Commissioners and their legal protection.

According to Prakash Raj, lawyers, experts and social activists are conducting a social audit at 100 polling stations in Karnataka. He said a press conference would be held in Bengaluru on September 30 to present evidence, followed by a national-level meeting in Delhi on October

Allegations & actions

Mass voter deletions
Alleged: 13 crore voters dropped nationally without mandatory notices. **Action:** National press conference in Delhi on October 1

Karnataka targets
Alleged: 1.08 crore votes under ASDO and unmapped categories. **Action:** State evidence presentation and press meet on September 30

Form 7 misuse
Alleged: Illegal bulk applications to cancel opposition votes. **Action:** Legal audits across 100 polling stations

Software centralization
Alleged: Removal of local approval buttons via ECI-Net. **Action:** Parliamentary opposition mobilization during November session

Institutional changes
Alleged: Unilateral appointments and legal immunity for ECs. **Action:** Appeals urging immediate Supreme Court intervention

1. He urged the Supreme Court to intervene immediately and quash the SIR process, which he described as unscientific.

Road delay sparks protest and traffic blockade in Magadi



CH NEWS, MAGADI

Long delays in the KSHIP road project connecting Bengaluru, Magadi and Somwarpet led to a strong protest in Magadi town, with farmers and workers blocking the Magadi-Kunigal road at Narasimha Circle.

Members of the Karnataka State Kempegowda Farmers' Association and the Forum for the Protection of Workers and Farmers staged the protest, alleging that the road project had been delayed for seven to eight years. They said poor road conditions, potholes and dust had caused serious difficulties for commuters.

The road blockade brought traffic to a standstill for more than half an hour, resulting in long queues of vehicles. Heated arguments also broke out between protesters and motorists who tried to pass through the blockade.

Deputy Tahsildar Prabhakar and KSHIP officials visited the protest site. The protesters demanded the presence of senior officials and questioned

Highlights

→ Farmers and workers block Magadi-Kunigal road

→ Project delayed for seven to eight years

→ Poor road conditions linked to four deaths

→ Traffic brought to standstill for thirty minutes

→ Officials promise road work starting next week

→ Association warns of larger taluk-wide agitations

the delay in completing the project.

The protest was withdrawn after KSHIP AEE Nagaraju arrived and assured the protesters that a final decision would be taken and the road work would begin within a week.

Karnataka State Kempegowda Farmers' Association president Shivakumar alleged that the project had suffered from poor-quality and unscientific work. He said four people had lost their lives in accidents linked to potholes and demanded immediate action to complete the road.

Workers' and Farmers' Protection Forum general secretary Nagaraju said two-wheeler riders were facing difficulties because vehicles raised large amounts of dust. He demanded compensation and employment for families of those who died in accidents and sought a written timeline for completing the project.

Farmers' Association honorary president Thammanna-gowda said the prolonged delay showed a lack of concern among officials and politicians. He warned that a larger agitation could be held across the taluk.

Tumakuru district farmers' association president Yogesh also criticised the government's drought compensation of ₹2,500 and demanded greater support for farmers. He questioned the delay in road work and sought clarification on the funds sanctioned for the project.

The protesters warned of further action if the road work is not completed as assured.

Search intensifies for missing government engineer

He wrote about the mental pressure he faced from contractors and other departments over pending bills worth crores of rupees

MALINGARAYA PUJAR CH NEWS

Anxiety and sorrow have gripped the family of Farvez Dharwad, an Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) with Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Limited (KRIDL), who has been missing for nearly two weeks.

Farvez left for Bengaluru on September 13 to attend a departmental meeting. He spoke to his mother over the phone until 11 a.m. on September 14. After that, his mobile phone was switched off.

The engineer's disappearance has caused concern in Gadag and among his family members. His elderly father, Jafar Saab, is now waiting for his son to return, especially as Farvez's son Mohammad Saad is set to celebrate his first birthday tomorrow.

Instead of preparing for a birthday celebration, the family is spending the day in fear and sadness. Jafar Saab became emotional while remembering his son and appealed to him to return home for his child's birthday.

He said Farvez had always worked honestly but claimed that some people had repeat-



edly visited their home and harassed him. He also said his son was under pressure because funds for several works had not been released.

Farvez has reportedly left a note in his office diary. According to the information available, he wrote about the mental pressure he faced from contractors and other departments over pending bills worth crores of rupees. He also stated that no one should be held responsible for his death.

JDS state spokesperson Venkanagouda R. Govindagouda visited Farvez's residence and spoke to his family. Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy also spoke to the family over the phone and offered reassurance.

The family said it had no information about reports concerning any statement by the Chief Minister about a complaint against Farvez.

Meanwhile, Gadag police have formed special teams to trace the missing engineer and have intensified their investigation. As the search continues, Farvez's family remains hopeful that he will return home safely, especially before his son's first birthday.



HIGHLIGHTS

Taluk health officials lead rabies awareness program

Experts warn against ignoring animal bites

Pet owners urged to ensure regular vaccinations

Medical officers advise keeping safe distance from strays

Inter-departmental coordination emphasized for prevention

ASHA workers and local health staff participate actively

people not to take bites from dogs, cats or other animals lightly.

Dr. Panchamukhi said deaths caused by rabies can be completely prevented and stressed the importance of co-operation among different government departments to achieve this goal.

ASHA workers from the Betageri area, Health Department officials and members of the public participated in the awareness programme. The event highlighted the importance of timely vaccination and responsible pet care in preventing rabies.

Gadag observes Rabies Day with safety awareness

CH NEWS, GADAG

World Rabies Day and Awareness Week was observed at the taluk level in Gadag to create awareness about rabies, its dangers and ways to prevent the disease.

Addressing the programme, Taluk Health Education Officer Dr. Rajendra S. Gadad said rabies is a fatal infectious disease caused by a virus that mainly affects brain cells. He said the disease is preventable and urged people not to ignore bites from dogs or other animals.

Dr. Gadad advised people who are bitten by dogs or other animals to immediately take the rabies vaccine. He also stressed that pet owners should ensure their dogs receive vaccination at regular intervals.

The programme was organised by the Taluk Health Officer's office in association with the Betageri Primary Health Centre at the Taluk Health Officer's conference hall. Presiding over the programme, Dr. Madhumati Panchamukhi, Administrative Medical Officer of the Betageri Primary Health Centre, advised children and the public to maintain a safe distance from stray dogs. She urged

Deaths caused by rabies can be completely prevented

ART OF HEALING

'Technology cannot replace compassion in healthcare'

CH NEWS, TUMAKURU

Communication, compassion and dedication are essential for becoming a good doctor, Dr. H. Basavanagoudappa, Vice Chancellor of JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research, Mysuru, said.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the first-year MBBS course for the academic year 2026-27 at Siddaganga Medical College and Research Institute (SMCRI) in Tumakuru.

Dr. Basavanagoudappa said medical education should not be limited to securing good



grades or obtaining a degree. He advised students to develop dedication, communication skills and compassion while preparing for their medical careers.

He said 99% of unpleasant incidents in the medical field occur not because of doctors' irresponsibility but because of a lack of proper communica-

tion with patients. He urged students to develop the habit of patiently listening to patients.

He said artificial intelligence could support medical learning, but technology could not replace moral relationships and compassion in patient care. He encouraged students to draw inspiration from achievers such as Dr. Devi Shetty and Dr. C.N. Manjunath. SMCRI Executive Director Dr. S. Sachchidananda said the institute was committed to developing world-class, compassionate doctors

Snakebite awareness stressed at Chitradurga health programme



CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

Awareness and presence of mind are more important than fear when dealing with snakebites, Deputy District Health Education Officer G.V. Konnur said.

He was speaking at the International Snakebite Awareness Day programme organised jointly by the Primary Health Centre in Kasapura village of Chitradurga taluk and the District IEC division.

Konnur advised people to keep a snakebite victim calm and prevent panic. He said the wound should not be cut, a tight tourniquet should not be tied and venom should not be sucked out with the mouth.

The victim should not be allowed to walk. Rings, bangles, watches and tight clothing around the bitten limb should be removed immediately, as swelling can affect blood circulation.

Snakebite first aid

✓ Keep the victim calm; prevent panic

✗ Don't cut the wound

✗ Don't tie a tight tourniquet

✗ Don't suck out the venom

✗ Don't let the victim walk

✓ Remove rings, bangles, watches and tight clothing

✓ Lay the patient on the left side, bitten limb still

✓ Go to the nearest health centre at once

At a Glance

■ Program context: International Snakebite Awareness Day event held in Kasapura village, Chitradurga.

■ Core safety message: Awareness, presence of mind, and immediate hospital care outweigh fear.

■ Additional focus: Promotion of humanitarian organ donation pledges administered by health officials.

ORGAN DONATION

People can officially register to donate organs such as the heart, kidneys, liver, lungs and corneas. Donating healthy organs after death to patients in need is a humanitarian act.

He urged people not to waste time on unsafe practices, superstitions or traditional remedies and advised them to take the victim to the nearest health centre immediately. During transportation, the patient should be laid on the left side and the bitten limb should be kept still.

Konnur also advised people to use a torch while moving outside at night and maintain cleanliness around their homes to reduce the risk of snake encounters.

District Health Education Officer Krishna Nayak spoke about organ donation and said donating healthy organs after death to patients in need is a humanitarian act. He said people can officially register to donate organs such as the heart, kidneys, liver, lungs and corneas.

Senior Health Inspector Rudramuni administered the organ donation pledge.

Quick Read



H.S. Keerthana, IAS
H.S. Keerthana takes charge as NWKRTC MD

CH NEWS, HUBBALLI

Smt. H.S. Keerthana, IAS, assumed charge as the new Managing Director of the North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) on September 28, 2026. Keerthana belongs to the 2020 Karnataka batch of the Indian Administrative Service. Before taking charge at NWKRTC, she served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Chik-kamagaluru Zilla Panchayat. She has now assumed responsibility as Managing Director of NWKRTC. The announcement was issued by NWKRTC authorities.

Koppal launches free month-long rabies vaccination drive

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

A free rabies vaccination programme for dogs and cats was launched in Koppal on Monday to mark World Rabies Day. The programme was organised by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services and the District Polyclinic, Koppal. Dr. Ramesh Doddamani, Joint Director of the Raichur-Kalaburagi Division, inaugurated the campaign by administering anti-rabies vaccines to dogs and cats. Dr. S.G. Rona, Deputy Director of the District Polyclinic, Dr. Chandrashekhara G. and Chief Veterinary Officer Dr. Yamanappa B.H., along with office staff, were present. The free vaccination drive will continue from September 28 to October 27. Pet owners are encouraged to use the facility. For details, contact 08539-299906.

Poetry carries culture, literature and values: Naveed

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Literature, culture and values are reflected in the poems and writings created by writers and poets, said Mohammad Badiyuddin Ahmed Naveed, Inspector, Department of Legal Metrology. He was speaking after inaugurating the monthly poetry symposium organised by the All India Musahira Committee of Koppal for local poets on Sunday evening. Naveed said poems and writings contain valuable information and convey positive messages to society. He said poets try to communicate meaningful messages through their verses, and people should understand these messages and apply them in their lives. He also said that living with mutual national harmony gives greater meaning to life and stressed the importance of preserving cultural and literary values. The committee announced that the All-India Grand Poets' Meet would be held again during the last week of October, continuing the annual tradition. The gathering was informed that everyone's cooperation would be important for the event.

Congress demands resignation of Chief Election Commissioner

Samarth Shamanur criticized SIR for causing panic, urging unity to protect voting rights, welfare access, and constitutional integrity beyond partisan politics

CH NEWS, DAVANAGERE

The District Congress staged a massive demonstration outside the Deputy Commissioner's office on Monday, demanding the immediate resignation of Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged mass deletions from voter lists. Protesters wearing black armbands raised slogans to protect democratic rights. Addressing the gathering, MP Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun emphasized that the Election Commission must function as an independent, neutral backbone of democracy. She asserted that holding constitutional bodies accountable is necessary when public trust and transparency are compromised. Dr. Mallikarjun cited serious allegations regarding the



District Congress workers protest outside the Deputy Commissioner's office in Davanagere on Monday

wrongful deletion of nearly 13 crore voters nationwide, including 1.07 crore across Karnataka and over two lakh within Davanagere district alone. Urging an impartial inquiry, she stated that the authorities must safeguard the franchise of every citizen regardless of background. She confirmed that leaders from the INDIA bloc will meet in Delhi on September 30 to outline coordinated agitations across national, state, and district levels. Speaking at the protest, Davanagere South MLA Samarth Shamanur criticized the Special Intensive Revision process, stating it triggered widespread panic and confusion among vulnerable populations. Many citizens feared losing their ration cards, welfare benefits, and

SIT integrity questions raised in Belthangadi case



CH NEWS, BELTHANGADI

Senior RSS leader Dr. Kalladka Prabhakar Bhat has raised concerns over the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed to re-investigate the 14-year-old Belthangadi rape and murder case. Speaking to reporters in Bantwal on Monday, Bhat said the decision to constitute the SIT was a positive step but questioned whether all officers included in the team were beyond suspi-

cion. He urged the investigators to conduct an impartial and honest probe and determine the truth without being influenced by external pressure. Bhat said the police have the capability to identify those responsible for the crime. However, he suggested that the SIT should have included more strong officers, citing the Mangaluru Police Commissioner as an example. He also said the investigation should ensure justice for the victim, whose family has been awaiting closure for years. The case dates back 14 years, and its renewed investigation has attracted attention in Dakshina Kannada. Bhat said investigators should pursue all available evidence and establish the facts conclusively. Bhat also commented on a notice issued to him for questioning in connection with the Abdul Rehman murder case. Expressing displeasure, he questioned whether he was being summoned simply because he had made a phone call. He also questioned the proposed narco-analysis test for Bharat Kumdel and asked what grounds had been cited for conducting such a procedure. He additionally remarked that SP Arun Kumar should undergo the test first. Bhat said he had previously been jailed and referred to the arrest of his wife while expressing his frustration over the latest notice. He also suggested that authorities might be considering action against him under the Goonda Act. He maintained that such cases should be initiated only when there is evidence of an-

ti-national or anti-social activity. He further called for a people-friendly approach by the police and referred to instances where courts had reprimanded police conduct.

constitutional franchise whenever field officials approached their homes. He stressed that protecting fundamental voting rights transcends partisan politics, urging all democratic forces to unite to safeguard constitutional integrity. Shamanur reminded the crowd that past public mobilizations, including protests against NEET irregularities, proved that united public resistance forces governments to act. District Congress President Ibrahim Khalil Ulla, alongside prominent party functionaries and grassroots workers, actively participated in the demonstration. The agitation concluded with leaders reiterating their commitment to sustain nationwide protests until voter list transparency is restored and electoral rights are fully protected.

Highlights

1

RSS leader questions composition of SIT officers

2

Fourteen-year-old Belthangadi case sees renewed investigation

3

Police issue inquiry notice over phone call links

4

Protests raised against police notices and Goonda Act threats

5

Leader questions grounds for proposed narco-analysis tests

6

Authorities urged to avoid politically motivated actions

Madhu Bangarappa announces historic Shikaripura padayatra



Minister Madhu Bangarappa

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

Minister Madhu Bangarappa announced that a massive rally and padayatra have been organised in Shikaripura on September 30 to commemorate the Bharat Jodo march undertaken by Rahul Gandhi four years ago against the country's electoral system and the policies of the central government. Speaking at a press conference on Monday, he noted that September 30 marks the fourth anniversary of Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo march from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, a journey that significantly strengthened the Congress party across the nation and the state. Consequently, the state government has decided to celebrate this occasion. He recalled that the march had passed through Karnataka, and he had personally walked alongside Rahul Gandhi starting from Gundlupet. He added that KPCC President BK Hariprasad decided to hold the fourth-anniversary celebrations in Shikaripura, and he congratulated both BK Hariprasad and CM DK Shivakumar for this initiative. He further remarked that Rahul Gandhi is not someone driven by a lust for power, nor is he the type of politician who engages in politics while sitting in air-conditioned rooms in Delhi and weaponizing agencies like the ED and IT. He is someone who always walks alongside ordinary people, listens to their joys and sorrows, and contemplates doing something beneficial for them in the future. It is precisely because of such a person's padayatra that we have attained power today, it is our good fortune to have walked alongside him. The padayatra will commence at 10.00 AM from Kittadandi and proceed via Kote, Hosanagara, Mattikote, Hosanagara Cross, and Nelavodlu to reach Shikaripura. Subsequently, a massive rally will be held at the APMC premises. KPCC President BK Hariprasad, along with other state and district Congress leaders and functionaries, are expected to attend the march and the rally.

At a glance

Commemoration Focus

Celebrating the fourth anniversary of Rahul Gandhi's historic Bharat Jodo march.

Event Structure

A massive padayatra starting from Kittadandi leading to a public rally at the APMC yard.

Political Objectives

KPCC leadership and ministers targeting constituency mobilization and opposition defeat.

Koppal's landless warn of protest for title deeds

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Sanjay Das Kaujalagi, a nomadic community leader and head of the Landless Struggle Committee, has expressed dissatisfaction over the delay in providing housing sites, title deeds and e-Khata certificates to poor and landless families in Kunikeri Tanda and surrounding areas. Speaking at a press conference at the Press Club on Monday, he warned of an intense agitation if the demands of eligible beneficiaries were not addressed immediately. According to the committee, hundreds of families, in-



The Landless Struggle Committee at the press conference at the Press Club, Koppal

cluding daily wage workers, poor and destitute people, widows, persons with disabilities and members of minority communities, have been living in Survey No. 41/1 at Kunikeri Tanda for several years without permanent homes and basic facilities. The committee said the families had not received official documents or basic amenities despite their long stay in the area. It stated that more than 400 to 500 homeless beneficiaries were selected during the 2024 Ashraya Committee meeting. However, title deeds have not yet been issued to them. The committee alleged that the local administration and elected representatives had failed to provide housing on sites identified through Survey No. 41/1 and MGNREGA works. The organisation has placed several demands before the authorities. It sought immediate issuance of official title deeds to all eligible landless residents of Kunikeri Tanda. It also demanded allotment of e-Khata and Khata numbers by the Gram Panchayat or concerned authority. The committee further demanded drinking water and electricity facilities for poor families living in the area. Sanjay Das Kaujalagi said the administration should take the problems of the poor seriously and distribute the pending title deeds without further delay. He warned that protests would be organised at the taluk and district levels if action was not taken soon.

Basavakalyan parks neglected amid encroachment

CH NEWS, BIDAR

Although Basavakalyan is the second largest city in the district, the municipal council is not paying any attention to providing basic amenities. There are many parks in the records. However, in reality, there is not a single place with a conducive atmosphere to relax and relieve fatigue. Land is encroached on in many places. Since large buildings have stood up in many places, it is difficult to identify the protected area of the park. When the municipality existed, the Chaman Garden opposite the Raja Bagaswara Dargah was well maintained. There are grass and thorns in the gardens on both sides of the road leading to the main bus stand and in the new layouts from Dr Ambedkar Circle to Tripurant. A garden has been built in the middle of Jaishankar Oni near Shantiniketan High School to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of India's independence. There is a good

enclosure wall around it. There were children's toys inside. However, for some years, thorns have grown here and pigs and dogs are roaming around. This place is like a hideout for thieves and the residents of Oni are dumping garbage here. The drain around it always collects dirty water. There is an increase in the menace of mosquitoes and flies. The garbage collectors bring and throw garbage at the entrance of the spacious garden in the middle of Ganga-Madina Colony. Every 4 days, this place turns into a dump and looks like a garbage heap. The important thing is that children from

“It is being said that although money has been sanctioned for the development of some parks, the work has not been done due to encroachment. Therefore, the Municipal Council should take immediate action”
— Laxman Kapanure, Social Activist

RESIDENTS WANT

►

Fences for the gardens in Tripuranta, Sita Colony, Jaishankar Colony, Hanuman Temple site, Vijayanagar Colony, Hiremath Colony and other places

►

Cleaning of the parks every day

►

Separate arrangements to collect garbage from houses

some nearby schools go to the empty space inside from such a place for morning prayers. Different arrangements should be made here for collecting garbage from houses, say the residents. The garden in Vidyanagar Layout also has a good perimeter wall. But grass has grown inside. A fence should be built for the gardens in Tripurant, Sita Colony, Jaishankar Colony, Hanuman Temple site, Vijayanagar Colony, Hiremath Colony and other places. People are demanding that cleanliness be done every day.

CHOICE AND ACCESS

Koppal holds awareness programme on abortion and hearing

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

A programme marking International Safe Abortion Services Day and International Week of the Deaf was held at the District Teaching Hospital auditorium on Monday. The programme was jointly organised by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, District Health and Family Welfare Department, District Teaching Hospital and Mother and Child Hospital, Koppal. Dr. Rajesh, Obstetrician and Gynecologist at the Mother and Child Hospital, inaugurated the programme



Mothers, pregnant women, students and health staff at the awareness programme in Koppal on Monday

and spoke about safe abortion services. Observed under the theme “Unified Action: Empowering Choice and Access to Services for All,” the programme explained that safe abortion is a procedure performed by qualified and trained healthcare providers in an appropriate medical setting using scientifically approved methods. He said the initiative aims to protect women's sexual and reproductive rights and prevent maternal deaths caused by unsafe abortions. ENT specialist Dr. Avinash spoke about the International Hearing Awareness Week programme and said its objective is to create awareness about preventing and controlling hearing impairment and deafness. This year's theme is “Upholding the Human Rights of People with Hearing Impairment.” He advised people not to insert sticks or oil into their ears, get earwax removed by unqualified persons or put anything into the ear without medical advice. He also warned against swimming in contaminated water.

Highlights

→

Programme promoted safe abortion and hearing health.

→

Doctors highlighted scientifically approved abortion procedures.

→

Safe services aim to prevent maternal deaths.

→

Public advised against unsafe ear cleaning practices.

→

Patients with ear symptoms urged medical consultation.

→

Free hearing surgeries available for young children.

Dr. Avinash advised people experiencing ear pain or dis-

FROM SPACE TO SEA: ISRO DETECTS EL NIÑO'S IMPACT ON INDIAN OCEAN

The ocean plays a vital role in regulating Earth's climate, weather and ecosystems. A recent observation by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has once again shown how satellite technology can help scientists understand major changes taking place in the oceans.

ISRO's EOS-06, also known as Oceansat-3, has detected changes associated with the developing El Niño phenomenon. Satellite observations have revealed changes in ocean productivity and surface winds in the equatorial Pacific, the region where El Niño develops. These changes are important because El Niño can influence weather and climate patterns far beyond the Pacific, including the Indian Ocean region and the Indian monsoon.

El Niño is a periodic warming of the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. This warming changes atmospheric circulation and wind patterns and can influence rainfall across different parts of the world. For India, El Niño is particularly important because it can affect the summer monsoon, although its impact varies from one event to another.

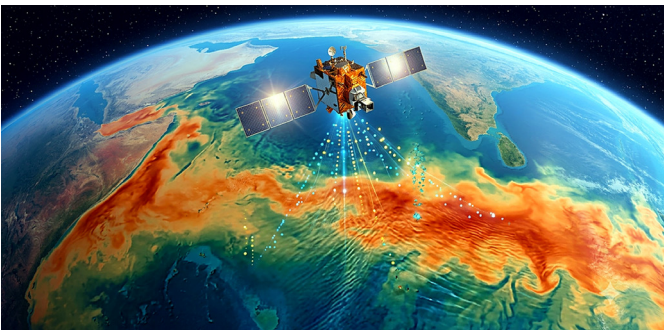


- DR. VIJAY GARG

One of the interesting indicators observed by ISRO is chlorophyll-a, which is associated with phytoplankton, the microscopic organisms that form the foundation of marine food chains. Satellite observations during the developing El Niño have shown a reduction in surface chlorophyll-a in parts of the equatorial Pacific. This is linked to changes in ocean circulation and reduced upwelling of nutrient-rich water.

Surface winds are also important. During El Niño, normal wind patterns in the equatorial Pacific can weaken or reverse. This affects the movement of ocean water and the availability of nutrients near the surface. Consequently, marine productivity can change, potentially affecting fish and other organisms that depend on phytoplankton.

Although the primary satellite observations are from the



Pacific Ocean, their importance extends to the Indian Ocean because Earth's oceans and atmosphere are interconnected. Changes in one major oceanic region can influence atmospheric circulation and rainfall patterns elsewhere.

For India, such observations are valuable for understanding possible changes in monsoon behaviour, fisheries and marine ecosystems. They can also contribute to better climate forecasting and preparedness.

The importance of Oceansat-3 lies in its ability to observe enormous areas of the ocean from space. Instead of relying only on observations from ships and instruments at individual locations, satellites provide a broader picture of changing ocean conditions.

This is a significant achievement for Indian space science. ISRO's satellite observations demonstrate how space technology can contribute directly to environmental understanding and climate research.

The changing ocean is a reminder that events occurring thousands of kilometres away can influence life, agriculture and livelihoods in India. Continuous satellite monitoring can help scientists detect these changes early and improve our ability to prepare for their consequences. From space to sea, ISRO's observations are helping us understand the invisible connections that shape our climate and reminding us that protecting our oceans is essential for protecting our future.

E-MARKET: BEYOND CONVENIENCE, THE NEW CHALLENGE OF A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

India's shopping landscape is changing at an unprecedented pace. This is not merely a transformation in the way people shop; it signals a deeper shift in consumer behaviour, employment, technology, small businesses and the overall structure of the economy. According to a recent report by research and consulting firm Infism, India's e-market, valued at around \$125 billion in 2024, could reach nearly \$345 billion by 2030, almost tripling in six years, with an estimated compound annual growth rate of 18.4 per cent. However, this figure should not be viewed simply as a success story of market expansion. The real question is what such rapid growth will mean for the Indian economy, employment, consumer rights, small businesses and the environment. The next chapter of India's e-market must not be merely about selling more; it must be about creating a more responsible, inclusive and sustainable model of growth.

The biggest transformation brought about by e-commerce is that it has taken the marketplace out of a physical location and placed it in the palm of the consumer. Earlier, customers went to the market; today, the market reaches the customer through a mobile phone. Traditional opening and closing hours are losing relevance, geographical distance matters less, and convenience has become one of the strongest attractions of online shopping. Online commerce is no longer restricted to metropolitan India. Small towns and emerging cities are becoming important centres of digital consumption. Recent studies suggest that nearly 66 per cent of new direct-to-consumer orders are coming from Tier-II and Tier-III cities. This development is particularly significant for India because smaller cities are emerging as the next major drivers of consumer demand.

Regional languages, local preferences, digital platforms for small merchants and efficient supply networks can give further momentum to e-commerce. The marketplace of tomorrow, therefore, will not simply be technology-driven; it will have to understand India's linguistic diversity, cultural richness and highly varied local needs. The younger generation will play a decisive role in this transformation. Young consumers already account for nearly one-third of online shoppers, and by 2030 they could become the largest group in terms of digital spending. This is not merely a demographic change; it represents a transformation in the psychology of consumption. The new generation compares products, checks prices, reads customer reviews and attaches great importance to convenience. For them, shopping is not merely about purchasing a product; it is also about saving time. This mindset is giving extraordinary momentum to quick commerce.

A few years ago, receiving everyday products within minutes seemed almost impossible. Today, quick commerce is expanding from metropolitan centres to smaller cities. Estimates suggest that its market could reach \$65–70 billion by 2030, contributing nearly 45–50 per cent of the incremental growth of the e-market over the next five years. The number of small fulfilment centres could also rise from around 2,525 in 2025 to nearly 7,500 by 2030. But a serious question arises: Is delivering every product within a few minutes really the ultimate measure of progress?



- LALIT GARGG

ress? If a customer receives a product in five minutes, but that convenience comes with excessive packaging, greater traffic, higher energy consumption, insecure employment and unsustainable business models, how long can such speed truly be considered progress? The success of tomorrow's e-market must therefore be measured not only by sales and delivery speed, but also by its social, economic and environmental balance.

Technology will deepen this transformation further. Artificial intelligence will understand consumer preferences and recommend products. Conversational commerce will help customers make purchasing decisions through interactive dialogue, while virtual try-on technologies may transform the way people buy clothing, beauty products and other goods. A recent study estimates that artificial intelligence and machine learning could improve retail productivity by 35–37 per cent by 2030. An even greater transformation may be ahead. Today, consumers search for products themselves; tomorrow, artificial intelligence could perform much of the searching, comparison and selection for them. The strongest competitor in the marketplace may therefore not be the company offering the largest number of products, but the one capable of understanding the customer's needs before the customer articulates them. This will save time, but it will also create new concerns regarding privacy, data security and consumer freedom of choice. As technology becomes more powerful, the responsibility to protect consumers must become equally strong.

The expansion of e-commerce is also creating a major challenge for traditional retailers. Customers accustomed to comparing prices online are becoming more informed even when they shop at physical stores. Yet it would be wrong to view the future simply as a battle between online and offline commerce. The successful retailer of tomorrow will probably combine both worlds. A local shopkeeper can accept digital orders, provide home delivery and use technology to strengthen traditional customer relationships. E-commerce, therefore, need not end the traditional marketplace; it can transform it into a more competitive and modern system. Employment is another important dimension. E-commerce has created millions of opportunities in delivery, warehousing, packaging, technology services and logistics. Yet questions remain about wages, social security, workplace safety and the quality of employment.

Economic growth cannot be called complete if its benefits remain concentrated among

companies and investors while workers at the last mile remain insecure. The digital economy must create not merely more jobs, but better, safer and more dignified employment. The environment is equally important. Individual packaging, frequent small deliveries and ultra-fast fulfilment can increase energy consumption, traffic and waste. The e-market of the future must therefore move towards recyclable packaging, electric vehicles, consolidated deliveries and low-waste supply chains. Only then can its economic benefits be aligned with environmental responsibility.

Another major change is taking place at the intersection of social media, content creators and commerce. According to a 2026 Google-Deloitte study, by 2030 the younger generation could account for nearly 45 per cent of online spending, while content creators could influence around 30 per cent of total retail expenditure. The traditional distance between advertising and purchasing is rapidly disappearing. In this emerging environment, trust, experience and social influence may become as important as price. A trusted content creator can influence purchasing decisions more powerfully than a conventional advertisement. The consumer journey is increasingly moving from discovery to influence to purchase within the same digital ecosystem.

The e-market of 2030 will therefore be radically different from today's marketplace. It will not simply be an online store but a vast economic ecosystem powered by artificial intelligence, regional languages, digital payments, rapid delivery, social influence and personalised recommendations. By the end of the decade, the e-market could account for around 10–12 per cent of India's total retail spending, contribute nearly 2.5 per cent to the national economy, and reach 420–440 million online shoppers. Yet we must remember that the larger the market becomes, the greater its responsibility. The real test of India's e-market is not how fast it grows, but how many people it takes along with it. If technology provides genuine convenience, small businesses gain opportunities, consumers remain protected, workers receive dignified employment, environmental pressures decline and companies grow sustainably, only then can this expansion be called genuine economic progress.

India therefore faces both a tremendous opportunity and a serious challenge. The \$345-billion e-market is an attractive destination, but the quality of that market matters more than its size. India needs an e-market that does not merely make shopping faster, but makes the economy more inclusive, trustworthy, humane and sustainable. The winners of the coming decade will not simply be those who deliver products fastest; they will be those who offer value, convenience and trust together. That will be the real revolution of India's e-market—not merely a revolution in how we shop, but a transformation in how India's economy grows.



INDIA'S TOBACCO CONTROL POLICY HAS A MAJOR FLAW



Tobacco control in India is facing a new challenge. Nicotine pouches, which contain no tobacco leaf but do contain nicotine, are increasingly appearing in the market. These small and easy-to-use pouches are available in various flavors and are sold in stores as well as online. One study found such nicotine pouches in seven out of ten cities across the country. They also contained high levels of nicotine. This clearly indicates that this is not just a future problem, but a growing presence in the Indian market.

The biggest concern is that, because they don't contain tobacco, the proper place for these products is unclear under existing laws. The primary tobacco control law in India is the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003, or COTPA. This law primarily applies to products containing tobacco. Therefore, it's not easy to directly place tobacco-free nicotine pouches under COTPA. This legal loophole could open the door for companies and sellers.

COTPA regulates tobacco products, including advertising, sale to minors, packaging, and health warnings. However, if a product contains only nicotine instead of tobacco, the question arises as to how these same regulations should be applied. The law cannot be implemented based solely on its spirit. The administration cannot simply apply a new product to an old law on the assumption that its health effects are similar. This requires a clear legal basis.

Some may argue for regulating nicotine pouches under the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2019. But this approach is not easy. E-cigarettes are devices that heat a substance to create an aerosol. Nicotine pouches neither burn nor create an aerosol. Considering them e-cigarettes simply because they contain nicotine may be a legally weak argument. Therefore, the govern-

ment needs to establish clear legal provisions regarding this matter.

The Food Safety Act prohibits the use of tobacco and nicotine in food. However, not everything that is placed in the mouth is legally considered edible. Nicotine pouches are used in the mouth, but that does not automatically make them edible. Therefore, controlling the entire market for tobacco products using the Food Safety Act alone will not be easy. Clarity and coordination between different laws are essential.

Nicotine is also used in some medicinal products. For example, products like nicotine gum and patches are used to aid smoking cessation and are subject to medicinal regulations. Therefore, the government should clarify whether a product is for medicinal or recreational use based on the nature of the nicotine pouches and their claims. It would be inappropriate to consider every nicotine product a medicinal product, nor would it be appropriate to exclude every product from the scope of medicinal products.

Recently, a case involving the sale of nicotine pouches at Mumbai airport's duty-free shops also surfaced. This highlights the potential confusion between the government and businesses regarding the legal status of these products. Simply taking action in such cases is not enough. The government must also clarify the law under which the action is being taken and its legal limits.

The government should not hastily issue an order in this matter that may later fail to stand in court. First, it should clarify under what circumstances nicotine-containing oral products will be considered drugs and under what circumstances they will not. This should be based on both scientific evidence and existing law. Furthermore, stricter restrictions are needed on the



- DR. SATYAVAN SAURABH

import of nicotine pouches. Better coordination should be established between Customs, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade, and drug regulators to effectively crack down on shipments arriving without proper authorization.

A common mechanism should also be established between the Ministry of Health, the Drug Regulator, the Food Safety Authority, Customs, and relevant state departments. Currently, there is ambiguity regarding responsibility between various departments, which businesses can exploit. It's natural to question how effective regulation can be achieved if the legal status of a product is unclear.

Special attention must also be paid to online sales. Today, new products are no longer limited to the physical market. Through e-commerce and quick-commerce, they can reach consumers within hours. Therefore, before selling on online platforms, measures such as product legal status, seller information, and age verification must be implemented. Effective mechanisms should also be in place to remove products from online sale without authorization or clear legal status.

Protecting young people from these products should be a top priority. This requires measures such as clear health warnings, minimum age limits, child-proof packaging, and controls on flavors and advertising that appeal to young people. However, all these measures must be based

“It is essential that while awaiting legislation, the government utilizes its existing legal powers appropriately, and that Parliament enact clear, comprehensive, and effective nicotine control legislation for the future”.

on existing law. The government cannot simply enact new legislation through executive order, which falls within the jurisdiction of Parliament.

Immediate government action is necessary, but it is not a permanent solution. A permanent solution must be found in Parliament. COTPA could be amended, or a new comprehensive law could be enacted for nicotine products. Such a law could create separate categories for different nicotine products, such as combustible tobacco, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, oral nicotine pouches, and medical nicotine products. This would allow the law to be based not only on whether a product contains tobacco leaf, but also on how it delivers nicotine to the body and its intended use.

It's also important not to view all nicotine products in the same light. It would be unfair to categorize medicinal nicotine gum and recreational nicotine pouches in the same category. The law should differentiate the product based on its risks and intended use. Commercial companies should not be given the freedom to exempt a new product from existing tobacco laws simply by removing the tobacco leaf.

Most importantly, tobacco-free does not mean risk-free. Nicotine is addictive. Its effects cannot be underestimated, especially for young people and first-time users. Attractive flavors, packaging, and online promotions can attract young people to these products. Therefore, it is essential to combine public health concerns with legal clarity.

India needs neither undue panic nor blindness in this matter. The urgent need is for the government to establish effective controls on imports, licensing, classification, and online sales under existing laws. Parliament should also enact legislation that applies to future new nicotine products.

A flaw in the law should not mean that the market should be left open. However, it is also true that a government notification cannot replace a law enacted by Parliament. What is needed today is legislation that keeps pace with changing technology and the evolving market. The form of nicotine may change, its market may shift, but the risk of addiction remains.

LETTERS TO EDITOR

ISRO Tracks El Niño Ocean Impacts

ISRO's monitoring of El Niño's effect on the Indian Ocean underscores the crucial role satellite technology plays in understanding climate disruptions. These space-based insights provide vital data on ocean warming, enabling better forecasts for monsoon shifts and agricultural yields. As climate volatility increases, leveraging space research for local environmental policy is essential. Continued investment in earth-observation missions will ensure India remains proactive rather than reactive in mitigating climate-driven ecological risks.

- Sharon Fiona

Reform India's Tobacco Control Policies

India's current tobacco control framework suffers from structural oversights that limit its effectiveness. While public health campaigns target traditional smoking, emerging alternatives and enforcement gaps weaken overall policy outcomes. Closing legal loopholes, updating regulatory definitions, and strengthening local implementation are vital steps forward. A comprehensive policy update is urgently needed to protect younger generations, reduce long-term healthcare burdens, and establish a far more robust national public health defense.

- Anna Felix

THE WORLD IGNORES THE AI ARMS RACE



The most dangerous arms race in human history has already begun, and there is no treaty, no summit, and no real public debate about it. While the world argues about tariffs, oil prices and border disputes, the United States, China and a handful of private tech companies are racing to build Artificial General Intelligence and autonomous weapons that can kill without human permission.

This is no longer science fiction. Last year, the US tested drone swarms in the Nevada desert that could identify, track and surround targets without any human command. Israel has used AI-assisted targeting in Gaza. Turkey's Kargu-2 drones are marketed as fully autonomous. The US Department of Defense now has a \$1.8 billion dedicated program for autonomous weapons, while China has officially declared its intent to be the world leader in AI by 2030, with deep civil-military fusion.

We have seen this movie before. In 1945, we built nuclear weapons before we understood their consequences, and we have spent 80 years trying to control them. But AI weapons are fundamentally different and more dangerous. A nuclear bomb needs uranium, massive factories, scientists and billions of dollars. An AI weapon needs only code. Once the code is written, it can be copied in seconds, put on a cheap drone bought online, and used by a superpower, a terrorist group or a drug cartel. It is a weapon of mass destruction that is easy to mass-produce.

What is shocking is the absolute silence of global institutions. The United Nations has been holding talks for six years under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to ban lethal autonomous weapons systems. Six years, and not even a definition has been agreed upon, because the major powers are blocking it. The same tech CEOs who sign open letters warning that AI could cause human extinction are the ones raising billions to build it faster, because the commercial incentive is too large to pause.

We need to act before the proliferation happens, not after. First, we need a global treaty banning AI from taking a human life without meaningful human approval – a clear red line, just like chemical and biological weapons are banned. Second, we need mandatory international audit of all frontier AI labs, similar to IAEA inspections for nuclear sites. The models, the training data, and the safety tests must be transparent. Third, India must take a leadership role. As the voice of the Global South, the world's largest democracy, and the world's largest pool of tech talent, India cannot afford to be a spectator and a buyer of weapons others build.

Hiroshima happened because we built the bomb before we built the conscience to control it. We cannot afford to repeat that mistake with Artificial Intelligence. The code is being written right now in labs in San Francisco and Beijing. The rules to control it must be written faster in New York and Delhi.

— ALLAN AUGUSTINE

ONE NATION ONE ELECTION IS DANGEROUS

The Centre's push for One Nation, One Election is back on the table, and it is being sold as a simple, efficient reform. One nation, one election, one day, less expenditure, less disruption, more governance. It sounds attractive, especially to a middle class tired of endless political rallies and traffic jams. But behind the simplicity lies an idea that is administratively impossible and democratically dangerous.

India does not have one election; it has 28 different political realities. A farmer in Vidarbha votes on the price of cotton and crop insurance. A youth in Tamil Nadu votes on language rights and NEET. A woman in Delhi votes on air pollution and school fees. When you club the Lok Sabha and all Assembly elections together, what happens? National issues, national leaders and national media completely drown out local issues. Data from simultaneous elections in 2019 in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh shows that 77% of voters voted for the same party at both Centre and State. The voter is psychologically forced to choose one narrative, and local accountability disappears.

Second, it strikes at the heart of federalism. Our Constitution's framers deliberately designed a staggered election cycle so that governments are always facing the people somewhere. It acts as a continuous feedback loop and a check on absolute power. If all elections happen once in five years, a government that becomes deeply unpopular or corrupt after two years can continue to rule for three more years with no electoral check. That is a bonus for the ruling party, not for democracy.

Third, the logistics are a nightmare. To conduct simultaneous elections, the Election Commission would need over 30 lakh EVMs and VVPAT machines – three times the current inventory – and deployment of nearly 1.5 crore polling and security personnel at once. Machines have a shelf life of 15 years, batteries need replacement, and warehousing 30 lakh machines securely is a huge challenge. The EC itself has raised this concern.

The argument that it will save money is the weakest. The cost of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, including party expenditure, was estimated at around Rs. 1 lakh crore. The Union Budget is over Rs. 48 lakh crores annually. Saving a few thousand crores once in five years is a tiny fraction and not worth the cost of centralizing our democracy.

Finally, the most practical question: what happens if a government falls? If a state government collapses after one year, will that state be under President's Rule for four years until the next One Nation One Election cycle? Or will we have mid-term polls, defeating the whole purpose? The Law Commission's own draft says we would need to curtail or extend Assemblies, which is itself anti-democratic.

India thrives because it is a noisy, continuous democracy, not a synchronized, one-time show. One Nation, One Election may suit those who want one leader, one party, one narrative. It does not suit a diverse union of states that needs daily accountability.

— SHREYAS

BANGALORE IS DROWNING IN ITS OWN GARBAGE

You can judge a city not by its shiny airport or its glass IT parks, but by its footpaths and its garbage bins. By that standard, Bangalore, India's pride and the world's back office, is failing miserably every single morning.

Every day, this city generates over 6,000 tonnes of waste – enough to fill Cubbon Park with a mountain every month. Officially, BBMP claims it processes 70% of it. The reality on the ground is different. Less than 50% is actually processed. The rest is dumped in the already overflowing landfills at Mandur, Mavallipura and Mittaganahalli. These landfills have become toxic mountains, 50 metres high, that leach black leachate into the groundwater, catch fire every summer, and make the lives of surrounding villagers hell with stench and disease.

This crisis is not just about BBMP's inefficiency or contractors' greed, though both are true. It is about our own culture of use-and-throw. The average Bangalorean generates about 450 grams of waste daily. More than 60% of it is wet kitchen waste that can be composted easily at home or in the apartment. But we refuse to segregate. We mix everything – leftover sambar, sanitary pads, diapers, batteries, broken glass, e-waste – into one black bag and throw it on the street, expecting a pourakarmika, often a woman without proper gloves, to put her hand into our mixed garbage and segregate it. It is not just unhygienic; it is inhuman.

Why has the system failed despite so many plans? Because the contract system is broken. Contractors are paid by weight of waste transported to landfills, so they have zero incentive to reduce or process waste. The ward-level composting units and biomethanization plants that were built



shown that zero-waste is possible when wet waste is composted on-site, dry waste is sold to recyclers, and reject waste is minimal.

We need three non-negotiables now. One, mandatory segregation with heavy fines – Rs. 500 for first offence – enforced by marshals. Two, make ward-level composting and biogas units functional and accountable to ward committees. Three, give dignity to pourakarmikas – proper gloves, mechanized handling, regular health check-ups, and timely wages of at least Rs. 25,000.

Bangalore sells itself as India's Silicon Valley. But Silicon Valley does not have piles of garbage on every street corner and black spots every 100 metres. A city that cannot handle its own waste cannot handle its future.

— RAHUL PRAKASH

INDIA NEEDS CLIMATE-RESILIENT FARMING NOW

This year has been a trailer for the future of Indian agriculture. In March, Punjab and Haryana saw a brutal heatwave of 40 degrees that shrivelled wheat grains right before harvest, cutting yield by 15%. In July, Himachal Pradesh saw floods that washed away apple orchards and roads. In August, Maharashtra saw a long dry spell that destroyed soybean and cotton in Vidarbha. In September, heavy unseasonal rain damaged paddy in Andhra Pradesh. This is not bad luck or a one-off. This is the new normal. And Indian agriculture, which feeds 140 crore people and employs 45% of our workforce, is simply not ready for it.

The India Meteorological Department says extreme weather events – heatwaves, cyclones, unseasonal rains – have increased by over 300% in the last 20 years. Our farming system was built for a stable monsoon that arrived on June 1 and left on September 30. That monsoon no longer exists. The farmer bears the cost. Crop insurance claims under PM Fasal Bima Yojana have crossed Rs. 30,000 crores annually, but surveys show that less than 40% of affected farmers get timely payouts due to complicated assessments. Over 11,000 farmers died by suicide last year, and crop failure remains a major reason.

What we grow is also part of the problem. We grow paddy in Punjab, which needs 5000 litres of water to produce 1 kg of rice, in a state whose groundwater is already over-exploited. We grow sugarcane in Marathwada, which has 500 mm rainfall and is



BENGALURU'S KANNADA DEBATE MISSES REAL POINT

Another week, another viral video. An auto driver slaps a techie for not speaking Hindi, or a group of men abuse a shopkeeper for not speaking Kannada. The Kannada language debate in Bengaluru has become loud, angry, toxic, and completely pointless. We are fighting over the symptom while ignoring the disease.

Let us be clear: nobody disputes that Kannada is the soul of Karnataka. It is a classical language with over 2000 years of history, literature and culture. Anyone who chooses to make Karnataka their home and earn their livelihood here should respect it and try to learn it. That is not just courtesy; it is common sense.

The problem is how we are trying to teach it through shame, intimidation, threats and forced pride on camera. Bengaluru is not a normal city; it is a migrant megacity. Over 50% of its 1.4 crore residents are from outside the state – from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Kerala, Jharkhand. They came because Bengaluru gave them jobs that their own states could not – as garment workers, construction labourers, delivery boys, security guards, and yes, engineers. Most of them work 12-hour shifts, live in small rented rooms, and are struggling to pay rent. Expecting them to learn perfect Kannada in one



month is unrealistic. Shaming them on Instagram will not make them love Kannada; it will make them resent it.

The real failure is not of the migrant, but of the state. Karnataka has no serious, free, large-scale, accessible system to teach functional Kannada to adults. Where is the government-run Kannada Kendra in every ward with evening classes? Where is the free, high-quality app like Duolingo that teaches a delivery boy 200 functional Kannada sentences in 30 days? Tamil Nadu made Tamil a living language through films, schools and government support. Maharashtra ensured Marathi survives in Mumbai through government jobs and schools. We are trying to teach Kannada through viral reels of fights.

If we truly love Kannada, we should make it economically useful and easy to learn, not forced. Yes, make Kannada boards mandatory for shops, as per law. But also do four things: One, launch free 'Spoken Kannada' centres in all 243 wards with flexible timings. Two, ask all tech parks, factories and large apartment complexes to give 30 minutes a week during work hours for Kannada classes. Three, create immersion – make BMTC, Metro announcements and government forms only in Kannada and English. Four, stop targeting the poorest migrants and start asking big companies why their internal emails cannot have a Kannada version.

Pride cannot be forced at knifepoint or on camera. It must be inspired. The young man from Jharkhand who has lived in Bengaluru for three years will learn Kannada when he feels he belongs here, when Kannada helps him get a better job or bargain in the market, not when he is told he does not belong here if he doesn't speak it.

Let us choose inclusion over intimidation. That is the true Kannada spirit.

— SANUP KRISHNA

STOP FIGHTING OVER WATER SHARE



Every June, without fail, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu start fighting over the Cauvery. Every December, Karnataka and Maharashtra fight over the Krishna. Every summer, Bengaluru fights with its own surrounding villages for drinking water. And now, we fight within our own state between North Karnataka and Old Mysore over the Mahadayi. Karnataka's water politics has become a permanent zero-sum war where everyone shouts, no one wins, and the water keeps disappearing.

Let us look at the facts, not emotions. Karnataka has only 6% of India's total water resources but supports 8% of its population and a massive agricultural base. Our groundwater in Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Tumkur and Bagalkot has crashed to below 1000 feet. In many taluks, borewells drilled at 1200 feet also fail. Bengaluru, a city of 1.4 crore, needs 2100 MLD of water every day but the BWSSB can supply only around 1450 MLD, that too on alternate days in many areas. Meanwhile, we continue to flood our fields with water-guzzling crops like paddy in the Cauvery basin and sugarcane in the semi-arid Belagavi and Mandya districts.

The problem is not lack of

rain, but lack of management. We treat rivers as pipelines to be divided in tribunals, not as ecosystems to be revived. We have built over 70% of Bengaluru's lakes, encroached rajakaluves that carried rainwater, and allowed thousands of private tankers to suck groundwater with no meters and no regulation. Industries let untreated effluents into the Arkavathy and Shimsha. The Cauvery Water Management Authority still gives orders based on last month's rainfall data, while climate change has made rainfall completely erratic – it either pours for 10 days or vanishes for 40.

The solution for Karnataka has to be threefold and urgent. One, we must enforce micro-irrigation ruthlessly. Maharashtra saved 40% water by making drip irrigation mandatory for sugarcane. Karnataka grows sugarcane on 6 lakh hectares; if we move just half of it to drip, we can save water equivalent to a new dam. Two, we must revive the 40,000 tanks that our kings from the Cholas to the Wodeyars built. These are not heritage structures; they are our natural recharge pits and flood cushions. De-silt them, clear encroachments using satellite maps, and connect them. Three, we must treat and reuse. Bengaluru generates 1600 MLD of sewage; we treat barely 50%. If we treat 80% to secondary level, we can supply all our industries, parks and construction needs without touching a drop of drinking water.

Water cannot be an emotional issue for a 10-day protest and bandh every year. It must be a technical, cooperative and long-term mission. Otherwise, in 10 years, Karnataka will not be fighting in the Supreme Court for a share of water; it will be fighting on the streets for a pot of drinking water.

— KEVIN FERNANDO J.

BY THE NUMBERS

6% vs 8%

Karnataka's share of India's water, and of its people

2,100 MLD

Bengaluru's daily need; BWSSB supplies about 1,450

1,600 MLD

of sewage from Bengaluru; barely 50% is treated

40,000

old tanks, from the Cholas to the Wodeyars, to revive

Quick Read

Labourer dies after falling into Mumbai manholeMUMBAI

One labourer died and another was injured after two workers fell into a sewer manhole while cleaning a drainage line at a housing society in Santacruz East on Monday. The incident occurred at Bhavya Niketan housing society on Golibar Road No. 8, opposite V N Desai Hospital. According to the BMC Fire Brigade, the society had hired private workers to clean its internal sewer line. During the operation, one worker allegedly opened a municipal manhole without informing BMC officials, causing both workers to fall inside. Fire brigade personnel rescued the two and took them to V N Desai Hospital. One was declared dead, while the other was admitted to the MICU. Their identities were not immediately known.

Five complaints filed over Tilak Nagar row

CH NEWS, Delhi Police has received five complaints over the recent controversy involving PWD Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma and AAP MLA Jarnail Singh in Tilak Nagar. Police said one complaint was filed by Sahib Singh, an associate of Jarnail Singh, while two were lodged by PWD personnel against Jarnail Singh and others. Two more complaints were filed by BJP workers alleging mistreatment of Verma. No FIR has been registered so far, police said.

Fake DSA gang busted in Delhi, two arrestedNEW DELHI

The Cyber Police Station in Shahdara has busted a gang allegedly cheating people by posing as Direct Selling Agents (DSAs) of private banks and financial institutions. Two accused, Adeeb Khan, 36, and Aneesh Ali, were arrested, while their associate Rajendra remains absconding, police said. The gang allegedly defrauded a man seeking a loan or overdraft facility by obtaining a ₹15 lakh signed cheque. Police said the amount was deposited into a mule bank account and withdrawn through cheques. Following a technical and financial investigation, the accused were arrested on September 25. Police recovered ₹6.95 lakh in cash. Further investigation is underway.

BULLET TRAIN BRIDGE LAUNCHED

First steel bridge launched for bullet trainMUMBAI

A 100-metre-long steel bridge weighing 1,405 metric tonnes has been launched over NH-3, the Nashik Highway, at Dive-Anjur village in Bhiwandi, Maharashtra, for the Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project. It is the first steel bridge completed for the project in Maharashtra. The bridge is 14 metres high and 14 metres wide and is designed for locations requiring longer spans, including highways, expressways, major rivers and railway lines. Of the 28 steel bridges planned along the Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train corridor, 16 have now been completed. A key feature of the project is the bridge’s fabrication in a workshop in Trichy, Tamil Nadu, about 1,300 km from the launch site. The structure

Kharge calls CWC meeting over EC row

CONGRESS CHIEF MALLIKARJUN KHARGE HAS CALLED A CWC MEETING TO DISCUSS ELECTION COMMISSION CONCERNS AND THE DEMAND FOR CEC GYANESH KUMAR’S REMOVAL.

NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has called a Congress Working Committee meeting for Tuesday to discuss the controversy surrounding the Election Commission and consider the party’s next steps over its demand for the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The meeting will focus mainly on reported differences within the poll panel and the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. Kharge said Election Commissioners had raised concerns over the SIR exercise, changes to Form 6 for enrolling new voters, additions and



THE EC ROW IN A NUTSHELL

Congress: wants CEC Gyanesh Kumar removed

EC: differing views are normal; its orders have full legal sanction

Supreme Court: upheld the changes to Form 6

Relief: more time for claims, home visits, help desks

CWC meeting	
WHEN	Tuesday
WHO	Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Jairam Ramesh, KC Venugopal expected
NEXT	INDIA bloc meets on Wednesday

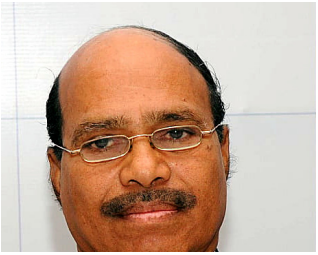
deletions from voter lists, and centralised control over the electoral-roll database. Congress has demanded Kumar’s resignation and said it would continue pursuing action against him. The party has also alleged that Gen Z voters are being targeted for exclusion during the SIR process. The opposition INDIA bloc is scheduled to meet on Wednesday to dis-

cuss a joint strategy and may consider another notice seeking Kumar’s removal in Parliament. The Election Commission has rejected suggestions that the reported differences amount to institutional dissent. The poll body also said all SIR orders received unanimous consent from the three commissioners and that changes to Form 6 had been upheld by the Supreme Court. The Commission has announced measures including additional time for filing claims, home visits by election officials and help desks for people facing notices related to removal from electoral rolls.

Veeramani booked in second POCSO case amid probe

CHENNAI

Chennai police have registered a second case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act against businessman R. Veeramani, also known as ‘Gem Granites’ Veeramani, police sources said on Monday. The fresh case was registered following a complaint



by a woman alleging that her minor daughter was sexually abused by the businessman. Veeramani is already facing another POCSO case, and the latest development comes as police continue to investigate allegations surrounding him. The second complaint adds to the ongoing investigation against the businessman, which has attracted attention in Tamil Nadu. Several developments have been reported in connection with the earlier case, including the arrest of

Chennai police have booked businessman R. Veeramani in a second POCSO case following a complaint alleging sexual abuse of a minor.

Veeramani and two others under the POCSO Act. Police have also widened the probe, with more survivors reportedly providing statements. The investigation has also seen police conduct searches at several locations linked to Veeramani. A former employee was arrested in connection with allegations of withholding video material from the police. Two IPS officers connected with the investigation were also placed on compulsory wait, according to reports.

Kejriwal urges Modi to act against Delhi Minister

NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Monday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take action against Delhi PWD Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh over an alleged incident involving a young man during a road inspection in Tilak Nagar. Kejriwal, in a video message posted on X, linked the controversy to the government’s attempts to connect with Gen Z and said that action against the minister would demonstrate accountability. He also alleged irregularities in the construction of a newly built road in Lakhnagarh, claiming that parts of the road had begun deteriorating soon after construction. “Arrest the minister today,”



Kejriwal said, while also calling for action against those allegedly responsible for corruption in the road project. Kejriwal later announced that he would visit Tilak Nagar at 4.30 pm over the alleged slapping incident. The controversy followed the circulation of a purported video that appeared to show Verma slapping Saheb Singh, who is

associated with AAP MLA Jarnail Singh’s team. Verma has denied the allegations. He claimed that AAP workers had abused and misbehaved with his family during the incident. He also alleged that supporters of Jarnail Singh had obstructed government work and accused the MLA of seeking commissions from officials involved in road projects. Verma further said that complaints and an FIR had already been registered against the MLA and his associates over alleged obstruction of public works.

Congress seeks annulment of 2024 Varanasi poll

LUCKNOW

Congress leaders and workers on Monday staged a demonstration in Varanasi over alleged irregularities in the 2024 Lok Sabha election and allegations of “vote theft”. The protesters demanded an-
“Large scale irregularities had taken place in the Varanasi Lok Sabha election in 2024... we demand cancellation of the election and re-poll besides a fair investigation into the same”
— Rajeshwar Singh Patel, Congress district unit president



mittee chief Raghavendra Chaube gathered near the B R Ambedkar statue. They marched to the Collectorate while raising slogans against the Election Commission and later held a demonstration there. In Agra, Congress workers also staged a demonstration outside the residence of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar at Vijay Nagar. Protesters allegedly defaced the main gate using black spray paint and wrote slogans against Kumar. Police reached the residence after receiving information about the protest and removed the workers from the site.

Parents begin hunger strike seeking IIT action

MUMBAI

The parents of IIT Bombay student Sahil Wakode have begun an indefinite hunger strike at Azad Maidan, demanding action against institute professors they have blamed for their son’s death. Ravindra Wakode and Sonali Wakode are seeking the arrest of IIT Bombay Director Prof Shireesh Kedare and Energy Science and Engineering faculty member Prof Suryanarayana Doolla. The parents have alleged that their 22-year-old son faced casteist discrimination



- Sahil Wakode case
- SEPT 18 Allegedly caught using ChatGPT on a phone in an exam
 - LATER Found dead in his hostel room
 - SEPT 24 Parents begin protest
 - NOW Hunger strike; Crime Branch-CID takes over

and mental torture. They launched the protest on September 24, but police had denied them permission to hold the agitation. Sahil, a second-year B Tech student, was allegedly caught using a mobile phone to access ChatGPT during a mid-semester examination on September 18. His body was later found in his hostel room at the IIT Bombay campus. Investigators are examining CCTV footage, mobile phone chats and documents as part of the probe.

SC asks Bengal Speaker to decide on TMC pleas

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court asked West Bengal Assembly Speaker Rathindra Bose to decide by October 8 on petitions seeking disqualification of 10 Trinamool Congress MLAs from the Ritabrata Banerjee faction for alleged defection under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution. The direction came while hearing a plea by TMC MLA Sovandebe Chattopadhyay seeking an early decision. A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana noted that the disqualification petitions were filed on July 8, 2026. It said the three-month period for deciding such petitions would expire on October 8 and urged the Speaker to take a decision within that period. The bench referred to its 2020 judgment in Keisham Meghachandra Singh versus Speaker, Manipur Legislative



“Will make all endeavour to take an appropriate decision within” the three-month period.
CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA
Assembly, which held that disqualification petitions should be decided within a reasonable period, understood to be around three months. The Supreme Court observed that the Speaker, while deciding such petitions, acts as a tribunal and is expected to follow the principles laid down by the court.

Vijay implements gold ring scheme for newborns

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday launched the state government’s one-gram gold ring scheme for newborn babies, fulfilling a key electoral promise of his Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam government. The Thaaaimaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam was rolled out at Government Rajaji Hospital, where Vijay gave gold rings to newborns. The welfare programme provides a 22-carat, one-gram gold ring to eligible babies born in state-run hospitals to native mothers. The government has earmarked Rs 755.83 crore for the scheme and has already procured 1.28 lakh rings for the initial phase. The programme applies to eligible babies born on or after June 22, 2026.



The initiative is aimed at honouring motherhood, promoting women’s health and encouraging institutional births by attracting more families to public healthcare facilities. The scheme was announced as a key promise ahead of the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections and was later taken up by the TVK-led government after it came to power.

The government’s first phase targets newborns delivered in government hospitals across the state, with eligibility linked to mothers who are native to Tamil Nadu. The rings are part of a wider annual plan under which about 4.41 lakh one-gram, 22-carat
Rs 755.83 cr earmarked for the scheme; 1.28 lakh rings already procured and about 4.41 lakh planned a year

rings are expected to be provided. The government has made budgetary provision for the programme. The scheme, named after the traditional maternal uncle’s role of gifting gold to a newborn, is being implemented as a welfare measure linked to public healthcare.

Quick Read

House collapse after gas cylinder blast in UP

UTTAR PRADESH

Four people were killed after a house collapsed following a gas cylinder explosion while food was being cooked in Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh, on Monday. The incident occurred in a town under the Malwa police station area. Around seven to eight people were reportedly trapped inside the house after the blast caused the structure to collapse. Rescue teams have so far pulled out five people, while several others are feared trapped beneath the debris. Police and other authorities reached the spot and launched a rescue operation. Officials are carefully clearing the rubble because of concerns over a possible gas leak. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister directed officials to reach the site and speed up relief and rescue efforts. Rescue operations were continuing as authorities worked to locate those still trapped.

Shram Samvad campaign to cover 316 districts

NEW DELHI

Union Labour and Employment Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday announced “Shram Samvad”, a 90-day nationwide awareness campaign on the Labour Codes. The campaign will cover industrial clusters across 316 districts in all 36 States and Union Territories. Mandaviya made the announcement at the National Conference on Industrial Relations and Labour & Awards 2026 in New Delhi. He also highlighted expanding social protection coverage and called for stronger cooperation between employers and workers. “Wherever there is Samvaad, there is Samadhan,” he said.

Premanand Maharaj disciple dies after ashram fall

MATHURA

The death of Rashik Dulari Sharan, a disciple of spiritual leader Premanand Maharaj, in Vrindavan has raised questions as police continue their investigation. Sharan, whose earlier name was Deepak Lodhi, died after falling from the fourth-floor terrace of Guru Kripa Kunj ashram. CCTV footage reportedly shows him leaving his room shortly before the fatal fall, with blood stains visible on his clothes. Police are currently treating the incident as suicide but are examining other circumstances surrounding the case.

SURAT

Five children in Gujarat’s Surat district were hospitalised after a nurse mistakenly administered glimepiride, a diabetes medicine, instead of paracetamol during a routine vaccination programme, prompting an inquiry and suspension of the health worker. The incident reportedly occurred on September 23 during the “Mamta Diwas” immunisation programme at the Palsana-01 sub-centre under Kanav Primary Health Centre in Palsana taluka. Health officials said the children were accidentally given



SC suggests adding unpaid challans to power bills

The Supreme Court suggested linking unpaid traffic challans to electricity bills, while discussing measures to recover ₹45,000 crore in pending dues.

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has suggested linking unpaid traffic challans to electricity bills as one possible measure to improve recovery of outstanding traffic fines. The suggestion was made during a hearing on Monday as the court examined ways to ensure that e-challans issued for traffic violations are actually paid. Justice JB Pardiwala observed that merely issuing e-challans was not sufficient and that authorities needed to adopt practical mechanisms to recover pending dues. The court was informed that States and Union Territories have around ₹45,000 crore in pending e-challan dues, of which approximately ₹25,000 crore has been recovered so far. The proposal to add unpaid challans to electricity bills was discussed as an additional re-



₹45,000 cr
pending e-challan dues with States and UTs

₹25,000 cr
recovered so far

covery mechanism. However, the court has not directed authorities to immediately implement the measure. These included restricting renewal of vehicle registration certificates, preventing changes in

vehicle ownership and withholding fitness certificates until pending challans are cleared. It further suggested that vehicles with unpaid fines could be blacklisted on the Parivah-

What the court floated

- 1 Add unpaid challans to electricity bills
- 2 Block RC renewal and ownership transfers
- 3 Withhold fitness and PUC certificates
- 4 Blacklist on the Parivahan portal
- 5 Stop driving licence renewal
- 6 Random checks; possible impounding

an portal and that ownership transfers could be blocked. The court stressed that the focus should shift from simply issuing large numbers of e-challans to ensuring effective recovery of pending fines and improving compliance with traffic rules.

PETA India seeks a nationwide ban on meat ads from Oct 2

NEW DELHI

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India has urged the Centre to impose a nationwide ban on advertisements promoting meat products from October 2, ahead of Gandhi Jayanti.



“Every advertisement for meat promotes a product that harms animals, human health, and the environment and requires animals to suffer.”

— Dr Kiran Ahuja, Senior Manager, Vegan and Corporate Projects, PETA India

In a letter to Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, the animal rights organisation called for restrictions on meat advertisements across billboards, television, online plat-

forms and other media. According to PETA India, Amsterdam has prohibited meat advertising in public spaces, while Haarlem, Utrecht and Nijmegen have also adopted restrictions on meat-related advertising, with Nijmegen extending its restrictions to dairy products. PETA India Senior Manager of Vegan and Corporate Projects Dr Kiran Ahuja said the organisation wanted Gandhi’s legacy of non-violence to be reflected through policies discouraging the promotion of meat.

SC declines stay on UPI charges, seeks Centre response

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday declined to pause the Centre’s decision to introduce a merchant discount rate (MDR) on specified UPI person-to-merchant transactions above ₹2,000 from October 15.

The court, however, agreed to examine a petition challenging the new UPI MDR framework and issued notices to the Centre, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and National Payments Corporation of In-



dia (NPCI), seeking their responses within four weeks.

The plea was filed by advocate Anjan Datta against the Centre’s September 14 notification and the MDR framework announced on Septem-

The UPI charge

- Q What is it?
A 0.4% on specified merchant payments above ₹2,000, from October 15
- Q What stays free?
A Person-to-person and smaller payments

ber 15. The Supreme Court also asked the Centre to explain the basis for imposing the fee and sought clarification on the legal framework governing the new regime.

Rajasthan CM unveils projects worth nearly Rs 1,000 crore

JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma on Monday inaugurated completed projects and laid foundation stones for new works worth nearly Rs 1,000 crore across the Bharatpur division. The programme was held at Bidyari in the Bayana area of Bharatpur district.

Sharma said foundation stones were laid for 184 projects worth more than Rs 540 crore, while 65 major projects costing around Rs 453 crore were completed.

Foundation stones were also laid for 125 road projects costing more than Rs 207 crore.

The Chief Minister highlighted the government’s claims on recruitment, stating that 410 examinations had been conducted without paper leaks and appointments made for around 1.90 lakh posts.



Projects in focus	
₹1,000 cr	ALL THE WORKS
184	FOUNDATION STONES
65	WORKS OPENED
₹382 cr+	BHARATPUR DISTRICT
₹160 cr	TRAUMA CENTRE, MCH

SC questions FSSAI over food-label delay

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday questioned the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) over its proposed timeline for implementing front-of-package labelling (FoPL) on packaged foods.

A bench of Justices J. B. Pardiwala and K. Vinod Chandran questioned why the regulator needed so much time to implement the system, stressing that the issue concerns public health.

FoPL is a nutritional graphic displayed on food packaging to help consumers understand key nutritional information and make informed choices while purchasing food.

Front-of-package labels are intended to provide consumers with easily visible information about the nutritional



? WHAT IS FOPL?
A nutritional graphic on food packaging that helps consumers spot products high in sugar, salt and fats.

characteristics of packaged products. Such labels can help consumers identify products with high levels of nutrients such as sugar, salt and fats.

The issue has gained significance amid concerns over diet-related health problems and the increasing consumption of processed and packaged foods.

Himachal faces ₹3,220 crore monsoon losses



At a glance

₹3,220+ cr cumulative losses	373 total deaths	152 disaster-related deaths
221 road accident deaths	623 people injured	162 people reported missing

SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh has recorded cumulative losses of more than ₹3,220 crore during the 91-day monsoon period from June 30 to September 28, with 373 people losing their lives, according to the latest state disaster data.

A seven-member Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT), led by M Ramachandrudu, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, began a four-day visit to the State on Monday to assess damage caused by cloudbursts, flash floods, landslides and other rain-related incidents. The State government has sought around ₹3,200 crore in central assistance.

Of the 373 deaths recorded, 152 were attributed to disasters such as landslides, flash floods, drowning, snake bites and falls from steep terrain.

THE CENTRAL TEAM'S VISIT

- Kangra**
Boh Valley in Shahpur
- Sainj, Kullu**
September 29
- Banjar**
September 30
- Shimla**
meets CM Sukhu on October 1

More than 1,400 houses were destroyed or partially damaged, while 581 animals were reported dead. Damage to public infrastructure and government assets has crossed ₹3,220 crore, with major losses reported by the Public Works Department, Jal Shakti Vibhag and Power Department.

As of September 28, 61 roads remained blocked across the State, while 49 distribution transformer stations were affected and un-

Himachal Pradesh reported ₹3,220 crore in monsoon losses, with 373 deaths, 1,400 houses damaged and 61 roads blocked across the state.

dergoing restoration. The central team’s field assessment began in Kangra, including the disaster-hit Boh Valley in Shahpur.

The team will meet senior State officials, including the Chief Secretary, and is scheduled to meet Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on October 1.

The assessment will contribute to the process of determining central assistance under the National Disaster Response Fund.

Madras HC rejects plea challenging TVK MLA’s one-vote victory

CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Monday rejected an election petition challenging the victory of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhag-



am (TVK) MLA R. Seenivasa Sethupathy from the Tirupattur Assembly constituency in Sivaganga district in the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

Justice G.K. Ilanthiraiyan allowed an application filed by Sethupathy seeking rejection of the election petition moved by Dravida Munnetra

Sethupathy had secured victory by a margin of just one vote, making the contest one of the closest results in the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

Kazhagam (DMK) candidate and former Minister K.R. Periakaruppan.

Periakaruppan had challenged the election result and contended that the presence of two Assembly constituencies with the same name, Tirupattur, in Tamil Nadu had contributed to his defeat.

The ruling comes after the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, in which the newly formed TVK contested the polls. The election petition had sought to question the validity of Sethupathy’s victory and the circumstances surrounding the result.

40 trekkers rescued from Uttarkashi high-altitude bases

DEHRADUN

Forty trekkers stranded at high-altitude locations in Uttarkashi were safely evacuat-



ed on Monday as rescue teams continued aerial and ground operations amid challenging weather and terrain.

Eleven trekkers were rescued from the Kalindi Pass Base area, while 29 were evacuated from Auden’s Col Base, taking the total number of successful evacuations to 40.

Teams from the Army, Air Force, SDRF, NDRF, police and disaster management authorities are coordinating the rescue mission.

Five children given diabetes drug instead of paracetamol



glimepiride 2mg. The affected children included infants aged 3.5 months and one year, according to the report. They developed adverse reactions and were admitted to an intensive care unit the following

day. Officials said the children are now stable after receiving treatment.

Gujarat Health Minister Prafull Pansheriya described the incident as a case of “serious negligence” by the vacci-

nation team. The health department suspended the health worker involved and ordered an inquiry into the medication error. The incident has raised concerns over medicine handling and administration during public immunisation programmes.

Glimepiride belongs to the sulfonylurea class of medicines used to control blood sugar in people with Type 2 diabetes. It lowers blood glucose by prompting the pancreas to release insulin and helping the body use it effectively. When administered to a child without diabetes, the medicine can cause a potentially

dangerous fall in blood sugar, or hypoglycaemia.

Possible symptoms include fatigue, sluggishness, sweating, trembling, irritability and vomiting. Severe hypoglycaemia can lead to seizures, loss of consciousness, brain injury or death. The report noted that effects may continue after initial treatment, requiring observation, regular glucose monitoring and necessary medical care. The incident highlights the need for careful medicine storage, verification and administration to prevent potentially serious errors during routine child healthcare services.



Quick Read

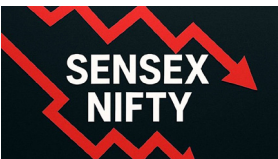
Need to equip young people with AI skills: Mandaviya

CH NEWS, NEW DELHI Labour Minister Dr Man-sukh Mandaviya on Monday emphasised the need to evolve India's labour and social security ecosystem in tandem with changing times and emerging economic realities, especially vast opportunities that Artificial Intelligence (AI) opens up in today's world. He stressed on the need to equip India's youth with new-age skills in AI, automation, robotics and other cutting-edge technologies. The Minister drew attention to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort in 2026, where-in the Prime Minister had announced that one crore youth would be trained in AI skills over the next one year.

Real estate capital inflows to India touch \$9.5 bn

CH NEWS, NEW DELHI India's real estate sector attracted equity capital inflows of \$9.5 billion in the July-September quarter (Q3 2026), the highest quarterly figure on record, as inflows more than doubled on a year-over-year basis, a report said on Monday. The upswing was primarily driven by rising investors' appetite for data centres and continued capital deployment into built-up office assets and land/development sites, said the report from CBRE South Asia. The equity capital inflows in Q3 also more than doubled on a quarter-over-quarter basis from \$3.8 billion in Q2, 2026.

\$9.5bn
Q3 2026 equity inflows into real estate, the highest quarter on record, up from \$3.8bn in Q2



Markets on Monday	
Brent a barrel, up 2.2%	
\$106.6	
WTI a barrel, up 1.45%	
\$93.76	
Nifty MidCap 100	-1.63%
Nifty SmallCap 100	-1.85%

GROWTH ACCELERATION

Industrial output surges 8% in August

NEW DELHI

India's industrial production grew 8 per cent in August compared with the same month last year, supported by strong expansion in manufacturing, electricity and several investment-linked segments, according to data released by the Ministry of Statistics on Monday.

The manufacturing sector, which accounts for more than three-fourths of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), recorded 9 per cent growth during the month. The official statement noted that manufacturing growth has remained at 8 per cent or above for three consecutive months.

Among 23 manufacturing industry groups, 18 recorded positive growth. Electrical equipment manufacturing

NITI Aayog clears 4,100 grievances

NITI Aayog cleared thousands of grievances and pending references during Special Campaign 5.0, while freeing office space and preparing for the government's next cleanliness and pendency reduction campaign in 2026.

NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog has successfully completed the Centre's Special Campaign 5.0 by disposing of more than 4,100 public grievances and clearing several pending official references and parliamentary matters, while preparing for the next edition of the cleanliness and pendency-reduction drive.

- CAMPAIGN 6.0
- Target: pending references and grievances
 - Focus: references involving MPs, state governments and inter-ministerial matters



The campaign, launched by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), was conducted from November 2025 to August 2026. It focused on improving admin-

istrative efficiency, reducing pending matters and strengthening cleanliness practices across government offices. NITI Aayog and its affiliated organisations, including the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office, Atal Innovation Mission and National

States urged to plan Rabi scientifically

NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday urged states to adopt scientific and region-specific strategies for the upcoming rabi season, citing changing weather patterns and uneven rainfall during the kharif cycle as reasons for stronger planning of water resources and crop choices.

Addressing the two-day national conference on Rabi Campaign 2026, Chouhan said climate variability had created contrasting conditions across the country. While some regions received

RABI FOCUS
Expand pulses and oilseeds cultivation
Promote gram, lentil and mustard
Strengthen procurement and market linkages
Ensure timely fertiliser availability
Improve processing and export-oriented production

abundant rainfall, others were facing drought-like situations and concerns over water availability.

He asked state governments to assess reservoir levels, irrigation resources and soil moisture conditions before finalising sowing strategies. Given constraints on water resources, he said advance planning for pre-sowing activities and subsequent irrigation would be critical for a successful winter crop season.

The minister also stressed that crop selection should be based on local water availability. States should avoid promoting water-intensive varieties in areas expected to face shortages and guide farmers towards suitable crops and varieties to minimise production risks.

Chouhan called for focused efforts to expand pulses and oilseeds cultivation, particularly in rice-fallow areas where residual soil moisture can be effectively utilised. States have been asked to prepare district-level plans to promote gram,



Changing weather and uneven rainfall have prompted the Centre to seek region-specific rabi planning, water management and crop choices.

lentil and mustard using region-appropriate practices.

Highlighting market support, the minister said farmers naturally prefer crops offering better returns. He stressed that efficient procurement systems and market linkages were essential for pulses and oilseeds, alongside stronger processing capacity and efforts to promote export-quality production.

On farm inputs, Chouhan emphasised timely fertiliser availability and efficient distribution to support farmers through the rabi season.

Sensex tanks over 1,100 points as global tensions rattle investors

MUMBAI

Indian equity benchmarks ended sharply lower on Monday as rising crude oil prices, escalating tensions in West Asia, surging global bond yields and persistent foreign fund outflows weighed heavily on investor sentiment.

The Sensex plunged 1,124.02 points, or 1.52 per cent, to close at 72,771.72, while the Nifty declined 360.25 points, or 1.56 per cent, to settle at 22,780.25. Selling pressure was broad-based, with losses extending across large-cap, mid-cap and small-cap stocks.

Among the Nifty constituents, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles (TMPV), Power Grid and Jio Financial Services emerged as the top laggards. The broader market also witnessed significant weakness, with the Nifty MidCap 100 falling 1.63 per

72,771.72 Sensex, down 1,124.02 points (1.52%)	22,780.25 Nifty, down 360.25 points (1.56%)
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cent and the Nifty SmallCap 100 ending 1.85 per cent lower.

Investor sentiment remained fragile amid concerns that the ongoing conflict in West Asia could further disrupt global energy supplies and fuel inflationary pressures.

Market participants reacted nervously after US President Donald Trump rejected an Iranian proposal aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz and easing hostilities, while Iran maintained that diplomacy remains the only solution to its conflict with the United States and Israel.

The geopolitical uncertainty reverberated across global financial markets, triggering risk-off sentiment. Major Asian markets ended

lower, with South Korea declining nearly 2 per cent, Japan's Nikkei slipping 0.10 per cent and Chinese equities dropping more than 1 per cent.

The rise in crude oil prices added to investor concerns. Brent crude futures gained 2.2 per cent to \$106.6 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude climbed 1.45 per cent to \$93.76 per barrel.

Higher energy prices are seen as a key risk for India, which is heavily dependent on crude imports and remains vulnerable to inflationary pressures stemming from elevated oil costs. Adding to the negative sentiment, global bond yields moved higher as investors reassessed inflation risks.

DRI cracks pan-India smuggling racket, seizes Rs 10.36 cr gold



NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted a pan-India gold smuggling syndicate that allegedly used courier networks to transport smuggled gold across the country, seizing 6.61 kg of foreign-origin gold worth about Rs 10.36 crore and arresting 11 persons, including one of the alleged masterminds, according to an official statement on Monday.

The operation which was carried out based on specific intelligence inputs, targeted a network involved in smuggling gold through the Indo-Bangladesh border in West

Bengal and Assam before distributing it to major markets through courier consignments, according to the Finance Ministry.

The ministry further noted that coordinated searches and interceptions were conducted simultaneously in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Guwahati. During the operation, DRI officials intercepted live courier consignments containing smuggled gold that had been booked from Guwahati and Kolkata for delivery in Mumbai, Delhi and Ahmedabad.

Seven recipients were apprehended, while searches at the premises of consignors in Kolkata led to the arrest of three more persons. Moreover, a subsequent operation in Mumbai resulted in the arrest of one of the key coordinators of the network.

Investigators found that the syndicate had adopted a strategy of splitting smuggled gold into multiple small consignments and dispatching

them through courier channels to recipients in different cities for disposal in the domestic market.

The investigation also showed that both the shippers and the recipients were acting as paper companies or private individuals without engaging in any legal gold trading, suggesting a conscious effort to hide the source and flow of gold that was smuggled through courier services.

DRI recovered and seized a total of 6.61 kg of foreign-origin gold bars valued at around Rs 10.36 crore under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962.

In a significant development, preliminary examination of documentary evidence suggested that the syndicate had transported and delivered nearly 318 kg of smuggled gold worth around Rs 475 crore through the same courier-based network during the first nine months of the current calendar year, the ministry said.

Study finds Ashwagandha well tolerated

NEW DELHI

A large multicentre clinical study has found that daily administration of a standardised Ashwagandha root extract for 24 weeks was well tolerated, with no evidence of treatment-related liver or kidney injury, the Ministry of Ayush said on Monday.

Published in Frontiers in Medicine on August 20, the study was a multicentre, randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial examining the prolonged prophylactic use and tolerability of Ashwagandha following COVISHIELD vaccination.

The research involved 1,200 apparently healthy adults aged between 18 and 70 years who had received a first, second or booster dose of the vaccine. Nearly 86 per cent of participants completed the study.

Participants were randomly assigned to receive either 500 mg of standardised aque-



ous Ashwagandha root extract daily, equivalent to four grams of raw root powder, or a matching placebo. The trial was conducted across seven sites in India, with participants receiving the intervention for 24 weeks and being followed until week 28.

According to the ministry, liver and kidney parameters remained within reported reference ranges. Assessments of liver enzymes, bilirubin, creatinine and blood urea showed no evidence of treatment-related hepatic or renal injury.

The study also reported zero serious adverse events considered attributable to the intervention, while no participant withdrew because of an ad-

Study highlights
→ 1,200 adults participated across seven Indian sites
→ 24-week intervention followed through week 28
→ 500 mg standardised Ashwagandha extract given daily
→ No treatment-related hepatic or renal injury reported
→ Zero attributable serious adverse events
→ No withdrawals due to adverse events
→ Neutralising activity exceeded 85 per cent in both groups

verse event.

The study also assessed immune response following vaccination. Virus-neutralising activity exceeded 85 per cent in both groups, with no statistically significant difference between participants receiving Ashwagandha and those receiving placebo.

Goyal highlights opportunities across sectors for UAE investors

NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday highlighted India's strong growth trajectory and the wide range of opportunities across sectors for UAE investors, supported by the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) framework.

The minister said he was delighted to meet Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Managing Director, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA).

"Held a productive discussion on accelerating the India-UAE economic partnership and fully leveraging the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), a landmark framework driving trade, investment, and building resilient supply chains," Goyal posted on X.



The minister said he looks forward to deepening "our shared economic ties and taking the India-UAE partnership to new heights".

India and the UAE have identified six areas for deeper cooperation in the maritime sector: ship ownership, modern ports, ship manufacturing, ship repair and maintenance, shipbreaking and container manufacturing.

Moreover, a working group

will be set up for these areas, with India's Shipping Ministry leading the engagement from the Indian side.

Earlier, Goyal met Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Foreign Trade, the UAE, and discussed the continued progress under the India-UAE CEPA and new avenues to further deepen our trade and investment partnership.

Commerce Minister said the ultimate objective is to take UAE investments in India to \$100 billion, from around \$25 billion and more currently. The UAE is looking at opportunities in sectors including space, startups, ports and shipbuilding, while also exploring investments in India's stock market.

"India-UAE local currency trade is in double digits," Goyal said, adding that the two sides aim to expand it more rapidly.

Quick Read



Netanyahu makes surprise UAE visit

Jerusalem

Israeli media reported that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made an unannounced visit to the United Arab Emirates, where he was believed to have met with the Gulf state's leader. The UAE has been an important regional partner for Israel since the two countries established diplomatic relations under the US-brokered Abraham Accords in 2020.

Avalanche kills 4 at Himlung base camp

Kathmandu

At least four people have died and 12 remain missing after an avalanche struck the base camp of Mt. Himlung in Nepal's Manang district, officials said Monday. Four bodies have been recovered, with two transported to Kathmandu and two to Chame. Around 27 expedition guides and support staff were reportedly at the 7,126-meter mountain preparing ropes and tents for the autumn climbing season. Eleven people have made contact, while rescue operations continue with helicopters after weather conditions improved. Nepal has faced heavy rainfall, landslides and flooding since September 24. Authorities had earlier restricted trekking in several high-altitude areas over weather-related safety concerns.

Russian strikes kill two, injure 28 in Ukraine

Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russian strikes killed at least two people in the Kyiv region and injured 28 others, including nine children, in Kharkiv. The attacks caused casualties and damage as Russian forces continued strikes across Ukraine, according to Ukrainian authorities. Emergency responders were deployed to affected areas to assist victims and assess the impact. Zelenskyy said authorities were working to protect civilians and provide necessary support to those affected. The latest attacks come amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, with Ukrainian officials continuing to call for stronger air-defence capabilities to counter Russian missile and drone strikes.

Taiwan detects PLA aircraft, PLAN ships

Taipei

Taiwan detected three Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft and five People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) ships operating around the island, according to Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense. Taiwan's armed forces monitored the activity and maintained heightened vigilance in response to the presence of Chinese military assets around the island. The reported movements come amid continued Chinese military activity in areas surrounding Taiwan. Taipei has regularly reported PLA aircraft and naval vessels operating near Taiwan, while Beijing maintains its claims over the island and opposes what it describes as separatist activities.

Bangkok floods force thousands into shelters

The disaster caused an estimated \$320 million in damages, severely impacting local homes, businesses, and infrastructure.

BANGKOK

Thousands of residents have taken refuge in emergency shelters across Bangkok after severe flooding inundated neighbourhoods and overwhelmed the city's drainage network.

The flooding followed exceptionally heavy rainfall, with as much as 320 millimetres (12.6 inches) recorded over two or three days last week.

Large areas of the Thai capital were submerged, disrupting daily life and forcing residents to leave homes affected by rising water. Emergency shelters have been opened to accommodate people displaced by the flooding, while authorities work to manage



up to 320 mm of rain in two or three days last week	\$320 million estimated damage to homes, businesses, infrastructure	Thousands of residents in emergency shelters
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the consequences of the widespread inundation.

The damage from the disaster has been estimated at about \$320 million, highlighting the significant economic impact on homes, businesses, infrastructure and local communities. Floodwaters have affected roads and neighbourhoods, creating difficulties for transportation and other essential services.

Bangkok's drainage system, designed to move large volumes of rainwater through the densely populated city, was unable to cope with the extraordinary amount of rainfall. The overwhelmed network contributed to water accumulating rapidly across several areas.

Residents sheltering in evacuation centres face un-

Bangkok floods hit city

Bangkok's overwhelmed drainage system failed to cope with extraordinary rainfall, causing severe urban flooding. High density leaves little space for natural absorption, straining infrastructure. Authorities provide relief as residents await returns, highlighting urgent needs for enhanced climate resilience.

certainly over when they will be able to return home. Authorities and emergency workers are continuing relief operations, including providing temporary accommodation and assistance to affected communities.

India gains US tariff relief for speciality drugs

WASHINGTON

India has been included among countries eligible for zero US tariffs on several categories of speciality pharmaceutical products and ingredients, providing targeted relief to Indian drug manufacturers exporting to the American market.

The US Commerce Department published the list as Washington prepares to impose a 100 per cent tariff on certain patented pharmaceutical imports and related ingredients from September 29.

The exemption does not apply to all pharmaceutical products exported from India. Instead, it covers specified



medicines and ingredients identified under a presidential proclamation issued in April.

Eligible products include orphan drugs, nuclear medicines, plasma-derived therapies, fertility medicines, cell and gene therapies, and antibody-drug conjugates. Certain medical countermeasures related to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear

threats, as well as some animal-health products, are also covered.

India was included alongside several other jurisdictions, including the European Union, Japan, South Korea, Britain, Switzerland, Thailand, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Malaysia.

According to the Commerce Department notice, qualifying products from the listed jurisdictions can receive a zero per cent tariff because the countries have current or forthcoming trade and security framework agreements with the United States.

Generic medicines and their associated ingredients are excluded from the Section 232 pharmaceutical tariffs, according to the Commerce Department notice. This distinction is significant for India, whose pharmaceutical industry is a major supplier of generic medicines to the United States.

US pharma tariffs from September 29

PATENTED IMPORTS	INDIA & LISTED NATIONS
100% tariff on certain patented pharmaceuticals and ingredients	0% on eligible speciality medicines and ingredients

Baloch group seeks global action over rights abuses

GENEVA

The Baloch National Movement (BNM) has urged the international community to take action over alleged human rights violations in Balochistan during a protest outside the United Nations Office in Geneva.

The protest, held near the



Broken Chair monument, focused on allegations of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and the sentencing of political activists in what the BNM described as fabricated cases by Pakistani authorities.

Speakers at the rally alleged that thousands of people had been subjected to abductions and killings across Pakistan. They argued that the situation was not confined to the Baloch community, but also affected Pashtuns, Sindhis and Kash-

Protesters from Sindh, the Pashtun community, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Kashmir also took part in the demonstration.

miris.

The group also cited figures concerning alleged disappearances and extrajudicial killings in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, though these claims were presented by the organisation and were not independently established in the report.

The BNM previously staged a demonstration outside the United Nations headquarters in New York while Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was attending the UN General Assembly. Protesters displayed banners and placards and staged a tableau highlighting enforced disappearances and alleged extrajudicial killings.

Xi, Trump agree on constructive China-US ties

BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Donald Trump have agreed to build a constructive China-US relationship based on strategic stability, respect, fairness and reciprocity, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said following Xi's state visit to the United States.

Wang made the remarks while briefing reporters on Xi's September 23-25 visit. He said the two leaders held candid and in-depth discussions in a friendly atmosphere on China-US relations and broader international issues.

On trade, Wang said Xi stressed that stable economic relations require expanding areas of cooperation while reducing outstanding problems. He called for fair treatment of Chinese companies and con-



Wang Yi
CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER

- Respect:** recognising each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, social systems, development paths, core interests and major concerns
- Fairness:** mutually beneficial cooperation, resolving differences through consultation, rejecting zero-sum approaches
- Reciprocity:** treating both countries as equals and addressing their concerns on an equal basis

tinued dialogue to support stable bilateral trade.

Regarding fentanyl, Wang said China had acted with goodwill to assist the United States and that both leaders had instructed their law-enforcement agencies to strengthen cooperation against transnational crime.

The talks followed agreements on more favourable tariff treatment for \$30 billion of non-sensitive goods in each direction and the creation of a new dialogue on emerging technologies, according to a White House fact sheet.

South Korea warns North over DMZ blast

Suspected land mine explosions caused the incident, though device origins remain unconfirmed.

SEOUL

South Korea's Defence Minister Kang Shin-chul has warned that the government will take "appropriate, substantial and corresponding" measures if an investigation confirms that North Korean land mines caused a recent explosion inside the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ).



Two South Korean soldiers were severely wounded in the September 21 incident, which involved two separate blasts south of the Military Demarcation Line separating the two Koreas. The explosions are suspected to have been caused by land mines, although the exact nature and origin of the devices have not yet been conclusively established.

Kang made the remarks on Monday after meeting Jang Dong-hyeok, leader of the opposition People Power Party (PPP), at South Korea's National Assembly. He said an on-site investigation was continuing and that authorities would provide a transparent explanation once the facts were established.

Summary
→ Investigation continues into DMZ explosion
→ Mine type remains unverified
→ Government denies cover-up allegations
→ Ruling and opposition parties clash
→ Assembly committee schedules plenary hearing
→ North Korean responsibility unconfirmed

US rejects Iran proposal over Strait tensions

NEW YORK

The United States rejected an Iranian proposal concerning the strategic Strait of Hormuz after Tehran reportedly demanded access to billions of dollars in frozen Iranian assets, according to US Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz.

Waltz said the proposal was discussed amid ongoing efforts to address tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial waterway through which a significant share of global energy shipments passes. He indicated that Washington did not accept Tehran's demand for the release of frozen assets as part of the arrangement.

The comments come against the backdrop of heightened diplomatic and economic tensions between the United States and Iran. The status of Iranian funds frozen under US sanctions has

STRAIT OF HORMUZ

Any disruption to commercial shipping through the waterway could have wider implications for oil and gas supplies and global prices.

remained a longstanding point of contention between the two countries.

According to the report, Waltz characterized the financial demand as a key reason for Washington's rejection of the proposal. The US position reflects its continued use of sanctions and restrictions on Iranian assets as part of its broader policy toward Tehran.

The report did not indicate that an agreement had been reached following the rejection of the proposal. Further diplomatic discussions could depend on whether the two sides can narrow their differences over sanctions, frozen assets and maritime security.

TRADITIONAL GAMES 2026

India, Egypt deepen sports and youth collaboration

CAIRO

India and Egypt discussed ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation in sports and youth affairs during a meeting between India's Ambassador to Egypt, Suresh Reddy, and Egypt's Minister of Youth and Sports, Gohar Nabil, on Monday.

According to the Indian Embassy in Egypt, the discussions covered sports exchanges, efforts to promote cricket in Egypt and football-related engagements between the two countries. Reddy also invited Egypt to participate in the BRICS Indigenous and Traditional Games 2026, as part of

HIGHLIGHTS	
✓ India-Egypt high-level diplomatic meetings	✓ Sahara Expo 2026 agricultural cooperation
✓ Digital public infrastructure technology talks	✓ Healthcare and pharmaceutical partnership exploration
✓ Growing commercial and economic ties	✓ Broadening bilateral strategic engagement

efforts to expand sporting and youth exchanges between the two countries.

The meeting was the latest in a series of high-level engagements between Indian and Egyptian officials covering a range of sectors. Earlier on September 23, Reddy met Egypt's Minister of Agriculture

and Land Reclamation, Alaa Farouk, on the sidelines of Sahara Expo 2026 in Cairo. The two sides discussed opportunities to deepen cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors.

The Indian Embassy said Farouk welcomed the participation of Indian companies at the exhibition, describing it as re-

flecting growing commercial ties between the two countries.

On September 21, Reddy held discussions with Egypt's Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Raafat Hindy. Their talks focused on India's experience with digital public infrastructure, institutional cooperation and greater engagement between information and communications technology companies from both countries.

Earlier this month, Reddy also met Egypt's Minister of Health and Population, Khaled Abdel Ghaffar, to explore cooperation in healthcare and pharmaceuticals.

CHANGE OF NAME	CHANGE OF NAME
I, Sunitha Daniel Bethapudi W/o Sai Kishore Darbha R/o Villa No. Q3, NVT Stopping by the Woods, Nimbekaipura, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru, Bidarahalli, Bidrahalli, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560049 have changed my name to Sunitha Darbha	I, S O W M Y A S H R E E SHASHIKIRAN D/o MANJUNATH K R, W/o SHASHIKIRAN B KRISHNAMURTHY, R/o No. 162, D Street, 1st Main Road, Mysore Road, Hosaguddadahalli, Government Electric Factory, Bangalore South, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560026, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SOWMYASHREE K.M.
NAME CHANGE	NAME CHANGE
I, TAHERA BEGUM VATIYABARI, Resident of No.4/3, Ishaq Residency, Sauders Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru-560005, have changed my name to TAHIRA BEGUM VATIYABARI, vide affidavit dated: 28.09.2026 before notary G. DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.	I, AQHEELA BANU ATEEQ, W/o. Mohamed Ateeq Ahmed, Resident of No.41/5/1, Nethaji Road, Pulakeshinagar, Frazer Town, Bengaluru-560005, have changed my name to AQHEELA BANU, vide affidavit dated: 28.09.2026 before notary G. DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.

**VITHYA RAMRAJ WINS
400M HURDLES BRONZE:**

- Ramraj clocked a personal best of 54.75 seconds.
- She broke PT Usha's 55.42-second national record.
- Usha had set the record at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.
- Ramraj had equalled the mark at the 2023 Asian Games.
- Mariam Kareem won gold in a Games-record 54.31 seconds.
- Anu Raghavan finished fifth with a personal best of 55.88 seconds.

Vithya Ramraj broke PT Usha's 42-year-old national record in the women's 400m hurdles, clocking 54.75 seconds to win bronze at Asian Games 2026.

**Vithya Ramraj
Breaks Usha's
42-Year Record**

NAGOYA

Vithya Ramraj scripted a landmark moment in Indian athletics at the Asian Games 2026 on Monday, breaking the 42-year-old national record held by legendary athlete PT Usha in the women's 400m hurdles. Ramraj clocked a personal best of 54.75 seconds to win the bronze medal in a thrilling final. Her performance improved Usha's previous national benchmark of 55.42 seconds by 0.67 seconds, bringing an end to one of the longest-standing records in Indian athletics. Usha had established the record at the

1984 Los Angeles Olympics, where she narrowly missed a medal after finishing fourth in the Olympic final. Ramraj had equalled the mark at the 2023 Asian Games, where she also won bronze.

Three years later, the Indian athlete finally moved beyond Usha's historic mark. Ramraj remained firmly in medal contention throughout the race and held her position during the closing stages. However, she could not match the late acceleration of Mariam Kareem of the United Arab Emirates, who won gold in a Games-record 54.31 seconds.

Kazakhstan's Adelina Zems secured silver with a personal best of 54.58 seconds, while Ramraj completed the podium with her 54.75-second effort.

Indian athlete Anu Raghavan also delivered an impressive performance, lowering her personal best to 55.88 seconds and finishing fifth from lane eight. Ramraj's latest achievement gives her a second successive Asian Games bronze in the event and establishes her as the new national record holder.

**Seema Kaliramna
Misses Discus Podium**

Seema Kaliramna missed the women's discus podium despite setting a personal best, finishing fourth after a fiercely contested Asian Games final.

NAGOYA

Seema Kaliramna narrowly missed a medal in the women's discus at the Asian Games 2026 on Monday, finishing fourth despite producing a personal best of 59.88 metres in a fiercely contested final.

The Commonwealth Games bronze medallist needed a major effort in the closing rounds after slipping out of the medal positions. She delivered her best throw of the competition in the penultimate round, improving her previous personal best of 59.73m by 15 centimetres. However, the effort was not enough to take her back into the top three.

Kaliramna opened with 53.67m before making a significant improvement with her second attempt, throwing 58.40m and briefly moving into the bronze-medal position.

Thailand's Subenrat Insaeng soon overtook her with 58.53m and then produced a decisive personal-best throw of 61.43m, be-

coming the first athlete in the competition to cross the 60m mark.

China's Jiang Zhichao also found her best effort late, recording 62.25m to move into second place. Kaliramna responded with 59.88m but remained fourth.

She came close again with her final attempt, registering 59.81m, but could not change the standings.

China's Feng Bin won gold with 63.69m, while Jiang took silver and Insaeng secured bronze.

"Finishing fourth is disappointing, but I am happy that I improved my personal best and came very close to the 60-metre mark." - Seema Kaliramna (Indian discus thrower) "I gave everything in my final attempts and tried to fight back for a medal, but the competition was very strong." - Seema Kaliramna (Indian discus thrower)

"Breaking my personal best twice on the Asian Games stage gives me confidence to keep working towards crossing the 60-metre barrier." - Seema Kaliramna (Indian discus thrower)



The result ended India's women's discus podium run dating back to 1998. India has previously won Asian Games gold in the event through Neelam Jaswant Singh in 2002 and Seema Punia in 2014.

Despite missing the podium, Kaliramna left the competition with a new personal benchmark. Her 59.88m throw was the best effort of her career and came on the Asian Games stage. Sanya Yadav finished eighth with 49.90m.

"Finishing fourth is disappointing, but I am happy that I improved my personal best and came very close to the 60-metre mark." - Seema Kaliramna (Indian discus thrower) "I gave everything in my final attempts and tried to fight back for a medal, but the competition was very strong." - Seema Kaliramna (Indian discus thrower)

"Breaking my personal best twice on the Asian Games stage gives me confidence to keep working towards crossing the 60-metre barrier." - Seema Kaliramna (Indian discus thrower)

**SEEMA KALIRAMNA'S
PERFORMANCE**

- Best throw: 59.88m
- Previous personal best: 59.73m
- Improvement: 15cm
- Final position: Fourth
- Gold: Feng Bin — 63.69m
- Silver: Jiang Zhichao — 62.25m
- Bronze: Subenrat Insaeng — 61.43m

**Chikitha enters
QF; Jyothi loses
in individual
pre-quarters**

OKAZAKI

Indian archer Chikitha Taniparthi won an intense round of 16 clash against Chinese Taipei's Chen Yi-Hsuan in the women's compound individual event at the Okazaki Chuo Sogo Park Multipurpose Square here on Monday.

While Taniparthi managed to scrape through, Hangzhou 2023 gold medallist Jyothi Surekha Vennam lost in her 1/8 elimination round after going down to South Korea's Kang Yeonsoo 146-150.

Taniparthi and Chen gave it their all, and they were tied at 148 points after the regulation 15 shots. The match went to the shoot-off, where the Indian nailed a bull's-eye, while Chen also fired a 10, but it wasn't a bull's-eye.

Taniparthi had shot 30, 29, 30, 29 and 30 in her five games, while Chen was also pretty strong in her outing, hitting 30, 30, 29, 30 and 29 across the five games for a shoot-off, where Taniparthi eventually held her nerve.

Jyothi found no answers to 14-year-old Yeonsoo as the South Korean did not hit a single arrow below 10 to defeat the Indian 150-146. Jyothi hit 27, 30, 29, 30 and 30 in the five games, while the Korean was absolutely flawless in her outing, smashing all arrows to the maximum 10-point mark.

Earlier in the day, Ganesh Ratnam beat Sahil Jadhav in an all-Indian pre-quarters in the men's compound individual category. He defeated Sahil in a nail-biting contest 149-148 to make his way into the quarterfinals.

Ganesh began with a 29 before displaying a flawless effort in the next four games to tally 30 in each of them. Sahil started with 30, but hit 29, 30, 30 and 29 in the next games.

Earlier, Ganesh started off his individual campaign with a 144-142 win over Indonesian archer Sostar Andaru Rinaldi, while Sahil began with beating Jamiyangombo Purevdorj of Mongolia 149-137 in the round of 32. The Indian compound men's, women's and mixed teams have secured their places in the semi-finals.

PRIYA BOOKS SEMIFINAL SPOT**Priya Ghanghas Secures Boxing Medal**

NISHIO

Indian boxer Priya Ghanghas assured herself of a medal in the women's 60kg category after defeating Tajikistan's Mijgona Samadova 5-0 in the quarterfinals at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games on Monday.

Priya had to fight back after trailing 2-3 at the end of the opening round. The Indian responded strongly in the second and third rounds, dominating the exchanges and securing unanimous victories in both to book her place in the semifinals and guarantee at least a bronze medal.

Both boxers began cautiously before increasing the intensity. Samadova, a bronze medallist at the Hangzhou Games in the 57kg category, landed several punches during the opening round, while Priya also found her target during the final 90 seconds. The Tajik boxer eventually edged the round 3-2.

Priya became more aggressive in the second round, connecting with effective combinations. Samadova was also handed a point penalty, helping the Indian secure a 5-0



Priya came from behind after losing the opening round and won both remaining rounds 5-0 to secure a medal. - Bout report

round victory.

The Tajik boxer came out aggressively in the final round, looking to overturn the contest. Priya remained composed, finding opportunities when Samadova moved onto the back foot. She again won the round 5-0.

All five judges ruled in Priya's favour. Three judges scored the bout 29-27, while two scored it 30-26.

Priya will face China's Yang Chengyu in Wednesday's semifinal. Chengyu is a two-time World Championship medallist, with a gold in 2023 and bronze in 2025.

Priya's medal is India's fifth confirmed boxing medal at the Games. Earlier, Lovlina

PRIYA GHANGHAS:

- **Category:** Women's 60kg
- **Quarterfinal Result:** 5-0 win
- **Opponent:** Mijgona Samadova, Tajikistan
- **Medal Assured:** Bronze
- **Semifinal Opponent:** Yang Chengyu, China
- **Semifinal:** Wednesday
- **Judges' Scores:** Three judges — 29-27; two judges — 30-26

Borgohain, Ankush Panghal and Parveen Hooda had also secured medals in their respective categories.

**GUJARAT DY CM PRESENTS ₹1.33 CRORE TO
ASIAN GAMES MEDALLIST ELAVENIL VALARIVAN**

GANDHINAGAR

The Gujarat government has awarded rifle shooter Elavenil Valarivan Rs 1.33 crore under its 'Khel Pratibha Puraskar Yojana' after she won two silver medals at the 2026 Asian Games in Japan, taking the total incentives extended to the athlete by the state to Rs 2.41 crore.

Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi on Monday honoured shooter Elavenil Valarivan for her silver-medal performances in the women's 10m air rifle team and individual events at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games.

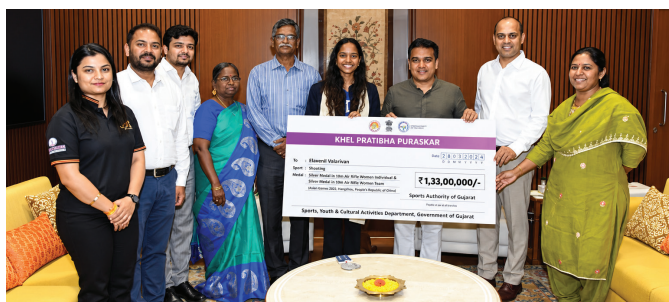
Valarivan first helped India win silver in the team event before claiming another silver in the individual competition. She shot 252.4 in the individual final to finish behind Japan's Taichi Hinata, who won

gold with a Games-record score of 253.0.

Congratulating Valarivan, Sanghavi said the Gujarat government was committed to providing athletes with the training and facilities required to prepare for international competitions.

"An athlete's international success is the result not only of their own hard work but also of the support and values provided by their parents throughout their journey," he said. Sanghavi also highlighted Valarivan's association with the Sanskardham complex, where she studied under the state government's DLSS scheme, saying her Asian Games performance had brought recognition to Gujarat.

"The success of athletes nurtured at Sanskardham could inspire thousands of young athletes across the



state," he added.

According to the Gujarat government, Valarivan had previously received Rs 1.33 crore under the Shaktidoot Scheme and Olympic Incentive Scheme, in addition to Rs 74 lakh through schemes including the DLSS Scheme and Khel Mahakumbh.

The latest incentive takes the total financial assistance provided to Valarivan by the state government to Rs 2.41 crore.

Valarivan, who resides in

Ahmedabad's Maninagar area, has been associated with the state government's Shaktidoot Scheme since 2017-18 and currently holds an 'A' category position under the programme.

The 27-year-old has represented India at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the 2024 Paris Olympics. She won gold at the ISSF World Cup in Rio de Janeiro in 2019 with a score of 251.7 and received the Arjuna Award from the Central government in 2022.

**Esha wins silver in women's 25m
pistol after thrilling shoot-off**

TOYOTA

India's Esha Singh produced a remarkable fightback under intense pressure to win the silver medal in the women's 25m pistol event at the Asian Games 2026 in Aichi-Nagoya on Monday, surviving multiple shoot-offs before finishing second on the podium. This is Esha's third silver in the Asian Games, having won silver in the 10m Air pistol individual event and team event in Hangzhou 2023.

Esha entered the final having only narrowly secured her place among the top eight, qualifying in eighth position after scoring 580-22x. But the Indian quickly put that behind her once the medal round began, opening the final with a perfect five hits from five shots.

She remained among the leaders throughout the early stages, although the contest repeatedly tightened at the

top. Xiao Jiaruixuan of China moved ahead with consecutive perfect series, while North Korea's Kim Hyon Suk also stayed firmly in medal contention. The elimination phase brought further twists. Esha slipped down the standings after registering three hits, but responded with a flawless 5/5 to ensure that she remained in contention. When Vietnam's Trinh Thu Vinh was eliminated, the Indian was guaranteed herself a medal.

The battle for bronze then turned into an extraordinary sequence of shoot-offs between Esha and Kim, who were tied on 34 hits. Both shooters initially recorded three hits, forcing another shoot-off. A technical interruption added to the tension before the contest resumed with a single-shot situation. Esha eventually prevailed, securing the bronze-medal position and earning the right to fight Xiao for gold.