



FINALLY, BBC REBOOTED

BDA FLOATS ₹3,348 CR TENDER FOR KEY 20-KM STRETCH

The 73-km Bengaluru Business Corridor Project, which had been stuck for over 18 years, has been touted as a solution for perennial traffic problems seen on Bengaluru's periphery.

BENGALURU

After several years of delay, the Bengaluru Business Corridor (BBC), formerly known as Peripheral Ring Road (PRR), in the Kamataka capital appears set to see the light of day, with the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) inviting tenders for its first package on Monday.

The BDA invited tenders for a project, spanning nearly 20 km, at an estimated cost of Rs 3,348 crore, with a completion timeline of 36 months.

In the first package, the bids have been invited for the construction of BBC package-1 from Tumakuru Road to Ballari Road (19.80 km), including 10 years of operation and maintenance. The project will be executed under Design, Build, Operate and Transfer (DBOT) model and includes 10 years of oper-



ations and maintenance (O&M). This will be Peripheral Ring Road-1. The deadline for filing tenders is 4 pm on May 4.

As per the tender documents, project deadline is 36 months (three years), and tender is likely to be finalised by May 2026.

Confirming the development in an X post, LK Atheeq, chairman of Bengaluru Business Corridor Ltd (BBCL), said the project had reached a key milestone. "We have invited tenders for the stretch from BIEC Madavara near Nelamangala to Airport/Ballari Road. This marks a key milestone in reviv-

ing the long-pending infrastructure project." The entire Phase I of the PRR spans 73.4 km and has been divided into three packages. Package 1 covers Tumakuru Road to Ballari Road (19.8 km), Package 2 stretches from Bellary Road to Old Madras Road (18 km), and Package 3 connects Old Madras Road to Hosur Road (27.75 km). Currently, the tender has been floated only for Package 1.

The corridor is being implemented by BBCL, a special purpose vehicle, with the aim of reducing traffic congestion around Bengaluru by creating an access-controlled road network. The proposed design includes eight main carriageway lanes along with four-lane service roads, connecting key arterial routes such as Tumakuru Road and Hosur Road.

BENGALURU BUSINESS CORRIDOR (PERIPHERAL RING ROAD)

1993-1994

The idea of a Peripheral Ring Road (PRR) around Bengaluru is first proposed in the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) to ease congestion on the Outer Ring Road (ORR).

2014

Revised cost estimate rises to ₹8,100 crore due to escalation and new compensation norms under the 2013 Land Acquisition Act.

2018

The project is revived with a proposal to include it under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) model. BDA invites global tenders, but bids fail to attract investors.

2021

The government approves a ₹22,000 cr plan to fund PRR through BDA loans and internal resources.

2023

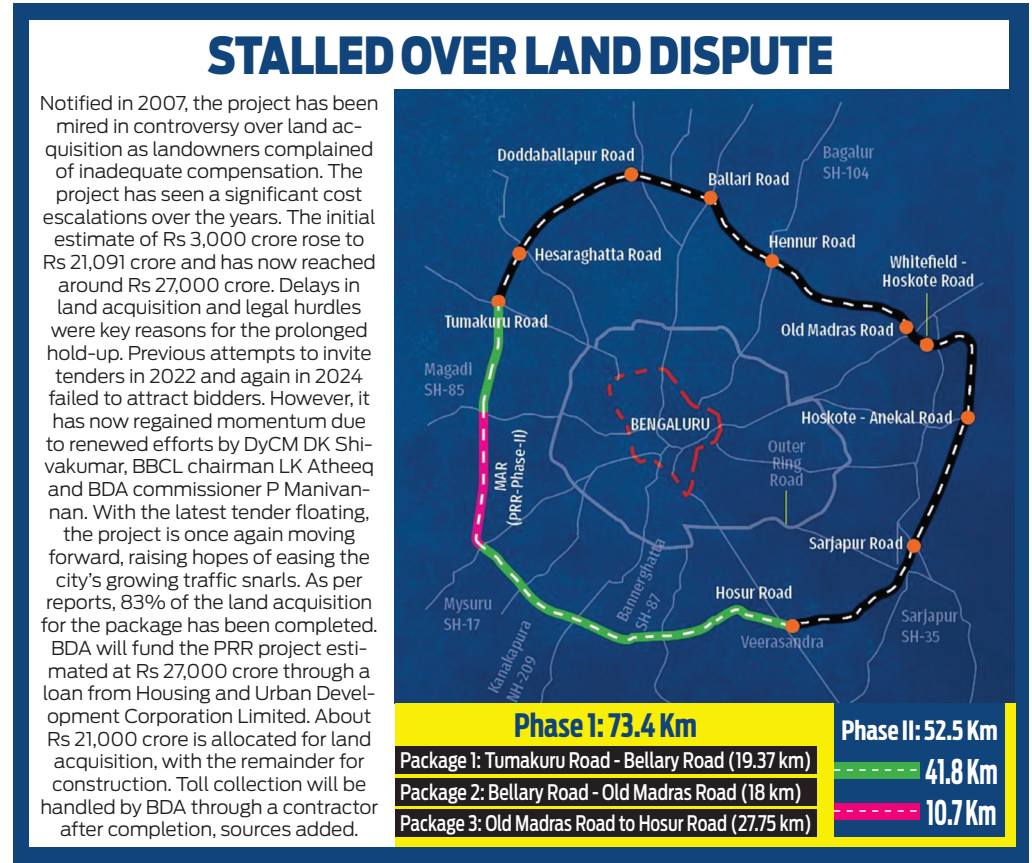
Proposal made to monetize corridor within the right-of-way to improve financial sustainability.

2024

A new Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) – Bengaluru Business Corridor Ltd (BBCL) – is formed to execute the project. The project is officially renamed the Bengaluru Business Corridor (BBC).

2026

BDA FLOATS ₹3,348 CRORE TENDER FOR KEY 20-KM STRETCH OF BBC



Centre relaxes kerosene supply rules for 60 days

NEW DELHI

Amid global energy uncertainty in view of the West Asia crisis, the Union government has rolled out a 60-day emergency measure to reintroduce PDS kerosene, including in 21 "kerosene-free" States and Union Territories. Select petrol pumps in every district will be permitted to store and distribute limited quantities of superior kerosene oil (SKO) under the relaxed norms. The move is intended to ensure that house-

holds facing LPG constraints continue to have access to essential fuel for basic domestic requirements. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, according to a Gazette notification issued on March 29, has permitted public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) to allocate PDS kerosene across 21 States and Union Territories, including Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Gujarat, where kerosene supply had been phased out.

CRUDE OIL HITS \$116 AMID IRAN WAR ESCALATION

G7 vows 'steps' to stabilise energy markets



WASHINGTON

G7 ministers, after an emergency meeting, issued a stern warning on Monday against "unjustified export restrictions" on hydrocarbons, as the group moved to stabilise a global economy reeling from the ongoing war in West Asia.

The bloc vowed to take "all necessary measures in close coordination with partners" to preserve the "stability and security of the energy market."

In a rare joint communiqué involving finance ministers, energy ministers, and central bank chiefs, the group signalled its readiness to intervene further in energy markets to prevent a full-scale global recession. "We call on all countries to refrain from imposing unjustified export restrictions on hydrocarbons and related products," it said in a statement released after emergency talks.

The Group of Seven (G7) is a powerful bloc of advanced Western economies, including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Canada and Japan. The meeting was convened as Brent crude oil prices surged past \$116 per barrel on Monday, marking one of the highest monthly gains in history.

The energy crisis was triggered by Iran's effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway through which nearly 20% of global oil transits, in retaliation for a joint US-Israeli bombing campaign against the Islamic Republic on February 28.

The campaign aimed at sparking regime change in Tehran through decapitation strikes against top Iranian leadership, killing key figures including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other senior officials.

'Open Hormuz or else..'

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump threatened on Monday to destroy Iran's oil export hub of Kharg Island and other oil wells and power plants if it does not agree to a deal to end the war soon.

Trump wrote on his Truth Social network that the United States is in "serious discussions" with "a more reasonable regime" in Tehran.

"Great progress has been made but, if for any reason a deal is not shortly reached, which it probably will be, and if the Hormuz Strait is not immediately 'open for business,' we will conclude our lovely 'stay' in Iran by blowing up and completely obliterating all of their electric generating plants, oil wells and Kharg Island (and possibly all desal-

inisation plants), which we have purposefully not yet 'touched,'" Trump said.

Kharg Island, 24 kilometres off the coast of Iran in the northern Persian Gulf, is central to the country's oil exports and economy.

About 90% of Iran's crude oil exports leave the country via the island, much of it destined for China and other Asian markets.

Kharg Island is relatively small — about 8 kilometres long and 4–5 kilometres wide — but it hosts extensive infrastructure, including storage tanks, pipelines and offshore loading terminals. The island's terminals can load roughly 1.3–1.6 million barrels of crude per day, helped by deep-water access that allows very large crude carriers to dock.



Iranian lawmakers review possibility of leaving NPT

Iran's parliament is reviewing a possible exit from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said on Monday, while insisting Tehran has not and will not seek nuclear weapons.

Spain shuts airspace for US planes involved in Iran war

In a pushback against the US amid the ongoing war, Spain has closed its airspace to American aircraft involved in military operations against Iran. "We don't authorise either the use of military bases or the use of airspace for actions related to the war in Iran," said

Israel's Haifa oil refinery catches fire amid attacks

Israel's largest oil refinery in the northern city of Haifa caught fire on Monday after both Iran and Hezbollah fired rockets toward it. Two people were reportedly lightly injured and the fire was quickly put out. There were also rocket alerts in southern Israel.

Indian killed in Iranian strike on Kuwait power facility

KUWAIT CITY

An Indian national has been killed in Kuwait in Iranian strikes on a power and water desalination plant, the Indian Embassy said on Monday.

The number of Indian nationals killed in the ongoing West Asia conflict has risen to eight, with the latest casualty reported from Kuwait. Expressing its "deepest condolences" at the tragic demise of

the Indian national in the attack on Sunday, the embassy in a social media post said it was closely coordinating with the Kuwaiti authorities to render all possible support and assistance.



QUICK READ



Bengaluru all set for historic Karaga Mahotsav

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The countdown to the historic Karaga Mahotsav celebrations has begun. Devotees are eagerly awaiting the sight of the world-famous Karaga carrying a flower garland in the moonlight of Chaitra Purnima. The Karaga Shakyotsava will be held on the Chaitra Pournami day of April 1. This time too, A Gyanendra will be carrying the Karaga. This time the Karaga Utsav is full of many special features, and lighting arrangements have been made in the Karaga like the Mysore Dasara. The streets of Dharmaraya Temple, roads leading to Karaga like JC Road, Corporation Road, GBA office, SP Road, Avenue Road, KR Market, Hudson Circle, Halasuru Gate Circle, and Corporation Circle are decorated with lights.

Tenant assaulted over rent dispute, FIR filed

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The disagreement soon escalated into a physical fight. During the altercation, the landlord Shobha, along with Devaraj and their children, allegedly assaulted the tenants. It is alleged that sharp objects like a knife and blade were used in the attack. Naresh, his brother Sachin, and sister Rekha sustained injuries to the face, head, and other parts of the body. In a disturbing turn, Rekha, who reportedly fell unconscious during the assault, was allegedly doused with water while she was lying on the ground. Following the incident, the injured were taken for treatment at Victoria Hospital. After receiving medical care, Naresh filed a complaint with the police. Based on the complaint, a case has been registered at the Jeevan Bheema Nagar Police Station. Further investigation is underway into the incident.

Sri Kashi Vishweswara chariot fest on April 1

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The chariot festival of Sri Kashi Vishweswara situated at Arehalli village in Hoskote Taluk will be held on April 1. Special abhisheka, decoration for the idol of the god, Veeragasa dance will also be performed. On April 6 palanquin festival will also be held. Various religious performances will be held till April 4, a release from the temple development board mentioned.

Hostels, canteens to get LPG refills on priority

Under new government guidelines, all commercial establishments must register for Piped Natural Gas connections with their respective distribution entities within seven days to be considered under the allocation framework

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In line with Union government directives to regulate commercial use of LPG amid the West Asia crisis, the state government issued a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to manage supply and distribution. Under new guidelines, all commercial establishments must register for Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections with their respective distribution entities within seven days to be considered under the allocation framework. The state has categorised commercial LPG distribution into four priority sectors,

which district administrations must follow. The top priority group includes essential institutions such as educational institutions, student hostels, and hospitals; second priority includes government and public sector units, as well as canteens at airports, railway stations, and bus terminals. The third priority category, closely watched due to its scale, covers restaurants, dhabas, hotels, industrial canteens, food processing units, KMF (Nandini) dairies, Indira Canteens, community kitchens, paying guest accommodations, corporate canteens, and sports facilities. The fourth category includes la-



bour-intensive and industrial sectors such as steel, automobile, textile, dye, chemical, and plastics industries, along with seed processing, agriculture and allied sectors, pharmaceuticals, fisheries, zoolog-

ical parks, poultry, and sericulture. The SOP states the first two priority sectors will receive 100% of their quota, while supply to the third category will be considered after meet-

ing needs of higher-priority segments. Officials said the Centre has increased Karnataka's allocation by 8%, bringing total availability for commercial purposes to 68%. The state's average monthly consumption over the past three months has been around 25,000 tonnes, while current availability stands at 18,494 tonnes. On a daily basis, Karnataka has approximately 29,463 commercial LPG cylinders available. In contrast, average consumption during normal times is about 850 tonnes per day or about 44,000 cylinders of 19kg capacity. As per guidelines from the

ministry of petroleum and natural gas, stakeholders are expected to receive 578 tonnes of commercial LPG and 38.5 tonnes of auto LPG per day, totalling 616.5 tonnes. Auto LPG supply will continue as per existing allocations. The situation in the state is expected to improve significantly, said KH Muniyappa, Food and Civil Supplies Minister. Meanwhile, authorities have flagged black marketing, warning of legal action and licence cancellation. District-level monitoring committees, headed by deputy commissioners, have been tasked with overseeing distribution.

'Govt committed to ensuring advanced healthcare for all'

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

For the first time in the country, a large, state-of-the-art and well-equipped hospital with 450 beds for children has been built at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Children's Health, said Medical Education Minister Dr Sharanaprakash R Patil. Speaking after inaugurating the new hospital, the minister said this hospital has been built to provide good care and treatment to children. This is the first time in the country that such a huge super specialty hospital is being built by the government and is carrying out such a large-scale work. Patients coming from other states are also provided the same treatment here. 100 per cent quality health care is provided only in our government hospitals. He called on the public to make good use of this. He said that the institute currently has 450 beds and treats about 1,78,000 outpatients and 21,000 inpatients annually. In addition, about 5,000 surgeries are performed.



Medical Education Minister Dr Sharanaprakash R Patil said the government is committed to providing better healthcare services by building super specialty, cancer hospitals and trauma care centres in all districts of the state.

"The Siddaramaiah-led government is establishing medical colleges in all districts. We have already achieved 90% of the target. Only four or five districts are left. It will be completed everywhere very soon," he clarified. "We are committed to providing good healthcare to all

by taking steps to build super specialty hospitals, cancer hospitals and trauma care centers in all districts. Like the Jayadeva Heart Institute, a NIMHANS model and an Endocrinology Center will now be established in Mysore and Kalaburagi. Like the Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital, a children's hospital will be built in Kalaburagi at a cost of Rs 100 crore, the Minister explained. Tertiary care treatment is available only in government hospitals, not elsewhere, our mission is Universal Health Care for All. We have the highest number of medical seats and colleges. In addition, there are 800 nursing colleges in our Karnataka, he said.



Inmates booked after B'loru jail viral video sparks outrage

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A video from inside Parappana Agrahara Jail has gone viral again. It has been revealed from the complaint filed by the jail superintendent that the undertrial prisoners themselves have not only recorded videos of the luxurious arrangements inside their own 1st Tower, 9th Barracks 1st Room on their mobile phones, but also filmed entertainment services such as mobile phones, TV, Netflix and others and shared them online. The video also goes viral on the internet, where it is stated that, an IAS officer is responsible for these privileges. Also, the DIG has facilitated the current privileges.

If you have money in jail, you can get anything you want, says one prisoner. In another video, the words, IPL cricket cup is ours, are heard. The prisoners, who filmed this video inside their cell on Friday midnight, have shared it on social media. In order to ensure discipline and prevent the prisoners from conspired in any criminal act, the jail authorities had transferred the prisoners alphabetically, sorted them and sent them to their rooms as per the orders of the DIG. The accused in the video have also admitted that they had taken up this act to take revenge for the recent tightening of prison rules.

Segregate waste or pay fine: New rules kick in

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru is set to enforce stricter waste management rules from April 1, with authorities cracking down on citizens who fail to segregate their garbage at source. Under the new Solid Waste Management Rules-2026, implemented by the Greater Bengaluru Authority and Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited, waste segregation has been made mandatory for all households. From April 1, a special enforcement drive will begin across the city to ensure compliance. As per the revised rules, residents must separate their waste into categories such as wet waste, dry waste, domestic sanitary waste, and special waste. Despite existing guidelines, many households have continued to hand over mixed waste, increasing the burden on sanitation workers who are forced to sort garbage manually.

Big civic budgets hinge on tax collection reality

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The five civic corporations have proposed a combined budget outlay of Rs 20,216.5 crore for 2026-27, banking on Rs 4,378.6 crore from property tax collections. However, past trends show consistent shortfalls in meeting these targets, raising questions over how much of the planned spending will actually materialise. Historically, the erstwhile BBMP struggled to meet its targets, often falling well short of projections. It was only in 2024-25 that collections crossed 90 percent of the target, offering a brief improvement. But the shortfall for the current fiscal is as high as 40 percent as of March 20.

Data from the 2026-27 budgets shows varying degrees of reliance. In Bengaluru Central, property tax, cess and related receipts account for 41% of the total income, with Rs 780 crore expected purely from them. Bengaluru East has pegged this share at 39 percent, with the highest standalone property tax target of Rs 1,120.4 crore.

In Bengaluru North and South, the dependence is moderate but still significant. North estimates Rs 826.3 crore in property tax collections, with tax-related receipts forming 25.6 percent of its income, while South projects Rs 780 crore with a 28.8 percent share. Bengaluru East is aiming to mobilise an additional Rs 150 crore through reforms such as a GIS-based property tax system inte-

Corporations looks to widen revenue base

Recognising the risks, corporations are attempting to widen their revenue base. One of the key measures is the conversion of B-khata properties to A-khata, which is expected to bring more properties into the formal tax net. At the same time, there is a push to use technology for better assessment and enforcement.

grated with utility agencies. Another Rs 100 crore is expected through identification of defaulters using AI-driven data systems. In Bengaluru Central, authorities are focusing on improving accessibility, with plans to introduce kiosk service centres for self-payment and to train staff in advanced survey techniques such as GPS and total station methods. In Bengaluru West, officials plan stricter recovery measures, including auctioning properties of defaulters and strengthening tracking systems. Commissioner KV Rajendra said the focus would be on improving the capacity of the revenue department to ensure timely assessment and collection. In Bengaluru South, officials remain cautious about recovery prospects, particularly with arrears.

With property tax forming a key revenue pillar, any gap could directly affect project execution, leaving several civic works at risk of delay.



No water, only bills: Residents struggle for every drop

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Residents of Chamundinagar are facing a severe and ongoing drinking water crisis, with the situation worsening despite regular billing by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board. The area has been grappling with water scarcity throughout the year, with no consistent supply of Cauvery water. Despite this, residents continue to receive water bills, adding to their frustration. For over 3,000 households in the locality, access to water has become a daily struggle. The supply, when it does arrive, is limited to just one hour a day-far from sufficient for basic needs. Residents say this short duration does not meet the demands of cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, and other daily activities. The situation becomes even more difficult as people are forced to stay awake late into the night, waiting for water supply that often comes at odd hours, including midnight. Many households have adjusted their routines, losing sleep just to collect water. In the absence of reliable supply, residents are left with no choice but to depend on tanker water. The community has been collectively purchasing water, with each area arranging for around three tanker loads every week. This has added a financial burden, as families are forced to spend extra money just to meet their basic needs. The lack of water has also forced people to travel long distances in search of usable water for daily chores. From washing utensils to cleaning clothes, every activity has become a challenge due to the shortage. Residents say the double burden of paying for tanker water while still receiving regular BWSSB bills has left them exhausted. The ongoing crisis has turned water into a daily concern, with no immediate relief in sight.

SMART TRAVEL

Over 22,000 IPL fans used Namma Metro for season opener

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bengaluru witnessed a major success in public transport management during the IPL 2026 opening match, as thousands of cricket fans shifted to Namma Metro, setting a new benchmark for match-day travel. During the match at M Chinnaswamy Stadium, more than 22,000 passengers used Metro services, over twice the usual 8,000 to 10,000 commuters seen on regular days. The sharp rise in ridership

came as a result of a special initiative introduced by Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited in coordination with Bengaluru City Police, Greater Bengaluru Authority, Karnataka State Cricket Association, and Royal Challengers Bengaluru. A key highlight of this initiative was the integration of IPL match tickets with Metro QR codes. This allowed fans to travel free of cost from any station to Cubbon Park Metro Station or MG Road Metro Station and return after the



match without purchasing separate tickets. The move significantly eased pressure on Bengaluru's Central Business District,

bringing down both traffic congestion and parking demand. Commuters were encouraged to park their vehicles at nearby Metro stations

and continue their journey by train. Parking charges remained unchanged at Rs. 30 for two-wheelers and Rs 60 for four-wheelers, making the park-and-ride option convenient and affordable. To handle the surge, special arrangements were put in place at Cubbon Park and MG Road stations to guide fans smoothly towards stadium entry gates. Awareness campaigns, including station displays, direct communication with smart card users, and promotional boards, played a

crucial role in informing the public about the facility. After the match, crowd dispersal was handled efficiently. Around 22,000 passengers were cleared within just 50 minutes, between 11:05 pm and 11:55 pm. This was made possible by pre-positioning trains and running additional services at intervals of three minutes. During this period, 13 trains operated towards Kempagowda Metro Station (Majestic) and nine towards Whitefield from Cubbon Park station. In total, 39 round trips

were conducted, 18 on the Purple Line, 15 on the Green Line, and six on the Yellow Line. The last services were extended, with trains departing Majestic at 1.45 am and from RV Road at 2.05 am. The entire operation saw disciplined crowd behaviour, ensuring smooth and safe movement across stations. Based on feedback from ground staff and authorities, plans are already in place to further enhance facilities and crowd management systems for upcoming matches.

QUICK READ

POCSO Accused Allegedly Harasses Minor via Video Call from Jail

Hubballi
According to reports, the accused, who is currently lodged in a Central Jail in connection with a POCSO case, managed to gain access to a mobile phone and used it to make a video call to the minor victim. During the call, he allegedly threatened the girl and pressured her to speak in his favor in court proceedings. The act has caused significant distress to the victim and her family. It is further alleged that the accused had written the victim's name on his hand and displayed it during the video call, adding to the intimidation. The continuous harassment has reportedly left the minor traumatized, while her family remains deeply concerned about her safety and mental well-being.

Mahavir Jayanti Celebrated with Grand Procession and Rituals

Dharwad
On the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, a grand procession was organized featuring a decorated chariot carrying the portrait of Lord Mahavira. The procession drew widespread attention as it passed through key areas of the city. Horses, camels, traditional drum performances, and vintage cars added to the visual appeal of the event. Women performing traditional lazim dance further enhanced the vibrancy of the procession, captivating onlookers. The atmosphere was filled with devotion as followers chanted religious hymns and peace mantras. Members of the Jain community, dressed in traditional attire, actively took part in the procession, reflecting unity and spiritual dedication. The event showcased the rich cultural and religious traditions associated with Jainism.

Contaminated Drinking Water Sparks Outrage, Residents Blame Negligence

Hubballi
According to local residents, several areas including Anand Nagar Road, Sangam Colony in Ward 53, Ayodhya Nagar, and Gurunath Nagar have been affected by contaminated water supply. People claim that the drinking water being supplied to their homes is mixed with sewage and contains visible worms, making it unsafe for consumption. Residents have expressed frustration over the lack of response from authorities despite repeated complaints. Many claim they tried contacting officials to address the issue, but no immediate action was taken. The situation has raised serious health concerns, especially for children and elderly citizens who are more vulnerable to waterborne diseases.

Drunk Youths Create Ruckus after Forcing Entry into Relative’s House

Tension prevailed in a residential locality of Hubballi city after two youths, allegedly under the influence of alcohol, forcibly entered a relative’s house and created chaos late at night

HUBBALLI

According to local sources, the incident took place in Yalapur Oni, a densely populated neighborhood in Hubballi. The two accused youths, reportedly intoxicated, barged into the house of their relatives without permission. Witnesses stated that the youths were behaving aggressively and appeared to have lost control due to excessive alcohol consumption.

Upon entering the house, the duo allegedly began arguing with the occupants over personal issues. The situation quickly escalated into a disturbance, with loud shouting and unruly behavior alarming neighbors.

Residents nearby gathered



outside the house after hearing the commotion, fearing that the situation might turn violent.

Family members inside the house tried to calm the youths and asked them to leave, but their attempts were unsuccessful. The intoxicated individuals

continued to create a scene, damaging household items and causing emotional distress to the residents. Their actions not only disrupted the peace of the household but also disturbed the entire neighborhood.

Following the incident, lo-

cals informed the police, who arrived at the scene and brought the situation under control. The two youths were reportedly taken into custody for further questioning. Authorities are investigating the matter and are expected to take appropriate legal action based on the complaint filed by the affected family.

Residents of the area have expressed concern over the increasing incidents of alcohol-related disturbances and have urged the authorities to take stricter measures to prevent such behavior. The incident serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining discipline and respecting social boundaries, especially within family and community settings.

In a major anti-corruption operation, a commercial income tax officer in Hubballi has been arrested by the Lokayukta police for allegedly accepting a bribe of ₹6 lakh. The arrest has once again highlighted concerns over corruption within government departments

Commercial Tax Officer Arrested in Hubballi Lokayukta Bribery Trap

HUBBALLI

According to official sources, the accused officer, identified as Bharath Kumar Heggade, was caught red-handed while accepting a bribe in Hubballi. The operation was conducted by the Lokayukta team following a complaint regarding illegal monetary demands.

The officer was reportedly involved in a case linked to irregularities in input tax credit claims.

The complaint was filed by Vishwajit Naik, a deputy commissioner in the commercial taxes department and a native of Ankola. As per reports, Naik had purchased

eight tippers in 2019 and claimed an input tax credit of Rs 60 lakh, out of which Rs 34 lakh was utilized. However, the Commercial Taxes Department later alleged that the input tax credit claimed by him was illegal and had been used for purposes other than intended.

Following these allegations, a case was registered and multiple hearings were conducted to investigate the matter. It is reported that the hearing had been scheduled four times earlier, and the latest meeting was the fifth hearing in the case.

During this process, the accused officer allegedly de-



manded Rs 6 lakh from Naik to settle the case and close the proceedings.

Acting on the complaint, the Lokayukta police laid a trap and caught Bharath Kumar Heggade while he was accepting the bribe amount.

The operation was carried out under the supervision of Bengaluru Lokayukta SP Shivaprakash Devaraj. A team led by Lokayukta DySP Mallikarjun Chukki, along with officers Pradeep Kumar and Inspector Raju, executed the raid successfully.

The accused officer has been taken into custody, and further investigation is underway. Authorities are also examining whether more officials were involved in the alleged corruption network. The incident has sparked public outrage and renewed demands for stricter vigilance and accountability in government offices to curb corruption.

Jatra Mahotsava of Sangameshwara Mahaswami Celebrated with Devotion

KUNDGOL

The Jatra Mahotsava of Sangameshwara Mahaswami, revered as a savior of devotees, was celebrated with great religious fervor at Gudgeri village in Kundgol taluk, drawing large participation from devotees and locals. The grand religious event was held in honor of Sangameshwara Mahaswami, a respected spiritual figure believed by followers to guide and protect devotees. Gudgeri village, known for its spiritual significance, witnessed an influx of devotees who gathered to take part in the celebrations and seek blessings.

During the Jatra Mahotsava, special rituals and pujas were performed as part of the traditional chariot festival. Devotees actively participated in these religious ceremonies, offering prayers and expressing their faith in the teachings and blessings of the Mahaswami. The rituals were conducted with devotion, maintaining long-standing customs associated with the festival.

Decision on CM Change Left to High Command, Says Vinay Kulkarni

DHARWAD

Speaking to reporters in Kitar, Vinay Kulkarni made it clear that discussions around a possible leadership change in the state are not within the purview of regional leaders. He reiterated that such decisions are the sole responsibility of the party’s high command, and any speculation at the local level is unnecessary.

Kulkarni’s statement comes amid ongoing political discussions and rumors surrounding a potential change in the Chief Minister’s position. However, he maintained a firm stance, saying that leaders at his level are not authorized to speak on the issue. He urged party workers and the public not to indulge in speculation and to wait for an official announcement from the leadership.

The MLA also highlighted the importance of focusing on development work and governance rather than engaging in political debates that could create confusion among the public. He stressed that the party remains united and committed to serving the people, regardless of internal discussions or decisions taken at higher levels.

Kulkarni’s remarks are seen as an attempt to maintain par-



Dharwad Rural MLA
Vinay Kulkarni stated that any decision regarding a change in the Chief Minister’s post has been left entirely to the party high command, emphasizing that local leaders will not comment on the matter

ty discipline and avoid fueling rumors. Political observers note that such statements reflect a coordinated approach within the party to ensure that sensitive matters are handled only by top leadership.

As speculation continues, all eyes remain on the party high command for any official decision regarding the leadership in the state. Until then, leaders like Vinay Kulkarni have chosen to refrain from commenting further, emphasizing unity and organizational hierarchy.

Action to Be Taken Against Illegal Gas Procurement by Commercial Outlets



HUBBALLI

Amid a growing shortage of domestic gas cylinders in Hubballi, authorities have warned of strict legal action against commercial establishments illegally procuring domestic gas. Officials have emphasized that priority will be given to essential services and household consumers.

According to Joint Director Vinod Kumar, there has been a noticeable shortage of domestic gas cylinders in recent times, causing inconvenience to the public. The situation has been worsened by reports that several commercial establishments are unlawfully using domestic cylinders instead of authorized commercial gas supplies. Authorities have taken serious note of these violations and have assured that stringent action will be initiated against those found guilty.

Vinod Kumar stated that ensuring uninterrupted supply of gas to households remains the top priority. He highlighted that many residents have been forced to wait in long queues outside gas agencies due to the shortage. To address this issue, the depart-

ment has decided to prioritize distribution of domestic cylinders to households, hospitals, and emergency services.

Officials acknowledged that there is a slight shortage of commercial gas cylinders as well, which may have contributed to the misuse of domestic cylinders by business operators. However, they stressed that such practices are illegal and put additional pressure on the already strained domestic supply chain.

The Joint Director also appealed to the public to cooperate with authorities and refrain from hoarding gas cylinders. He urged consumers to use gas responsibly and report any instances of misuse or illegal distribution. Authorities are expected to intensify inspections and monitoring to curb malpractice and ensure fair distribution. The move is seen as an effort to streamline the supply system and safeguard the interests of genuine consumers. Residents have welcomed the decision and expressed hope that strict enforcement will bring relief from the ongoing shortage and restore normalcy in gas availability across the city.

HUBBALLI DRIVER ASSAULT

Autorickshaw Driver Assaulted by Youth in Hubballi’s Eshwar Nagar

HUBBALLI

In a shocking incident reported from Hubballi, an autorickshaw driver was allegedly assaulted by a youth in the Eshwar Nagar locality of Nekaranagar area. The incident has raised concerns about safety and law and order in the city. According to initial reports, the autorickshaw driver had

finished his day’s work and was resting inside his vehicle when the incident occurred. The driver was reportedly seated in his auto late at night, unaware of the events that were about to unfold.

A youth approached the driver and soon got into a heated argument with him. While the exact reason behind the altercation remains

unclear, the situation quickly escalated into a physical confrontation. The youth allegedly assaulted the driver during the dispute, causing panic in the otherwise quiet neighborhood.

Witnesses in the area reported hearing raised voices and commotion, which drew the attention of nearby residents. Some locals attempted to intervene and calm the

situation, but the confrontation had already turned violent by then. The autorickshaw driver sustained injuries during the assault, though the severity of his condition has not yet been officially disclosed.

The incident took place under the jurisdiction of the Old Hubballi police station. Upon receiving information, police personnel rushed to

the spot and brought the situation under control. A case has reportedly been registered, and an investigation is underway to identify the exact cause of the dispute and take necessary action against the accused youth.

Authorities are also examining whether the accused was under the influence of alcohol or any other substance at the time of the inci-

dent. Police officials have assured that strict action will be taken based on the findings of the investigation.

This incident has once again highlighted concerns over public safety, especially during late hours. Residents have urged law enforcement agencies to increase night patrols and take preventive measures to avoid such incidents in the future.





QUICK READ

**Haveri Resident Turns to Biogas amid LPG Shortage****Haveri**

Amid the ongoing shortage of LPG cylinders, a resident of Haveri has turned to an eco-friendly solution by reviving his biogas plant to meet household cooking needs. The move highlights the growing relevance of sustainable energy alternatives in times of fuel scarcity. Srinivas, a resident of Rajendranagar in Haveri, has decided to restart his biogas plant, which he had set up several years ago. Faced with difficulties in accessing regular LPG cylinder supplies, he chose to rely on a renewable and environmentally friendly option to ensure uninterrupted cooking fuel for his household. The biogas plant, installed at a cost of around Rs 15,000 approximately four years ago, utilizes household waste such as dry waste, wet waste, and vegetable scraps to produce gas.

Electric Stove Sales Surge in Haveri amid LPG Shortage**Haveri**

With the ongoing shortage of cooking gas cylinders in Haveri, residents are increasingly turning to electric stoves as an alternative, leading to a sharp rise in sales across local markets. The persistent lack of availability of LPG cylinders has left many households in Haveri struggling to meet their daily cooking needs. Frustrated by the situation, a growing number of residents are opting for electric stoves, particularly induction cooktops, as a reliable and convenient solution. Local home appliance and electronics stores have reported a significant spike in demand for electric stoves. Traders say that customers are actively enquiring about various models, features, and prices, indicating a clear shift in consumer preference due to the fuel shortage. What was once considered a secondary option has now become a primary cooking method for many households.

State-Level Wrestling Tournament Draws Huge Crowd**Haveri**

A state-level wrestling tournament held as part of the Jathra Mahotsava at the Purasiddheshwara Temple in Haveri witnessed enthusiastic participation and drew large crowds, showcasing thrilling bouts and athletic excellence. The two-day wrestling competition took place at the Hosamani Siddappa Stadium and featured more than 150 wrestlers from across the state. The event, organized as part of the temple festivities, brought together seasoned athletes and emerging talents, making it a major attraction for sports enthusiasts and devotees alike. The matches were marked by intense competition, with wrestlers displaying exceptional strength, agility, and technique. Participants executed powerful moves and counterattacks, keeping their opponents on the defensive.

Over 500 BJP Leaders Campaign for Bagalkot By-Election

In a significant political mobilization, more than 500 leaders and workers of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from Belagavi district actively campaigned for the party's candidate in the Bagalkot by-election

BAGALKOT

The large-scale campaign effort reflects the importance the BJP has attached to the Bagalkot by-election. Leaders and party workers from across Belagavi district gathered in large numbers to strengthen the party's outreach and connect with voters ahead of the crucial poll.

The campaign witnessed door-to-door interactions, public meetings, and voter engagement activities aimed at highlighting the party's agenda and achievements.

Party sources stated that the coordinated campaign is part of a broader strategy to ensure maximum voter contact and



build strong support for the BJP candidate. Workers were seen visiting various localities, interacting with residents, and addressing their concerns. The effort also included spreading awareness about development initiatives and welfare schemes implemented by the government.

Senior leaders emphasized

the need for unity and dedication among party workers to secure victory in the by-election. They urged volunteers to maintain discipline and focus on effectively communicating the party's vision to the electorate. The presence of a large number of workers has boosted the morale of the local cadre and intensified the cam-

paign atmosphere in the region.

The Bagalkot by-election is being closely watched, with political parties making strong efforts to gain an advantage. The BJP's extensive campaign in Belagavi indicates its determination to leave no stone unturned in securing a favorable outcome.

Political observers believe that such massive mobilization of party workers could play a crucial role in influencing voters and shaping the election results. As campaigning continues, all eyes remain on the developments leading up to the by-election, which is expected to witness a competitive contest.

In a major breakthrough, the Harugeri police in Belagavi district have arrested a gang of inter-state dacoits and seized gold ornaments and cash worth over ₹36 lakh. The operation was carried out based on specific intelligence inputs during the investigation of a house burglary case

Inter-State Dacoit Gang Arrested, Gold and Cash Worth ₹36 Lakh Seized

BELAGAVI

According to police officials, the gang was originally based in Maharashtra and had been involved in multiple dacoity cases across Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Goa. The Harugeri police received crucial leads while probing a burglary case within their jurisdiction, which helped them track the movements of the suspects.

Acting swiftly on the information, the police intercepted the gang while they were reportedly on their way to Goa, allegedly planning to visit a casino. In a well-coordinated operation, officers managed to apprehend all seven members of the gang and recover stolen valuables, including

gold ornaments and cash worth approximately Rs 36.11 lakh.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Ravi Shinde, Sunil Pawar, Shankar Jadhav, Dilip Shinde, Kishore More, Vinod Shinde, and Mithun Jadhav. Police sources revealed that the accused had been hiding in a settlement in Jalna district of Maharashtra before attempting to move towards Goa.

Investigators further disclosed that the gang has links to several serious criminal cases, including dacoity and murder, across multiple states. One of the arrested individuals is reportedly wanted in connection with a murder and dacoity case in Maharashtra. Officials stated that the ar-



rest was carried out after a high-speed chase, described as cinematic due to its intensity and precision. The successful operation highlights the coordination and efficiency of the police in tackling organized crime.

Further investigation is underway to uncover the full extent of the gang's activities

and identify any additional accomplices. Authorities are also working to link the seized valuables to unsolved cases in different states.

The operation has been widely appreciated as a significant step in curbing inter-state criminal networks and ensuring public safety across the region.

Ex-Servicemen Ensure Discipline at SSLC Exam Centres

GADAG

In a commendable initiative, members of the Ex-Servicemen's Association are volunteering to maintain discipline and security at SSLC examination centres in Rona taluk of Gadag district, ensuring a smooth and peaceful environment for students.

Amid the ongoing SSLC examinations across the state, ex-servicemen from various villages in Rona taluk have stepped forward to assist authorities in maintaining order at examination centres. These volunteers are working in coordination with the police and education department staff to ensure that exams are conducted without any disruptions.

The initiative, which has been ongoing for the past three years, has become a model of community service and civic responsibility. The presence of disciplined and experienced ex-servicemen at exam centres has significantly contributed to

maintaining a calm and secure atmosphere, helping students focus on their examinations without fear or disturbance.

During a surprise visit to the examination centre at Sri Veerabhadreshwara High School, the Deputy Director of School Education and Literacy, R.S., observed the dedication of the ex-servicemen. He noted that they were stationed at both the front and rear of the centre, effectively performing duties similar to police personnel to ensure strict vigilance and prevent any untoward incidents.

Officials have emphasized that the involvement of ex-servicemen plays a crucial role in creating a conducive environment for students. Their discipline, commitment, and sense of duty have been widely appreciated by both authorities and the public.

The initiative has received praise from various quarters, with many lauding the ex-servicemen for their selfless service.

Evidence Suggests Iron Ore Processing 3,000 Years Ago

KOPPAL

A recent study has revealed evidence that iron ore was refined and processed in Koppal district nearly 3,000 years ago, shedding new light on the region's ancient industrial and cultural history.

The research, conducted by historian Dr. Shanabasappa Kolkar from Gangavati, points to significant findings near Hirebenkal Morer Plate in Gangavati taluk. According to the study, remnants of ancient furnaces and other materials indicate that iron ore refining activities were carried out in the area during the Iron Age.

Experts involved in the research have identified multiple traces of early iron production across Koppal district, suggesting that the region played an important role in early metallurgical practices. The discovery of furnaces in particular has

provided strong evidence that iron ore was not only available but also systematically processed using established techniques.

Interestingly, the findings suggest that iron ore may have been transported from the Sandur region to these processing sites in Koppal. This indicates the existence of organized resource movement and possibly trade or logistical networks during that period. The presence of such systems highlights the advanced nature of ancient communities in the region.

The study also points to the likelihood that the refined iron was used to produce tools and weapons, further emphasizing the technological capabilities of the time. The discovery of lower-grade or secondary ore materials in the area has added further credibility to the research, indicating that even different types of ore were utilized efficiently.



Village Sets Example with Self-Sufficient Gobar Gas Model

BELAGAVI

Kattanbhavi village in Belagavi taluk has gained attention for its widespread use of gobar gas, with nearly 85 percent of households producing their own cooking fuel. Out of approximately 250 houses in the village, more than 200 have installed gobar gas units, making the community largely independent of external gas supplies.

The village's success is rooted in its strong agricultural and dairy-based lifestyle. Most families own cattle such as cows, buffaloes, and bullocks, which provide a steady supply of dung. This, along with household waste, is used to produce gobar gas through simple biogas plants set up in the backyards of homes. The system not only ensures a continuous fuel supply but also promotes sustainable waste management.

Residents say that the availability of gobar gas has eliminated the need to rely on gas cylinder bookings, which can often be delayed or costly. Cooking is carried out efficiently using gobar gas stoves, and families have been benefiting from this natural and eco-friendly energy source for decades. In fact, many villagers have been using gobar gas consistently for nearly 40 years.

The model has also contributed to environmental conser-

At a time when many regions are facing shortages of fuel and cooking gas, a small village in Belagavi district has emerged as a model of self-reliance by adopting gobar gas as its primary source of energy. The initiative has significantly reduced dependence on conventional gas cylinders

vation by reducing dependence on firewood and fossil fuels. It has minimized deforestation and lowered carbon emissions, making it a sustainable solution for rural energy needs.

The spread of gobar gas in the region is credited to the efforts of Shivaji Kaganikar, a 76-year-old environmentalist and social activist from Kadoli village. Between 1990 and 1995, he played a key role in promoting biogas units across Belagavi, Hukkeri, and Khanapur taluks, leading to the establishment of nearly 30,000 such systems.

Kattanbhavi now stands as an inspiring example for other villages across the country, demonstrating how local resources and community participation can ensure energy security and environmental sustainability.

Pregnant Woman Injured as Ambulance Overturns After Collision

BAGALKOT

A shocking road accident involving an ambulance and a car near a bus stand in Bagalkot left a pregnant woman injured and caused panic among onlookers. The entire incident was captured on CCTV, highlighting the severity of the crash.

According to reports, the accident occurred when an ambulance heading towards the district hospital collided with an Innova car near Kalidasa Circle. The impact of the collision was so intense that the ambulance overturned in the middle of the road, creating a chaotic scene and drawing immediate attention from nearby residents.

The pregnant woman, who was being transported in the ambulance, was among those affected by the accident. Eyewitnesses stated that the situation appeared extremely alarming at first, given the condition of the overturned vehicle. However, quick action by local youths present at the scene helped prevent further complications. They

rushed to the spot and carefully rescued the woman from the ambulance, ensuring her safety.

Despite the dramatic nature of the accident, officials confirmed that there were no fatalities. The passengers inside the ambulance, including the pregnant woman, sustained only minor injuries. They were promptly attended to and provided necessary medical care.

The Bagalkot traffic police reached the scene soon after the incident and conducted a detailed inspection. Authorities have registered a case under the jurisdiction of Navanagar traffic police station. The CCTV footage from the area is being closely examined to determine the exact cause of the accident and identify any negligence involved. The incident has once again raised concerns about road safety and the need for cautious driving, especially in busy urban areas. Authorities have urged motorists to follow traffic rules strictly to prevent such accidents in the future.

MAHAVIR PEACE MESSAGE

Adopting Mahavira's Principles Ensures Peace in Society, Says Tahsildar

SHIRAHATTI

Tahsildar Raghavendra Rao emphasized the importance of non-violence and moral values in building a peaceful society while addressing a gathering on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti in Shirahatti. He stated that the teachings of great spiritual leaders continue to guide people even in challenging times.

Speaking at the Tahsildar office in Shirahatti after offering floral tributes to the por-

trait of Lord Mahavira, Raghavendra Rao highlighted the relevance of non-violence in today's world. He remarked that even in times marked by global conflicts and unrest, people in India continue to live peacefully due to the enduring influence of Mahavira's principles and the teachings of other great philosophers.

He noted that the philosophy of non-violence, compassion, and harmony has played a crucial role in shaping soci-



ety. According to him, if individuals adopt these principles in their daily lives, it would lead to greater understanding and unity among communities. He stressed that peace is

not merely the absence of conflict but the result of conscious efforts to practice kindness and tolerance.

The Tahsildar also spoke about the universal nature of

Jainism, stating that its teachings are not limited to any particular caste or creed. Instead, they serve as a guiding force for the welfare of humanity as a whole. He pointed out that values such as forgiveness over anger, love over hatred, and kindness instead of violence are essential for building a harmonious society.

The event was organized as part of Mahavir Jayanti celebrations, during which officials and staff members gath-

ered to pay their respects and reflect on the teachings of Lord Mahavira.

The atmosphere was marked by devotion and a sense of collective responsibility toward promoting peace and ethical living.

Raghavendra Rao concluded his address by urging people to incorporate these timeless values into their everyday lives, stating that doing so would help create a more compassionate and peaceful society for future generations.



QUICK READ

Mahavir Jayanti Celebrated with Cultural and Spiritual Programs

KARWAR

Mahavir Jayanti was celebrated with devotion and cultural significance in Karwar, highlighting the timeless teachings of non-violence, truth, and compassion. The event was organized at a government auditorium with the joint efforts of the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, and the Department of Kannada and Culture. The celebration marked the birth anniversary of Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara of Jainism, whose teachings continue to inspire society. Speaking on the occasion, officials emphasized that Mahavir's message of non-violence, peace, and coexistence remains highly relevant in today's world. They noted that his principles encourage individuals to lead a life rooted in truth, compassion, and ethical values, promoting harmony in society.

Mass Cleanliness Drive Scheduled across Dandeli Town

KARWAR

The initiative will be conducted on March 31 at 7:00 AM simultaneously across all 31 wards of Dandeli. The program will be carried out under the leadership of local legislator R. V. Deshpande, with active involvement from various government departments and local authorities. According to officials, the campaign is designed as a comprehensive effort to ensure cleanliness across the town. It will cover public spaces, roads, marketplaces, and other key areas, with a focus on improving sanitation and creating awareness among citizens about maintaining a clean environment. The event is expected to witness participation from a wide range of stakeholders, including municipal officials, members of local governing bodies, and representatives from village panchayats. Office bearers, committee members, and leaders from different sectors have also been invited to take part in the drive.

District Administration Issues Order for Gram Panchayat Reorganization

VIJAYAPURA

According to District Commissioner Dr. Anand K, the reorganization aims to streamline administrative functioning and improve governance at the grassroots level. The order outlines changes in the jurisdiction of multiple Gram Panchayats across various taluks, including the inclusion and reassignment of several villages. Under the revised structure, villages from different taluks such as Alamel, Sindagi, Talikoti, and Basavana Bagewadi have been reorganized and grouped under respective Gram Panchayat limits. The move is expected to ensure better delivery of civic services, improved coordination among local bodies, and more effective implementation of government schemes. Officials stated that the reorganization has been carried out after careful consideration of administrative requirements and local needs.

Savita Community Protests Telecom Exploitation and Corporate Encroachment

The Savita community has launched a strong protest against alleged exploitation by telecom companies and the growing dominance of corporate-run beauty parlors, calling both devpts a serious threat to the livelihoods of ordinary citizens and traditional workers

GADAG

In a press statement issued on Monday, Gadag District President Krishna H. Hadapad expressed firm support for Member of Parliament Raghav Chadha, who has raised concerns in Parliament regarding telecom companies allegedly overcharging customers through misleading data and recharge plans. Hadapad described Chadha's intervention as historic and people-centric, emphasizing that the current system unfairly

burdens consumers.

He criticized telecom operators for offering recharge plans with only 28 days of validity, arguing that this effectively forces customers to pay for an extra month each year. Calling it daylight robbery, Hadapad urged the central government to adopt Chadha's proposal of treating unused mobile data as a digital asset that can be carried forward to subsequent recharge cycles.

Beyond telecom concerns, the Savita community has also raised alarm over what it de-



scribes as corporate encroachment into their traditional occupation. Hadapad highlighted that large corporations and wealthy investors are estab-

lishing high-end, air-conditioned salons across the country, often using unaccounted money for investment. According to him, these entities, despite lacking professional expertise, are dominating the market purely through financial power.

This trend, he warned, is severely impacting small, traditional barbers who have depended on this occupation for generations. Many small shops are reportedly shutting down, pushing thousands of families into financial distress.

The community has demanded immediate government intervention, including the identification and cancellation of licenses of such profit-driven establishments.

Furthermore, the Savita community has called for a special legal framework that prioritizes individuals from the community in practicing their traditional profession. Hadapad also appealed to leaders like Chadha to raise this issue in Parliament and pressure the central government to safeguard the interests

of marginalized workers.

Echoing these concerns, state leader Bailappa Narayanaswamy condemned both telecom companies and corporate players, accusing them of exploiting the poor and eroding traditional livelihoods. He warned that failure to act promptly could lead to widespread public outrage.

The Savita community has vowed to continue its protest until concrete measures are taken to address both telecom exploitation and corporate domination.

Notebook and Food Distribution Marks Mahavir Jayanti Celebration

MYSURU

The program was held on Ramanauja Road at Jyotigamaya Free Girls' Hostel, where members of the S. Prakash Priyadarshan Friends Group organized the distribution of holige, dry fruits, fresh fruits, and notebooks to the hostel residents. The initiative was aimed at combining celebration with social responsibility, reflecting the timeless teaching that non-violence is the highest virtue, a principle strongly advocated by Mahavira.

Addressing the gathering, senior social worker Dr. Raghuram Vajpayee spoke about the five key principles of life taught by Mahavir—truth, non-violence, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-possessiveness. He said that celebrating the occasion through acts of service brings deeper meaning to the event and reminds people of the importance of humanity, self-awareness, and ethical living.

JDS City Working President S. Prakash Priyadarshan emphasized that Mahavir's teachings are universal and relevant to all religions. He



The birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir was celebrated in a meaningful manner in the city through a service initiative that focused on helping students and promoting the values of non-violence and compassion.

noted that love and non-violence can unite people across different communities and beliefs.

He urged citizens to adopt peaceful ways of living and highlighted the need for harmony and coexistence in today's world. He also called on

people to pray for global peace and understanding.

The event was attended by several notable individuals, including social worker Sinchana Gowda, political leader Purushottam, social activist Vidya, Shreyas from M.M. Groups, senior sportsperson Mahadev, Rajesh Kumar, Mahesh, and representatives of the hostel including Madesh. Others such as S.P. Akshay Priyadarshan and Datta were also present.

The celebration demonstrated how festivals can be observed in a socially meaningful way, spreading the message of kindness, unity, and service while honoring the enduring teachings of Mahavir.



Bengaluru Faces Rising Concerns over Deepening Urban Inequality

BENGALURU

The analysis conducted by Janaagraha highlights a significant disparity in per capita expenditure among Bengaluru's corporations. Despite total budget allocations ranging between ₹3,400 crore and ₹4,700 crore, the distribution of funds appears uneven, leading to stark differences in the quality of civic infrastructure and services available to residents.

According to the findings, there is an estimated 2.5-fold gap in per capita spending between different jurisdictions. This means that residents in certain areas receive substantially higher public investment compared to others, creating an imbalance in access to essential services such as roads, sanitation, water supply, and public amenities.

Urban policy observers argue that such disparities risk deepening socio-economic divides within the city. They warn that unequal allocation of resources may result in uneven development, where some neighborhoods continue to thrive while others struggle with inadequate infrastructure and limited public services.

The issue has also raised questions about the role of the Greater Bengaluru Authority in ensuring fair and balanced development. Critics suggest that without a robust framework for equitable distribution, administrative restructuring alone cannot address the city's long-standing challenges. Experts emphasize that urban governance must prioritize inclusivity and fairness, ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their location, have access to basic civic amenities.

SELF-ENUMERATION FACILITY ANNOUNCED FOR CENSUS EXERCISE

KARWAR

Authorities have introduced a self-enumeration facility for the upcoming census exercise, allowing residents to submit their details online within a specified period.

According to District Commissioner K. Lakshmi Priya, the house listing and population enumeration process will be conducted from April 1 to May 15, 2026. As part of this initiative, citizens have been given the option to complete their census details independently through an online platform.

Residents can access the official census portal and fill in their household and personal information digitally. The self-enumeration process enables any member of a household to register details on behalf of the family. Upon successful submission, users will receive a unique self-enumer-



ation identification number via mobile or email.

Officials have clarified that when census enumerators visit households for verification, residents must provide this identification number to confirm their submission and complete the process. This system is expected to streamline data collection and reduce the need for repeated visits.

The district administration has urged all citizens to ac-

tively participate in the self-enumeration process and provide accurate information. Authorities emphasized that the data collected will remain secure and confidential, and will be used strictly for national planning and development purposes.

The initiative aims to make the census process more efficient and accessible by leveraging digital technology, while also ensuring wider public participation.

KARWAR CLEANLINESS DRIVE

Three-Day Cleanliness Drive Launched in Karwar Constituency

KARWAR

A large-scale cleanliness campaign has been launched across the Karwar constituency, aiming to promote hygiene, public participation, and environmental responsibility through a sustained three-day initiative.

The cleanliness drive, which began on March 30 and will continue until April 1, was inaugurated by local legislator R. V. Deshpande. The initiative is being carried out continuously over three days, covering multiple towns, vil-



lages, and urban areas within the constituency.

Speaking at the launch event, Deshpande emphasized the importance of cleanliness

as a shared civic duty. He stated that the campaign is inspired by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, who strongly advocated cleanliness as a way

of life. He urged citizens to actively participate in maintaining hygiene in their surroundings, stressing that cleanliness should not be treated as a one-time activity but as an ongoing responsibility.

The campaign includes extensive cleaning efforts in public spaces such as streets, marketplaces, public toilets, and parks. Authorities are working in coordination with local representatives and officials to ensure the success of the program. The initiative aims to create awareness

about sanitation while encouraging long-term behavioral change among residents.

Officials involved in the campaign highlighted that the effort is not limited to a symbolic exercise but is designed to bring about lasting improvements in public health and sanitation. They reiterated that maintaining cleanliness is essential for building healthier communities and improving the overall quality of life.

The drive has witnessed active participation from various government departments, local bodies, and volunteer

groups. Members of self-help organizations and citizens have also joined hands in large numbers, demonstrating a collective commitment to the cause.

Organizers expressed confidence that such initiatives will strengthen community engagement and inspire people to take ownership of their environment. The campaign is expected to set an example for other regions by showcasing how coordinated efforts between authorities and the public can lead to meaningful change.

Food Safety Training Program Conducted for Vendors in Gokarna

A food safety training and certification program was organized to educate food business operators on hygiene, safety standards, and regulatory practices

KARWAR

The one-day training program was conducted at a community hall under the initiative of the Food Safety Training and Certification Centre. The session aimed to create awareness among food vendors about maintaining quality, cleanliness, and safe food handling practices.

The program was inaugurated by Panchayat Development Officer V.A. Patgar, who emphasized the importance of hygiene and health in daily life. He urged food business operators to adopt better practices to ensure public safety and improve service standards.

Senior Health Inspector Dinesh Nayak addressed the participants and highlighted the need for strict adherence to food safety guidelines. He stressed that maintaining proper hygiene, cleanliness of surroundings, and quality



standards is essential for protecting consumer health. He also encouraged vendors to actively implement the knowledge gained through such training programs in their daily operations.

Former Food Safety Officer and trainer Arun Kashibhat spoke about the importance of structured guidelines in food preparation and handling. He explained various safety measures, cleanliness protocols, and regulatory requirements

that food vendors must follow. He also emphasized that obtaining certification is becoming increasingly important and urged all food business operators to complete the process.

Health Inspector Mahantesh Hugar pointed out that Gokarna, being a major tourist destination, requires higher standards of food safety and hygiene. He noted that ensuring quality food and clean surroundings is essential for

maintaining the town's reputation among visitors.

Officials further informed that similar training programs are being conducted across different taluks of the district, encouraging all food vendors to obtain the necessary certification under the Food Safety Training and Certification initiative. The session included detailed guidance on food handling, safety precautions, hygiene maintenance, and regulatory compliance.

‘Gruhalakshmi Funds Released’: Health Camp and Census Drive Announced

CHITRADURGA

District Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority President R. Shivanna stated that the 29th installment of the Gruhalakshmi scheme has been released and will be credited to eligible women beneficiaries within the next two to three days. A total of 3,88,341 beneficiaries in the district are expected to receive financial assistance, with the government allocating ₹77.66 crore for this installment. The Gruhalakshmi scheme, a flagship initiative of the state government, provides ₹2,000 per month directly to the bank accounts of women heads of households. The program aims to strengthen the financial independence of women and has significantly improved economic stability for many families. Officials noted that beneficiaries are utilizing the funds for household expenses, children's education, healthcare, and savings.



ings, leading to increased confidence and decision-making power among women.

In a separate initiative, the district hospital, in collaboration with SS Narayana Health Hospital, Davanagere, will conduct free heart check-ups for children on the first Wednesday of every month. The screenings will take place at the Mother and Child Hospital within the district hospital premises between 10:30 AM and 1:00 PM.

Pediatric cardiologist Dr. G. S. Anil Kumar will examine children for symptoms such as recurring in-

Multiple public welfare initiatives, including the release of Gruhalakshmi scheme funds, free child health services, and a census self-enumeration drive, have been announced in Chitradurga district.

fections, bluish discoloration of skin or lips, breathing difficulties, irregular heartbeat, and persistent cough. Parents have been advised to utilize this free service for early detection and treatment of heart conditions. District Surgeon Dr. S. P. Ravindra provided contact details for further information.

Additionally, officials have announced that self-enumeration for the upcoming Census of India 2027 will be conducted from April 1 to April 15, 2026.

Anwar Hussain Gadad Honoured with SAIMA Award for Social Service

GADAG

Anwar Hussain Gadad, a noted social worker from Alavandi village in Koppal taluk, has been honoured with the prestigious SAIMA Award in recognition of his long-standing contributions to social, religious, and educational fields.

The award was presented at a grand organization organized by the South India Media Association at a reputed hotel in Hyderabad. The event brought together prominent dignitaries, public representatives, and well-known personalities from the film industry, making it a significant occasion celebrating excellence

and service.

Anwar Hussain Gadad has been actively involved in various community development initiatives for several years. His work spans across promoting education, supporting social welfare activities, and contributing to religious harmony in the region. His dedication and consistent efforts have made a meaningful impact on the lives of many people, especially in rural areas.

The award ceremony was attended by several distinguished guests, including ministers from the Telangana government and leaders associated with social welfare departments. Spiritual leaders and public representatives

also graced the occasion, highlighting the importance of recognizing grassroots contributors like Gadad. Additionally, popular actors and actresses from the Telugu and Kannada film industries were present, adding prominence to the event.

During the ceremony, speakers praised Gadad's commitment to society and his tireless efforts in uplifting underprivileged communities. They emphasized that such recognition serves as an inspiration for others to contribute towards social development and community service.

Family members, friends, and well-wishers of Anwar Hussain Gadad were also present at the event, expressing pride and joy over his achievement. The honour marks a significant milestone in his journey and reinforces the value of selfless service in society. The SAIMA Award not only recognizes individual excellence but also highlights the importance of community-driven efforts in building a better and more inclusive society.



AUTO DRIVERS STRUGGLE FOR LPG SUPPLY

HIRIYUR

Auto drivers in Hiriyr are facing severe difficulties due to long waiting times for LPG refilling, leading to frustration and disruption in their daily livelihood.

In Hiriyr town, auto drivers have expressed growing concern over the shortage and delayed availability of LPG, which is essential for running

their vehicles. Many drivers reported that they are forced to wait for several hours at gas stations, often losing valuable working time and income in the process.

The issue has become more pressing in recent days, with drivers alleging irregular supply and poor management at distribution points. Several drivers stated that they arrive early in the morning hoping

to get their turn, but end up waiting for extended periods due to limited stock and long queues.

Auto drivers, who depend entirely on daily earnings, said the situation has severely impacted their financial stability. We spend most of our day waiting in line instead of earning money. It is becoming impossible to manage our expenses, one driver said.



K'taka Launches PRAIAS Initiative to Combat Diabetic Foot Complications

KALABURAGI

Karnataka has taken a significant step in addressing diabetic foot complications with the launch of the PRAIAS initiative, a nationwide program aimed at prevention, early detection, and awareness of diabetes-related limb risks.

The initiative, titled PRAIAS Podiatry Reach Across India for Awareness and Screening was formally inaugurated at the Gulbarga Institute of Medical Sciences in Kalaburagi. It is designed as a collaborative national effort to reduce the growing burden of diabetic foot complications, which remain one of the most serious yet preventable consequences of diabetes.

India currently faces a major diabetes crisis, with over 100 million people living with the condition. Alarmingly, a new diabetic foot ulcer develops every 12 seconds in the country, and globally, a limb is lost to diabetes every 20 seconds. These statistics highlight the urgent need for preventive healthcare measures and structured screening

programs. The PRAIAS initiative is spearheaded by leading diabetic foot specialists and supported by healthcare organizations focused on innovation in podiatry care. A key feature of the program is the launch of a Digital Podiatry Screening Van, which will travel across cities to provide accessible and advanced screening services to communities.

This mobile unit is equipped with modern diagnostic tools that assess foot pressure, detect neuropathy, and evaluate blood circulation in the lower limbs. These screenings help identify high-risk individuals early, allowing timely medical intervention and significantly reducing the chances of severe complications, including amputations.

The initiative follows a structured outreach model, with the screening van stationed in different cities for a few days to conduct systematic evaluations. It also integrates advanced technology and data analysis to identify risk factors and guide patients toward appropriate treatment pathways.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MUNAZIR AHMED**, S/o Abdul Hye, resident of No. 4/1, Umer Shariff Road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru – 560004, have changed my name to **SYED MUNAZIR AHMED**, vide affidavit dated: 26.03.2026, before Notary V. RAJASHEKARA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **NIHARIKA**, D/o Verinder Chadha & Meena Chadha, resident of No. K105, 1st Floor, Casa Grand Boulevard, Bidarahalli Hobli, Chikka Gubbi, Bengaluru -560077, have changed my name to **NIHARIKA CHADHA**, vide affidavit dated: 26.03.2026, before Notary V. RAJASHEKARA, Bengaluru.

CAUSE TITLE IN THE COURT OF THE 30th ADDITIONAL CHIEF JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE AT BENGALURU

MISC. No. 4092/2026
Krishnappa Reddy S/o Thimmaiah alias Thimmaiah Reddy, Aged about 63 years, R1at No.11, Itagalapura Village Rajanakunte Post, Yelahanka Taluk Bangalore District – 560064.

...Petitioner

V/s
Registrar of Births and Deaths, Rajanakunte Grama Panchayat, Yelahanka Taluk, Bangalore District

Respondent

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the public that the above named petitioner Krishnappa Reddy has filed a Miscellaneous Petition before this Hon'ble Court under Section 13(3) of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 seeking permission for delayed registration of death of his mother Smt. Nanjamma, wife of Late Thimmaiah alias Thimmaiah Reddy, who died on 01-03-2019 at Itagalapura Village, Rajanakunte Post, Yelahanka Taluk, Bangalore District due to natural causes and old age, and the said death was not registered within the prescribed time. Any person having objection, if any, to the registration of the death of the above said deceased may file objections before this Hon'ble Court within the period from 27-03-2026 to 27-04-2026. If no objections are received within the said period, further orders will be passed according to law.

Place : Bengaluru
Date : 27-03-2026
Petitioner:
Krishnappa Reddy

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client **Sri.K.N.Chandrappa** s/o Nallappa, Residing at Situated at Kurabarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Kolat Taluk and District, I am the Owner of the Below said Property,while Sale Deed for taken Digital copy, have lost following Documents of property pertaining to below Mentioned property Situated at Situated at Kurabarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Kolat Taluk and District, had published the factum of lost of her Original Regd Sale Deed, Dated:06-04-2021,Regd Sale Deed executed by Venkateshappa S/o munivenkatappa and his brother Ramesh s/o Munivenkatappa, In favour of, Sri. Nallappa s/o Yallanabihovi,with respect to schedule property, which is registered as Book No.1, Volumeno.2186, in Pages 55-57,In Regd as Doc No.94/95-96, in the office of the SRO, KOLAR, Property bearing Sy No.6/3, Situated at Kurabarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Kolat Taluk and District, Measuring 0.05 guntas police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2131435/2026, DATED:-30-03-2026, and complaint dated:-30-03-2026, by respective person,if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.

Place:-Chinthamani, Date:-30-03-2026.
K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL, ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY, BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD CHINTHAMANI, Mob: 9980110692

CH CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad contact:
080-41209042

NAME CHANGE

I, **MEHREEN TAJ.A**, D/o Afzal Pasha & Noor Taj, resident of No. 216, 2nd Cross, MTB Road, Hameed Khan Garden, Kalasipalyam, Bengaluru – 560002, have changed my name to **MEHEREEN TAJ**, vide affidavit dated: 26.03.2026, before Notary V. RAJASHEKARA, Bengaluru.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public that my client, **Sri.Srinivasayya S** S/o Salappa, is the absolute owner of the property: Property Bearing E-Swathu Form No.3,E-Swathu No.30-22-89/21,Old Property No.9631/L,Nirdharana No.9631/L,In measuring East to west 12.192024 Meters,North to South 9.144018 Meters,Totally measuring 111.4836 Sq Meters,Situated at 89/21,New A D Colony,Mulabagilu Town and Taluk, Kolar District, and bounded on. East By : Property West By : Road North By : My Remain Property South By : My Remain Property My client intends to mortgage the said property, in favour of M/S "AAVAS FINANCERS LIMITED"Kolar Branch, The said property is free from all encumbrances, and no litigation is pending in any court of law. Any person(s) having any claim, right, title, or interest by way of sale, mortgage, gift, trust, inheritance, or litigation over the said property is hereby requested to make their claim known in writing, along with supporting documents, to the undersigned at K.S.HARISH KUMAR Advocate Chinthamani, within 7 days from the date of this advertisement. If no claim is received within this period, it shall be considered that there are no objections, and my client will proceed with the transaction.

Date : 26.03.2026
Place : Chinthamani
K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL, ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY, BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD CHINTHAMANI, Mob: 9980110692

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client **Sri.Mahesh R** W/o Ramakrishnappa J V, Residing at Situated at #7,D V G Road,East Babepalli,43,1,Bagepalli Town and Taluk, Chikaballapura District, I am the Owner of the Below said Property,while Sale Deed for taken Digital copy, have lost following Documents of property pertaining to below Mentioned property Situated at Situated at #7,D V G Road,East Bagepalli,43,1,Bagepalli Town and Taluk, Chikaballapura District, had published the factum of lost of her Original Regd Sale Deed, Dated:06-04-2021,Regd Sale Deed, Executed by Sri.K R Ramachandrapa S/o Late,Devara Rangappa,In favour of Sri. Balaji M S/o Murali M,In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.BGP-1-00071-2021-22,CD No.BGPD6701In regd before of the SRO Bagepalli, Property Bearing E-Swathu Form No.3,E-Swathu No.235605492, Nirdharana No.H L No.785/40, In measuring East to west 12.039624 Meters,North to South 10.972822 Meters,Totally measuring 132.1087 Sq Meters, Situated at #7,D V G Road,East Gabepalli,43,1,Bagepalli Town and Taluk, Chikaballapura District,police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2131435/2026, DATED:-30-03-2026, and complaint dated:-30-03-2026, by respective person,if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.

Place:-Chinthamani, Date:-30-03-2026.
K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL, ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY, BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD CHINTHAMANI, Mob: 9980110692

MUDHOL MAHADEV JATRA

Mahadev Temple Fair Celebrated with Devotion in Mudhol

BIDAR

The annual Mahadev temple fair in Mudhol (B) village of Aurad taluk was celebrated with great devotion and cultural fervor, with former minister and MLA Prabhu B Chavan participating in the festivities.

Addressing the gathering during the jatra mahotsav, Prabhu B. Chavan highlighted the significance of such traditional fairs in preserving cultural heritage and strengthening social unity in rural areas.

He stated that temple fairs like the Mahadev jatra serve as a symbol of cultural identity and play a vital role in fostering devotion, harmony, and collective spirit among people from all sections of society.

He emphasized that Lord Mahadev is revered as a compassionate deity who responds to the prayers of devotees and alleviates their difficulties. He noted that even a simple offering made with devotion is enough to please the deity, reflecting the spiritual belief that sincerity matters more than material offerings.



He further added that worshipping Mahadev instills peace of mind, courage, and guidance to walk on the path of truth, righteousness, and harmony.

Praising the residents of Mudhol (B), the MLA appreciated their dedication towards preserving traditions and organizing the fair in a grand and disciplined manner.

He mentioned that he has been attending the event consistently for the past 17 years, which reflects his strong connection with the village and its people. He described the villagers' commitment to sus-

taining cultural values as exemplary.

Speaking about development works, Chavan said that the people of Mudhol (B) have always shown him immense support and affection, and in return, he has prioritized the village's development. He stated that significant funds have been allocated for various infrastructure projects, including the reno-

vation of the temple, construction of a community hall, and development of essential civic facilities.

He further highlighted the establishment of an electricity substation, improvement of roads with dividers, construction of school buildings, anganwadi centers, and a modern panchayat building.

He also noted that funds have been provided for the development of the village lake, contributing to both environmental and community benefits.

Assuring continued support, Chavan said that all pending demands of the villagers would be addressed in a phased manner.

The event concluded with religious rituals, cultural activities, and active participation from villagers, reflecting a strong sense of unity and devotion.

QUICK READ



Navy staff kills woman, stores body parts

VISAKHAPATNAM
An Indian Navy staff member allegedly killed a 28-year-old woman in Gajuwaka and tried to destroy evidence. The accused, Chintada Ravindra, called the woman, Polipalli Mounika, to his house when his wife was away. After an argument, he reportedly killed her, cut the body into pieces, stored some parts in a fridge, and burnt others at a vacant place. Police said the two were in a relationship since 2021. A special team is investigating the case further.

KN Nehru files nomination from Trichy west

COIMBATORE
DMK leader and Minister KN Nehru filed his nomination from Tiruchirappalli West on the first day of nominations for the Tamil Nadu elections. He submitted the papers to Returning Officer Thavavalavan at the Revenue Divisional Office. Nehru received a warm welcome from party workers, with several leaders and allies accompanying him. Speaking to reporters, he said anyone can contest from any constituency, referring to TVK chief Vijay. He also expressed confidence that people will support Chief Minister MK Stalin in the elections.

UP to recruit 5K Anganwadi workers, 60K helpers this year

The government announces large-scale recruitment and welfare measures to strengthen Anganwadi services and childcare systems statewide

LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday announced that the state government plans to recruit more than 5,000 Anganwadi workers and over 60,000 helpers during the current year.

He said that the recruitment process has already begun and will be carried out in a transparent manner.

The announcement was made during a programme held at Lok Bhawan, where several Anganwadi-related projects were inaugurated.

The Chief Minister stated that the government is also focusing on strengthening social security measures for Anganwadi workers and helpers. He said that they have been brought under im-



portant insurance schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana.

In addition, nearly three lakh workers and helpers are being provided health insurance coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh annually under Ayush-

children. He said that the present government has removed such practices and introduced transparency, ensuring that appointments are made strictly on merit.

He also highlighted that services are being digitised, with the use of smartphones and modern growth-monitoring devices to improve efficiency. Smartphones will soon be distributed to Anganwadi workers across all districts to help in real-time data collection.

He said Anganwadi centres will support the National Education Policy with pre-primary classes, while 27,000 centres will be merged. He also praised workers for their key role in nutrition and maternal health.

Raut blasts BJP for blaming Cong for Assam immigration issues

NEW DELHI

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut on Monday strongly criticised the BJP for accusing Congress of causing demographic changes in Assam, questioning the ruling party's own performance on the issue. He pointed out that the Border Security Force is under the control of the Central government, which is led by the BJP.

Raut said it was wrong for the BJP to repeatedly blame Congress when it has been in power at the Centre and in Assam for many years. He said this showed failure on the BJP's part to address illegal immigration.

"BJP controls the Border Security Force and also gov-



erns Assam, yet it keeps blaming Congress. What have they done in the past 10 years? This clearly shows failure," Raut said.

His remarks came after Union Home Minister Amit Shah accused Congress of changing Assam's population balance for vote-bank politics ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections.

Addressing a rally in Nalbari, Shah alleged that dis-

tricts such as Dhubri and nearby areas have seen a rise in illegal immigrants due to earlier Congress policies. He claimed that previous Congress governments allowed infiltration for decades.

Shah also said that the current BJP government has taken strong action to control the situation.

He credited Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma with securing borders and reclaiming about 1.25 lakh acres of land from alleged encroachers.

Amit Shah urged voters to re-elect BJP, promising to identify and deport illegal immigrants. Immigration remains a key Assam poll issue, with BJP and Congress set for a direct contest.



BJD MP resigns after remark sparks RS uproar

NEW DELHI

A major controversy unfolded in Parliament after remarks about Biju Patnaik triggered protests and political backlash.

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Sasmit Patra on Monday resigned from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and IT, objecting to alleged comments made by its chairman Nishikant Dubey. In his letter to the Rajya Sabha Chairperson, Patra said he stepped down "as a matter of principle," stating he could not serve under someone who made disrespectful remarks about a respected leader.

The controversy began after Dubey allegedly claimed that Biju Patnaik acted as a link between former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the CIA in the 1960s. The statement sparked strong reactions from several Members of Parliament.

Raising the issue in the Rajya Sabha, Patra described the remarks as "false, disparaging and fabricated." He accused the ruling party of lowering the standards of political discussion and demanded accountability.

Man dies after train hit at Ghatkopar

MUMBAI
A 33-year-old man died after being hit by a local train at Ghatkopar railway station, officials said. The deceased, Narendra Mandre, a resident of Bhatwadi, was struck by an Up fast air-conditioned train on platform 4 on March 27. He was taken to Rajawadi Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The Kurla Government Railway Police have registered a case of accidental death and started an investigation. Police are checking how the victim came onto the tracks at the time of the incident.

Missing photos on NCP banner trigger fresh factional tensions

MUMBAI

A controversy broke out in Maharashtra after key leaders' photos were missing from an NCP event banner.

A political row erupted within the Nationalist Congress Party after photographs of senior leaders Ajit Pawar and Sunetra Pawar were missing from a banner displayed at a party event in Raigad district.

The incident took place during a felicitation programme held on March 27 for

newly elected Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti members. The event was attended by state NCP chief Sunil Tatkare. The banner at the venue prominently displayed Tatkare, his daughter and minister Aditi Tatkare, and his son Aniket Tatkare, but did not include Ajit Pawar and Sunetra Pawar.

The absence of their photographs quickly sparked criticism from within the party. NCP leader Rohit Pawar raised concerns, alleging that certain senior leaders, includ-

ing Sunil Tatkare and Praful Patel, were trying to strengthen their control over the party while sidelining other factions.

Following the backlash, Aditi Tatkare issued an apology and clarified that the omission was not intentional. She said it was a mistake made at the local level and should not be seen as a sign of internal division. She also stressed that both Ajit Pawar and Sunetra Pawar continue to hold an important and respected place within the party.

TELANGANA MINISTER PROMOTES E-VEHICLES, ARRIVES ASSEMBLY IN EV

HYDERABAD

Telangana Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Monday travelled to the State Assembly in an electric car, highlighting the government's push to promote eco-friendly vehicles across the state.

The minister, accompanied by MLA Danam Nager, drove from the Ministers' Quarters to the As-

sembly in the electric vehicle as a symbolic move to encourage people to adopt cleaner transport options.

Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakar said the state government introduced an electric vehicle (EV) policy to reduce pollution and protect the environment.

He stressed that shifting to EVs is important to cut harmful emissions caused by fuel-based vehicles.

As part of the policy, the government has offered major benefits to buyers of electric vehicles.

These include a 100 per cent exemption from road tax and registration charges, making EVs more affordable for the public.

The minister said that the government has already provided tax exemptions worth nearly Rs 1,000 crore under this policy. He added

that steps are also being taken to improve infrastructure, including setting up charging stations across the state to support EV users.

Prabhakar noted that several EV manufacturers are supporting the initiative by offering discounts ranging from 10 to 20 per cent for government employees.

He thanked these companies for their cooperation and urged more firms to

come forward and offer incentives to boost EV adoption.

The government recently introduced a scheme offering up to 20% discounts on electric vehicles for employees. Finalised with EV makers, it may benefit five lakh staff.

The 2024 policy covers multiple vehicle types, promoting cleaner, affordable transport.

LOCKER RULES

Banks cannot check locker contents: Finance Minister

NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said that banks are not allowed to see or record what customers keep inside their lockers, as doing so would break banking rules and violate customer privacy.

She made this clear while replying to a question in the Lok Sabha during Question Hour.

The minister was responding to a supplementary query raised by Congress MP Nandao Dasaram Kirsan from the



Gadchiroli-Chimur constituency. The question was about whether banks could offer different insurance coverage based on the value of items

stored in lockers. Sitharaman firmly rejected this idea.

She explained that banks cannot monitor or ask customers to disclose the valu-

ables they place in lockers. According to her, such actions would go against banking regulations and customer trust. "Banks cannot sit and watch or record what a customer keeps in a locker. That would be a clear breach of rules," she said.

Because banks have no information about the contents, it is not possible to decide insurance coverage based on the actual value of stored items.

Instead, a standard rule is followed across all banks. Sitharaman stated that, in case of any loss such as theft, fire,

or locker break-in, customers are eligible for compensation equal to 100 times the annual locker rent.

She added that this fixed compensation system ensures fairness and avoids complications. Since each locker may contain different items of unknown value, assessing them individually is not practical.

Nirmala Sitharaman said there is currently no plan to change rules or offer varied insurance, stressing privacy, assuring confidentiality, and urging customers to secure valuables carefully.



Mamata blames BJP of 'divisive politics'

PASCHIM MEDINIPUR

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party of creating divisions among communities for political gain. Addressing a poll rally in Paschim Medinipur, the Trinamool Congress leader strongly criticised the party's approach and rejected the "chargesheet" issued by Union Home Minister Amit Shah against her government.

Banerjee said that instead of targeting her administration, the first chargesheet should be filed against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah.

She alleged that the BJP rose to power by creating unrest and using divisions within society. According to her, the party is now trying to benefit politically by encouraging conflict among different groups.

She further claimed that the BJP was attempting to create tension between communities, including Hindus and Muslims, and even within administrative and police services. Banerjee said such actions could disturb social harmony and weaken governance.

The Chief Minister also

Mamata Banerjee accuses BJP of creating divisions, rejects Amit Shah's chargesheet, and alleges political interference in administration and transfers.

raised concerns about the treatment of government officials. She alleged that many civil servants who had previously worked efficiently were now being humiliated. According to her, this was affecting the morale of officers and the smooth functioning of the administration.

Reiterating her earlier stand, Banerjee accused the Election Commission of transferring senior officers to poll-bound states under pressure from the BJP. She described these transfers as arbitrary and called it a serious case of political interference.

Banerjee urged people to remain united and not fall for divisive politics.

She said her government remains committed to maintaining peace, development, and harmony in the state, while continuing to work for the welfare of all sections of society.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SRINIVAS alias SRINIVAS BADIGER S/o MARUTI BADIGER, R/o 613/3, 4th Cross, 6th Main, 5th Stage, BEML Layout, RR Nagar, Rajarajeshwari nagar, Bangalore south, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560098, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SRINIVASA BADIGER.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, JYOTI CHITTI alias JYOTI WANAKKI W/o WANAKKI BHIMAPPA, R/o Kotur Village, Kotur, Hubli, Dharwad, Karnataka-580011, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JYOTI B WANAKKI.

DOCUMENT LOST

I, N MALLESHA R/o Bangalore, do hereby State that the Original Sale Deeds bearing Document No / Identification **ANK-4-00059-2015-16 AND ANK-1818-2001-02** which stands in my name and belongs to me has been lost during transit to Chandapura. If anyone happens to find the said document kindly contact to the below signed person.

Sd/- N MALLESHA
M.No : 9008677848

CH CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad contact:
080-41209042

CHANGE OF NAME

I, KANHAIYALAL S/o RAM SEWAK AGARWAL, R/o 616, 3rd Cross, Kormangala, 3rd Block, Koramangala, Bangalore South, Bangalore, Karnataka-560034, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KANHAIYALAL AGARWAL.

DOCUMENT LOST

I, SATISHA BC R/o Bangalore, do hereby State that the Original Sale Deeds bearing Document No / Identification **ANK-1-0315/2011-12 AND JGN-01-03075/2013-14**, which stands in my name and belongs to me has been lost during transit to Attibele. If anyone happens to find the said document kindly contact to the below signed person.

Sd/- Satisha BC
M.No : 7483107662

Altum Credo
Home Finance

ALTUM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD
Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinita, Wakdevadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005, Maharashtra (India)

Possession Notice [Rule 8(1)] (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **Altum Credo Home Finance Private Limited** hereinafter referred as "ACHFL" under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (no. 3 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand notice on **10th June 2025** with respect to Loan Agreement No. **1192040100033** calling upon the **Manjunatha N A (BORROWER), Lakshmi (CO- BORROWER), N N Anjinappa (CO- BORROWER)** to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice being **Rs. 3,93,977/- (Rupees Three Lakh(s) Ninety Three Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Seven Only)** within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice.

1. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of said rules on the **26th day of March of the year 2026**.

2. The borrower/secured debtor and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with property will be subject to the charge of the ACHFL for an amount of **Rs. 3,93,977/- (Rupees Three Lakh(s) Ninety Three Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Seven Only)** and further interest from **09th June 2025**

3. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub- section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Property No. 515, E Swathu No. 151200600100520045, Measuring 18.288 X 18.288 Mts. i.e. 334.45 Sq. Mt. Situated at Didige Village Didige Gram Panchayath, Davangere and **Bounded on: East:** House of Malleshappa, **West:** Land of Shivamma, **South:** House of Kadbager Basappa, **North:** Road.

Place : Davangere, Karnataka
Date : 26.03.2026

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

QUICK READ



Senior Maoist leader, 8 cadres surrender in Andhra Pradesh

VIJAYAWADA

In a major step against Left-Wing Extremism, senior Maoist leader Cheluri Narayana Rao, also known as Suresh, surrendered before Andhra Pradesh Police on Monday along with eight other cadres. Rao was a Central Committee Member and served for nearly 36 years in CPI (Maoist). Police said the group carried a total bounty of Rs 66 lakh and surrendered five weapons, including an AK-47 and INSAS rifle. Officials called it a significant success in anti-Naxal operations.

Dozens of leaders quit Cong, join AAP Punjab

CHANDIGARH

In a major setback to Congress, nearly three dozen leaders joined the Aam Aadmi Party in Punjab on Monday. The induction was led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's OSD Rajbir Ghuman. Those who joined included Congress Vice President (SC Wing) Sahib Singh Chhailwaddi and District Women Congress President Sarabjit Kaur, along with several leaders from other parties. The leaders said they were impressed by the state government's people-friendly policies and decided to support AAP.

Woman Killed With Gas Cylinder, Husband Arrested

NEW DELHI

A 32-year-old woman, Poonam, was allegedly killed by her husband during a domestic dispute in southeast Delhi's Pul Prahladpur area, police said on Monday. The accused, Suresh Kumar, attacked her with a small LPG cylinder at their home in DDA Janta Flats. Neighbours alerted police after hearing screams. Poonam was taken to hospital but was declared dead. The couple, married in 2020, had recently moved from Rajasthan. Police said a financial argument led to the incident.

ASSAM'S STABILITY IMPROVED IN DECADE: PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Assam has moved from instability to peace due to sustained efforts.

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said Assam has witnessed a major transformation after years of instability, crediting the change to the BJP's double-engine government.

Addressing booth-level workers under the 'Mera Booth, Sabse Mazboot Samvaad' programme, he said twelve peace agreements were signed with various organisations in the northeast to ensure lasting peace.

Modi criticised the Indian National Congress, stating



that earlier agreements were only made on paper to gain attention, without real impact. He said Assam once suffered from violence and unrest, but the situation has improved

significantly in the past decade. According to him, the BJP worked sincerely to implement agreements and provide a stable future for the youth.

He added that previous governments failed to resolve issues related to insurgent groups and even betrayed causes like that of the Bodo community. In contrast, he said the BJP ensured peace through honest governance and consistent action.

The Prime Minister asked party workers to reach out to first-time voters and explain the situation under earlier

governments, which he described as misrule. He stressed that voters should understand how important peace is for the state's growth and overall development. He also cautioned people to stay alert and not believe misleading AI-generated videos being shared during the election period, as they could create confusion among voters.

Meanwhile, the Assam Assembly elections for all 126 seats are set to be held on April 9. The BJP-led NDA is aiming to return to power once again and secure a third consecutive term in the state.

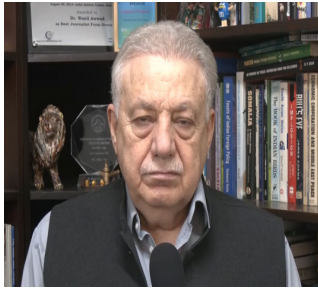
Middle East expert claims Trump prolonging Iran war

NEW DELHI

Middle East expert Wael Awad on Monday claimed that the ongoing West Asia conflict is being prolonged by Donald Trump to benefit his billionaire associates and support Israel's agenda.

He said wars often make rich nations richer while poorer countries suffer the most. Awad alleged that Trump's decisions are influenced by powerful allies and pointed to a rise in his personal assets. He also questioned Trump's claims of military success, citing reports from Tehran that US forces attempting a landing at Kharg Island were captured.

He warned that tensions could rise further, especially around the Easter period, raising fears of possible large-scale incidents. Awad added that Iran is well-prepared for a long conflict, backed by



years of planning and covert operations.

According to him, Iran has carried out thousands of targeted strikes and built a strong defence strategy. He also said Gulf countries are rethinking their ties with the US, as they now find themselves protecting American bases instead of receiving protection. Awad suggested that regional nations may push for a new security arrangement without US military presence, as the conflict continues to escalate with no immediate resolution in sight.

'South Asian politics going through major changes'

South Asian politics is going through major changes as traditional parties lose ground to new, youth-driven movements. A key example is Balendra Shah, a former rapper who recently became Nepal's youngest Prime Minister. Middle East expert Wael Awad said this reflects a growing shift, with people frustrated over issues like unemployment, inflation, and rising living costs.

BRS seeks probe into Ponguleti over mining allegations

HYDERABAD

A delegation of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leaders met Shiv Pratap Shukla on Monday, submitting a formal complaint against Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy over alleged illegal mining and land-grabbing activities.

The meeting at Raj Bhavan lasted nearly an hour, during which BRS MLAs and MLCs presented documents claiming large-scale irregularities.

The delegation demanded the Minister's immediate dismissal and called for an independent judicial inquiry, preferably under a sitting High Court judge, to ensure fairness and transparency.

दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय DELHI HIGH COURT

Court Defers Hearing On Plea Against Sonia

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday deferred the hearing on a petition seeking registration of an FIR against Sonia Gandhi over alleged irregularities in voter list inclusion.

The matter at Rouse Avenue Court will now be heard on April 18, as arguments from her side remain incomplete. The plea, filed by advocate Vikas Tripathi, claims Sonia Gandhi's name was added to electoral rolls before she became an Indian citizen.

The petitioner argued that such inclusion may have involved false declarations and forged documents, and sought a detailed investigation.

Earlier, the petitioner presented certified copies of electoral records to support claims of alleged fraud in the case. However, the court has not yet heard the complete arguments from the counsel

A Delhi court postponed hearing on a plea seeking FIR against Sonia Gandhi over alleged voter list irregularities, with arguments to continue next month

representing Sonia Gandhi, and the hearing will continue on the next date.

In her response, Sonia Gandhi described the allegations as politically driven and without merit. She clarified that matters related to citizenship come under the authority of the Central government, while issues concerning voter lists are handled by the Election Commission of India.

The case had earlier been dismissed by a Magistrate Court, which noted that the judiciary has limited powers in electoral matters due to constitutional provisions restricting such intervention.

Cong leader set for discharge soon

Senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, who was hospitalised due to fever, is likely to be discharged soon as her health has improved significantly. Doctors said she has shown excellent recovery and her condition is now normal. The 79-year-old was admitted to Sir Ganga Ram Hospital on March 24. According to hospital chairman Dr Ajay Swaroop, she is responding well to treatment and remains stable.



Although she will continue IV antibiotics for a few days, all her health parameters are normal, and discharge will be decided soon.

Mehbooba backs Iran amid escalating tensions

JAMMU

Mehbooba Mufti on Monday voiced strong support for Iran as tensions continue to rise in West Asia. She said she believes Iran will ultimately defeat the United States and Israel.

Speaking to reporters, the former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister stated that Iranian forces are highly motivated and ready to fight, while she claimed that American and Israeli troops are losing ground and retreating from conflict zones.

Her comments came at a time when Donald Trump announced that the US military had successfully targeted and destroyed several important locations in Iran. He described the development as a "big day" and asserted that Iran's naval and air strength



had been heavily damaged by the strikes.

Trump also indicated that the US might consider taking control of Kharg Island, a key Iranian oil export centre. He said the island could be captured without much resistance, highlighting its importance in global oil supply and trade routes.

At the same time, Iran's Parliament Speaker Moham-

mad Bagher Ghalibaf accused the US and Israel of planning a ground invasion while pretending to engage in diplomatic talks. He warned that Iran is fully prepared to defend itself and will not give in to external pressure under any circumstances.

With strong statements coming from all sides, the situation in the region remains tense.



MODI TO LAUNCH RS 19,800 CR PROJECTS IN GUJARAT

GANDHINAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Gujarat on March 31, 2026, to inaugurate and lay foundation stones for development projects worth over Rs 19,800 crore. The event will take place at Vav-Tharad in the presence of Chief Minister

Bhupendra Patel and other senior officials.

The projects include Rs 10,921 crore under Union ministries such as Power, Road Transport and Highways, and Railways, along with Rs 8,886 crore under various departments of the Gujarat government. Key initiatives include projects at

the Khavda renewable energy park in Kutch, aimed at boosting green energy and strengthening power supply.

Several road projects will also be launched, including new bypass roads and highway sections to improve connectivity. Major railway works, including new lines and track expansions, will be

inaugurated to enhance transport services in the region.

Urban development projects form a large part of the plan, especially in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. These include canal development, modernisation of public transport, construction of bridges, housing for economically weaker sections, and

new sports and community facilities.

In Gandhinagar, projects include sewer lines, a sewage treatment plant, lake interlinking, and improved drainage systems. Other sectors such as water supply, health, tourism, tribal development, and rural development will also see new initiatives.

MONITORING SETUP

Sikkim sets up 24x7 LPG control rooms

GANGTOK

The Sikkim government has set up a central control room in Gangtok and district-level centres across all six districts to monitor LPG supply. The step comes amid concerns over possible disruptions due to the ongoing West Asia conflict.

According to the Food and Civil Supplies Department, these control rooms will function 24x7 to ensure smooth distribution, prevent black marketing, and address public complaints. A



regulated refill system has also been introduced, allowing domestic LPG refills every 25 days in urban areas and 45 days in rural regions. Priority supply of com-

mercial LPG will be given to essential services like hospitals and educational institutions. Authorities have ordered strict enforcement of the Essential Com-

modities Act, 1955, and daily reporting from district units.

Oil companies such as Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited are working closely with the Sikkim government to maintain a steady and uninterrupted LPG supply across the state.

At the national level, the Centre is actively monitoring the situation and has taken several steps to ensure adequate fuel availability.

Stalin files nomination, confident of DMK alliance victory

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin on Monday filed his nomination from the Kolathur constituency, aiming for a fourth consecutive term in the Assembly elections.

The nomination process has begun across all 234 constituencies, marking an important stage ahead of polling scheduled on April 23. Election officials have set up centres in every constituency with tight security to ensure smooth proceedings.

Stalin submitted his nomination papers at the designated office on Paper Mills Road before Returning Officer S.



Shanthi. Senior leaders, including Minister Sekhar Babu, were present during the filing. The event drew large crowds, with party workers and supporters gathering in huge numbers. After filing his nomination, Stalin expressed

strong confidence in the victory of the DMK-led alliance. He said the people of Tamil Nadu would once again support his government and its policies. He also stated that the alliance is expected to win more than 200 seats in the elections. Following the filing, Stalin held a roadshow in an open vehicle across key parts of the constituency. Supporters lined the streets, waving party flags and cheering as he passed through, turning the event into a major show of strength. He also released a booklet highlighting development works and welfare schemes carried out in Kolathur during his tenure.

QUICK READ

Israeli strikes cripple Iran's Khondab nuclear plant

Vienna

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed that Iran's Khondab Heavy Water Plant near Arak has been severely damaged and is no longer operational following Israeli strikes. Satellite analysis showed the facility, used in nuclear reactor operations, sustained extensive destruction, though it held no declared nuclear material. The Israel Defense Forces called the operation "Rising Lion," citing concerns that the plant could support plutonium production for weapons. Israel said Iran had failed to fully convert the reactor to prevent such use. The strike heightens tensions in West Asia as global attention focuses on Iran's nuclear capabilities and regional security.

Fuel hike sparks food price surge in Punjab

Rawalpindi

Rising fuel prices in Pakistan have pushed up transport costs, causing a sharp increase in food prices across Punjab province. Traders report that goods from Karachi, Faisalabad, and Sargodha are now costlier to move, raising retail rates. Milk sells at PKR 230 per kg, mutton at PKR 2,700, and rice at PKR 400 per kg. Vegetables like tomatoes and garlic, and fruits such as apples and bananas, are also more expensive. Traders say the fuel hike has disrupted supply chains, driving persistent inflation. Consumers face growing pressure as essential food becomes less affordable.

Taiwan reports Chinese aircraft, ships near waters

Taipei

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense detected one Chinese military sortie, nine naval vessels, and an official ship near its waters yesterday morning. The aircraft crossed the median line into Taiwan's southwestern and southeastern ADIZ, prompting monitoring and responses by Taiwanese forces. On Sunday, 19 Chinese sorties and additional vessels were reported, with many entering Taiwan's northern, central, southwestern, and eastern ADIZ. Taiwan maintains its own government and military, while China claims the island as part of its territory. These incursions continue to heighten tensions, reflecting the ongoing dispute over sovereignty and regional security in the Taiwan Strait.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

	3	6		7	5		8	4
4			1			7		
	7	9		8	2		6	5
9			6			5		
	1			5	8		4	7
5		7	3			8		
	9			1	6		7	8
7		1	8			4		
	5			3	4		1	9

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

9	8	1	4	7	6	3	5	2
3	6	4	5	2	9	8	7	1
5	7	2	1	8	3	6	4	9
4	1	5	2	6	7	9	3	8
8	2	6	3	9	4	7	1	5
7	9	3	8	5	1	2	6	4
6	5	9	7	4	8	1	2	3
2	3	7	9	1	5	4	8	6
1	4	8	6	3	2	5	9	7

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle



Moonbound: NASA ready for historic launch

NASA's Artemis II mission marks humanity's return to lunar orbit, testing vital life-support systems for future Mars exploration.

KSC, FLORIDA

Humanity is standing on the brink of a new era in space as NASA completes final checks for the highly anticipated Artemis II mission. Scheduled to blast off as early as April 1 from the Kennedy Space Center, this mission marks the first time in over fifty years that humans will travel beyond low-Earth orbit. Four brave astronauts are prepared to board the massive Space Launch System rocket for a ten-day journey around the Moon. The crew features a talented team, including NASA's Reid Wiseman, Victor Glov-



er, and Christina Koch, alongside Canada's Jeremy Hansen. This mission isn't just a trip; it is a rigorous test of the Orion spacecraft's life-support systems with people actually inside. While the weather looks mostly clear with an 80% chance of "go" conditions, teams are keeping a watchful eye on

potential high winds that could delay the countdown. Once in space, the craft will follow a "free-return" path, using the Moon's own gravity to sling the crew around its far side and back home to Earth. During this loop, the team is expected to break the record for the farthest distance humans have ever traveled from our home planet. This mission is a vital stepping stone for NASA's grand plan to build a permanent base on the Moon and, eventually, send the first humans to Mars. The world will be watching as the engines ignite, signaling our return to the deep stars.

The Ahmadi community in Pakistan faced restricted Eid celebrations due to legal barriers and police intervention, highlighting ongoing religious inequality.

Faith behind closed doors for Pakistan's Ahmadis

ISLAMABAD

While millions across Pakistan celebrated Eid with joy and unity, the Ahmadi community was once again forced into silence. A report by the Voice of Pakistan Minority (VOPM) revealed that members of this group were prevented from offering their traditional Eid prayers in several districts of Punjab. Instead of festive gatherings, the community faced heavy police presence and legal threats, turning a day of celebration into a stark reminder of their isolation. The rights group explained that these restrictions are not accidents but part of a "predictable reality" in Pakistan. Because of specific national laws that limit how Ahmadis can practice their faith, local authorities often step in to stop their public worship. VOPM noted that the very police meant to protect citizens often become the "instruments of restriction," ensuring that Ahmadi gatherings simply do not take place. For the community, being denied the right to pray together on Eid goes beyond missing a single event; it deepens a painful sense of in-

equality. The report highlighted a sharp contradiction: while the Pakistani government often pledges to protect religious freedom and fight extremism, the lived experience for Ahmadis tells a story of unfulfilled promises. The VOPM concluded that a society cannot truly claim to



'Religion misused to fuel conflicts in Pak'

ISLAMABAD:

A recent report highlights how religion is being used in Pakistan to drive conflict narratives. Experts say occasions like Eid are exploited to spread hostile messages against India and other nations. Blasphemy laws, increasingly applied between 2022 and 2024, have been used not just for legal cases but also to target minorities and settle disputes. Analysts note that social media and public rhetoric turn faith into a tool for mass mobilisation and ideological control. Cross-border tensions with Afghanistan show that religious unity is often a cover for strategic and political objectives rather than genuine reconciliation.

Min Aung Hlaing moves toward Presidency

NAYPYIDAW

In a major move to formalize his control over Myanmar, junta chief Min Aung Hlaing was officially nominated as a presidential candidate yesterday. The announcement follows a controversial election held over the last few months, which was widely dismissed by international observers as a "sham." By moving into a presidential role, the General is attempting to trade his military uniform for a civilian title while keeping the country under his firm grip. To comply with the constitution—which forbids a sitting military chief from being

maker from the military-backed USD. The Military will nominate a third candidate soon. From these three, one will be elected President, while the other two will serve as Vice Presidents. Given the military-stacked parliament, Min Aung Hlaing is widely expected to win the top spot. While the junta calls this a "transition to democracy," human rights groups and critics argue it is merely a "rebrand" to help the regime escape international isolation. Despite the name changes in the capital, fierce fighting continues across much of the country between the military and resistance forces.



report submitted earlier this month. However, controversy has erupted because the gov-

ernment has not yet made the full report public. Critics and local media, including The

Fuel strike paralyzes 8 districts in Bangladesh

DHAKA

A massive fuel crisis is gripping northern Bangladesh as tanker workers launched an indefinite strike, leaving millions of people worried about market stability. The protest began across eight districts, including Rangpur and Dinajpur, after three workers were arrested for alleged fuel theft. In response, union leaders have halted all operations at a major oil depot, stopping the flow of diesel and petrol to the region. The strike is already threatening to bring buses and trucks to a standstill. Union leaders are demanding the immediate release of their colleagues, warning that they will not return to work until their terms are met. This ten-

717.jpg

A massive fuel strike in northern Bangladesh, triggered by worker arrests, threatens regional stability amid global supply tensions and government crackdowns on illegal oil hoarding.

sion comes at a difficult time, as global fuel supplies are already tight due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The war has made importing oil harder and more expensive for the entire

World body slams Pakistan's border rocket attacks

KABUL

The International Human Rights Foundation (IHRF) has issued a stern warning to Pakistan, demanding an immediate end to military strikes on civilian areas in Afghanistan. Calling the recent shelling of residential neighborhoods "war crimes," the global rights group urged the United Nations to investigate the violence. The call for action follows reports of heavy weaponry and mortar rounds hitting homes in the provinces of Paktika, Khost, and Kunar. The situation turned deadly, when rocket fire struck areas near Asadabad. Local officials confirmed that one person was killed and sixteen others, including women and children, were injured in the assault. Taliban spokesperson Hamdullah Fitrat accused Pakistani forces of deliberately targeting civilian homes, forcing many families to flee and sparking fears of a growing humanitarian crisis. Under international law, armies must distinguish between military targets and innocent families. The IHRF stressed that "blind attacks" on homes and farms cause not just physical destruction but deep psychological scars. While Pakistan claims its operations target militants hiding across the border, the Taliban has rejected these excuses, pointing to the rising number of civilian victims instead. The border has seen a sharp increase in fighting since a brief Eid ceasefire collapsed. With tensions at an all-time high, the IHRF is calling on humanitarian groups to provide urgent aid to displaced families. They reminded both nations that protecting human dignity is a requirement, not a choice, even in times of war.

KABUL BOOSTS REGIONAL TIES AMID CONFLICTS AROUND

KABUL:

Afghanistan is stepping up regional outreach amid ongoing tensions with Pakistan and the war in West Asia. Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi met Iran's envoy to discuss trade and support for peaceful resolution of Afghanistan-Pakistan issues. Iran emphasized dialogue and regional stability. Meanwhile, Muttaqi spoke with UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, highlighting the need to prevent Afghan territory from being used against Pakistan and appreciating UAE's mediation in US-Afghan matters. With borders closed and aid limited, Afghanistan seeks cooperation from neighbors to ease supply challenges and promote stability amid rising regional conflicts.

717.jpg

Former Nepal leaders arrested over protest firing

KATHMANDU

The arrest of former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and ex-Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak has sent shockwaves through Nepal, putting the new government's promises of justice under the microscope. The two leaders were taken into custody yesterday for their alleged roles in a September 2025 firing incident that claimed several lives during the "Gen Z uprising" in the capital. The arrests followed a massive 1,000-page investigation

report submitted earlier this month. However, controversy has erupted because the gov-

ernment has not yet made the full report public. Critics and local media, including The

Kathmandu Post, have raised concerns that the move feels "selective." While the two politicians are behind bars, other top security officials named in the report remain free, leading to suspicions that the new administration might be targeting its political rivals. Nepal's new Prime Minister, Balendra Shah, took office with a massive mandate and a 100-point reform plan to fix the economy and reduce corruption. While many support bringing those responsible for the 2025 violence to

justice, experts warn that the process must be transparent to remain legitimate. Unlike neighboring Bangladesh, where similar unrest led to widespread retaliatory violence and the death sentence of a former leader, Nepal has remained relatively peaceful. The public is now watching closely to see if the Shah government will deliver fair trials or if this mandate will be wasted on political distractions. For the families of those killed, the hope remains that the law will apply to everyone equally.





Final Six Spots Up for Grabs in 2026 World Cup Playoffs

European and intercontinental playoffs will decide last teams for expanded global tournament

MADRID

The race to complete the line-up for the 2026 FIFA World Cup reaches its climax this week as playoff tournaments across Europe and beyond determine the final six teams for the expanded 48-nation event.

For the first time, the World Cup — to be co-hosted by United States, Canada and Mexico — will feature 48 teams, up from 32 in 2022. While most qualification spots have already been secured, the remaining berths will be filled through high-stakes knockout clashes.

In the European playoffs, eight teams are battling for four spots in winner-takes-all matches. Among them, Italy national football team stands out as it seeks to avoid missing a third consecutive World Cup — an unprecedented setback for the four-time champions.

The decisive fixtures in-



clude Bosnia-Herzegovina vs Italy, Sweden vs Poland, Kosovo vs Turkey, and Czech Republic vs Denmark. All matches are scheduled for Tuesday, with no second chances for the losing sides. The winner between Turkey and Kosovo will join a group

featuring the United States, Paraguay and Australia in the final tournament.

Meanwhile, the intercontinental playoffs — officially termed the “Playoff Tournament” by FIFA — will decide the last two qualifiers. Held in Mexico, the six-team competi-

tion has narrowed down to four contenders: Congo, Jamaica, Bolivia and Iraq.

Congo will face Jamaica, while Bolivia takes on Iraq in the final round of matches. These decisive games will be played in Guadalajara and Monterrey, with the winners securing their tickets to football’s biggest stage.

The stakes are immense, as qualification not only guarantees participation but also significant financial and sporting rewards. Already-qualified teams span all continents, including powerhouses like Argentina, Brazil, France, and Germany.

The tournament is set to kick off on June 11, 2026, at the iconic Estadio Azteca, with the final scheduled for July 19 in New Jersey.

As the playoffs unfold, anticipation builds for what promises to be the biggest and most diverse World Cup in history.

Dzeko Looms Large as Italy Faces Bosnia in Crucial Playoff

ROME

Edin Dzeko stands between Italy and a long-awaited return to the FIFA World Cup as the Azzurri prepare for a decisive playoff clash against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Italy, desperate to avoid missing a third consecutive World Cup, must find a way to contain the 40-year-old striker, who remains a potent attacking force. Dzeko, Bosnia’s all-time leading scorer with 73 international goals, is a familiar figure to several Italian defenders, having shared dressing rooms with them during his time at AS Roma and Inter Milan.

Defenders Gianluca Mancini, Riccardo Calafiori, and Alessandro Bastoni have all played alongside Dzeko at club level, adding an intriguing personal dimension to the encounter. Italy winger Federico Dimarco, who also shares a close bond with the Bosnian forward, acknowledged the challenge ahead.

“Edin is a great player and a great person,” Dimarco said, while stressing that friendships will be set aside once



Veteran striker’s aerial threat tests Italy defence in high-stakes World Cup qualifier

the match begins.

Bosnia earned their place in the playoff final after a dramatic win over Wales, with Dzeko scoring a crucial headed equaliser. His aerial ability, combined with his physical presence, poses a significant concern for Italy’s defence — an area that has shown vulnerability in dealing with crosses. The match will be played at the Bilino Polje Stadium in Zenica, where a charged atmosphere is expected

despite reduced capacity following sanctions by FIFA for crowd misconduct. Concerns over pitch conditions due to recent snowfall add another layer of uncertainty.

Italy enters the contest under immense pressure, having failed to qualify for the last two World Cups. Players like Matteo Politano are acutely aware that this could be their final opportunity to feature on the global stage.

With young talents like Pio Esposito pushing for a starting role and experienced names leading the charge, Italy’s fate hinges on their ability to neutralise a familiar but formidable opponent in Dzeko.



Tiger Woods Faces Personal Turmoil after DUI Arrest, Report Says

MIAMI

Tiger Woods is reportedly dealing with personal strain following his recent arrest for driving under the influence (DUI), with reports suggesting his partner Venessa Trump has issued a strong ultimatum regarding his future conduct.

The 50-year-old golf icon was arrested in Florida on March 27 after a car crash and was charged with DUI involving property damage. He was held for several hours at a local jail before being released on bail, according to reports.

The incident has sparked concern within his personal circle, with sources indicating that Venessa Trump has warned Woods to make immediate lifestyle changes or risk the end of their relationship. According to insiders, the ar-

rest has been viewed as a “red flag,” prompting a serious conversation between the two.

Despite their shared connection to golf and a reportedly strong bond, the relationship is said to have faced challenges. Sources suggest that while Trump has been supportive, she expects Woods to take responsibility and regain control of his life moving forward.

Woods, one of the most successful golfers in history, has faced a series of personal and professional setbacks over the years. This latest episode adds to ongoing scrutiny around his off-course life, even as he remains a respected figure in the sport. Reacting to the incident, Donald Trump expressed concern for Woods, describing him as a close friend and acknowledging that the golfer has been dealing with difficulties.

Seven years after tragedy, Cardiff pursues damages from Nantes over transfer dispute

Cardiff Seeks \$138M Compensation in Sala Crash Legal Battle

NANTES

Seven years after the tragic death of Emiliano Sala, Welsh club Cardiff City is seeking more than \$138 million in compensation from FC Nantes, with a French commercial court set to deliver a crucial ruling in the long-running legal dispute.

Sala, 28, died in January 2019 when the light aircraft carrying him from France to the United Kingdom crashed into the English Channel near Guernsey. The Argentine striker had just completed a club-record €17 million transfer from Nantes to Cardiff, where he was expected to bolster the team’s fight against relegation from the Premier League.

The case has been marked by years of legal wrangling. Cardiff previously contested the validity of the transfer, arguing that the deal had not been fully completed.

However, FIFA, the Court of Arbitration for Sport, and Switzerland’s federal court all ruled against the Welsh side, confirming that the transfer agreement was le-



gally binding. In its latest move, Cardiff is seeking damages from Nantes, alleging responsibility over the circumstances surrounding the flight arrangement. Central to the argument is the role of football agent Willie McKay, whom Cardiff claims acted on behalf of Nantes in organising the journey. The French club has strongly denied any liability.

Investigations into the crash revealed serious safety lapses. The flight had been arranged by David Henderson, who was later convicted in 2021 for endangering aircraft safety. The pilot, David Ibbotson, did not possess a valid commercial licence, was not qual-

ified for night flying, and had an expired certification for the aircraft used.

The tragedy had profound sporting and emotional consequences. Cardiff was relegated at the end of the 2018–19 season and now competes in the third tier of English football, while Nantes and the wider football community continue to remember Sala’s legacy.

The upcoming court decision could mark a significant turning point in one of football’s most complex and emotionally charged legal battles, potentially redefining accountability in player transfers and associated arrangements.

Tudor Departs Spurs After Brief Spell as Relegation Battle Intensifies

LONDON

Tottenham Hotspur have parted ways with interim head coach Igor Tudor after just seven matches, leaving the club without a manager at a critical stage of their Premier League survival fight.

The decision, described as mutual, comes only 44 days after Tudor’s appointment on February 14. His departure follows a dismal run of results, with Spurs losing five of his seven games, including a damaging 3-0 home defeat to Nottingham Forest before the international break.

Tottenham currently sit just one point above the relegation zone with seven matches remaining, placing their near five-decade stay in England’s top flight under serious threat. The club last played outside the top division in the 1977–78 season.

Tudor’s tenure also included a disappointing exit from the UEFA Champions League, where Spurs were knocked out in the round of 16 by Atletico Madrid. A heavy 5-2 defeat in the first leg drew particular criticism, as did his controversial early substitution of goalkeeper Antonin Kinsky.



Off the pitch, the club expressed sympathy for Tudor following the recent death of his father, acknowledging the personal challenges he faced during his short stint in London. Attention now turns to finding a replacement capable of steering Spurs to safety. Among the reported candidates are Roberto De Zerbi, Adi Hütter, and Sean Dyche, while former player Ryan Mason could once again step in as caretaker. Tottenham’s struggles this season have been marked by instability.

Tudor was brought in after the dismissal of Thomas Frank, who had replaced Ange Postecoglou earlier in the campaign but failed to deliver consistent results.



Sheetal Devi Hails ‘Deeply Personal’ Para Archer of the Year Honour

NEW DELHI

Sheetal Devi described her “Para Archer of the Year” recognition as “deeply personal” after being honoured by World Archery for a breakthrough season that has redefined possibilities in the sport.

The Indian para archer, who was born with phocomelia and competes without arms, expressed heartfelt gratitude after receiving the prestigious award, which celebrates her exceptional performances and inspiring journey over the past year.

“This one feels deeply personal... a heart filled with gratitude,” Devi wrote, reflecting on a journey marked by perseverance and historic achievements.

Her rise to global prominence was cemented at the

World Archery Para Championships in Gwangju, where she clinched her maiden world title. In doing so, she became the first woman without arms to win a world championship in para archery, defeating Paralympic champion Ozgur Cure Girdi in the compound women’s individual final.

Devi’s success extended beyond the individual event. She also secured a silver medal in the women’s team competition and a bronze in the mixed team category, underlining her consistency at the highest level.

Her unique shooting technique, which relies on remarkable balance and precision, has drawn widespread admiration across the sporting world. Beyond the world championships, she has built

an impressive medal tally across major tournaments, including the Asian Championships, Asian Para Games, and the Paralympic Games.

In 2025, Devi became the first Indian archer to win the BBC Emerging Athlete of the Year award, following her mixed team bronze medal alongside Rakesh Kumar at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. She has also been recognised as World Archery Para Woman of the Year and received the Arjuna Award in 2024. Adding another milestone, Devi was selected for India’s able-bodied compound team for the Asia Cup in Jeddah — a rare feat that highlights her versatility.

Her journey continues to inspire, symbolising resilience, innovation, and excellence on the global stage.

Woodland’s Emotional Houston Triumph Marks Stunning Comeback

HOUSTON

Gary Woodland produced one of the most inspiring victories in recent golf history, winning the Houston Open for his first PGA Tour title since undergoing brain surgery in 2023.

The 2019 U.S. Open champion delivered a dominant final-round performance at Memorial Park, carding a 3-under 67 to finish at 21-under 259 and secure a five-shot victory over Nicolai Hojgaard. Woodland had built a commanding lead during the round, stretching it to seven shots before comfortably closing out the win.

The triumph carried deep emotional significance for the 32-year-old, who only 30 months ago underwent surgery to remove a brain lesion that had caused severe anxiety and unfounded fears about his health. More recently, he revealed his battle with post-traumatic stress disorder, making his comeback even more remarkable.

“We play an individual sport, but I wasn’t alone today,” Woodland said after sinking his final putt, visibly overwhelmed. He credited the

support of family, fans, and his team in helping him navigate the most challenging period of his life.

Despite returning to competitive golf in early 2024, Woodland admitted that the mental toll lingered. He described moments of emotional breakdowns during tournaments, including earlier this season, before deciding to openly discuss his struggles — a move he said made him feel “lighter.”

On the course, however, Woodland looked in complete control. His powerful driving and improved precision, aided by equipment adjustments and guidance from coach Randy Smith, were key to his success. He even recorded a ball speed of 196 mph during the round, underlining his physical readiness.

Hojgaard, who finished second, and defending champion Min Woo Lee showed sportsmanship by stepping aside near the 18th green to allow Woodland his moment.

The victory not only marks Woodland’s fifth career title but also secures his place at the upcoming Masters and

lifts him back into the world’s top rankings.

While the road to recovery continues, Woodland’s Houston win stands as a powerful testament to resilience, determination, and the courage to seek help.



QUICK READ

IndiGo launches direct Kolkata Shanghai daily flights

New Delhi

IndiGo, India's largest airline, has announced a new daily non-stop flight between Kolkata and Shanghai, improving travel links between India and China. The service uses Airbus A320neo aircraft and supports both business and holiday travel. Passengers from several Indian cities can connect through Kolkata. The airline says this move will boost trade and tourism. IndiGo now runs 21 weekly flights to China. Flight timings allow overnight travel. Meanwhile, shares of InterGlobe Aviation fell slightly. The airline also plans to start over 30 new routes from Navi Mumbai, increasing weekly departures and strengthening domestic connectivity across many key cities.

IndiaSkills event sees top youth compete nationwide

New Delhi

More than 650 young participants from across India are taking part in the IndiaSkills National Competition 2025-26, organised by the government. The event covers 63 skill areas and includes winners from regional rounds. Officials said the programme encourages practical careers and prepares youth for global challenges. The competition has received over 3.65 lakh registrations, showing rising interest in skill training. Experts from industries are judging participants on quality and efficiency. Winners will represent India at the WorldSkills Competition in Shanghai 2026. The event, supported by industry partners, will continue until April 2.

Construction sector set for moderate growth revival

New Delhi

India's construction sector is expected to see revenue growth of 6 to 8 per cent in 2026-27 after two slow years, according to a recent report. Growth may remain low at 2 to 4 per cent in 2025-26 due to fewer road projects and slower progress under the Jal Jeevan Mission. Experts say companies focused on roads may face pressure, while those in power and urban projects could perform better. Engineering firms may see higher growth. Improved government spending and project execution are likely to support recovery, with order inflows expected to rise steadily in the coming years.

No govt incentives without local design push: Minister

New Delhi

Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has warned that companies will not receive government incentives if they fail to design products in India. Speaking at a press meet, he said firms must improve design, quality, and engineering efforts under the scheme. He expressed concern over slow progress and said funds may be stopped if expectations are not met. The government wants companies to focus beyond basic manufacturing. Approved projects may also face delays in payments. The minister stressed that strong design skills and trained talent are key to building a reliable and competitive electronics industry in India.

New ‘leaf’ for India’s electric vehicle dreams

India’s new LEAF initiative standardizes electric vehicle charging to accelerate the nation’s transition toward a sustainable future.

NEW DELHI

India took a giant leap toward a cleaner future as the government launched a new project called ‘LEAF’.

This initiative, the Light Electric-Vehicle Acceleration Forum, aims to make charging electric scooters and rickshaws as easy as filling up a gas tank. Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy introduced the plan to fix the biggest hurdles facing green travel.

Currently, many electric vehicle owners struggle with different types of plugs and broken charging stations. LEAF brings together over twenty big companies, including vehicle makers and tech experts, to create a single, reliable network. By working together, these groups will ensure that any light electric vehicle can use the same



charging points across the country. This "one-plug-fits-all" approach, backed by national standards, is designed to end the confusion for everyday drivers.

Minister Kumaraswamy shared that this move is a key part of making India self-reliant. By improving public charging access and making the systems talk to each other, the government hopes to cut down on carbon emissions and save the planet. Industry

INDIA POWERS UP WITH MASSIVE GREEN ENERGY

NEW DELHI

India’s energy landscape is changing fast as the nation embraces a greener future. New government data shows a healthy 2.95% jump in the total energy supply this past year.

While traditional coal still does the heavy lifting for the nation's power needs, the real star of the show is the explosive growth in renewable resources like sunlight and wind.

The country’s potential for green energy is now staggering. Solar power, in particular, has seen a massive leap, making up about 71% of our future clean energy capacity. Most of this green potential is tucked away in six states, including Rajasthan and Guja-



India’s energy sector is evolving rapidly, with a 2.95% supply increase and solar power driving 71% of future green capacity to ensure a sustainable tomorrow.

rat, where vast landscapes are being turned into power hubs. This shift is backed by serious money; investment in the energy sector has grown six times larger over the last four years alone.

As India grows, so does our hunger for electricity. The average person now uses significantly more energy than they did a decade ago. To keep up, the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources has more than doubled since 2016. This steady rise shows that as the economy expands, the way we power our homes and businesses is becoming more sustainable.

While coal and oil remain essential for now, the surge in wind and water power signals a turning point. India is not just consuming more; it is investing in a brighter, cleaner tomorrow. The path ahead looks powered by the sun, ensuring the nation stays energized while protecting the environment.

New law to speed up business rescues

NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha passed a vital new update to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code on Sunday, aiming to cut through the red tape that often slows down business recoveries.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced the changes to ensure that when a company fails to pay its debts, the legal process moves much faster. The highlight of this bill is a strict 14-day deadline for courts to start the rescue process once a default is proven.

For years, many cases have been stuck in long legal battles, causing businesses to lose value. To stop this, the new law introduces penalties for those who try to intentionally delay the process. Minister Sitharaman explained that these twelve new amendments are designed to protect the "life" of a company rather than just acting as a debt collection tool. The goal is to save viable businesses, keep people employed, and maintain the company's worth.

Since it first launched in 2016, the insolvency frame-

Neighbors face economic risk from Iran war

NEW DELHI

A new data warns that the growing conflict in the Middle East is casting a dark shadow over the economies of Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

According to S&P Global Ratings, these South Asian nations are at high risk because they rely heavily on imported fuel. If oil prices stay high or supplies are cut off, their hard-won economic recoveries could quickly fall apart.

Bangladesh appears particularly vulnerable. The country buys almost all its oil from abroad and only has enough stored to last about a month. If the war drags on, the government might have to strictly limit how much fuel people can use. Additionally, nearly half of the nation's electricity comes from gas, much of which is also imported. This could lead to power shortages and keep prices for daily goods painfully high.

While Bangladesh’s for-

Investors pour 386 cr into Black Box

MUMBAI

Black Box Limited, a major global player in digital infrastructure, announced a massive financial boost.

The company successfully raised ₹386.36 crore after investors and company leaders converted their financial warrants into equity shares. This move shows a huge vote of confidence in the company’s future, especially since the stock market has been quite bumpy lately.

A big chunk of this money—about ₹200 crore—came directly from the company’s own promoters. By putting their own money on the line, these leaders now own nearly 70% of the business. This high level of ownership suggests that those running the show are fully committed to the company's long-term success and are not just looking for a quick profit. Every single person who held a warrant chose to trade it in for shares, meaning no one backed out of the deal.



India’s government approved 29 new electronics projects, investing \$7,104\$ crore to create 14,000 jobs and boost domestic manufacturing.

Thousands of jobs as India builds tech



NEW DELHI

India’s tech scene just got a massive boost as the government officially cleared 29 new projects to manufacture electronic parts right here at home. This ambitious move involves a staggering investment of \$7,104\$ crore and is set to change the lives of many by creating over 14,000 new jobs. It is a major step toward making India a global leader in gadgets and digital tools.

S. Krishnan, a top official at the Ministry of Electronics and IT, shared that these projects will produce electronic components worth more than \$84,515\$ crore. By making these parts locally instead of buying them from abroad, India is securing its spot in the worldwide supply chain. This latest round of approvals

brings the total number of cleared projects to 75, showing how quickly the country's digital economy is sprinting ahead.

The official also noted that our digital world is growing twice as fast as the rest of the economy. Beyond just building hardware, there is a strong focus on nurturing local talent and keeping our data safe. For instance, new training centers and high-tech security labs are popping up to ensure the youth are ready for these new roles. Experts believe that depending on our own technology, especially for cybersecurity, is vital for the nation’s safety. With more factories opening and thousands of people finding work, India is successfully plugging into a high-tech future that promises growth for everyone.



Suraj Rajappan to lead Kotak Mahindra prime

NEW DELHI

Kotak Mahindra Prime Limited (KMPL), a leading name in vehicle finance, announced a major leadership change.

The company’s Board of Directors has appointed Suraj Rajappan as its new Managing Director and CEO. Starting June 1, 2026, Rajappan will take the reins for a three-year term, following the retirement of the current leader, Shahrukh Todiwala.

Todiwala is stepping down after an impressive thirty-year career with the Kotak Group. He leaves behind a legacy of careful growth and a strong focus on keeping customers happy. His successor, Suraj Rajappan, is no stranger to the company. Having started his professional journey at KMPL, Rajappan brings 24 years of deep experience to his new role. He has worked across many different parts of the business, making him a perfect fit to lead the firm's next chapter.

Ashok Vaswani, the head of Kotak Mahindra Bank, welcomed the appointment, noting that Rajappan’s skills will help the company grow even further. KMPL has a long history, starting in 1996 as a joint venture with Ford before becoming a full part of the Kotak family in 2005.

New Mangalore Port gets massive hi-tech upgrade

NEW DELHI

The central government has officially greenlit a major makeover for the New Mangalore Port, aiming to turn it into a world-class maritime hub.

The project focuses on redeveloping "Berth Number 9," a nearly 50-year-old structure that will now be transformed to handle massive shipments of oil, gas, and petroleum.

With an investment of ₹438.29 crore, this upgrade is a key part of India’s plan to modernize its busy coastline.

This isn't just a simple repair; it is a total reconstruction. The old, aging facilities will be torn down and replaced with modern infrastructure built to last another half-century. One of the most exciting changes is the deepening of the waters. By increasing the

depth from 10.5 meters to 14 meters—and eventually even deeper—the port will be able to welcome giant ships known as Very Large Gas Carriers. These massive vessels can carry huge amounts of fuel, making trade much cheaper and more efficient.

Minister Sarbananda Sonowal praised the move, noting that it prepares India for future energy needs. The project will be

managed through a partnership between the government and private companies, ensuring expert handling for the next 30 years. Once finished in about two years, the port will be able to move nearly 11 million tonnes of cargo annually. This boost in capacity will not only lower moving costs for businesses but also strengthen India's position as a global leader in the shipping world.

New flights link tribal heartlands to capitals

RAIPUR

In a historic move for regional travel, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai inaugurated direct flight services connecting Ambikapur to New Delhi and Kolkata yesterday.

The launch from Maa Mahamaya Airport marks a turning point for the tribal-dominated Surguja division, bringing modern air travel to a region that has long waited for better connectivity.

The new services, operated on 72-seater aircraft, will run twice a week. The Delhi flight started today with a fare of ₹6,500, while the Kolkata service is set to take off on April 2 for ₹6,000. Both routes include a convenient stop in Bilaspur, linking three major hubs. For locals, these flights are more than just a convenience; they are a gateway to better business, quicker medical care, and a boost in tourism.

Chief Minister Sai highlighted that this is just the beginning. Plans are already in motion to connect the state to holy cities like Ayodhya and Varanasi. To support this growth, airports in Jagdalpur and Raigarh are being expanded, and a new cargo hub is planned for Raipur. Just yesterday, the CM also kicked off night flight operations in Bilaspur, ensuring that emergency and commercial planes can now land safely after dark.

Spread over 365 acres, the upgraded Ambikapur airport represents a ₹80 crore investment in the state's future. Leaders believe this “historic moment” will save hours of exhausting road travel and integrate Chhattisgarh’s northern districts into the national mainstream, making the sky the limit for local development.



DEEPSEEK OUTAGE GLITCH

Popular AI tool hits major 7-hour snag

NEW DELHI

DeepSeek, the famous Chinese AI chatbot that recently shook the tech world, just faced its longest shutdown ever. For over seven hours, users across the globe were left frustrated as the platform went completely dark. While the service usually runs smoothly, this massive glitch marks a rare stumble for a company that once made Silicon Valley investors nervous about the future of American



tech dominance.

The trouble began with tracking sites showing a sudden flood of complaints. Although the company initially thought they had fixed the problem, the issues kept coming back until the following morning. So far, DeepSeek has

stayed silent about what actually caused the crash, leaving many to wonder if the system was overwhelmed or facing deeper technical struggles.

This outage comes at a tense time for the startup. While DeepSeek became a household name last year, it still hasn't matched the sheer power of rivals like ChatGPT or Gemini. On top of the technical breakdown, the company is facing serious accusations from U.S. competitors. Rival firm Anthropic recently

claimed that DeepSeek used thousands of fake accounts to “steal” smart features from their own AI model.

Experts warn that if these models are built using stolen data, they might lack important safety rules. This could potentially make them tools for cyberattacks or spreading misinformation. For now, users are just happy to have the service back online, but the long silence during the crash has raised new questions about its reliability.



Not Here to Prove, Only to Improve: RAHANE

Veteran batter focuses on growth, shrugs off criticism, backs young bowling unit

MUMBAI

Ajinkya Rahane has made it clear that he is no longer concerned about outside noise, insisting his focus remains firmly on self-improvement rather than proving his talent to critics. Leading Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League, the seasoned batter said he is content with his recent progress, particularly in white-ball formats.

Rahane's fluent 40-ball 67 against Mumbai Indians on Sunday sparked fresh discussions about his form and future, but the 37-year-old remained unfazed. "Let people talk. I am not here to show anyone how talented I am," he said, emphasizing that growth as a cricketer is his

primary goal.

Having stepped down from Mumbai's Ranji Trophy captaincy last season and staying out of India's national setup since 2023, Rahane acknowledged the scrutiny but reiterated that it does not affect his mindset. Instead, he takes satisfaction in the improvements he has made over the past few years.

The KKR skipper also clarified that he was dealing with cramps during the latter part of the match, which the team lost by six wickets. Despite a strong batting effort that put KKR on course for a bigger total, he credited Jasprit Bumrah for delivering crucial overs that restricted the scoring.

Rahane admitted that

KKR's relatively inexperienced bowling attack needs time to develop. With players like Vaibhav Arora leading the unit alongside Karthik Tyagi and Blessing Muzarabani, the captain said the transition phase is challenging but offers opportunities for emerging players.

He added that the team combination would likely change once Cameron Green, currently recovering from a back issue, is fit to bowl again.

Backing under-fire spinner Varun Chakravarthy, Rahane said every player goes through difficult phases and stressed the importance of maintaining a positive mindset without overthinking setbacks.

No Concern over SKY Role, Says Jayawardene

MUMBAI

Mahela Jayawardene has dismissed speculation surrounding Suryakumar Yadav being used as an impact substitute in Mumbai Indians' opening match, stating the move was purely precautionary due to a minor niggle.

Suryakumar, India's T20 captain, did not take the field against Kolkata Knight Riders and contributed a quick 16 off eight balls as Mumbai chased down 221 to register their highest successful run chase in Indian Premier League history. Addressing concerns, Jayawardene emphasized there was no underlying issue.

"I hope we don't create unwanted stories. The camp is happy," he said, explaining that Suryakumar had a slight groin tightness and was given additional rest with a five-day gap before the next game. Despite the batter's willingness to return to the field late in the match, the team management opted for caution.

"These are valuable players, and such decisions are calculated to ensure they remain fit throughout the season," Jayawardene added.



Coach clarifies precautionary call, backs Rohit's freedom and team's balance strongly

The coach expressed satisfaction with Mumbai's dominant chase, led by Rohit Sharma and Ryan Rickelton, who stitched together a commanding 148-run opening partnership. Jayawardene admitted the bowlers may have conceded 15-20 runs too many but credited the batters for an "exquisite" display.

He also highlighted the tactical thinking behind including Shardul Thakur, who delivered a key spell. With mul-

iple new-ball options like Hardik Pandya in the lineup, the team sought variety in the middle and death overs, reflecting a flexible approach to combinations. Jayawardene noted that Rohit appears revitalized without leadership responsibilities, allowing him to play with greater freedom and composure. Drawing from his own experience, the former Sri Lankan captain said reduced pressure often helps senior players rely on instinct and rhythm.

"He is calmer and more focused. That freedom is showing in his batting," Jayawardene said, underlining the positive environment within the Mumbai camp.

Controversy erupts after umpires penalise players, PCB launches disciplinary proceedings swiftly

PSL 2026 Row: Ball-Tampering Storm Erupts After Viral Clip

LAHORE

The Pakistan Super League 2026 has been rocked by a major controversy after a suspected ball-tampering incident during the clash between Lahore Qalandars and Karachi Kings at Gaddafi Stadium.

The spotlight fell on Pakistan stars Fakhar Zaman, Shaheen Afridi, and Haris Rauf after a viral clip showed them handling the ball moments before the final over. The situation quickly escalated when on-field umpire Faisal Afridi intervened, suspecting that the ball's condition had been altered.

Following a consultation with the square-leg umpire, officials awarded five penalty runs to Karachi and replaced the ball. The decision dramatically shifted the match equation from 14 runs needed to just nine in the final over, tilting the advantage decisively.



Karachi seized the opportunity, with Abbas Afridi smashing a boundary and a six to secure a four-wicket win with three balls to spare in a tense finish.

The controversy deepened post-match as the Pakistan

Cricket Board initiated disciplinary action. Match referee Roshan Mahanama charged Fakhar Zaman with a Level 3 offence under the PSL Code of Conduct, which prohibits any artificial alteration of the ball. If found guilty, he could face a suspension of one to

two matches.

Fakhar has denied the allegations and appeared for an initial hearing, with a final verdict expected soon. Meanwhile, Shaheen Afridi adopted a cautious stance, stating that the matter would be reviewed based on available footage.

All-rounder Sikandar Raza also questioned the decision, claiming there was no deliberate attempt to tamper with the ball and that he was merely trying to dry it.

Adding to the drama, Hasan Ali was fined 10 percent of his match fee for a separate Level 1 offence related to on-field conduct, which he accepted without contest.

As the clip continues to circulate widely, opinions remain divided, with debates intensifying over whether the umpires' call was justified or overly harsh in a high-pressure moment.



CHENNAI

R Praggnanandhaa delivered a statement performance on the opening night of the Candidates tournament in Cyprus, defeating Anish Giri with a composed and clinical display using the white pieces.

Praised as a "masterpiece" by former world champion Viswanathan Anand, the 20-year-old Indian showcased both preparation and precision to outplay his higher-ranked opponent in a tightly contested encounter.

Opting for the relatively un-

Praggnanandhaa Stuns Giri with Opening-Round Masterclass

common 1.e4 followed by 2. Nc3, Praggnanandhaa surprised Giri early in the opening. The Dutchman responded solidly, and both players navigated the initial phase without conceding ground. However, the momentum began to shift in the middle game as the Indian gradually took control.

While the position remained balanced on the board even after 29 moves, time pressure started to weigh heavily on Giri, who had already spent considerable time responding to the unexpected opening approach. Forced into a series of exact moves to stay afloat, the Dutch grandmaster found himself increasingly on the defensive.

Praggnanandhaa capitalised on this pressure in the endgame, demonstrating maturity beyond his years. The decisive moment came on the 42nd move when he chose to

capture Giri's knight — a precise and winning decision. An alternative pawn push would have led to complications, but the Indian remained accurate. A few moves later, Giri resigned, conceding a significant opening-round loss.

A strong start is often crucial in a high-stakes tournament like the Candidates. While early victories do not guarantee success, setbacks can prove costly. Praggnanandhaa's win not only boosts his confidence but also places him firmly among the early frontrunners.

In other results, Javokhir Sindarov defeated Andrey Esipenko, while Fabiano Caruana overcame Hikaru Nakamura. Wei Yi drew with Matthias Bluebaum.

Praggnanandhaa will next face Wei Yi with the black pieces as the tournament gathers momentum.



Verstappen Hints at F1 Exit amid Growing Frustrations

LONDON

Max Verstappen has opened the door to a potential early retirement from Formula One, admitting that his current dissatisfaction with the sport has left "all options on the table" beyond the ongoing season.

The 29-year-old, a four-time world champion from 2021 to 2024 with Red Bull Racing, has endured a challenging start to the 2026 campaign. His struggles continued at the Japanese Grand Prix, where he finished eighth — his poorest result of the season so far.

Verstappen, who has 71 career race wins — behind only Lewis Hamilton (105) and Michael Schumacher (91) — also failed to finish in China and managed just sixth place in the season opener in Australia. These results mark a sharp dip for a driver who dominated the sport for four consecutive years before losing his title to Lando Norris last season.

A key source of Verstappen's frustration has been re-

cent technical changes to the cars, particularly the shift to a 50-50 balance between electrical power and fuel combustion in the new engine regulations. The Dutchman has been vocal in his criticism, suggesting the changes have impacted both performance and driving enjoyment.

When asked about the possibility of stepping away despite having a contract with Red Bull until 2028, Verstappen did not dismiss the idea. Instead, he indicated that he is reassessing his priorities, including spending more time with family and friends.

"Is it worth it, or do I enjoy being more at home?" he reportedly reflected, highlighting the emotional toll of a demanding F1 calendar.

With races in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia cancelled due to regional tensions, the season now enters a month-long break before resuming in Miami on May 3. This pause is expected to give Verstappen time to consider his future, although he is likely to see out the current season.

AIFF to Present ISL Bid Structures to Clubs for Review

CHENNAI

The All India Football Federation has decided to present detailed bid structures for the commercial rights of its men's competitions, including the Indian Super League, to participating clubs later this week, as the process to finalise a long-term partner gathers pace.

The AIFF Executive Committee, in its meeting, agreed that clubs must be involved in evaluating the bids before any final decision is taken. This comes after ISL clubs sought additional time to assess the proposals submitted by two contenders — Genius Sports and FanCode.

Genius Sports has proposed an annual investment of approximately ₹63 crore with a five per cent escalation each year over a 20-year period. In comparison, FanCode, which is currently streaming and broadcasting the ongoing ISL season, has offered around ₹36 crore annually for the same duration. Both bids cover media rights, sponsorships, data, and other commercial assets linked to the league and the Federation Cup.

AIFF Deputy Secretary General M Satyanarayan said clubs would closely examine the structure and commercial viability of each bid. "The clubs will want to understand how the league will be produced commercially and how sustainable the proposals are. The final decision will be taken collectively," he noted.

To ensure transparency and



accountability, the federation will also involve KPMG to conduct a comparative analysis of the bids. The evaluation process, followed by potential negotiations based on feedback from clubs, is expected to take around a month.

Earlier this month, the AIFF had floated a Request for Proposal (RFP) divided into two packages — one covering men's competitions and another focusing on the Indian Women's League. Meanwhile, Capri Sports is understood to be the sole bidder for the women's league rights.

In a related development, the committee also discussed the implementation of the proposed National Sports Governance Act. State and district associations will be given 90 days to study the new framework and align their statutes with the evolving governance requirements.

Nikhat Tops Draw, Faces Potential Olympic Champion Clash at Asian Meet



CHENNAI

India's star boxer Nikhat Zareen enters the Asian Boxing Championship as the top seed in her category but could face a stern test against Olympic champion Wu Yu in the semifinals, following the official draw re-

leased ahead of the tournament in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

The continental event, marks the first major competition of the season and carries significant weight, with finalists likely to secure spots for the upcoming Commonwealth Games and Asian Games as per selection policy.

Nikhat, a two-time world champion competing in the 51kg division, will be aiming to maintain her dominance. However, her path is far from easy, with Wu Yu — who defeated her convincingly during the 2024 Summer Olympics — potentially awaiting in the last-four stage if both progress.

India's coaching staff, led by head coach Santiago Nie-

va, has been closely analysing opponents following the draw, underlining the importance of preparation at this level. The team comprises a mix of experienced campaigners and emerging talents, all eager to make an impact.

Among the seasoned names, Lovlina Borgohain, who begins directly from the semifinals in the 75kg category, will look to regain top form after a quiet 2025 season. She could face Uzbekistan's rising boxer Aziza Zokirova, a silver medalist from the previous edition.

Reigning world champions Minakshi Hooda (48kg) and Jaismine Lamboria (57kg) also carry top seeding, boosting India's medal prospects. Other contenders, including Preeti, Priya, Ankushita, and veteran Pooja Rani, are set to face early challenges against strong Kazakhstan opponents.

In the men's section, the competition appears even tougher due to greater depth. Promising talent Jadumani Singh Mandengbam faces a challenging opening bout against Japan's Rui Yamaguchi, while experienced boxer Sachin (60kg) enters as the No. 2 seed.

With strong contingents from boxing powerhouses like Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, Indian boxers will need to be at their very best to secure podium finishes and cement their place in upcoming global events.