



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

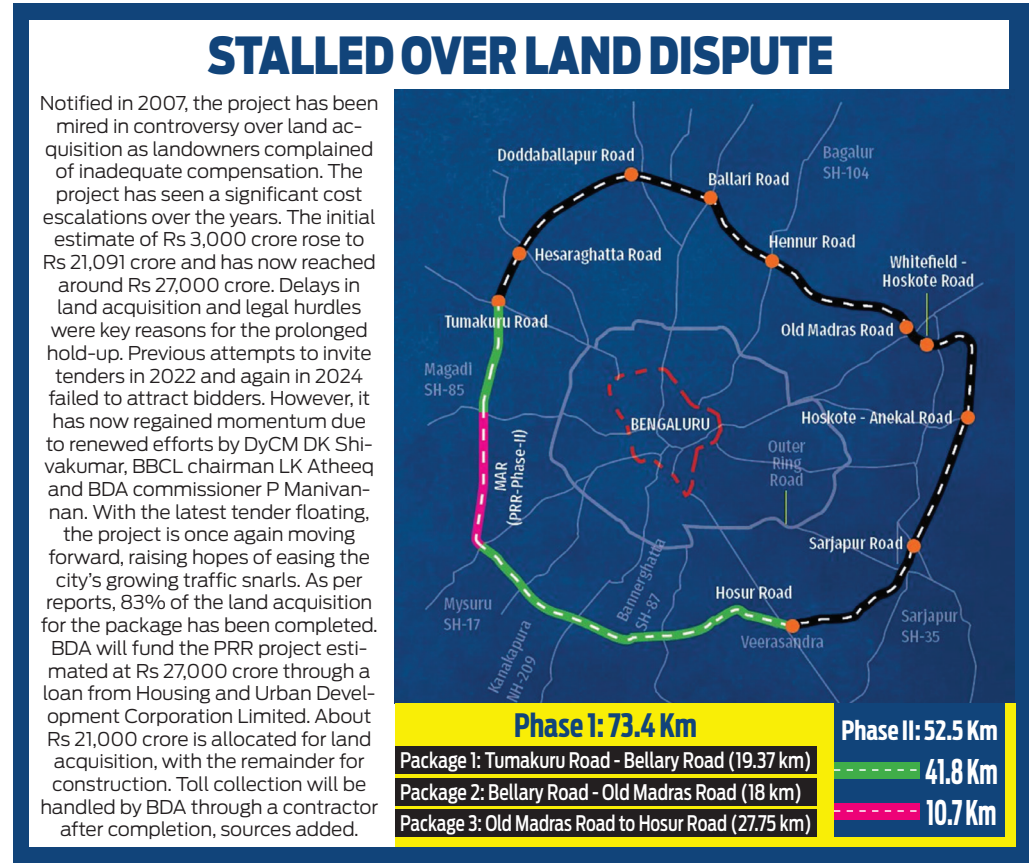
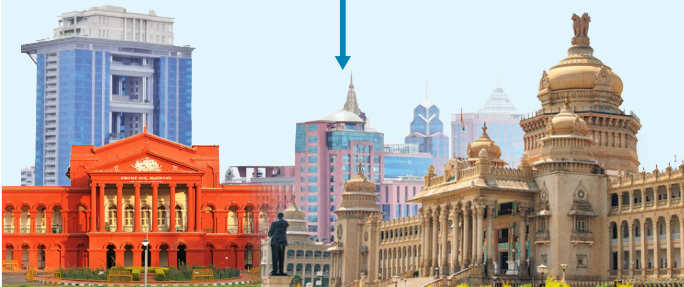
Proposal made to monetize corridor within the right-of-way to improve financial sustainability.

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-

isation 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

Ganja Seized from Car in Malpe Case Registered Against Two

Malpe

Malpe police have foiled an attempt to illegally transport ganja after seizing 173.42 grams of the narcotic substance from a car parked near Shri Nagabrahma Bobbary Daivasthana on the Hoo-de-Kodibengre road. The contraband was discovered on March 28, 2026, when Sub-Inspector Anil Kumar D. of Malpe police station was conducting a spot mahazar in connection with Crime No. 37/2026 (Section 281 BNS) along with panch witnesses. During the inspection of the white Hyundai Creta bearing registration number KA-20-MB-7666, police found suspected ganja hidden inside the vehicle. The seized quantity has been valued at approximately ₹8,000. In addition, two mobile phones — a Samsung phone (worth around ₹6,000) and a blue Honor phone (worth around ₹5,000) — were also recovered from the car and taken into custody as material evidence. Police sources said the two accused, including one identified as Mohammed Faizal, were allegedly keeping the ganja for sale.

Daily Wage Worker Ends Life by Hanging in Kapu Plantation

Kapu

A 43-year-old daily wage labourer died by suicide by hanging in a plantation house under Kapu police station limits on March 28. The deceased has been identified as Shridhar (43), a resident of Pallijodu road, Karkala, originally from Manipura village. According to the complaint filed by his wife Manjula (42), Shridhar had been working as a labourer in Manipura for several years. For the past nearly ten years, he had been living separately from his wife and had developed a severe addiction to alcohol. In recent weeks, Shridhar was employed at Appu Shetty's plantation located at Borgal Gudde in Manipura village. On March 28 afternoon around 2 pm, Anand S. Pujari informed Manjula over phone that Shridhar had hanged himself inside the kitchen of the plantation house. Police are examining the circumstances leading to the suicide.

Scooter Rider Killed in Tempo Collision on NH Near Karkala

Karkala

A scooter rider lost his life in road accident involving a tempo on National Highway near Sanur village in Karkala taluk on Sunday morning. The fatal incident occurred around 9:20 am on March 29 near the Ram Mandir in Sanur on the Karkala-Udupi stretch of the National Highway. Jayananda Shetty, a resident of Kerwasi, was riding his scooter from Sanur towards Karkala when a tempo coming from the Chilambi side, allegedly driven at high speed and in a rash manner, rammed into the rear of the scooter. The impact of the collision was severe. Jayananda Shetty was thrown onto the road and sustained critical head injuries. He was immediately rushed to Karkala City Hospital for treatment, but doctors declared him brought dead on arrival.

CNC to Stage Sathyagraha in Madikeri Demanding Exclusive Virtual Constituency for Codavas

CNC announces Sathyagraha in Madikeri on April 2 seeking special virtual constituency for Codavas on the lines of Sikkim's Sangha seat; demands ST status and constitutional safeguards.

MADIKERI

The Codava National Council (CNC) will hold a Sathyagraha on April 2 at 10:30 AM near the Deputy Commissioner's office here to press for the creation of exclusive "intangible" or "virtual" constituencies for the indigenous Codava community in both Parliament and the Karnataka Legislative Assembly.

The protest comes as the community seeks representation similar to Sikkim's unique Sangha constituency, which has been reserved ex-

clusively for Buddhist monks and nuns since 1958 under Article 371(F) of the Constitution. Under the proposed model, only registered members of the Codava community would be allowed to vote and contest elections, irrespective of where they reside within Kodagu district. With an estimated population of 70,000 to 1,00,000, the Codavas describe themselves as an animistic indigenous group whose ancestral roots are confined solely to Kodagu.

Chairperson of the CNC NU Nachappa said in a press

release here today that they argue that after the merger of the erstwhile Part-C State of Coorg with Mysore State in 1956, their political representation has steadily declined. The community now fears that the upcoming 2026 delimitation exercise could further marginalise them, especially if areas like Sullia are included in Kodagu constituencies. Apart from the special virtual constituency, the CNC's charter of demands includes granting Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, inclusion of the Codava Thak language in the

Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, creation of an autonomous Codava region under the Sixth Schedule, and constitutional protection for their traditional "Gun-Thok" sacrament as an essential religious practice. CNC leaders have submitted multiple memoranda to the President of India, Prime Minister, Union Law Minister, and the Election Commission between 2023 and 2025.

The organisation has also conducted several human chain awareness programmes across Codava territory to

highlight their concerns. The community has strongly criticised certain historians from Hampi University for allegedly distorting Codava history and demanded strict action against them.

They have also called for separate enumeration of Codavas in the 2027 Census, pointing out that they were recorded as a distinct race in national censuses from 1871-72 till 1931 before being merged with larger groups. The Sathyagraha assumes added significance as the Union Government is preparing to introduce a bill to in-

crease Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 816 to facilitate the implementation of the Women's Reservation Act. This proposed expansion, expected to take effect for the 2029 elections based on the 2011 Census, has made the demand for protected representation even more relevant for small indigenous communities like the Codavas. CNC functionaries said the move is essential to preserve the distinct ethnological and cultural identity of the Codavas within India's diverse democracy and prevent their further assimilation.

Kalyanapura Flyover Finally Opens to Public After 4-Year Delay

UDUPI

Commuters in Udupi received much-needed relief as the long-delayed Kalyanapura flyover and underpass were opened to public traffic on Monday morning.

The project, which began in 2022, was formally made operational on Monday by Udupi-Chikkamagaluru MP Kota Srinivas Poojary, who permitted emergency public use of the flyover ahead of the official inauguration.

Speaking on the occasion, MP Poojary acknowledged that the project had suffered inordinate delays. He attributed the slow progress to several factors, including rocky terrain, court cases filed by nearby residents fearing damage to their buildings from blasting,



and lack of timely intervention by previous authorities.

Poojary credited his persistent follow-up with officials and contractors for accelerating the work in recent months. He said small pending works remain, but the flyover has been opened on an emergency basis to ease traffic congestion before the onset of the monsoon.

The new infrastructure is expected to significantly reduce traffic bottlenecks at Kalyanapura junction on the busy Udupi-Mangaluru National Highway. Local traders had suffered heavy losses for nearly four years due to restricted access and prolonged construction activity. The MP expressed gratitude to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Na-

After four years of delay, Kalyanapura flyover and underpass in Udupi thrown open to public traffic on Monday; MP Kota Srinivas Poojary flags off emergency use ahead of monsoon.

tional Highways Authority of India officials, local representatives, and the public for their cooperation.

He added that the formal inauguration of the flyover will be held soon in the presence of Udupi MLA Yashpal Suvarna and other dignitaries. The opening of the Kalyanapura flyover marks a major relief for daily commuters, bus operators, and traders in the region after years of inconvenience.



Mahavira's Message Essential for Civil Society: C.T. Ravi

CHIKKAMAGALURU

Bhagawan Mahavira's teachings are highly relevant for modern civil society and offer the only lasting solution to the conflicts and problems the world is facing today, said BJP MLC C.T. Ravi. He was speaking at the Bhagawan Sri Mahavir Jayanti celebration organised by the district administration at Kuvempu Kalamandira in the city on Monday.

"Mahavira did not set out to conquer the world. Instead, he conquered himself and became a 'Jitendriya' (one who has mastered the senses). In today's times, many are mistakenly equating religion with mere traditions and rituals. Anything that promotes violence cannot be called religion. Grabbing others' property is adharm, not dharma. True religion must align with duty and the needs of the time," Ravi said.

He added that only Indian philosophy and Indian perspectives can bring lasting peace to the world because India gave Mahavira and Buddha to humanity. "We are the ones who declared 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' — the world is one family. We taught that God resides in every atom, particle, blade of grass and piece of wood. This is why our dharma and thought processes are superior," he emphasised.

The programme was inau-

BJP MLC C.T. Ravi says Bhagawan Mahavira's message of non-violence and self-conquest is the only solution to global conflicts; stresses Indian thought can bring world peace.

gured by A.N. Mahesh, State President of the Central Environment Assessment Authority. He noted that Mahavira's supreme message of non-violence and peace serves as a model for the entire world in these times of conflict. "While war clouds loom over many parts of the world, including the Middle East, India continues to live in harmony among different religions and communities. This is possible only because of the foundation of ahimsa laid by great souls like Mahavira," Mahesh said.

Dr. Hemalatha, who delivered a special lecture on Mahavira, explained that the principles of non-violence and penance taught by the 24th Tirthankara are the perfect antidote to hatred, war and unrest in the world.

H.P. Manjegowda, President of Chikkamagaluru City Development Authority, also spoke on the occasion. Ramarao Desai, Deputy Tahsildar, presided over the function. Prominent members of the Jain community, including Jinendra Babu, Charithra, Kantilal Jain and Gautam Chand, were present.

NITK Surathkal Hosts 2nd Geospatial Industry Conclave 2026

SURATHKAL

The National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK), Surathkal, successfully organised the 2nd Geospatial Industry Conclave 2026, providing a vibrant platform for academia, researchers, and industry experts to discuss advancements in geospatial technologies and their practical applications. The conclave was jointly organised by the IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) Bangalore Chapter, the Department of Water Resources and Ocean Engineering (WROE), and the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE) at NITK. Around 120 participants, including students and faculty from various NITs, engineering colleges in Mangaluru, Bengaluru, and neighbouring institu-



tions, actively participated in the event.

Dr. Paul Rosen from the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory was the Chief Guest. In his keynote address, he highlighted the significance of the NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) mission in natural resource management and disaster mitigation. He stressed the increasing role of satellite-based earth observation in tackling global environmental challenges. The pro-

gramme was presided over by Prof. Udaya Bhat K., Dean (Research and Innovation), and Prof. Govinda Raj Mandela, Dean (Student Welfare). The conclave was convened by Dr. Shyam Lal, Dr. Shwetha H.R., Dr. Chandan M.C., and Er. Dilip Kumar Dalei, Chair of the IEEE GRSS Bangalore Chapter. Distinguished keynote speakers included Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay, Director, Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre; Paramananda Jena,

Scientist 'G', Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO); Lt Col Rakesh Verma, Senior Director (Sales & Business Development), Vantor; Muraliedhara Navada, Principal Scientist, MapmyIndia; and Dr. Rampalli Madhuri from Vassar Labs. The sessions focused on cutting-edge innovations in geospatial intelligence, remote sensing, environmental monitoring, and disaster management.

Participants appreciated the conclave for facilitating meaningful networking and collaboration between academic institutions and industry leaders. The event is seen as a significant step in bridging the gap between theoretical research and real-world geospatial applications, especially in the fields of agriculture, defence, urban planning, and climate studies.

CENSUS 2027

Notices Issued to Absent Enumerators for Census 2027 Training in Mangaluru

MANGALURU

The Mangaluru City Corporation has appointed a total of 909 enumerators to conduct the forthcoming Census 2027 within the city limits. These enumerators will work under the supervision of 7 Charge Officers. In addition, the Self Enumeration process for citizens will be open from April 1 to April 15, 2026. Residents can voluntarily fill their personal details through the secure online portal — www.se.census.gov.in. The administration has organised mandatory training programmes for all appointed census staff.

The department heads however say that it has come to the notice that some enumerators have been absent from



the training sessions citing frivolous reasons. Officials have warned that training is crucial for the successful implementation of the national Census exercise. Such absenteeism is being viewed seriously. All enumerators have been instructed to discharge

their duties with full responsibility. Charge Officers have been directed to ensure attendance of staff under their jurisdiction and submit necessary reports. In this backdrop, notices have been issued to the absent enumerators under the Census Act, 1948. The au-

thorities have made it clear that the defaulters must mandatorily attend the next training session.

Strict legal and disciplinary action will be initiated against those who fail to comply. The Census 2027 exercise, which includes both House Listing and Population Enumeration phases, is a massive national exercise aimed at collecting accurate demographic data. Self-enumeration has been introduced this time to make the process more convenient and citizen-friendly. Officials have appealed to all appointed enumerators to treat their responsibility with utmost seriousness and cooperate fully with the administration to ensure the smooth conduct of the Census in Mangaluru city.

Young Boy Saves Drowning Child During Kambala Festival in Uppinangady

Quick-thinking boy Rakshit jumps into deep river water to save a drowning child during Kambala festival in Uppinangady; Puttur MLA Ashok Kumar Rai honours the young hero on the spot.

UPPINANGADY

A major tragedy was averted during the ongoing Kambala festival in Uppinangady when a brave young boy jumped into the deep river waters and rescued a child who was drowning.

The incident occurred while buffaloes were being bathed in the river as part of the traditional Kambala celebrations. A small boy accidentally slipped and began struggling in the deep waters. Without a moment's hesitation, Rakshit, a boy present at the spot, dived into the river and pulled the drowning child to safety.



The courageous act of young Rakshit has won widespread admiration from

the public. Soon after the rescue, Puttur MLA Ashok Kumar Rai visited the spot,

met Rakshit personally, and congratulated him for his timely and fearless action.

QUICK READ

Chinmaya Mission to Host Summer Camp on Mahabharata for Children

Mangaluru
Chinmaya Mission Mangaluru is organising a special summer camp for children focused on the timeless stories of the Mahabharata to nurture moral values and cultural awareness. The 10-day Balavihar Summer Camp will be held from April 3 to April 12, 2026 at Chinmaya Mission, Sharada Sannidhi, Rosario Church Road, Hoige Bazar, Mangaluru. The camp aims to introduce children to various episodes and characters from the Mahabharata through engaging storytelling sessions. In addition to the epic narratives, the programme will include teachings from the Bhagavad Gita and devotional bhajans specially designed for young participants. The camp is open to children in the age group of 6 to 13 years. Parents and guardians interested in enrolling their children can contact Rupa Rani at 94493 88532 for more details regarding registration, timings and other information.

Blood Donation Camp Held at SCS Hospital

Mangaluru
In a initiative to support regional healthcare needs, SCS Hospital, Upper Bendor, in collaboration with KMC Blood Centre, Mangaluru, successfully organised a blood donation camp on Saturday. The camp was inaugurated by the Chairman & Managing Director of SCS Hospital along with the medical team. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of voluntary donors who came forward with great commitment and civic responsibility. The primary objective of the camp was to augment blood reserves in the region and ensure timely availability of blood components for patients requiring emergency care, surgeries, and critical treatments in Mangaluru and surrounding areas. The hospital emphasised the crucial role of regular blood donation and active community participation in strengthening the healthcare ecosystem. Such collaborative initiatives between hospitals and blood centres play a vital role in creating awareness about the importance of voluntary blood donation and building a reliable blood supply chain in the coastal region.

Mangaluru Tahsildar urges residents to complete online self-enumeration between April 1 and 15 for India's first digital Census 2027; data to remain confidential and not used for taxation.

Tahsildar Calls for Online Self-Enumeration in Mangaluru Taluk

MANGALURU

In preparation for India's first fully digital Census, the Mangaluru Tahsildar has appealed to all residents of Mangaluru taluk to take advantage of the self-enumeration facility and complete their household details online between April 1 and April 15.

According to the announcement, the Census exercise under the Census Act 1948 will be conducted in two phases. The self-enumeration window allows citizens to voluntarily enter their household information

through a simple online process that takes just 15-20 minutes.

Residents can visit the dedicated portal <https://se.census.gov.in>, follow the easy steps, and generate a unique Self Enumeration ID (SE ID) upon successful submission. This ID should be kept ready and shared with the official enumerator when they visit the house for verification.

The Tahsildar assured that all personal details, names, and identities will be kept strictly confidential as per the Census Act. The collected data will not be used for any

tax-related purposes or investigations, and will be securely protected.

This self-enumeration option forms part of the first phase (House-listing and Housing Census) of the national Census 2027. The Tahsildar emphasised that accurate and complete self-enumeration by citizens will help build a strong foundation for Viksit Bharat @ 2047. All members of the public in Mangaluru taluk are requested to utilise this convenient digital facility and contribute towards the success of the nationwide exercise.

Railways Sanctions ₹2.91 Crore for Kabaka-Puttur Station Upgrade Project

MANGALURU

Dakshina Kannada MP Capt. Brijesh Chowta has announced that the Railways has sanctioned ₹2.91 crore for the construction of a massive new platform shelter at Kabaka-Puttur railway station.

The project aims to provide better passenger amenities at Platform No. 1. At present, the station has only a 531 sq. metre shelter. The new shelter will have a significantly larger area of 3,392 sq. metres, offering much-needed protection to passengers from sun

and rain.

Speaking about the development, Capt. Brijesh Chowta said that site identification for the new shelter has been completed and construction work is expected to begin shortly. Once completed, the facility will greatly ease difficulties faced by passengers, especially during summer and monsoon seasons.

The MP also revealed that a proposal has been submitted to install two lifts near Platform No. 2 at the existing Foot Over Bridge (FOB) to improve accessibility. The es-

timated cost for this project is ₹1.33 crore and the proposal is currently under examination at the Railway Board level. Capt.

Chowta had written to the General Manager of South Western Railway in November 2024, highlighting the hardships faced by passengers due to inadequate shelter. He expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of State V. Somanna, and railway officials for approving the much-needed funds.

NMPA to Organise Maritime Seminar on Challenges and New Port Act

MANGALURU

The New Mangalore Port Authority (NMPA) will organise a one-day Maritime Seminar on the theme "Maritime Adversities and Role of Stakeholders" and "Indian Port Act 2025" on Wednesday, April 1, 2026. According to a Press release here today from the Port, the event aims to bring together port stakeholders, shipping agents, logistics operators, maritime professionals, government officials, and industry experts to discuss emerging challenges in the maritime sector and analyse the implications of the newly introduced Indian Port Act 2025 for improving port governance and operational efficiency. S. Shanthi, Deputy Chairperson, New Mangalore Port Authority, will preside over the function. Darshan H. V. (IAS), Deputy Commissioner, Dakshina Kannada, will be the Chief Guest and inaugurate the seminar. Nandakumar V. Pillai, Director (Refinery), MRPL, will attend as the Guest of Honour. The technical sessions will feature expert talks by Capt. L. K. Panda, Former Nautical Adviser to the Government of India, and Capt. Anand W. Karkare, Former Deputy Conservator, Mumbai Port Authority. They will share insights on maritime adversities, regulatory changes, and the responsibilities of various stakeholders. The seminar is part of NMPA's ongoing efforts to promote dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among all players in the maritime ecosystem, ultimately contributing to the strengthening of India's port sector.



SDPI demands swift action on Haj Bhavan in Mangaluru

MANGALURU

The Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) Mangaluru district unit on Monday strongly demanded that the Karnataka government take immediate steps to construct the long-pending Haj Bhavan here and start direct Haj flights from Mangaluru International Airport.

Addressing mediapersons, district president Anwar Sadath said the project has remained on paper for decades despite repeated assurances by various governments. "Pilgrims from the coastal region are forced to endure hardships due to lack of proper facilities," he said.

Sadath pointed out that Mangaluru International Airport is fully capable of handling direct Haj charter flights, which would greatly benefit thousands of devotees from Dakshina Kannada,

SDPI demands immediate construction of Haj Bhavan in Mangaluru and direct Haj flights from city airport, citing decades of unfulfilled promises.

Udupi and neighbouring districts. The SDPI leader urged the state government to allocate funds without delay, complete pending formalities and begin construction work.

He also called for close coordination with the Ministry of Minority Affairs and Haj Committee of India to operationalise direct flights at the earliest. The party maintained that such infrastructure is not only a religious necessity but would also boost the local economy through improved air connectivity. SDPI leaders warned that continued inaction would force the party to intensify its campaign.

Flight Connectivity from Mangaluru to Mumbai Region Rises to Six Daily

MANGALURU

healthy passenger movement:

Starting with the summer flight schedule from March 29, 2026, air connectivity from Mangaluru International Airport (IXE) to the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) has significantly improved, with up to six daily flights on most days of the week.

On Mondays and Thursdays, there will be five flights to the MMR — two to Navi Mumbai (NMI) and three to Mumbai (BOM). On the remaining five days, passengers will have the benefit of three arrivals and three departures to the region.

IndiGo will operate all flights to Navi Mumbai Airport. The airline will also run two daily services to Mumbai (BOM), while Air India Express will operate the third daily flight to BOM. Sunday's flight data to and from Navi Mumbai reflects

Arrivals (NMI to IXE):

- 6E 866 – 94 passengers
- 6E 841 – 51 passengers
- 6E 2030 – 108 passengers

Departures (IXE to NMI):

- 6E 832 – 128 passengers
- 6E 865 – 121 passengers
- 6E 2031 – 165 passengers

Meanwhile, there is no clarity yet on the full resumption of international flights from Mangaluru. Both IndiGo and Air India Express have indicated that regular international operations may not resume until the end of April 2026 due to the prevailing situation in and around Iran. In the interim, Air India Express is expected to operate sporadic flights to Jeddah and Sharjah. The enhanced domestic connectivity to MMR is expected to benefit business travellers, students and tourists significantly.



MLA Slams Karnataka Government Over SSLC Third Language Change

MANGALURU

Mangaluru city South MLA Vedavyas Kamath has strongly condemned the Karnataka Congress government's decision to switch from marks to a grading system for the third language in SSLC examinations, describing it as a hasty and irresponsible move taken midway through the exams.

Addressing the media, Kamath said the government's abrupt decision reflects "haste without wisdom" and is being done for political reasons at the cost of students' future. He questioned how the School Education Minister could announce such a major policy change while the SSLC exams are still underway, especially with the third language paper

scheduled soon. "The students, teachers, and parents are now in total confusion. Many students are anxious about how their 'scoring subject' will be treated," he said.

Kamath pointed out that over 75,000 teachers handling third languages have decided to boycott the valuation process. Some students are even preparing to approach the court. He criti-

cised the government for showing complete lack of sensitivity, stating that such a policy should have been implemented at the beginning of the academic year or from the next session, not during the ongoing examinations. The MLA warned that the move would do injustice not only to Hindi but also to regional languages like Sanskrit, Konkani, and Tulu.

ANTI-DRUG CAMPAIGN

Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan Observed with Strong Youth Participation at Father Muller

MANGALURU

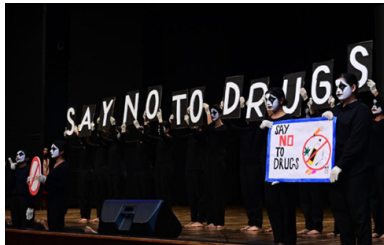
In a step towards creating a drug-free society, the Department of Mental Health Nursing, Father Muller College of Nursing, in association with the National Service Scheme (NSS), organised a grand Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan programme at the Father Muller Convention Centre here on Monday. Over 600 students and faculty members actively participated in the event. Mangaluru Assistant Commissioner of Police



Ms. Geetha D. Kulkarni inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp.

In her address, she spoke about the legal consequences of substance abuse, especially among the youth, and mo-

tivated students to stay alert and responsible. She distributed prizes to winners of a reel-making competition held as part of the awareness drive and later delivered an inspiring talk, urging students to



become torchbearers in the fight against drugs.

Principal Rev. Sr. Prof. Dr. Dhanya Devasia administered the anti-drug pledge, stressing the importance of awareness and personal re-

sponsibility. Presiding over the function, Director of Father Muller Charitable Institutions Rev. Fr. Faustine Lucas Lobo delivered a powerful address. He explained how substance abuse gradually turns a person from being lethargic to becoming a threat to family and society. He cautioned that even one exposure can lead to addiction and urged students to focus on academics, sports and cultural activities to preserve the healthy campus culture. A pre-inaugural session

on the health impacts of drug abuse was conducted by Dr. Anupa Arunkumar Shenoy.

NSS volunteers presented a meaningful mime show highlighting the dangers of substance abuse. Rev. Fr. George Jeevan Sequeira, Administrator of Father Muller Medical College Hospital, presented certificates and mementoes to the judges. The event successfully reinforced the institution's commitment to nurturing responsible and drug-free youth.

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 meeting 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.



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 Kemp Gowda 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

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-

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.



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

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.

Chikkaballapur Talent Shines with Bronze at Nationals

CHIKKABALLAPUR

A young athlete from Chikkaballapur district has brought pride to Karnataka by securing a bronze medal at the national-level athletics competition held in Chandigarh.

Sirinaagaraju, a resident of Bhaktarahalli village in Shidlaghatta taluk, represented Karnataka in the 4x100 meters relay event at the national competition from March 24 to March 29 in Chandigarh, Punjab. Competing in the under-20 category, he and his team delivered an impressive performance to clinch the bronze medal.

Sirinaagaraju has consistently demonstrated excellence in athletics from a young age. He has previously participated in competitions across various age categories including under-14, under-16, and under-18 levels. His achievements span events such as the 100 meters sprint, long jump, and relay races, where he has secured medals at state, South India, and national-level competitions, as well as at school and college meets. Following his recent achievement, a felicitation ceremony was organized to honor the athlete. The event was held at the residence of K. V. Naveen Kiran, President of the District Athletics Association. Several dignitaries and sports officials attended the ceremony to congratulate Sirinaagaraju on his success. Among those present were Nirmala Sai Prabhu, District Athletics Association General Secretary Manchanabale Srinivas, Joint Secretary Bhaktarahalli Nagaraju, and national athlete Bhoomika. They praised Sirinaagaraju's dedication, discipline, and consistent performance in athletics.

Officials expressed confidence that his achievement would inspire other young athletes in the district to pursue sports seriously and aim for national and international success. They also emphasized the importance of providing continued support and training opportunities to emerging talents. Sirinaagaraju's accomplishment marks another milestone for Chikkaballapur district in the field of athletics, reinforcing its growing reputation for nurturing sporting talent.

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.

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, Riat No.11, Itagalpura 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 Itagalpura 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/LNirharana No.9631/LN 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 Ramakrishnappa 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.BGP06701, In Regd before of the SRO Bagepalli, Property Bearing E-Swathu Form No.3,E-Swathu No.235605492, Nirharana 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.
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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 dev-



otees 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.



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



TELANGANA MINISTER PROMOTES E-VEHICLES, ARRIVES ASSEMBLY IN EV

HYDERABAD
Telangana Transport Minister Ponnampati 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 Nagender, drove from the Ministers' Quarters to the Assembly 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



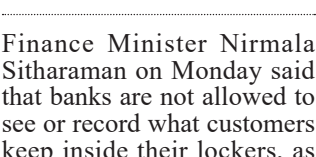
Banks cannot check locker contents: Finance Minister

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 Nandoo Dasaram Kirsan from the



LOCKER RULES

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.



Banks cannot check locker contents: Finance Minister

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-



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-



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.



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-



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



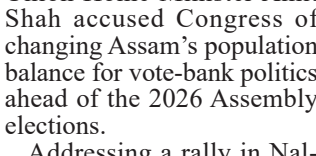
Mamata blames BJP of 'divisive politics'

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.



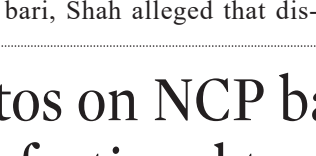
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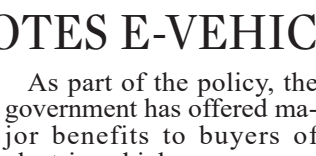
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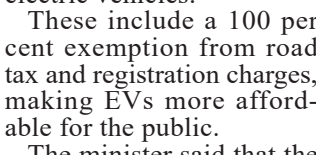
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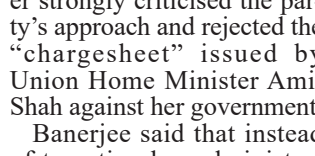
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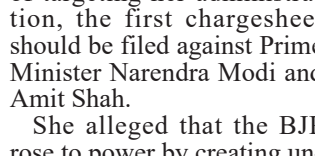
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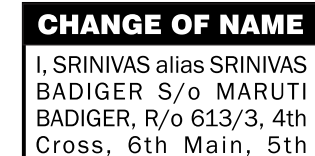
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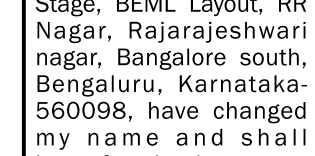


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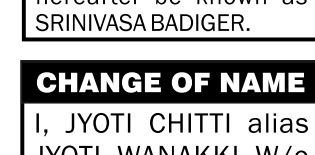
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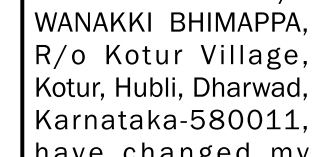
CHANGE OF NAME
I, SRINIVAS alias SRINIVAS BADIGER S/o MARUTI BADIGER, R/o 613/3, 4th Cross, 6th Main, 5th Stage, BEML Layout, RR Nagar, Rajarajeshwari nagar, Bangalore south, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560098, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SRINIVASA BADIGER.



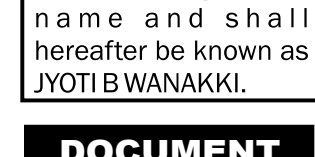
CHANGE OF NAME
I, JYOTI CHITTI alias JYOTI WANAKKI W/o WANAKKI BHIMAPPA, R/o Kotur Village, Kotur, Hubli, Dharwad, Karnataka-580011, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JYOTI B WANAKKI.



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



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 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 Chhajalwaddi 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.

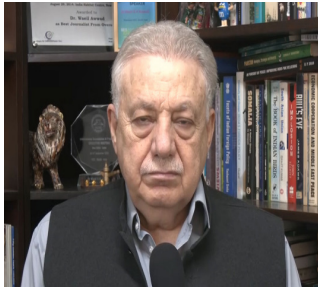
Middle East expert claims Trump prolonging Iran war

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.



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-



'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.

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

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-



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

nation. To fight back against hoarding and smuggling, the government has taken bold steps. They are now offering cash rewards of up to 1 lakh Taka for citizens who report illegal oil stockpiling. Meanwhile, the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has been deployed to guard oil depots and filling stations to ensure that what little fuel is left doesn't vanish into the black market. Local officials say these "unscrupulous actors" are making a bad situation worse. While the government tries to negotiate with the strikers, the shadow of the West Asia war looms large, making every drop of oil precious. For now, residents in the north can only wait and hope for a quick resolution.

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.



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

President—Min Aung Hlaing officially stepped down from his post as Commander-in-Chief. In a formal ceremony held this morning, he handed over the military reins to his trusted loyalist, General Ye Win Oo. Ye Win Oo, a former intelligence chief, was quickly promoted to Senior General to take over the armed forces, ensuring that the military remains in the hands of a close ally. The transition process works through three nominations: • The Lower House nominated Min Aung Hlaing. • The Upper House nominated Nang Ni Ni Aye, a law-

maker from the military-backed USDP. • 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.

POLITICAL ARRESTS

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

leaders agree that for more people to switch to electric, the experience must be simple and dependable.

This new forum is not just about wires and batteries; it is about building a world where sustainable travel is the easy choice for everyone. As more companies join the mission, India is setting the stage to lead the global shift toward electric mobility, ensuring our cities breathe a little easier tomorrow.

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

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 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-

work has already helped clean up the banking sector and encouraged companies to be more disciplined with their money. The Minister noted that many firms actually came out of this process stronger and with better credit ratings. By making the system more efficient, the government hopes to build a more reliable environment for investors and business owners alike. This move signals a shift toward a more modern, high-speed economy where financial stress is handled with professional urgency.

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-



eign cash reserves have recently grown to \$29.6\$ billion, the war creates an "unwelcome headwind." High fuel costs might stop inflation from falling, making life harder for families already struggling with rising costs. Pakistan and Sri Lanka face similar threats, as expensive energy can drain their limited savings and hurt trade.

In contrast, nations like Laos are safer because they use water power to generate electricity. For the rest, the window to protect their economies is narrowing. Experts suggest that these fragile nations must prepare for a long period of uncertainty. The focus now is on whether they can survive these global shocks without losing their financial stability.

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.

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 busi-

ness, 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.