



Rocking Star Yash and Tara Sutaria's chemistry steals the spotlight in the newly released romantic song 'Manamohaka' from the much-awaited film 'Toxic'.

Enforcement Directorate officials conduct searches at multiple locations across Bengaluru in connection with an alleged ISIS funding and recruitment case based on an NIA FIR and chargesheet.



Good morning

Never feel guilty for knowing different types of people. Good people radiate happiness. Bad people have lessons to teach. And amazing people... great memories."

BRIEFS

Andhra Covid Cases Rise to 26

► **Vikrama Vahini | Amaravati**

Andhra Pradesh reported seven new Covid-19 cases on Tuesday, taking the total number of infections in the state to 26, according to the Health Department.

The fresh cases were detected across three districts, with four cases reported from Guntur, two from East Godavari and one from Bapatla. The Health Department said the newly reported infections were identified in different parts of the state and were not linked to any cluster outbreak.

Officials said the situation is being monitored closely, while health authorities continue surveillance and precautionary measures to contain the spread of the virus.

Kolar NREGA Engineer Held in Bribe Trap

► **Vikrama Vahini | Kolar**

Lokayukta officials on Tuesday arrested Kolar Zilla Panchayat's NREGA engineer Krishna Murthy and his assistant Hussain Ali while allegedly accepting a ₹2 lakh bribe.

The duo had reportedly demanded ₹4 lakh from a contractor for clearing bills related to NREGA works. Acting on the contractor's complaint, Lokayukta police conducted a trap operation at the Kolar Zilla Panchayat office and caught them red-handed while receiving the money.

The bribe amount was seized, and a case has been registered against both accused under the Prevention of Corruption Act. Further legal action is underway.

Iran Strikes US Bases, Warns Trump

► **Vikrama Vahini | Kuwait**

Tensions in the Middle East escalated after Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed to have carried out missile and drone attacks on US military facilities in Kuwait and Bahrain.

The strikes reportedly targeted key American bases, including Ali Al Salem Air Base and Camp Arifjan in Kuwait, along with the US Navy's Fifth Fleet headquarters in Bahrain's Juffair area.

Following the attacks, Iran issued a warning to the US and its allies, stating that any further action against Iranian territory or interests would invite stronger retaliation. Tehran also warned neighbouring countries against allowing their territories to be used for US military operations.

The developments have raised concerns over a wider regional conflict amid rising tensions between Iran and the United States.

NEET Row Rocks Parliament

CONGRESS MARCH TO PM'S RESIDENCE FOILED AMID NATIONWIDE POLITICAL STORM

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Parliament witnessed high political drama on Tuesday as the controversy surrounding the alleged NEET question paper leak dominated proceedings, triggering repeated disruptions in both Houses, protests by Opposition parties, and a failed Congress march towards the Prime Minister's residence.

The Opposition, led by the Congress and its INDIA bloc allies, demanded an immediate discussion on the alleged irregularities in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), accusing the Centre of compromising the future of millions of students.

Members stormed the Well of both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, raising slogans and insisting that the issue be taken up ahead of regular business. The continued uproar forced repeated adjournments, bringing parliamentary proceedings to a near standstill.

Outside Parliament, Congress leaders intensified their protest by attempting to march towards the Prime Minister's residence, demanding accountability for the alleged examination scandal. However, Delhi Police prevented the procession from advancing beyond designated barricades and detained several leaders and workers.

Protesters carried placards seeking justice for students and called for the resignation of the Union Education Minister, alleging that the government had failed to protect the integrity of one of India's most important competitive examinations.

The Opposition maintained that the alleged paper leak had shattered public confidence in the examination system and called for a comprehensive, transparent investigation under judicial supervision.

It also demanded structural reforms in the National Testing Agency (NTA) to restore credibility to national-level entrance examinations.

The Centre, however, rejected allegations of any attempt to shield those responsible and reiterated that the matter is under investigation.

Government representatives informed Parliament that agencies concerned had already initiated action against those allegedly involved and assured the House that stringent measures would be taken to safeguard the integrity of future examinations.

The government also defended its ongoing reforms in the examination system and urged political parties not to prejudge the outcome of the



AAP Targets Congress Over CJP Protest

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

The political divide within the Opposition widened on Tuesday after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) accused the Congress of weakening the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) protest movement by staging a demonstration outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official residence.

The remarks came after Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and other leaders held a sit-in protest at 7 Lok Kalyan Marg over the alleged NEET paper leak issue.

AAP Questions Congress Protest

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh alleged that the Congress protest was aimed at diverting attention from the CJP movement. In a post on X, he claimed that the protest was organised to



weaken the ongoing agitation.

AAP leader Atishi Marlena also criticised the Congress, alleging a 'jugalbandi' (understanding) between the BJP and Congress.

She questioned why the government responded quickly to Rahul Gandhi's protest while allegedly ignoring CJP and activist Sonam Wangchuk's demands. **PG2**

investigation.

Student organisations and civil society groups also staged demonstrations at several locations in the national capital, demanding justice for aspirants and greater transparency in the conduct of competitive examinations. Security was tightened

across central Delhi, particularly around Parliament House and the Prime Minister's residence, to prevent any untoward incidents.

With both the government and the Opposition refusing to soften their stand, the NEET controversy has now evolved from an examination-related issue

Govt, Rahul Clash Over NEET Debate

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

The government on Tuesday said it is ready to discuss all issues related to the NEET examination controversy and the protests surrounding it in Parliament, while accusing Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi of changing his demands during a protest outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence.

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Jitendra Singh said the government had agreed to Rahul Gandhi's demand for a discussion on NEET in Parliament but alleged that the Congress leader later added a new demand seeking the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

Govt Says Rahul Backtracked on Demand

Singh, along with Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, met Rahul Gandhi and urged him to end his sit-in protest. He said Gandhi initially demanded a parliamentary debate on NEET, but after the government agreed, he sought the Education Minister's resignation as well.

The minister termed the change in demand as "unfortunate" and said such conduct does not suit the Leader of Opposition. He also alleged that the Congress had not submitted any formal notice in Parliament seeking a discussion on the NEET issue.

Rahul Protests Over NEET Issue

Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and other senior leaders staged a protest outside the Prime Minister's residence, demanding accountability over the alleged NEET paper leak and police action against protesting students. **PG3**

Karnataka Cabinet Oath Delayed

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**

Amid growing speculation over a possible expansion or reshuffle of the Karnataka Cabinet, Raj Bhavan has clarified that no swearing-in ceremony for new ministers is scheduled for Wednesday.

Officials at Lok Bhavan said no official programme has been fixed at present and indicated that the state government has verbally advised authorities to wait for at least two more days before making preparations.

Ministerial List Yet to Be Finalised

The delay comes as the list of new ministers to be inducted into the Cabinet has not been finalised.

Discussions between the Congress high command and Karnataka leaders are still underway, preventing the announcement of the final names.

Raj Bhavan and government sources confirmed that no oath-taking ceremony will be held tomorrow unless there are sudden political developments or last-minute changes.

Final Approval Awaited

Officials said preparations at Lok Bhavan will begin only after the final list of ministers receives approval from the party leadership in Delhi and the state government officially communicates



Karnataka Cabinet expansion has been delayed as the Congress leadership is yet to finalise the list of new ministers. Raj Bhavan clarified that no swearing-in ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, with preparations to begin only after the final approval from the party high command.

the details.

The Cabinet expansion exercise has attracted significant attention, with several party leaders lobbying for representation.

The timing and composition of the reshuffle will be decided after consultations between the Congress leadership and Karnataka leaders. The delay has intensified speculation among party aspirants awaiting ministerial berths.

Rahul, Priyanka Freed



► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were released by Delhi Police hours after being detained during a protest outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence at Lok Kalyan Marg.

The leaders were taken into custody while demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the alleged NEET-UG paper leak issue. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and other Opposition leaders were also detained during the protest.

Senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi visited Mandir Marg Police Station following the detention, after which the leaders were released.

Priyanka Gandhi criticised the police action, alleging that the Opposition was being denied space to raise issues, while the Congress continued to demand accountability over the NEET controversy.

RAHUL CHANGED DEMANDS: JITENDRA SINGH

Jitendra Singh accused Rahul Gandhi of changing demands during NEET talks, saying the LoP added the Education Minister's resignation demand after the government agreed to a Parliament debate.

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Union Minister of State for PMO Jitendra Singh on Monday accused Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi of changing his demands during negotiations over the Congress protest outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence.

Singh said Rahul Gandhi initially agreed to end the sit-in if the government assured a discussion on the NEET issue in Parliament. However, after the government accepted the demand, Rahul allegedly added another condition seeking the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

Govt Ready for NEET Debate, Says Minister

Jitendra Singh said he, along with Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, met Rahul Gandhi at the protest site and requested him to withdraw the demonstration as it was causing inconvenience to the public.

According to Singh, the government immediately agreed to discuss NEET-related issues in



Parliament after receiving approval from senior leadership. He alleged that Rahul later changed his stand and demanded both a parliamentary debate and the Education Minister's resignation.

Rahul, Other Leaders Detained

The protest was held by Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Mallikarjun Kharge, Akhilesh Yadav and other Opposition leaders over the alleged NEET paper leak issue and police action against protesters.

Delhi Police later removed and detained Rahul Gandhi and several Congress leaders from the protest site near Lok Kalyan Marg.

Singh criticised Rahul's move, saying that changing demands during talks was "unfortunate" and against democratic norms.

GBA Officials Attacked During Shivajinagar Drive

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**

A group of miscreants allegedly assaulted Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officials and staff who were carrying out a footpath encroachment clearance drive in Shivajinagar, one of the city's busiest and most sensitive areas.

The incident occurred near the Shivajinagar Bus Stand, where GBA officials had been conducting an encroachment clearance operation since morning. At around 12.30 p.m., Basavaraj Padukote and his supporters allegedly arrived in an Innova car and launched an attack on the officials.

Assistant Executive Engineer Madhav Rao,



who was involved in the clearance operation, was allegedly chased and assaulted by the group. Staff members alleged that after the officer was pushed to the ground, he was attacked with helmets and

plastic chairs.

A female officer was also allegedly subjected to misbehaviour during the incident. According to the allegations, Basavaraj Padukote, associated with the 'Namma Karnataka Sene' organisation, and his supporters came close to the woman officer's face and sprayed pepper spray, creating panic at the spot.

"We were sprayed with pepper spray at close range. Fearing for our lives, we had to run away and hide. We are now scared to carry out our duties. We need immediate security," the woman officer, Savitri, said, expressing concern over the

incident. GBA staff also alleged that four police personnel were present at the spot during the operation but failed to intervene and instead stood by recording videos.

GBA Employees' Association president Amruth Raj alleged that Basavaraj Padukote had been regularly collecting money from local traders in the name of a Kannada organisation.

The GBA Employees' Association has decided to hold a major protest condemning the alleged assault and demanding immediate security for officials involved in encroachment clearance operations.

HEALTH

Junk Food Curbs in Schools Soon

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Concerned over the growing cases of obesity, diabetes and other lifestyle-related health problems among children, the Food Safety Department is preparing new guidelines to restrict the sale of junk food in and around schools, colleges and educational institutions across Karnataka.

The department is planning to issue detailed recommendations based on the advice of nutrition experts to ensure healthier food choices for students. Officials have already started collecting samples of junk food items sold at school and college canteens, hostels and shops located near educational institutions. The samples are being tested in laboratories, and further action will be taken based on the reports.

The department has identified a wide range of food items that may come under restrictions, including potato chips, French fries, burgers, pizzas, hot dogs, soft drinks, energy drinks, chocolates, donuts, ice creams, candies, packaged biscuits, fried snacks, fried chicken, tacos, wraps, instant noodles and other highly processed foods.

Officials said excessive consumption of such foods has been linked to rising obesity and health complications among children. The move aims to reduce the availability of unhealthy food options and encourage students to consume nutritious diets.

Health experts have warned that childhood obesity is increasing significantly, especially among children below 16 years of age. They said obesity at a young age can increase the risk of serious health conditions such as Type-2 diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart diseases, stroke, fatty liver disease, breathing problems, joint-related issues and certain types of cancer.

Experts have advised parents and educational institutions to focus on providing balanced and nutritious meals instead of fried, processed and sugar-rich foods.

They stressed that healthy eating habits developed during childhood play an important role in preventing long-term health problems.

The Food Safety Department is also expected to work with schools and colleges to create awareness among students about the harmful effects of excessive junk food consumption.

The initiative comes amid increasing concerns over changing food habits among young people and the need to address lifestyle-related diseases at an early stage.



Comprehensive Strategy of the State Government to mitigate Super El Niño

Super El Niño (El Niño) is a global climatic phenomenon in which the sea surface temperature in the central and eastern parts of the Pacific Ocean rises above normal levels. The term originates from the Spanish words meaning "little boy" or "Christ Child," as fishermen in South America first observed this unusual temperature variation around Christmas.

This phenomenon completely alters global wind patterns and rainfall patterns. Scientists have warned that the temperature of the Pacific Ocean is rising significantly and that this could potentially become the strongest Super El Niño event in 150 years. Therefore, the Government is fully prepared to address this emergency situation, and through this article, I am making an effort to explain this global phenomenon.

How Does Super El Niño Occur?

• Normal Conditions: Under normal conditions, the trade winds blowing across the Pacific Ocean push warm water towards Asia. As a result, cold water rises from the depths along the coast of South America.

• Super El Niño Conditions: During Super El Niño, these winds weaken or reverse direction. As a result, warm water moves towards the eastern Pacific, near the coast of the Americas, and accumulates there.

Effects of Super El Niño on India and Karnataka

• Rise in Temperature: Due to the influence of Super El Niño, temperatures across the world are reaching record levels. The initial months of 2026 have already been exceptionally warm, and global temperatures are expected to rise further in the coming days.

• Indian Monsoon: Super El Niño is having a negative impact on the southwest monsoon in India. Due to a lack of moisture, rainfall is declining in several parts of the country, raising the threat of drought and adversely affecting sowing activities.

• Threat of Drought: Due to the lack of rainfall, water levels in reservoirs decline, agricultural activities are affected, and drought-like conditions arise across the country.

• Rise in Temperature: During this period, temperatures higher than normal and unusual heat conditions are experienced.

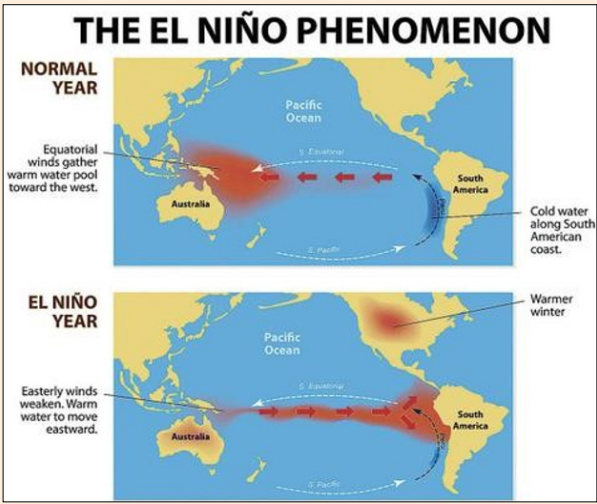
• Situation in Karnataka: Its direct impact is visible on the agricultural sector of the State. Due to the failure of the monsoon, sowing activities have been affected in several districts. The Agriculture Department is advising farmers to cultivate alternative crops.

• The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) has forecast that this climatic abnormality may continue until March 2027.

Economic Loss: A decline in agricultural yields may lead to a significant increase in food prices globally.

Major Initiatives Undertaken by the State Government:

The State Government has formulated a comprehensive strategy to effectively address the drought conditions that may arise due to the Super El Niño climatic abnormality.



Directions have been issued to various departments relating to drinking water security, groundwater conservation, efficient utilisation of water resources and protection of farmers' livelihoods.

Comprehensive information on approximately 3.7 million borewells in the State has been collected and instructions have been issued to record the same on the K-GIS portal of KRSRAC. In addition, special training is being provided for the technical inspection, recharge, flushing, re-drilling and improvement of water quality of borewells, and it has been decided to review progress every 15 days.

Awareness is being created among the public regarding the recharge of private borewells through audio and video messages disseminated through social media. Steps also being taken to provide the public with information from authorised institutions like BWSSB, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Board (Jal Jeevan Mission).

Instructions have been issued to strictly enforce the rules already in force to prevent the drilling of new borewells in taluks where groundwater has been over-exploited.

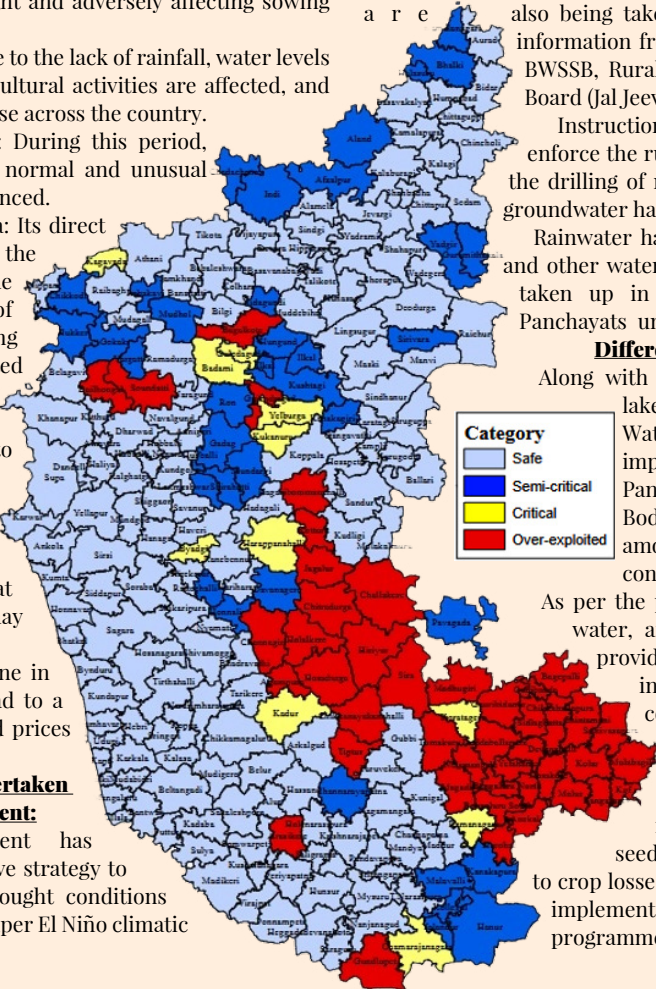
Rainwater harvesting systems, check dams and other water conservation works are to be taken up in rural areas through Grama Panchayats under the VBGRAMG scheme.

Different types of Check dams:

Along with expediting desilting works of lakes, feeder channels and canals, Water Budgeting will be implemented not only in Gram Panchayats but also in Urban Local Bodies by creating awareness among the public regarding water conservation and water harvesting.

As per the policy for the reuse of treated water, arrangements will be made to provide non-potable water for industries, gardens, constructions and other purposes.

The Government has placed emphasis on preventing migration by supplying fodder seeds to farmers facing distress due to crop losses, constructing farm ponds and implementing alternative livelihood programmes in rural areas under the



VBGRAMG scheme.

Top Drought-Resistant Crops:

• Millets: Varieties like pearl millet (bajra), sorghum (jowar), and finger millet (ragi) are highly climate-resilient. They require as little as 250-400 mm of annual rainfall and can survive extreme heat and poor soils.

• Pulses: Chickpeas, pigeon peas (tur), and cowpeas. Their deep taproot systems help them access subsoil water, and they fix nitrogen, enriching the soil naturally.

• Oilseeds: Groundnuts, sunflower, and sesame. These require 400-750 mm of rainfall and tolerate dry spells much better than traditional cash crops.

In addition, the Revenue Department, KSNDMC and KRSRAC will work in coordination to develop a real-time Water Stress Index in the State. A comprehensive study has also been directed to be undertaken, in collaboration with the India Meteorological Department, regarding the conditions conducive for undertaking cloud seeding.



Conclusion

Overall, Super El Niño is not merely a natural phenomenon but a force that can have serious impacts on humanity and development. Therefore, through scientific methods, efficient water and agricultural management and awareness, we must effectively face this challenge and learn to live sustainably in harmony with nature. The Government is also prepared for this challenge and has taken decisive steps to effectively address the Super El Niño situation through its multiple efforts.

It is the responsibility of every individual to reduce carbon emissions, give priority to renewable sources of energy and mitigate the effects of climate change through cooperation at all levels.

I urge all the citizens to join hands with the Government in its efforts and co-operate in mitigating this emergency situation, in their own interest!

Dr. Shalini Rajneesh
(Chief Secretary to Government)



NEWS

VEDAVYASA JAYANTI OBSERVED

Vikrama Vahini | Bagepalli

The Akhila Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad (ABSP), Bhagyanagar Taluk Committee, celebrated Maharshi Vedavyasa Jayanti at the Government Girls' Pre-University College in Bhagyanagar.

As part of the celebrations, a speech competition on the life and contributions of Maharshi Vedavyasa was organised for the students, who participated enthusiastically.

Speaking on the occasion, the organisers highlighted the timeless literary and spiritual contributions of Maharshi Vedavyasa and encouraged students to draw inspiration from his life and works.

The programme was attended by ABSP Chikkaballapur District President (Children's Wing)



Smt. Parimala Reddy, District Committee Member Smt. Radhamani, Cheluru Taluk President P.S. Sridhar, the college Principal, faculty members and other office-bearers.

SIT to Probe Art of Living Land Row

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka Government has ordered a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the alleged encroachment of over 290 acres of government gomala (grazing) land in Bengaluru South taluk by the Art of Living Foundation, its affiliated organisations and other entities.

The decision follows a court-directed land survey conducted in October 2025, which reportedly found prima facie evidence of encroachment on government land in Survey No. 46 of Kaggalipura village and adjoining areas, including B.M. Kaval, Agara and Uttarahalli Hobli.

According to the government order, the SIT will conduct a comprehensive investigation into the legality of land grants, lease

agreements, transfers and other transactions related to the land.

The order names the Art of Living Foundation, Veda Vignana Maha Vidya Peeth Institute, Sumeru Global Support Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Sumeru Realty Pvt. Ltd., and other respondents in a pending writ petition before the Karnataka High Court as entities whose land holdings and transactions will be examined.

The survey reportedly indicated that portions of the government grazing land were occupied through lease arrangements and agreements with land grantees, while the validity of certain documents has also come under scrutiny. It further stated that some of the land was allegedly being used for purposes other than those for

which it had originally been granted.

The SIT has been directed to identify any officials or private individuals responsible for irregularities, investigate alleged encroachments on government land, and recommend appropriate legal and administrative action.

The probe will also examine issues raised in Public Interest Litigation (PIL) No. 15264/2023, pending before the Karnataka High Court, in which spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and other respondents have been named.

The government said the investigation would cover all alleged encroachments in the area, irrespective of the organisations or individuals involved.

Special Trains Between Prayagraj, Yesvantpur

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

To meet the increased passenger demand, North Central Railway has announced the operation of special weekly express trains between Prayagraj Junction and Yesvantpur Junction, with eight trips in each direction.

Train No. 04149 Prayagraj Junction-Yesvantpur Weekly Express Special will depart from Prayagraj Junction at 6.00 pm every Wednesday from August 5 to September 23, 2026, and arrive at Yesvantpur Junction at 9.00 pm on Friday.

In the return direction, Train No. 04150 Yesvantpur-Prayagraj Weekly Express Special will leave Yesvantpur Junction at 7.00 am every Saturday from August 8 to September 26, 2026, and reach Prayagraj Junction at 6.30

am on Monday.

The special trains will halt at several important stations, including Shankargarh, Manikpur, Banda, Khajuraho, Lalitpur, Bina, Rani Kamlapati, Itarsi, Nagpur,

Ballarshah, Kazipet, Secunderabad, Vikarabad, Raichur, Guntakal, Anantapur, Dharmavaram, Hindupur and Yelahanka, among others.

The trains will comprise 23 ICF coaches, including one AC Two-Tier coach, two AC Three-Tier coaches, 11 Sleeper Class coaches, seven General Second Class coaches, and two Seating-cum-Luggage/Divyangjan-friendly coaches, providing enhanced travel options for passengers during the peak travel period.



BJP Backs NEET Students, Slams Violence

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Former Karnataka Minister and Rajajinagar MLA S. Suresh Kumar on Monday said the BJP stands in solidarity with genuine students affected by the alleged NEET question paper leak, while strongly condemning the violence and vandalism witnessed during the protest in Delhi.

In a statement, Suresh Kumar said those responsible for the alleged paper leak should be brought to justice and punished according to law. He added that the second NEET examination was conducted peacefully after the Centre took adequate

measures to prevent irregularities.

Referring to the violence during the Delhi protest, he alleged that anti-national and anti-social elements had hijacked the students' agitation. He condemned attempts to march towards Parliament and attacks on police personnel, stating that such actions could not be justified under the guise of a student protest.

He urged the Central Government to take strict action against those responsible for the violence and expressed concern over slogans allegedly raised during the protest, claiming they had no connection with the



AAP Targets Congress Over CJP Protest

From PGI

Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, Kharage, Akhilesh Yadav and other Opposition leaders were removed from the protest site by Delhi Police and detained. They were later taken to Chhatrasal Stadium.

During the police action, Rahul Gandhi reportedly suffered a minor injury below his eye while resisting removal from the protest site. The controversy follows the CJP's "Sansad Chalo" march held on the first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament. The protest, along with Sonam Wangchuk's hunger strike, drew attention over demands raised by the group.

Police barricades and heavy deployment led to clashes at some locations during the march. Delhi Police said several personnel and protesters were injured, while vehicles were damaged during the unrest.

issue of the NEET paper leak.

Suresh Kumar also alleged that the movement had been influenced by forces hostile to the country and criticised activist Sonam Wangchuk, accusing him of failing to prevent the protest from being taken over by such elements. He further questioned Wangchuk's credibility by referring to past allegations against him.

Appealing to students, Suresh Kumar urged those genuinely affected by the NEET paper leak not to be misled by vested interests or extremist elements, and advised them to pursue their demands through peaceful and lawful means.

LIDKAR Hosts State Meet for Leather Artisans

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

A state-level dialogue on the holistic development of traditional leather artisans was successfully organised by the Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram Leather Industries Development Corporation (LIDKAR) in Bengaluru on Sunday.

Inaugurating the programme, LIDKAR Chairman Mundargi Nagaraj said the corporation is committed to improving the livelihoods of leather artisans by integrating traditional craftsmanship with modern technology, skill development, entrepreneurship and expanded market access.

He said the suggestions and recommendations received during the dialogue would be compiled and used to formulate effective development policies and action plans.

LIDKAR Advisor E. Venkatayya highlighted the growth potential of the leather industry, emerging opportunities, skill enhancement, global market prospects and modern production systems.

The programme was attended by former LIDKAR Managing Director Vasundhara Devi, Managing Director Dr H. Nataraj, Deputy General Manager Monappa Kattimani, Pranesh, former MLC C. Ramesh, senior officials and other dignitaries.



Leather artisans from various districts actively participated in the interaction, sharing their views on challenges faced by the traditional profession, market access, fair pricing, availability of raw materials, bank credit, government schemes, skill development, branding, digital marketing, e-commerce, Common Facility Centres (CFCs), youth participation and

attracting the next generation to the leather industry.

Officials also briefed participants on various LIDKAR initiatives, including skill development programmes, Leather Artisan Scheme, Kayaka Spoorathi, Swavalambi, mobile sales outlets, Paduke Kuteera, direct loan assistance, marketing support, residential workshops and Pragathi LIDKAR Colony.

Govt, Rahul Clash Over NEET Debate

► From PGi

According to the government, Gandhi was requested to end the protest as the location was causing inconvenience to the public. However, Gandhi refused to withdraw the sit-in.

Police Detain Rahul, Other Leaders

Later in the evening, police removed and detained Rahul Gandhi and other Congress leaders during the protest.

The government reiterated that it remains open to a discussion on NEET-related concerns in Parliament and called for cooperation from all political parties to address issues affecting students.

The Opposition, meanwhile, accused the government of avoiding accountability over the alleged NEET paper leak and demanded immediate action to safeguard the interests of affected students.

Surya Seeks EC Probe Into 13,000 'Shifted' Voters

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

BJP MP Tejasvi Surya on Tuesday alleged that more than 13,000 eligible voters in Bengaluru had been wrongly marked as 'shifted' during the electoral roll revision exercise without mandatory physical verification, and sought a high-level inquiry into the alleged lapses.



In a representation submitted to Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer V. Anoop Kumar, Surya claimed that serious irregularities had surfaced during the house-to-house voter verification in five polling booths of HSR Layout Ward-174 under the Bommanahalli Assembly constituency.

According to Surya, thousands of voters

were categorised as 'shifted' despite no proper field verification being carried out.

He alleged that Booth Level Agents (BLAs) were neither informed nor consulted before the classification, and that their signatures and consent were not obtained as required under Election Commission procedures.

The Bengaluru South MP further claimed that mandatory geo-tagged photographs and digital records were not captured during the verification process.

He also alleged that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) failed to verify the status of voters with neighbours or local residents, while several citizens reported that officials had never visited their homes.

KUWJ TO HONOURS TOP JOURNALISTS

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka Working Journalists' Association (KUWJ) has announced the recipients of its prestigious KUWJ Trust Fund Awards 2026, recognising journalists for their outstanding professional service, social commitment and contributions to the field of journalism.

The awardees are:

- * DVG Award: B.V. Gopinath (Samyukta Karnataka, Kolar)
- * Gommata Media Award: Girish Rao Hatwar (Jogi), Editor, Kannada Prabha
- * H.S. Doreswamy Award: Raviprakash (Prajavani)
- * S.V. Jayashilarao Award: John Mathais, Senior Journalist
- * C.R. Krishnarao Award: Ananth Chiniwar, Senior Journalist
- * Dr M.M. Kalburgi Award: Meena Mysore
- * Dr B.R. Ambedkar Award: Mavalli Shankar



- (Ambedkar Vada Patrike)
- * Patil Puttappa (PaPu) Award: Adeveppa Inandar, Senior Journalist, Badami
- * Smt. Yashodamma G. Narayan Award: Manjula Kirugavala (Janodaya, Mandya)
- * Badarinath Hombale Award: D.G. Momin (Gajendragad, Gadag)
- * Kidisheshappa Award: Dinesh Gowdagere, Editor, Ibbani Surya, Chitradurga
- * Ravi Belagere Award: H.C. Dinesh Kumar, Senior Journalist
- * P.R. Ramaiah Memorial Award: Bhavani Lakshminarayana, Senior Journalist, Chikkaballapur
- * H.K. Veerannagowda Memorial Award: B.S. Jayaram (Pandavapura)
- * Rajashekar Koti Award: T.V. Rajeshwar (Andolana, Mysuru)
- * P. Ramaiah Award: H.B. Dinesh (Hirisave)
- * Maa Ramamurthy Award: Shivamurthy, Senior Journalist, Raichur

- * Mahadeva Prakash Award: Suresh K. (Vijaya Karnataka, Belagavi)
- * Shivamogga Minchu Srinivasa Award: Srikanth Bhat (Vijayavani, Bengaluru)
- * H.S. Rangaswamy Award: G. Vadiraj Kamarur, Resident Editor, Hosadigantha, Shivamogga
- * M. Nagendra Rao Award: Kannappa Ushamahi, Senior Journalist, Shivamogga
- * Smt. Girijamma-Rudrappa Talikoti Award: B.K. Ramyashree (Chandan/Akashvani)
- * Appajigowda (Cinema) Award: Harshavardhan Byadanur (Vijayavani)
- * Moodana Haveri Award: S.R. Nandihalli (DD-1, Haveri)

KUWJ Special Awards will be presented to Rudrayya K.H. (Vijaya Karnataka, Chikkamagaluru), Kiran K. (Suvarna News, Chikkamagaluru), B. Umesh Nayak (Vijayavani, Chikkamagaluru), Biligiri Srinivas (Chamarajanagar), and H.P. Ravikumar (Janata Madhyama, Hassan).

Court Summons Priyank, Nalapad in RSS Case

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

A Bengaluru court has issued fresh summons to Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge and Congress leader Mohammed Nalapad in connection with a private complaint alleging derogatory remarks against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

The 42nd Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACJM) directed both leaders to

appear before the court on August 1, after earlier summons reportedly could not be served.

The complaint was filed by Tejas Gowda, a resident of Siddapura in Bengaluru, alleging that Priyank Kharge and Mohammed Nalapad made defamatory statements that harmed the reputation of the RSS.

According to the complaint, Priyank Kharge



posted an allegedly derogatory message about the RSS on social media platform X on October 14, 2025, while Mohammed Nalapad allegedly made objectionable remarks against the organisation during a YouTube programme.

The complainant contended that the statements and social media posts damaged the image of the RSS, prompting him to approach the court through a private

complaint.

The case comes amid ongoing political debate over Priyank Kharge's demand that the RSS be registered as an organisation, a stand that has drawn sharp reactions from opposition parties and RSS supporters.

The court has directed both accused to appear in person on August 1, when further proceedings in the matter will be taken up.

ENTERTAINMENT

OTT BUZZ: NEW RELEASES THIS WEEK

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Entertainment lovers have plenty to look forward to this week as major OTT platforms including Netflix, Prime Video, Apple TV and JioHotstar roll out a fresh lineup of movies and web series from July 21 to July 26.

The week's releases cover a wide range of genres, including crime thrillers, romantic dramas, comedy films, documentaries, anime and popular franchise spin-offs. With several highly anticipated titles arriving across platforms, viewers can expect a mix of international and Indian content.

Netflix Offers a Diverse Lineup

The documentary "A Toxic Love Story", releasing on July 22, explores a mysterious case involving a married couple from an affluent California neighbourhood. The story begins with threatening emails from an unknown person and develops into a complex investigation where questions arise over the real victim and the person behind the crime.

The French action thriller "Elite Force" follows David, a senior GIGN officer who returns to active duty after a dangerous enemy launches attacks using stolen military explosives. The eight-episode series focuses on a high-risk mission while he protects his young godson, who joins the elite force despite David's concerns.

Netflix will also premiere "Elize: Shadow of a Woman", a Brazilian psychological thriller inspired by the real-life case of Elize Matsunaga. The film explores the events leading up to a shocking crime and the emotional conflicts surrounding betrayal and relationships.

Other Netflix releases include the Mexican medical drama "My Daughter's Father", which follows a doctor's desperate search for a kidney donor for his critically ill daughter while uncovering a hidden family secret.



Reality series "Kaulitz & Kaulitz Season 3" returns with Tokio Hotel's twin brothers Bill and Tom Kaulitz sharing their personal journeys across Los Angeles, Berlin and their hometown of Hanover.

Romantic comedy "Love in Slow Motion", Thai action thriller "The Debt Collector", and "Ransom Canyon Season 2" are also among the major Netflix releases this week.

Adding to the comedy lineup, Kevin Hart's "72 Hours" will stream from July 24. The film follows Joe, a struggling advertising executive who accidentally joins a stranger's bachelor party group chat and ends up on a three-day Miami adventure that changes his life.

Prime Video will release "Aadarsh Baal Vidyalaya" on July 24, starring Kay Kay Menon in the lead role.

The series revolves around Gyaneshwar Tripathi, a relaxed headmaster of a poorly managed government school in Delhi. When he learns that principals of the city's top-performing schools are being selected for a government-funded Cambridge training programme, he decides to

transform his struggling institution despite several challenges.

JioHotstar will also premiere "Stuart Fails to Save the Universe", a spin-off set in the world of The Big Bang Theory. The series follows comic book store owner Stuart Bloom, who accidentally creates a multiverse crisis after breaking a machine built by Sheldon and Leonard.

The comedy follows former tennis prodigy Dusty Boyd, who loses his career due to injury and discovers a new passion for pickleball while trying to rebuild his confidence and relationship with his father.

Netflix will also release "Musafir Cafe", starring Vikrant Massey, Vedika Pinto and Mahima Makwana.

Set across Bhopal and Mussoorie, the series follows three strangers whose lives become connected through unexpected circumstances. The story explores love, personal struggles and life-changing decisions. With a strong mix of star-powered films, gripping thrillers, emotional dramas and popular franchise returns, this week's OTT releases promise entertainment options for audiences across genres.

Ragini's 'Sarkari Nyayabele Angadi' Trailer Out

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The trailer of Kannada film 'Sarkari Nyayabele Angadi', starring Ragini Dwivedi in the lead role, has been released. The film highlights the functioning of government fair price shops and issues related to the public distribution system in rural areas.

Shot entirely in Mandya district, the movie presents a rural backdrop and focuses on the challenges and irregularities in the ration system. Actor Kumar Bangarappa said the film is the first Kannada movie to focus on government fair price shops and aims to deliver a strong social message along with entertainment.

Ragini Dwivedi plays Parvathi, a village woman, marking her first portrayal of an authentic rural character. She said the film offers a blend of awareness and entertainment.

The trailer launch was attended by former MP L.R. Shivaramagowda, producer Sa. Ra. Govindu and other film personalities.

Directed by Satvik Pavan Kumar, the film is produced under Jayashankar Talkies by Teju Murthy and Padmavati Chandrashekhkar. The movie also stars Kumar Bangarappa, Dodanna, Naveen Saju and others, and is set to release on July 31.

The film aims to create awareness about the public distribution system through a realistic rural story.



BUSINESS

Ethanol Blend Stays at E20

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Centre has confirmed that ethanol blending in petrol will remain limited to 20% for now, ruling out any immediate move towards E25 or E30 fuel. Any increase in the blending level will be considered only after detailed technical studies, scientific assessments and consultations with automobile manufacturers, fuel companies and research organisations.

The clarification comes amid concerns among motorists over the impact of higher ethanol blends on vehicle performance, mileage and compatibility, especially in older cars and two-wheelers.

India Achieves E20 Target Ahead of Schedule
Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Suresh Gopi informed the Rajya Sabha that India achieved the target of 20% ethanol blending five years ahead of schedule.

According to the government, ethanol blending in petrol increased from 1.53% in 2013-14 to 20% during the 2025-26 ethanol supply year.

The impact of E20 petrol on older vehicles has remained a major concern among motorists. Some vehicle owners have reported issues such as reduced mileage, rough engine performance and fuel-related problems.

More than 20 crore two-wheelers and over three crore petrol cars are already using ethanol-blended petrol across the country, including several vehicles manufactured before the introduction of formal E20 compatibility standards.

Experts say vehicles designed for E10 petrol may experience a 3% to 5% reduction in fuel efficiency after switching to E20. For instance, a vehicle giving 15 km per litre mileage may see a drop to around 14.25 km per litre depending on conditions.

The government has also ruled out supplying separate E10 petrol at selected fuel stations, stating that maintaining separate storage and transportation systems would increase costs and reduce the benefits of the ethanol programme.

The Centre added that automobile manufacturers will continue to honour warranties when customers use approved E20 fuel, while future decisions on higher ethanol blends will be taken only after comprehensive technical evaluation.

SPORTS

Made in India Shines on Wimbledon Court

> Vikrama Vahini | London

Wimbledon may be the world's oldest and most prestigious tennis tournament, but one of its most recognisable symbols proudly carries a 'Made in India' tag. The iconic green and purple towels used by players throughout the tournament are manufactured in Vapi, Gujarat, showcasing India's textile excellence on one of the biggest sporting stages.

Known for its rich traditions, Wimbledon has been held in London since 1877 and is famous for its all-white dress code, royal patronage and historic grass courts. While tennis stars such as Novak Djokovic, Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz compete for Grand Slam glory, the towels they use between points are produced entirely in India.

The towels are supplied by Christy, the tournament's official towel partner since 1987. In 2006, Indian textile major Welspun Living Ltd. acquired the Christy brand. Four years later, in 2010, towel production was shifted from Manchester, England, to Welspun's manufacturing facilities in Vapi and Anjar, Gujarat. Since then, every official Wimbledon towel has been woven in India.

While the towel designs are created at Christy's studio in Manchester, the entire manufacturing process—from sourcing cotton and spinning yarn to weaving, finishing and packaging—is carried out in Gujarat. The towels are made using Hygro Cotton technology, which enhances softness and improves water absorption. Production planning begins nearly 18 months before the tournament.

Smriti Joins Super Giants!

> Vikrama Vahini | London

Indian cricket star Smriti Mandhana is all set to begin a new chapter in her career as she joins Manchester Super Giants for the much-awaited The Hundred Women's competition, beginning on Tuesday (July 21).

The England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) popular 100-ball tournament features eight teams, with separate competitions for men and women. Mandhana, who was previously picked by Manchester Originals but withdrew due to personal reasons, has now joined Manchester Super Giants through a direct contract.

The Manchester-based franchise boasts a strong line-up of international stars, with former Australian captain Meg Lanning and England's top-ranked spinner Sophie Ecclestone joining forces with Mandhana. Indian wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh has also been selected, creating an exciting Indian batting partnership.

The franchise was renamed Manchester Super Giants after the RPSG Group, owners of the Indian Premier League team Lucknow Super Giants, invested in the Manchester-based side.

She became the fastest player to reach 500 runs in the tournament and has scored 676 runs in 29 innings at an impressive strike rate of 139.09 while representing Southern Brave.

BURGER VIDEO COSTS CJP SPOKESPERSON HIS JOB

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) on Tuesday removed its spokesperson Vijeta Dahiya after a video allegedly showing him eating a burger during a protest march towards Parliament went viral on social media.

In a statement, the party said Dahiya's conduct was "deeply insensitive" and did not reflect the values of the movement, particularly at a time when party workers and protesters were facing police action during the demonstration.

The party stated that Dahiya had been relieved of all official responsibilities, describing his actions as unacceptable and inconsistent with the principles of the organisation.



CJP sacks spokesperson Vijeta Dahiya after a viral video allegedly showed him eating a burger during a Parliament protest march. The party termed his conduct "deeply insensitive," while Dahiya defended himself, saying he was hungry after two sleepless nights of agitation. The incident sparked a political row and drew widespread criticism across social media platforms.

The controversy erupted after a video circulated online allegedly showing Dahiya eating a burger while CJP supporters were participating in the protest. The clip drew widespread criticism on social media.

Responding to the backlash, Dahiya defended his actions, saying he had eaten because he was hungry after spending two sleepless nights participating in the agitation.

He argued that protesters also have basic needs and questioned why eating during a demonstration had become a matter of controversy.

He further said that many critics commenting online did not understand the physical and mental strain faced by protesters and maintained that there was nothing inappropriate about taking a brief break to eat during the protest.

Rahul Leads Congress Dharna at PM Residence

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, party president Mallikarjun Kharge, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and several senior party leaders on Tuesday staged a sit-in protest near Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence at Lok Kalyan Marg, demanding his resignation over the police action against students protesting the alleged NEET question paper leak.

The Congress leaders accused the Centre of suppressing peaceful protests and alleged that police had used excessive force against students and other demonstrators during Monday's protest in the national capital.

Earlier in the day, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra visited injured protesters at a hospital in New Delhi before joining the dharna.



During the protest, Union Minister Jitendra Singh, accompanied by Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, met Rahul Gandhi and appealed to the Congress leaders to call off the demonstration.

Addressing supporters and posting on social media platform X, Rahul Gandhi said an attack on students was an attack on every Indian family and urged citizens to join the protest demanding justice for students affected by the alleged NEET paper leak.

Modi Vows Tough Action on NEET Leak

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday assured the strictest action against those responsible for the alleged NEET examination paper leak, stressing that protecting the integrity of competitive examinations is a national priority.

Addressing the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) 'Mangal Milan' gathering, the Prime Minister said safeguarding students' interests and ensuring a transparent examination system required a united effort.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, briefing the media after the meeting, said the Prime Minister had directed that those involved in the paper leak be given the harshest punishment under the law. He added that the government had acted swiftly by making arrests and conducting a re-examination to protect the future of affected students.

Modi also urged NDA Members of Parliament to engage with young people and reassure them of the government's commitment to protecting their interests. He cautioned party leaders against what he described as attempts by the Opposition to spread confusion among students and called on them to counter misinformation.

The Prime Minister also appealed for unity within the NDA and urged opposition parties to cooperate in ensuring the smooth functioning



Prime Minister Narendra Modi vowed the strictest action against those behind the alleged NEET paper leak, reaffirming the Centre's commitment to protecting students and ensuring fair, transparent examinations. He also urged political parties to work together to restore confidence in the examination system.

of Parliament, emphasising that the welfare of students and the nation's progress should remain the collective responsibility of all political parties.

The Centre's strong response comes amid nationwide protests over the alleged NEET paper leak, with students demanding greater accountability and reforms to strengthen the credibility of the country's examination system.

HC REJECTS CJP'S URGENT PLEA

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Monday declined an urgent hearing on a public interest litigation (PIL) alleging excessive use of force by the Delhi Police during the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) "Sansad Chalo" protest march.

The plea was mentioned before a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela. Refusing to grant immediate relief, the Bench orally observed, "Don't drag the Court into this. It will come up tomorrow," while listing the matter for hearing.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police said it has registered five FIRs in connection with the alleged violence, stone-pelting and vandalism reported during the protest. Officials said efforts are underway to identify those



The Delhi High Court refused an urgent hearing on a PIL, alleging police excesses during the CJP's "Sansad Chalo" protest, scheduling the matter for the next day. Meanwhile, Delhi Police registered five FIRs over the protest-related violence and continued its investigation.

involved using CCTV footage and videos from the affected areas.

The Cockroach Janta Party, a satirical social media movement, emerged following remarks made by the Chief Justice of India during a court hearing. The movement later gained attention online before its social media accounts were suspended.

HDK Clears Air on 'CM Snub' Row

> Vikrama Vahini | Hassan

Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy on Tuesday sought to end the controversy over his remarks during the funeral of his mother, Chennamma, clarifying that his reference to the 'Chief Minister' was indeed meant for Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and that there was no intention to slight him.

The clarification came after political speculation over Kumaraswamy's failure to mention Shivakumar by name while thanking leaders who attended the funeral and the Karnataka Government for according state honours to his mother.

Speaking to reporters near his mother's memorial in Hassan, Kumaraswamy said his remarks were made in an emotional state.

"I had no plan to deliver a speech. In that emotional moment, I referred to the Chief Minister, and that reference was to D.K. Shivakumar," he said.

Rejecting allegations that he had deliberately omitted Shivakumar's name, Kumaraswamy said there was no political motive behind his remarks and urged people not to misinterpret the incident.



ED RAIDS 8 BENGALURU LOCATIONS IN ISIS FUNDING PROBE

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday conducted searches at eight locations across Bengaluru in connection with an alleged ISIS funding and recruitment case, based on a First Information Report (FIR) and chargesheet filed earlier by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

According to officials, the investigation pertains to allegations of financing the banned terrorist organisation ISIS, radicalising youths and facilitating their travel abroad to join the terror outfit.

The NIA has alleged that the accused organi sed personality develop ment programmes under the banner of 'Iqra Camp' to identify and recruit young Muslim youths in Bengaluru. These participants were later introduced to weekend study sessions known as 'Quran Circle', where investigators claim they were exposed to ISIS ideology.

The agency further alleged that funds for recruitment and overseas travel were raised through personal

contributions and organisations, including Iqra Welfare Trust and GFM Trust.

The ED is examining financial transactions, documents and other records linked to these entities as part of its money laundering investigation.

According to the NIA chargesheet, some of the allegedly radicalised youths were sent to Syria via Turkey to join ISIS-linked activities.

The investigation also claims that the accused attempted to exploit public sentiment during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) to spread extremist propaganda.

During the searches, ED officials scrutinised documents, digital records and financial transactions at the premises linked to the suspects. The agency is investigating the funding sources and possible involvement of others connected to the case.

Further action will be taken based on the evidence collected during the ongoing investigation.



J&K Floods Claim 24 Lives

> Vikrama Vahini | Jammu

Heavy rains continued to disrupt normal life across Jammu and Kashmir, with flash floods and landslides claiming more than 24 lives in the past two days.

Katra in Reasi district recorded the highest rainfall in the Jammu region with 107.1 mm in the last 24 hours, followed by Poonch (61.5 mm), Reasi (54.5 mm) and Rajouri (49 mm).

Several areas reported waterlogging and road disruptions as rivers and streams swelled due to continuous rainfall. The administ ration has advised people to remain cautious, while rescue and relief operations are underway in affected areas.

The weather department has warned of more heavy rainfall in parts of the region in the coming days.

Authorities have deployed teams to assist affected residents and restore connectivity in flood-hit areas. Several low-lying regions remain under alert as the rainfall situation continues to be monitored closely. Authorities are monitoring vulnerable areas and urging residents to avoid risky locations.

India Summons Russian Envoy Over Seafarers' Deaths

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

India on Tuesday summoned a senior Russian diplomat, a day after four Indian seafarers were killed in a missile strike on a commercial cargo vessel in the Black Sea near Ukraine.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) conveyed India's strong concern over the attack, which also left another Indian critically injured.

Commercial Ship Hit by Missile Strike According to Ukrainian authorities, the MV Golden Leo, a Guinea-Bissau-flagged cargo vessel carrying grain from the Ukrainian port of Odesa, was struck by three cruise missiles on Sunday while departing the port.

The attack reportedly claimed 10 lives, including four Indian and several Syrian crew members.

The vessel had 17 crew members on board, including five Indians. Four Indians were killed, while one remains in critical condition in hospital.

India Registers Strong Protest The MEA summoned Vladimir Ladanov, Russia's Chargé d'Affaires in New Delhi, and asked him to convey India's strong concerns to Moscow.

During the meeting, Indian officials described the targeting of a



commercial vessel and the loss of civilian lives as "unacceptable," stressing that such attacks threaten the safety, security and stability of international maritime trade.

Mumbai Firm Owns Vessel

According to shipping records, the MV Golden Leo is owned by Mumbai-based Ocean Grace Shipping Ltd.

In recent months, India has also lodged protests with both the United States and Iran following the deaths of Indian crew members linked to regional hostilities.

Ukraine Blames Russia

Ukraine has accused Russia of carrying out the missile strike on the civilian cargo vessel. The ship was transporting grain at the time of the attack when it was hit while leaving the Port of Odesa.

India has reiterated its concern over the safety of civilian shipping and called for greater protection of international maritime commerce amid the continuing conflict.

Mamata Shuts Door on TMC Rebels

> Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday ruled out the return of rebel leaders to the party, declaring that those who had defected would not be welcomed back. She made the remarks while addressing the party's Martyrs' Day rally in Kolkata.

Backing TMC National General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee, Mamata said the party had benefited from the exit of leaders who joined the BJP and asserted that the organisation would move forward without them.

"We will not take them back. Those pretending to be saints or acting on behalf of the BJP should join the BJP openly," she said, adding that the party's fight against political challenges would continue.

Earlier in the rally, Abhishek Banerjee urged the party leadership to maintain a firm stand against defectors and prevent their re-entry into the organisation.

Meanwhile, a rival faction of the Trinamool Congress, led by Rittabrata Banerjee, held a separate programme near the Gandhi statue in Kolkata. Former TMC leader Madan Mitra, now associated with the rebel camp, criticised the party leadership and challenged Mamata Banerjee to interact directly with the public.

Police Excesses Unacceptable: Patil



> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The police action against students who were protesting for their legitimate rights is highly condemnable. Every citizen has the right to protest. Should people not have the right to question the governments in power? Our protest will continue until justice is delivered to the students, said Karnataka Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil.

Speaking to the media after participating in a massive protest organised in New Delhi under the leadership of AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, H.K. Patil alleged that the government attempted to suppress the students' protest by using tear gas and water cannons against them. He strongly condemned the action.

Demanding the immediate resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the alleged irregularities in the NEET examination, H.K. Patil said the protest would continue until the minister steps down. "Those responsible for this action must be arrested. We will not tolerate such atrocities against the future generation of the country," H.K. Patil warned.

Farmers Protest India-US Trade Deal

> Vikrama Vahini | Chandigarh

Farmers from several states heading to New Delhi to participate in a Kisan Maha Panchayat against the proposed India-US trade agreement were stopped at the Shambhu border, farmer organisations alleged.

Farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher claimed that thousands of farmers travelling from Punjab and other states were blocked at the Punjab-Haryana border after the Haryana government placed heavy concrete barricades at Shambhu.

The one-day Kisan Maha Panchayat, organised under the banner of 'Desh Bachao Morcha', is being held at Kisan Ghat in New Delhi. Farmers said many participants had already reached the national capital, while others were prevented from moving forward. Authorities deployed heavy police forces at the border and blocked traffic by placing concrete barriers on the bridge over the Ghaggar river.