

IN BRIEF



Two zebra foals born at Bannerghatta Biological Park

BENGALURU: Bannerghatta Biological Park has welcomed two new additions to its zebra family with the birth of two female foals in January this year. They have been released into the enclosures only on Monday for public viewing.

According to zoo authorities, zebra Kokila, aged two-and-a-half years, delivered a foal on January 17, while another zebra, Kaveri, aged 12 years, gave birth to a foal on January 28. Both the newborn foals are females and have been sired by a male zebra named Bharath.

Officials said the foals are currently housed along with the other zebras and are under constant monitoring by the park's veterinary team and animal keepers to ensure their well-being. With the birth of the two foals, the total number of zebras at the zoo has increased to 10.

Zoo authorities said zebras usually have a gestation period of about 12 to 13 months. The newborn foals initially have brown stripes, which gradually turn black as they grow. Visitors to the park can catch a glimpse of the newborn zebras during their visit to the zoo, officials added.

Vaibhav Narang is CEO, VIBGYOR Group of Schools

BENGALURU: VIBGYOR Group of Schools, India's leading K-12 education network, appoints Vaibhav Narang as its Chief Executive Officer. The appointment underscores the group's continued focus on strengthening leadership as it advances its mission of delivering holistic, future-ready education across India.

With over 17 years of experience, Vaibhav Narang brings deep expertise across banking, fundraising, strategy, and infrastructure. Over the past five years, he has played a key role in shaping the strategic and financial direction of the Ampersand Group, leading strategy and fundraising initiatives across its education and services portfolio. Prior to this, he held senior leadership roles within the Ampersand Group as Senior Vice President and Head - Treasury, Strategy and Chairman's Office.

Indians' global travel plans revealed

BENGALURU: Klook has released its Spring Readiness Index, offering a snapshot of how Indian travellers are planning for the spring travel season across Japan and South Korea.

The Spring Readiness Index is based on insights from 900 travellers across nine Asia markets, Japan remains the top spring destination, with 78% of respondents naming it as their preferred choice, followed by South Korea at 52%.

For Indian travellers, the main draw during the March-April travel window is seasonal attractions, reinforcing a broader shift toward experience-led travel shaped by natural spectacles, cultural moments, and limited-time opportunities.

This is reinforced by Search interest on Klook's platform for spring-related terms such as "cherry blossom" and "sakura" rose 57% from December 2025 to February 2026, highlighting strong momentum for seasonal travel.

LPG tanker overturns near Katapady, traffic disrupted on NH-66

HANS NEWS SERVICE
UDUPI

AN LPG tanker overturned near Katapady on National Highway-66 in Udupi district on Monday morning, creating panic among commuters and residents in the vicinity. The tanker, which was

transporting liquefied petroleum gas from Mangaluru towards Udupi, reportedly lost control while negotiating a stretch of road where highway work is underway. The vehicle toppled on its side, raising concerns about a potential gas leak. Fire and emergency services

personnel rushed to the spot immediately after the incident. As a precautionary measure, water was sprayed on the tanker and safety checks were carried out to ensure that there was no leakage.

The accident led to a temporary disruption of vehicular movement on the

highway. Police diverted traffic and warned motorists to avoid the area until the situation was stabilised. Officials later confirmed that no injuries were reported. Arrangements were being made to transfer the gas from the tanker before it could be safely removed from the spot.



Sudha Murty urges Centre to establish AIIMS in Raichur

Expresses concern over lack of institute in north Karnataka

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

SUDHA Murty, Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha, expressed disappointment in Parliament over the absence of an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Karnataka and strongly urged the Union Government to establish one in the backward district of Raichur.

Raising the issue during the Zero Hour in the ongoing Parliament session in New Delhi, Murty pointed out that several states across the country have been allotted AIIMS institutions, but Karnataka is yet to receive even one such premier medical institute. She said the state deserves better healthcare infrastructure considering its population and growing medical needs.

Murty specifically appealed to the Centre to consider Raichur district for the new AIIMS facility. She clarified that she was not requesting the institute to be set up in developed cities like Bengaluru or Hubballi, but rather in Raichur, which needs it the most due to its backward status and lack of advanced healthcare facilities. She noted that Raichur



is among the most backward districts identified by NITI Aayog. Murty recalled that while southern Karnataka witnessed significant development during the rule of the Wodeyar dynasty, large parts of northern Karnataka remained neglected for decades. Establishing an AIIMS in Raichur would help correct this historical imbalance, she said.

Highlighting the healthcare challenges faced by residents, Murty stated that the district lacks well-equipped hospitals. As a result, patients are forced to travel long distances to cities like Hyderabad or Bengaluru for treatment. This situation causes immense financial strain on poor families who already struggle to afford healthcare.

She also pointed out that the district's literacy levels remain relatively low. Ac-

ording to available data, female literacy in Raichur is around 48 percent, while male literacy is about 60 percent. Establishing a premier medical institution like AIIMS could significantly improve education and employment opportunities in the region.

Murty further explained that such a major healthcare project would not only provide advanced medical treatment to people in northern Karnataka but also create thousands of jobs and encourage students to pursue medical education locally.

She concluded by urging the Union Government to consider the long-term benefits of establishing AIIMS in Raichur, stating that the move would greatly strengthen healthcare access and regional development in Karnataka.

Chinnaswamy Stadium gets nod for hosting IPL 2026 matches

BENGALURU: The Karnataka government on Monday gave formal approval to the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) to host the 2026 Indian Premier League matches at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, ending months of uncertainty following the stampede after the team's maiden title win.

The 19th edition of the world's biggest T20 league begins on March 28 with defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru set to face Sunrisers Hyderabad in their first match here at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in the tournament opener, as per the schedule. The formal approval comes after a meeting chaired by Karnataka home minister Parameashwar with the Expert Committee, which was constituted by the state government, and representatives from the KSCA, RCB and their event management firm DNA.

"During the meeting, the Expert Committee presented its report outlining the preparedness and compliance meas-

ures undertaken at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium," KSCA's official spokesperson Vinay Mruthyunjaya informed in a statement. "Based on the recommendations of the Expert Committee and after reviewing the arrangements in detail, the Hon'ble Home Minister has formally accorded approval for the conduct of the upcoming IPL matches at the iconic M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru."

"The Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) places on record its sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Home Minister, Dr. G. Parameashwar, for his leadership, guidance and support in facilitating this approval," he added. Apart from the opening fixture of the upcoming season, the M Chinnaswamy Stadium is also slated to host the RCB Unboxing event as well as the tournament's opening ceremony. RCB had earlier announced that it would play five of their seven home matches in Bengaluru, while two will be played at Raipur's Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Cricket Stadium.

At least 11 people were killed and more than 30 injured in a stampede near the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on June 4, 2025 during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's IPL victory celebrations, raising serious concerns over crowd management.

The KSCA also expressed its gratitude towards the members of the Expert Committee.

"Our special thanks are also due to Shri Sreemant Kumar Singh, Member Secretary of the Expert Committee and Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru, for his proactive coordination and for ensuring that all safety, security and operational aspects were comprehensively evaluated," the release said.

"KSCA further expresses its sincere appreciation to all the distinguished members of the Expert Committee and the officials associated with the Expert Committee and its sub-committees, whose careful assessment and constructive recommendations have been instrumental in enabling this important decision."

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BJP likely to field new face Vinay Kumar for Davanagere South bypoll

HANS NEWS SERVICE
DAVANAGERE

THE Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is reportedly considering a new candidate for the upcoming by-election to the Davanagere South Assembly Constituency. Party sources indicate that the leadership may field young leader G.B. Vinay Kumar in an attempt to overcome factionalism within the local unit and strengthen its chances in the crucial bypoll. The by-election was necessitated following the demise of senior Congress leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa, who had contested the constituency. The BJP is determined to win the seat this time and is carefully weighing its options amid internal differences between local leaders.

Factional politics has reportedly intensified within the Davanagere BJP unit since the last Lok Sabha election. Former MP G.M. Siddeshwar and former



MLA S.A. Ravindranath are said to be backing different aspirants for the party ticket. Sources said the Siddeshwar faction has been lobbying strongly for party ticket to his close associate Yashwanth Rao Jadhav. However, the Ravindranath camp has reportedly opposed the proposal, leading to a stalemate within the party's local leadership.

Initially, the BJP high command was said to be considering giving the ticket to B.G. Ajay Kumar, who had contested the previous election but lost. However, lack of support from certain factions has made the party

leadership reconsider its options. Amid these developments, the name of G.B. Vinay Kumar has emerged as a strong contender. Party insiders say his name has been discussed at the national level, and the leadership is evaluating his candidature as a strategy to bring a fresh face into the contest and avoid internal factional disputes.

Vinay Kumar had contested the last Lok Sabha election as an independent candidate after reportedly being denied a ticket by the Indian National Congress. Despite contesting independently, he managed to

secure nearly 40,000 votes, demonstrating his local influence.

Political observers believe that Vinay Kumar's candidature could help the BJP attract young voters in the constituency. He is known as a young leader and runs an IAS training academy, which has helped him build connections among students and youth.

Another factor that may work in his favour is the party's social engineering strategy. While the BJP is likely to field Veeranna Charantimath, a Lingayat leader, in the Bagalkot by-election, the party may opt for a candidate from the Kuruba community in Davanagere South to balance caste equations.

If the BJP finally decides to field Vinay Kumar, it could signal the high command's determination to end factional politics in the district and project a new leadership face ahead of the by-election.

Film producer's grandson sets triple record in Rubik's Cube challenge

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU

FOURTEEN-year-old Shivateja Y, grandson of noted Kannada film producer Rockline Venkatesh, has created a remarkable achievement by setting a triple record in solving Megaminx Rubik's Cubes, earning recognition from the India Book of Records, Asia Book of Records and International Book of Records. To celebrate the rare achievement, a press conference was held at Conrad Bengaluru. Members of the family, including Shivateja's father Yatheesh Venkatesh, were present at the event and expressed pride over the young achiever's success. Speaking at the event, Rockline Venkatesh said their family is usually associated with film-related events, but this occasion was special as it celebrated an achievement outside the film industry. He said it was a matter of immense pride that the younger generation in their family had accomplished something unique. Rockline also observed that many children today spend most of their time on television and mobile phones, but achievements like this show how youngsters can use their time to develop



extraordinary skills.

Shivateja's father Yatheesh Venkatesh said parents must first identify the talents of their children and support them accordingly. He added that Shivateja's mother was the first to recognise his interest and talent in solving Rubik's cubes, while he ensured that his son received the encouragement and facilities needed to pursue the skill.

Shivateja's mother said that this was the first time anyone in their family had achieved recognition in the Rubik's cube field. She added that Shivateja had been practicing continuously for the past three years and had mastered the complex stages of solving the cube before setting the record.

Record-breaking performance

Shivateja, a student from Bengaluru, created the record by solving multiple mixed Megaminx Rubik's Cubes. At the age of 14 years and 9 months, he successfully solved 21 Megaminx cubes in 1 hour, 27 minutes, 12 seconds and 30 milliseconds, securing the record in multiple record books.

Interestingly, Shivateja is also the grandson of Karnataka MLA Munirathna. His achievement has drawn attention across the state and the country, bringing pride to his family and highlighting the growing interest of young Indians in mind sports and puzzle solving.

112: Centralised ambulance management system to be in place for effective service

BENGALURU: The government is set to implement a centralised ambulance management system under the unified emergency helpline number '112; Medical Education & Skill Development Minister Sharanprakash Patil announced in the Legislative Council on Monday.

The minister said the new system is expected to be fully operational within three months, with technical integration currently in progress. He said the government would directly take over the centralised management of all state ambulances under the '112' platform to ensure faster and more effective emergency healthcare delivery. Patil said this in response to a question raised by MLC T N Javarayi Gowda during the question hour.

Further stating that recruitment of supporting staff for ambulance services would also be undertaken shortly, he assured the House that Karnataka's ambulance fleet meets the standards prescribed by the Central Government and that there is no shortage of ambulances in the state. Noting that 1,715 ambulances are currently operational across the state, including 715 operated under the Arogya Kavacha programme and 1,000 managed directly by the state government, the minister said 262 additional ambulances will be procured to further strengthen emergency response capacity.

Govt facing shortage of land even to provide for burial grounds: Minister

BENGALURU

REVENUE Minister Krishna Byre Gowda told the Legislative Assembly on Monday that the government faces a land shortage, even for burial grounds and is forced to purchase land for this purpose in some cases.

Minority communities are angry with the government for not providing sufficient space for cemeteries, he said, as he highlighted difficulties faced in allocating land for schools and playgrounds. The minister was replying to a question by Aurd BJP MLA Prabhu Chavan during Question Hour.

"Over the last 10 years,

all governments have tried to ensure that all villages have burial grounds based on their needs. Even the High Court has pursued this. Still, we have not been able to provide space in some places," Gowda said. He said that after providing all available land to farmers and for various other purposes, the government is now left with no land for burial grounds. "For burial grounds, the government had to purchase land at a cost of Rs 58 crore in the last three years. By giving lands for various purposes, we have now reached a situation where we must purchase land for burials," he added.



Having given away lands for various purposes, the administration has to go around with a "begging

bowl", asking for land, the minister further said. Among Hindus, some bury and some burn the

dead. In areas surrounding Bengaluru, those who used to bury have started to burn the dead because

there is no space for burial. "But, in the two minority communities (Muslims and Christians) there is no opportunity to burn the dead bodies. We have to give them land. They are now angry with us for not providing land. Nobody understands when we say there's no land. How long can we provide?" he said.

Gowda, however, asserted that the department would work towards reserving space for public amenities like schools and burial grounds. "In villages, we must provide youngsters with playgrounds, parks, and schools," he added.

Earlier, intervening, Leader of the Opposition

R Ashoka said that after giving away lands for various purposes all these years, the government has today reached a position where it has to "beg".

Stating that people are not ready to give even one acre for schools and hospitals, let alone burial grounds, he said that when he was revenue minister during the BJP government, he had asked district deputy commissioners to reserve space for schools, anganwadis and burial grounds before granting lands. "This is important keeping the next generation and the next 25-30 years in mind," he said.