



Thunderstorms likely across state for next 4 days

BENGALURU: Parts of Karnataka witnessed early summer showers ahead of Ugadi, with a hailstorm reported in Hassan on Monday. The Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre has forecast thunderstorms and rain across the state over the next four days.

According to officials, several regions are likely to experience light to moderate rainfall accompanied by gusty winds and thunder from Monday onwards. The India Meteorological Department has predicted rainfall in districts including Kalaburagi, Koppal, Vijayapura, Davangere, Bidar, Chikkamagaluru, Ballari, Vijayanagara, Raichur, Mysuru and Chamarajanagar, particularly after Monday evening.

The unexpected pre-Ugadi showers have brought cheer among farmers and residents, as rainfall typically begins only after the festival. This year, however, rains arrived nearly three days ahead of Ugadi, providing relief from rising temperatures.

In Chikkamagaluru district, heavy rains with thunder were reported in areas such as Narasimharajapura, Koppa and Kalasa, while Sringeri witnessed moderate rainfall. Some parts received intense showers, while others experienced brief drizzles. In Shivamogga, which had been facing intense heat over the past few days, rainfall brought down temperatures and improved weather conditions.

Rainfall was also recorded in parts of Kodagu, including Madikeri, Kakkabbe and surrounding areas, offering much-needed respite to residents affected by the scorching heat. Overall, the early rains have cooled down several regions, though authorities have cautioned that thunderstorms and gusty winds are likely to continue across Karnataka in the coming days.

Teens on bikes turn aggressive after being filmed

BENGALURU: A group of six young men riding three motorcycles in triple formation on Kabbana Road became aggressive after a motorist following them recorded the scene on video, sparking a brief confrontation that has now led to police action.

The incident unfolded around 10 pm on Saturday night within the Commercial Street police station limits. As the trio of bikes moved along with two riders each, a youth on a two-wheeler trailing behind filmed them riding. Spotting the recording, one of the group members hurled an object from his hand toward the filmer's bike and issued threats.

The person who shot the footage uploaded the clip to social media, drawing attention to the reckless riding and subsequent hostility. Commercial Street police registered a road rage case based on the video evidence. They took one of the youths into custody for questioning. The remaining five, identified as minors, were summoned to the station along with their parents for detailed inquiry.

The matter was later transferred to Shivajinagar Traffic Police Station under charges of traffic rule violations. Authorities seized the involved motorcycles after establishing that the juveniles had been provided the vehicles. Cases have been booked against the minors and their guardians for allowing under-age use of two-wheelers.

Traffic police confirmed that appropriate legal steps have been initiated against the boys and their parents in line with juvenile justice provisions and motor vehicle regulations.

Illegal electric fence claims life of young tigress

FOREST OFFICIALS INITIATE PROCEEDINGS IN BANDIPUR BUFFER ZONE

HANS NEWS SERVICE
CHAMARAJANAGAR

A tigress aged approximately 2 to 3 years has been killed by electrocution in the buffer zone of Bandipur Tiger Reserve at Padagur village. The tigress came into contact with an illegal electric fence

erected around a banana crop on farmland near the forest. The land, owned by local Ravichandra, had been leased to a farmer from Kerala named Paramesh, who set up the unauthorised live wire for crop protection.

The area has seen heightened tiger activity lately. Last

week, a tiger preyed on and killed cattle belonging to a Padagur farmer. Anticipating further conflict, forest department personnel had deployed a cage trap and maintained vigil to safely capture the tiger if required.

The electrocuted tiger was detected when buffer zone

forest officers flew a thermal drone as part of surveillance operations aimed at locating and potentially trapping the animal. The drone survey revealed the fatality caused by the illicit fencing.

Bandipur Tiger Reserve's Deputy Conservator Prabhakaran, accompanied by ACF

Suresh, DRFO Shivakumar, and supporting staff, reached the location promptly. After thorough inspection and documentation, the team registered a case and initiated appropriate legal and administrative proceedings against those who installed the dangerous electric line.



PROTESTS OVER DENIAL OF KANNADA OPTION

SW RAILWAY DEPT EXAM POSTPONED IN HUBBALLI



HANS NEWS SERVICE
HUBBALLI

THE South Western Railway on Tuesday postponed its departmental examinations following intense protests by Kannada organisations, who alleged injustice to local candidates due to the absence of a Kannada language option.

The exams were scheduled for Goods Train Manager and LDCE (Limited Departmental Competitive Examination) posts, primarily meant for the promotion of existing railway employees. The computer-based test (CBT), which was to be conducted for two hours, triggered controversy after candidates found that the question paper was available only in Hindi and English.

Members of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (Karave), led by T.A. Narayana Gowda, staged protests and laid siege to examination centres in areas like Keshwapur. Protesters raised slogans against the railway department, accusing it of repeatedly neglecting Kannada-speaking candidates.

Karave activists demand-

ed immediate cancellation of the examination and called for a re-exam with Kannada as an option. "This is a clear injustice and betrayal. Kannada-speaking candidates must be given equal opportunity," protesters asserted.

The agitation intensified as large groups gathered outside exam centres, disrupting the scheduled process. With the situation escalating, railway authorities decided to postpone the examination as a precautionary measure to maintain law and order.

Following the protests, officials confirmed that the exams have been deferred and candidates who had arrived at centres were sent back. Authorities stated that fresh dates for the examination would be announced later.

According to sources, the decision to postpone was taken after instructions from higher authorities, including officials of the Railway Recruitment Cell.

However, no clarity has been given yet on whether Kannada will be included as a language option in the rescheduled exam.

CM slams railways for cancelling exams over Kannada row

BENGALURU

KARNATAKA Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday criticised the Railway Department for abruptly cancelling promotion examinations for railway employees after protests by Kannada organisations over the denial of an option to write the test in Kannada.

In a statement, Siddaramaiah said the examinations scheduled for promotion to 194 Goods Train Manager posts in the South Western Railway, and 101 Limited Departmental Competitive Examination (LDCE) posts in the Hubballi division were cancelled at the last moment following strong opposition from Kannadigas and Kannada organisations.

He said the sudden cancellation had left Kannada employees in a state of uncertainty.

According to the Chief Minister, thousands of Kannada-speaking railway employees had earlier objected to the denial of an opportunity to write the examination in Kannada. However, the Railway Department allegedly ignored peaceful protests and representations made by employees and organisations. Siddaramaiah said cancelling the examination just as it was about to begin had created confusion and placed Kannada employees in a difficult situation. He added that the situation could have been avoided if the Railway Department had recognised the issue earlier and allowed candidates to write the examination in Kannada. He said that if



the department had corrected its mistake at the outset and permitted the exam in Kannada, the present situation would not have arisen. Instead, it ignored the concerns of Kannadigas and cancelled the examination hurriedly after protests intensified, which he described as condemnable.

Siddaramaiah also alleged that Kannada job aspirants have been facing discrimination in several examinations conducted by Central government departments due to what he described as the Centre's policy of favouring Hindi. He said Kannadigas have repeatedly raised their voice against such practices and sought justice. The Chief Minister expressed disappointment that the issue had arisen even when V. Somanna from Karnataka is serving as the Minister of State for Railways.

Railway officials said that the issue regarding language inclusion would be examined at higher levels. "We will convey the concerns raised by candidates and organisations to the concerned authorities," an official stated.

The controversy has once

again highlighted the long-standing demand for inclusion of regional languages in central recruitment and departmental exams conducted in Karnataka.

Activists argue that denying Kannada puts local candidates at a disadvantage, especially in internal

promotion exams. Earlier, Kannada organisations had warned of large-scale protests if the railway department failed to address the issue.

With the exam now postponed, all eyes are on the authorities' next move regarding language inclusion.

Bagalkot Assembly seat faces third by-election

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BAGALKOT

BAGALKOT constituency now prepares for its third bye-election ever recorded. The seat became empty following the untimely death of sitting legislator H Y Meti, reportedly leading to heated discussions over candidate selections in both Congress and BJP camps.

Sixteen general elections have taken place here since 1952. A key historical moment came in 1962 when B T Murala stepped aside from the seat to support his political mentor S Nijalingappa. Murala himself represented the area five times, setting a notable record.

BATTLE FOR TICKETS IN BJP AND CONGRESS

During the second bye-election back in 1998, BJP's P H Pujar secured victory for the first time, opening the party's account in the region. Congress endured a 33-year drought without a win after 1978, until H Y Meti triumphed in 2013 and ended that streak. Curiosity now surrounds who will succeed him in the role. Ticket aspirations run high in Congress circles. Meti's sons Mallikarjun and Umesh, plus his daughter Mahadevi, all express interest. Calculations suggest Mallikarjun Meti might receive the nod due to his position as the eldest son. Beyond the



Mallikarjun Meti

Meti family, several others have declared themselves as potential contenders if the party looks outside the lineage.

BJP sees competition



Veeranna Charantimath

between Veeranna Charantimath and P H Pujar, but sources indicate Veeranna Charantimath has nearly secured the ticket as the frontrunner.

Senior Cong MLAs meet Siddaramaiah, demand cabinet rejig

BENGALURU

A group of senior Congress legislators met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday, urging a cabinet reshuffle to provide them an opportunity to serve as Ministers. The group of about 40 legislators, who have been MLAs for over three terms, has planned to go to New Delhi together on April 11 after the by-polls, to meet the Congress high command and discuss inducting at least 20 of them during the reshuffle. The legislators, who met Siddaramaiah at his office in the Legislative Assembly premises, included H C Balakrishna, N A Haris, Ashok

Pattan, S N Narayanaswamy, M Y Patil, D G Shanthana Gowda among others.

The meeting followed a dinner on Thursday night where most of these ministerial aspirants discussed mounting pressure for the much-awaited state cabinet rejig. Speaking to reporters, Balakrishna said they urged the CM to give an opportunity to 20 new faces during the cabinet rejig.

"More than 40 senior legislators have won more than three times. We met the Chief Minister. During the cabinet formation after the 2023 elections, the high command, the CM and the Deputy CM (D K Shivakumar) stated there

would be a reshuffle after 2.5 years. Accordingly, we urged the CM to rejig the cabinet and give an opportunity to any of the 20 MLAs among the 40," he said. Flanked by Haris and Ashok Pattan, Balakrishna said they plan to meet the Congress high command after the April 9 Assembly by-polls for the Bagalkote and Davangere South segments, and elections in other states, to request an opportunity to become Ministers.

He said, "The Chief Minister said that he too will speak to the Congress high command." Pattan said Siddaramaiah conveyed his plans to go to New Delhi after these polls.

Lack of physical activity leading to rising health issues among women

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TUMAKURU

RENOWNED paediatric cardiologist Dr Vijayalakshmi Balekundri has expressed concern over the increasing health issues among women, attributing it to a decline in physical activity.

Speaking at an International Women's Day programme held at Sri Devi Engineering College, she said the growing sedentary lifestyle among women is leading to obesity and other health complications. Dr Balekundri noted that post-COVID, obesity among women has increased by nearly 30 per cent, call-

ing it an alarming trend. She pointed out that neglect of physically active lifestyles is a key factor contributing to this rise. "Those who lead a life of hard work tend to remain healthier and live longer," she said, citing the life of the late Dr Shivakumara Swamiji of Tumakuru as an example of disciplined living and longevity. Highlighting the cultural importance of women, she said India is unique in according women the status of both mother and divinity. However, she expressed concern that modern lifestyles are leading to a gradual departure from traditional values and practices. She emphasised that

women possess the strength to guide society in the right direction by correcting mistakes both at home and in public life. Leadership, she said, comes through responsibility and achievement, drawing inspiration from figures such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and educationist Dr M.R. Huliyakar.

Assistant Commissioner of the Revenue Department Supriya Banagar called for greater representation of women in politics, similar to the opportunities they have received in the fields of education and healthcare.

Ophthalmologist Dr Lavanya advised women to ded-

icate at least one hour daily to physical exercise to maintain good health, stating that healthy women contribute to a healthy family and society.

Sridevi Group of Educational Institutions Director Dr Raman Huliyakar said women are making strides in all fields and stressed the need for continued support and encouragement. The event was attended by institution chairman Dr M.R. Huliyakar, admission head Roopa Natesh, medical college vice-principal Dr Rekha Gurumurthy and others. A video presentation showcasing achievements of women was screened on the occasion.

