

SINGLE SHOT



Legislative Council Chairman expresses displeasure over absent ministers

BENGALURU: Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti on Tuesday briefly adjourned the House, expressing displeasure over the absence of Ministers and ruling party members post lunch break.

The development comes a day after Assembly Speaker U T Khader adjourned the House and walked out in protest, over the lack of written replies from government departments to questions raised by MLAs.

The “unprecedented” move by the Speaker had caused huge embarrassment to the Congress government, forcing the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to issue directives to Ministers and bureaucrats, including suspending errant officials.

When the council resumed after lunch, Leader of Opposition Chalavadi Narayanaswamy pointed toward the empty treasury benches and suggested that ruling party members seemed to have “boycotted” the proceedings.

Only Minister of School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa and Chief Whip Saleem Ahmed were in attendance. The Chairman asked, “Ministers are not here; what should I do?”

Raising objection to empty treasury benches, Opposition Chief Whip N Ravikumar said, “If we have to speak on any issues, who should we tell? Who is there among Ministers? Where is the government?”

Following this, Horatti adjourned the House for 10 minutes.

When the House resumed, a couple of Ministers -- Ramalinga Reddy, Santosh Lad arrived, but the treasury benches by and large remained sparse as most of the ruling Congress MLCs were absent.

The Chairman asked the Chief Whip Saleem Ahmed, “If there are no members and Ministers on the treasury bench side, what is it? How should the House be run? If you don’t want, I will adjourn the House for tomorrow. What other work is there during the session? If there are no members and the seats are empty, how can the House run?”

When Horatti asked the Chief Whip about the MLCs, Ahmed replied, “They will be coming.”

Pointing out that MLCs were not present, despite the House resuming late post lunch, the Chairman said, “What should we do? Shall I adjourn the House for tomorrow? What do you mean that they will be coming? I don’t like it.” Ravikumar attacked the ruling Congress, asking, “Before whom should we raise the issues?”

When the Chairman expressed his willingness to adjourn the House till Wednesday morning, Ravikumar said the opposition BJP was ready to participate in the proceedings, provided the treasury benches show equal cooperation.

Defending the ruling party members, Congress MLC Ramesh Babu said there was some delay in the return of his party colleagues, who had gone for lunch.

As a couple of Ministers and ruling party MLCs started trickling in, the Chairman called BJP MLC A H Vishwanth to speak on the Budget.

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BENGALURU

A petition filed by Sri Lankan Supreme Court judge A H M D Nawaz before the Karnataka High Court has triggered a legal debate on jurisdiction, with Google LLC and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology opposing its maintainability.

The plea challenges allegedly defamatory and objectionable content published

online against the judge. The matter came up before a bench headed by Justice Sachin Shankar Magadam.

During the hearing, counsel for Google argued that the petition itself may not be maintainable before the Karnataka High Court. It was submitted that the alleged defamatory content originated in Sri Lanka, while Google is a US-based entity, raising serious concerns about territorial jurisdiction. The counsel



cautioned that entertaining such petitions could open the floodgates for similar

cross-border litigations.

Echoing similar concerns, the Centre’s counsel

contended that a foreign judge approaching an Indian High Court raises fundamental legal questions. The government argued that the petitioner had not sufficiently established how the case falls within the jurisdiction of the Karnataka High Court.

However, the petitioner’s counsel strongly defended the plea, stating that Article 14 of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees equality before law, extends

beyond Indian citizens. It was argued that no individual, including members of the judiciary worldwide, should be subjected to defamatory attacks. The counsel further submitted that the objectionable content was accessible in India through Google’s platform, which operates as an intermediary. It was argued that once a complaint is filed, failure to remove such content within a reasonable time makes the platform li-

able for its continued circulation.

Additionally, the petitioner raised concerns that defamatory content continued to be published even while the matter is under judicial consideration. This, the counsel argued, amounts to undermining the dignity of the judiciary. After hearing arguments from all sides, the bench adjourned the matter to April 6 for further consideration.

War of words in Assembly

Priyank Kharge questions BJP MLAs on cow adoption

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BENGALURU

A heated exchange broke out in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly after minister Priyank Kharge questioned BJP legislators over their participation in the state’s earlier cow adoption scheme.

Raising the issue during the session, Kharge asked how many cows had actually been adopted by BJP MLAs under the scheme introduced by the previous government. His question reportedly put several BJP members on the defensive, as they were unable to provide clear answers.

The debate intensified when BJP MLA Sharanabasappa Darshanapur (Sharanu Salagar referenced) spoke on cow protection, prompting Kharge to counter by questioning ownership of companies involved in beef-related businesses, leading to objections from the opposition benches.

Senior BJP leader Ash-



wath Narayan intervened, urging the government to take action instead of diverting the issue. Kharge responded by questioning his interruption, which led to a sharp exchange between the two leaders.

Narayan accused the government of lacking sensitivity and challenged it to act against alleged irregularities. Kharge, in turn, criticised the opposition’s stance, leading to a verbal spat between the two.

Former minister Suresh Kumar stepped in, stating that Narayan was express-

ing genuine concern and questioned the need for Kharge to pose “quiz-like” questions in the House.

Defending himself, Kharge said it was necessary to ask such questions, especially when the opposition was accusing the government of inaction.

He urged BJP members to provide specific details if they had concerns and maintained that raising questions was part of legislative accountability.

Minister Dr. K. Sudhakar also joined the discussion, highlighting the practical

challenges faced by those in animal husbandry. He pointed out that farmers often struggle to maintain non-productive cattle and that merely advocating cow protection without addressing ground realities was not a solution.

Sudhakar emphasised the need to create awareness among farmers and warned against moral policing in the name of cow protection, calling for practical and sustainable solutions to the issue. Returning to his original question, Kharge cited that former minister Prabhu Chauhan had adopted 11 cows and former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai had adopted around five to six cows. Apart from them, he claimed, no other BJP MLA had participated in the scheme and challenged the opposition to provide data on cow adoption.

The exchange led to a brief uproar in the House, with both sides engaging in sharp verbal arguments before proceedings moved forward.

No price hike ahead of Ugadi; groceries and vegetables cheaper



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WITH the countdown to Ugadi underway, consumers have received a welcome relief as prices of essential commodities and vegetables remain stable, with some even witnessing a decline. Unlike previous years, there has been no significant price rise in grocery items, while vegetable prices have softened, adding to the festive cheer.

Traders attribute the trend to reduced demand from the hotel and catering sectors. Due to disruptions in the Middle East, several hotels have reportedly shut down or revised their menus, leading to a decline in bulk purchases of

food items. As a result, wholesale prices at markets like APMC yards have dropped by ₹1–2 per kg compared to usual rates.

This has ensured that retail prices have not increased, benefiting consumers ahead of the festival.

Seasonal factors also help

Typically, when Ugadi falls in April–May, it coincides with school and college admissions, increasing financial pressure on families. However, this year, with exams mostly completed and summer holidays underway, households are relatively more comfortable celebrating the festival.

Additionally, a four-day holiday stretch has further

RATE CARD (IN RS)

Toor Dal: 100–120
Chana Dal: 65–75
Urad Dal: 100–130
Wheat Flour: 42–48
Brown Chickpeas: 60
Green Gram (Moong): 90–120
Jaggery: 42
Rice: 42–47
Sona Masoori Rice: 47–54

boosted the festive mood without financial strain. Overall, stable prices and lower vegetable rates have brought much-needed relief to households, making this Ugadi more affordable and cheerful for consumers across the state.

Govt fulfilled Rs 100/tonne aid promise to cane farmers: Minister

BENGALURU

SUGAR Minister Shivanand Patil on Tuesday said the state government had taken multiple measures to support sugarcane farmers and fulfilled its promise of providing additional financial assistance, while asserting that most farmers were satisfied this year.

Replying to BJP MLC N Ravikumar during zero hour in the legislative council, Patil said the government had already acted on several farmer-centric demands and continued to explore further support measures for both farmers and sugar factories.

“In Karnataka’s history, if any government has supported sugarcane farmers twice, it is the government of Siddaramaiah. This time as well, we had promised to provide Rs 50 per tonne from the government and Rs 50 per tonne from factory owners, and we have fulfilled that promise,” the minister said.

He maintained that farmers are not in distress; in fact, most farmers are satisfied this year, adding that the government would continue efforts to ensure their well-being. However, Patil questioned the nature of the issues raised



by Ravikumar, stating, “Most of the issues you mentioned seem to favour factory owners. I am not sure whether you are speaking on behalf of farmers or factory owners.”

He noted that the government had also taken steps to address concerns of sugar mill owners. The minister said that the Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with sugar factories for cogeneration had not been renewed in some cases, earlier, due to the availability of cheaper wind and solar energy. “Some PPAs have been cancelled, while some continue...We are considering reviewing this and possibly entering into new PPAs next year,” he said, adding that open access allowed factories to sell power in other states where tariffs were higher.

He further said the government was examining demands such as exemption of water usage tax and extending support to both cooperative and

private sugar mills. Highlighting issues requiring central intervention, Patil said the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for sugar had not been revised since 2019 despite repeated representations.

“We have suggested differential pricing, one for essential consumption and another for industrial use,” he said, citing large-scale usage by beverage companies. On ethanol, he said, while incentives like a six per cent interest subvention were provided, lack of regulation on production capacity had led to overcapacity.

“Only 10 to 13 per cent of production is being procured, making factories financially unviable,” he noted. The minister said that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had written to the Centre on November 6 and 8, 2025, and a delegation had also met Union Minister Prahlad Joshi to press for revision of sugar MSP and higher ethanol procurement or pricing. Inviting cooperation, Patil said he was willing to lead a delegation, including opposition members, to take up the matter with the Centre. The minister underlined that Karnataka was among the top three sugar-producing states and emphasised the sector’s importance.

Sale of granted land to SC/ST invalid; subsequent transactions also void: HC

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BENGALURU

THE Karnataka High Court has ruled that if the first sale of land granted to Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) is declared invalid, then all subsequent transactions related to that land will also stand cancelled.

The ruling came from a single-judge bench of Justice R. Devdas while hearing a petition filed by S.K. Jayaram, who had purchased the land after multiple transactions.

The court invoked the legal doctrine that “one cannot transfer a better title than one possesses”, stating that since the initial sale itself was illegal, every subsequent sale automatically becomes void.

The bench observed that the land in question was first sold in 1956 in violation of conditions imposed under the PTCL Act. Therefore, all later transactions, including Jayaram’s purchase in 1988, have no legal validity.

Citing Section 4(1) of the PTCL Act, the court



noted that any transfer of granted land in violation of conditions is automatically null and void, and such transactions do not confer ownership or rights.

The court upheld the orders of the competent authority, which had earlier cancelled the sale, and dismissed Jayaram’s petition, stating that there was no legal flaw in the authority’s decision.

Background of the case

The land measuring 3 acres 26 guntas in

Survey No. 143 at Khaji Sonnenahalli village, Bengaluru East Taluk, was granted in 1947 to T. Poojappa, a member of the Scheduled Caste community. After his death, his wife and minor sons sold the land in 1956 to Basamma.

Over the years, the land changed hands multiple times before being purchased by Jayaram in 1988.

However, authorities later found that the initial sale itself violated the grant

conditions, leading to its cancellation. This decision was earlier upheld by the High Court, and the latest ruling reiterates that all subsequent buyers cannot claim ownership over such land.

Implication

The judgment reinforces strict enforcement of the PTCL Act and serves as a warning that any illegal transfer of SC/ST granted land—even decades later—can invalidate all future ownership claims.

If activity points are not earned, marks sheet will be withheld: VTU V-C

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BENGALURU

STUDENTS who do not engage in social service and waste time will have their degree marks cards withheld, warned Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) Vice-Chancellor Prof. S Vidyashankar.

Speaking after inaugurating the workshop at BGS College of Engineering and Technology on the AICTE Activity Points Tracking

System (APTS) mobile app developed by VTU to manage AICTE activity points online, he said, “Students should stop being immersed in mobile phones all the time. Pay attention to social service activities as well. This will be good exercise for your mental and physical health. AICTE has identified about 16 activities. Accordingly, everyone should choose activities of their interest and actively participate. Without activity

points, the final degree certificate will be withheld,” he cautioned.

“Do not produce fake certificates for activity points. This will not be tolerated anymore. Everything will be tracked through the mobile app. Do not participate in activities just for formality. Coordinators will be appointed for management. Through this app, we will receive real-time data. Students must cultivate honesty in life. Do not waste time.

Along with academics, extracurricular activities are also very important. College coordinators should manage this properly,” he said.

BGSCET Director Dr. G.T. Raju said: “AICTE introduced activity points with the good intention of instilling a spirit of service among engineering students during their studies. To manage this, VTU has developed a mobile app, which will be very convenient for students.”

The event was attended by VTU Bengaluru Regional Office Director Dr. H.R. Sudarshan Reddy, VTU Executive Council Member Prof. Keshavamurthy, BGSCET Director Dr. G.T. Raju, Principal Dr. G.K. Ravikumar, Youth for Seva National Coordinator Ashwini Kumar, AICTE Activity Points Coordinator Meera Rajagopal, and Lifecycle Sports Pvt. Ltd. Chief Business Officer Aravind Jinor, among others.

