

# THE BEACON

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## Digital land registrations stall due to GIFT city demand

**Disha Banthia**

Gujarat's property registrars are placing digital land registrations on hold due to a widening gap between property prices and buyer sentiment in Ahmedabad's housing market, driven largely by demand from professionals working in GIFT City. Although registrars do not determine ownership, officials typically pause or refuse registrations when digital coordinates conflict with revenue or survey records that define a land's identity and extent. In such cases, written explanations are issued to inform buyers and sellers of required corrections or whether an appeal is necessary. While digital registration has improved transparency around land boundaries, it has also made discrepancies harder to overlook, said Gujarat High Court lawyer Darshil Rohit. He added that it has now become standard practice for revenue or survey departments to provide clarifications before cases move forward. On the market side, Darshil Desai, marketing head at Shilp Real Estate Group, described a mismatch between pricing and sentiment. Rising construction costs have pushed property prices higher, while buyers continue to delay bookings. Desai noted that around 35 per cent of recent transactions are driven by non-resident Indians, mainly in areas such as SG Highway and the Shela-Bopal belt. Proximity to GIFT City and stronger rental yields in these locations allow prices to command premiums of up to 18 per cent over properties elsewhere in Ahmedabad.

## Booth officers clarify Kozhikode voter list discrepancies

**Ameya Krishnakumar**

Following the allegation of Communist Party of India Marxist (CPI(M)) Kozhikode district secretary M Mehaboob on the voter list discrepancies in Kozhikode after the Election Commission of India (ECI) published the draft list, booth level officers (BLO's) say that there has been no mistake from their side and the exclusion must have happened while the voters were choosing a different booth or the incomplete submission of relevant certificates from their side. Indira, a BLO officer from Kozhikode, says that "To manage crowds and improve administrative efficiency, authorities mandated that each booth be limited to approximately 1,000 voters, leading to the creation of new polling stations and



Representational Image

The Hindu

the redistribution of existing lists. This rapid restructuring caused technical errors where families were split across different booths, and some eligible voters were inadvertently left off the draft list." The hasty implementation of the SIR is due to pressure from the authorities ahead of the legislative assembly election, he added. "According to the voters'

list in hand, we were forced to choose a nearby school as a polling station, which is at least 2 km away for all of the voters in that constituency. Without proper geographical analysis, the higher authorities have instructed us to separate the voters under one booth, and these changes were made to around 13 constituencies," he further added. During the

recent local body election, a similar displacement issue arose in one of the BJP-held constituencies, where most voters were split, resulting in increased frustration. BJP state president and advocate Prakash Babu has decided to pursue legal action by filing a petition regarding these discrepancies in court and is now awaiting the final appeal. According to Babu,

explanations have not been provided regarding the alleged removal of names from electoral rolls across nineteen specific wards. The representative explains that they are currently gathering evidence and drafting documents with a lawyer to ensure a comprehensive filing. The official lawsuit is expected to be submitted to the court along with the procedural steps involved in addressing local electoral discrepancies through the judicial system, the following week," he added. While political parties have expressed concerns over these exclusions, booth officers are expected to ensure that a final, corrected electoral roll is completed by late January, once the final verification of residential records is complete.

## Urban expansion fuels Bannerghatta wildlife conflict

**Niranjana Jayan**

The human-wildlife dispute around Bannerghatta National Park is the result of uncurbed urban expansion into a longstanding wildlife corridor, not a change in animal behaviour, environmentalist Sandeep Anirudhan said, warning that diminishing forest buffers are compelling unavoidable contact at the city's edge. The issue has come under focus amid a renewed audit of the park's eco-sensitive zone (ESZ), as members of the Central Empowered Committee conducted an on-the-ground inspection of the ESZ boundary on



Tiger in Bannerghatta National Park

Disha Banthia

Friday ahead of a hearing scheduled for 7 January by the Supreme Court of India. The inspection focused on evaluating the ecological effect of curtailing the ESZ and minimising conflict in terrains bordering compact human settlements. The visit follows a petition filed in May 2025 by

K. Bellappa challenging a notification from March 2020 that minimised the ESZ around Bannerghatta. The petitioners have warned that undermining the park's safeguards could trigger long-term ecological damage. Anirudhan said Bengaluru's growth has exceeded limits beyond the Outer Ring

Road into former zones that were once forest and farmland. He highlighted unlawful layouts, quarrying and frequent attempts to formalise violations through policy changes. "Wildlife has remained where it always was, living in balance", he said. It is humans who keep broadening boundlessly into these spaces, and that is what creates conflicts. He added that without ecologists included in planning and governance, mandates on development and conservation would be at risk, which is being shaped more by economic interests than ecological limits.

## India faces escalating antibiotic resistance

**Anaina Kasim**

Widespread antibiotic resistance, driven by the lack of information when people are prescribed the drugs and easy access to over the counter (OTC) drugs, is accelerating drug resistance, stated Dr Noel Abraham from Metropolitan Hospital, Thrissur. The concern follows a recent research article published in The Lancet Clinical Medicine released during the World Health Organization's World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week. The study flags India facing a severe antimicrobial resistance (AMR) burden, with around 80 per cent of patients carrying multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs), the highest rate reported globally. These pathogens do not respond to many commonly used antibiotics, making infections harder and more expensive to treat and underscoring a deepening public health crisis. Dr Abraham explained that resistance often stems from patients discontinuing medication once their illness subsides, allowing surviving bacteria to adapt, which requires stronger future dosages. He warns that while not genetic, AMR colonises newborns during gestation, leading to high fatality rates. To stop this cycle, he urges mass education on strictly following prescribed routines.

## Avatar: Fire and Ash delivers scale, not depth

**Akhil Raj**

Avatar: Fire and Ash looks stunning as ever. Pandora is still beautiful, the action is huge, and the technical craft behind every frame is evident. The opening minutes pull you in quickly and briefly hint at something special. That feeling fades sooner than expected. The story slips into a familiar pattern of attack, capture, and escape, repeating the same ideas until the tension wears thin. Over time, the plot becomes easy to read,



Avatar 3: Fire and Ash film poster

3dv.com

and many turns are clear long before they arrive. What really feels missing is a sense of discovery. The Way of Water expanded the world with new places, creatures, and cultures that felt alive. However, even though the Fire clan looks striking, the film never takes

time to explore who they are. They end up feeling like a visual background rather than a real part of the story. On an emotional level, the film feels distant. Big moments appear, but they rarely land. By the end, it feels more like an add-on than a strong chapter.

## Kamaraj Road reopening eases traffic

**Harivalagan E**

After six years of one-hour journeys and long Infantry Road detours, travel time has been saved following the reopening of Kamaraj Road, says Nanda Kumar, an IT employee, bringing relief for daily commuters. For the first time since June 2019, the barricades have finally come down on Kamaraj Road. The vital 214-metre stretch, which connects Cubbon Road to the Cauvery Emporium Junction on MG Road, was officially reopened to two-way traffic on

January 2, 2026. The reopening marks the end of a six-year closure due to the construction of the underground MG Road Metro Station (Pink Line). Nanda Kumar claims that the newly constructed road is neat and wider and feels better now during peak traffic hours even though some congestion remains. He mentions his concerns on the road feeling hotter even if the rider moves fast due to the lack of trees that were cut down in the process of construction.