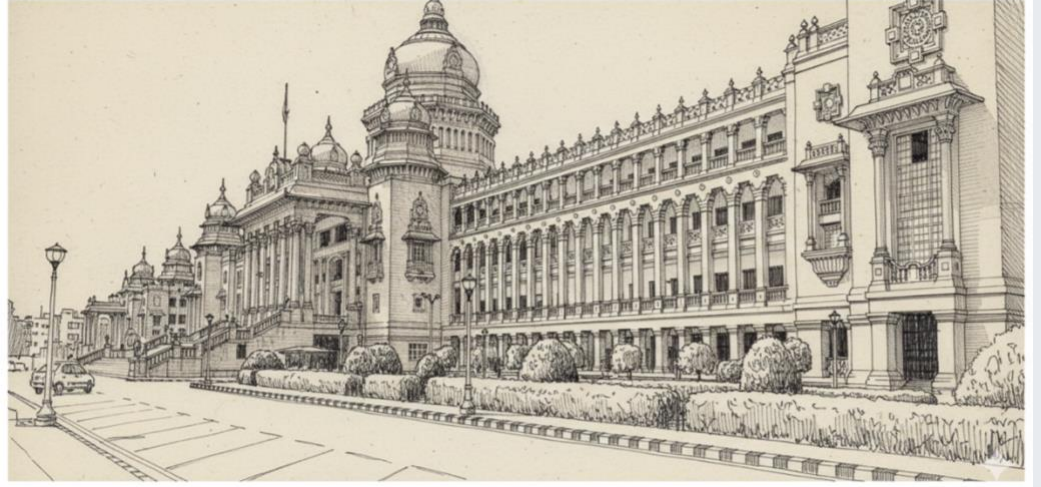




**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**  
Karnataka Regional Branch, Bengaluru

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**NEWSLETTER**

March 2026  
Vol. 7 / Issue 68



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## WHAT'S NEW

### RESPECTFUL HOMAGE

#### FROM PETROMAX BUNGALOWS TO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS

Remembering Shri S.  
Ramanathan's Eventful  
Journey in the Civil Service -  
And Beyond

### LEAD FEATURE

KARNATAKA'S BIO-  
ECONOMY FROM  
GROWTH ENGINE TO  
STRATEGIC GROWTH  
PILLAR



## From the Chief Editor

In this issue, we mark the passing of an era in the history of IIPA-Karnataka Regional Branch with our **Chairman-Emeritus, Shri S. Ramanathan, IAS (Retd.)**, leaving us all on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at the ripe old age of 98. He was an institution in himself. In the Civil Service, he excelled himself in all his postings. Post-retirement, he immersed himself in a host of activities in civil society. As Chairman of the Karnataka Regional Branch of the IIPA from 1990 to 2022, he played a stellar role in building up this institution to its present status. And as its Chairman Emeritus, he continued to offer us his valuable guidance with his presence and inputs at meetings and events. His absence will be sorely missed. **Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar** reflects on his eventful and inspiring journey.

Our **Lead Feature** is on **Karnataka's Bio-Economy**. It is based on the *Karnataka BioEconomy Report 2025* which articulates a transformation narrative—from an early-stage biotech cluster to a full-cycle, innovation-led economic pillar that is integral to the state's future growth.

In our section on **Audit Matters**, **Shri T. Sethumadhavan** presents the highlights of the Report of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India (CAG) on the implementation of the **Yettinahole Integrated Drinking Water Project** in Karnataka.

We are proud to report on the accolades received by two of our senior Civil Servants, **Major P. Manivannan, IAS** and **Dr. Ram Prasath Manohar, IAS**, who figure in the list of **Top 25 Changemakers of 2025**, as per *Bureaucrats of India, 2025*.

In our section on **Branch News**, we carry brief reports and photographs of the following programmes conducted by us over the last month:

- (1) "AI Procurement & Safe Use in Government: A Practical Framework for Administrative Officers"
- (2) Training Programme for Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Raj Fellows of the Kalyana Karnataka Region
- (3) Training Programme for KAS Officers on 'Administrative Reform'.

In our section on **Branch Members' Writings in the Popular Media**, we provide links to thought-

## Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.)

Former Chief Secretary,  
Government of Karnataka.  
Former Chairman, Karnataka  
Administrative Reforms  
Commission-2.

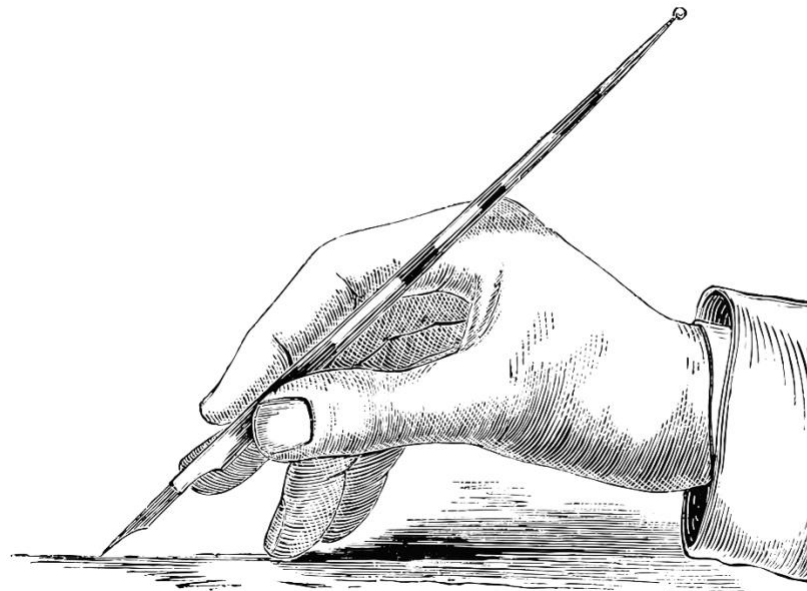
Chairperson, Karnataka Regional Branch  
Indian Institute of Public Administration



provoking articles written by Dr. Gurucharan Gollerkeri, Dr. Annapoorna Ravichander, and Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar.

And in our **Food for Thought** column, we celebrate the power and promise of women on the occasion of International Women's Day, 2026.

**I add our usual disclaimer here that the views expressed by the contributors in this issue of the Virtual Newsletter are personal and do not represent the views or position of the Editorial Board or the Executive Committee of the Branch. Do write in, with your responses, views and ideas for improvement of the Newsletter.**





## FROM PETROMAX BUNGALOWS TO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS

*Remembering Shri S. Ramanathan's Eventful Journey in the Civil Service - And Beyond (1928-2026)*

**D Jeevan Kumar**

The passing of **Shri S. Ramanathan, IAS (Retd.)**, at the age of 98 marks the end of an era in Indian public administration. He belonged to that early generation of civil servants who entered service soon after Independence and helped translate the aspirations of a newly independent nation into functioning institutions. His career traces a remarkable arc—from the austere district administration of the 1950s to the creation of modern infrastructure that connected India to the world.

Born in Lahore in 1928, Shri Ramanathan grew up in a family shaped by public service. His father's government career involved frequent transfers, exposing him early to India's diversity. After schooling in Delhi and Shimla, he pursued higher education in economics and belonged to the first cohort of the Delhi School of Economics in 1949. This academic grounding, combined with a brief stint in teaching, prepared him for a career that would eventually influence several sectors of India's development.

When Shri Ramanathan joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1952, the country's administrative machinery was still evolving. Infrastructure was sparse, resources were limited, and the responsibilities placed on young officers were immense. His early postings demanded rigorous field engagement. Administration then meant travelling long distances on horseback or by bullock cart to villages that lacked roads or electricity. Officers camped in inspection bungalows lit by petromax lamps, with minimal facilities.

Yet it was precisely these demanding tours that gave officers like Shri Ramanathan a deep understanding of rural India. One episode from his district career illustrates the spirit of administration in those years. A primary health centre required land in a village divided by rivalry between two families who jointly owned the only suitable plot. Shri Ramanathan spent an entire day mediating between them under a banyan tree, refusing refreshments until an agreement was

## RESPECTFUL HOMAGE



**Shri. S. RAMANATHAN**

I.A.S. (Retd.)

16 January 1928 – 7 March 2026

Chairman Emeritus

Indian Institute of Public Administration  
Karnataka Regional Branch, Bengaluru

*A man with impeccable credentials in the Civil Service as leader, motivator, path-finder and trend-setter; as a builder of institutions; as a model citizen; and, above all, as an extraordinary human being endowed with rare qualities of head and heart.*

**Deeply mourned by :**

**Chairperson, Members of the Executive Committee, Office Staff and the General Body of the Karnataka Regional Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration, which he ably stewarded for more than three decades.**

reached. By evening the estranged brothers reconciled and donated the land for the health centre—an outcome that not only enabled a public project but also healed social divisions within the village.

Shri Ramanathan's career later moved to the national stage, where he contributed to major infrastructure initiatives. After serving as a United Nations Community Development Expert in Afghanistan between 1965 and 1967, assisting the Afghan government in strengthening local governance, he joined the Government of India at the invitation of the distinguished economist and Union Minister for Shipping and Transport, Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao.

Recognizing Shri Ramanathan's administrative ability, the ministry created a special position of Director (Projects) to address several long-pending infrastructure initiatives. In this role, he helped advance projects such as the development of Mangalore and Tuticorin Harbours, the establishment of the Cochin Shipyard and completed several dredging and shipping projects. These projects were complex undertakings requiring coordination across ministries and technical agencies. Shri Ramanathan immersed himself in the technical details, working closely with specialists to ensure that projects moved forward after years of delay.

Shri Ramanathan's contributions extended further when he served as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation and later as a full-time member and Chairman of the International Airports Authority of India (IAAI). During this period, he played an important role in planning and modernizing India's airport infrastructure. Working with the Paris Airports Authority, he oversaw master plans for major international airports at Delhi, Bombay (Sahar),

Calcutta, and Madras (Meenambakkam). These initiatives laid the foundation for the expansion of India's aviation sector and strengthened the country's global connectivity.

One of Shri Ramanathan's decisions with lasting significance for Karnataka was chairing the High-Level Committee that recommended Devanahalli as the site for Bengaluru's international airport. Today, as Bengaluru continues to grow as a global technology hub, the importance of that decision is widely evident.

Throughout his long career, Shri Ramanathan earned deep respect for his uncompromising integrity. During his tenure as Secretary in the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, he once faced pressure to award a major technology contract without international competitive bidding. He firmly declined, insisting that such a decision required transparent procedures and Cabinet approval. For him, due process was not bureaucratic rigidity but the foundation of public trust.

Even after retirement, Shri Ramanathan remained engaged in civic and educational initiatives. He supported the education of underprivileged girls, contributed to cultural and intellectual institutions, and remained active in public life. One organization that will miss him the most is the Karnataka Regional

Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration, where he had an extraordinarily long innings of more than three decades as Chairman and subsequently as Chairman-Emeritus. In recognition of his distinguished service, he received several honours, including the **Karnataka Rajyotsava Award** in 1998.

Reflecting on the civil services in later years, Shri Ramanathan acknowledged that governance had become more complex in an era shaped by technology and globalization. Yet he remained convinced that the essential virtues of public service remain constant: *integrity, competence, and commitment to the public good.*

For young aspirants to the civil services, his advice was simple and timeless: *"Hard work, discipline, and integrity—it stays the same across ages."*

Shri S. Ramanathan's journey—from petromax-lit district bungalows to the planning of international airports—captures the transformation of India itself. But beyond projects and positions, his enduring legacy lies in the example he set: that public institutions are strengthened by the character, integrity, and quiet dedication of those who serve them.





## Lead Feature

### KARNATAKA BIO ECONOMY

#### From Growth Engine to Strategic Growth Pillar

(Source: **Karnataka Bio-Economy Report 2025**, prepared by the Association of Bio-Tech Led Enterprises)

#### A New Milestone—Record Growth and National Leadership

In 2025, **Karnataka’s bioeconomy**—the sum of biotechnology-driven economic activity across sectors such as Bio-Pharma, Bio-Industrial biotech, Bio-Services, Bio-Agri, and Bio-IT — **surpassed USD 39.2 billion (~₹3.25 lakh crore)**, marking a dramatic upswing from approximately USD 31 billion just two years earlier.

This figure positions Karnataka as **India’s most mature and innovation-driven bioeconomy**, contributing roughly **21% of the nation’s total bio-economic output** in 2025—a share larger than any other Indian state.

Crucially, biotechnology now accounts for **about 10.5% of Karnataka’s Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)** in 2025, more than **twice** the Indian national average for bio-economy value-to-GDP share—reaffirming the sector’s central role in the state’s economic architecture.

#### Structural Transformation: From Research Ecosystem to Full-Cycle Bioeconomy

The **Report 2025** narrates a strategic shift: Karnataka’s bio-economy has evolved from a research-heavy cluster into a **full-spectrum bio-industrial ecosystem** where discovery, scale-up, and commercialization coexist—enhancing employment, exports, and sustainable industrial capacity.

#### Sectoral Composition and Growth Drivers

- **Bio-Pharma (41.9%)** remains the anchor segment, buoyed by strong vaccine, biosimilar, and diagnostics manufacturing and exports.
- **Bio-Industrial Biotechnology (~29.2%)—especially** enzyme, fermentation, and bioenergy applications—registered one of the fastest growth rates, reflecting the state’s shift toward industrial

biomanufacturing.

- **Bio-Services (~25.8%)** and **Bio-Agri (~3%)** sectors contribute to diversified value creation, including contract research, analytics, and sustainable agriculture biotechnology.

This balanced sectoral structure underscores the bioeconomy’s **depth and resilience**, underlining its integration with healthcare, agriculture, renewable energy, and knowledge services.

#### Startups, Innovation, and Regional Diffusion

A strong entrepreneurial ecosystem underpins these gains. The state saw **~1,450 active biotechnology and life-science startups** by the end of 2025, with **218 new enterprises launched that year alone—signalling** durable innovation and investor confidence.

While Bengaluru continues as the nucleus of biotech activity (anchoring about 54% of total value), emerging **innovation corridors** in **Mysuru, Belagavi, and Dakshina Kannada** showcase a deliberate strategy of **“beyond Bengaluru” regional diffusion** of innovation and industrial capacity.

#### Investments and Financial Momentum

Between early 2024 and late 2025, the biotechnology sector in Karnataka **mobilized USD ~1.14 billion in bioeconomy-linked investments**, including nearly 40 distinct deals spanning early-stage, growth, and private-equity rounds—a testament to investor confidence in the state’s innovation infrastructure.

#### Policy, Innovation Infrastructure, and Strategic Vision

The bioeconomy’s success is supported by a continuum of strategic policies and infrastructure initiatives:

- Karnataka has maintained a **dedicated Department of Biotechnology** since 2001, now integrated within the broader **Department of Electronics, IT, BT & Science & Technology**—enabling cross-sectoral convergence of biology, engineering, and data science.
- Focused innovation infrastructure, including biotech parks, centres of excellence, and

incubation networks, has connected startups with academia and industry, facilitating translation of scientific discovery into marketable products.

- Funding platforms such as *elevate*, *Idea2PoC*, and state *fund-of-funds* mechanisms have supported over 100 biotech ventures through ideation to early commercialization.

These policy and ecosystem enablers fuel a **virtuous cycle of innovation, talent attraction, and productive investment**—positioning the state as a benchmark for other regions.

### Economic Impact and Future Outlook

Beyond headline figures, the bioeconomy’s multiplier effects are increasingly evident in **employment generation, export growth, and inclusive regional development**. The sector’s integration with digital tools, AI-driven bioinformatics, and sustainable bioenergy technologies highlights its role in Karnataka’s broader **economic diversification strategy**.

Looking ahead, the report and supporting commentary underscore the path toward further expansion, with projections suggesting continued growth toward **USD 45 billion by 2026** and sustained contributions above the 10% of GSDP threshold, contingent on policy continuity and investment in skill development, manufacturing scale-up, and cross-disciplinary innovation.

### Conclusion: From Frontier Science to Economic Backbone

The *Karnataka BioEconomy Report 2025* articulates a **transformation narrative**—from an early-stage biotech cluster to a **full-cycle, innovation-led economic pillar** that is integral to the state’s future growth. As the ecosystem matures, Karnataka not only cements its leadership within India’s bio-economy but also exemplifies a model where policy coherence, deep innovation infrastructure, entrepreneurial dynamism, and strategic investment coalesce to shape a competitive and inclusive bio-industrial economy.





## Audit Matters

### Report of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India (CAG)<sup>1</sup> on the Implementation of the Yettinahole Integrated Drinking Water Project in Karnataka



**Shri T. Sethumadhavan, IA&AS (Retd.)**  
Former Principal Accountant-General  
Madhya Pradesh

#### Introduction

CAG has submitted a Report on the Yettinahole Drinking Water Project (Project), conceived as a lifeline to provide drinking water primarily to the drought-prone districts of Chikkaballapura and Kolar through diversion of 24 TMC of floodwater during the peak monsoon seasons from the west-flowing rivers of Yettinahole and its tributaries. Initially, the project was entrusted to Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited (KNNL) but was transferred to Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limited (VJNL) in 2016. The project was to be implemented in 2 phases.

CAG's audit report brings out, *inter alia*, the following observations:

1. Detailed Project Report (DPR) originally prepared in 2012 was revised twice, once in 2014 and subsequently in 2023, with substantial design changes. The change of the scope of works and increase in schedule of rates led to a threefold increase in the project cost from Rs.8,224 crores in 2012 to Rs. 23,252 crores in 2023.
2. The DPRs did not include the date for completion of the project, which contributed to the delay in completion of the project. On CAG pointing out the omission, the date for completion has been

fixed as November 2026, but the above target does not seem feasible.

3. The location of the Balancing Reservoir was altered twice, and its capacity was drastically downsized from 10 TMC to 2 TMC, warranting increased pumping requirements during monsoons. The consequential changes in design resulted in an additional cost of Rs.621.45 crores.
4. The estimation of rainfall data and divertible water flow was inaccurate. As against the indicated flow of 32 TMC, in the DPR, the actuals during the 5-year period (2018 to 2023) came to only 20 to 24.7 TMC, which would impact the envisaged benefits out of the project.
5. The project received insufficient financial allocations, with only 25% to 50% of its annual requirements met during the years 2018 to 2023. The request of the executing agency (2024) to avail additional loans to meet the shortfall of Rs. 7,955 crores was pending with the Department, contributing to further delays in completion.

#### Project Implementation

1. The project entailed the acquisition of 10,164 acres of land spread out in different districts and villages, which called for significant planning and coordination. There were significant delays in initiating proposals for land acquisition and follow-up with cascading effects on the completion of each phase. Even after 12 years of its start, the project is nowhere near its fruition. Meanwhile, assets worth Rs.2,966 crores (Phase I) continue to remain unutilized.
2. Execution of the Gravity Canal (cost: Rs.8,609 crores), taken up in 2017 and prior to land acquisition, remains incomplete due to delays in land acquisition and farmers' protest (March 2024).
3. Delay in land availability affected the start of the construction of the Balancing Reservoir, awarded in 2018 (March 2024). As a result of 3-5 years of delays in the award of contracts, the work for the Gravity and Feeder Canals remained to be completed as of December 2023.
4. The work for Phase II was executed in a disjointed manner due to delays in land acquisition, which resulted in the creation of infrastructure for the project in patches.

<sup>1</sup> Government of Karnataka Report No.10 of the Year 2025 (Performance Audit: Commercial).

## Construction Management

1. Deficiencies and variations in the tendering process included *non-adoption of standard tender documents, selection of contractors without assessing their background and experience, grant of inadequate bidding time for high-value contracts, etc.*
2. In as many as 80% of the contracts awarded, the implementing agency did not assess the financial and bid capacity and work experience of the contractors.
3. About 70% of the contracts (worth Rs. 14,805 crores) were awarded to seven contractors, with one of them getting work for Rs. 5,217 crores.
4. There were several cases of avoidable payments for works that were part of the turnkey contract (and not eligible for separate payment), non-recovery for excess provision for materials, premature release of retention amounts and performance guarantees, non-entitled advance payments for material supplies, omission to recover the rightful amounts accrued due to reduction in GST, etc.
5. Most works awarded on short-term contracts remained incomplete even as of December 2023.
6. Hill Area weightage was erroneously extended for the supply of materials, resulting in overpayment of Rs.48 crores.
7. Non-recovery of Rs.181 crores for excess provisions of length of mild steel pipes.
8. Payment of an additional Rs.12 crores for works that were part of turnkey contracts.
9. Incorrect application of the price adjustment clause leading to excess payment of Rs.28 crores.
10. Excess expenditure of Rs.21 crores due to the inclusion of lining thickness in rate conversion of MS pipes.
11. Retention money of Rs. 35 crores and bank guarantees of Rs. 92.3 crores released prematurely.
12. Non-recovery of benefits of Rs.77 crores from contractors due to the implementation of GST.



## Project Monitoring

1. The project suffered in the absence of proper monitoring systems at the government level and within VJNL as well as the omission of regular monthly and multi-level reviews. This led to work being initiated in a non-sequential manner, delays in project implementation, and cost escalation.
2. Third-party inspections of works (2005) were initiated lately in 2018, by which time 65% of the work was already completed with failure to carry out essential quality tests on equipment and pipes. The maintenance of necessary work records was also deficient.

## Recommendations

The CAG's report contains several recommendations for expediting the Project as follows:

1. The implementing agency (VJNL) should work in a mission mode to adhere to the target of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2026 and should prioritize the construction of the Balancing Reservoirs as well as Phase II works.
2. The agency should make use of reliable data for (re)computation of the water flow and yield availability.
3. Government should expedite decisions regarding the provision and availability of funds for timely completion of the project.
4. VJNL should strictly follow the legal provisions in awarding contracts and recover all excess payments made to contractors expeditiously.
5. An effective monitoring system should be installed at the government level and in VJNL with provisions for third-party inspections and regular review meetings.



# Accolades for Karnataka Civil Servants

Two Civil Servants from Karnataka figure among top 25 Changemakers of India in 2025 Introduction



Bureaucracy remains the backbone of governance, translating policies into action and ensuring that development reaches every citizen. Bureaucrats, through their dedication and administrative leadership, play a vital role in strengthening institutions, improving service delivery, and driving meaningful change on the ground.

Bureaucrats India proudly presents the 25 illustrious bureaucrats of 2025 - officers who have demonstrated exceptional leadership, innovation, and commitment to public service. The selection was curated by the editorial team comprising Pragya Lal, Vigya Dwivedi, Pooja Rai, Naina Jha, Aparna Vats, and Vridhi Bhatia based on performance, integrity, policy impact, and dedication to innovation.

From strengthening inclusive governance to leveraging technology for better public delivery, each officer on this list has made a lasting difference to citizens' lives. Their work reflects professionalism, resilience, and a shared commitment to India's progress.

## 1. Major Manivannan Ponniah, IAS, Commissioner, Bangalore Development Authority

Major Manivannan Ponniah, a 1998-batch officer, is known for transforming urban governance, including the Bangalore Development Authority. He continues to work towards sustainable, citizen-centric urban development in Karnataka.

Over the past two decades, he has worked to empower citizens to actively engage with government institutions, promoting participative governance and collaborative problem-solving. Having managed large urban administrations as Commissioner and led utility organizations as CEO, he has effectively leveraged social media to strengthen citizen participation and public trust. During his tenure at BESCO, he focused on improving Bengaluru's power distribution and infrastructure.

## 2. Dr. Ram Prasath Manohar, IAS, Chairman, BWSSB

As Chairman of the Bangalore Water Supply & Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Dr. Ram Prasath Manohar leads transformative initiatives aimed at ensuring equitable, reliable, and future-ready water access for millions of citizens. His work focuses on modernizing water infrastructure, integrating smart technologies into public service delivery, and strengthening citizen engagement for transparent governance.

An officer of the 2010 batch, Dr. Manohar has played a key role in policy formulation, field administration, and cross-sector coordination, driving reforms that balance innovation with accountability. Committed to environmental stewardship and resilient urban planning, Dr. Manohar continues to advance sustainable resource management and improve quality of life through effective public service leadership.



## Branch Activities

### **Branch Activity 1 - AI Procurement & Safe Use in Government: A Practical Framework for Administrative Officers**

A day-long training program on the subject “*AI Procurement & Safe Use in Government: A Practical Framework for Administrative Officers*” was conducted by the Karnataka Regional Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA-KRB) on 6 February 2026 at the IAS Officers’ Association Building, Bengaluru. The programme was attended by around 50 government officials from various departments of the Government of Karnataka, including Project Directors, Technical Heads, and Under-Secretaries.



The inaugural session began with a welcome address by **Shri Bhoobalan**, IAS, CEO, Centre for e-Governance (CeG), Govt of Karnataka (GoK), who highlighted the growing relevance of Artificial Intelligence in government operations and emphasized the need for capacity building among officers to ensure informed, responsible, and value-driven adoption of AI across departments.

This was followed by the Inaugural Address by **Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd)**, Chairman, IIPA-KRB, who spoke on the importance of administrative preparedness in the era of AI.

The Keynote Address was delivered by **Shri Pankaj Kumar Pandey, IAS**, Principal Secretary, DPAR (e-Governance), GoK. He emphasized the need for a cautious and structured approach to AI adoption in government, focusing on transparency, accountability, data protection, and citizen trust. He also highlighted that informed procurement decisions and safe usage frameworks are critical to ensuring that AI solutions genuinely deliver public value rather than becoming technology-driven procurements.

The introductory session on the Karnataka AI Cell and its initiatives was presented by **Dr. Shreevyasa**, Project Director, Karnataka AI Cell, CeG, who briefed participants on the state’s AI roadmap, ongoing initiatives, and the support mechanisms available to departments for responsible AI adoption.

The training programme was conducted by **Dr. Arvind Rao**, Member, Voxel Analytics LLP who is also Associate Professor, Dept. of Biostatistics and Computational Medicine, University of Michigan, USA.

The technical sessions led by Dr. Arvind Rao, covered the practical capabilities and limitations of Generative AI in government, appropriate and inappropriate use cases, and common risks associated with over-reliance on AI-generated outputs. A dedicated session on why AI procurement differs from conventional procurement was followed by guidance on certain mandatory clauses that should be included in any procurement bid document and the safeguards to be ensured while evaluating vendor pitches and technical claims by the bidders.

A structured group activity, facilitated by **Dr. Shreevyasa**, encouraged participants to suggest real-world departmental AI use scenarios and present their perspectives. The Build vs. Buy vs. Partner decision framework session by Dr. Arvind Rao provided a clear flowchart to guide implementation choices, while the data policy awareness session focused on personal data handling, privacy, and compliance in AI-enabled systems.

The programme concluded with an interactive Q&A session. Overall, the training enhanced participants’ ability to make informed AI procurement decisions, assess vendor claims critically, and ensure the safe and responsible use of AI in governance, in line with the Government of Karnataka’s digital transformation priorities.

## **Branch Activity 2 - Report on the Training Programme for Rajiv Gandhi Panchayati Raj Fellows**

A two-day training programme for Rajiv Gandhi Panchayati Raj Fellows (RGPRF) was held on 20–21 February 2026 at the Kalaburagi Zilla Panchayat Meeting Hall. The programme was organized by the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), Karnataka Regional Branch, Bengaluru, in collaboration with the IIPA Kalaburagi Local Branch. It brought together 50 Fellows (one from each taluk of the Kalyana Karnataka region) and seven Panchayat Development Officers representing the districts of Ballari, Bidar, Kalaburagi, Koppal, Raichur, Vijayanagara, and Yadgir. The objective was to strengthen the Fellows' technical knowledge, administrative capacity, and domain expertise related to Panchayati Raj institutions.



*Photo of participants*

The inaugural session was presided over by **Shri T. M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS** (Retd.), Chairperson of IIPA Karnataka Regional Branch, while **Smt. Uma Mahadevan, IAS**, Additional Chief Secretary and Development Commissioner, addressed the participants online as Chief Guest. **Shri Bhanwar Singh Meena, IAS**, CEO of Kalaburagi Zilla Panchayat, and **Dr. B. S. Gulashetti**, Secretary of the IIPA Kalaburagi Local Branch, were also present. Speakers highlighted the important role played by Fellows in strengthening Gram Panchayats and encouraged them to apply administrative knowledge effectively in the field.

The training included a series of thematic sessions conducted by senior administrators and domain experts. **Day 1** focused on operational and governance issues, including the use of **MGNREGA software**, planning and transparency mechanisms, and the role of Gram Panchayats in **rural water supply**

**management**. Sessions also addressed **conflict resolution and consensus building at the village level**, along with practical experiences from Gram Panchayat Adhyakshas on making their Gram Panchayat **Open Defecation Free and on Solid Waste Management**. One session highlighted the importance of coordination between **Gram Panchayats, schools, Anganwadis, and School Development and Monitoring Committees** to improve child development and education outcomes.

**Day 2** concentrated on community participation, digital governance, and inclusive planning. Discussions covered **linkages between Gram Panchayats and Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** and their role in women's empowerment and livelihood promotion. Technical sessions explained the functioning of **Panchatantra 2.0 and e-Swathu software** for property record digitization and improved service delivery, as well as the use of E

Governance platforms such as **Sakala, Seva Sindhu, and Social Security Pension systems** to ensure timely public service delivery. Another technical session explained the **Rajiv Gandhi Rural Housing Scheme software**, focusing on beneficiary selection, data management, and project monitoring. An expert explained the need for **gender, child, and persons with disabilities budgeting and urged participants to guide GPs to build it into their budgets**. Participants also engaged in a **group activity** and made presentations, encouraging collaborative learning and problem-solving.

The programme concluded with a **valedictory session** attended by **Shri Nalin Atul, IAS**, Secretary of the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB), who emphasized improving operational efficiency and effective grassroots governance. Certificates were distributed to the Fellows, and speakers encouraged them to apply the knowledge gained in their fieldwork.

Overall, the training programme enhanced participants' understanding of **project implementation, community engagement, digital governance tools, and conflict management**, thereby strengthening their capacity to support **effective and accountable Panchayati Raj administration**.



Press Reports of the programme above

**ಜನನಿಯ ಸಾರಥಿ**  
**ವಾರ್ತಾ ಭಾರತಿ**

**ರಾಜೀವ್ ಗಾಂಧಿ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಸಹದ್ಯೋಗಿಗಳ ತರಬೇತಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿ**



ಕಲಬುರಗಿ, ಫೆ.25: ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರದೇಶದ ರಾಜೀವ್ ಗಾಂಧಿ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಸಹದ್ಯೋಗಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಿದ್ದ ಎರಡು ದಿನಗಳ ತರಬೇತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ಜಿಪಂ ಹೊಸ ಸಭಾಂಗಣದಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಯಿತು.

ಈ ತರಬೇತಿಯು ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ನಿವೃತ್ತ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಯಾಗಿ ದ್ವಿ.ಟಿ.ಎಂ. ವಿಜಯ ಭಾಸ್ಕರ್ ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶನ ಹಾಗೂ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಡಳಿತ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ-ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಡಳಿತ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಶಾಖೆ ಸಹಯೋಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು.

ಗ್ರಾಪಂಆಡಳಿತ, ನೀರು ಸರಬರಾಜು, ಘನ ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ, ಉಪ ಸಮಿತಿಗಳು, ಮಕ್ಕಳ, ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಅಂಗವಿಕಲ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಉದ್ದೇಶದ ಆಯವ್ಯಯ ಮತ್ತು ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ತಂತ್ರಾಂಶಗಳ ಕುರಿತು ತಜ್ಞರು ಉಪನ್ಯಾಸ ನೀಡಿದರು. ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಉಮಾಮಾದೇವನ್, ಎನ್‌ಜಿಎಂ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕಿ ಪ್ರಿಯಾಂಕ ಮೇರಿ ಫ್ರಾನ್ಸಿಸ್ ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ ಜಿಪಂ ಸಿಇಒ ರಾಹುಲ ಶಿಂಧೆ, ಕಾರವಾರ ಜಿಪಂ ಸಿಇಒ ಡಿ.ಡಿ.ಲೀಷ ಶಶಿ ವಿಡಿಯೋ ಸಂವಾದ ಮೂಲಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಜಿಪಂ ಸಿಇಒ ಭಂವರ್ ಸಿಂಗ್ ಮೀನಾ ಮತ್ತವರು ಶಿಬಿರಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಉಪನ್ಯಾಸ ನೀಡಿದರು.

ತರಬೇತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ಸಮಾರೋಪ ಸಮಾರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಆರ್ ಡಿಬಿ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ನಳನ್ ಅತುಲ ಮಾತನಾಡಿದರು.

Kalaburagi Edition  
 Feb 26, 2026 Page No. 4  
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**ಸಂಜೆವಣಿ**  
 Sanjevani / 2026-02-22, 4, Kalaburgi  
**ಆರ್‌ಜಿ‌ಸಿಆರ್ ಫೆಲೋ ತರಬೇತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ಯಶಸ್ವಿ**



ಕಲಬುರಗಿ, ಫೆ. 22: ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರದೇಶದ ರಾಜೀವ್ ಗಾಂಧಿ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಫೆಲೋ (ಆರ್‌ಜಿ‌ಸಿಆರ್) ಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಿದ್ದ ಎರಡು ದಿನಗಳ ತರಬೇತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವು ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ಹೊಸ ಸಭಾಂಗಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿ ನಡೆಯಿತು.

ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವು ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಮಾಜಿ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಟಿ.ಎಂ. ವಿಜಯ ಭಾಸ್ಕರ್ ಅವರ ಮಾರ್ಗದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಡಳಿತ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ (ಐಪಿಎಐ) - ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಆಡಳಿತ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಶಾಖೆ ಸಹಯೋಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಗ್ರಾಪಂ ಪಂಚಾಯತಿ ಆಡಳಿತ, ನೀರು ಸರಬರಾಜು, ಘನ ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ, ಉಪ ಸಮಿತಿಗಳು, ಮಕ್ಕಳ, ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಅಂಗವಿಕಲ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಉದ್ದೇಶದ ಆಯವ್ಯಯ ಮತ್ತು ಪಂಚಾಯತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ತಂತ್ರಾಂಶಗಳ ಒಳಗೊಂಡ ವಿಷಯಗಳ ಕುರಿತು ತಜ್ಞರು ಉಪನ್ಯಾಸ ನೀಡಿದರು. ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವು ಫೆಲೋಗಳ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯವರ್ಧನೆಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿ ಶ್ವೇತ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಚರಣೆಗೆ ದಾರಿಯಾಯಿತು.

ಈ ತರಬೇತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಮಾಮಾದೇವನ್ (ಎಸಿಎಸ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು), ಪ್ರಿಯಾಂಕ ಮೇರಿ ಫ್ರಾನ್ಸಿಸ್ (ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಎನ್‌ಜಿಎಂ), ರಾಹುಲ್ ಶಿಂಧೆ (ಸಿಇಒ ಜಿಪಂ ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ), ಡಾ.ಡಿ.ಲೀಷ ಶಶಿ (ಸಿಇಒ ಜಿಪಂ ಕಾರವಾರ) ಅವರು ವಿಡಿಯೋ ಸಂವಾದದ ಮೂಲಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಜಿಪಂ ಸಿಇಒ ಭಂವರ್ ಸಿಂಗ್ ಮತ್ತು ವಿವಿಧ ತಜ್ಞರುಗಳು ಶಿಬಿರಾರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಉಪನ್ಯಾಸ ನೀಡಿದರು. ತರಬೇತಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದ ಸಮಾರೋಪ ಸಮಾರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಆರ್ ಡಿಬಿ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ನಳನ್ ಅತುಲ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿ ಮಾತನಾಡಿದರು.

### **Branch Activity 3 - Report on a one-day Training Programme on “Administrative Reform” for Karnataka Administrative Service officers**

The Karnataka Regional Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration, Bengaluru held a one day Training programme for senior level Karnataka Administrative Service (KAS) Officers of Bangalore Division at the IAS Officers Association Building, Bengaluru on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026 on “*Administrative Reform*”.

In the inaugural session, **Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar**, Chairperson, IIPA-KRB made an introductory speech in which he referred to the previous training programmes on different subjects organized by IIPA-KRB for KAS officers in recent years. The subjects chosen for the present training program pertained to subjects that were important and interesting.



The training program was inaugurated by **Shri Ramandeep Chowdhary, IAS**, Secretary DPAR(AR), GoK. Welcoming the participants, he said that the State Training Policy 2012 is being revisited. Now there are ample online training programmes available on iGOT Government portal on many subjects. He exhorted the officers to assimilate the latest technologies in administration and policy making.

**Shri Shivayogi Kalasad, IAS** (Retd.) spoke on ‘**Expediting Land Acquisition Process**’. He covered the legal aspects of the land acquisition process, gave practical examples of delays and offered valuable suggestions to expedite the processes.

**Shri Sreekanta Murthy, KAS** (Retd) spoke on “**Expediting Departmental Inquiries**”. He suggested that most departmental inquiries could be conducted

under Rule 12 of CCA Rules considering the gravity of offences and this will expedite completion of cases.

The subject of **Data Analytics** plus **Data-Driven Decision-Making** was jointly addressed by **Dr. V. Rema**, Asso. Professor and **Dr. V. Sudarshana**, Asso. Professor, both from the Dept. of Data Sciences & Analytics, Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Bengaluru. The speakers demonstrated with examples of Governmental portals and databases to show how the data could be analyzed and presented for better understanding and decision-making.

**Smt. Prema Pawar**, Head of the Legal Cell & Ex-officio Deputy Secretary, DPAR spoke on **Monitoring of Court Cases**.

The final sessions on **Artificial Intelligence Safeguards** and **Procurement and Applications in Governance** were taken by **Dr. Arvind Rao**, Member Voxel Analytics and Professor at the University of Michigan, USA and **Dr. H.M. Shree Vyas**, Project Director, AI Cell, DPAR(E-Governance). Both dwelt on AI as an emerging tool to aid governance and the necessity of approaching it with a human face.



## Branch Members' Writings in the Media



### **Shri G. Gurucharan, IAS (Retd.)**

Director, School of Social Sciences  
MS Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences  
Bengaluru

### **The Return of the Goon Squad**

In *Deccan Herald* dt. 27 February 2026  
<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/the-return-of-the-goon-squad-3913250>

### **The long descent of India's parliamentary dignity**

In *Deccan Herald* dt. 15 February 2026  
<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/the-long-descent-of-indias-parliamentary-dignity-3899155>

### **Navigating growth in a fragmented world In**

*Deccan Herald* dt. 4 February 2026  
<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/navigating-growth-in-a-fragmented-world-3885384>



### **Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar**

Hon. Professor, Mahatma Gandhi Rural Development & Panchayat Raj University, Gadag, Karnataka

### **A Requiem for Nali-Kali**

In *Deccan Herald* dt. 19 February 2026  
<https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/a-requiem-for-nali-kali-3903618>



### **Dr. Annapoorna Ravichander**

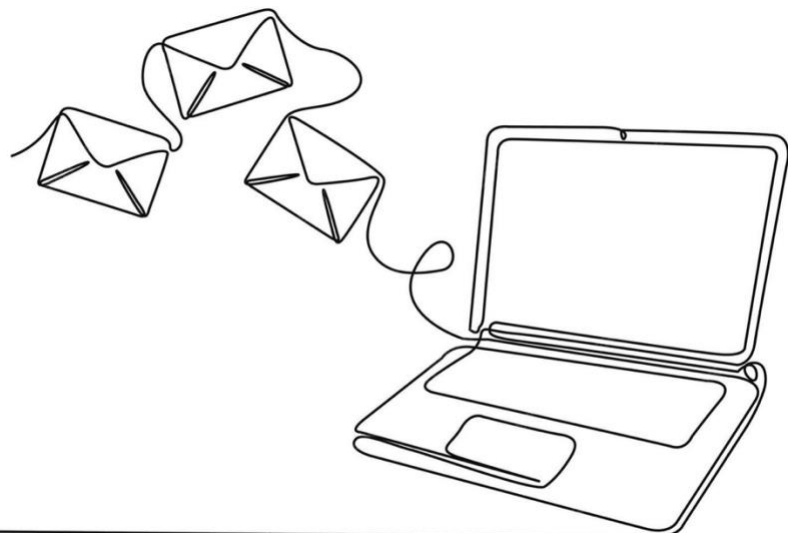
Freelance Consultant

### **Why some Policies work and others don't: The Case for Monitoring and Evaluation In Meghalaya Monitor**, dt. 22 February 2026

<https://meghalayamonitor.com/>

### **Malik Ayaz: A Great Administrator In Meghalaya Monitor** dt. 15 February 2026

<https://meghalayamonitor.com/>





## Panchayats in Kolar get national attention for climate responsiveness

The Hindu Bureau  
BENGALURU

A grassroots effort to address deepening climate stress in Karnataka's Kolar district received national attention this week at Mumbai Climate Week 2026, as local leaders shared how coordinated panchayat action had helped villages in responding to falling groundwater levels, ecological degradation and agricultural distress.

Participating in a session titled 'Panchayats Leading India's Climate Change,' Suryanarayana Rao, a gram panchayat member from Huladenahalli (Tekal Hobli) of Malur taluk, in Kolar district, joined representatives from Maharashtra, Kerala, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha to showcase how village institutions are shaping locally grounded climate solutions.

The panel provided an overview of the Conference of Panchayats initiative led by Asar Social Impact Advisors and Policy & Development Advisory Group. It shed light on the importance of strengthening local leadership in climate action, according to a release from these two organisations.

Mr. Rao described how climate pressures in Kolar became impossible to ignore as groundwater levels plunged dramatically over the last two decades. "Kolar depends entirely on rainfall, and our wells have been sinking deeper every year. Farmers are drilling up to 2,000 ft. for water. Soil health has deteriorated, biodiversity has declined, and repeated droughts have made agriculture increasingly uncertain," he said.

The gathering adopted 13 major resolutions focused on increasing forest cover, conserving water sources, promoting organic farming to restore soil health, protecting biodiversity and strengthening agriculture-based livelihoods.

## Gram panchayats achieve 71.39% tax collection; Karnataka tops country in revenue mobilisation

The Hindu Bureau  
BENGALURU

Gram panchayats in Karnataka have achieved 71.39% tax collection for the financial year 2025-26 as of February 18 and with this, the State has recorded the highest tax collection in the country in 2024-25, according to the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department.

In a statement, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj and IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge said the steady rise in demand and recovery over the past five years had placed Karnataka at the top in terms of tax mobilisation by gram panchayats. "Over the last five years, the tax demand has doubled and the collection amount has also increased significantly. In 2024-25, Karnataka recorded the highest tax collection in the country," Mr. Kharge said.

### Tax arrears recovery

He pointed out that the balance for the current financial year would be recovered by the end of March 2026. Tax arrears from previous years stood at ₹3,352.4 crore, and recovery



Priyank Kharge

was under way after segregating dues based on property classification, he said.

Chief Executive Officers of all Zilla Panchayats have been directed to conduct focused tax collection drives. Awareness campaigns are being carried out through information, education and communication activities and social media platforms apart from print media.

### Special drives

In Vijayanagar district, a special drive across 137 gram panchayats resulted in the collection of ₹3.07 crore. In Yadgir district, a one-day property tax campaign across 122 gram panchayats collected ₹3.12 crore, the Minister said.

To facilitate payments, property owners can pay taxes through PhonePe,

Google Pay and at Bapuji Seva Kendras. Details of payable property tax are available on the Panchamitra software platform.

Mr. Kharge said gram panchayats were providing civic amenities such as drinking water, streetlights, roads and drainage even in areas where land conversion had not been formally undertaken, placing a financial burden on local bodies. The amendments to Section 199 of the Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj Act, 1993- introducing Sections 199B and 199C- were notified on April 7, 2025.

The Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj (Gram Panchayat Taxes, Rates and Fees) Rules, 2025 came into effect on October 17, 2025, with the objective of strengthening the own-source revenue of gram panchayats.

The Minister said certain technical issues following modifications to the e-Swathu 2.0 software were being addressed. Increased tax mobilisation would enhance the financial capacity of gram panchayats and support the creation of basic infrastructure in rural areas, he added.



### KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar

Bengaluru 560 009. Phone No.: 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in,

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-86/2054/2025-26

Date: 20.02.2026

### SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(Through GoK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tenders under two cover system are invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible traders / manufacturers registered in state & central government portals.



### International Women's Day: Celebrating the Power and Promise of Women

*"I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress that women have achieved."*

— B. R. Ambedkar

International Women's Day offers an opportunity not only to celebrate the achievements of women but also to reflect on the continuing journey toward equality, dignity, and empowerment. The history of India's social and political transformation is deeply intertwined with the courage and vision of remarkable women who challenged injustice and expanded the horizons of freedom.

More than a century ago, **Savitribai Phule** issued a stirring call: *"Awake, arise, educate—smash traditions, liberate!"* Her message captured the transformative power of education in liberating women from structures of exclusion. In the political sphere, **Sarojini Naidu** reminded us that the moral strength of a nation lies in the ideals of love, courage, and sacrifice embodied by its women.

Contemporary voices have continued this struggle in new ways. **Kamala Bhasin** famously observed that *"patriarchy has no gender,"* urging society to confront structural inequalities that limit human freedom. Similarly, **Ela Bhatt** demonstrated through her pioneering work with self-employed women that empowerment is both an economic and moral transformation.

These voices remind us that women's empowerment is not merely a social objective; it is central to the project of building a just, democratic, and compassionate society.

**International Women's Day is not merely a celebration—it is a reminder that the progress of democracy, development, and human dignity is inseparable from the freedom and empowerment of women.**





## Editorial Board

### Chief Editor

**Shri T. M. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS  
(Retd.)**



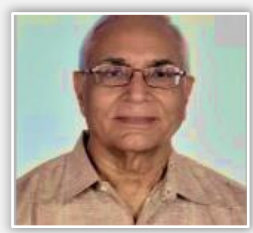
**Shri S. V. Ranganath, IAS  
(Retd.)**



**Dr. A. Ravindra, IAS (Retd.)**



**Shri T. Sethumadhavan,  
IA&AS (Retd.)**



**Dr. Annapoorna  
Ravichander**



**Dr. Priyanca Mathur**



### Editor

**Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar**



Feedback/Contributions/Ideas/Book Reviews/Report Summaries may kindly be mailed to

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