

Ask Karnataka to implement Cauvery order, T.N. urges SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Tamil Nadu government headed by Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay moved the Supreme Court on Monday for a direction to the State of Karnataka to implement a Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) decision of July 30 to ensure the release of 3,500 cusecs for 15 days from its reservoirs at Kabi-ni and Krishnaraja Sagara.

Tamil Nadu's approach to the Supreme Court for the release of 4.536 tmc ft of water (at the rate of 3,500 cusecs for 15 days) on or before August 12 has come even as Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said the water situation has become "slightly better" while urging Kannada organisations to withdraw their State-wide bandh call on August 13.

The Tamil Nadu application, finalised by senior advocates C.S. Vaidyanathan and G. Umapathy, and



Water flows into Biligundlu, the first point of entry of the Cauvery into T.N., in Krishnagiri district on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

drafted by Tushar Nair, was filed by advocate-on-record B. Karunakaran.

The State urged the top court to direct the CWMA to issue an appropriate direction to Karnataka to make good, on a pro-rata basis, the shortfall at the inter-State point of Biligundlu for the period from June 1 to August 12, and in this regard release 26.954 tmc ft of water forthwith.

It further sought an order to the CWMA to monitor the flows in the reservoirs of Karnataka every 10

days and ensure stipulated monthly/daily releases at Biligundlu.

‘Orders defied’

The Tamil Nadu government said Karnataka had continued to defy the orders of the Cauvery Tribunal for allocation of water to its neighbour except a few times when there were inevitable surpluses in the reservoirs on account of floods.

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Tamil Nadu urges SC to enforce Cauvery order

“Even if Karnataka ensured flows of 3,500 cusecs for 15 days, it would get only 4.536 tmc ft leaving a backlog of 5.379 tmc ft even as per the pro rata assessment of distress as on July 28... If the inflows into the four major reservoirs of Karnataka against 30 years average up to August 3, 2026 is considered, the pro-rata ratio works out to 46.34%.

Based on this pro-rata ratio, the flows due from June 1, 2026 to August 12, 2026 works out to 26.95 tmc ft. The direction given by the CWRC and CWMA is only 4.536 tmc ft, which is far less than the quantum of water as per distress proportion,” the Tamil Nadu application said.

The State argued that despite the CWRC/CWMA interventions, total flows realised at Billigundulu from July 29 to August 2 were only in the range of 158 cusecs to 530 cusecs.

→ “Thus, it is evident that Karnataka has willfully not complied with the directions of CWRC/CWMA. It is stated that as on August 3, Karnataka is having 23.078 tmc ft in KRS, 18.610 tmc ft in Kabini, 7.827 tmc ft in Harangi and 28.022 tmc ft in Hemavathy, totally 77.537 tmc ft of gross storage... This increase in the live storage is on account of recent heavy rainfall in the catchments upstream of Kabini and KRS. Thus, Karnataka in spite of having adequate storage has failed to comply with the directions of CWMA,” Tamil Nadu contended.

Lok Sabha passes SC judges Bill without any discussion

Lower House clears legislation to increase strength of judges in the top court from 34 to 38 amid protests by the Opposition; Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, Indian Statistical Institute Bill introduced

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Monday passed a Bill to increase the sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court without any discussion as persistent protests by Opposition members over the police action against protesting students at Jantar Mantar and the alleged *chadhawa chori* (theft of offerings) at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya continued to disrupt proceedings.

Two other Bills – the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026, and the Indian Statistical Institute Bill, 2026 – were introduced amid sloganeering in the afternoon.

Repeated adjournments

The House was adjourned repeatedly during the day as Opposition members trooped into the Well raising slogans and displaying placards, forcing Speaker Om Birla to suspend proceedings first till noon, then till 2 p.m., before adjourning the House for the day following the passage of the Supreme Court



The House saw repeated adjournments amid Opposition protests and sloganeering in the Monsoon Session. ANI

(Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026.

At the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting, sources told *The Hindu* that Congress deputy leader Gaurav Gogoi, chief whip Kodikunnil Suresh and Samajwadi Party MP Dharmendra Yadav demanded that Home Minister Amit Shah make a statement in the House on the police crackdown on protesters and that the government initiate a discussion on the alleged embezzlement of funds at the Ram Temple, during which Prime Minister Narendra Modi could intervene.

The BAC allotted three hours each for discussion on the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill and the Indian Statistical Institute Bill, and five hours for the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill. However, there was no discussion on taking up the proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA).

Judges Bill

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill replaces an ordinance promulgated earlier this year to raise the sanctioned strength of the apex

court from 34 to 38 judges, including the Chief Justice of India. A statutory resolution moved by Opposition members seeking disapproval of the ordinance was rejected by voice vote.

Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal briefly introduced the Bill, but with protests continuing, it was passed by voice vote without debate. The government has argued that increasing the court's strength is essential to address mounting pendency.

Amid the disruptions, the House also introduced the Indian Statistical Institute Bill and the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill. The Indian Statistical Institute Bill seeks to repeal the 1959 Act governing the institution and incorporate it as a statutory body corporate with the President as its Visitor and a Board of Governors as its principal executive body.

The Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, introduced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, seeks to replace the 1891 law by recognising electronic, digital, virtual and cloud-based banking records as admissible evidence in courts.

Rajya Sabha passes Bill on MSMEs amid Opposition protests

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Amid the Opposition's uproar demanding an apology from Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the police action against protesting youth and students, the Rajya Sabha on Monday passed the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026. The Upper House functioned for only 19 minutes in the morning, and after reconvening in the afternoon, was adjourned for the day soon after the Bill was passed.

Opposition members did not participate in the discussion on the Bill. Amendments moved by INDIA bloc members Ajay Maken, John Brittas, V. Sivadasan and A.A. Rahim were defeated by a voice vote.

The Bill, which replaces the 2006 Act, provides for the notification of a national digital platform for the free and voluntary registration of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). According to Union MSME Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, the legislation seeks to address the sector's liquidity concerns by mandating all Central Public Sector Enterprises

Union MSME Minister

Jitan Ram Manjhi

says the draft legislation seeks to address the sector's liquidity concerns

(CPSEs) to route invoice settlements through the Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) for the procurement of goods and services from MSMEs.

Replying to the debate, Mr. Manjhi said the Narendra Modi government had extended strong support to the MSME sector and remained committed to its growth. He appealed to the Opposition to support the legislation, saying, "The objective is to balance the interests of all concerned parties while maintaining constitutional principles and the interests of businesses."

Highlighting the sector's contribution to the economy, Mr. Manjhi said MSMEs contribute 31% to India's GDP, 36% to the country's manufacturing output and 41% to exports. He also said outstanding credit disbursed to MSMEs had risen to more than ₹38.35 lakh crore from ₹10 lakh crore in 2014-15.

New talks are 'last chance' for Iran to forge deal, avoid escalation: Trump

U.S. leader says negotiations ongoing with Tehran on Hormuz and denuclearisation; Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman reiterates no talks under way with Washington; he adds discussions on managing the waterway remain active with Oman

Reuters

DUBAI

U.S. President Donald Trump said late on Monday that newly planned talks with Tehran are the "last chance" for Iran to forge a deal and avoid an escalation of U.S. strikes on the country.

Earlier in the day, Iran said there were no talks under way with the U.S. and no plans for any meetings, contradicting Mr. Trump who had claimed talks would take place in the afternoon as justification for calling off attacks.

Over the weekend Mr. Trump repeated a pattern that has emerged through-



Mural messaging: People walk past an anti-U.S. billboard on a street in Tehran on Monday. REUTERS

out the past five months: announcing plans for "massive attacks" on Iran, only to cancel them at the last minute.

Speaking at the Oval Office, Mr. Trump said he ex-

pects negotiations that will reopen the Strait of Hormuz and create a pathway for Iran to address Washington's concerns about its nuclear programme will begin in the next day or

two. "The first phase is the opening of the straits. The second phase will be the denuclearisation," the President said. "And that will take a little while."

Mr. Trump, asked about the status of the negotiations, told reporters "they are going on right now," adding that the two sides were speaking at the request of Iran, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar among others. "This is a last chance for them to sign a good document," he said, referring to Iran.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei rejected the claim, saying no negotiations with the U.S. were taking place and no meetings were sche-

duled. Iran had no plans to host foreign delegations or send negotiators abroad in the coming days, he said.

Mr. Baghaei added that all Iranian negotiators were currently in the country, apart from Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who was on a religious pilgrimage in Iraq. The only talks under way, he said, were discussions with Oman over management of the Strait of Hormuz.

Meanwhile, oil prices fell after Mr. Trump's decision to hold back from military action, with Brent crude futures down more than 4% to around \$84 a barrel.

(With inputs from Associated Press)

LNG imports rise as US, Nigeria and Oman offset Hormuz volume loss

Sukalp Sharma

New Delhi, August 3

AGILITY IN ramping up Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) imports from regions that were not impacted by the Strait of Hormuz crisis helped India import higher volumes of the super-chilled gas in the May-July period, after seeing a dip in import volumes in March and April — the initial two months of the West Asia war, according to latest ship-tracking data.

• Imports in May-July

SUPPLIER	VOLUMES (MN TN)	CHANGE Y-O-Y (%)
U.S.	2.19	252.8
Nigeria	1.31	123.8
Oman	1.22	340.9
Angola	0.80	71.3
UAE	0.55	-34.4
Qatar	0.23	-91.3
Others	0.78	6.9
Total	7.08	15.4

SOURCE: KPLER

Even as the effective closure of the strait forced a crash in LNG imports from India's largest supplier Qatar, the ramp-up in cargoes from a diversified pool of sources, including the US, Oman, Nigeria and Angola, came to the rescue.

While some major LNG importing countries reduced imports amid sky-high prices due to the regional conflict and the disruption in maritime movements via the critical

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LNG

chokepoint, India prioritised supplies over price considerations amid demand from various sectors, which include city gas distribution (CGD), fertiliser, power and ceramics.

The country's LNG imports in May-July rose 15.4% over the year-ago period to 7.08 million tonnes, according to an analysis of ship-tracking data from commodity market analytics firm Kpler. In March-April, import volumes had declined by almost 13% from the year-ago period.

India depends on LNG imports to meet about half of its natural gas requirement, and about 60% of those imports came through the Strait of Hormuz, primarily from Qatar and also UAE. The two countries are major LNG exporters at global level too.

Vessel movement through the strait — the narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the Persian Gulf with Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea — has been disrupted due to the conflict. The strait is a major transit point for energy flows, usually accounting for a fifth of global oil and LNG shipments.

With 2.19 million tonnes of supply, the US was the top source of LNG for India in May-July, followed by Nigeria at 1.31 million tonnes, Oman at 1.22 million tonnes, and Angola at

0.80 million tonnes, data shows.

LNG imports from the US jumped 252.8% year-on-year (y-o-y), while those from Oman were higher by 340.9%. Imports from Nigeria and Angola were higher by 123.8% and 71.3%, respectively.

In 2025, the average monthly LNG imports from the US were just 0.2 million tonnes, while those from Nigeria, Oman and Angola were 0.1 million tonnes, 0.2 million tonnes, and 0.1 million tonnes, respectively.

Notably, after crashing in March, April and May, India's LNG imports from the UAE recovered in June and July despite the exports being dependent on the strait for transits. For May-July, LNG imports from the UAE were down 34.4% y-o-y at 0.55 million tonnes, while supplies from Qatar plummeted 91.3% to 0.23 million tonnes. In 2025, the average monthly LNG import volumes from Qatar stood at 1 million tonnes, followed by imports from the UAE at 0.3 million tonnes.

According to industry insiders and experts, UAE has been able to export sizable cargoes despite the Hormuz blockade using tactics like switching off the LNG tankers' transponders to avoid detection and capitalising on short windows of opportunity based on maritime security assessments.

While Qatar has also exported some cargoes using this strategy, the UAE has been far more aggressive, displaying a

higher risk-tolerance. Both suppliers also benefited from the partial recovery in transits via the strait in the three-week period after the US and Iran inked an initial peace pact on June 17. It crumbled after the first week of July.

"Indian market has shown more resilience, since the last dip in March-April, for July 2026 alone we have almost 16% higher year-on-year imports. Supplier mix remains dominated by the US and Oman, supplying about 30% and 20% of the total LNG supply in India respectively. Although the gas supply restrictions (imposed to ensure adequate supplies to critical sectors) were removed in July, we have seen stronger demand throughout May-June as well," said Sonal Ranjan, LNG and natural gas analyst at Kpler.

Given the continuing limitations in supplies via the strait, LNG prices are likely to remain higher and could push some of the more price-sensitive sectors to alternative fuels.

"We do expect the lack of LNG availability pushing the Asian spot LNG prices higher near the \$19-20 (per million British thermal unit) range through the second half of the year. So, this of course is expected to constrain the affordability of the market, with price sensitive sectors like industry and power sector expected to see demand destruction as LNG loses its competitiveness against alternative fuels," Ranjan said.

Sharif's PML-N set to form govt in PoK amid rigging allegations

Press Trust of India

Lahore, August 3

THE PAKISTAN Muslim League (Nawaz), (PML-N) swept the second phase of elections in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), winning 14 out of 18 contested seats, which will enable it to form a government in region.

The Pakistan People's Party won the remaining four seats, PoK's Election Commissioner Ghulam Mustafa Mughal said on Monday.

The second phase of the ongoing PoK polls was held on Sunday, amid violence and rigging allegations. One person was killed, and several were injured in the violence.

Mughal said polling in three

more seats, which were supposed to happen on Sunday, will now take place on Tuesday.

"Polling staff and election material could not reach the constituency because of landslides and bad weather that resulted in blocked roads," he said.

The elections for 45 contesting seats in the so-called legislative assembly in PoK are happening in three phases between July 27 and August 10.

India maintains that the entire Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh are integral and inalienable parts of it.

New Delhi also asserts that Pakistan has been in "illegal and forcible occupation" of parts of these Union Territories.

Last week, India described the ongoing elections in PoK as an attempt by Islamabad to camouflage its illegal occupation and hide its "grave" human rights violations in the region.

"The current cosmetic electoral exercise is nothing but an attempt by Pakistan to camouflage its illegal occupation and hide its grave human rights violations in the region," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in New Delhi.

In the first phase held on July 27, the establishment-backed Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) won nine out of 13 seats, while the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won the rest.

Hasina's 'homecoming' media event could strain ties with India: Dhaka

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Continued political activities by deposed Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from Indian territory "could harm" bilateral relations, the Government of Bangladesh conveyed to India on Monday through Humayun Kobir, the Foreign Affairs Adviser to Prime Minister Tarique Rahman.

Mr. Kobir met with Indian High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi in Dhaka after Ms. Hasina's August 5 'homecoming' media event was announced here by the Foreign Correspondents Club.

"Adviser Kobir mentioned that such activities



Sheikh Hasina

could harm the positive progress of bilateral relations between the two countries. The Indian High Commissioner assured that the matter would be duly considered, necessary inquiries would be made and efforts would be made in this regard," the official news agency of

Bangladesh UNB reported. The report added that Dhaka expects India to ensure that no one, including Ms. Hasina, used "Indian territory to make political statements or conduct any activities aimed at creating instability within Bangladesh".

The Indian High Commission said that the discussion between Mr. Trivedi and Mr. Kobir focused on "mutual interests" and "mutual benefits".

"High Commissioner reiterated India's intent to work positively with the Government of Bangladesh to advance the developmental aspirations of the peoples of India and Bangladesh," said the High Commission in a message.

Ms. Hasina, who has been based in New Delhi since fleeing Dhaka in 2024, has given multiple telephonic and emailed interviews over the past months expressing her desire to return to Bangladesh by the end of the year.

On Sunday, the Foreign Correspondents Club announced that the media event featuring an audio message from Ms. Hasina would be held on August 5 and that the event titled 'Sheikh Hasina's Homecoming' would also feature her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy and several top functionaries of the Awami League.

Wael Awwad, the club's president, told *The Hindu* on Monday that the event remains on track.

WELLINGTON

Nauru, the world's third smallest country, changes name to Naoero



AFP

▶ The Pacific Island country of Nauru has changed its name to the Republic of Naoero, its President said, matching the spelling and pronunciation in the national language. With 12,000 residents, Nauru is the world's third-smallest country by population size. The new name is spoken as Now-ero. AP