



Allocation of ₹ 47,224 crore for education sector reflects state's commitment to strengthening learning outcomes, expanding access to education

Kumari Shibulal, Founder, Shibulal Family Philanthropic Initiatives



The ₹17,817 crore allocation in the 2026 state budget for health signals the government's intent to expand both capacity and quality of care

Ramesh Kumar S, Chief Operating Officer, Aster Dm Healthcare



The shift toward operational efficiency through Kaveri 3.0 will help to enhance the registration process. It is a growth oriented budget for the real estate sector

Priyanka Raju, Director, Kalyani Developers



HOSTELS & SCHOOLS

187 new post-matric hostels
40 new residential schools
30 new KREIS schools
4 Ambedkar CBSE schools

New institutions and corporations:

Karnataka Adivasi Development Corporation
Scheduled Tribes Commission
Buddhist Development Corporation
₹100 Cr for Jain, Buddhist and Sikh welfare

LIVELIHOOD AND MINORITIES

Borewell subsidy raised to ₹1.50L
Fast food & mobile kitchens 75% subsidy
5K Laptops for minority students
Haj Bhavans in Hubballi, K'buragi
2,500 govt jobs to be filled
₹1,500 cr for welfare corporations

₹40CR FOR UPGRADATION OF WEATHER STATIONS

Bengaluru: The budget proposals include Rs 40 crore for upgradation and replacement of 5,150 telemetric weather stations to ensure accurate dissemination of reliable rainfall and weather data for early warning. The budget has also set aside Rs 1,162 crore for disaster relief measures.

TRANSPORT

BUDGET AND BENGALURU'S LIVABILITY GAP

The State government has declared in its Budget that its primary objective is to make Bengaluru the world's most livable city. The vision is certainly welcome and deserves appreciation. However, the actual action plan on urban mobility presented in the Budget appears far from being in sync with this goal. It raises an important question: does policy direction truly reflect what makes a city livable?

A central concern is the continued and excessive focus on road infrastructure expansion and capacity addition. The Budget outlines extensive investments in roads across the State. For instance, 1,846km of roads are proposed to be developed in 2026-27 under Stage-II of the State Highway Development Project at a cost of Rs 5,000 crore. While infrastructure investment is important, simply expanding road capacity rarely solves congestion in the long run. On the contrary, it often induces more traffic. Such an approach risks becoming a colossal waste of public money if it neither addresses traffic problems nor improves the quality of urban life.

What matters more is how roads are designed and built - ensuring high standards of workmanship, durability and comprehensive road safety provisions should be the priority.

One positive announcement in the Budget is the proposed 9-km pedestrian walkway along Outer Ring Road. If implemented well, it could significantly improve the walking environment along one of the city's busiest corridors. However, details are still awaited. More importantly, the overall allocation for pedestrian

infrastructure remains abysmally low when compared to spending on road expansion.

Public transport also received relatively little emphasis in the city's context. The Budget announced the Rs 2,000-crore Karnataka Electric Bus Programme, supported by the World Bank, under which 4,000 electric buses will be inducted and 32 BMTC depots, besides 62 depots of other State transport corporations, will be developed. While this is a welcome move toward cleaner transport, merely adding buses is not enough. Scientific rationalisation of routes, schedules and service planning is equally important to improve efficiency and commuter convenience.

Similarly, the allocation of Rs 600 crore for nine railway routes is a positive step. But improving train speeds, reliability and railway safety will be just as crucial. Another major concern is the slow progress in implementing Bengaluru's master plan road network. Speedy execution of the 317-km network should be prioritised, rather than continued emphasis on new road expansion projects.

Equally important is the need for an integrated planning approach. Bengaluru still lacks a single unified land-use and transport master plan. Separate Comprehensive Mobility Plans and land-use plans rarely align in practice. Integrating these into one coherent framework is essential for sustainable urban development. What's missing is the speedy implementation of Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project, which can play a big role in sustainable mobility.

Ultimately, a truly livable Bengaluru cannot be built through road expansion alone. It requires prioritising public transport, pedestrian infrastructure, integrated planning and safe, efficient mobility systems. Without these elements, the vision of making Bengaluru the world's most livable city risks remaining only a statement of intent rather than a tangible reality.



Prof Ashish Verma, Convener, Sustainable Transportation Lab at Indian Institute of Science

75,000 ha in KK region to turn green

FOREST, ECOLOGY

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS @Karwar

TO increase green cover in the dry Kalyana Karnataka region, the state government has announced a massive afforestation programme covering 75,000 hectares.

Strengthening the Forest Department through large-scale recruitment and mitigating human-animal conflict are also key promises in the Karnataka Budget 2026.

While outlining his vision for a sustainable economy, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

placed significant emphasis on conservation and conflict mitigation. Announcing the afforestation programme, he said the Kalyana Karnataka districts currently have less than 10% forest cover.

"As per the National Forest Policy, green initiatives must be prioritised. Forest-related activities will be taken up across 75,000 hectares, with an allocation of Rs 150 crore, including Rs 50 crore from the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board," he said.

The Chief Minister noted that the government has spent Rs 1,044 crore over the past three years to mitigate human-



animal conflicts.

The funds were used for compensation for crop loss, livestock loss and human casualties, as well as recruitment of 358 per-

sonnel for elephant and leopard task forces, construction of elephant-proof trenches, installation of solar-powered fences, and railway barricades.

Siddaramaiah announced that Rs 1,500 crore will be spent over the next five years to further strengthen conflict mitigation efforts. A leopard rehabilitation centre will also be set up at Bannerghatta for Rs 5 crore, where leopards captured in human habitats around Bengaluru will be housed.

Additionally, 2,000 vacant posts in the Forest Department will be filled during the current financial year. The government has also approved a long-pend-

ing demand to declare the He-saraghatta grasslands a protected habitat for water birds, grassland birds and small mammals.

Accordingly, 5,676 acres will be notified as the 'Greater He-saraghatta Grassland Conservation Reserve.'

As a tribute to noted environmentalist Salumarada Thimakka, who passed away recently, a memorial will be established near Hulikal-Kudur. The Chief Minister also announced plans to create a biodiversity park at Madappanahalli in Bengaluru North, to be named the Basavanna Biodiversity Park, spread across 153 acres.

₹1CR SOFT SKILL BOOST FOR TOURIST GUIDES

TOURISM

AMIT S UPADHYE @Hubballi

THE Karnataka Budget 2026-27 has drawn up a roadmap for the tourism sector with plans to invest in training tourist guides and local stakeholders in soft skills.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, presenting the budget, said Rs 1 crore will be spent on training tourist guides, taxi drivers, auto drivers and security personnel. Soft-skill training courses will be developed to enhance the professionalism of these key stakeholders. The state also plans to introduce diploma courses in select universities to train tourist guides. He said 1,000 'Smaraka Mitras' will be identified, trained and accredited by the Tourism Department to help safekeep of the 844 protected monuments and nearly 1,000 unprotected monuments in the state.

Looking at the potential of coastal tourism, the government plans to implement a Comprehensive Coastal Tourism Development Plan. Connectivity to tourist destinations



Hampi has the highest number of registered tourist guides in the state

in the region will be improved through seaplane and heli-taxi services in collaboration with stakeholders. Joy rides and river cruise schemes will also be introduced.

The Chief Minister announced a ropeway project to connect Mullayanagiri, Seethalayyagiri and Kaimara in Chikkamagaluru district, to be developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. However, the proposal drew opposition from experts and locals as the locations fall within the ecologically sensitive Western Ghats.

The Lakkundi heritage site, which recently made headlines after treasure was discovered, also finds mention in the budget.

The government proposes to develop the Gadag-Kappatagudda-Lakkundi tourism circuit.

Siddaramaiah announced Rs 100 crore for the development of Anjanadri Hills and Rs 10 crore for infrastructure development of the Karnataka Exhibition Authority in Mysuru.

He said the government has prepared a comprehensive plan to develop Anjanadri Hills into a world-class tourist destination.

"After obtaining necessary forest and environmental clearances from the Government of India and concurrence from UNESCO, the remaining development work will be taken up on priority," he said.

Stress on development of industries beyond B'luru

INDUSTRIES

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah's budget has focussed on industrial development beyond Bengaluru and to generate more employment.

Under the new Industrial Policy 2025-30, the government has announced an additional incentive of 5% for the most backward regions and 3% for backward regions outside Bengaluru.

The CM also announced to promote ease of doing business in the state, a unified and integrated portal has been developed with the support of Microsoft. Apart from this, to facilitate ease of doing business in the state, Karnataka Decriminalisation (Amendment of provisions) Act 2025 has been implemented. It excludes 278 articles from the scope of criminal offenses across 13 different Acts.

He announced that a vehicle scrapping facility will be established in Chikkaballapur district on 100 acres by KIADB to safely dispose end-of-life vehicles. The state government will also allocate 100 acres in Mandya district to establish an advanced construction and infra-

structure testing facility in association with Automotive Research Association of India, which will invest Rs 500 crore to establish the facility.

Siddaramaiah also announced that a 1,000 acre industrial park will be developed in Belagavi district. "To promote the growth of aerospace industries in Mysuru, an aerospace park will be developed adjacent to the Mysuru airport by KIADB," he said.

The CM also announced Rs 30,000 crore of investment and 75,000 employment opportunities are expected in the Dharwad Industrial Node of the Bangalore-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. In order to develop this node, Rs 600 crore will be provided for acquisition of 1,000 acres of land. Of this, Rs 200 crore will be provided in the current financial year.

Siddaramaiah said to encourage MSME's and to create employment opportunities, 10 new clusters will be established at a cost of 15 crore under MSE-CDP scheme. Eight Industrial estates have been established in different districts by KSSIDC. Two new industrial estates will be established in Muddebihal in Vijayapura district and Kampli in Ballari district. Also, 1,500 industrial plots will be allocated across 10 industrial estates.

8k vacant posts to be filled in home dept

HOME

PRAVEEN KUMAR @Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday announced that 8,000 vacancies in the Home Department will be filled soon.

To avoid recruitment malpractices, a permanent Police and Police Auxiliary Services Recruitment Board will be established, he said presenting the state budget.

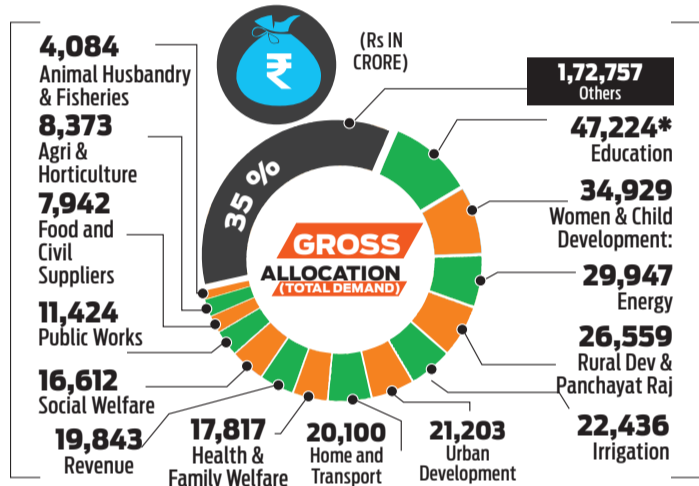
He said 12 new police stations will be established in various parts of the state. New buildings for 10 police stations will be constructed at a cost of Rs 30 crore. For better mobility, new vehicles

will be provided to the department at a cost of Rs 75 crore.

Under 'Operation Parishud-dikarana', sophisticated equipment, including artificial intrusion detection system, CCTVs, and body-worn cameras will be provided at a cost of Rs 20 crore to prevent the use of phones, marijuana and illegal activities in prisons. A drug de-addiction centre will be established on the premises of the Bengaluru Prison, he said.



NUMBERS GAME
Budget booklets being brought to Vidhana Soudha amid tight security before CM Siddaramaiah presented his record 17th budget on Friday | PTI



Siddu sets aside ₹44,632cr for welfare of Ahinda voter

SOCIAL WELFARE

MARX TEJASWI @Shivamogga

THE state budget 2026-27 has made wide-ranging announcements across Social Welfare, Scheduled Tribes Welfare, Backward Classes Welfare and Minorities Welfare departments, covering education, livelihood and institutional reform. The total allocation under the SC Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan stands at Rs 44,632 crore.

Hostels, residential schools

Across all four departments, 187 new post-matriculation hostels will be opened this year. A high-level committee will be set up to reform the management of 6,562 hostels housing 8.50 lakh students. Rs 56 crore has been additionally provided for revising hostel maintenance rates, and Rs 25 crore for basic infrastructure in government hostels.

Forty new residential schools will be started in hoblis, and 31 existing schools upgraded to of-

fer pre-university education. Thirty new Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) schools will be constructed at Rs 660 crore. Educational infrastructure and other basic amenities will be provided at these residential schools at a cost of Rs 50 crore. Four KREIS schools will become Centres of Excellence for NEET, JEE and K-CET coaching. Four CBSE residential schools, named after Ambedkar, will be set up in Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Belagavi and Kolar.

New institutions, corps

A Karnataka Adivasi Development Corporation will be established for Irula, Soliga, Jenukuruba, Kadukuruba, Kudiya, Siddi and other vulnerable tribal communities living on forest fringes. A separate Scheduled Tribes Commission will be constituted to address ST grievances. A Buddhist Development Corporation will be set up under the Social Welfare Department. Rs 100 crore has been earmarked for the comprehensive development of Jain, Bud-

dhist and Sikh communities.

Livelihood, self-employment

The Ganga Kalyana Scheme borewell electrification subsidy has been doubled from Rs 75,000 to Rs 1.50 lakh. For the Madivala community, modern laundries will be set up at dhoobi ghats in Bengaluru and Mysuru, with loans up to Rs 5 lakh at 4% interest will also be available. The Savita community will get subsidised loans up to Rs 10 lakh at 4% interest for salons. Fast Food Truck Trailers and Mobile Kitchen Kiosks will be provided



to unemployed ST and minority youth at 75% subsidy.

Minority welfare

A total of 25 new Saint Shishunala Shariff Residential Schools will be started in 2026-27, in addition to 10 being set up this financial year. Haj Bhavans will be built in Hubballi and Kalaburagi. Five thousand meritorious minority students will receive Rs 50,000 each for laptops. Dham-macharis of the Buddhist community will get a monthly honorarium of Rs 6,000. Waqf properties in commercial areas will be developed through the Public-Private Partnership model.

Other announcements

The government will establish 10 working women's hostels for SC and ST women across six cities. A Sri Maharshi Valmiki Administrative Soudha will be constructed in Bengaluru at a cost of Rs 50 crore. Rs 1,500 crore has been allocated to welfare corporations, and 2,500 vacant posts across the four departments will be filled.