



US-Iran move closer to temporary deal to halt conflict

P9



'India-Vietnam tie boosts trade growth outlook'

P11

P12

Robert Downey Jr: Online fame is no real art



BJP'S FIRST-EVER BENGAL GOVT OATH ON MAY 9 | LEGISLATIVE LEADER DECISION ON MAY 8

GUV PUTS **END** TO MAMATA ERA

Guv dissolves Mamata cabinet; Banerjee no longer Bengal CM; Dramatic move comes after she 'refused' to resign despite mounting pressure after electoral setback

KOLKATA

Governor RN Ravi has formally dissolved the West Bengal Legislative Assembly, effectively ending Mamata Banerjee's tenure as the chief minister.

The move, implemented under Clause 2 of Article 174 of the Constitution of India, was announced in an official notification issued on Thursday. "I hereby dissolve the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal with effect from 7th May, 2026," the Governor stated in the notice.

The current assembly was constituted in May 2021 after the Trinamool Congress, under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee, returned to power for the third consecutive term in the state. The dissolution marks the formal completion of the tenure of the outgoing assembly, following the recently concluded two-phase elections. The notification was issued by the Department of Parliamentary Affairs.

The dissolution comes amid a political standoff after Banerjee refused to step down following the BJP's sweep, alleging irregularities in the elections. She claimed that the BJP's decisive performance in West Bengal was a result of vote manipulation and tampering of EVMs. She also accused the ECI of colluding with the BJP to unseat her government.

BENGAL STANDOFF

■ **DISSOLUTION AUTHORITY:** The Governor invoked Article 174(2)(b) of the Constitution to dissolve the assembly after the conclusion of the election process.

■ **REASON FOR DISSOLUTION:** It comes after the assembly term of the TMC government expired on Thursday.

■ **ELECTION RESULT:** The BJP secured a decisive victory with 207 seats, marking a significant shift in West Bengal's political landscape, ending the TMC's consecutive terms since 2011.

■ **IMMEDIATE GOVERNANCE:** The state is under the administration of the Governor's office during the transition period.

■ **GOVT FORMATION:** The new chief minister is scheduled to take oath at the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata on May 9.

■ **OUTCOME:** Mamata Banerjee, having refused to resign, was functionally removed from office through the dissolution of the assembly.

MAMATA: Early career and rise

CONGRESS ROOTS

Started in the 1970s within the student wing of the Indian National Congress (Chhatra Parishad).

1984

Became one of India's youngest MPs by defeating CPI(M) heavyweight Somnath Chatterjee in the Jadavpur constituency.

1999, 2009

Served multiple times as a Union Cabinet Minister, holding key portfolios including Railways, Coal, and Human Resource Development.

2006, 2008

Led massive protests against land acquisition for industrial projects in Singur/Nandigram, which significantly strengthened her political standing and led to a "mass leader" image.

2011

Ended 34 years of Communist Party of India (Marxist) rule in West Bengal, bringing the TMC-Congress alliance to power.

2011, 2026

Served consecutive terms as the chief minister of West Bengal.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF?

2013: Death of another PA

■ **Pradip Jha**, Suwendu Adhikari's personal assistant during his years in the Trinamool, died under circumstances in Purba Medinipur district. But the case did not trigger a political controversy at that time.

2018: Security officer found dead

■ **Subhabrata Chakraborty**, a State Armed Police constable posted as Adhikari's personal security officer (PSO), was found dead at a police barrack in Kanthi of Purba Medinipur.

No matter how much we condemn the way this murder was carried out, it is not enough. He was killed because he was my aide and I defeated Mamata Banerjee in Bhabanipur. This could be the reason for his murder. —Suwendu Adhikari, BJP leader

2021: Death of personal aide

■ **Pulak Lahiri**, another personal aide to Adhikari, was found dead under unusual circumstances in 2021, but no conclusive findings establishing criminal conspiracy have been made public.

2026: Chandra shot dead

■ **Chandranath Rath**, another close aide of Adhikari, was shot dead in North 24 Parganas on Wednesday night. The murder has triggered sharp political reactions.

Multiple teams set up to trace killers of Suwendu's aide

KOLKATA

West Bengal police have formed multiple teams to trace the men involved in the killing of BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari's close aide Chandranath Rath, a senior officer said on Thursday.

Police are also probing whether contract killers were engaged in the murder of Rath (42), who was shot dead in North 24 Parganas district on Wednesday night.

A forensic team visited the spot on Thursday morning and collected samples, while officers of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) also joined the probe, he said.

Prove majority for oath: Guv to Vijay

CHENNAI

Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam (TVK) chief Vijay, who made a blockbuster debut in politics by breaking the DMK's and AIADMK's traditional duopoly, met Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar once again on Thursday as uncertainty continues over the formation of the next state government.

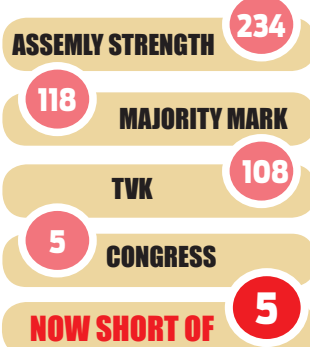
TVK, which emerged as the single-largest party with 108 seats in the 234-member assembly, had staked a claim to form the government on Wednesday. The Governor, however, was not convinced and asked Vijay to furnish proof that he could head a majority government.

At present, TVK holds 108 seats, while Congress, with 5 MLAs, has pledged support. Together, TVK+ Congress have 113 MLAs, still five short of the majority mark of 118 in the 234-member TN assembly.

As per TVK insiders, they are counting on backing from other key DMK allies - CPI (two seats), CPM (two seats), and VCK (two seats).

While DMK won only 59 seats, Stalin too lost his stronghold, Kolathur, to TVK. The AIADMK won 47 seats. Vijay

Number game of House



was prepared for a quick swearing-in ceremony on Thursday, along with four senior colleagues, but the event has been delayed.

Meanwhile, speculation persists about possible realignments. Reports suggest that Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) informally explored the idea of Dravidian parties joining forces to form a government. TVK has 108 seats, DMK has 59, and AIADMK has 47. Stalin, however, signalled that the DMK would not immediately attempt to destabilise a potential TVK government.

Denying Vijay chance to form govt 'unfair': DKS

BENGALURU: Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Thursday termed as "unfair" Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar not inviting TVK chief Vijay to form the government in that state, despite emerging as the single largest party. He urged the Governor to allow TVK to form the government and prove its majority on the floor of the Assembly.

"In Tamil Nadu what the Governor is doing is not fair. He should allow the single largest party (TVK) to form the government and ask them to take the floor test," Shivakumar said. Addressing reporters here, he said, in 2018, the then

Governor invited B S Yediyurappa, leader of the BJP -- the single largest party with 104 seats in the 224-member assembly -- to form the government, despite the Congress-JD(S) alliance submitting a letter claiming a majority. However, unable to manage the numbers, Yediyurappa resigned in three days, before facing the floor test. Citing the example of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shivakumar recalled that the then President gave him an opportunity to prove a majority on the floor of the Lok Sabha. "TVK should be given an opportunity, it is unfair," he said.

In a democracy, one should look at the people's mandate. Give them an opportunity; if TVK fails, that's okay. There are instances of losing a vote of confidence even with one vote; didn't Vajpayee lose? —DK Shivakumar, DyCM

Adhikari lost 4 aides in 13 years



KOLKATA

For over a decade, the BJP's giant slayer Suwendu Adhikari has lost several of his close aides and security personnel to unnatural deaths, the latest being the killing of his personal assistant Chandranath Rath.

Adhikari, who defeated Mamata Banerjee twice in elections and is now one of



the frontrunners for the chief minister's post in West Bengal, has indicated that this is a political killing.

While no investigative agency has established any direct link between these incidents, the cases are increasingly being referenced together in West Bengal's political circles due to the recurring pattern of unnatural or controversial deaths.

From shadow to limelight: Nishant takes oath as Bihar min

PATNA

In a major expansion of the Cabinet of Bihar's first BJP-led government, JD(U) supremo Nitish Kumar's son Nishant Kumar and 31 others took oath as ministers on Thursday in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Governor Lt Gen (Retd) Syed Ata Hasnain administered oath at a grand ceremony held at Gandhi Maidan, that was also attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Health Minister JP Nadda and BJP president Nitin Nabin.

The BJP, which is the single largest party in the 243-member assembly with 89 MLAs, has 15 ministers, who took oath on Thursday. Most of the inductees were those who were part of the Nitish Kumar cabinet formed in last November after the NDA stormed back to power in the assembly polls.

The JD(U) is represented by 15 ministers, 13 of whom took the oath on the occasion.

The son who said No, then said Yes

The part that makes Nishant Kumar's entry into Bihar politics genuinely interesting is precisely the reluctance that preceded it. The 45-year-old engineering graduate had reportedly wanted to earn his spurs as a party worker first, before accepting any formal government post. That is not how political sons in Bihar typically behave, and it earned him a certain quiet respect even among those who remain sceptical of dynastic politics. Reports suggest the decision to join the government finally came after a late-night meeting with senior JD(U) leaders on Tuesday. Lalan Singh, one of the party's most trusted operators, had made the trip from Delhi specifically for those conversations.

What was said behind closed doors has not been fully reported. What is known is that Nishant walked out of his father's residence the next morning as a man who had agreed to something he had been declining for weeks. His 'Sadbhavana Yatra', scheduled to continue on May 7, was cancelled due to the swearing-in and is set to resume from May 9.



1-YEAR OF OPERATION SINDOOR 'INDIA FORGIVES NOTHING'

NEW DELHI

India on Thursday marked the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor, the large-scale military operation launched against terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir following the deadly Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 civilian lives on April 22 last year.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi changed his display picture on X to an image associated with Operation Sindoor, paying tribute to the courage and valour of the Indian armed forces. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also adopted the same display picture and shared a post commemorating the operation.

Rajnath Singh releases 'Op Sindoor' documentary Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday released Operation Sindoor documentary at Joint Commanders' Conference in Jaipur.

The defence minister also hailed the mission as a benchmark for modern warfare, citing its unmatched precision and seamless tri-services synergy. The operation stands as a powerful symbol of national resolve and preparedness to

deal with national security challenges, he said in a message.

Forces revamp combat units, boosts air defence

JAIPUR: A year after Operation Sindoor, the Indian Army is transforming its battle formations to make them more agile while the Indian Air Force will soon receive two more squadrons of S-400 air defence systems to further strengthen the air space, top military officials said here on Thursday.

The officials also note that China's continuous military assistance is factored into the Indian security matrix. They further assert that every terror camp in Pakistan is visible to the Indian forces and no sanctuaries are safe even if Islamabad shifts them deep inside the country.

Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, Air Marshal A K Bharti and Vice Admiral A N Pramod who were the director generals of military operations in their respective services during the last year's India-Pakistan conflict spoke to the media at the army's South Western Command that looks after a part of the Western front.

Defence Minister Rajnath

What is Operation Sindoor?

Operation Sindoor was a multi-dimensional military and strategic offensive launched by India on the night of 7-8th May, 2025. It was conducted in response to a major terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir, on 22nd April, 2025, where 26 tourists were killed by the Pakistan-backed group The Resistance Front (TRF).

Singh also addressed a Joint Commanders Conference.

Responding to queries, Lt Gen Ghai said critical transformation in the armoured corps, mechanised infantry and aviation cops were at an "advanced stage of deliberation" and would be implemented.

This comes after the army carried out a series of such transformations in the infantry and artillery regiments to create Bhairav battalions, Ashni platoons, Divyastra batteries and Shaktiban regiments to tackle the emerging threats.

K'taka Cabinet clears major reforms; infra, welfare projects

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, on Thursday approved a series of significant decisions related to education, infrastructure, healthcare, employment and temple development during the 12th Cabinet meeting of 2026 held at Vidhana Soudha.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil said the state government will legally challenge the Union Government's repeal of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and its replacement with the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajivika Mission (VBGRAMG). Karnataka argued that the move weakens the "Right to Work" and reduces the powers of local bodies while increasing the financial burden on states.

The Cabinet also reviewed the Thorat Commission report on the proposed State Educa-

tion Policy (SEP), which recommends a 2+8+4 education structure and compulsory Kannada or mother tongue instruction up to Class 5, preferably till Class 12.

Among key infrastructure decisions, the Cabinet approved a Rs 180 crore expansion of Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research in Mysuru, increasing its capacity from 400 to 600 beds. A Rs 132.5 crore drinking water project for Hatti Gold Mines township in Raichur district was also cleared.

The Cabinet sanctioned Rs 200 crore for industrial estates and the PM-MITRA Mega Textile Park in Kalaburagi region.

Major temple development projects were also approved, including Rs 604.65 crore for Phase 3 works at Kukke Subramanya Temple and Rs 29 crore for Ghati Subramanya Temple.

A 2% reservation quota in state civil services for sportspersons representing Karnataka or India was also finalised by the Cabinet.

Bird Flu spread: Mysuru Zoo takes precautionary Measures

MYSURU

Precautionary measures have been intensified at the Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens to prevent the outbreak and spread of contagious bird flu among animals and birds.

Authorities at Mysuru Zoo, Karanji Nature Park, and the Chamundi Wildlife Conservation Centre at Koorgalli have implemented strict preventive protocols to stop the spread of avian influenza among captive and migratory birds. Disinfectant solutions are being sprayed rigorously at all entry points of the zoo premises.

At the vehicle entry gate (Gate-2), disinfectant spraying arrangements have been made mandatory for all vehicles carrying staff, officials, food supplies, and other materials entering the zoo campus. Similarly, all visitors, staff members, officials, and guests entering the zoo are required to pass through disinfectant-treated pathways.

To maintain hygienic en-



vironments, foot dips at every animal enclosure have been disinfected regularly. Staff members handling waste disposal and feeding animals have been instructed to use hand sanitizers before and after their duties.

Zoo authorities have directed all animal keepers to immediately report any abnormal symptoms noticed among animals or birds. Veterinarians are continuously monitoring the health condition of all species and taking appropriate measures when necessary. Staff working near Karanji Lake have also been instructed to alert higher authorities if

any migratory bird deaths are noticed.

As advised by wildlife experts and scientists, all resident and migratory birds are under close surveillance. Samples of droppings from birds at Mysuru Zoo, Karanji Nature Park, and the Koorgalli conservation centre are being collected and sent to the Regional Disease Diagnostic Laboratory for testing.

Regarding the feeding of animals with chicken meat, zoo officials stated that live chickens brought to the zoo are thoroughly examined for signs of disease before slaughter. The chicken meat is

washed with potassium permanganate solution and later subjected to UV sterilization before being fed to animals. To avoid transmission of infection from live poultry to captive birds, the zoo is also planning to procure processed chicken meat from reputed institutions.

In view of the alert situation, internal movement of zoo staff will be restricted if required. Until the situation normalizes, staff members will not be permitted to visit poultry farms, bird sanctuaries, or other zoos.

A rapid response team comprising veterinarians, laboratory technicians, and four animal keepers has been formed to handle any emergency arising from a possible outbreak. Infected birds, if identified, will be safely disposed of following strict protocols.

Mysuru Zoo Executive Director P. Anusha stated in a release that all necessary preparations have been made to prevent the spread of bird flu infection.



Young Indians (Yi) YUVA executive council formed at VVCE

MYSURU

In a major step towards empowering youth leadership and strengthening student-driven social impact initiatives, the Young Indians (Yi) Mysuru Chapter, an integral part of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), successfully inducted the Yi YUVA Executive Council at Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering (VVCE), Mysuru.

The initiative marks a significant milestone in expanding Yi Mysuru's footprint within educational institutions and creating structured leadership opportunities for students beyond academics.

The induction ceremony was held in the presence of Dr. Sadashive Gowda, Principal, Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering; Dr. Basavaraju H. T., Head & Associate Professor; Nodal Officer Sufiya; Priyanka Sridhar, Chair, Yi Mysuru; Amruth B G, Yi YUVA Co-Chair; Yi Executive Committee Members Charan and Sukrutha; faculty

members; and students.

During the session, the newly inducted Yi YUVA Vertical Youth Council members were introduced to the various Yi verticals including Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Climate Change, Health, Sports, Accessibility, Branding, and Road Safety, and were formally assigned as the respective Chairs and Co-Chairs of these verticals to take forward initiatives and create meaningful impact for the city and the community.

Addressing the gathering, the speakers emphasized the growing importance of youth participation in leadership, innovation, civic responsibility, and nation-building. Students were encouraged to actively engage in initiatives that contribute towards personal growth, professional development, and societal transformation.

Speaking on the occasion, Priyanka Sridhar, Chair, Yi Mysuru, highlighted that creating Executive Councils within colleges instills a greater sense of responsibility,

ownership, and leadership among youth. She noted that Yi YUVA serves as a platform that enables students to move beyond classrooms and become socially conscious individuals capable of driving real impact through structured initiatives and collaborative action.

The newly inducted council members expressed enthusiasm towards building a vibrant Yi YUVA chapter within the institution and committed themselves towards taking forward impactful projects aligned with the Yi vision of youth-led change.

The formation of the Yi YUVA EC at Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering is expected to pave the way for stronger student engagement, grassroots-level impact initiatives, and future collaborations between educational institutions and industry-led youth platforms.

Yi Mysuru continues to expand its mission of nurturing responsible citizens, future leaders, and changemakers for society.

Govt revoked ADGP Rao's suspension after 'kickback', alleges MLC. Vishwanath

MYSURU

Former minister and MLC A. H. Vishwanath alleged that the state government revoked the suspension order against senior police officer K.Ramachandra Rao after receiving a "kickback."

Addressing a press conference in Mysuru on Thursday, he said Ramachandra Rao was a "notorious officer" who had earlier registered a case against an inspector in connection with the seizure of ₹2 crore cash found in a Kerala bus. The officer was suspended after his foster daughter Ranya Rao was arrested in a gold smuggling case. Besides, serious sexual harassment accusations had also surfaced against the officer.

The MLC claimed that Ramachandra Rao had allegedly sexually assaulted a woman who had approached him seeking justice. When media



reports and videos related to the incident surfaced, the officer had reportedly denied that the video featured him. However, a forensic laboratory report later confirmed that the video was indeed of Rao, following which the government suspended him.

Vishwanath questioned the government's sudden decision to revoke the suspension and reassign the officer to duty. There is no value for justice in this government. It is unclear whether the Home Department is being run by Home Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara or by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's son

Yathindra. A major kickback might have been involved in revoking the suspension order and criticized the functioning of the administration.

Opposed Abhimanotsava

The former minister also opposed the "BSY Abhimanotsava" scheduled to be held in Chitradurga on May 9. Referring to former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, he said the BJP leader is facing allegations under the POCSO Act, one of the strictest laws in the country, and termed the issue serious. Decision to organize a celebratory event despite the allegations and Union Home Minister Amit Shah attending the programme as chief guest was not a good sign. These two incidents have become a black mark on the state.

Speaking about the Tamil Nadu election results, Vishwanath said the political landscape there had changed be-

cause of the votes of young people. A similar transformation should happen in Karnataka too and urged the youth to develop political awareness and work toward change. He praised actor Vijay for building a new political party within two years and making notable progress.

Retirement

Vishwanath also announced that he would not contest any future elections and said elections earlier were fought with people's blessings and support, but now candidates are forced to spend huge sums of money. Today, contesting an Assembly election requires nearly ₹50 crore. "I neither have that kind of money nor the strength to spend it," he said, adding that even his children would not contest elections, though they would remain active in politics according to their abilities.

Administrator appointed to MYMUL

MYSURU

Following the completion of the tenure of the Board of Directors of the Mysuru District Cooperative Milk Producers' Societies Union Limited (MYMUL), the government has appointed Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies C. Prasad Reddy as the Administrator of the union.

As per the government order, C. Prasad Reddy has officially taken charge as the Administrator of the federation.



MYSURU

Legislative Council Member Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah said that students should pursue quality education and become financially independent in life.

Speaking after visiting and inspecting Sri Siddaramaiah Women's Hostel located in Vijayanagar 3rd Stage on Wednesday, he interacted with the students and said the main objective of the institution is to ensure that poor students from rural and middle-class families do not face

hardships in continuing their education. Quality food, accommodation, and other facilities are being provided under the leadership of M. Ramaiah and Puttabasavegowda at affordable rates. Therefore, students should make proper use of the opportunity and achieve success in life.

Chief Minister's Joint Secretary M. Ramaiah said that Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah himself had secured ranks in SSLC and students too should study well and excel. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Dr. Yathindra are extend-

ing support to poor students and encouraged them to become good doctors, engineers, professors, KAS and IAS officers, and achieve higher positions in society. He also urged the students to bring pride to their parents and the hostel.

On the occasion, institution office-bearers and members including Puttabasavegowda, Srinivas Rao, Kumaraswamy, Dr. Nagaraj, Dr. Renuka, Sheshamurthy, Leelavathi, Pallavi, Manjunath, Shivaswamy, Nagaraj, and Mahesh were present.

Artists asked to submit life certificate for pension renewal

MYSURU

The Department of Kannada and Culture has instructed artists, writers and widow pension beneficiaries in the district who are receiving monthly pensions to submit their life certificates for the financial year 2026-27.

Beneficiaries receiving the pension must visit the office

of the Assistant Director, Department of Kannada and Culture, Karnataka Kalamandira, Vinoba Road, Mysuru, along with original documents including a copy of their PPO (Pension Payment Order), bank passbook copy and other relevant records.

Applicants must obtain the life certificate form, get it

authenticated by a gazetted officer and resubmit it to the department office before 5.30 pm on May 30.

For further information, beneficiaries may contact the office telephone number 0821-2513225, according to a release issued by Assistant Director of the Department of Kannada and Culture, M. D. Sudarshan.

CM Siddaramaiah releases Rs 3 cr for MDJA new building

MYSURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah recommended the release of ₹3 crore for the construction of the new building of the Mysuru District Journalists' Association and has also released the first installment of the grant.

In this regard, Mysuru

District Journalists' Association President K. Deepak, Vice-President Ravi Pandavapura, and Treasurer N. Suresh visited the Chief Minister's residence in Mysuru on Thursday and expressed gratitude to Siddaramaiah on behalf of journalists.

Chief Minister's Media

Advisor K.V. Prabhakar and Mysuru Deputy Commissioner Lakshmi-kanth Reddy were present on the occasion.

Association General Secretary Dharmapura Narayan stated that the construction work of the new building will begin at the earliest.





Ex-Mayor Sandesh Swamy captures majestic tiger at Nagarahole

MYSURU

Former Mysuru Mayor Sandesh Swamy experienced a breathtaking wildlife moment on Wednesday at the enchanting Nagarahole National Park.

During a visit to the famous Sunkadakatte safari zone, he successfully captured a stunning photograph of a majestic tiger in its natural habitat, creating excitement among wildlife enthusiasts and nature lovers alike.

The tiger, resting in the puddle of water in the dense green forest, offered a rare and unforgettable sighting. The picture clicked by Sandesh Swamy beautifully reflects the raw beauty, power, and elegance of the striped predator, often called the “King of the Jungle.”

Wildlife lovers say such moments highlight the rich biodiversity of Nagarahole, one of India’s finest tiger reserves. The memorable click has already become a talking point among safari visitors, symbolising the magical connection between humans and the untamed beauty of nature.

High command must end leadership confusion soon: Ex-Minister Rajanna

MYSURU

Senior Congress MLA and former minister K.N. Rajanna on Thursday urged the Congress high command should quickly resolve the confusion surrounding the leadership issue in Karnataka and warned that prolonged uncertainty could affect both the government and the party.

Speaking to reporters in front of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah’s residence in Mysuru, he said the CM himself had already made it clear that he would abide by whatever decision the party high command takes. Siddaramaiah has clearly stated that he will act according to the directions of the high command. Therefore, the high command should resolve the confusion prevailing in the state at the earliest. Otherwise, it will have an impact on both the government and the party.

Rajanna further revealed that he had personally conveyed his views to the party leadership during his meeting with the high command and had even written a letter regarding the matter. There is a need to give a free hand for cabinet expansion. If that is not possible, then a clear decision should be taken regarding leadership change. Whatever the decision may be, it should be taken quickly.

Commenting on Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar’s aspirations for the top post, Rajanna said there was nothing wrong in him aspiring to become Chief Minister.

In the Congress party, at least a dozen leaders are qualified to become Chief Minister. So there is nothing wrong if D.K. Shivakumar has such ambitions,” he remarked.

When asked whether replacing Siddaramaiah would create difficulties for the Congress party, Rajanna maintained that the final decision rests entirely with the party high command.

“Ours is a national party. In any national party, the final decision belongs to the high command. While taking any decision, the high command has to consider every aspect carefully. After examining all factors, they will arrive at a final conclusion,” he said.

He added that he was neither claiming that a change in the Chief Minister’s post would definitely happen nor denying the possibility altogether. “I am not saying the Chief Minister will be changed, nor am I saying it will not happen. The high command has to take the final call,” he stated.

Minister stresses comprehensive treatment for kids with Cleft Lip and Palate

MYSURU

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said that timely and comprehensive treatment for children born with cleft lip and cleft palate is extremely important and that the government is actively working in this direction.

He was speaking after inaugurating the 24th annual conference of Indocleftcon 2026, organized by the Indian Society of Cleft Lip Palate and Craniofacial Anomalies (IS-CLPCA), at the Knowledge Park in the Naimisham Campus of the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing in Mysuru on Thursday.

The minister said that cleft lip and cleft palate are congenital conditions, but due to lack of awareness and delayed identification, many children suffer complications later in life if timely expert consultation and treatment are not provided. There is a need to create awareness among people living in rural areas and small towns. Health workers visiting homes should identify children with such conditions and guide families on where and how treatment can be obtained.

Highlighting the importance of a multidisciplinary approach, Rao stated that treatment is not limited to a single surgery and requires the coordinated efforts of skilled surgeons, orthodontists, speech therapists and other specialists to ensure proper growth and development of the child.

The minister appreciated the contribution of Smile Train, which has been working in this field for the past 20 years and said it has successfully supported more than seven lakh surgeries, calling it a remarkable achievement.

He pointed out that poor families often face difficulties traveling to major cities like Bengaluru for treatment due to travel and accommodation expenses. To address this issue, the government and private organizations are jointly working to provide high-quality treatment facilities in Mysuru itself.

Referring to the conference theme — “Connect, Communicate and Collaborate” — he said the slogan is highly appropriate, as such health challenges can be effectively addressed only through cooperation between governments and voluntary organizations.

The minister also emphasized the need to adopt modern technology, advanced surgical techniques and new medical materials to improve the quality of treatment.

Speaking at the event, Renu Mehta, Regional Director of Smile Train South Asia, said the organization is committed to caring for every child born with cleft lip and palate conditions.

She said that since 1999, Smile Train has supported more than 20 lakh surgeries globally, including over 7.5 lakh surgeries in India over the past 26 years. The organization works closely with local hospitals, doctors and surgeons and has signed official agreements with 13 Indian states to expand access to quality treatment.

She added that Smile Train’s goal is to spread expertise across the entire medical network through training, mentoring and continuous education. Recently, 30 young surgeons received practical training in alveolar bone graft surgery during a workshop.

ISCLPCA Secretary Pritam Shetty said the association functions as a strong multidisciplinary team comprising surgeons, speech pathologists, orthodontists, pediatricians, anesthetists and neurosurgeons.

He noted that the organization began 25 years ago with just five founding members and has now grown into a professional body with 650 members. Through annual meetings and knowledge-sharing initiatives, the association continues to work toward providing comprehensive care to children born with cleft lip and palate conditions.

He also announced that, as part of its silver jubilee celebrations, the organization is bringing out an open-access textbook on cleft lip and palate treatment at a cost of around ₹25 lakh. Experts from India and abroad are contributing to the publication, which will be published by Springer and is expected to bring global recognition to the Indian association.

ISCLPCA President M. Pushpavathi and several others were present at the event.



Social harmony is the foundation for national development: RSS Chief

MYSURU

Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsangh-chalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, on Thursday said that social harmony, compassion and fraternity are the true foundations for national development and warned that discrimination and selfishness weaken the strength of society and the nation.

Delivering a thought-provoking speech in Mysuru at JSS Suttur Mutt on Thursday, Bhagwat explained the Indian concept of “samaja,” stating that Indian society is not merely a social contract based on mutual benefit, but a living bond rooted in oneness, duty and shared destiny. The Western idea of society is based on individual benefit, whereas the Indian idea of “samaja” teaches that every individual belongs to one larger universal family.

Quoting Swami Vivekananda, Bhagwat said every nation has a mission and Bharat’s mission is to spread the message of unity and spiritual knowledge to the world. He said India’s ancient civilization recognized the truth that all existence is interconnected and that harmony comes from realizing this oneness.

The RSS chief stressed that development should not be viewed merely as material progress. According to him, true development includes moral discipline, compassion, self-restraint and equal concern for all sections of society. He said uncontrolled greed and excessive consumerism lead to conflict, while cooperation and coordination sustain social peace.

Bhagwat strongly criticized social discrimination and untouchability, calling them grave mistakes committed by society against its own people. Inequality survives first in the mind and urged people to remove feelings of superiority and inferiority from daily life. “Nobody is superior, nobody is inferior. We belong to each other,” he remarked.

Referring to B. R. Ambedkar, Bhagwat said the Indian Constitution aimed to establish political, economic and social equality, but true equality can survive only through fraternity and emotional integration. He noted that liberty, equality and fraternity were deeply rooted in Indian traditions and the teachings of Gautama Buddha.

Calling for stronger social bonding, Bhagwat urged people to visit each other’s homes, build friendships across caste and community lines and work collectively for the upliftment of weaker sections. Leaders of different communities, he said, should come together regularly to discuss local development and welfare measures.

He asserted that Bharat cannot become truly prosperous unless development reaches every section of society. Comparing society to a human body, Bhagwat said a nation cannot be considered healthy if one section remains neglected or marginalized.

Emphasizing sacrifice, compassion and social responsibility, Bhagwat said fraternity and harmony alone can ensure lasting national progress and preserve the unity and freedom of the country.

Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Swamiji and others were present. As soon as Mohan Bhagwat arrived at the mutt, he was given a traditional welcome.



Green cover will be protected at Manipal Hospital junction: MP Yaduveer

MYSURU

Amid growing public concern over the reported felling of a large number of trees for the ongoing flyover project at the Manipal Hospital Junction, Mysuru-Kodagu Lok Sabha member Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar on Thursday assured citizens that the greenery in the area would be protected to the maximum extent possible.

Speaking to reporters after inspecting the project site, he said unnecessary fear had been created following media reports about tree cutting. He clarified that no final decision had yet been taken regarding removal of trees and reiterated that the authorities had already been instructed earlier to focus on transplantation rather than cutting.

“There is no need for panic. During the initial inspection itself, I had instructed officials that trees with a girth of around 30 cm should be transplanted by the Forest Department. Even larger trees can also be shifted with the help of expert agencies and NGOs that specialise in tree transplantation,” he said.

The MP said the proposed list prepared by officials included not only fully grown trees but also small saplings, which had added to public anxiety. According to him, there are 155 trees identified in one stretch and another 108 in a different section. “Efforts will be made to preserve nearly 90 to 95 percent of the trees. Even if a tree has to be removed, two or three saplings will be planted in its place as part of the replantation policy,” he stated.

Yaduveer stressed that the government would not support any move that reduces the city’s green cover and assured that every step would be taken to safeguard the environment while carrying out development works.

Responding to concerns raised by environmental activists over the survival rate of transplanted trees, the MP said successful examples already exist in the country. He cited the transplantation of trees during the construction of the Surat highway project as an example where large trees were successfully shifted and preserved. “In this case, the trees are not being relocated far away. They will only be shifted within the same park area by three to five metres. The trees will be carefully lifted by crane and replanted immediately. We have studied the matter properly before taking any decision,” he explained.

When asked whether all trees would be transplanted, Yaduveer said he had instructed officials to attempt transplantation on a “100 percent basis” wherever feasible. He also welcomed similar directions issued recently by the Forest Minister.

He further noted that while the Forest Department had followed due procedure in identifying and listing trees for the project, better coordination and communication with elected representatives could have avoided public misunderstanding.

“Whenever development works are taken up, such processes naturally create concern among citizens. Officials must also explain the measures being planned to save the trees,” he said.

Speaking about the project cost, Yaduveer said the overall flyover project is estimated at ₹712 crore, while the Manipal Hospital Junction flyover component alone costs around ₹120 crore. The flyover is scheduled for completion by March 27, 2027.



A TRIBUTE OF COMPASSION

CM Siddaramaiah flags off Ambulances in memory of Rakesh Siddaramaiah

MYSURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday flagged off two ambulances near his Mysuru residence in memory of his late son Rakesh Siddaramaiah.

The ambulances were donated to the District Health Department by Samata Trust to support poor and needy patients requiring timely medical care.

The Chief Minister inaugurated the service by waving the green flag, describing the initiative as a humanitarian effort aimed at reaching people in distress, especially those from economically weaker sections. The ambulances are expected to strengthen emergency healthcare services and improve access to treatment for patients in rural and underserved areas.

The gesture stood as a touching tribute to Rakesh Siddaramaiah, reflecting a message of compassion, service and social responsibility toward the underprivileged.



QUICK READ

Serial accidents near Dabaspeta leave over 10 injured

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
More than 10 people were injured in a series of road accidents on the national highway near the Post Office Gate at Dabaspeta in Nelamangala. The injured were shifted to nearby hospitals for treatment. According to police, the mishaps involved multiple vehicles, including bikes, two cars, a lorry, a government bus and a Bolero jeep. The accidents led to a massive traffic jam on the Bengaluru-Tumakuru highway, disrupting vehicular movement for several hours. Personnel from the Nelamangala Traffic Police rushed to the spot, cleared the damaged vehicles and restored traffic flow on the busy highway. Further investigation into the accidents is underway.

Public thrash man for attempting to stab estranged wife

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A man was thrashed by members of the public after he allegedly attempted to stab his estranged wife on a road in Dasanapura near Madanayakanahalli. According to police, the accused, identified as Sanjay, had married for the second time. However, his wife had been living separately due to his alleged alcohol addiction. On the day of the incident, the woman was walking on the road when Sanjay reportedly arrived on a bike, stopped her and tried to attack her with a knife. Locals immediately intervened, rescued the woman and assaulted the accused before handing him over to the police. Madanayakanahalli police have launched an investigation.

Rs 170 crore sanctioned for Rajakaluve works: Muniraju

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Dasarahalli MLA S Muniraju said the government has sanctioned Rs 170 crore for Rajakaluve development works in the constituency. He was speaking after launching development works near Defence Colony, Cauvery Layout and Dhanapal Layout. The project includes construction of barrier walls along the Rajakaluve, installation of fencing and clearance of encroachments. Muniraju said the works would help prevent people from dumping garbage into the canals and ensure smooth flow of water. He added that quality development measures would be undertaken to improve drainage infrastructure and avoid flooding problems in the area during heavy rain.

Art of Living marks 45 years; PM Modi to inaugurate Dhyana Mandir

Prime Minister Modi will launch Dhyana Mandir and year-long social welfare initiatives.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

As the Art of Living completes 45 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the celebrations and the 70th birthday events of founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar on May 10 at the Art of Living International Center on Kanakapura Road. Prime Minister Modi will inaugurate the newly constructed Dhyana Mandir (meditation hall) along with year-long projects focused on mental well-being, rural development, nature conservation and social transformation. Speaking about the organisation's journey, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said the sign of a healthy society is seeing a smile on every face, which



has remained the guiding vision of the Art of Living for the past 45 years.

Founded in 1981 by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the Art of Living has grown into a global volunteer-driven humanitarian and educational organisation with a presence in over 180 countries. Born in Papanasam in Tamil Nadu on May 13,

1956, Ravi Shankar showed an early inclination towards spirituality and began reciting the Bhagavad Gita at a young age. By the age of 17, he had graduated in modern physics, combining scientific learning with spiritual teachings.

During a 10-day period of silence, he developed Sudarshan Kriya, a breathing tech-

nique now practised worldwide. Over the decades, the organisation has built a network of over 37,000 programme leaders and more than a million volunteers globally. Its humanitarian initiatives include rehabilitation programmes for victims and perpetrators of violence, including former militants and gang members in conflict-hit regions such as Kosovo, Iraq and India. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's contributions have been recognised with the Padma Vibhushan and several international honours. In the field of education, the organisation runs more than 1,300 free schools in rural and tribal areas, benefiting over one lakh children. Vocational training

initiatives have reached more than 4.7 lakh youth across India. Environmental campaigns by the organisation include rejuvenation of over 75 rivers and extensive tree plantation drives. Prisoner rehabilitation programmes have reached more than eight lakh inmates worldwide. Campaigns promoting ethics, anti-corruption, women's empowerment and mental well-being have also mobilised millions. The Art of Living's World Culture Festivals have been organised in cities including Bengaluru, Berlin, New Delhi and Washington DC. A global meditation for world peace led by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar will be held on May 13 and streamed live worldwide.

KSCDCL to open first showroom outside state in Jaipur

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka State Coir Development Corporation Limited (KSCDCL) is set to open its first showroom outside Karnataka in Jaipur on Saturday, marking a major step in its efforts to expand the market for eco-friendly coir products across the country.

The showroom, established in collaboration with a regional distributor, will stock nearly 6,000 Dutch mats along with a range of other coir products, KSCDCL Chairman Nataraj Janakiram said.

The first consignment of products was flagged off by Karnataka Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh at Vidhana Soudha last week and has already reached Jaipur.

Strong education foundation shapes a successful life: Dr Jayakar Shetty

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Education is the foundation of life, and a strong educational base can shape a magnificent future, said Dr Jayakar Shetty, Vice Chancellor of Bangalore University.

He was speaking at the graduation ceremony of BGS-B School on Kengeri-Uttarahalli Main Road in Bengaluru. Addressing students, Dr Shetty stressed that education and industrial aspirations must go hand in hand. He said educational institutions should equip students with skills that industries currently demand.

According to him, the present curriculum reforms introduced by the Central and State governments are moving in the right direction by focusing on skill-based education. He also said the present time offers immense opportunities for young entrepreneurs and encouraged students to become job creators instead of merely seeking employment.

Dr Shetty praised the contributions of the BGS and SJB Group of Institutions in the fields of education, healthcare and employment generation.

Dr Prakashnath Swamiji also addressed the gathering and urged students to contribute to the development of their families and society. Drawing inspiration from Balagangadharanatha Swamiji, he said students should uphold values of service and social responsibility.

He noted that industries no longer evaluate candidates solely based on academic marks, but also consider qualities such as discipline, punctuality and conduct. Students, he said, must develop these qualities alongside academic excellence.

During the ceremony, degrees were awarded to 270 students.

Among those present were Pramod, Varadarajan, Dr S P Yoganna, Dr Puttaraju, Megha Patil Mongoli, Dr Mohan, Dr Guruprasad and Principal Ramya.

Nearly 600 vehicles towed for parking violations since April 1

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A month after Bengaluru reintroduced towing operations for wrongly parked vehicles, traffic police say the crackdown is beginning to show visible impact on city roads. Since April 1, nearly 600 vehicles — the majority of them cars — have been towed away for causing obstruction and traffic congestion across different parts of the city. At present, towing operations are being carried out in the Central, West and North traffic divisions with six towing trucks in service. Officials said the drive will soon be expanded to South Bengaluru and other congested areas. Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Karthik Reddy said six additional towing vehicles would soon be added to strengthen enforcement across the city. He said the towing fleet, provided by the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), currently functions with small teams of three to four personnel, including the driver. Ev-

ery operation is supervised by an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) from the respective traffic police station. Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Anoop Shetty said authorities are currently operating with one towing vehicle for every two traffic police station jurisdictions. According to him, the focus has largely been on cars and other four-wheelers as they occupy more road space and create major bottlenecks for moving traffic. Officials said the towing strategy is flexible and changes depending on traffic congestion. In the west division, a tow truck may operate in Wilson Garden one day and move to Ashok Nagar the next, covering different problem areas throughout the week. A senior traffic police officer said towing vehicles are deployed immediately whenever severe congestion is reported due to illegal parking. He added that parking violations are most common on roads within the central business district and at key junctions along the Outer Ring



Problems continue for smooth traffic flow inspite of levying fines for wrong parking

Road. According to police, wrong parking is particularly severe in the south-east and southern stretches of the Outer Ring Road, especially in the city's tech corridor, where roadside parking often narrows carriageways and slows traffic movement during peak hours. Background Vehicle towing in Bengaluru had been suspended on February 2,

2022, following allegations of corruption and irregularities in enforcement. The system was officially reintroduced on April 5, 2026. The operations are being jointly conducted by the Bengaluru Traffic Police and the GBA. Officials said all towing vehicles are equipped with dash cameras and geotagging systems to improve transparency and accountability. The fine for wrong parking is Rs 500 for all vehicles. In addition, vehicle owners must pay towing charges of Rs 650 for two-wheelers and Rs 1,000 for four-wheelers.

CYBERCROOKS POSING AS NIA OFFICIALS DUPE ELDERLY WOMAN OF RS 2 CRORE

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 78-year-old homemaker and her daughter were allegedly cheated of Rs 2.1 crore by cybercriminals posing as officials of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in a sophisticated "digital arrest" scam in Bengaluru.

The victims, residents of Jayanagar, were targeted after fraudsters falsely claimed they were linked to a terror-related investigation involving the banned Popular Front of India (PFI). According to police, the ordeal began on April 13 when the elderly woman received a WhatsApp call from a man claiming to be an NIA officer.

The caller alleged that a PFI member arrested during an investigation had been us-

ing a debit card issued in her name. He warned her not to reveal the matter to anyone, saying the case was highly sensitive. The fraudsters gradually gained the woman's trust and collected details about her family members along with copies of identification documents. They later claimed that her daughter was also under suspicion in the same case.

A man identifying himself as Pradeep Jaswal allegedly conducted video-recorded "statements" of the woman and her daughter. The accused repeatedly threatened them with arrest and public humiliation if they failed to cooperate. Terrified by the accusations, the victims insisted they had no links to any terror organisation.

The fraudsters then assured them that they could avoid arrest if they cooperated with the "investigation." On the pretext of verifying money trails and complying with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) procedures, the accused persuaded the woman to disclose details of her bank accounts and balances. They subsequently instructed her to transfer funds to multiple bank accounts, claiming the money would be returned after verification.

Believing the claims, the woman transferred her life savings over several transactions. Police said she even prematurely closed fixed deposits held in two banks and transferred the proceeds to the fraudsters.

The cybercriminals alleged-

ly continued manipulating the victims and convinced them to pledge gold jewellery to raise additional funds. The fraud came to light only on May 2 when the elderly woman approached her brother seeking more money. Suspecting foul play, her brother warned her that she was being cheated.

The woman then contacted the national cybercrime helpline 1930 and later filed a formal complaint with the police. A senior police officer said a case has been registered under provisions of the Information Technology Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Investigators are now working to trace the accused and freeze the money transferred into various accounts.

Educational institutions preparing students for future technologies: Siddharth Verma

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Educational institutions are equipping students with knowledge required for the future in today's technology-driven world, said Siddharth Verma, Senior General Manager of Schneider Electric Company.

He was speaking after inaugurating the cultural programme "Verve-2026" organised at JSS Engineering College on Kengeri-Uttarahalli Main Road. Addressing students, Verma said the industrial revolution that began in the 17th century paved the way for the technological advancements seen today, particularly in the field of electrical energy. He urged students to make the best use of the knowledge

imparted by professors and develop skills that would help them succeed in the modern industrial environment.

Sangamesh Upase said such cultural and educational platforms help students gain confidence and improve their overall personality. He noted that values such as culture and discipline continue to be preserved through monasteries and educational institutions. Referring to the teachings of Basavanna, Upase said students should adopt his ideals and vachanas in their daily lives to promote equality in society. He added that participation in extracurricular activities alongside academics enhances students' knowledge and leadership abilities.

TERMINAL LACKS MAINTENANCE

Airport-like promise fades as SMVT struggles with maintenance issues

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Years after its grand inauguration, the Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal at Byappanahalli is facing growing criticism over deteriorating passenger amenities and maintenance concerns, raising questions about whether the station has lived up to its "airport-like" image.

When the terminal was opened, it drew widespread attention for its modern architecture, glass facade, escalators, digital displays and centralised air-conditioning. Con-



structed at a cost of Rs 314 crore, the station was projected as a future-ready railway hub designed to redefine passenger comfort in Bengaluru.

However, passengers now say the reality falls short of expectations. While the terminal continues to witness heavy long-distance passen-

ger traffic and remains one of the city's busiest railway stations, several facilities have failed to keep pace with increasing footfall. Inside the station, many passengers complained about inadequate cooling despite the terminal being marketed as centrally air-conditioned. Travellers said the difference between outdoor and indoor temperatures was barely noticeable during afternoon hours, making waiting areas uncomfortable. The lack of adequate seating has emerged as another

major concern. Many passengers were seen sitting on floors or standing for extended periods while waiting for trains. Long-distance travellers often arrive well in advance due to Bengaluru's unpredictable traffic conditions, leading to overcrowding in the concourse area. Maintenance issues were also visible across the premises. Parking areas were littered with garbage, including liquor bottles, while paan stains were found on staircases, platforms and walls. Passengers additionally

raised concerns over poorly maintained washrooms and hygiene standards within the station. Railway officials, however, maintained that the facilities remain operational and said measures are being taken to improve passenger experience as traffic grows steadily. Responding to complaints regarding poor cooling, officials denied any failure in the air-conditioning system and stated that the equipment was functioning normally. Authorities also addressed concerns about esca-

lators frequently remaining non-functional. According to officials, passengers often press emergency stop buttons unnecessarily, after which the escalators can only be restarted using special keys available with security personnel.

Railway authorities said expansion works are already underway to reduce congestion and improve facilities. A new concourse spanning nearly 875 square metres is currently being constructed adjacent to the existing terminal at an estimated cost of Rs 17 crore.

QUICK READ

Computer exam announced for Gram Tax Collectors

CHITRADURGA

A computer test will be held on May 22 at 11 am at Chitradurga Teachers' Training College for candidates applying for Gram Panchayat Tax Collector posts in Chitradurga district. The list of eligible candidates has been published on chitradurga.nic.in for direct recruitment to these vacant posts. All shortlisted candidates must bring their Aadhaar card and online application receipt while attending the exam. Those who fail to appear at the scheduled time will be treated as absent. More details are available on the Zilla Panchayat website chitradurga.nic.in, the officials said. Candidates are advised to follow instructions carefully for examination process rules.

Udupi Police launch locked house safety system

UDUPI

The Udupi District Police has launched an innovative Locked House Beat System (LHBS) to monitor houses left locked when residents travel or work. Beat staff will regularly check such homes during day and night to ensure safety and security. Residents can inform the district control room at 0820-2526709 before leaving. Through WhatsApp, they must share departure and return dates, address details, and a selfie taken in front of the house. The facility is only for individual houses, not apartments. Police have warned citizens not to share details with unknown numbers for safety reasons.

Gadag activist launches stray animal safety initiative

GADAG

Social activist Krishna H Hadapada has appreciated the efforts of S D Sinchana from Gadag for launching a unique animal protection campaign aimed at preventing road accidents involving stray animals. He said society must change its attitude towards the community of transgender people and recognize their potential as contributors to social welfare rather than viewing them only as help seekers. As part of her birthday initiative, Sinchana has started a campaign to place reflective radium belts around the necks of cows and dogs that roam on roads at night. The belts are designed to glow when vehicle lights fall on them, making animals visible to drivers and helping prevent accidents. The initiative is aimed at saving both animal lives and ensuring road safety for motorists.

Nikhil Kumaraswamy addresses JD silver jubilee event

Nikhil criticized government, citing farmer debt, poor support prices, rural distress, and thousands of suicides statewide including Mandya

MANDYA

Mandya district leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy said that the region holds special place in his political journey as he spoke at the silver jubilee celebration of the Janata Dal party at Pandavapura in Melukote constituency

He said that Mandya has given him love and support even though his family is not originally from the district and added that the defeat in the twenty nineteen Lok Sabha election taught him important lessons about patience and maturity making him a more careful and experienced politician

He added that there is a clear difference between his earlier self and present self and he feels more responsible in public life now The Janata Dal party he said was formed



through the struggle of former prime minister H D Deve Gowda and continues to stand for Kannada land language and farmers rights

He said the party has survived while many regional parties have disappeared and remains strong in Karnataka He praised H D Deve Gowda who at the age of ninety three continues to work in the Rajya Sabha for farmers irrigation and rural issues calling him an inspiration for younger leaders

Nikhil also criticized the current government saying that farmers are facing heavy debt no fair support prices and rising distress leading to serious problems in rural areas He claimed that in the last three years nearly three thousand farmers have died by suicide across the state including ninety seven in Mandya alone calling it proof of government failure

He said that people are worried about the future of farming and called for stronger support systems for farmers and better policies from leaders to protect rural life He also said that the year two thousand twenty eight assembly elections will be important and expressed confidence that the alliance could return to power with renewed public trustIn the meeting party workers expressed hope that former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy will return to active state politics and strengthen organization ahead of the next elections They said unity among leaders is key for success and urged continued focus on farmers issues development and regional pride



Unsafe water crisis sparks public outcry

The activist said chicken market waste is dumped into drainage causing foul smell, while nearby road is damaged, hanging dangerously and risking pedestrians daily

Residents of Gadag city have raised serious concern over poor civic conditions in Javali Galli where a major storm water drain and drinking water pipeline system has been badly neglected by authorities said social activist Krishna H Hadapada in a press statement

He said the drinking water line drawn from Tungabhadra river passes through filthy drain water and is covered with waste including plastic and garbage creating serious health risks for nearby areas

He warned that even a small leak in the pipeline could allow sewage water to mix with drinking water affecting residents of Doragalli Hombalanaka Janata Colony Mageri Oni and Ambedkar Nagar and increasing risk of diseases like cholera and typhoidThe activist also highlighted that waste from a nearby chicken market including rotten meat and blood is being dumped directly onto the drainage area making the surroundings unbearable with foul smell affecting daily life of peopleHadapada further stated that the main cement concrete road near the drain has lost its foundation and is now hanging in the air creating fear among pedestrians especially school children and workers who use this route every day

Society seeks land for journalist housing; government will examine feasibility and alternatives like KUDA and municipal plots

WORKING JOURNALISTS SEEK HOUSING SITES IN KOLAR

KOLAR

The Kolar district administration has assured journalists that steps will be taken to explore housing site allocation in the region. Deputy Commissioner Dr M R Ravi said the request for five acres of land submitted by the Kolar and Chikkaballapur Working Journalists Cooperative Society will be examined. He added that the administration will check legal options for allotting government land for housing purposes.

He also suggested that the society consider alternative routes through KUDA, municipal bodies, and public private partnership models. Officials referred to Mysuru where journalists were allotted sites through urban development authority as a possible model for Kolar. Society president K S Ganesh said many journalists in the district still



live in rented houses without owning property. He said if five acres are allotted the society will develop layouts and distribute sites to eligible members. The Deputy Commissioner reiterated that feasibility of government land allotment will be verified before any final decision. He said other possibilities such as municipal council land, KUDA plots, and development partnerships would also be explored. Journalists present welcomed the initiative and urged the administration to speed up the process for housing allotment.

The administration said all legal checks will be completed before any allocation is formally approved for the society. It added that ensuring transparent procedures and fair distribution of land remains the top priority of the district government. The Deputy Commissioner also said that experiences from other districts will be studied carefully so that a suitable and legally sound housing solution can be created for journalists in Kolar while maintaining transparency accountability and public interest at all stages.

Congress protests against gas price hike

UDUPI

Block Congress Committee and Youth Congress Committee in Karkala staged a protest in front of the taluk office in Udupi district today against the hike in gas prices. Party leaders and workers expressed anger over the central government's price hike. Speaking on the occasion Congress leader Uday Shetty Muniyalu criticised the BJP government which came to power with the promise of achche din and said it had given koche din to the people.

KMDC offers major relief for borrowers

KOLAR

The Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation KMDC has announced an interest waiver and One Time Settlement OTS scheme for eligible minority loan beneficiaries in the state According to KMDC District Manager Shirin Taj the scheme covers loans taken between financial years 2013 -14 and 2018 -19 The initiative aims to reduce financial burden and help beneficiaries clear long pending dues Under this scheme borrowers who repay the principal loan

amount will get full waiver of interest. The government has fixed the implementation period from May 1 to July 31 2026 Beneficiaries can also repay in three instalments with 25 percent in May another 25 percent in June and remaining 50 percent in July Shirin Taj appealed to all eligible borrowers to use the opportunity and contact nearest KMDC office for details She said the scheme will support economic stability and self reliance of minority communities She urged beneficiaries not to miss the benefit and complete payments

within the deadline to avoid additional financial stress The corporation expects hundreds of families to benefit from this scheme and improve their economic condition through timely settlement She also said the government initiative is expected to reduce loan default rates and strengthen financial discipline among borrowers. Officials have asked all eligible people to approach KMDC offices for support and guidance during the scheme period effectively and on time across Karnataka.

Minor dies following parental relationship objections

RAMANAGARA

A 15-year-old boy in Channapatna town of Ramanagara district died by suicide after consuming poison following a family dispute over his relationship with an older woman. The incident occurred in Rajakempegowda locality and came to light on May 4 after earlier treatment attempts failed and the boy passed away on May 4, 2026. According to police the boy had fallen in love with a 26-year-old woman named Shobha from Bidadi and his parents had objected due to the age difference and advised him to end the relationship. Despite this the boy reportedly continued contacting her through social media platforms such as WhatsApp and

Instagram which created further tension at home. He had earlier attempted suicide on April 29 after an argument and was first treated at Channapatna Taluk Hospital before being shifted to a private hospital in Bengaluru for advanced care. However he died on May 4 after his condition worsened despite medical efforts. Following his death the boy's parents lodged a complaint alleging that the woman was responsible and police have registered an FIR against her at Channapatna Rural Police Station. Police said investigation is ongoing and statements are being collected from family members friends and others connected to the case to understand the circumstances leading to the tragic incident in detail.

Shidlaghatta to host grand Rama Shobha Yatra

SHIDLAGHATTA

A grand Sri Rama Shobha Yatra will be held in Shidlaghatta on June 7, with organisers announcing that preparations are underway to make the event large and devotional in nature. Posters for the programme were released at Sri Rama Temple in Fort Circle by Sri Rama Shobha Yatra Observance Trust.

Trust taluk president Venkatesh said the Shobha Yatra is aimed at bringing people together and promoting unity among Hindus. He said the motto "We are all Hindus, we are all one" should be followed in practice through such community events.

River opens its first store in Shivamogga

SHIVAMOGGA

Electric scooter maker River Mobility has opened its first store in Shivamogga, marking its entry into the city. The new River Store on BH Road was inaugurated by former Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister K. S. Eshwarappa in partnership with MAG Enterprises. The store will provide test rides, sales, accessories, and full service support for customers. River is expanding across Karnataka and already runs 14 stores in cities like Bengaluru, Belagavi,



Hubballi, Mangaluru, Mysuru, and Tumakuru. The company is also growing in other parts of India through company outlets and dealer partnerships. In April, Karnataka made up over

26 percent of River's total sales, making it its second largest EV market. The River Indie scooter is designed for daily use with good storage, all-weather comfort, and practical range.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS ISSUE

KPCC slams delay women's reservation implementation bill

BENGALURU

KPCC South District Campaign Committee convenor Mrs. Krupa Alva said that even though the Women's Reservation Bill was passed in Parliament in 2023 the Central Government is delaying its implementation She spoke at a media conference in Bengaluru and accused government of misleading people on women's empowerment She said not implementing the 33 percent reservation even after



Parliament approval is an injustice to women She demanded immediate action from the Centre to fulfil its promise. She also raised concerns

over constituency delimitation being planned before reservation is implemented She warned that population based delimitation could change the po-

litical balance in several constituencies She said Bengaluru may face social and political imbalance if changes are made without care She added that delaying women's reservation goes against constitutional values and weakens democracy She criticised the Centre for prioritising political benefits over women's rights.

KPCC leaders R Arun Kumar Dinesh Prasad Mallikarjun Amarnath Nagaveni Krishnamurthy and Bhagya were present

at the press meet They supported the demand for quick implementation of the bill They said women must get equal political opportunities They urged Centre to avoid further delay and respect women representation rights Speakers said the issue is important for future of Indian democracy They called for fair delimitation process that does not harm women or smaller regions They hoped for early justice to women voters nationwide.

Chitradurga gears up for grand BSY tribute event

CHITRADURGA

Preparations are in full swing in Kotenad, Chitradurga, for a major "Abhimanotsava" event being organised to honour former Chief Minister and senior BJP leader B.S. Yediyurappa. The programme is scheduled to be held on May 9 at the spacious ground behind Madara Chennai Mutt. Party workers and supporters of Yediyurappa, who is credited with building the BJP's base in South India, are organising the event as a tribute to his long political journey. Or-

ganisers said the celebration is meant to recognise his role in mentoring leaders and strengthening the party across the state. A large stage and a special German-style pandal are being set up at the venue. Preparations for seating, food, and crowd management are being carried out on a large scale. Local MLA S R Gupta visited the site and reviewed the arrangements. Several leaders including Vishwanath, Munirathna, and Gopalaiah also inspected the preparations and discussed event planning with organisers.

QUICK READ

Temple land proposal sparks village action

HUNSUR

In Maradur village of Hunsur taluk, officials and temple committee members have moved to identify land for Venugol Swamy Temple. The proposed site measures 200 feet east-west and 100 feet north-south. Development Officer Dharmendra, Administrative Officer Nagaraj, and Seva Samiti members inspected and planned to send a proposal to the Taluk Panchayat Executive Officer for reservation of the land. Earlier, villagers had requested allocation of major temple land. Elders and committee members including Satish, Murthy, Lokesh, Siddalingappa, Prasanna and Srikanth attended. Authorities have urged government approval for further action and preservation of temple.

Major job fair to boost opportunities in Haveri

Haveri

A job fair will be held on May 9, 2026, at college premises from 9:30 am. It is organised by Chetana Business School and Goodleppa Hallikeri Colleges to help students and job seekers get opportunities. The aim is to connect rural youth with companies and improve employment chances through campus recruitment. Many companies including Med Plus Pharma, ESSVEE Recruitment, Koravi Developers, Dev Matrix Digital Solutions, Muthoot Finance, Koti Steel and Proficient Minds will participate. The program will be inaugurated by M C Kolli, Director of KLE Society, Belgaum, placement directors and officials attending.

Special Puja prayed for Sudhakar's health recovery

CHALLAKERE

Religious rituals were held at Panchamukeshwar Temple in Challakere for the speedy recovery of District In-charge Minister D. Sudhakar. Devotees performed Mrityunjaya Homa, Rudrabhishek, Navagraha Shanti, Anjaneya Sahasranama and Ganapati puja. The program was led by Rajiv Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sanstha leaders and Congress workers under Smt Usha Chandrakumar. She said the minister is a leader who works for Dalits, backward classes and minorities in the district. Priests Thyagaraja Joshi and Subrahmanya Swamiji conducted the rituals. Many Congress workers including Shivshankar, Nagaratna, Geetha and Mallamma attended the ceremony. Devotees prayed for his early recovery and continued public service.

KSDL invites public tech to protect sandalwood

Minister said KSDL will fund anti-theft tech for farmers, with awards for growers, police, forest staff, informants

BENGALURU

Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Limited (KSDL) has announced a new initiative to protect sandalwood trees and reduce theft across the state said Large and Medium Industries Minister M. B. Patil on Thursday. Under this plan farmers scientists and organisations are invited to share new machines or ideas that can help stop sandalwood theft. They will be allowed to show their technology to KSDL officials and if it works well the government will consider using it and support its rollout. Minister Patil said KSDL will bear the cost of adopting useful anti-theft technologies to protect farmers who grow sandalwood on their land. To encourage cultivation four top sandalwood supplying farmers will be honoured on June 4 the birth



KARNATAKA SOAPS AND DETERGENTS LIMITED

Government of Karnataka

anniversary of Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar.

On the same day police and forest staff who have worked hard to catch sandalwood thieves will also be rewarded along with citizens who gave helpful information.

He said theft of sandalwood has been a long-standing problem and even though strict laws exist convictions remain low in many cases.

In this situation the organisation must support farmers

with both legal help and modern technology so that more people feel safe to grow sandalwood.

So far in the last three years KSDL has bought 174.5 metric tonnes of sandalwood from farmers and paid ₹6.08 crore directly into their bank accounts. Officials said the aim of the programme is to protect valuable sandalwood trees support farmers and strengthen Karnataka's famous Mysuru sandal soap in-

dustry through innovation and public participation. They added that community involvement and new technology will play a key role in reducing illegal cutting of trees and increasing trust between farmers and government agencies. The initiative is also expected to create better income opportunities for growers and ensure steady supply of raw material for KSDL in the coming years.

It further stated that KSDL remains committed to working with farmers experts and security agencies to protect sandalwood resources reduce theft cases and promote sustainable cultivation practices across Karnataka while encouraging innovation-driven solutions from the public for long-term benefits and strengthen rural economy and farmer confidence in Karnataka state.



Ramanagara MLA launches road drainage works project

RAMANAGARA

Ramanagara MLA H A Iqbal Hussain on Thursday launched road and drainage development works in Vivekanandanagar, stating that the area is being upgraded with better basic facilities under a new grant of about Rs 5 crore. He performed the traditional shovel ritual before starting works near Rayaraddody Circle and BGS Circle.

Speaking to reporters, the MLA said Vivekanandanagar is a large ward that requires continuous development and more funding. He said several works have already been taken up in the area after he became MLA, and fresh projects are now being started again to improve roads and drainage systems.

He added that priority is being given not only to rural development but also to urban infrastructure, especially in fast-growing city areas. According to him, basic needs such as education, health, housing, and transport infrastructure are being focused on to improve living conditions. He assured that quality roads would be constructed under the new works.

MLA said CM Siddaramaiah and D K Shivakumar sanctioned special grants for urban and minority welfare, with multiple schemes underway and more works planned soon

The MLA also said that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar have sanctioned special development grants, including funds for urban and minority welfare projects. He mentioned that multiple schemes worth several crores are being implemented in the region and more works will begin soon.

He instructed officials and contractors to maintain quality and complete works on time. During the event, a few local leaders from the JD(S) also joined the Congress party in the presence of the MLA.

The programme was attended by several public representatives, municipal officials, and local leaders who welcomed the development works and expressed hope for improved civic facilities in the ward in the coming months.

Udupi district intensifies sanitation drive before monsoon

KARKALA

With the southwest monsoon expected to arrive soon, authorities in Udupi district have intensified a district-wide pre-monsoon sanitation campaign to prevent disease outbreaks and improve cleanliness.

The "Pre-Monsoon Cleanliness Campaign" has been launched under the guidance of the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Panchayat and is currently being implemented in most gram panchayat areas across the district. Officials stated that 142 of the district's 155 gram panchayats are actively participating in the drive. So far, sanitation work covering 1,35,143 metres has been completed and nearly 22,998 kg of dry waste has been cleared. The campaign focuses on cleaning drains, roadsides, public areas and

stagnant water spots to ensure smooth drainage during monsoon and reduce mosquito breeding. Authorities are also giving importance to reducing plastic pollution. Among all taluks, Kundapura has recorded the highest progress. More than 46,000 metres of area has been cleaned and over 5,500 kg of plastic waste collected there. Officials further said Hebri and Byndoor taluks have achieved full participation from all gram panchayats. The district administration has also initiated strict enforcement against littering and improper waste disposal. A total fine of Rs 38,700 has been collected from 17 violators through gram panchayat officials.

Authorities said the campaign will continue in the coming days to ensure villages remain clean and prepared before heavy rains begin.

Petition filed against BSNL official in Vijayapura

VIJAYAPURA

A petition was submitted to District Collector Dr. Anand K. and BSNL senior officials in Bengaluru by farmer and Dalit organisations along with Aam Aadmi Party leaders demanding action against a BSNL official over alleged violation of government conduct rules during birthday celebrations at the office and disrespect shown to Dr B R Ambedkar. Leaders said the Deputy General Manager of BSNL Vijayapura allegedly celebrated his birthday inside the government office which they claimed violated rules and also hurt sentiments during Ambedkar Jayanti events.

They further alleged that a portrait of Dr Ambedkar was placed near the footpath area of the office while the official birthday celebration was

Prof KH Belur praises Basavanna humanist philosophy

GADAG

Prof KH Belur said that Basavanna is a great humanist who gave early ideas of democracy and equality. He was speaking at a monthly Shivanubhava program in Gadag where Buddha Basava and Ambedkar jayanthi was celebrated. He said Basavanna's Kayaka philosophy teaches dignity of work and equality for all people. He added that Basavanna remains a cultural leader not only for Karnataka but for the world. He said Buddha teachings promote peace and non violence and Dr B R Ambedkar provided a strong constitution for India through knowledge and reading. He also said that celebrating great leaders should not be limited to rituals but their ideas must reach students and society. Former civic leader Shankar Hangal said photo based celebrations are not enough and true respect comes when ideas are practiced in daily life especially among children.

UNANNOUNCED LOAD SHEDDING SPARKS OUTRAGE AMONG UDUPI RESIDENTS

UDUPI

Continuous and unannounced power cuts in several parts of Udupi district have triggered public outrage, with residents alleging that unofficial load shedding is being carried out without prior intimation. Over the last four to five days, residents have been facing repeated electricity interruptions at different times of the day and night. Consumers say power supply is being disrupted during morning, afternoon, late-night and early morning hours, severely affecting normal life. The frequent outages are impacting homes, offices, businesses and industries. Citizens say the situation has become especially difficult due to the ongoing summer season when dependence on cooling appliances such as fans and air conditioners is very high.

Residents pointed out that power cuts are normally expected during heavy rain, light-



ning or strong winds when transformers or electric lines get damaged. However, they alleged that the current disruptions are happening despite stable weather conditions. Public anger is particularly visible in urban localities such as Manipal, Indrali, Kunjibettu, Eshwarnagar, Kuklikatte and Dodanagudde where electricity supply interruptions have reportedly increased in recent days. Consumers questioned how rural areas would be coping if even major urban centres are facing frequent outages.

People said that though scheduled maintenance shutdowns by Mangalore Electricity Supply Company (MESCOM) are acceptable, the absence of prior information regarding emergency power cuts has caused major inconvenience. Meanwhile, MESCOM officials clarified that some interruptions were caused after a transformer malfunction at Nittur station. Executive Engineer K. Prasanna Kumar said the damaged transformer has now been repaired and electricity supply is being restored gradually.

STORMWATER SAFETY PUSH

Bengaluru South orders urgent drain cleaning ahead of monsoon

BENGALURU

With the monsoon season approaching, Bengaluru South City Corporation has issued strict directions for immediate cleaning of stormwater drains to prevent flooding and related disasters. Commissioner K N Ramesh personally inspected desilting work near Sindhoora Kalyana Mantapa on the Outer Ring Road at Sarakki in J P Nagar. During the inspection, the Commissioner instructed engineers to remove all silt and waste from drains and stormwater chan-



nels without delay. He also ordered the removal of slabs covering roadside drains so that cleaning can be carried out effectively. Officials were told to ensure that garbage and weeds

inside the drains are completely cleared.

He further directed that plastic waste collected at bridge junctions in Rajakalves must be removed regularly, warning

that such blockages can seriously affect water flow during heavy rains. He emphasized that continuous cleaning in sensitive locations is necessary to avoid flooding in residential areas. At the same time, the Disaster Management team led by Additional Commissioner (Development) Dr Naveen Kumar Raju carried out inspections across Bommanahalli Zone. The team visited several flood-prone locations including HSR Layout 1st Main Road, 14th Cross, Madiwala Lake, Oxford College surroundings, and Anugraha Layout. Officials re-

viewed the condition of stormwater drains, water flow levels, and encroachments in canal areas. The Additional Commissioner instructed departments to speed up desilting work and take preventive steps to handle possible rain-related emergencies. Disaster Management Advisor Dr Vinutha and field engineers were also present during the inspection. Officials said the ongoing works are aimed at reducing waterlogging problems and ensuring better safety for residents during heavy rainfall in Bengaluru city this monsoon season.

COALITION TALKS INTENSIFY AMID TN POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY

Regional allies hold key influence as major parties explore possible post-election alli-ances

CHENNAI

The political landscape in Tamil Nadu has entered a crucial phase as the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Communist Party of India, and Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi emerge as decisive forces in determining the formation of the next government in the state.

Their support is expected to play a pivotal role in deciding whether actor-politician C. Joseph Vijay's Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) can secure power or whether an alter-native arrangement involving the DMK and AIADMK may take shape.

Amid the ongoing uncertainty following the Assembly election results, M. K. Stalin on Thursday held a series of high-level discussions with CPI-M State Secretary P. Shanmugam, CPI State Secretary M. Veerapandian, and VCK president Thol. Thirumavalavan at his residence on Cenotaph Road in Chennai.

According to sources familiar with the discussions, Stalin explored the possibility of the DMK extending support to the AIADMK in an effort to facilitate government formation and prevent prolonged political instability in the state. The move is being viewed as a significant devel-



opment in Tamil Nadu politics, considering the traditional rivalry be-tween the two Dravidian parties.

The current political deadlock has arisen because no party or alliance has succeed-

ed in crossing the majority mark of 118 seats in the 234-member Tamil Nadu Assembly. With numbers falling short for all major contenders, smaller parties and allies have suddenly gained immense im-

portance in the post-election scenario.

The CPI-M, CPI, and VCK together hold six MLAs, making their collective decision crucial in the ongoing political negotiations. Sources indicated that leaders of both communist parties informed Stalin that their respective state committees would deliberate on the issue during meetings scheduled for Friday before arriving at a final decision.

Political observers believe the coming days could witness intense backroom negotiations as parties attempt to stitch together a stable coalition government in Tamil Nadu.

EC seizes record inducements during state elections

NEW DELHI

Election Commission teams confiscated massive quantities of cash, liquor, drugs, and freebies across poll-bound states. The Election Commission of India has seized more than Rs 1,400 crore worth of illicit inducements during the recently concluded Assembly elections in five states and Union Territories, marking a sharp rise compared to the 2021 state polls.

According to an official statement released on Thursday, flying squads and surveillance teams appointed by the poll body confiscated inducements worth Rs 1,444.96 crore between February 26 and May 6. The amount represents a 40.14 per cent increase over the Rs 1,029.93 crore seized during the Assembly elections held in the same regions in 2021.

Among all states, West Bengal registered the highest increase in seizures, recording a rise of 68.92 per cent compared to the previous election cycle. Tamil Nadu followed closely with a 48.40 per cent increase in confiscated materials.

In West Bengal alone, enforcement teams seized cash



worth Rs 31.14 crore, liquor valued at Rs 151.86 crore, drugs worth Rs 130.28 crore, precious metals valued at Rs 69.36 crore, and other freebies worth Rs 190.77 crore. The total seizure figure in the state reached Rs 573.41 crore, making it one of the largest enforcement drives during the elections.

Tamil Nadu reported the highest overall seizure value among the states, with confiscations amounting to Rs 662.28 crore. The seizures included Rs 105.22 crore in cash, liquor worth Rs 4.94 crore, drugs valued at Rs 78.61 crore, precious metals worth Rs 165.86 crore, and various freebies worth Rs 307.65 crore.

Meanwhile, in Kerala, Election Commission flying

squads recovered inducement materials worth Rs 80.67 crore. These included cash amounting to Rs 12.12 crore, liquor worth Rs 2.51 crore, drugs valued at Rs 58.47 crore, precious metals worth Rs 2.25 crore, and other freebies worth Rs 5.33 crore.

The Election Commission has significantly strengthened surveillance mechanisms during elections in recent years to curb the use of money power and illegal inducements aimed at influencing voters. Officials said coordinated efforts involving flying squads, static surveillance teams, police personnel, and intelligence units were carried out to monitor suspicious movement of cash, liquor, narcotics, and valuables during the election period.

NCB secures 20-yr jail for 3 drug traf-fickers held in Haryana

PANIPAT

A Special NDPS Court in Haryana's Panipat district sentenced three drug traffickers to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment each in a 2021 interstate charas trafficking case, a Narcotics Crime Bureau (NCB) official said on Thursday.

The Special Court held Mohd. Wali, Mohd. Rehan Shah and Imran Khan, all three residents of Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit, guilty under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act for carrying 10 kg charas.

While sentencing the accused trio to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment, the court also slapped a penalty of Rs 2 lakh each," an official of NCB's Delhi Zonal Unit said.

The Special court delivered its judgment in the case on May 5, the NCB said in a statement. The case originated on September 28, 2021, when NCB officials, acting on specific intelligence, intercepted three suspects in Panipat. This led to the seizure of 10 kg of charas sourced from Jammu

and Kashmir's Srinagar, an official statement said.

"The success of the case is attributed to the diligent and meticulous investigation carried out by the NCB. Through effective tracing of backward linkages, the kingpin was identified and apprehended in Jammu as the main supplier, thereby ensuring disruption of the entire supply chain," the federal probe agency said.

This sentencing serves as a powerful deterrent against narco-trafficking, the statement said, adding that it also highlights the NCB's sustained focus on strengthening the quality of prosecution and investigative standards.

Such results contribute significantly to the rising national conviction rate and demonstrate the agency's resolve to seek the maximum penalties under the NDPS Act.

The NCB urged citizens to share information regarding narcotics trafficking through the MANAS – National Narcotics Helpline (Toll-Free Number: 1933), assuring that informers' identities will be kept confidential.

Op Sindoor destroyed terror bases: Air Marshal

JAIPUR

Awadhesh Kumar Bharti, who served as the Director General of Air Operations during last year's Operation Sindoor, on Thursday stated that Indian armed forces shot down 13 Pakistani aircraft and damaged 11 enemy airfields during the high-intensity military campaign.

Addressing a press conference in Jaipur on the anniversary of Operation Sindoor, the Deputy Chief of Air Staff said the operation was a decisive response against terrorism and military threats originating from Pakistan. According to him, Indian forces also destroyed nine terrorist hideouts located inside Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir during the operation.

Air Marshal Bharti asserted that despite the scale of the military action, India successfully ensured that no damage occurred to its civilian or military infrastructure. He highlighted the precision and coordination demonstrated by the Indian armed forces throughout the operation.

He further revealed that the Army, Navy, and Air Force leadership worked in complete coordination and that the armed forces were granted full operational freedom by the government. Every major strategic decision, he said, was taken jointly by the three

Indian armed forces inflicted heavy damage on Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, senior Air Force officer reveals

ser-vices to ensure maximum effectiveness and minimal collateral damage.

"When our desire for peace is mistaken for weakness, we have no choice but to act. And when we act, there is no room for leniency. It is decisive, lethal and translates into Operation Sindoor," the Air Marshal said while explaining the objective behind the military campaign.

Responding to questions regarding India's decision to agree to a ceasefire after the operation, Bharti acknowledged the emotions and anger among citizens, particularly the younger generation, due to India's past experiences with Pakistan. However, he clarified that the operation was specifically targeted at terrorists and their support infrastructure rather than civilians.

The remarks come amid renewed discussions over India's military preparedness and its policy against cross-border terrorism. Defence analysts believe Operation Sindoor has become a significant example of India's coordinated military capability and strategic response in the region.



NDA LEADERS CONDEMN KILLING OF ADHIKARI'S AIDE

NEW DELHI

The NDA leaders on Thursday condemned the killing of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Suwendu Adhikari's personal assistant Chandranath Rath in West Bengal and launched a sharp attack on the Trinamool Congress (TMC) alleging that the state continues to witness political violence and "rule of goons".

Uttarakhand Chief Minister

Pushkar Singh Dhami strongly condemned the incident and said violence has no place in a democracy. I strongly condemn this unfortunate incident. In a democratic process, there is no place for violence. This attempt to create such an atmosphere is a result of frustration and despair. They (TMC) have been shown the exit door by the people," Dhami said while addressing reporters in Dehradun.

Delhi HC protects Aman Gupta personality rights

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday stated that it would pass an interim order to protect the personality and publicity rights of entrepreneur and Shark Tank India judge Aman Gupta in a case concerning the alleged unauthorised commercial use of his identity across multiple digital platforms.

The matter was heard by a single-judge Bench of Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, who indicated that an interim order would be issued after considering submissions presented during the hearing. Gupta, widely known as a judge on the popular television show Shark Tank India, is also the co-founder of electronics brand boAt Lifestyle.

Senior Advocate Diya Kapur, appearing on behalf of Gupta and instructed by Advocate Nakul Gandhi, presented before the court a detailed compilation of allegedly infringing material along with copies of previous judicial orders in similar personality rights cases.

During the proceedings, the counsel highlighted several forms of alleged mis-use of Gupta's identity. These reportedly included fake commercial endorsements, unauthorised event-booking services using his name, sale of merchandise featuring his identity and registered catchphrase "Hum Bhi Bana Lenge," AI chatbots impersonating him, and circulation of vulgar or objectionable content associated with his persona.

The lawsuit, filed before the Commercial Division of the Delhi High Court, alleges "widespread, systematic and unauthorised commercial exploitation" of Gupta's personality, publicity and trademark rights by unknown entities, digital intermediaries and online platforms.

According to the plaint, Gupta has built considerable goodwill and commercial value around his public image as a successful entrepreneur, investor and media personality.

The suit claims that his name, likeness, voice, mannerisms and distinctive catchphrases possess significant market value and are being illegally exploited without consent.

The legal action also seeks protection for Gupta's registered trademarks, including the phrases "Hum Bhi Bana Lenge" and "Down, But Not Out!", which have become closely associated with his public appearances and television persona.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-4/TENDER/2026-27/755 DATE: 06/05/2026
Short term E-Re-Tender Notification (Call-3)

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise Short term e-Re-Tenders from Eligible registered contractors for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 1 work under head of account 4059-SCP (CMIDP), Amount put to tender is Rs. 80.00 Lakhs.

Calendar of events:1)Last date for queries & clarifications : 12-05-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 14-05-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 16-05-2026 at 4.30 PM, 4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 5)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-207/KSMCA/2026-27

Government of Karnataka
Office of the Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Ayanur Sub Division, Shivamogga

No.: ACF/Tender-CAMPA/CR-3/2025-26 Date: 05.05.2026
Short-Term e-Tender Notice (Through e-Procurement Portal)

Short-Term Call-3 Tenders are invited through e-procurement portal as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 2000 from interested Forest contractors registered in Forest Department as Forest contractors for the year 2026-27 and having experience of growing saplings of various sizes, plantation advance works and having experience of carrying out similar works as put to tender in the Forest Department and having necessary facility for growing of saplings in the limits of the zone where works have to be carried out for implementation of "Formation of Plantation and Maintenance" mentioned in the annexure, under CAMPA Head of Account, in forest areas coming in the limits of various Forest Zones of Shivamogga Regional Forest Division for the year 2026-27. For further information this office can be contacted during office hours and details of the Tender can be obtained through the official website <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

1.Last date for submission of e-Tenders: 13.05.2026 up to 4.00 PM 2. Date of opening the Tender: 14.05.2026 at 4.30 PM

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests, Ayanur Sub Division, Shivamogga

DIPR/smg/ksmca/26-27/1605/187

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
BENGALURU URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Olo Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, First Floor,
Zilla Panchayat Building, S. Kariyappa Road,
Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple), Bengaluru 560070.
Phone No: 080-26716046 Website: <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>
No.EE/PRED/BNG/UJ/TND/AE-1/07/2026-27 Dated: 06.05.2026

KPPP Tender Notice (Single Cover System)
TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited through KPPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Urban, For MLA Grants Works. The work details can be obtained from the KPPP Web Site The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before
Dated:22.05.2025 upto 4.00 pm. Further details can be obtained from web site at <http://www.KPPP.karnataka.gov.in> or contact this office during office working hours.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Urban Dist, Bangalore.

DIPR/CP/556/SSC/2026-27

Government of Karnataka
Office of The District Officer,
Minorities Welfare Department, Shivamogga.
1st Floor, Sathyashree Arcade, 5th Parallel Road,Durgigudi.
E-mail: domshimoga@gmail.com Ph.: (08182) 220206
No.: MWDS/F.I.T./C.R.-08/2026-27 Date: 06.05.2026

e-Procurement Short-Term Tender Notification

Short-Term Tender is invited through e-Procurement (KPP Portal) from interested Tenderers for selection of a competent agency for supply of food and other necessary items to A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Residential School/College, M. D. R. Schools/Colleges and Student Hostels functioning in the limits of Shivamogga District Minorities Welfare Department. Details are as below.

Sl. No. 1. Tender No.: MWD/2026-27/IND0128 Approx. Amount put to Tender : 457.59 Lakhs. Commencement date for uploading Tender Application: 04.05.2026 Last date for uploading Tender Form: 19.05.2026 at 5.00 PM

Tender Application Fees: As per E-Procurement (KPPP Portal) E.M.D. Amount: 6.86 Lakhs

Interested Tenderers should upload in website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in and Tender Document and information is available in the said website.

Sd/- District Officer, Minorities Welfare Department, Shivamogga.

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/20/05/193

CH CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad contact: 080-41209042

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ,
ವಿಭಾಗ ಕಾರವಾರ

ಸಂ: ಕಾನಿ.ಇಂ/ಲೋ.ಇ.ವಿ.ಕಾ/ಓ.ವಿ-1/ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-02/2026-27/541 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06-05-2026

ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ (ಇ-ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಡಿ)

ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕೋಟಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವರಿಸಿದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರವಾರ ಇವರಿಂದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಕೋಟಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಇ-ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಡಿ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವುದು. ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ವಹಿಸಲು ಅರ್ಹಗಾರರೇಕಾದರೂ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು (ಕೆಡಿಎಲ್-4) ರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವ ಪರವುಗಳನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸುವುದು.

(1) ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ವಿಚಾರಣೆಗೆ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿ: 13-05-2026 16.30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ (2) ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿ: 14-05-2026 16.30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ (3) ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ವಿಷಯ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿ: 15-05-2026 17.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ (4) ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅರ್ಥಿಕ ವಿಷಯ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿ: 18-05-2026 17.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಸರು: ಲೆಕ್ಕಪರಿಶೀಲನೆ: Mitigation-8443-Deposit Contribution During 2025-26 ವರ್ಷ ಇನ್ನೆಡೆಟ್ (1) PWD/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT32655 (ಕೆಡಿಎಲ್-4) ರಲ್ಲಿನ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಂದಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ e-proc ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಚಿಸಲಾದ ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಇಲಾಖಾ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂದರೆ "https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in" ನೋಡುವುದು. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ help desk Bangalore (Phone No. 918025501216 & 918025501227) ಇವರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸುವುದು. ಸಹಿ/- ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಾರವಾರ
DIPR/KWR/MSKMA/110/26-27 dt. 06.05.2026

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ
ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ-562123
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂ: 080-27222135 e-mail: ka.nelmangala.cmo@gmail.com
ಸಂ: ನಸಸ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ(ವಿ)/ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು/16/2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 07.05.2026

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ)

(ಸ್ವಾಂತರ್ಯ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ KW 1&2 ರ & KG ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳಂತೆ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ)

ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಇವರಿಂದ 2026-27ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನಗರಸಭೆ ನಿಧಿಯಡಿ ವಿವಿಧ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ಒಟ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ: 149.93 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಐಟಂವಾರು ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನ ಕೆಲಸ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಒಳ ಲೋಕೇಲಿ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಡಿ ಅರ್ಹ ದರ್ಜೆಯ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೆಲಸವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರುಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮುಂತಾದ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> ಹಾಗೂ ನಗರಸಭೆಯ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಾಖೆಯನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸುವುದು.

ವಿವರಗಳ ಕು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತಿದೆ:

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1	DMA/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT57600	49.96
2	DMA/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT57593	49.98
3	DMA/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT57599	49.99

ಸಹಿ/- ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು
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ಸಹಿ/- ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು
ನಗರಸಭೆ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ

QUICK READ

Millions of British voters cast ballots

London

Millions of British voters cast their ballots on Thursday in local and regional elections that are expected to deal a huge blow to Prime Minister Keir Starmer's Labour Party and renew questions over his ability to govern. Elections for almost 5,000 council seats in England and to the parliaments in Scotland and Wales could signal the beginning of the end of Britain's traditional two-party system if voters opt for populist and nationalist parties rather than the once-dominant Labour and Conservatives. Polls suggest the populist Reform UK of Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage will expand its control of councils in England, and could form the main opposition in Scotland and Wales to the pro-independence Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru. Challenging from the left, the Greens look set to threaten Labour's strongholds in London and other major centres.

Iraq's historic marshes come alive

Chibayish Marshes

After years of drought that left large swathes of Iraq's historic marshes cracked and empty, rising water levels are beginning to revive the wetlands, drawing buffalo herders and fishermen back to areas once abandoned. In Chibayish marshes in southern Iraq, canoes once again glide through waterways that had dried up in recent years, while water buffalo wade through restored marshland and patches of green pasture have reappeared. Some time ago, all our livestock died and there was no water at all," said Haidar Qassem, a farmer raising water buffalo in the central marsh. "Many of our people migrated because of the drought," Qassem said, adding that water had returned this year, livestock numbers were recovering and some families had come back.

NAME CHANGE

I, KAIYNATH ABDUL KAREEM, W/o Mohammed Safari Mushtaq, Resident of No 32/3, Cockburn Road Cross, Shivajinagar, Bengaluru 560051, have changed my name to KAIYNATH KAREEM, Vide Affidavit Dated 05.05.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru

BEFORE THE HON'BLE STATE CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL COMMISSION, CHENNAI

CMP No.1079/2025 in FA.No.1152/2025

Mr. Nithiyannandhan S/o. Pachiyappan Karaipudhur, Palladam Circle, Tiruppur ...Petitioner/ Appellant -Vs-

1.The Chief Executive Officer, Flipkart Internet (P) Ltd., Bengaluru-560 103 and 3 others --Respondents/Respondents To,

1. The Chief Executive Officer, Flipkart India (P) Ltd., Vaishnavi Summit, 1 Ground Floor, 7th Main, 80 Feet Road, 3rd Block, Koramangala Industrial Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560 034 Respondent No.2

Kindly take notice that in the CMP No.1079/2025 in FA.No.1152/2025 for condone delay his Hon'ble State Consumer Disputed Redressal Commission, Chennai has ordered fresh summons to you through Paper Publication returnable by 20.05.2026. Kindly be present on 20.05.2026 at 10.30 a.m before the said Hon'ble State Consumer Disputed Redressal Commission, Chennai in person or through a Pleader. Your appearance by then the matter will heard and decided in your absence. The case stands posted on 20.05.2026.

K.SUDHAKAR & V.T.SRINIVASAN Counsel for Petitioner/Applicant

US-Iran move closer to temporary deal to halt conflict

The proposed arrangement is expected to be only an interim understanding rather than a comprehensive peace settlement

WASHINGTON

The United States and Iran are moving closer toward a limited and temporary agreement aimed at halting the ongoing conflict between the two nations, according to officials and sources familiar with the negotiations.

However, the proposed arrangement is expected to be only an interim understanding rather than a comprehensive peace settlement, leaving several major disputes unresolved.

Sources revealed on Thursday that the draft framework under discussion focuses primarily on stopping military hostilities and ensuring stability in the strategically important Strait of Hormuz. The narrow waterway remains one

of the world's most crucial oil shipping routes, and fears of disruptions there had earlier rattled global markets.

The emerging agreement reportedly takes the form of a short-term memorandum instead of a full-scale peace accord. This highlights the continuing mistrust and deep divisions between Washington and Tehran, especially over Iran's nuclear programme. Key disagreements remain regarding the future of Iran's highly enriched uranium stockpiles and the duration for which Tehran would suspend sensitive nuclear activities.

Despite these unresolved issues, both countries appear willing to reduce immediate tensions and avoid a fresh escalation in conflict. Officials involved in the diplomatic



process indicated that the current priority is to establish a stable environment that can pave the way for direct negotiations in the future.

The possibility of reduced tensions has already influenced international financial markets. Asian stock markets traded near record highs on Thursday, while global oil

prices recorded sharp declines amid hopes that shipping through the Strait of Hormuz could soon normalise without threats of disruption.

A senior Pakistani official involved in mediation efforts stated that the immediate goal is to secure a permanent end to military confrontation. According to the official, broader and more complex disputes could be addressed later once both sides return to formal diplomatic talks.

The temporary arrangement, if finalised, may provide short-term relief for global energy markets and international trade routes, even though a lasting resolution to the decades-long tensions between the United States and Iran remains uncertain.



US troop cut worries German's Vilseck town residents

VILSECK

The small Bavarian town of Vilseck is facing growing uncertainty after reports suggested that at least 5,000 American troops could soon be withdrawn from Germany under plans linked to President Donald Trump.

The move is expected to significantly impact the local economy, which has depended heavily on the U.S. military presence since the end of World War Two.

Although officials have not yet formally confirmed which units will be relocated, attention has centred on the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment stationed at Rose Barracks in Vilseck. The regiment is currently the only permanent brigade combat team based in Germany and has long played a major role in supporting the local community through employment and business activity.

Vilseck's newly elected mayor, Thorsten Graedler, expressed serious concern over the potential consequences of the troop withdrawal. According to him, the town's economy is deeply tied to the military base, which provides thousands of jobs and supports businesses including restaurants, pubs, supermarkets, garages, and local service providers.

Graedler explained that over the years, the consistent presence of American soldiers and their families created a strong economic dependence that is now becoming a major vulnerability. He warned that losing the military population

They fear economic collapse amid possible withdrawal of thousands of American military personnel from the town

could result in significant job losses across the rural region, where alternative sources of employment are limited.

The proposed troop reduction comes as Washington continues to pressure European nations to increase their own defence spending. American leaders have repeatedly argued that European allies have relied too heavily on U.S. military support while underinvesting in their domestic defence capabilities.

Interestingly, discussions about withdrawing the 2nd Cavalry Regiment had already surfaced during Trump's first presidential term. However, those plans were later reversed under former President Joe Biden, allowing the regiment to remain stationed in Germany.

Despite the uncertainty, Mayor Graedler said he still hopes the troop withdrawal plans may not be fully implemented, noting that no official confirmation has yet been issued regarding the removal of the Stryker unit. Meanwhile, the German government stated that the announcement did not come as a major surprise, especially as Berlin has recently increased defence spending to rebuild and modernise its military following years of underinvestment.

Health authorities worldwide race tracing passengers following deadly hantavirus outbreak aboard stranded Antarctic cruise vessel

Global hunt begins after deadly cruise ship virus outbreak

AMSTERDAM

Countries around the world have launched urgent efforts to trace passengers who left the cruise ship MV Hondius after a deadly hantavirus outbreak onboard claimed three lives and raised fears of further international spread of the disease.

The outbreak occurred aboard the expedition cruise vessel MV Hondius, which later became stranded off the coast of Cape Verde. According to the World Health Organization, three people a Dutch couple and a German national died following the outbreak. Eight additional passengers, including a Swiss citizen, are suspected to have contracted the virus.

Health officials are now attempting to locate several passengers whose whereabouts remain unknown after they

disembarked from the vessel in different countries. Authorities fear that infected travellers may unknowingly spread the disease further if not identified and isolated quickly.

Among the passengers who left the ship was the wife of a Dutch man who died onboard on April 11. Reports stated that the woman later became seriously ill herself and died before she could return to the Netherlands.

Dutch airline KLM Royal Dutch Airlines confirmed on Wednesday that the woman had been removed from a flight in Johannesburg on April 25 after her medical condition rapidly worsened during travel. According to Dutch broadcaster RTL, a KLM flight attendant who reportedly came into contact with the passenger has now been admitted to a hospital in Amsterdam

after showing possible symptoms associated with hantavirus infection.

The Dutch health ministry confirmed that a Dutch woman has been hospitalised and will undergo testing to determine whether she contracted the virus. However, officials did not publicly identify her profession or disclose details regarding possible contacts, citing privacy considerations. A spokesperson for KLM stated that the airline could not comment on individual medical cases due to confidentiality policies.

Hantavirus is a rare but potentially deadly disease generally spread through contact with infected rodents or their droppings. Symptoms can initially resemble flu-like illness but may rapidly progress to severe respiratory complications.

Israeli attack kills son of Hamas leader

CAIRO

An Israeli air strike has killed the son of Hamas' chief negotiator in U.S.-mediated talks over Gaza's future, a senior Hamas official said on Thursday, as leaders of the militant group held talks in Cairo aimed at safeguarding their truce with Israel.

Azzam Al-Hayya, son of Khalil Al-Hayya, succumbed to his injuries on Thursday after being struck in an Israeli attack on Wednesday night, said senior Hamas official Basim Naim. He is the fourth son of Hamas' exiled Gaza chief to have been killed in Israeli attacks.

Hayya, who has seven children, has survived multiple Israeli attempts to kill him. An Israeli strike in Doha last year targeting Hamas leadership killed his son, though Hayya survived.

Two other sons were killed in past Israeli attempts on his life, in Gaza strikes in 2008 and 2014.

Rubio to meet Pope Leo as Trump keeps up attacks on pontiff

VATICAN CITY

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio came to the Vatican on Thursday for a potentially fraught encounter with Pope Leo as President Donald Trump has continued a series of disparaging attacks on the Catholic leader over the Iran war.

Rubio's convoy drove through the central Roman boulevard leading to the Vatican under tight security, arriving at 11:10 am (0910 GMT) for the first visit between the pope and a Trump cabinet official in nearly a year.

The closed-door meeting between Leo and Rubio, who also serves as Trump's national security adviser, is expected to last about a half-hour. Rubio will meet afterwards with

the Vatican's top diplomat, Italian Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

Leo, the first U.S. pope, drew Trump's ire after becoming a firm critic of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran and the Trump administration's hardline anti-immigration policies.

The president has kept up an unprecedented series of public attacks on the pope in recent weeks, drawing a backlash from Christian leaders across the political spectrum.

On Monday, Trump falsely suggested the pope believed it was okay for Iran to obtain nuclear weapons and said Leo was "endangering a lot of Catholics" by opposing the war.

Leo told journalists after the latest attack that he was spreading the Christian message of peace. The pope also

Hezbollah commander killed by Israel in Beirut suburbs

BEIRUT

Israel said on Thursday it had killed a commander of Hezbollah's elite Radwan force in an airstrike on Beirut a day earlier, the first Israeli attack on the Lebanese capital since a ceasefire agreed last month.

The Israeli military said the commander was killed when Israel struck the southern suburbs of Beirut. There was no immediate confirmation from Hezbollah. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz announced the attack in a joint statement on Wednesday.

The strike has raised pressure on the ceasefire that had halted Israeli attacks on Beirut, even as Israeli forces have remained deployed in areas south of the Litani River and continued to carry out strikes in southern Lebanon.

Iran ally Hezbollah has responded to those strikes by firing and launching armed

drones towards Israeli soldiers.

The Lebanon ceasefire has underpinned a broader truce in the wider Iran war, with a halt to Israeli strikes in Lebanon being a key Iranian demand in Tehran's negotiations with Washington.

Israel earlier on Wednesday called for residents to evacuate several villages north of the Litani River, which could represent an expansion of Israel's zone of action. Talks between Israel and Lebanon have continued, but have largely been at the ambassador level.

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said on Wednesday that it was premature to talk of any high-level meeting between Lebanon and Israel.

Salam, in comments reported by Lebanon's National News Agency on Wednesday, said shoring up a ceasefire would be the basis for any new negotiations between Lebanese and Israeli government envoys in Washington.

TIE BEYOND DIPLOMATIC FORMALITY

Paraguay Prez lauds friendship with Taiwan, China

TAIPEI

Paraguay and Taiwan share a friendship based on freedom and democracy that extends beyond diplomatic formalities, Paraguayan President Santiago Pena said on Thursday, as China told him to sever ties with Taipei.

His visit comes as China steps up efforts, opens new tab to draw the South American nation away from its longstanding support for Taipei.

The trip is Pena's second visit as president to Taiwan. Paraguay is one of 12 coun-

tries that still maintain formal diplomatic relations with the democratically-governed island that is claimed by Beijing.

Speaking in English to university students in Taipei after receiving an honorary doctorate, Pena said Paraguay and Taiwan have an alliance that is based on freedom.

"Paraguay and Taiwan share a friendship built on a solid foundation, democracy, freedom, confidence in institutions, the dignity of hard work," he said.

"Our bilateral relationship

extends far beyond diplomatic formality. It is manifested in



concrete actions, tangible achievements, and real opportunities for both of our nations."

Addressing Pena at the same event, Taiwanese Vice President Hsiao Bi-king mentioned how she had first met and been impressed by him in Washington before he was elected president.

"And I am still extremely impressed by President Pena's passion for serving the people of Paraguay," she added.

"President Pena, passion, people, Paraguay, five P's. And plus, a principled partnership

with Taiwan makes it 'perfecto.'" In Beijing earlier on Thursday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said Paraguay should "stand on the right side of history" and "sever so-called diplomatic relations with the Taiwan authorities."

"The 'One China' principle is a fundamental norm of international relations and the universal consensus of the international community," Lin said, referring to Beijing's stance that both sides of the Taiwan Strait are part of a single country.



MUMBAI

Indian batting legend Cheteshwar Pujara believes that fifteen year old sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is ready for the ultimate challenge. Pujara emphasized that while the young star is currently dominating the shorter format, the

Cheteshwar Pujara backed teenage prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi for Test cricket, praising his temperament following a stellar 2026 IPL season

“Teen star Vaibhav ready for test cricket”: Cheteshwar Pujara

longest version of the game remains the true test of a player's character.

Sooryavanshi has become the talk of the town during the ongoing 2026 IPL season. Playing for the Rajasthan Royals, the left-handed prodigy has smashed 404 runs in just ten innings. This explosive performance has led many fans to demand his immediate inclusion in India's national T20 squad. However, Pujara argues that young talents should not limit themselves to white-ball cricket.

“If Vaibhav has the opportunity and the skill, he should definitely play Tests,” Pujara stated. He explained that Test matches build the temperament and respect for the game that every cricketer needs. While acknowledging that specialists like Shreyas Iyer are vital for specific formats, he insists that the red-ball game should be the goal



for every aspiring athlete.

Now working as a cricket expert, Pujara is using his vast experience to break down the game for viewers. He enjoys sharing stories from the pitch to help fans and young players understand the technical side of batting and bowling strategies. For Pujara, the message is clear, talent like Sooryavanshi's is rare, and it deserves to be nurtured on the grandest stage of all.

Dropped catches cost Punjab victory against Hyderabad

HYDERABAD

Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer was left reflecting on missed opportunities after his team suffered a 33-run defeat to Sunrisers Hyderabad. Despite a historic performance from a young star, Iyer admitted that poor fielding proved to be the deciding factor in the high-scoring match.

Hyderabad set a massive total of 235 runs, but the story could have been different. Punjab fielders dropped key batters Ishan Kishan and Heinrich Klaasen early in their innings.

Both players took full advantage of these lifelines, smashing half-centuries that pushed the game out of reach. “We weren't able to take catches,” a frustrated Iyer noted after the game. He pointed out that while the team started the season strong, they cannot afford such sloppy mistakes if they want to stay competitive.

The match wasn't without highlights for Punjab. Cooper



Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer blamed poor fielding and dropped catches for their 33-run loss to Hyderabad, despite Cooper Connolly's historic century.

Connolly played a breathtaking innings, scoring an unbeaten 107 runs. At just 19, he became the youngest overseas player to hit an IPL century. Iyer praised the teenager's fearless mindset under pres-

sure and also commended Yuzvendra Chahal for his steady bowling on a difficult pitch.

However, a top-order collapse left Connolly with too much to do alone. Chasing a giant target, Punjab finished on 202 runs. While the batting showed heart, the skipper insisted that the team must improve their consistency and fielding standards immediately. For Hyderabad, the win was a clinical display of how to punish an opponent's mistakes and control the game.

India to host first World Yogasana Championship

AHMEDABAD

India is preparing to make history by hosting the first-ever World Yogasana Championship in Ahmedabad next month. From June 4 to 8, the TransStadia arena will welcome elite athletes from over forty countries for a global competition that blends ancient tradition with modern athletic spirit.

The event, organized by Yogasana Bharat, aims to elevate yoga from a spiritual practice to a globally recognized sport. Official trials were recently held in Haryana to select the best talent for the Indian national team. These athletes will now undergo intensive training at a coaching camp in Ahmedabad to prepare for the world stage. Competitors will be judged on their precision, balance, and flexibility across various categories, including artistic and rhythmic yogasana.

Udit Sheth, President of Yogasana Bharat, stated that this championship is a "defining moment" for the sport. He noted that the vision, supported by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is to introduce yoga to the world's youth and eventually see it featured in the Olympic Games. By creating a competitive environment, India hopes to show that yogasana is a gateway to a healthy and disciplined lifestyle.



PSG beat Bayern to reach Champions League final

MUNICH

Paris Saint-Germain has secured a spot in their second consecutive UEFA Champions League final after a tense battle against Bayern Munich. Despite a 1-1 draw in the second leg, the French giants advanced with a thrilling 6-5 total score across both matches.

PSG started with lightning speed, scoring just three minutes into the game. Ousmane Dembele found the back of the net after a perfect pass from teammate Khvicha Kvaratskhelia. This early goal put heavy pressure on Bayern, who spent the rest of the match desperately searching for a way back. The German side felt cheated when the referee denied their loud appeals for a penalty after a close-call handball in the box.

Throughout the match, both goalkeepers performed hero-



ics. Manuel Neuer made several brilliant saves to keep Bayern in the hunt, while PSG's Matvey Safonov blocked a dangerous shot from Jamal Musiala. Bayern's star striker Harry Kane finally scored late in the second half with a powerful strike, marking his 14th goal of the tournament. However, his effort came too late to change the final outcome.

Under the guidance of coach Luis Enrique, PSG showed a new level of defensive toughness to hold off Bayern's late attacks. The defending champions will now travel to Budapest for a massive final showdown against Arsenal. After winning the trophy last season, the Parisians are now just one win away from keeping their crown as the kings of Europe.

Junior hockey teams ready for Australia clash

BHOPAL

Hockey India has officially announced the twenty-four-member squads for the upcoming Under-18 Men's and Women's series against Australia. This high-stakes tournament will be held at the SAI Central Centre in Bhopal from May 15 to 20, serving as a vital warm-up for the Asia Cup in Japan later this month.

The final players were chosen after a week of intense training and testing. Forward Ketan Kushwaha has been appointed as the captain for the Men's team, while Sweeti Kujur will lead the Women's side. Both teams have been trimmed down from a larger group of forty-two players to ensure only the most fit and tactically sharp athletes take the field.



Legendary former players are guiding these young stars. Sardar Singh, who mentors the Men's team, believes playing against a fast-paced Australian side is the perfect way to test the boys' discipline. Meanwhile, former captain Rani is coaching the Women's team. She described the four-match series as a "dress rehearsal" that will show exactly where the players stand before they head to

the international stage.

The series is expected to draw large crowds in Bhopal as fans gather to see the future of Indian hockey. For these teenagers, it is more than just a game, it is a golden opportunity to prove they can handle the pressure of international competition. With expert coaching and tough opponents, the stage is set for an exciting week of world-class junior hockey.

STAR BOWLERS RETURN TO NZ SQUAD

WELLINGTON

New Zealand has announced an ambitious nineteen-man squad for their upcoming Test tours, featuring the highly anticipated return of fast bowlers Kyle Jamieson and William O'Rourke. The team is preparing for a historic one-off match against Ireland in Belfast followed by a major three-game series in England.

Jamieson is back in the Test lineup for the first time in over two years. The towering bowler has spent a long time recovering from a serious back injury and was recently eased back into action through domestic matches. O'Rourke also returns from his own injury layoff, strengthening a pace attack that includes stars like Matt Henry and Ben Sears.

The squad features some fresh faces as well. All-rounder Dean Foxcroft earned his first call-up after a

string of impressive performances in local cricket. Meanwhile, veteran batter Henry Nicholls has been recalled following a strong domestic season. Former captain Kane Williamson also joins the group, providing vital experience for the challenging English conditions.

The tour begins on May 27 in Belfast, marking the first time New Zealand will play a Test match on Irish soil. While the Ireland game is a standalone fixture, the following matches in England will be part of the World Test Championship. The team will be without Michael Bracewell, who is taking a break from the long format, and Jacob Duffy, who is staying home for the birth of his child. This tour represents a vital chance for the Kiwis to climb the global rankings.



Indian women archers stun S.Korea in Shanghai

SHANGHAI

The Indian women's recurve team created history at the Archery World Cup Stage 2 by defeating the legendary South Korean team to reach the final. The stunning 5-1 semifinal victory guarantees India at least a silver medal and marks a rare upset against the ten-time Olympic champions.

The trio of Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat, and young Kumkum Mohod showed incredible nerves of steel. After taking an early lead, they finished the match with a perfect streak of three bullseyes to knock out the top-seeded Koreans. India will now face China in the gold medal match this Sunday. “It was a dominant performance,” noted spectators as the Indian women outshined the reigning world champions in a high-pressure deciding set.



While the women celebrated, it was a difficult day for the rest of the Indian contingent. The men's recurve team suffered a surprising early exit after losing to Bangladesh. Meanwhile, India's usually dominant compound archers struggled across the board. The men's compound team narrowly missed out on a bronze medal after a tense shoot-off against China, and the women's compound team fell in

the quarterfinals to Turkey.

Despite the setbacks in other events, the spotlight remains firmly on the recurve women. Their ability to take down the world's most successful archery nation has sent a wave of excitement through the sport. As they prepare for the final against the home favorites, China, the Indian team is proving they are serious contenders for the upcoming international season.

Mumbai to launch first Women's T20 League

MUMBAI

The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) has announced a landmark moment for local cricket with the launch of the inaugural T20 Mumbai Women's League. The tournament will run alongside the fourth season of the men's league from June 1 to 13 at the historic Wankhede Stadium, creating a massive double-header for fans.

This new competition aims to provide a high-profile stage for female athletes. Big names like Sayali Satghare and Saima Thakor will feature alongside teenage sensation Ira Jadhav, who recently became the most expensive

player at the auction. MCA President Ajinkya Naik stated that hosting both events together reflects the city's commitment to building a more inclusive and diverse cricket ecosystem.

The men's side remains equally star-studded, featuring global icons such as Suryakumar Yadav, Yashasvi Jaiswal, and Ajinkya Rahane. For many young stars, playing at the Wankhede is a dream come true.

League Chairman Rajdip Gupta noted that the tournament will be broadcast nationwide on Star Sports and streamed on JioHotstar, giving local talent invaluable exposure to a massive audience.

England star Lucy Staniforth set to retire

BIRMINGHAM

Aston Villa midfielder Lucy Staniforth has announced she will retire from professional football at the end of this season. The 33-year-old is ending a brilliant 16-year career that saw her rise from a teenage talent at Sunderland to an international star.

Since joining Villa in 2023, the York-born playmaker helped the club reach its highest league finish. Despite facing tough injury setbacks, including major knee surgeries, her leadership remained unmatched. Reflecting on her journey, the Lioness, who earned 17 caps for England, shared that she feels "super-content" to start a new chapter.

Fans now have one final chance to cheer for the midfield maestro. Staniforth leaves a lasting legacy of resilience and skill, moving into the "big, wide world" after an unforgettable run on the pitch.



Batters on fire as SRH top table

HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad captain Pat Cummins has hailed his team's "fearless" batting unit after a dominant 33-run victory over Punjab Kings propelled them to the top of the IPL 2026 standings. Cummins credited the group's aggressive mindset for setting a massive total that proved too much for the opposition.

Batting first, Hyderabad posted a towering 235 runs, thanks to blistering half-centuries from Heinrich Klaasen and Ishan Kishan. While both players

benefited from dropped catches, they made the most of their luck to dismantle the Punjab bowling attack. Cummins jokingly admitted he was tempted to stay on the sidelines after seeing the team win so consistently under stand-in captain Ishan Kishan earlier this season. “The batters have been on fire, so you don't have to do too much,” Cummins noted with a smile. Despite the loss, the match featured a historic moment for Punjab as young Australian Cooper Connolly smashed an unbeaten 107. At just 19, he became the youngest overseas player to score an IPL century.

QUICK READ

Apple invests ₹100 crore for India's sustainability

New Delhi
Apple has committed ₹100 crore toward environmental initiatives in India, strengthening its sustainability goals and clean energy transition. The company is partnering with Clean Max to create more than 150 megawatts of renewable energy capacity across the country. Apple said the additional clean power generated would be enough to supply electricity to nearly 1,50,000 Indian households for an entire year. The investment aims to reduce carbon emissions and support India's growing renewable energy infrastructure. Apple also plans to expand energy efficiency measures and encourage greener operations within its supply chain. The initiative reflects the company's broader commitment to achieving carbon neutrality and promoting sustainable development in key global markets worldwide.



Instagram removes fake accounts in massive Purge 2026

New Delhi
Meta-owned Instagram reportedly removed millions of bot and inactive accounts in 2026 in a major cleanup dubbed "Great Purge of 2026" by users. The action caused sudden drops in follower counts for celebrities, influencers, and brands. Reports suggested influencer Kylie Jenner lost 14 million followers, though Meta clarified that only inactive accounts were removed and genuine users were unaffected. A company spokesperson said the process is routine and aims to improve authenticity and reduce fake engagement driven by bots inflating likes and followers. The purge sparked widespread reactions, with users sharing screenshots of declining numbers and joking that no account, including Instagram's official handle, was spared in the cleanup drive.

NITI Aayog releases 'School Education Roadmap' India

New Delhi
NITI Aayog has released a comprehensive report titled 'School Education System in India: Temporal Analysis and Policy Roadmap for Quality Enhancement', offering a decade-long assessment of school education across access, infrastructure, equity, inclusion, and learning outcomes. The report proposes 13 recommendations, including 8 systemic reforms such as composite schools, governance strengthening, teacher development, digital learning expansion, and inclusion initiatives, along with 5 academic reforms focusing on pedagogy, assessment, vocational education, ECCE, and AI integration. Based on UDISE+ 2024-25, PARAKH, NAS, and ASER data, it highlights improvements in infrastructure, digital access, enrolment equity. Covering 14.71 lakh schools and 24.69 crore students, it also outlines 33 phased implementation pathways across all governance levels.

'India-Vietnam tie boosts trade growth outlook'

The partnership upgrade expected to boost trade, critical minerals access, exports, and supply-chain resilience significantly, says PHDCCI

NEW DELHI

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) has said that the elevation of India-Vietnam relations to an Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership will significantly strengthen trade, investment flows, and supply-chain resilience between the two countries.

The upgrade follows the visit of Vietnam President To Lam to India, during which both sides agreed on a broad framework to deepen cooperation across critical sectors. Industry leaders said the partnership is expected to improve India's access to critical inputs, while also expanding export opportunities and supporting long-term economic growth.

According to industry representatives, the agreement aligns closely with India's flagship initiatives such as Make in India and Digital India,



while also supporting semiconductor development, electronics manufacturing, and pharmaceutical exports. Cooperation in rare earths and critical minerals is expected to play a key role in strengthening supply chains for electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, defence manufacturing, and advanced electronics.

The partnership also includes increased collaboration in artificial intelligence, information technology, and semi-

conductor ecosystems, which is expected to enhance India's position in global digital value chains. Sectors such as agriculture, tourism, aviation, urban infrastructure, and smart city development are also likely to benefit from expanded cooperation.

The two countries have set a bilateral trade target of \$25 billion by 2030 and signed multiple memoranda of understanding covering areas such as rare earths, pharma-

Expected outcomes

- India-Vietnam upgrade boosts trade outlook
- Enhanced partnership strengthens supply chains globally
- Cooperation expands semiconductors, AI, electronics sectors
- Bilateral trade target set \$25 billion
- Rare earths deal supports green industries

ceuticals, electronics, digital payments, education, and urban development.

Industry leaders including Rajeev Juneja and Dr. Ranjeet Mehta said the partnership will improve connectivity, ease of doing business, and regulatory alignment, further strengthening India's Act East Policy and enhancing long-term industrial collaboration.

Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace is now valued at \$1.1 billion after raising \$60 million in fresh global funding round

SKYROOT AEROSPACE BECOMES INDIA'S FIRST SPACE TECH UNICORN

NEW DELHI

Skyroot Aerospace has become India's first space-tech unicorn after raising \$60 million in a new funding round led by existing investors Sheralo Ventures and Singapore sovereign wealth fund GIC.

The fresh capital has pushed the Hyderabad-based startup's valuation to \$1.1 billion, more than doubling from its 2023 valuation of about \$519 million.

The round also saw participation from investors including BlackRock, Arkam Ventures, Playbook Partners, Greenko Group founders, Shanghvi Family Office, and others. Some investors were

existing backers, while Playbook Partners and Shanghvi Family Office joined as new participants.

Company CEO Pawan Kumar Chandana said the funds will support scaling up launch operations, expanding manufacturing capacity, and advancing the development of Vikram-2, a next-generation rocket designed to carry heavier payloads into orbit using an advanced cryogenic upper stage. The company is also preparing for the upcoming launch of Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital rocket. Skyroot Aerospace previously demonstrated its capabilities with the 2022 Vikram-S suborbital



mission, which validated key launch technologies. Vikram-1 is expected to mark its entry into commercial orbital launch services.

Industry experts said the milestone highlights growing global investor confidence in

India's private space sector and strengthens the country's ambition to expand its share in the global space economy over the next decade. The company's total funding now exceeds \$160 million, or roughly Rs 1,500 crore.

RBI signals flexibility in future inflation target framework

NEW DELHI

Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta indicated that India could consider modifying its inflation target and tolerance band in the future if the country continues to witness a favourable balance between economic growth and inflation. However, she emphasised that the existing framework remains appropriate given ongoing global economic uncertainty and volatility.

Gupta said India's inflation-targeting system has performed well over the past decade, delivering robust growth along with lower and more stable inflation. She noted that if this trend strengthens further, policymakers may eventually review the current inflation target and its flexibility band.

The government, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, recently retained the inflation target framework for another five years through March 2031. Under this system, the RBI is mandated to maintain headline consumer price inflation at 4 percent with a tolerance band of plus or minus 2 percent.

Gupta explained that the 4 percent target was initially recommended by the RBI Expert Committee in 2014 after studies suggested that this level best balanced economic growth and price stability. She also pointed out that advanced economies such as the United States and Japan generally maintain lower inflation targets around 2 percent, while emerging market economies often operate within a 2.5 to 4 percent range.

Vedanta shares fall after Citi cuts rating, target price

MUMBAI

Vedanta Limited saw its shares fall over 3 percent after brokerage firm Citi Research downgraded the stock from 'buy' to 'sell' and cut its target price to Rs 265, citing concerns over zinc prices and dividend policy changes.

The brokerage said the company's earnings are heavily dependent on its zinc business, which contributes more than 90 percent of its attributable EBITDA. It warned that any further weakness in zinc prices could significantly impact profitability and overall financial performance.

Citi also flagged uncertainty around Vedanta's revised capital allocation and dividend framework. The company is no longer bound by its earlier dividend distribution policy, raising concerns among analysts about future cash payouts and shareholder returns. Vedanta has historically been popular with income-focused investors due to its strong dividend track record.

According to Citi, the risk-reward profile at current London Metal Exchange price levels appears unfavourable, suggesting limited upside for the stock from present valuations.

Following the downgrade, Vedanta shares were trading at Rs 305.80, down Rs 10.60



Citi downgrades Vedanta to sell, citing weak zinc outlook, dividend policy changes, and limited upside, cutting target price to ₹265

during intraday trade. Despite recent volatility, the stock has shown mixed performance trends, gaining in the short term but declining sharply over the past month and six months.

The stock has remained under pressure due to broader weakness in metals markets and concerns over global demand conditions. Analysts say investor sentiment is also being influenced by uncertainty in commodity cycles and corporate restructuring decisions within the group.

Overall, Citi's revised outlook highlights caution on both commodity pricing risks and corporate policy shifts, which together could weigh on Vedanta's near-term earnings visibility.

LPG production stable despite refinery maintenance turnaround

NEW DELHI

India's largest domestic-market refinery, Reliance Industries' 33-million-tonne-per-annum Jamnagar plant, will undergo a scheduled four-week maintenance shutdown later this month.

The Petroleum Ministry, however, said the temporary closure will not disrupt supplies of LPG, petrol, diesel, or aviation turbine fuel because refinery maintenance schedules are being coordinated nationwide to avoid simultaneous outages.

Officials said the shutdown will begin only after Nayara Energy's Vadinar refinery resumes operations following its own maintenance turnaround.

The government believes domestic LPG production will remain stable because not all processing units at Reliance's refinery will be offline during the maintenance period.

India's energy sector is already facing pressure from the ongoing West Asia conflict and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz, a critical route for crude oil, LNG, and LPG imports. India im-

ports nearly 60% of its LPG needs, and about 90 percent of those imports usually pass through the Strait, making household cooking fuel particularly vulnerable to supply disruptions.

To manage shortages, authorities have prioritised LPG supplies for households while restricting industrial and commercial consumption. Refineries are also maximising domestic LPG production and sourcing additional cargoes from countries including the United States, Australia, and Russia. Government officials said India remains self-sufficient in petrol and diesel production and continues to maintain adequate fuel availability despite geopolitical tensions.

Officials also noted that domestic refiners have increased LPG output by roughly forty percent since the conflict began, helping reduce dependence on imports. Export duties on diesel and aviation turbine fuel have additionally discouraged overseas sales, ensuring more supplies remain available for Indian consumers and sectors during the crisis



PROFIT DIP

Bharat forge profit drops despite revenue rise

MUMBAI

Bharat Forge Ltd, the Pune-based forging and engineering major, posted a consolidated profit after tax of Rs 233.44 crore for the January-March quarter, down from Rs 282.62 crore in the same period last year. The decline came despite a robust increase in demand across automotive, industrial, and defence-related components.

Revenue from operations rose 17.53% year-on-year to Rs 4,528.04 crore in Q4 FY26, compared with Rs 3,852.6 crore in the corresponding quarter of FY25.



The growth was supported by higher volumes and improved performance in key domestic and export markets.

Operational performance remained steady, with earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation

increasing 14.21% to Rs 778 crore, up from Rs 681 crore a year earlier. The EBITDA margin also improved marginally to 17.81 percent from 17.68%, indicating stable cost management despite market pressures.

The company's board recommended a final dividend of Rs 6.50 per equity share of Rs 2 face value for FY26, subject to shareholder approval at the upcoming annual general meeting. If approved, the payout will be made on or after August 14, 2026.

Chairman and Managing Director Baba Kalyani said the company secured fresh orders worth Rs 4,814 crore during FY26, including defence contracts worth Rs 2,816 crore. He also said the company has begun restructuring its steel business and expects completion by the end of 2027.

Cricket fever delays Samantha's big movie magic



Fans of superstar Samantha Ruth Prabhu will have to wait just a little longer to see her back on the big screen. Her highly anticipated new movie, Maa Inti Bangaaram, has officially moved its release date. Originally set to hit theaters on May 15, the film will now arrive on June 19, 2026.

The reason for the sudden change? It is all about the love of cricket. With the Indian Premier League (IPL) currently in full swing, the producers decided to step back and let the sport take center stage. The creators explained that they want fans of the Sunrisers Hyderabad team to enjoy the matches without missing out on the cinema experience. They believe the Telugu states

should focus on cheering for their home team before diving into this new story.

Maa Inti Bangaaram is an exciting family action drama. Not only does Samantha star in the lead role, but she is also producing the project alongside her husband, filmmaker Raj Nidimoru, and Himank Duvvuru. The film is directed by the talented Nandini Reddy.

The movie features a great cast, including Diganth, Gulshan Devaiah, and Sree Mukhi. Even though the delay might be disappointing for some, the team promises that the wait will be worth it. By moving to June, the film hopes to capture the full attention of families looking for a summer hit once the cricket excitement finally settles down. Stay tuned for June!

Old photo of Stars goes viral online

The South Indian film industry is currently mourning the heartbreaking loss of legendary producer RB Choudary. The respected filmmaker recently passed away following a tragic road accident in Rajasthan. As friends and family gather to say their final goodbyes, a special memory has surfaced online to remind everyone of his incredible legacy.

A rare, vintage photograph featuring Tamil cinema's biggest icons has gone viral across social media platforms. The emotional image captures a younger Thalapathy Vijay and Ajith Kumar standing together. They are joined by the late RB Choudary, actor Jiiva, and famous director KS Ravi Kumar. The picture was taken years ago during a special cinema event where both Vijay and Ajith appeared as



guest stars. For many fans, seeing Vijay and Ajith in the same frame alongside the veteran producer has sparked deep emotions. RB Choudary was a giant in the movie business, known for supporting and launching many successful careers. Seeing him surrounded by the stars he helped shine has touched the hearts of thousands of netizens.

While the industry feels a deep void without him, this viral photo serves as a beautiful tribute to a man who brought so many people together.



Netflix unveils intense trailer of Saif Ali Khan's Kartavya

Netflix has finally unveiled the intense trailer for Kartavya, an upcoming crime drama starring Saif Ali Khan. Produced by Gauri Khan's Red Chillies Entertainment and directed by Pulkit, the film promises a gritty look at the life of a man torn between his job and his loved ones.

In this movie, Saif plays Pawan, a police officer who finds himself in deep trouble. The story begins when a journalist is shot while under his protection. As his bosses put pressure on him to find the killers, Pawan uncovers a dangerous web of lies and power. Things get even worse when his own family is threatened because of a mistake made by his brother. Pawan must figure out how to be a good cop while keeping his family safe, knowing that every choice he makes has a high price.

Saif Ali Khan shared that he was drawn to the role because it deals with "uncomfortable spaces" and hard decisions. He mentioned that playing a character with so much internal conflict was a thrilling experience. Director Pulkit added that the film explores the "grey areas" of life, where there are no easy answers.

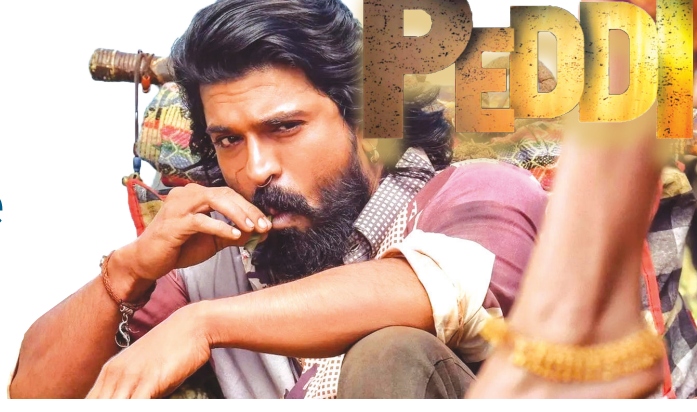
The movie features a talented cast, including Rasika Dugal and Sanjay Mishra. Kartavya is described as a deep, emotional story that looks beyond simple crime to see the human heart behind it. Fans won't have to wait long to see the mystery unfold, as the film is set to premiere on Netflix on May 15.



Prakash Raj joins Jr NTR's action epic

The excitement surrounding Jr NTR's next big movie, Dragon, has reached a new level. Industry sources have confirmed that the versatile and often outspoken actor Prakash Raj has officially joined the cast. This pan-India project, directed by the visionary Prashanth Neel, is already being hailed as one of the most significant cinematic ventures currently in production. Prakash Raj is widely known for his incredible ability to transform into any character, from terrifying villains to beloved father figures. His addition to the team is expected to bring a unique intensity to the film's story. While the specific details of his role are being kept a secret, insiders suggest he will play a powerful character that is central to the movie's plot. His presence often adds a layer of prestige and gravitas to big-budget films.

This news comes at a time when Prakash Raj has been a frequent topic of public discussion due to his vocal opinions on social and political issues. However, his talent as a performer remains undisputed. Fans are eager to see the on-screen chemistry between Jr NTR and Prakash Raj, a duo that has delivered memorable performances together in the past.



Ram Charan's new movie ready for screens

Excitement is building as Mega Power Star Ram Charan finishes the final touches on his upcoming film, Peddi. Directed by Buchi Babu Sana, this rural sports drama is one of the most awaited projects of the year.

In a big update today, the makers confirmed that the final editing of the movie is now complete.

With the "final cut" locked, the film is officially ready to be sent to the censor board for approval. The production team shared that everything is moving smoothly

behind the scenes, ensuring there are no delays before the big day. Fans can mark their calendars, as the pan-Indian movie is set to hit theaters worldwide on June 4, 2026.

Ram Charan stars alongside Janhvi Kapoor, who plays the female lead.

The movie also features a strong supporting cast, including legends like Shiva Rajkumar and Boman Irani. Adding to the hype, the legendary A.R. Rahman has composed the music, making the soundtrack highly anticipated.

As the release date nears, the team at Vriddhi Cinemas is preparing a massive promotional campaign.

Supporters are eagerly waiting for the first songs and the official trailer to drop. Sources say the producers plan to release these updates in stages to keep the energy high.

For now, the hard work in the editing room is done, and the stage is set for a grand cinematic experience. This sports drama promises to bring a powerful, emotional story to audiences across the country very soon.

Halle Berry finishes filming new movie fleur

Academy Award winner Halle Berry has officially finished shooting her latest film, Fleur, in the heart of Paris.

The actress celebrated the end of production on the erotic drama by sharing special moments from the French capital. This project marks a bold new chapter in her career, blending intense drama with a glamorous European backdrop.

Berry posted photos online showing her raising a champagne glass by the Seine River with director Ellie Foumbi and producer Holly Jeter. She described the filming process as a "once in a lifetime journey." The star also praised her "fearless" director and the hard-working crew that brought the story to life over the past few months. Production for the movie originally began in Paris back in March. In Fleur, Berry plays a New York housewife who decides to leave her thirty-year marriage behind.

Alia Bhatt returns to Cannes Red Carpet

Bollywood sensation Alia Bhatt is heading back to the French Riviera. The actress has confirmed she will attend the prestigious Cannes Film Festival for the second year in a row. Joining fellow icons Aishwarya Rai and Aditi Rao Hydari, Alia will represent India as a

global brand ambassador from May 12 to May 23.

For Alia, returning to the iconic red carpet feels like an "even bigger celebration" than her debut last year.

She shared her excitement about the event's unique energy, describing it as a powerful platform for sisterhood. Alia noted that it is a privilege to be part of a journey that champions female voices and women's empowerment on a global stage.

Aditi Rao Hydari also expressed her joy, stating that Cannes is about more than just fashion, it is about owning your individuality with confidence.

The festival continues to highlight women's worth, and this year, actress Gillian Anderson will serve as a juror for a special award dedicated to female filmmakers.

The general manager of the beauty brand representing the stars noted that having Indian beauty and creativity on the world's most famous carpet is a testament to how far the industry has come.

This year's lineup is truly international, featuring stars like Jane Fonda and Eva Longoria alongside our Bollywood favorites.



The Tamil film industry is buzzing with excitement over a massive new project. Legends Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan are joining forces for a movie directed by Nelson Dilipkumar. While fans are thrilled to see the two stars together, it is the

film's staggering budget and salaries that have truly stunned the movie world.

Reports suggest that the total pay for the stars and director alone has reached nearly ₹500 crore. Kamal Haasan is expected to earn around ₹220 crore through a

profit-sharing deal. Meanwhile, Rajinikanth's fee is estimated to be between ₹180 crore and ₹200 crore. Director Nelson, fresh off recent hits, is reportedly charging ₹70 crore.

This massive spending happens even before the cost of the crew or filming is added.

Interestingly, the actual cost to produce the movie is estimated between ₹150 crore and ₹180 crore. When you combine the production costs with the high salaries, this project, backed by Red

Cinema icons set for record breaking movie

Giant Movies, becomes the most expensive Tamil film ever made.

It has been decades since these two icons shared the screen in a lead capacity. Combining their legendary status with a top-tier director has created a level of hype never seen before. Industry experts believe the film will break many box office records when it finally arrives.

For now, the sheer scale of the investment shows just how much faith the producers have in these two cinema giants to deliver a global hit.

RDJ: Online fame is no real art

Marvel legend Robert Downey Jr. has sparked a major debate by criticizing the idea that social media influencers are the "stars of the future." Speaking on a recent podcast, the Iron Man actor called the claim "absolute horse-shit," arguing that true stardom requires more than just filming oneself on a phone.

Downey expressed concern that digital platforms make it too easy to become famous without doing traditional creative work. While he doesn't see the technology as a negative thing, he hopes younger generations will choose more meaningful paths. He wants to see youth focus on building, making, and educating themselves rather than chasing

"self-aggrandizing" online fame. The actor shared a personal story about his 14-year-old son, who briefly got caught up in the influencer world by asking for donations while gaming. Downey compared some digital creators to "hucksters of the information age," noting how the culture can feel almost like a religion. Despite his strong views, he admitted that he has met several influencers during movie promotions who are grounded and accomplished people. With over 58 million followers on Instagram, Downey stays active online but says he avoids being "consumed" by social media. He recalled how the bond between actors and audiences changed when Iron Man first launched at Comic-Con.



AAMIR KHAN sings classic hits at screening

Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan turned a movie screening into a musical celebration. The actor attended a special showing of the upcoming film Daadi Ki Shaadi, featuring Kapil Sharma and Neetu Kapoor. After the movie ended, the atmosphere became lively as Aamir joined the cast and crew for an impromptu singing session that has now gone viral. Videos from the event show Aamir having a wonderful time. In one clip, he delighted everyone by singing his famous hit "Aati Kya Khandala" alongside actress Sadia Khateeb. He didn't stop there, the actor also joined comedian Kapil Sharma to sing "Papa Kehate Hain," a nostalgic favorite from his early career. Aamir, who has been taking classical singing lessons for two years.