



Actor Genelia Deshmukh breaks down on stage as Riteish Deshmukh turns emotional while addressing the audience during the trailer launch of Raja Shivaji. The heartfelt moment moved the entire team, with Sanjay Dutt also seen visibly emotional at the event.

Political tensions have intensified in Uttar Pradesh over the issue of women's reservation, with the state government announcing a special legislative session on April 30.

Good morning

Judge nothing, you will be happy. Forgive everything, you will be happier. Love everything, you will be happiest.

BRIEFS

US-Iran Talks in Pakistan Face Uncertainty

> Vikrama Vahini | Islamabad
Uncertainty continues over the proposed second round of peace talks between the United States and Iran, amid heightened diplomatic tensions and ongoing strategic posturing by both sides.

The discussions, which are expected to take place in Islamabad in the coming days, are being closely watched by regional stakeholders. Pakistani authorities have reportedly put in place extensive security arrangements in preparation for the high-profile diplomatic engagement.

However, despite earlier indications of progress, uncertainty now surrounds the timing and scope of the talks as both Washington and Tehran continue to engage in diplomatic brinkmanship.

Ghalibaf Slams US Talks Critics

> Vikrama Vahini | Tehran
Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has strongly criticised those opposing potential talks with the United States, even as tensions continue to escalate in the ongoing US-Israel-Iran conflict.

The development comes amid fresh diplomatic and military strain in the Middle East, with Iran's military vowing a swift response to the reported US seizure of an Iranian-flagged vessel in the Gulf of Oman. The situation has kept global energy markets and geopolitical dynamics on edge.

At the centre of the dispute remains Iran's nuclear programme, which the United States has been pressing Tehran to curb as part of any potential agreement. However, Iran has refused to comply with such demands during

previous rounds of talks held in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Ebrahim Azizi, head of the Iranian Parliament's National Security Committee, stated that any future peace talks would depend



PG2

India Summons Iran Envoy After Attack on Ships

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
India has summoned the Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Fathali following a firing incident on Indian-flagged ships in the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, raising serious international concern.

The government lodged a formal protest and demanded immediate assurances for the safety of Indian vessels navigating the region, which has become increasingly volatile

amid the ongoing West Asia conflict.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri held discussions with the Iranian envoy, stressing that the security of Indian ships is of paramount importance.

He highlighted that any disruption in the Strait of Hormuz — one of the world's most sensitive and crucial oil transit routes — could have far-reaching consequences for India and the global economy. **PG2**

Doval in Riyadh Amid West Asia Oil Crisis

> Vikrama Vahini | Riyadh
India's National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval visited Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Sunday as part of high-level diplomatic

efforts to address the ongoing West Asia crisis and its potential impact on global energy supplies, particularly India's oil imports. **PG2**

Nashik TCS Row: No Bail for Nida Khan

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi
Nashik TCS Case Court Denies Bail to 'Absconding' Accused Nida Khan

NASHIK: A local court on Monday denied interim bail to Nida Khan, a senior employee at the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) BPO unit, in connection with a high-profile case involving sexual harassment and forced religious conversion.

Despite her lawyer seeking relief on grounds of her two-month pregnancy, the judge refused protection after the complainant requested more time to file a formal response.

Nida Khan is one of eight individuals accused in a scandal that has rocked the corporate hub. While seven other suspects—including Danish Sheikh and Tausif Attar—have already been arrested, Khan remains "absconding" according to police records.

Kejriwal Recusal Plea: HC Rejects 'Bias' Claim

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Monday dismissed a petition by AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal seeking the recusal of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma from the excise policy case. The court categorized the allegations of bias as "unsubstantiated" and lacking merit, further noting that such claims appeared to be an attempt to defame the judiciary.

The dismissal came after a day of tense virtual proceedings. Kejriwal, appearing via video link, urged the court to accept his rejoinder to prevent a "miscarriage of justice."

However, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta opposed the move, arguing that no new pleas should be entertained once a judgment is reserved.

Justice Sharma, while rejecting the recusal plea, noted that the court had already shown "indulgence" by allowing additional affidavits on record.

TALKS COLLAPSE AS US SEIZES IRANIAN SHIP

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Tensions between the United States and Iran have escalated sharply after Tehran refused to participate in the second round of peace talks and Washington seized an Iranian cargo vessel in the Gulf of Oman.

Iranian authorities cited multiple reasons for rejecting the talks, including the ongoing US blockade of Iranian ports and what they described as "unrealistic and unreasonable" demands. Officials stated that there is currently "no clear prospect" for meaningful negotiations unless the blockade is lifted.

In a related development, the United States Navy intercepted and seized an Iranian-flagged cargo ship, identified as Touska, in the Arabian Sea. According to United States Central Command, the vessel was attempting to breach the blockade while heading toward Bandar Abbas.

US officials said the guided-missile destroyer USS Spruance issued repeated warnings to the vessel over a six-hour period.



- * Tensions between United States and Iran have escalated after Iran refused second-round peace talks.**
- * Iran cited US blockade and "unreasonable demands" as reasons for rejecting negotiations.**
- * The US seized an Iranian cargo vessel Touska in the Gulf of Oman Arabian Sea.**
- * USS Spruance disabled the ship after warnings; Marines boarded and took control.**
- * Iran called the action "armed piracy" and warned of retaliation.**
- * Reports of possible drone attacks on US warships surfaced but remain unconfirmed.**
- * The current ceasefire is set to expire on April 22, increasing uncertainty.**
- * Prospects for de-escalation remain unclear, raising regional stability concerns.**

When the crew failed to comply, the warship fired at the engine room to disable the ship's propulsion.

Japan Quake Triggers Tsunami Alert

> Vikrama Vahini | Tokyo

A powerful 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck northeastern and northern Japan on Monday, prompting tsunami warnings, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency.

The agency reported that a tsunami measuring 80 cm was observed at Kuji Port in Iwate Prefecture following the quake.

The tremor, which occurred at around 4:53 PM local time, shook large buildings even in Tokyo, located hundreds of kilometres away from the epicentre.

Following the earthquake, strong sea waves were recorded, and authorities warned that tsunami waves of up to three metres (10 feet) could hit coastal areas in Iwate, Aomori, and Hokkaido regions.

Residents living along coastal and riverbank areas have been urged to immediately move to higher ground or take shelter in secure buildings.

Officials cautioned that tsunami waves may arrive multiple times and advised people not to leave safe locations until the warning is officially lifted.



LALIT MODI BLACK MAGIC CLAIM ROCKS IPL

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Former Indian Premier League (IPL) chairman Lalit Modi has sparked controversy after alleging that some teams may have resorted to "black magic" in earlier seasons to gain an advantage in matches.

The remarks came after a video from a match at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium went viral, showing a fan performing a "lemon trick" moments before Chennai Super Kings' batter Shivam Dube faced Sunrisers Hyderabad bowler Sakib Hussain. The clip triggered widespread discussion on social media.

Following the incident, a letter reportedly surfaced online claiming that CSK had raised concerns about black magic being used during the match. However, Modi later clarified that the circulating document appeared to be fake, although he acknowledged the broader discussion around such practices.

In a statement, Modi said he had earlier observed similar incidents during the 2011 IPL season and had even alerted team owners at the time based on what he described as "concrete information."



STORM OVER WORKPLACE DRESS CODES

Why Lenskart's Reported Restrictions Have Sparked a Wider Debate on Faith and Fairness

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The recent controversy involving Lenskart has once again placed the spotlight on the delicate balance between corporate policy and individual freedoms in India's plural society.

Reports alleging that employees in some outlets were asked not to wear visible religious symbols—such as kumkum, mangalsutra, or bangles—have drawn sharp reactions from sections of the public. For many, these symbols are not mere ornaments but markers of identity, tradition, and personal belief.

The perception that a company's internal guidelines could restrict such expressions has therefore been received not as a routine workplace directive, but as a step that risks marginalising cultural practices.

The backlash has been swift and visible. Social media platforms have seen calls for a boycott, while in some places, citizens have staged symbolic



protests by visiting stores and offering kumkum to staff members. Such acts, while peaceful, underline the depth of sentiment attached to the issue. Retail businesses, particularly those operating in consumer-facing environments, are highly sensitive to public perception. A controversy of this nature can quickly translate into reputational challenges and, potentially, an impact on footfall and sales. Even the perception of selective restriction—whether intended or not—can amplify distrust among customers.

Allegations that Lenskart discouraged visible religious symbols among store staff have ignited protests, boycott calls, and a larger conversation on how India's retail sector balances brand neutrality with employees' rights to express faith.

At the heart of the debate lies a fundamental question: where should companies draw the line between maintaining a uniform brand image and respecting the personal freedoms of employees? Dress codes are not unusual in the corporate world,

especially in sectors where consistency and presentation are key to brand identity. However, when such policies intersect with religious or cultural expressions, they enter a more complex terrain. In a country like India, where diversity is not an exception but the norm, even well-intended policies can be interpreted through the lens of identity and belonging.

Critics argue that any directive that appears to single out or disproportionately affect one set of practices risks being seen as exclusionary. Supporters of stricter dress codes, on the other hand, maintain that businesses must retain the right to define their workplace standards.

The challenge, therefore, is not about choosing one side over the other, but about ensuring that policies are framed and implemented in a manner that is even-handed, transparent, and sensitive to context. **PG2**

Editorial

Addressing Coercion and Misinformation: Safeguarding Rights, Law, and Social Harmony

Concerns about alleged "love traps" or coercive relationships in the name of religion have resurfaced in public discourse, now extending to claims about activities within large technology firms. While such reports generate anxiety, it is crucial to approach them with caution and rely on verified facts rather than sweeping generalisations. India's democratic framework guarantees every citizen the freedom to choose and practice a religion, but it equally upholds the rule of law against coercion, fraud, or exploitation. Any instance where an individual—particularly women—is subjected to manipulation, blackmail, abuse, or forced conversion is a grave criminal offence that must be dealt with firmly.

At the same time, the narrative around organised, large-scale networks operating across sectors must be examined through credible investigation rather than assumption. Isolated incidents, if proven, demand strict legal action against the perpetrators, irrespective of their identity or affiliation. However, attributing criminal acts to an entire community or professional sector risks deepening social divisions and undermining institutional trust. Responsible governance requires separating fact from speculation, ensuring that law enforcement agencies conduct impartial and evidence-based inquiries. The focus must remain on protecting victims and upholding justice, not amplifying unverified claims.

The broader challenge lies in strengthening legal safeguards, promoting awareness, and ensuring accountability across all domains—social, professional, and digital. Political parties, too, carry a responsibility to rise above divisive rhetoric and prioritise national interest over electoral considerations. A balanced approach—firm against crime, yet fair in judgment—is essential to preserve India's unity, social cohesion, and constitutional values. Ultimately, the path forward lies not in fear-driven narratives, but in a commitment to truth, justice, and the protection of individual rights.

-Editor



Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy paid floral tributes to Jagajyoti Basaveshwara at the Purna Sthal in the Parliament House premises this morning on the occasion of Basava Jayanti. He was joined by Union Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju and Minister of State for Railways and Jal Shakti V. Somanna.

Ghalibaf Slams US Talks Critics

From PGi

strictly on conditions set by Iran. These include a ceasefire in Lebanon and adherence by the US to prior commitments.

He warned that any action by the US against the interests of what Iran terms the "resistance front," or failure to honour earlier agreements, would indicate a rejection of Iran's preconditions.

Meanwhile, President of the United States has reportedly directed a delegation to travel to Pakistan for a second round of peace negotiations. However, Iran has not yet confirmed whether it will participate in the upcoming talks.

The crisis continues to evolve, with diplomacy, military developments, and global economic concerns closely intertwined.

India Summons Iran Envoy After Attack on Ships

From PGi

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal termed the firing on two Indian vessels as a "serious incident," reiterating that the safety of maritime trade and Indian seafarers is a top priority for the country.

The incident occurred in waters off northeast Oman, where two Indian-flagged ships came under fire. While no casualties or damage were reported, the vessels were forced to turn back due to security concerns.

India has urged Iran to ensure safe passage for its ships and facilitate the early resumption of normal maritime movement through the route. It also recalled Iran's past cooperation in ensuring the safety of Indian vessels and expressed hope for similar support in the

current situation.

The Iranian envoy reportedly assured that India's concerns would be conveyed to his government.

The Strait of Hormuz remains a critical chokepoint for global oil supply, with a significant portion of the world's energy shipments passing through it. For India, which depends heavily on this route for its energy needs, any instability poses a direct threat to energy security and economic stability.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump has also warned Iran against using the Strait of Hormuz as a pressure tactic, stating that any attempt to disrupt maritime routes would not be acceptable globally. He, however, indicated that diplomatic talks are ongoing and clarity on the evolving situation is expected soon.

ED Raid: Guilty Won't Be Spared

Vikrama vahini | Bengaluru

Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje on Monday alleged that politicians from various countries have invested through Bitcoin, claiming that members of the Congress party were particularly involved.

Responding to media queries regarding the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raid on the residence of BDA Chairman and N. A. Harris, she stated that the Congress has been continuously involved in financial irregularities, with Bitcoin being one of the avenues. She said the raid was conducted based on information about such investments.

"The guilty must be punished. The raid was not carried out without concrete information. Congress



leaders often escape accountability, while public money from the state is allegedly siphoned off and invested abroad," she said, further alleging that the Congress government in the state is corrupt.

"Job Fair Boost for Youth"

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Former Deputy Chief Minister and MLA C. N. Ashwathnarayan said that job fairs play a crucial role in supporting job seekers across the state.

Speaking at the "Yuvotsava" programme at SHVM Pre-University College in Malleswaram, he stated that such initiatives help youth secure employment and provide necessary career guidance. "Several organisations have joined hands to make this programme effective and beneficial for aspiring candidates," he added.

He emphasized that providing employment opportunities to youth is essential for building a strong and stable society. Referring to initiatives by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he noted that various measures have been undertaken to generate large-scale employment opportunities across the country.

The job fair was organised on the occasion of Basaveshwara Jayanti. Highlighting the teachings of Jagajyoti Basaveshwara, he said, "Kayakave Kailasa," and called upon everyone to work towards building an equal and just society.

STORM OVER WORKPLACE DRESS CODES

From PGi

Clear communication becomes essential: without it, ambiguity can fuel speculation, and speculation can quickly evolve into controversy.

The episode also highlights a recurring pattern in India's evolving corporate culture. As businesses expand across regions and demographics, they increasingly encounter the complexities of a diverse workforce and customer base. What may be seen as a neutral or standardised approach in one context might be perceived differently in

another. This makes it imperative for companies to adopt a more consultative approach—engaging employees, understanding local sensibilities, and anticipating how policies might be received beyond the boardroom.

There is also a broader societal dimension. Public reactions, including boycott calls, reflect not only dissatisfaction with a specific policy but also a growing expectation that companies align with cultural sensitivities. At the same time, sustained campaigns—especially

those driven by incomplete or unverified information—can risk escalating tensions unnecessarily. Responsible public discourse requires both accountability from institutions and restraint from stakeholders.

For policymakers, the controversy raises questions about whether clearer guidelines are needed to navigate such situations. While private enterprises must have the freedom to manage their operations, there is also a legitimate interest in ensuring that individual rights are not inadvertently compromised.

Doval in Riyadh Amid West Asia Oil Crisis

From PGi

The visit comes amid growing concerns over disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial maritime chokepoint for global crude oil shipments. The ongoing tensions between the United States and Iran have raised fears of supply instability, with possible implications for global oil prices and energy security.

Doval was received in Riyadh by Saudi Arabia's Deputy Minister of Political Affairs Saud al-Sati. During his visit, he held discussions with Saudi Energy Minister Abdulaziz bin

Salman, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, and National Security Advisor Musaid al-Aiban.

According to the Indian Embassy, the meetings focused on bilateral relations, regional developments, and issues of mutual interest, with a strong emphasis on strengthening cooperation in energy security and regional stability.

Focus on Energy Security. The visit is seen as strategically important for India, which imports nearly 40% of its crude oil requirements from Gulf nations.

NEWS

Hubballi-Tinsukia Summer Special Train

Vikrama Vahini | Hubballi

To manage the anticipated surge in passenger traffic during the summer vacation period, South Western Railway has announced the operation of a one-trip special train between SSS Hubballi and New Tinsukia.

Train No. 07325 will depart from SSS Hubballi at 11:45 AM on Thursday, April 23, 2026, and is scheduled to reach New Tinsukia at 2:30 PM on Sunday. In the return direction, Train No. 07326 will leave New Tinsukia at 10:00 PM on Monday, April 27, 2026, and will arrive at SSS Hubballi at 11:00 PM on Thursday.

The special service will halt at major stations en route, including SMM Haveri, Harihar, Davangere, Arsikere, Tumakuru, SMVT Bengaluru, Bangarapet, Kuppam, Jolarpettai, Katpadi, Renigunta, Gudur, Ongole, Vijayawada, Rajahmundry, Kottavalasa, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam Road, Palasa, Brahmapur, Khurda Road, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Bhadrak, Kharagpur, Andul, Dankuni, Bardhaman, Bolpur (Shantiniketan), Rampur Hat, New Farakka, Malda Town, Barsoi, Kishanganj, New Jalpaiguri, New Cooch

Behar, New Alipurduar, Kokrajhar, New Bongaigaon, Barpeta Road, Rangiya, New Misamari, Rangapara North, Vishwanath Charali, Harmuti, North Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, and Darbhanga in both directions.

The train will comprise 20 coaches, including 1 AC 2-Tier, 6 AC 3-Tier, 7 Sleeper Class, 4 General Second Class coaches, along with 1 Luggage and Generator-cum-Brake Van and 1 SLR/D coach.



South Pride: Shivakumar's Big Push for DMK-Congress in TN



Vikrama Vahini | Krishnagiri
Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday described people of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu as "brothers" fighting together to protect the pride of South India. Addressing an election rally in Thally assembly constituency bordering his Kanakapura segment, Shivakumar said, "We are merely divided by state boundaries but united in safeguarding South India's pride."

He sharply criticised the BJP-led Central government, claiming that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, cooking gas cylinders had vanished and firewood stoves had returned due to rising prices. Shivakumar highlighted Congress's welfare schemes in Karnataka, including free bus travel for women, ₹2,000

monthly aid to poor women, free electricity up to 200 units, and rice distribution. He promised similar benefits in Tamil Nadu, such as meter-free pump sets for farmers, enhanced old-age pensions, and support for the differently-abled.

Praising the DMK government under M.K. Stalin, he said, "Only Congress and DMK can fill people's stomachs and change their lives."

Shivakumar credited Congress for introducing 50% women's reservation in Panchayats and asserted that the INDIA alliance had prevented any reduction in Lok Sabha seats for South Indian states.

He appealed to voters to re-elect Congress candidate Ramachandra with a bigger margin than before and urged continued support for the Congress-DMK alliance.

Health And Lifestyle

LIVER DETOX: FACT OR TREND?

In recent years, "liver detox drinks" have become a popular health trend, especially on social media platforms like Instagram. Influencers and wellness enthusiasts claim that these drinks help cleanse the liver and remove toxins from the body, making them an essential part of modern health routines.

These beverages often include natural ingredients such as lemon, ginger, turmeric, and honey, which are widely believed to have health benefits. However, medical experts caution that such claims are not scientifically proven when it comes to "detoxifying" the liver.

Does the Liver Really Need Detox Drinks?

According to health professionals, the liver is a self-cleaning organ. It naturally filters toxins from the bloodstream and eliminates waste products without the need for external detox drinks or supplements.

Doctors emphasize that the concept of "liver cleansing" through special drinks is largely unsupported by scientific evidence. While the ingredients used in these drinks may support general health, they do not enhance the liver's natural detoxification process.

Marketing vs Medical Reality

Experts point out that the rising popularity of detox drinks is largely driven by marketing strategies and social media influence. Many companies promote these beverages as essential for liver health, but such claims often lack clinical validation.

The appeal of "quick health fixes" has contributed to the growing



demand, even though medical science does not support the idea that the liver requires such external cleansing methods.

What Actually Supports Liver Health?

Doctors recommend focusing on proven lifestyle habits to maintain a healthy liver. These include a balanced diet, regular physical activity, adequate hydration, and limiting alcohol consumption.

Avoiding processed foods, excessive fats, and unhealthy eating patterns is also crucial for liver health. Experts stress that long-term lifestyle discipline is far more effective than relying on detox drinks.

Conclusion: A Trend, Not a Treatment

While liver detox drinks continue to gain popularity as a wellness trend, experts conclude that they should not be seen as a medical necessity. The liver is naturally capable of detoxification, and maintaining overall healthy habits remains the most effective way to support its function.

SCIENCE & Technology

ASUS Boosts India Service Reach with 22 New Drop Zones

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

ASUS has expanded its after-sales service network in India by adding 22 new Drop Zone locations, aiming to make laptop repairs more accessible and convenient for users.

The initiative allows customers to submit their laptops for repair at nearby ASUS Exclusive Stores instead of travelling to dedicated service centres, addressing a long-standing inconvenience faced by many users across the country.

With this expansion, ASUS Drop Zones are now spread across multiple regions, including Delhi NCR, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

The Drop Zone model is designed to simplify the repair process. Customers can walk into participating stores, hand over their devices, and avoid long queues or travel time typically associated with service centres.

ASUS now offers multiple service options, including carry-in support for direct consultation, on-site service where technicians visit customers' homes, and Drop Zone submissions at nearby stores. The company said the move is aimed at improving accessibility, reducing turnaround time, and enhancing transparency in the repair process.

Arnold Su, Vice President at ASUS India, stated that the expansion focuses on delivering a reliable ownership experience beyond just the product.

Mid-Air Scare: Flight Circles 4 Hours, Diverted to Bengaluru

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

A Hyderabad-Hubballi flight operated by Fly91 was diverted to Bengaluru on Sunday after developing a technical snag mid-air, leaving passengers distressed after being airborne for nearly four hours.

Flight IC3401 took off from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at around 3 pm and was scheduled to land in Hubballi by 4:30 pm. However, as the aircraft approached its destination, it reportedly encountered a technical issue, forcing the crew to delay landing.

The flight remained in the air for several hours, circling over regions including Mundgod, Davanagere, and Shivamogga, as the crew coordinated with ground teams to secure a safe landing. After multiple attempts, the aircraft was finally diverted to Kempegowda International Airport, where it landed safely at around 7:30 pm.

Passengers onboard described a tense and frightening



A Fly91 Hyderabad-Hubballi flight was diverted to Bengaluru after a mid-air technical glitch, leaving passengers stranded in the sky for nearly four hours. Though the aircraft landed safely, the prolonged ordeal left flyers shaken and raised concerns over communication and safety.

experience, with some seen praying and others in tears upon landing. Family members of the passengers also expressed concern and frustration, alleging a lack of timely communication from the airline regarding the nature of the glitch and the diversion. No injuries were reported, and authorities are expected to investigate the incident to determine the exact cause of the technical fault.

Fuel Shock in Bangladesh Amid Global Crisis

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Bangladesh has sharply increased fuel prices by 10-15 per cent, pushing them to record highs amid a worsening energy crisis linked to ongoing tensions in West Asia. Under the revised rates announced late Saturday night, petrol will now be sold at 135 taka per litre, up from 116 taka. Diesel prices have risen to 115 taka per litre from 100 taka, while kerosene will cost 130 taka per litre, compared to the earlier 112 taka.

The price hike comes as Bangladesh grapples with volatility in global fuel markets, exacerbated by geopolitical instability in the region. Officials said the government had tried to keep domestic prices stable but was ultimately forced to revise rates due to sustained pressure on the economy.

A spokesperson for the Energy Division stated that fluctuating international prices made it difficult to maintain earlier rates. "Prices are changing rapidly in the global market.



MODI SLAMS TMC OVER 'APPEASEMENT, FEAR RAJ'

► Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched a sharp attack on the ruling All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) during a rally in tribal-dominated Purulia, accusing it of indulging in appeasement politics, fostering fear, and promoting a "syndicate raj" in West Bengal.

Addressing a large gathering, Modi alleged that the state government's focus on appeasement of a particular community has resulted in the neglect of tribal regions and created an imbalance in governance. He claimed that essential sectors such as education and infrastructure in tribal areas continue to suffer.

The Prime Minister also accused the TMC government of creating an environment of fear that discourages investment and industrial growth. "Industries require trust, not fear. No development can take place in such an atmosphere," he said, adding that corruption and the alleged "cut money" culture have driven investors away from the state.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a strong attack on the TMC in Purulia, accusing it of promoting appeasement politics, fear, and "syndicate raj" in West Bengal. He alleged governance failures, corruption, and neglect of tribal development, while urging voters to bring a political change in the state. He said industries cannot grow in an atmosphere of fear and accused the state government of driving away investment. Modi also highlighted the Centre's welfare initiatives for tribal communities.

Earlier, at another rally in Bishnupur, Modi issued a stern warning against alleged syndicate networks and corruption, urging those involved to surrender before the elections or face strict action later.

Highlighting the Centre's initiatives for tribal welfare, Modi said the government has strengthened support for tribal communities through increased funding and representation. He contrasted this with what he described as years of neglect under the state government, alleging poor infrastructure and lack of basic facilities in tribal districts.

The Prime Minister further

criticised the TMC over issues of law and order, particularly women's safety, and accused the party of opposing women's reservation in Parliament.

Reiterating his criticism, he said the people of West Bengal deserve development free from corruption and intimidation. He called on voters to ensure stronger governance and accountability through the upcoming elections. Calling for a political shift in the state, Modi urged voters to support the BJP in the upcoming elections, expressing confidence that the party would form the next government in West Bengal.

Karnataka to Decide on SC Quota on April 24

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka government is set to take up the crucial issue of internal reservation for Scheduled Castes in a special Cabinet meeting scheduled for April 24, a decision that could unlock a stalled large-scale recruitment drive across the state.

Over 2.5 lakh government job vacancies are currently pending, with nearly 65,000 immediate posts unable to be filled due to the absence of a finalised internal reservation framework. Officials said recruitment cannot proceed until clarity is achieved on the reservation matrix.

The Cabinet meeting, initially planned for March 27, was postponed due to the model code of conduct during by-elections in Davanagere South and Bagalkot held on April 9. With the electoral process now concluded, the government is revisiting the issue amid mounting pressure.

The delay has triggered growing discontent among unemployed youth. Earlier this year, protests by job aspirants in Hubballi brought attention to the prolonged recruitment delays and intensified demands for swift action.

Sources indicated that the



AI image

- * Karnataka Cabinet to discuss SC internal reservation on April 24
- * Over 2.5 lakh government vacancies pending; 65,000 immediate posts affected
- * Recruitment stalled due to lack of a finalised reservation framework
- * Earlier March 27 meeting postponed due to by-election model code of conduct
- * Growing protests by job aspirants, including in Hubballi
- * Government balancing legal, social, and political factors
- * Decision seen as key to resuming large-scale public sector hiring

government is attempting to strike a balance between legal requirements, social considerations, and political sensitivities while finalising the internal reservation structure. The decision is seen as a key prerequisite for resuming

large-scale hiring in the public sector. Until a resolution is reached, one of Karnataka's largest employment pipelines remains stalled, turning the issue into a significant governance and political challenge.

UK Calls for Safe Strait of Hormuz Passage

► Vikrama Vahini | London

The United Kingdom has called for a lasting settlement to guarantee freedom of navigation and a "toll-free" Strait of Hormuz, amid uncertainty over the US-Iran ceasefire and rising geopolitical tensions in the region.

British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, currently on a diplomatic tour of key partner nations, emphasized the importance of securing critical maritime routes that are vital for global energy and trade flows.

Cooper arrived in Japan on Monday for the final leg of what the UK government has described as an "intensified shuttle diplomacy tour," aimed at strengthening coordination with allies on shared geopolitical, economic, and energy security concerns.

During her six-day visit covering parts of Europe and West Asia, the Foreign Secretary held bilateral discussions with foreign ministers from 11 countries, including Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Ukraine.

The Strait of Hormuz, a key maritime chokepoint for global oil shipments, has long been a focal point of international security concerns, with any disruption in the passage seen as having immediate implications for global energy prices and supply stability.

AIR POLLUTION DROP MAY RAISE INDIA HEAT LEVELS

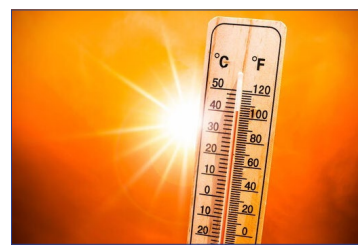
► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

India could face a worsening heat crisis in the coming years as declining air pollution removes a temporary cooling effect that has masked the true scale of rising temperatures, according to a new Harvard University study.

The research, titled "Critical Perspectives on Extreme Heat in India" by the Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability, warns that while air pollution has historically contributed to a short-term cooling effect over parts of India—especially North India—its reduction could lead to sharper increases in temperatures, particularly during winter months.

The study notes that India's land surface temperature rose by 0.88°C between 1980-90 and 2015-24, lower than the global average increase of 1.4°C.

Researchers attribute this relatively moderate rise to the cooling effects of atmospheric



aerosols and large-scale irrigation practices.

In North India, high levels of air pollution and irrigation have helped suppress daytime and seasonal temperature extremes.

However, the study cautions that cleaner air policies, while beneficial for public health, may remove this artificial cooling effect and expose the country to faster warming trends.

Experts involved in the study highlight that temperature patterns in India are already shifting, with some regions experiencing cooler-than-expected January temperatures, while October to December periods show higher-than-average warming.

ENTERTAINMENT

Dhurandhar 2 OTT Shift

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Ranveer Singh's blockbuster film Dhurandhar: The Revenge is gearing up for its OTT release after a record-breaking theatrical run, with reports indicating that the film will stream on JioHotstar instead of Netflix.

The action drama, directed by Aditya Dhar, has reportedly earned over ₹1,775 crore at the global box office and has already crossed the ₹1,000 crore mark in India, making it one of the highest-grossing Hindi films in recent times.

According to industry reports, the digital streaming rights for Dhurandhar: The Revenge have been acquired by JioHotstar in a deal valued at around ₹150 crore.

marking one of the biggest OTT acquisitions for a Hindi film.

The film is expected to premiere on the platform in late May or early June 2026, although an official confirmation from the makers is still awaited.

The shift from Netflix, where the first installment reportedly premiered, to JioHotstar for the sequel has drawn attention in the entertainment industry.

Released on March 19, 2026, the film continues its strong theatrical performance, with trade analysts noting its extended run at cinemas due to sustained audience interest.

About the Film:

Dhurandhar: The Revenge follows the story of Indian intelligence operative Jaskirat Singh Rangji, who operates undercover in Pakistan as Hamza Ali Mazari. The film traces his mission against criminal networks, including the elimination of gangster Rehman Dakait, after which he earns the title "Sher-e-Baloch."

The film features an ensemble cast including Arjun Rampal, Sara Arjun, Rakesh Bedi, and R. Madhavan.

MAHAVATAR PARASHURAM FIRST POSTER UNVEILED



► Vikrama Vahini | Mumbai

The makers of Mahavatar Parashuram have unveiled the film's first poster, offering a striking glimpse into what promises to be a grand cinematic retelling of the legend of Lord Vishnu's sixth incarnation, Parashurama.

Following the success of Mahavatar Narasimha by Hombale Films and Kaleem Productions, the team has now introduced the next instalment in the franchise with a visually rich and powerful poster that hints at an epic mythological spectacle.

The tagline of the film—"Where patience ends, Parashurama's axe

begins!"—has already generated strong interest among audiences, highlighting the intense and dramatic tone of the narrative.

The film is set to portray the story of Parashurama, the sixth avatar of Lord Vishnu, who is believed to have descended to earth to end the tyranny of corrupt and arrogant rulers who had strayed from the path of dharma.

The makers aim to present this ancient legend in a grand, cinematic format blending mythology with modern storytelling.

Speaking about the vision behind the project, producer Vijay Kiragandur said, "Our stories are our strength. With Mahavatar

Parashurama, we aim to reconnect audiences with the power of their roots and present it in a format that resonates with today's generation. It is a story of heritage, power and purpose."

The film is directed by Ashvin Kumar and produced by Vijay Kiragandur and Shilpa Dhawan under the banners of Hombale Films and Kaleem Productions. The music for the film is composed by Sam CS.

With its powerful theme and visually ambitious presentation, Mahavatar Parashuram is expected to continue the momentum of mythological storytelling in Indian cinema.

BUSINESS

West Asia Crisis Risks India Trade

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia pose significant risks to India's trade balance and overall macroeconomic stability, including widening of the current account deficit (CAD) and pressure on the Indian currency, according to a NITI Aayog report released on Monday.

The report, titled Trade Watch (October-December, Q3 FY 2025-26), highlights that instability in the West Asian region could have far-reaching implications for India's external sector performance, particularly in terms of trade flows, energy security, and exchange rate stability.

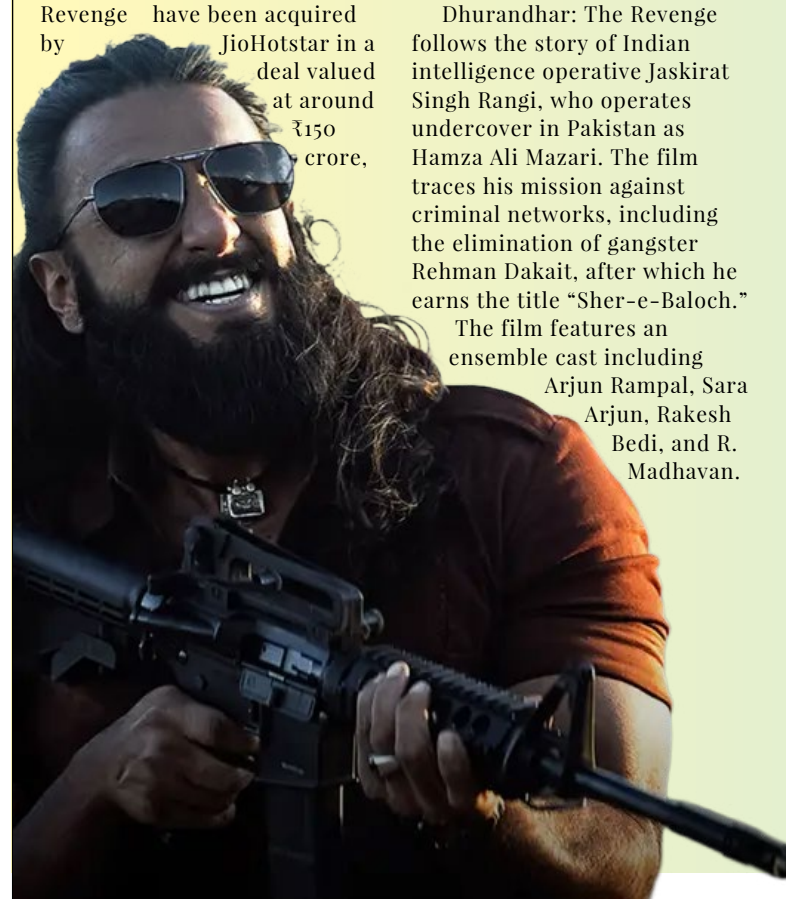
It notes that disruptions arising from geopolitical conflict in the region have the potential to increase import costs, especially for crude oil and other key commodities, thereby exerting upward pressure on the current account deficit.

The report further states that ongoing instability in West Asia has slowed progress on the India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which is seen as an important mechanism for diversifying India's export markets and improving access to key economies in the Gulf region.

According to the assessment, delays in trade negotiations with GCC countries may affect India's broader strategy of expanding export opportunities and strengthening economic ties with energy-rich nations in the region.

The report also references recent escalation in West Asia, noting that the conflict intensified after military strikes and retaliatory actions involving major regional players, further contributing to uncertainty in global energy markets.

NITI Aayog cautioned that sustained geopolitical instability could impact investor sentiment and create volatility in foreign exchange markets, posing additional challenges for India's macroeconomic management. India remains closely linked to West Asia through energy imports, remittances, and trade flows, making developments in the region critical for the country's economic outlook.



SPORTS

Kohli, Anushka Visit Vrindavan Ashram



> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) star Virat Kohli, along with his wife Anushka Sharma, visited Premanand Maharaj's ashram in Vrindavan on Monday during the team's break in the ongoing IPL 2026 season.

The couple visited the ashram to seek blessings on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. Visuals circulating on social media showed Kohli and Anushka participating in Ekantik Vartalaap (private spiritual conversation) with Premanand Ji Maharaj, a spiritual guru.

A video released by the ashram's official YouTube channel also showed the couple sitting quietly among devotees while listening to the discourses of Premanand Maharaj. This marks yet another visit by the duo to Vrindavan, where they have frequently travelled over the past year for spiritual guidance and blessings.

Kohli had earlier visited the ashram after announcing his retirement from Test cricket last year, and the couple have since made multiple trips, including in December 2025 and February 2026. Despite residing in London, the duo is known for their strong spiritual inclination and regular visits to religious places.

Meanwhile, Kohli is set to return to IPL action when RCB face Gujarat Titans on April 24. RCB last played against Delhi Capitals on April 18 and currently hold second place on the points table with eight points from six matches.

Hockey India Camps 36-Member Squad

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Hockey India on Monday announced a 36-member core probable group for the upcoming Senior Men's National Coaching Camp, scheduled at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) Centre in Bengaluru from April 20 to May 9.

The camp will focus on tactical cohesion, physical conditioning, and match-simulation sessions as the national team prepares for a busy international calendar, including the European leg of the FIH Pro League 2025-26, the World Cup, and the Asian Games.

The goalkeeping unit includes experienced players Krishan Bahadur Pathak, Suraj Karkera, and Pawan, along with emerging talents Mohith Honnanahalli, Shashikumar and Princedeep Singh.

In defence, the squad will be led by senior players Harmanpreet Singh and Amit Rohidas, alongside Jarmanpreet Singh, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, Sumit, Poovanna Chandura Bobby, Yashdeep Siwach, Nilam Sanjeep Xess, and Amandeep Lakra.

The midfield comprises a strong mix of experience and youth, featuring Manpreet Singh, Hardik Singh, and Vivek Sagar Prasad, supported by Rajinder Singh, Manmeet Singh, Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh, Vishnu Kant Singh, Raj Kumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, and Rosan Kujur.

The forward line includes Mandeep Singh, Dilpreet Singh, Abhishek, Sukhjeth Singh, Shilanand Lakra, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Angad Bir Singh, Uttam Singh, Selvam Karthi, Aditya Arjun Lalage, and Maninder Singh, forming a balanced attacking unit with both experienced and emerging players.

WOMEN'S RESERVATION ROW SPARKS UP SHOWDOWN

> Vikrama Vahini | Lucknow
Political tensions have intensified in Uttar Pradesh over the issue of women's reservation, with the state government announcing a special legislative session on April 30. The decision, approved by the Cabinet through circulation on Sunday night, comes as parties gear up for the 2027 Assembly elections.

The move follows a nationwide political debate after the Nari Shakti Vandan Amendment Bill failed to secure passage in Parliament. While the ruling NDA has been sharply

criticising the opposition for blocking the bill, opposition parties have defended their stance, citing alleged shortcomings in the proposed legislation.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched a strong attack on opposition parties, comparing their stand to the "Draupadi Cheerharan," and termed it an affront to women's dignity and democratic values. According to government

sources, the special session will be used to outline the state government's position on women's reservation and to strategise politically against the opposition.

There are also indications that a censure motion may be introduced during the session.

As per legislative norms requiring at least seven days' notice for convening a session, the Cabinet approved the proposal via circulation. The

matter has now been sent to the Governor for formal approval.

The ruling party has accused the opposition of politicising a crucial issue like women's empowerment, while opposition leaders have questioned the government's intent, calling the bill incomplete and flawed.

The upcoming session is expected to go beyond routine legislative business and could become a stage for direct political confrontation, with both sides aiming to shape public opinion on the sensitive issue of women's reservation.



19 Dead as Bus Overtakes in J&K's Udhampur



> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
At least 19 people were killed and several others injured after a passenger bus met with a horrific accident in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Monday. The tragedy occurred in the Khagot area of Ramnagar when the vehicle lost control on a sharp curve along a hilly stretch.

According to officials, the bus was travelling from a remote village towards Udhampur when the driver reportedly failed to negotiate a steep turn. The vehicle veered off the road and plunged nearly 100 feet down a rocky slope before crashing onto a lower road.

Rescue operations were launched immediately after authorities received information about the incident. Multiple ambulances were rushed to the spot, and the injured were shifted to nearby hospitals for treatment. Some critically injured passengers are likely to be airlifted for advanced medical

care. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) has taken cognisance of the incident and directed officials to ensure the best possible medical assistance for the victims.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh spoke to Udhampur Deputy Commissioner Minga Sherpa and expressed deep grief over the loss of lives. He assured that all necessary support is being extended to the affected families and that rescue efforts are being carried out on a war footing.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also conveyed his condolences, terming the incident "heartbreaking." He said instructions have been issued to the district administration, police, SDRF, and health departments to provide all possible assistance.

Meanwhile, Mehbooba Mufti expressed sorrow over the tragedy and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Surat Station Chaos: Migrants Rush Home

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi
Panic and chaos erupted at Udhna railway station in Surat on Sunday after thousands of migrant workers gathered to board special trains heading to northern states, particularly Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The sudden surge in crowd led to disorder, with passengers breaking queues and climbing over barricades at the station's entry points.

The incident occurred ahead of the departure of a special train to Bihar scheduled at 11:15 am. As pressure mounted, several passengers—including women and children—suffered from suffocation and dehydration due to overcrowding and rising temperatures.

Police were forced to resort to a mild lathicharge to control the situation and disperse those attempting to breach security arrangements. Officials from Western Railway acknowledged that the crowd pressure was "unusually high," attributing it to the ongoing marriage season and summer vacation rush.

According to railway authorities, nearly 23,000 passengers had gathered at the station, while six trains were scheduled to depart for



destinations in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Additional measures, including setting up seven extra ticket counters and deploying more staff, were taken to manage the rush. Despite these arrangements, disruptions occurred when some passengers attempted to bypass the queue system.

Migrant workers cited multiple reasons for their sudden return, including a reported shortage of LPG, declining industrial activity in Surat, and concerns linked to the ongoing conflict in West Asia. Some workers claimed they were skipping meals due to rising costs and lack of work, prompting them to return to their home states until conditions improve.

Railway authorities, however, urged passengers not to rely on rumours and clarified that operations remained largely normal. In an official statement, Western Railway said that several trains, including Udhna-Jaynagar Special and Madhubani Special, departed as scheduled.

"India, Korea Unite for Peace and Stability"

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung on Tuesday underscored their shared commitment to peace, stability, and deeper bilateral cooperation during a joint press conference held at Hyderabad House.

The high-level meeting marks the first visit by a South Korean President to India in eight years. Both leaders discussed expanding cooperation in trade, strategic industries, and global initiatives, while highlighting the growing partnership between the two nations.

Addressing the media, PM Modi described South Korea as a key partner in India's journey toward becoming a developed nation by 2047. He noted that Seoul's participation in initiatives like the International Solar Alliance and the Indo-Pacific



Oceans Initiative would strengthen efforts toward a peaceful, inclusive, and progressive Indo-Pacific region.

Modi also stressed the need for reforms in global institutions to better address emerging international challenges. Recalling Rabindranath Tagore, he noted that the poet once referred to Korea as the "Lamp of the East," adding that the country

today plays a vital role in global development and innovation.

President Lee Jae Myung praised India's rapid economic growth and its leadership in the Global South. He highlighted India's position as the world's largest democracy and fourth-largest economy, and lauded the "Viksit Bharat 2047" vision for driving transformative development.

Hyderabad Police Bust ₹150 Cr Cyber Fraud Case

> Vikrama Vahini | Hyderabad
Hyderabad Cybercrime Police have busted a massive ₹150 crore cyber fraud network under Operation Octopus-2, arresting 52 people across nine states.

Those held include 32 bank employees, 15 mule account holders, and five middlemen

allegedly involved in opening and operating fraudulent bank accounts used to siphon off money from victims. Police said around 350 accounts linked to nearly 850 cybercrime cases were used in the scam. Several devices and documents were seized, and further investigation is underway to trace wider links in the network.



MAN KILLS 8 CHILDREN, INCLUDING HIS OWN

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
In a deeply disturbing incident in the United States, eight children were killed in a mass shooting in Louisiana on Sunday, in what authorities suspect to be a case linked to domestic violence. The victims, aged between 18 months and 14 years, included three boys and five girls.

The accused, identified as 31-year-old Shamar Elkins, allegedly opened fire at multiple homes in a neighbourhood south of downtown Shreveport early in the morning. Shockingly, seven of the children killed were reported to be his own.

According to officials, the children had gathered at one house when the shooting took



A shocking mass shooting in Louisiana has left eight children dead, including seven allegedly killed by their father, Shamar Elkins. Authorities suspect domestic tensions behind the tragedy, as investigators continue to piece together the motive behind the horrific incident.

place. While most of the victims died inside the residence, one child was found dead on the roof, possibly while attempting to escape. One child survived the attack after reportedly jumping from the roof.

Law enforcement agencies responded swiftly, leading to a high-speed chase that extended into neighbouring Bossier Parish. The pursuit ended when the suspect exited his vehicle with a firearm, forcing officers to open

fire and neutralise him.

Police officials stated that the motive behind the crime is still under investigation, though preliminary findings suggest domestic issues may have triggered the attack. Reports indicate that Elkins was in the process of separating from his wife, and the couple had an argument prior to the incident. He reportedly had four children with his wife and three with another woman living nearby.

China, Japan Ramp Up Military Activity in Pacific

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
China has sent a naval task group, including the Type 052D destroyer Baotou, to the western Pacific Ocean for military exercises, according to its Eastern Theatre Command.

The drills come as Japan conducts large-scale joint military exercises with the United States and the Philippines, highlighting rising tensions in the Indo-Pacific region.

China said the exercises are routine and aimed at testing "far-seas operational capabilities," but the fleet's movement near Japan's waters has drawn attention amid growing regional maritime competition.

India-US Trade Talks Begin in Washington

> Vikrama Vahini | Washington

India and the United States have begun a three-day round of negotiations (April 20-22) to advance the first phase of their proposed Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) amid global tariff and economic uncertainties.

A 12-member Indian delegation led by chief negotiator Darpan Jain is participating in the talks, focusing on revising the draft framework, tariff reductions, and resolving ongoing trade

issues. The discussions come amid recent changes in US trade policy, including the introduction of a temporary 10% tariff, prompting both sides to reassess their positions and align strategies under evolving global conditions.

The proposed agreement is expected to include tariff cuts on key goods and increased trade across sectors such as energy, aviation, metals, and technology, with India also seeking better market access.

Air India Grooming Row

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
After the recent Lenskart controversy triggered a wider debate on workplace identity and personal expression, Air India has now come under scrutiny over its cabin crew grooming guidelines, following the circulation of an alleged internal document on social media.

The viral guidelines reportedly included restrictions on wearing religious symbols such as sindoor, mangalsutra, chooda, bindis, and other traditional ornaments, sparking criticism online and raising questions over workplace dress codes in the aviation sector.

According to the document that surfaced online, cabin crew were reportedly prohibited from wearing tikka or sindoor of any colour on the forehead. It also stated that only plain white or yellow gold bangles without designs or stones were permitted, while bracelets, mixed-metal jewellery, and embellished accessories were not allowed.

Further, the guidelines allegedly barred staff from wearing religious threads, black threads, beads, wedding choora, mangalsutra, taali, necklaces, anklets, toe rings, and even liquid vermilion.

Amit Shah on India-Nepal Border Review

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Union Home Minister Amit Shah will chair a high-level meeting on May 2 in New Delhi to review security and coordination along the India-Nepal border, sources said.

Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary is expected to join virtually, along with senior state officials, while district magistrates and SPs from border districts will participate via video conferencing.

The meeting will focus on issues such as illegal infiltration, cross-border smuggling, and drug trafficking networks. It will also review surveillance and coordination mechanisms along the porous 700-km Indo-Nepal border.

The India-Nepal border in Bihar spans seven districts, including West Champaran, East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Supaul, Araria, and Kishanganj, and is known for both security challenges and strong cross-border social and economic ties.

India-Korea Stress Peace, Stability Ties

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that India and South Korea together can send a strong message of peace and stability at a time of rising global tensions, as the two nations deepen cooperation across trade, technology, and strategic sectors.

He made the remarks during a joint press conference at Hyderabad House in New Delhi with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, who is on his first visit to India in eight years. The leaders held detailed discussions on expanding bilateral ties, with a focus on economic cooperation and strategic partnership.

PM Modi described South Korea as a key partner in India's development journey and said it could play an important role in helping India achieve its vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047. He also highlighted growing convergence between the two countries in areas of innovation, manufacturing, and global stability.

South Korea Calls India a Global Growth Leader: President Lee Jae Myung thanked PM Modi and the people of India for the warm welcome extended to him and his delegation. He described India as the world's largest democracy and one of the fastest-growing major economies.

Referring to India's global role, Lee said the country has emerged as a leader in the Global South, backed by its demographic strength and economic progress. He also praised India's development vision under "Viksit Bharat 2047."

He noted that South Korea has developed strong capabilities in semiconductors, shipbuilding, and cultural industries, and said both countries are well-positioned for deeper cooperation.