



VIKRAMA VAHINI

WORLD EARTH DAY

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Alia Bhatt in viral images promoting a Pakistani clothing brand were digitally manipulated using AI, as the actress has not endorsed or collaborated with the brand.

In a startling incident from Madhya Pradesh, nearly 2,000 litres of diesel reportedly vanished from a tanker kept in police custody, with officials claiming the fuel had "evaporated" — an explanation that has triggered widespread disbelief.



INSIDE

Good morning

If you can see the positive sides of everything, you'll be able to live a much richer life than others.

BRIEFS

Pune IT Rooms: Probe Ordered Over Alleged Misuse

> Vikrama Vahini | Pune
Maharashtra Minister of State for Transport Madhuri Misal has written to the Pune Police Commissioner, calling for an inquiry into allegations regarding the misuse of retiring rooms at a multinational IT company in Hinjawadi.

In her letter to the city police chief, the minister said she had received complaints from various sources claiming that male resting rooms within the company premises were being used for religious activities.

It has been alleged that a particular group has been regularly conducting such activities in these rooms, during which access to other employees was reportedly restricted, she stated.

The minister has sought a detailed investigation into the matter to ascertain the facts and take appropriate action if any violation of workplace norms or regulations is found. Authorities are expected to examine the complaint and verify the allegations.

Davangere Bypoll: Zameer's Fate After Results

> Vikrama Vahini | B'luuru
Political activity within the Karnataka Congress has intensified in connection with the Davanagere by-election, with speculation growing over possible disciplinary action against senior leader and minister Zameer Ahmed Khan.

Earlier, action was taken against several Muslim leaders accused of anti-party activities. Abdul Jabbar was removed from his post in the Minority Cell and expelled from the party's primary membership, while Naser Ahmed was relieved from his position as Chief Minister's political secretary.

Amid these developments, concerns have emerged over the future of Zameer Ahmed Khan as well, with reports suggesting that a decision on any possible action may be taken after the by-election results.

Maharashtra 'Love Trap': Suicide Bid, Fresh Arrest

> Vikrama Vahini | Amaravati
A shocking serial sexual abuse scandal has come to light in Maharashtra's Amravati after a minor victim attempted suicide at the Vazzar Dam. The girl was rescued by alert police officers, leading to the exposure of a predatory network.

The primary accused, Mohammad Ayaz (alias Tanvir), was arrested after more than 350 explicit videos were discovered on his mobile phone. Investigations suggest that Ayaz may have exploited approximately 180 girls.

Police Action: Authorities have arrested eight suspects so far, including Uzair Khan. Digital evidence, including seven smartphones, a laptop, a hard disk, and a tablet, has been seized.



As the sacred doors of Kedarnath Temple open on April 22, the divine call of the Char Dham Yatra begins anew—welcoming devotees into a snow-clad realm of faith, peace, and Lord Shiva's eternal presence. Amid pristine white peaks and echoing chants, the journey becomes a soulful path toward grace, devotion, and inner awakening.

Kharge's 'Terrorist' Remark on Narendra Modi Sparks Political Storm

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

A political controversy erupted after Mallikarjun Kharge, president of the Indian National Congress, referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "terrorist" during a press interaction in Chennai, prompting a sharp backlash from the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Addressing reporters, Kharge criticised the AIADMK for aligning with the BJP, questioning how a party that reveres leaders like C.N. Annadurai could support the Prime Minister. He alleged that such alliances weaken democracy and compromise principles of equality and justice. Kharge also praised M. K. Stalin, stating that Tamil Nadu requires

A major political row erupted after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "terrorist" during a press interaction in Chennai, later clarifying that he meant Modi "terrorises" opponents and institutions. The remark triggered a sharp backlash from the BJP, intensifying political tensions ahead of upcoming elections.



BJP Seeks EC Action Against Kharge

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday urged the Election Commission of India to take immediate action against Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge over his

alleged "terrorist" remark against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a memorandum submitted to the poll panel, the BJP demanded that Kharge be asked to issue a public

"Blockade Stays Till Iran Deal"

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Donald Trump on Tuesday asserted that the United States will not lift its naval blockade against Iran until a formal agreement is reached, while claiming that Washington is "winning" the ongoing conflict by a significant margin.

Trump stated that the blockade would remain in place as a key pressure tactic, emphasising that he would not rush into any agreement that is not favourable to the United States. He dismissed reports suggesting he was under pressure to strike a deal, saying there was "no pressure whatsoever" and that negotiations would happen on his terms.

Highlighting the impact of the blockade, Trump claimed it was severely damaging Iran's economy, estimating losses of around \$500 million per day, which he described as "unsustainable" even in the short term.

The US President also praised the performance of the American military, asserting that operations were progressing successfully. He alleged that Iranian military capabilities had been significantly weakened and said the situation was firmly under US control.

Trump criticised sections of the US media, including major publications, accusing them of spreading "fake news" and portraying the conflict inaccurately. He also attacked opposition Democrats, accusing them of undermining the country's strategic position.

The remarks come amid heightened tensions in the region, with the US continuing its naval blockade and both sides trading accusations over ceasefire violations as diplomatic efforts remain uncertain.



US-Iran Talks Uncertain as Ceasefire Deadline Looms

> Vikrama Vahini | Washington

Hopes for renewed diplomacy between the United States and Iran remain uncertain, with both sides yet to confirm participation in proposed talks in Islamabad as a two-week ceasefire approaches its Wednesday deadline.

The ambiguity comes amid rising tensions, particularly at sea, and increasingly sharp rhetoric from leaders on both sides, raising concerns that the opportunity for a peaceful breakthrough may be narrowing.

Iran's Foreign Ministry has demanded the release of an Iranian cargo vessel seized by the US Navy on Sunday, along with its crew and their families. Tehran has warned of retaliation over the incident, further escalating the situation.

Conflicting signals from officials have added to the uncertainty. Donald Trump denied being under pressure to reach an agreement but indicated that a delegation led by Vice President JD Vance may travel to Pakistan soon for potential talks.

On the Iranian side, the tone has been more cautious. A Foreign Ministry spokesperson stated that there are currently "no plans" for another round of negotiations, even as President Masoud Pezeshkian stressed the importance of diplomacy to ease tensions.

Sources suggest that US officials, including Vice President Vance, may depart for Pakistan shortly in anticipation of a possible second round of negotiations.

The diplomatic uncertainty is unfolding against a volatile backdrop in the Strait of

Hormuz, a key global oil transit route. The United States continues to enforce a naval blockade, while the recent seizure of an Iranian-flagged cargo vessel has intensified hostilities. Both sides have accused each other of violating the fragile two-week ceasefire agreement, which is set to expire soon.

Iranian leaders have strongly criticised US actions. Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf rejected negotiations "under the shadow of threats," warning that pressure tactics would not yield concessions. First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref also cautioned that continued restrictions on Iran's oil exports could have broader implications for global energy stability.

Meanwhile, diplomatic engagement continues behind the scenes. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has held multiple discussions with Pakistan's Mohammad Ishaq Dar, focusing on the ceasefire and prospects for renewed talks.

Despite ongoing tensions, there are limited signs of willingness to pursue dialogue. US officials maintain that a potential agreement remains within reach, though details are yet to be clarified. Iranian leaders, however, have expressed skepticism over Washington's public statements, particularly claims that key provisions had already been agreed upon.

With the ceasefire deadline fast approaching, the situation remains fluid, and the possibility of either renewed negotiations or further escalation continues to hang in the balance.

Shivamogga Blast: 3rd Convict Jailed

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

A special court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has sentenced the third accused, Arafat, to six years of imprisonment in the Shivamogga trial blast case.

The case relates to a trial explosion carried out in September 2022 near the Tungva river bank in Thirthahalli, Shivamogga district.

With this verdict, three accused in the case have now been convicted and sentenced to six years each. The trial against the remaining accused is still underway.

The NIA had initially arrested 12 individuals in connection with the case, while proceedings against nine accused are continuing before the special court.

Investigators alleged that the accused were in contact with extremist networks and were involved in activities such as fundraising and recruiting individuals for unlawful activities. The court, after examining evidence, found Arafat guilty and pronounced the sentence accordingly.

Security agencies said the trial blast was a serious case as it involved the testing of improvised explosive devices in a remote area, raising concerns about attempts to develop and experiment with explosive materials.

The investigation also revealed that the accused group had allegedly accessed online content related to weapon and bomb-making techniques.

Officials further stated that the case remains under close monitoring as the remaining accused are being examined for their alleged roles in the wider network. The National Investigation Agency is expected to file additional chargesheets based on ongoing evidence collection and digital forensic analysis.



SC SEEKS CENTRE REPLY ON NIA ACT CHALLENGE

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Supreme Court of India on Tuesday sought responses from the Centre, the National Investigation Agency (NIA), and the Kerala government on a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the NIA Act, 2008, observing that the issues raised were of "vital importance."

A Bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta issued notices to the respondents and posed a key question on the agency's powers: "Without being a police station, can the NIA register an FIR?"

> Case Background

The petition has been filed by Kerala-based advocate Mohammed

Mubarak Ali, who was arrested in December 2022 after the NIA took over investigations into cases involving alleged activities of the Popular Front of India.

He remained in custody for over a year before being granted bail by the Kerala High Court in June 2024.

> Court Proceedings and Timeline

The Court has granted four weeks for the Centre, NIA, and the state government to file their responses, and two weeks thereafter for the petitioner to submit a rejoinder. The matter is scheduled for further hearing on July 14, after the summer vacation.

During the hearing, senior

advocate Siddhartha Dave, appearing for the petitioner, referred to provisions of the NIA Act, particularly Section 6(5), which allows the Centre to direct the agency to investigate scheduled offences suo motu.

The Bench indicated that the government would need to clarify the legal basis for such powers, especially regarding FIR registration.

> Key Constitutional Challenge

The petitioner has argued that the NIA Act violates the federal structure of the Constitution by allowing the Union government to

override the powers of State police forces. He contended that "police" falls under the State List, and Parliament lacks the authority to create a central agency with overriding jurisdiction in this domain.

> Challenge to NIA Powers and Structure

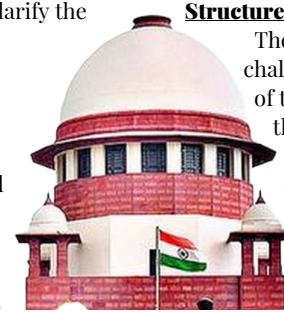
The plea further challenges Sections 6 to 10 of the Act, alleging that they confer "unbridled and unguided powers" on the Centre, enabling it to take over investigations within states without their consent. This, the

petitioner claims, effectively creates a parallel policing system and undermines the autonomy of state governments.

> Fundamental Rights Concerns

Seeking to have the Act declared unconstitutional, the petitioner has also argued that it violates Articles 14, 20, and 21 of the Constitution and disturbs the constitutional balance of federalism. He has further claimed that the manner of investigation and prosecution in his case caused grave prejudice.

The case is expected to have significant implications on the scope and powers of central investigative agencies in India.



Editorial

Balancing Workplace Neutrality and Religious Expression in Retail Spaces

The controversy surrounding Lenskart over alleged restrictions on employees wearing visible religious symbols such as kumkum, mangalsutra, and bangles has triggered widespread public debate. Sections of society have expressed strong displeasure, with calls for a boycott gaining traction on social media and protests emerging in some locations. For many, these symbols are not merely accessories but deeply personal expressions of faith and identity. As a result, any perceived curtailment of such expressions is seen as an infringement on individual rights, especially in a diverse and pluralistic society like India.

At the same time, it is important to recognise that private companies often implement dress codes to maintain a uniform and neutral brand image, particularly in customer-facing roles. The challenge arises when such policies appear to disproportionately affect one community or are interpreted as targeting specific religious practices. Without clear communication, even a standardised policy can be viewed as discriminatory. In a country governed by constitutional guarantees of religious freedom, businesses must exercise caution to ensure that workplace guidelines do not unintentionally conflict with these fundamental rights or alienate large sections of their customer base.

This episode highlights the urgent need for a balanced approach. Companies must engage transparently with employees and the public, clarifying the intent and scope of their policies. At the same time, governments may consider framing clear guidelines that help reconcile workplace norms with individual freedoms, ensuring fairness across all communities. Social harmony in a multicultural nation depends on mutual respect—between institutions and individuals alike. Ultimately, the goal should not be confrontation, but coexistence, where professional standards and personal beliefs can find a respectful and sustainable balance.

-Editor

STATEWIDE PROBE SOUGHT IN NASHIK & HUBBALLI CASES

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Hindu Rashtra Samanvaya Samiti has urged the Karnataka government to order a statewide comprehensive investigation into alleged workplace misconduct, women's safety concerns, and religious pressure in multinational companies and gyms, following recent incidents reported in Nashik and Hubballi.

A memorandum was submitted to the Chief Minister and the Home Department through the Bengaluru District Commissioner, demanding an impartial probe into what the organisation described as serious concerns related to harassment and exploitation in certain workplaces.

The delegation included representatives such as Sundresh Nargal of Sri Rama Sene, Sharath Kumar of Hindu Rashtra Samanvaya Samiti, advocate Ravi Shankar, and other members of Hindu organisations.

The demand follows a protest held on April 19 at Freedom Park,



Demand for Statewide Probe into Nashik TCS and Hubballi Gym Cases; Memorandum Submitted to Chief Minister and Home Department via Bengaluru District Commissioner by Hindu Rashtra Samanvaya Samiti

Bengaluru, where speakers expressed concern that the Nashik incident involving an IT company employee could indicate broader workplace misconduct beyond an isolated case. They called for a detailed investigation to rule out organised wrongdoing.

The memorandum further cited complaints from women employees alleging sexual harassment, intimidation, and religious pressure in some

organisations. The group stressed that such allegations must be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

The committee emphasised that women's dignity and safety are fundamental rights and urged the government to take immediate action. It also warned that protests would be intensified if appropriate steps are not initiated. Authorities have not yet issued an official response to the memorandum.

BJP Seeks EC Action Against Kharge

From PGi

apology and face "suitable penal and regulatory proceedings" under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The party also sought campaign restrictions against him.

The BJP said its delegation, including Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Kiren Rijju, and Arjun Ram Meghwal, will meet the Election Commission on Wednesday to press for action.

The complaint comes amid escalating political tensions between the ruling BJP and the Congress over recent statements made during election-related campaigning.

Kharge's 'Terrorist' Remark on Narendra Modi Sparks Political Storm

From PGi

leadership that stands firm against the BJP. He accused the AIADMK of losing its political identity and functioning as a subordinate ally, unable to safeguard the state's interests.

Following widespread criticism, Kharge issued a clarification, stating that his remark had been misinterpreted. He said he did not intend to label the Prime Minister a terrorist, but meant that Modi "terrorises" political opponents and institutions

through alleged pressure tactics. He further alleged that agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Income Tax (I-T) Department, and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) were being used to intimidate rivals.

The Congress chief also accused the Prime Minister of violating the Model Code of Conduct by addressing the nation after the failure of the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026 in Parliament, and criticised the Election

Commission for alleged bias.

Reacting strongly, BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla accused the Congress of repeatedly insulting the Prime Minister and engaging in divisive rhetoric. He alleged that such remarks reflected a pattern of targeting institutions and leadership.

The exchange has further escalated political tensions, particularly in the run-up to key elections, with both sides intensifying their attacks.

Reel Making Tragedy: Minor Dies in Fall

Vikrama Vahini | Hyderabad

A 14-year-old boy died after falling from a building while allegedly shooting a social media reel in the Secunderabad area of Hyderabad.

The incident reportedly occurred on April 5 but came to light recently after CCTV footage of the fall surfaced. The boy, identified as Mithun, was a resident near the Gandhi statue area in Mallapur under the limits of Nacharam Police Station.

According to reports, the boy slipped from the balcony while recording content and sustained serious injuries. He was undergoing treatment but succumbed to his injuries on Saturday. Police are examining the circumstances surrounding the incident.



Dhanvantari Temple Marks Decennial

Vikrama Vahini | Mulabagilu

The decennial celebration of the consecration of Lord Dhanvantari was held with great devotion and grandeur at the Sriman Madhvacharya Moola Mahasamsthana Sri Manmadhava Teertha Mutt in Agrahara here.

Special religious rituals were organised under the leadership of Sri 108 Srividyaavallabha Madhava Teertha Sripadaru, head of the Tambihalli Mutt. The ceremonies included Dhanvantari homa, sacred bathing rituals, institutional worship, grand final offerings, chariot procession, and distribution of holy offerings.

The rituals were carried out with devotion under the guidance of priest Murali. The event was conducted in a well-organised and traditional manner under the supervision of community leaders including Bhadravathi Krishnamurthy, Venkatesh Murthy, and B.G. Sudarshan Chandra.

DPR Planned for New Flyover at Iblur Junction

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao has directed officials to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for constructing an additional flyover at Iblur Junction on the Outer Ring Road, aiming to ease persistent traffic congestion in the area.

The directive was issued during a progress review meeting held at the GBA central office auditorium, where officials assessed the status of Suraksha-75 junction development works and ongoing white-topping projects across the city.

Rao stated that an additional



A new flyover at Iblur Junction is on the cards as Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao orders DPR preparation to tackle traffic congestion, alongside accelerated Suraksha-75 and white-topping works across Bengaluru.

flyover at Iblur Junction would significantly improve traffic flow and reduce bottlenecks. He instructed officials to immediately initiate DPR preparation and formulate a comprehensive execution plan to

take up the project at the earliest.

Under the Suraksha-75 initiative, development work at Iblur Junction is already underway. Officials have been asked to coordinate closely with the Traffic Police Department

to ensure speedy completion. Directions were also given to identify and acquire nearby vacant land under city corporation control to facilitate traffic decongestion measures.

Officials informed that coordination meetings have been held with the Traffic Police Department for 32 junctions under the Suraksha-75 project.

General Financial Concurrences (GFCs) have been finalized and handed over to respective city corporations. Work has commenced at 10 junctions, and officials have been instructed to complete them

within the stipulated timeline.

Authorities were further directed to expedite work at the remaining junctions in coordination with traffic police. In areas where metro corridors exist, joint inspections involving city corporation officials, BMRC, and traffic police have been ordered to finalize designs and begin execution without delay.

The meeting was attended by city corporation commissioners Pommala Sunil Kumar, K.N. Ramesh, Dr. Rajendra K.V., along with Chief Engineers and officials from B-SMILE, BWSSB, BESCOM, BMRC, and other departments.

NEWS

"Govt, Education Minister Face Embarrassment"

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka High Court's ruling directing that marks be awarded for Hindi language examination has caused significant embarrassment to the state government, Education Minister, and the Department of Education, alleged Legislative Council Opposition Chief Whip N. Ravi Kumar.

Speaking to the media, he said that the government had been taking "irrational decisions" regarding education policies. He recalled that about a month ago, the state government had decided that the Hindi examination would not be treated seriously and that whether

students passed or failed would not be given importance. It was also stated that students could either write the exam or skip it, and instead of marks, only grades would be awarded, he added.

Ravi Kumar pointed out that students and parents who had seriously prepared for the examination had expressed concern over this decision. However, the government had maintained that Kannada would be given first priority, English second, and Hindi would not be treated as a major subject, he said.

The matter was challenged in court by several petitioners. The

High Court has now ruled that students who have studied and written the examination should not be denied marks and directed that marks be awarded instead of only grades, he explained.

He further stated that the court has effectively overturned the government's decision, terming it "unscientific and immature." Welcoming the High Court verdict, the BJP said the decision has brought relief to students and parents.

Ravi Kumar urged the government to immediately stop taking such "unwise decisions" in the future.



Kolar Brick Kiln Raid: 10 Labourers, Including 2 Minors, Rescued

Vikrama Vahini | Kolar

In a major crackdown against bonded and child labour, officials rescued 10 workers, including two minors, from a brick manufacturing unit near Shivrapattan in Malur taluk of Kolar district.

The raid was conducted at the "NKN" brick kiln, following credible information that labourers were being illegally held in bonded conditions. The operation was led by Kolar Sub-Divisional Officer (AC) Jambagi Renuka Prasad Dileep on Tuesday evening.

Authorities rescued eight workers from Odisha along with two child

labourers from the premises. All 10 individuals have been taken into official custody, and steps are being taken to issue them "release certificates" as per legal procedure.

Officials said the brick kiln is owned by Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, against whom a case has been registered at Malur police station under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act.

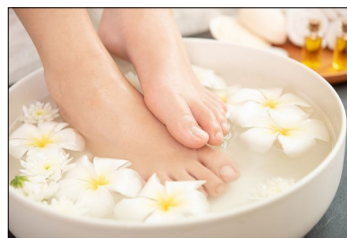
The joint operation involved Malur Taluk Executive Officer Krishnappa, CDPO Shobha, Labour Officer Renuka Prasanna, and Social Welfare Department Assistant Director Shivakumar.

Authorities confirmed that arrangements are being made to safely send the rescued workers back to their native places. Further investigation into labour violations at the unit is underway.

Officials also stated that the rescue operation was part of an ongoing district-level drive to identify and eliminate illegal bonded labour practices across industrial units. Surprise inspections are expected to continue in the coming days, with authorities warning strict action against employers found violating labour laws, particularly those involving vulnerable migrant and child workers.

Health And Lifestyle

Natural Pedicure at Home: Soft Feet Guide



Achieving soft, healthy feet does not always require expensive salon treatments, as simple kitchen ingredients can be effectively used for an all-natural pedicure at home, experts suggest.

A step-by-step self-care routine using natural elements such as rock salt, lemon, sugar, coconut oil, honey and banana can help cleanse, exfoliate and nourish the feet while avoiding chemical-based products.

The process begins with proper cleansing by soaking the feet in warm water mixed with a few teaspoons of rock salt and lemon juice. This helps relax the feet, gently exfoliate the skin and remove impurities. Experts recommend soaking for 10-15 minutes, followed by thorough rinsing and drying.

The next step involves exfoliation to remove dead skin cells. A natural scrub made from sugar and coconut oil can be massaged gently onto the feet. This not only smoothens the skin but also improves blood circulation, leaving the feet refreshed.

Foot care specialists advise careful nail grooming as the third step. Nails should be clipped and filed into shape, while cuticles should not be cut but

- * Natural pedicure can be done at home using simple kitchen ingredients.
- * Warm water with rock salt and lemon helps cleanse and relax feet.
- * Sugar and coconut oil scrub removes dead skin and improves circulation.
- * Nails should be trimmed and shaped carefully; cuticles should not be cut.
- * Banana and honey mask deeply nourishes and softens skin.
- * Final massage with coconut or almond oil keeps feet hydrated.
- * Weekly routine helps maintain soft, healthy, and smooth feet.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

gently pushed back to avoid infections, as they act as a protective barrier.

For deeper nourishment, a DIY foot mask made from mashed banana and honey can be applied for around 10 minutes. This helps retain moisture and keeps the skin soft and supple.

The final step involves massaging the feet with natural oils such as almond oil or coconut oil, which helps hydrate the skin and provides a relaxing effect.

Experts recommend repeating this natural pedicure routine once a week to maintain healthy, smooth and well-nourished feet without relying on salon treatments.

SCIENCE & Technology

Google Photos Adds Natural Face Edit Tools

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Google has rolled out new face touch-up tools in its Google Photos app for Android users, focusing on subtle and natural-looking edits rather than heavy filters.

The update allows users to make minor corrections such as removing blemishes, reducing dark circles, and adjusting uneven lighting, while preserving the original look of the face. The aim is to avoid the overly artificial appearance often caused by aggressive editing tools.

The new editing options include features like Heal, Smooth, Under Eyes, Irises, Teeth, Eyebrows, and Lips. Users can simply tap on a face in an image, choose a tool, and adjust the intensity using a slider, ensuring controlled and balanced changes.

Unlike traditional editing apps that require detailed manual adjustments, the updated tools rely on built-in artificial intelligence to analyse facial features, lighting, and skin tone. This enables the app to automatically apply subtle enhancements, saving time and effort for users seeking quick fixes.

The new features build upon existing tools such as Magic Eraser and Portrait Light, further enhancing the app's smart editing capabilities. Notably, these tools are integrated into the main editor, eliminating the need for additional downloads.

The update is being rolled out gradually and will be available on Android devices running version 9.0 or higher with at least 4GB of RAM.

TRUMP THREATENS IRAN BOMBING AS CEASEFIRE DEADLINE NEARS

> Vikrama Vahini | Washington
US President Donald Trump on Tuesday warned that Iran could face renewed bombing if a deal is not reached before the two-week ceasefire expires on Wednesday, even as diplomatic efforts continued across multiple channels to prevent escalation.
Trump said the United States is prepared to resume military action if negotiations fail, adding that he expects a deal but insisted Iran must come to the table. In remarks to CNBC's Squawk Box, he indicated that bombing remains an option, saying, "I expect to be bombing because I think that's a better attitude to go in with."
He further claimed that US military operations have significantly weakened Iran's capabilities, stating that key assets including its navy, air force, and leadership structure had been targeted in recent weeks.

However, he maintained that a negotiated settlement remains possible.
The warning comes amid uncertainty over a second round of US-Iran talks, which have yet to be formally confirmed by either side. Iranian officials have stated that no final decision has been made regarding participation, while US representatives had indicated possible negotiations in Islamabad involving senior envoys.
The first round of talks held earlier this month reportedly failed to produce any breakthrough, prompting renewed diplomatic activity in the region.
Pakistan has emerged as a key intermediary, urging both sides to extend the ceasefire and allow diplomacy to proceed. Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar called for

continued engagement, stressing that dialogue is the only viable path to regional stability.
Dar also held meetings with US diplomatic officials in Islamabad, where he reiterated Pakistan's position in favour of negotiations and urged both parties to avoid escalation. Separately,
Pakistani officials have engaged with Iranian representatives as part of efforts to facilitate talks.
China has also expressed support for Pakistan's mediation role, with its envoy in Islamabad backing continued diplomatic engagement between Washington and Tehran.
Meanwhile, security preparations in Islamabad have reportedly been intensified, with thousands of personnel deployed ahead of expected diplomatic movements, although the presence of negotiating teams remains unconfirmed.

Despite uncertainty, both sides have left the door open to dialogue. However, tensions remain high following recent maritime incidents in the Gulf region and ongoing military posturing, which have further strained the fragile ceasefire.
The situation remains fluid, with the ceasefire set to expire early Wednesday. Global markets and energy security remain on alert amid fears of renewed conflict if talks collapse.



Kharge's Remark on Modi Shows Frustration: Ravi Kumar

> Vikrama Vahini | B'luru
Karnataka Legislative Council Opposition Chief Whip N. Ravi Kumar on Tuesday strongly criticised Congress President Mallikarjuna Kharge for his alleged remarks against the Prime Minister, terming them as the "height of frustration and helplessness."
Speaking to reporters, Ravi Kumar said Kharge was facing political pressure as public support was declining, and that this frustration had resulted in "irresponsible and objectionable statements." He added that such remarks were unbecoming of a leader of Kharge's stature.
Referring to Kharge's earlier comments comparing the RSS and BJP to a "poisonous snake," Ravi Kumar said the public had elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi for three



Ravi Kumar slams Mallikarjuna Kharge for his remarks against the Prime Minister, calling them a sign of frustration, while also terming the High Court's Hindi marks ruling a setback for the Congress government.
consecutive terms and would not forgive what he described as a "slanderous campaign" against a popular leader.
Commenting on the recent High Court observation that marks should be awarded for Hindi instead of grades, Ravi Kumar termed it a "strong rebuke" to the ruling Congress government.

Agastheeswara Brahmotsavams Begin at Narayanavanam

> Vikrama Vahini | Tirumala
The annual Brahmotsavams of the Sri Agastheeswara Swamy Temple commenced on Tuesday with the ceremonial Dvajarahnam, marking the beginning of the grand festival. The temple, dedicated to Lord Agastheeswara Swamy and Goddess Maragathavalli Ammavaru, witnessed the hoisting of the sacred flag between 7:30 AM and 9:00 AM during the auspicious Vrushabha Lagnam. A large number of devotees participated in the inaugural rituals.
As part of the celebrations, the deity will be taken in procession on different vahanas each day. The schedule includes Simha Vahanam on April 22, Hamsa Vahanam on April 23, Sesha Vahanam on April 24, Nandi Vahanam on April 25, Gaja Vahanam on April 26, and Rathotsavam on April 27.
On April 28, Kalyanotsavam will be held in the evening followed by Ashwa Vahanam. The festivities will continue on April 29 with Sri Nataraja Swamy Veedhi Utsavam in the morning and Ravanasura Vahanam in the evening.
The Brahmotsavams will conclude on April 30 with Trishoola Snamam at Kailasakona and Dvajarahnam in the evening.
Temple officials said that Snanapana Tirumanjanam will be performed every morning, while Vahana Seva will take place daily in the evening. Cultural programmes, including Kolatam, spiritual discourses, and



devotional music, are being organised under the aegis of the TTD Hindu Dharma Prachara Parishad and the Annamacharya Project.
Temple Inspector Nagaraju, priests, and a large number of devotees attended the grand opening ceremony. According to temple history, the shrine is believed to have been constructed by Akasa Maharaju, father of Goddess Padmavathi Devi. The presiding deity is considered self-manifested and was later consecrated by Sage Agastya as per Vedic traditions, giving the temple its present name.

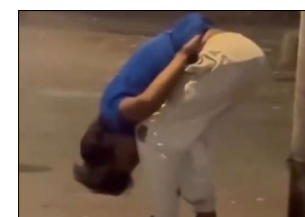
Court Orders FIR Against Parameshwar

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
A special court for elected representatives has directed police to register a First Information Report (FIR) against Karnataka Home Minister G. Parameshwar in connection with an alleged betting incident during a kabaddi tournament.
The order was issued following a petition filed by a complainant, Nagabhushan, who sought legal action over the alleged involvement of the minister in betting activities. Acting on the plea, the court instructed the Kodigehalli Police Station to register an FIR and initiate an investigation into the matter. According to the complaint, the incident took place during a kabaddi match between Chikkodi and Vijayapura teams. It is alleged that Parameshwar placed a bet of ₹500 predicting a victory for the Chikkodi team. However, after Vijayapura emerged victorious, the minister reportedly paid the bet amount.
The petitioner argued that such actions, if proven, could amount to a violation of laws related to betting and gambling. The court, after considering the submission, found sufficient grounds to direct the police to formally register the case and examine the allegations.



THANE 'ZOMBIE DRUG' VIRAL VIDEO: POLICE CLARIFY TRUTH

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi
Police in Thane have clarified that a viral video showing a man in a dazed, motionless state in the Bhayander area is not linked to any so-called "zombie drug," as claimed on social media.
Officials said the condition of the man was caused by an overdose of Pregabalin, a prescription medicine used to treat nerve pain, and not any illicit narcotic substance.
The video, which surfaced on April 15, showed the man standing motionless in a confused state, triggering widespread speculation online. Following this, the Mira Bhayander-Vasai Virar Police launched an investigation.
Police identified the individual as 22-year-old Sameer Rajendra Rawal, a labourer from Nepal, currently residing near Borivali Railway Station in Mumbai. He was traced on April 17 and later interrogated.
During questioning, Rawal



admitted to consuming multiple Pregabalin tablets for intoxication. He reportedly said he had been addicted to the medication for around two years and had consumed five tablets at once on the day of the incident, after which he experienced severe dizziness and was unable to move.
Police stated that Rawal had purchased the tablets without a prescription from a medical shop in Navghar. Authorities have since informed the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and initiated action against the pharmacy for allegedly selling Schedule-H drugs illegally.
Officials confirmed that no "zombie drug" or banned substance was involved, and the incident was purely a case of prescription drug misuse.

Cyclist Charged Toll Sparks Row

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
A viral video showing a cycle rider being charged ₹25 at a toll booth in Bengaluru has triggered widespread public outrage, raising questions over fairness and policy enforcement.
In the video, the cyclist is seen stopping at the toll booth and paying cash, which is accepted by the staff. The incident has sparked debate as bicycles and two-wheelers are generally exempt from toll charges on national highways across India.
Citizens have criticised the move, calling it an unfair burden on common people, especially daily wage workers who rely on bicycles for commuting to save fuel costs and reduce expenses. Concerns have also been raised over private infrastructure operators imposing such charges, despite broader norms favouring non-motorised transport.
The issue has reignited discussions on promoting eco-friendly commuting in a congested city like Bengaluru. Many argue that such toll charges could discourage cycling, which is otherwise seen as a sustainable and cost-effective mode of transport.



ENTERTAINMENT

HC PROTECTS ALLU ARJUN'S PERSONALITY RIGHTS

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
In a significant ruling on digital identity and celebrity rights, the Delhi High Court has granted interim protection to Telugu superstar Allu Arjun in a personality rights case, restraining the unauthorised use of his name, image, voice and other identifiable attributes through Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deepfake technologies.
Passing an ex parte ad-interim injunction, the court directed that no individual or entity shall commercially exploit or misuse the actor's persona without prior consent. The order comes amid rising concerns of celebrity identities in the digital space,
particularly through AI-generated content.
The plea filed by Allu Arjun alleged widespread misuse of his personality across various platforms. It highlighted the unauthorised sale of merchandise bearing his likeness, circulation of derogatory and misleading content, and even the dissemination of sexually explicit material created using manipulated visuals. The petition also pointed to instances where AI tools were allegedly used to clone the actor's voice and simulate fake phone calls, misleading the public and potentially damaging his reputation.
Taking note of the submissions, the court observed that the material placed on record clearly establishes that Allu Arjun's "name, appearance, voice, manner of delivering dialogues, gestures, attire, speech, signature and overall likeness" are distinctive attributes exclusively associated with him. It held that these characteristics serve as source identifiers and are entitled to legal protection against unauthorised exploitation.
The court further emphasised that such attributes effectively constitute the actor's personality rights, over which he enjoys exclusive control. It noted that any unauthorised use, particularly for commercial gain or in a misleading context, would amount to infringement.
Highlighting his stature in the film industry, the court referred to his journey from a child artist in Vijetha to becoming a pan-India icon through blockbuster films like Pushpa: The Rise and its sequel Pushpa: The Rule. The court noted that his widespread recognition further strengthens the need to protect his identity from misuse.
Importantly, the court also issued directions concerning online platforms and intermediaries. It stated that any website or platform found hosting infringing content must remove or disable access to such material. However, it clarified that platforms not primarily engaged in infringement would have the liberty to approach the court for modification or clarification of the order, upon undertaking that they would not host or circulate unauthorised content related to the actor.



Rakesh Bedi Hints at Fate of Dhurandhar 3

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Speculation over a third instalment of the blockbuster franchise Dhurandhar has gained momentum, with fans demanding "Dhurandhar 3" following the massive success of the first two films starring Ranveer Singh.
The franchise, directed by Aditya Dhar, has already delivered two commercially successful films — Dhurandhar and Dhurandhar 2 — both of which have set new benchmarks at the global box office. The combined worldwide collection of the two films is reported to have crossed ₹3,000 crore.
However, senior actor Rakesh Bedi, who played the character Jamal Jamali in the series, has dampened expectations of a third part. In a recent interview, he said he does

not believe Dhurandhar 3 is likely, suggesting that the storyline concludes with the protagonist returning to his country.
"The story feels complete at the end. I don't think there is scope for a third part," Bedi said, adding that the narrative reaches a natural closure.
At the same time, he hinted that the franchise could still continue in a new form. According to him, Dhurandhar remains a strong brand, and future instalments with new characters and fresh storylines could still be possible depending on the director's vision.
The films, known for their espionage-driven plot and political undertones, featured Bedi in the role of an Indian spy operating in Pakistan — a twist that became one of the highlights of the series.



Bhooth Bangla Hits ₹100 Cr in 3 Days

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi
Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar's latest horror-comedy "Bhooth Bangla" has crossed the ₹100 crore mark worldwide within just three days of its release, marking a strong opening at the global box office.
Directed by veteran filmmaker Priyadarshan, the film marks his reunion with Akshay Kumar after nearly 14 years. Released recently, the film has registered a total worldwide collection of ₹102.05 crore over its opening weekend, according to figures shared by Balaji Motion Pictures on its official X handle.
The film opened with ₹21.60 crore on day one, followed by ₹25.65 crore on day two, and saw a jump to ₹50.20 crore on Sunday,



driven by weekend footfalls. The performance has been described as steady, with stronger overseas contributions adding to its global tally.
In India, the film collected ₹3.50 crore through paid previews, followed by ₹12.25 crore (net) on day one, ₹19 crore on Saturday, and ₹23 crore on Sunday. While the numbers indicate a decent performance, industry

observers note that the collections are moderate for a star-led film of this scale. The horror-comedy has received mixed reviews from critics and audiences alike, though its commercial run has remained stable over the opening weekend.
The film features an ensemble cast including Tabu, Vamika Gabbi, Paresh Rawal, Rajpal Yadav, and Mithila Palkar in key roles.

BUSINESS

Citius InvIT IPO Oversubscribed 20x; GMP Flat

> Vikrama Vahini | Mumbai
The ₹1,105 crore Citius Transnet InvIT initial public offering (IPO) witnessed overwhelming investor response, closing with a strong overall subscription of 20.43 times at the end of the bidding period on Tuesday, as per data from the National Stock Exchange (NSE).
The IPO, which opened for public subscription on April 17, received bids for 1,25,40,24,900 units against the total offer size of 6,13,88,850 units, reflecting robust demand across investor categories. The institutional investors' segment led the subscription, being oversubscribed 23.21 times, while the portion reserved for other investors saw a subscription of 17.09 times.
Citius Transnet InvIT's public issue was entirely a fresh issue aimed at raising ₹1,105 crore. The offering followed the book-building route, allowing investors to bid within a specified price band.
Despite the strong subscription figures, activity in the grey market remained subdued. Market observers noted that the grey market premium (GMP) hovered around ₹3.25 on the final day of bidding, indicating expectations of a limited listing gain. The flat GMP suggests cautious sentiment among informal market participants despite the strong demand seen in the primary market.
The IPO is part of the growing InvIT (Infrastructure Investment Trust) segment in India, which has been attracting investor interest due to its potential for stable returns backed by infrastructure assets.
The basis of allotment for the IPO is expected to be finalised on April 24, 2026. Following the allotment, successful bidders can expect shares to be credited to their demat accounts, while refunds for unsuccessful applicants will be processed shortly thereafter.

SPORTS

Shafali up, Mandhana down in ICC rankings



> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
India opener Shafali Verma has climbed two places to reach sixth position in the latest ICC women's T20I batting rankings released on Tuesday, following her strong performances in the ongoing series against South Africa.

Shafali's rise comes after a fluent 57 off 38 balls in the second T20I, even though India suffered an eight-wicket defeat to South Africa Women, slipping to 0-2 in the five-match series. She had earlier scored 34 in the opening match at the same venue.

Meanwhile, vice-captain Smriti Mandhana slipped one place to fourth after scoring 13 and 12 in the first two matches. She was overtaken by West Indies skipper Hayley Matthews, who moved to the third spot.

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur made gains, moving up two places to 11th, boosted by her unbeaten 47 in the opening match. However, Jemimah Rodrigues dropped four places to 14th after a dip in form.

Among bowlers, India's Deepti Sharma slipped to fifth, while Renuka Singh Thakur fell to ninth. Arundhati Reddy also dropped to 12th, moving out of the top 10.

The ongoing series is seen as crucial preparation ahead of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup scheduled later this year in England and Wales. South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt retained her fifth position after a solid half-century in the second T20I.

MI, CSK Get Star Boost

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Five-time champions Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians have received a major boost in the ongoing Indian Premier League 2026 season with the arrival of key players after injury setbacks.

Both teams have struggled to find form this season, with more losses than wins, largely due to injury concerns affecting their squads. However, the return and inclusion of star players is expected to strengthen their campaigns.

For Chennai Super Kings, Australian fast bowler Spencer Johnson has joined the squad, replacing injured pacer Nathan Ellis. The franchise confirmed Johnson's inclusion through its official social media channels, providing much-needed support to their pace attack.

Meanwhile, Mumbai Indians have been bolstered by the return of England all-rounder Will Jacks, who has recovered from injury and rejoined the team. According to reports, Jacks has already arrived in India and begun training with the squad. The inclusion of these players is expected to improve team balance and performance as both franchises look to turn around their campaigns in the remainder of the tournament.

The return of key players comes at a crucial stage of the tournament, with both Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians aiming to regain momentum and stay in contention for the playoffs. Team managements are hopeful that the fresh energy and experience brought in by Spencer Johnson and Will Jacks will address key gaps in their line-ups and improve overall performance in the coming matches of the Indian Premier League 2026 season.

Phones Banned at Kedarnath Temple

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
The Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) has announced a complete ban on mobile phones inside the premises of the sacred Kedarnath Temple ahead of its seasonal reopening on Wednesday.

According to officials, devotees will not be allowed to carry mobile phones, take photographs or videos, or record reels inside the temple complex. The committee stated that the decision has been taken to preserve the sanctity of the shrine and ensure a smooth experience for pilgrims. Violations of the rule may invite legal action.

The temple portals will open at 8 am on April 22, marking the

Mobile phones have been completely banned inside the Kedarnath Temple ahead of its reopening on April 22, as the Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee aims to preserve sanctity and ensure a smooth pilgrimage experience. The shrine, richly decorated with 5,100 kg of flowers, will open at 8 am amid traditional rituals, marking the start of the Char Dham Yatra season.



start of the annual pilgrimage season. The temple has been beautifully decorated with around 5,100 kg of flowers sourced from across India and abroad, creating a vibrant spiritual ambience.

A BKTC member said the combination of snow-clad surroundings and floral decorations will offer a "mesmerising spiritual experience" for devotees. The opening rituals will be conducted

with traditional Vedic chanting led by the Rawal (chief priest) of the shrine.

The ceremonial Panchmukhi Doli of Baba Kedarnath has already begun its journey from its winter seat at Ukhimath and reached Phata on Monday night. It is scheduled to arrive at Gaurikund before making the final trek to Kedarnath Dham.

Meanwhile, the Char Dham Yatra, which began on April 19 with the opening of Gangotri and Yamunotri on Akshaya Tritiya, is witnessing heavy pilgrim turnout. The Yatra follows a traditional route beginning at Yamunotri, followed by Gangotri, Kedarnath, and concluding at Badrinath, following a west-to-east pilgrimage sequence.

"Actor On Screen, Not in Politics"

> Vikrama Vahini | Chennai
Actor-turned-politician Vijay on Tuesday strongly hit back at critics who dismissed him as "just an actor," asserting that he does not "act" in politics. Addressing a massive campaign rally in Chennai ahead of the Tamil Nadu

Assembly Elections, the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) chief took a swipe at ruling party leaders and ministers for repeatedly targeting him. "Yes, I am an actor, but since entering politics, I have not acted. It is you who are staging drama," he said.

Vijay also criticised the ruling DMK government over the Karur stampede incident, rejecting allegations that he was responsible.



Delhi Busts Fake ENO & Nescafé Racket; ₹20L Seized

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Counterfeit ENO and Nescafé Factory Busted in New Delhi; Goods Worth ₹20 Lakh Seized

The Crime Branch of the Delhi Police has busted a racket involved in the manufacture of fake ENO powder and Nescafé coffee in the national capital. Acting on a tip-off, police raided the Madhu Vihar area in East Delhi and uncovered two illegal units operating out of rented flats.

During the operation, counterfeit products and raw materials worth approximately ₹20 lakh were seized. The recovered items included three packaging machines, nearly 1 lakh fake ENO sachets, around 50,000 fake coffee sachets, 500 kg of coffee powder, acid-filled drums, packaging rolls, stickers, and cartons.



Police said the fake products were being distributed across various parts of the country through wholesale and retail channels, posing a serious health risk to consumers, as ENO is commonly used to treat acidity and indigestion.

Four accused — Uttam Das, Papai Das alias Pankaj, Nitin Bhardwaj, and Sanjay Bansal —

have been arrested in connection with the racket. Investigations revealed that the operation had been running for the past two months. Nitin Bhardwaj, who was initially absconding, was tracked down through technical surveillance and apprehended in Dehradun, while Sanjay Bansal was later arrested near Kashmiri Gate.

Hormuz Flashpoint: US-Iran Talks Spark Gulf Alarm

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Worries are mounting across the Middle East as renewed talks between the United States and Iran raise concerns over Tehran's growing influence on the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.

The anticipated round of diplomacy between Washington and Tehran is expected to have far-reaching implications beyond the two nations, impacting regional

players such as Israel and Lebanon. While a potential easing of tensions could bring relative calm, shifting power dynamics in the region remain a major concern.

A key focus of these developments is the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial maritime chokepoint for global oil trade. Its significance has come into sharper

focus following Iran's actions during heightened conflict periods, when it effectively disrupted passage through the strait.

As negotiations progress, analysts believe compromises from both sides are inevitable. However, there are growing fears among Gulf nations that Iran could leverage the talks to strengthen its control over the waterway, altering the regional balance of power.

Doctors initially struggled to diagnose the illness until neurologist Dr. Vemuri Rama Tarakanath noticed distinctive white lines on the victim's nails—an indicator of arsenic poisoning. Subsequent tests confirmed arsenic levels nearly ten times above normal, prompting police to launch an investigation.

PM Modi on K-Pop, K-Drama Popularity in India

Cultural Ties Deepen as K-Wave Gains Strong Foothold in India

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Prime Minister Narendra Modi has acknowledged the growing popularity of K-Pop and Korean dramas in India, describing them as a major cultural phenomenon embraced by millions across the country. Speaking at a joint press conference after bilateral talks

with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung in New Delhi, the Prime Minister highlighted the strengthening cultural ties

between India and South Korea. PM Modi noted that Korean dramas and K-Pop have become

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlights the rising popularity of K-Pop and Korean dramas in India, calling it a major cultural wave, while announcing a joint India-South Korea Friendship Festival in 2028 to further strengthen cultural ties.

"extremely popular in India," while also pointing out that Indian cinema and cultural influence are gaining increasing recognition in South Korea. He added that President Lee also appreciates Indian films, reflecting the deepening cultural exchange

between the two nations. To further strengthen these ties, the Prime Minister announced that India and South Korea will jointly organise an India-South Korea Friendship Festival in 2028.

K-Pop and Korean dramas have witnessed a sharp rise in popularity in India over the past decade, driven by engaging storytelling, high production values, and global music appeal. Popular groups such as BTS and BLACKPINK have built a strong fan base in India, contributing to the wider cultural wave known as the "Korean Wave" or Hallyu.

The upcoming friendship festival is expected to further boost cultural, entertainment, and people-to-people connections between the two countries.

Rahul Kolkata Visit Cancelled

> Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata
The proposed visit of Rahul Gandhi to Kolkata on April 23 has been cancelled after local authorities reportedly denied permission for the event.

Congress leaders alleged that the Mamata Banerjee-led state government deliberately blocked the programme as part of political interference in the ongoing election campaign. They claimed local administration and police acted under instructions from the state government.

The party said it waited until the evening for approval but was informed that permission had been denied. It is now likely to seek fresh approval for a revised schedule on April 25 or 26.



2,000 Litres 'Evaporate' from Police Custody Tanker in Madhya Pradesh

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
In a startling incident from Madhya Pradesh, nearly 2,000 litres of diesel reportedly vanished from a tanker kept in police custody, with officials claiming the fuel had "evaporated" — an explanation that has triggered widespread disbelief.

The dates back to 2022, when police at Piprahi outpost under Hanumana police station in Maunjanj district seized a pickup vehicle carrying diesel, alleging illegal transportation. The tanker belonged to Sumit Kumar Gupta, a local resident. Following court proceedings, the district court directed Gupta to pay a fine of ₹1,81,630 to secure the release of his vehicle. However, upon retrieving the



tanker, Gupta was shocked to find it completely empty. Despite being sealed and locked, not a single drop of diesel remained inside.

When questioned, police officials reportedly told Gupta that the diesel had

simply "evaporated," raising serious concerns about the handling of seized property within police premises.

The incident has sparked outrage and disbelief, as experts question how such a large quantity of fuel could disappear from a secured and sealed tanker.

Gupta claims he has suffered a loss of around ₹3.5 lakh and has also alleged pressure to withdraw his complaint. "There was not a single drop of diesel in the tanker when I collected it. I had already paid the fine. I want justice and compensation for my loss," he said.

Authorities have yet to provide a detailed explanation, and the continues to raise serious questions over accountability and transparency.

THRISSUR BLAST TOLL AT 14; PM ANNOUNCES RELIEF AID

> Vikrama Vahini | Thrissur
The death toll in the devastating explosion at a fireworks unit linked to preparations for the Thrissur Poomam festival has risen to 14. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced an ex-gratia compensation of ₹2 lakh each for the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.

Expressing deep grief over the tragedy, the Prime Minister said the Centre is closely monitoring the situation and wished a speedy recovery to those undergoing treatment.

The incident occurred at a fireworks facility operated under the Thiruvambady Devaswom, where large quantities of firecrackers were being prepared ahead of the annual festival. Authorities said the situation remains critical as sporadic explosions continue at the site, severely hampering rescue operations and posing risks to emergency personnel.

The situation remains critical as sporadic explosions continue at the site, severely hampering rescue operations and posing risks to emergency personnel.



Thrissur Blast Kills 13, Injures Over 40

> Vikrama Vahini | Thrissur
At least 13 people were killed and over 40 others injured in a massive explosion at a fireworks manufacturing unit in Mundathikode near Thrissur on Tuesday, casting a shadow over the upcoming Thrissur Poomam celebrations.

According to the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority, the blast occurred around 3:30 pm at a shed where firecrackers were being prepared for the annual festival. Several injured persons are reported to be in critical condition.

Eyewitnesses said the initial explosion was followed by a series of intermittent blasts, making rescue operations difficult. The exact number of workers present at the unit at the time of the incident remains unclear.

Police, Fire and Rescue Services, and ambulances rushed to the spot and shifted the injured to the Government Medical College Hospital in Thrissur and other nearby healthcare facilities.

Officials indicated that the unit was located in a dried paddy field, and intense summer heat may have contributed to the severity of the explosion. Rescue teams faced challenges in reaching the exact site due to the risk of further blasts, as the quantity of explosive materials stored at the facility is not yet known.

Bride Illness Unmasks Revenge Plot

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
A shocking poisoning case has come to light after a young bride, Bala Sashirekha, was hospitalised in Guntur with severe vomiting, diarrhoea, and neurological symptoms, leading to the exposure of a meticulously planned revenge plot.

Doctors initially struggled to diagnose the illness until neurologist Dr. Vemuri Rama Tarakanath noticed distinctive white lines on the victim's nails—an indicator of arsenic poisoning. Subsequent tests confirmed arsenic levels nearly ten times above normal, prompting police to launch an investigation.

Suspicion deepened when it emerged that Bala's mother-in-law, M. Uma Maheshwari, had died weeks earlier under similar circumstances, initially believed to be natural. Multiple family members reporting comparable symptoms raised alarm.

The investigation gained momentum following a complaint by M. Sirisha, daughter of the deceased and sister of Bala's husband, who resides in the United Kingdom. She accused her estranged husband, Ajith Kumar Mupparappu, a pharmacist, of orchestrating the crime.

Police revealed that Ajith and Sirisha, married in 2018, had a troubled relationship that turned abusive, leading to their separation in 2022. Investigators allege that Ajith then devised a revenge plan targeting Sirisha and her family.

Sindoor Strike: Terror Chiefs in Hiding

> Vikrama Vahini | Pahalgam
India's decisive military response, codenamed Operation Sindoor, has significantly weakened terror infrastructure across the border, with key operatives continuing to remain in hiding even a year after the strikes. Launched in May 2025 following the deadly Pahalgam attack that claimed 26 lives, the operation targeted major bases of Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed. Indian forces reportedly struck multiple locations, dismantling critical terror facilities.

Sources indicate that top militants Hafiz Saeed and Masood Azhar have since gone underground, frequently shifting locations under tight security. Intelligence agencies are said to be closely monitoring their movements. Officials describe the operation as a strong message of India's counter-terror capabilities, with its impact continuing to be felt across terror networks in the region.