



VIKRAMA VAHINI

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

₹2

03 May, 2026 | Sunday | Krishna Paksha | Dwitiya | Vikrama Samvata | Bengaluru | Volume: 09 | Issue: 52



Sai Pallavi's Bollywood debut film "Ek Din" opens to a disappointing ₹1 crore on Day 1, with just 1.4% occupancy, raising questions over the film's performance and Aamir Khan's production decision.

The Supreme Court on Saturday dismissed a petition filed by the Trinamool Congress (TMC) challenging the Election Commission's (EC) decision to appoint only central government officials as counting observers for the West Bengal Assembly elections.

INSIDE

Good morning

"challenges makes you more responsible. Always remember that life without struggle is a life without success. Don't give up and learn not to quit."

BRIEFS

IED Blast Kills 3 DRG Personnel in Chhattisgarh

Vikrama Vahini | Kanker (Chhattisgarh)
Three personnel of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) were killed and one injured after an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated during a demining operation in the forest area along the Narayanpur border on Saturday. Police said the team was engaged in locating and neutralising IEDs planted by Naxalites when the explosion occurred under Chhotobethia police station limits.

The deceased have been identified as Inspector Sukhram Vatti and Constables Krishna Komra and Sanjay Gadpale. The injured constable, Paramanand Komra, is undergoing treatment. Security forces had been conducting extensive operations to clear explosives left behind by Naxals in the region. Officials said the incident occurred while one such device was being defused. This is the first major Naxal-related incident in the state after the Centre's declaration on March 31 that India is "Naxal-free," highlighting continuing security challenges in affected areas.

Nashik Court Denies Bail to Nida Khan in TCS Case

Vikrama Vahini | Nashik
A court in Nashik has rejected the anticipatory bail plea of Nida Khan, a key in the TCS BPO sexual harassment and alleged forced conversion case, citing the need for custodial interrogation. Khan had sought relief on the grounds of pregnancy, but the court held that the seriousness of the allegations warranted further investigation. Police said she is currently absconding, while custody of four other accused has been extended till May 5 as the probe continues.

Kulkarni Loses MLA Seat

Vikrama Vahini | B'uru
Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni has been disqualified from the Karnataka Legislative Assembly following his conviction and life sentence in the Yogesh Gowda murder case. The disqualification order was issued by the Assembly Secretariat under provisions of the Constitution and the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which mandate removal of elected representatives sentenced to two years or more in prison. With this, the Dharwad Rural Assembly seat has officially fallen vacant. Kulkarni, who was among 16 convicts in the case, has moved the High Court seeking a stay on his conviction and bail.

KSRTC Strike Alert May 20?

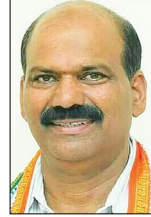
Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Public transport services in Karnataka may come to a halt from May 20 as transport employees have announced an indefinite strike demanding resolution of their long-pending wage issues. The Joint Action Committee of transport unions has called for the strike, stating that buses of KSRTC, BMTC and other state-run corporations will not be operated from 6 am on May 20. The decision follows the failure of talks with Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on April 28.



Union leaders said their demands include a 25% wage hike, clearance of pending arrears of ₹1,272 crore, and resolution of other service-related issues within a fixed timeline. They also criticised the government for not addressing COVID-era compensation claims and other allowances. The unions warned that the state government would be responsible for any inconvenience caused to commuters due to the strike.

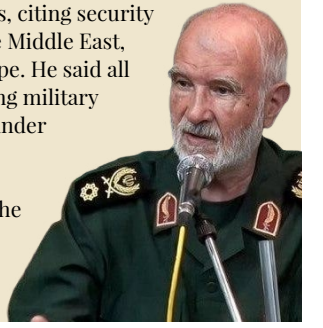
Sringeri Recount Confirms Congress Win

Vikrama Vahini | Chikkamagaluru
The recounting of postal ballots in the Sringeri Assembly constituency has concluded, confirming the victory of Congress candidate T.D. Rajegowda, bringing an end to a prolonged legal battle. The recount was conducted at IDSG Government College following directions from the High Court. Rajegowda, who had earlier won by a margin of 201 votes, secured victory again with a slightly increased margin of 203 votes. A total of 1,822 postal ballots were cast in the constituency, of which 270 were rejected during the initial counting.



Iran Warns War Return in US Standoff

Vikrama Vahini | Tehran
Iran's military headquarters has warned that a resumption of conflict with the United States is "likely," alleging that Washington is not committed to existing agreements or international understandings. In a statement carried by Iran's Fars News Agency, Mohammad Jafar Asadi, deputy at the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, said recent US actions and remarks indicate a lack of seriousness in diplomatic commitments. He added that Iran's armed forces remain fully prepared for any escalation. Iranian military officials also cautioned that renewed conflict involving the United States and Israel cannot be ruled out, while stressing that strategic assessments suggest rising tensions regardless of diplomatic efforts. Asadi said Iran had shown flexibility during earlier rounds of negotiations but claimed the US had responded with increased pressure and tougher demands. He further stated that Iran's position is that issues such as sanctions relief and the status of the Strait of Hormuz must be addressed before broader talks, including nuclear-related discussions. Iranian officials have accused the US of seeking "surrender rather than negotiation," calling such demands unacceptable. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump reiterated a hardline stance, stating that Iran must not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons, citing security concerns for the Middle East, Israel, and Europe. He said all options, including military action, remain under consideration if diplomacy fails. Speaking at the White House, PG2



Bird Flu Alert in Tumakuru

Vikrama Vahini | Tumakuru
Bird flu fears have intensified in Tumakuru district after the recent deaths of 30 chickens, following earlier reports of mass peacock deaths in the region. Authorities have sent samples of the dead poultry for laboratory testing to determine the exact cause. Officials said 44 peacocks had already died in the past few days, with laboratory reports confirming H5N1 avian influenza infection in those cases. The latest poultry deaths have raised concerns of further spread of the virus. In response, the district administration has declared Kallalli and four other villages as containment zones and ordered the temporary closure of chicken shops in the affected areas. Residents have been advised to remain vigilant and report any unusual PG2



CHHOTA USMAN JAILED FOR NASIR ESCAPE PLOT

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
An NIA Special Court on Saturday sentenced Vikram Kumar alias Chhota Usman to seven years of rigorous imprisonment in a case involving a conspiracy to help terror accused T. Nasir escape from jail in the Bengaluru serial blast case. Chhota Usman, the ninth accused in the case, had pleaded guilty before the court. He was charged with planning an unlawful operation to free T. Nasir, a key accused and alleged mastermind of the Bengaluru serial blasts linked to the banned outfit LeT. According to investigators, Vikram Kumar was earlier lodged in prison in connection with a murder case, where he came into contact with T. Nasir. Influenced by Nasir, he converted to Islam and adopted the name Chhota Usman. Even after his release, he allegedly remained in contact with Nasir and other operatives. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) revealed that the accused, along with others including Junaid Ahmed and Salman Khan, planned a "cinematic-style" attack to free Nasir. The plan involved ambushing police vehicles while transporting the accused for court hearings or medical examinations. They intended to attack the convoy, throw grenades, kill police personnel, and abduct Nasir during transit. PG2



₹18.62 Cr Drugs Seized at B'uru Airport

Vikrama Vahini | B'uru
Customs officials at Kempegowda International Airport have seized narcotics worth ₹18.62 crore in a major operation, authorities said on Saturday. Acting on specific inputs, officials intercepted three passengers arriving from Bangkok and recovered 52.68 kg of hydroponic drugs concealed in their baggage. The accused have been taken into custody and booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Further investigation is underway to trace the source and intended recipients of the contraband. PG2



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and actor Rishabh Shetty share a moment during an engaging conversation on cinema and culture, highlighting the impactful portrayal of Indian civilisation through films.

India Tests Mobile Emergency Alert System

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
The Government of India on Saturday conducted a nationwide test of its Cell Broadcast emergency alert system, with citizens across several regions receiving a loud "Extremely Severe Alert" message on their mobile phones. Authorities clarified that the alert was only a test and no action was required from the public. **Nationwide Disaster Communication Drill**
The test formed part of a nationwide mobile-based disaster communication exercise aimed at improving the speed and reach of emergency warnings during natural or man-made disasters. The system is designed to instantly alert citizens and ensure timely dissemination of critical safety information. The drill covered Delhi-NCR and capital cities of all States and Union Territories, excluding border areas and poll-bound regions. During the exercise, users received notifications accompanied by loud sound alerts or vibrations on their mobile devices. **Message Clarifies It Is a Test**
The alert message received by users read: "India launches Cell Broadcast using indigenous technology, for instant disaster alerting service for its citizens. Alert citizens, safe nation. No action is required by the public upon receipt of this message. This is a test message. - Government of India." Officials had earlier informed the public about the exercise and urged people not to panic upon receiving the alert. **Strengthening Emergency Preparedness**
The Department of Telecommunications, in coordination with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), conducted the drill to strengthen India's disaster



India conducted a nationwide test of its Cell Broadcast emergency alert system, sending "Extremely Severe Alert" messages to mobile users to strengthen disaster communication and preparedness. Authorities clarified it was a drill and urged citizens not to panic.

response communication systems. The system uses the Integrated Alert System "SACHET", developed by the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), which enables authorities to send geo-targeted emergency messages directly to mobile phones via Cell Broadcast technology. **Pan-India Rollout Planned**
Officials said the system is operational across all States and Union Territories. During the testing phase, users may receive messages in English, Hindi, and regional languages, depending on their device settings. Multiple alerts may be issued during drills to ensure compatibility across telecom networks and devices. Once fully operational, the Cell Broadcast system will be used to send real-time emergency alerts in multiple Indian languages, ensuring wider reach and faster communication during disasters, irrespective of network or device type.

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Panchatantra Stories

The Hermit and the Mouse

Near the southern city of Mahilaropyam stood a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, the god of destruction. A humble hermit lived there, taking care of the temple with great devotion. Every day, he would go into the city to collect alms and return in the evening.

He kept what he needed and gave the extra food to the workers who cleaned and maintained the temple.

In the same hermitage lived a small mouse. Every day, it secretly entered the hermit's room and stole food from his bowl. At first, the hermit ignored it, but as the theft continued, he grew frustrated.

He tried several ways to stop the mouse—hanging the bowl higher, guarding it, and even chasing it away with a stick—but nothing worked. The clever mouse always found a way to escape with food.

One day, a wandering mendicant visited the temple. However, the hermit was distracted, constantly watching for the mouse instead of paying attention to his guest. The mendicant felt insulted and decided to leave. Before leaving, the hermit explained his problem with the mouse.

After listening carefully, the mendicant said, "This mouse must have stored enough food in its hole. That is why it is bold and fearless. Its strength comes from what it has accumulated."

The hermit realized the wisdom in these words. Early the next morning, he and the mendicant followed the mouse's tracks. They soon discovered its hidden hole filled with a large stock of stolen food. They removed everything and brought it back to the temple.

That night, when the mouse returned, it found nothing in its hole. Its confidence and strength were gone. Hungry and weak, it tried to jump toward the hermit's food bowl but failed. The hermit struck it with a stick, and though it survived, it was badly shaken.

The mouse, now frightened and powerless, fled the temple and never returned again. The hermit learned that true security comes from removing the source of a problem, not just reacting to its effects.

The mendicant reminded him that wisdom lies in understanding the root cause before taking action.



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah chaired a progress review meeting with Additional Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, and Secretaries of the Government at the Conference Hall of Vidhana Soudha. Prior to the meeting, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah released the new Karnataka Progress Portal and its handbook, which provide comprehensive information on all state departments, scheme views, approvals, and coordination of development programmes.

BANASHANKARI SKYWALK WORK FINALLY BEGINS AFTER 7-YEAR DELAY

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Construction of the long-pending Banashankari Skywalk has finally begun after a delay of seven years, Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya announced on Friday.

The project, aimed at improving pedestrian connectivity between the Banashankari Metro station and the TTMC bus terminal, is expected to benefit over 50,000 daily commuters.

Project Concept and Need

According to Surya, the project was first conceptualised in 2019 following a joint inspection of the Banashankari TTMC and Metro station along with then Minister R. Ashoka and BMTC Chairman Nandiesha Reddy.

The inspection highlighted the daily struggle of commuters moving between the two transport hubs and the need for

a safe pedestrian skywalk.

By January 2022, the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) had prepared a detailed design for a circular skywalk featuring greenery, resting zones, vendor spaces, and integrated loops connecting the Metro station and TTMC.

Delays Despite Approvals and Funding

Surya said he repeatedly followed up with authorities over the project. In November 2023, he met Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D.K. Shivakumar urging faster execution.

In February 2024, ₹50 crore was allocated for the project in the BBMP budget following discussions with then BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath. However, progress remained slow, and even during a site visit in September 2024, no physical work had

begun.

Tenders were eventually floated in April 2025, with BMRCL committing to complete construction within 15 months.

Work Finally Begins

Surya confirmed that construction has now officially started, calling it a long-awaited relief for commuters.

He noted that the skywalk is especially crucial for daily travellers, including senior citizens, women, and office-goers navigating the busy junction.

He also said the project reflects the importance of sustained public and political pressure in ensuring urban infrastructure development.

Monitoring Progress

The MP added that his office will continue to monitor the project closely and track progress on a monthly basis to ensure timely completion within the committed deadline.



Iran Warns War Return in US Standoff

From PG1

Trump said recent communications with Iran had not produced meaningful progress. "They're asking for things that I can't agree to," he said, adding that while he preferred a diplomatic solution, military options remain available.

Trump also criticised Iran's leadership, describing internal divisions and confusion among officials, and claimed that ongoing negotiations were "disjointed" and ineffective. The latest exchange highlights continuing tensions between Tehran and Washington, with no clear breakthrough in diplomatic efforts so far.

Bird Flu Alert in Tumakuru

From PG1

bird deaths immediately to authorities. Veterinary and health department teams have been placed on high alert, and expert groups have been deployed to monitor the situation and implement preventive measures. Officials have urged the public not to panic but to strictly follow safety guidelines to prevent further spread.



Union Minister and Member of Parliament Smt. Shobha Karandlaje distributed electric sewing machines to rural artisans and toolkits to traditional artisans from five taluks of Bengaluru Urban district under the Zilla Panchayat for the year 2025-26 at the MP Office in Suvarna Bhavan, Malleswaram. Hon'ble MLC Shri T. N. Javarayi Gowda, Deputy Director Shri P. Jayaraj, and other dignitaries were present on the occasion. The initiative aims to strengthen the livelihoods of rural and traditional artisans by promoting self-employment and skill-based economic activities.

CHHOTA USMAN JAILED FOR NASIR ESCAPE PLOT

From PG1

The group had allegedly procured grenades from Haryana's Ambala and arranged weapons and vehicles for the operation. The conspiracy was uncovered during NIA investigations,

which confirmed the group's preparations for a coordinated terror strike. The court, while pronouncing the sentence, noted the seriousness of the offence and the accused's admission of guilt.

K. Ravi Appointed HAL CMD

Vikrama Vahini | B'luru

K. Ravi has taken charge as the 22nd Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), succeeding Dr D.K. Sunil, who superannuated on April 30, 2026.

Ravi brings over three decades of experience in aerospace, defence, manufacturing, and electronics sectors. Prior to his appointment, he served as Director (Operations) at HAL, where he led key strategic initiatives and contributed to the company securing Maharatna status.

Outlining his vision, Ravi said he aims to transform HAL into a globally competitive aerospace and defence



enterprise driven by innovation, Artificial Intelligence (AI), operational excellence, and people-centric growth.

During his tenure at HAL, Ravi held several leadership roles including Executive Director and General Manager of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Division, and Executive Director (Corporate Planning).

Ambedkar's 135th Birth Anniversary Celebrated at MEI



Vikrama Vahini | Mysuru

The 135th birth anniversary of B. R. Ambedkar was celebrated at Mysore Electrical Industries (MEI) on Saturday with great reverence and enthusiasm. Karnataka Transport and Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy inaugurated the programme and paid rich tributes to the architect of the Indian Constitution.

The 135th birth anniversary of B. R. Ambedkar was marked at Mysore Electrical Industries, where Minister Ramalinga Reddy highlighted his enduring legacy and the Constitution's role in strengthening democracy and empowering citizens.

Addressing the gathering, the minister said that Dr Ambedkar's contributions are remembered not only across India but also globally.

He noted that Ambedkar empowered every citizen and community in the country, and his tireless efforts, along with his team, laid the foundation for the freedom and rights enjoyed by citizens today.

Highlighting the importance of the Constitution, Reddy said it

remains the guiding force of India's democracy and enables citizens to live with dignity and exercise their freedom of expression. He stressed that strengthening democratic values through the Constitution is essential for the nation's progress and unity.

He further urged people to follow the path shown by Dr Ambedkar and work collectively towards nation-building.

Emphasising India's aspiration to become a global power, he said the Constitution serves as a strong pillar supporting the country's growth and development.

Speaking on the occasion, he also lauded the recent performance of Mysore Electrical Industries, stating that the organisation has turned profitable and should continue striving for greater efficiency and growth in the coming years.

The event was attended by noted writer Talakadu Chikkarange Gowda, KPCC spokesperson M Lakshman, MEI Chairman S Manohar, along with the Managing Director, officials, staff members, and representatives from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities.

NEWS



At Suttur Srikshetra, BJP State President and MLA B.Y. Vijayendra visited Jagadguru Shri Shivaratri Deshikendra Mahaswamy and respectfully extended a formal invitation for the "Shri B.S. Yediyurappa Abhimana Utsava" programme, honouring former Chief Minister Shri B.S. Yediyurappa. The delegation received the blessings of His Holiness on the occasion. Former MP Shri Pratap Simha, Mysuru City BJP President Shri L. Nagendra, Mysuru Rural District President Shri K.N. Subbanna, former MLA Shri Niranjan Kumar, and leader Shri L.R. Mahadevaswamy were present.

Vijayendra Flags Karnataka Fiscal Crisis

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Karnataka BJP President B.Y. Vijayendra on Saturday launched a sharp attack on the state Congress government, alleging that its guarantee schemes have pushed Karnataka into a "serious debt trap" and caused severe stress on state finances.

Citing the Union Finance Ministry's Monthly Economic Review for April 2026, Vijayendra claimed that Karnataka is witnessing deteriorating fiscal indicators, including a revenue deficit of 0.7% and over 15% of revenue receipts being spent on interest payments.

He said the report highlights the "fragile financial condition" of the state under the Siddaramaiah-led government and warned that Karnataka's fiscal health is under severe

pressure.

In a post on X, Vijayendra alleged that "politically motivated expenditure" under the Congress government's guarantee schemes has depleted the state treasury, affecting infrastructure development and priority sector spending.

He further claimed that Karnataka is losing its financial flexibility and ability to handle economic shocks due to what he termed "unscientific financial management."

Targeting Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the BJP leader questioned the rationale behind what he described as "emptying state coffers for political gains," and accused the government of pushing future generations into mounting debt.



SPIRITUAL

PRAYER IS LIFE'S PURPOSE: SWAMIJI

Vikrama Vahini | Mysuru

Prayer with pure devotion should be the ultimate goal of life, said Sri Sathyaatma Theertha Swamiji of Sri Uttaradi Mutt, emphasising that sincere prayer is essential for making human life meaningful.

He was delivering his blessings after performing Maha Ksheerabhisheka and Phala Panchamrita Abhisheka to Lord Sri Venkateshwara during the concluding ceremony of the 8th anniversary celebrations of Sri Venkateshwara Dhyana Kendra at its branch in Srirampura, Mysuru.

Swamiji said that wherever worship is carried out with love and devotion, divinity resides there. "God does not consider wealth, status, or grandeur.

Pure and selfless prayer is the true measure of devotion. When our actions please the wise and elders, they also become dear to God," he said.

He stressed that true spiritual practice lies in continuous contemplation and inner connection with the divine. "Lord Venkateshwara has incarnated to remove the sufferings of devotees. Strengthening faith and devotion towards Him should be our only duty, which gives true meaning to life," he added.

Highlighting the importance of knowledge in spiritual centres, Swamiji said that learning and spiritual discussions must continue in dharmic institutions so that wisdom and devotion are awakened. He appreciated Sri Venkateshwara Dhyana Kendra for regularly conducting knowledge sessions under the guidance of scholar Pandit Hemanth Acharya.

Swamiji also called for preserving values



for future generations, saying that ancestral traditions were rooted in righteousness and discipline. "To ensure that future generations walk on the path of dharma, we must sincerely engage in chanting, penance, and recitation of scriptures," he said.

Following the discourse, Swamiji performed sacred abhisheka rituals and conducted mangalarati for Lord Venkateshwara.

Pandit Hemanth Acharya, administrator of the centre, requested Swamiji to stay for ten days and conduct a knowledge yajna, which was also supported by devotees. Scholars including Badaraynacharya, Aniruddhacharya,

Harish Acharya, and several devotees were present. Hundreds of devotees participated and received blessings through padapuja and mantra initiation.

SCIENCE & Technology

Ancient Roman Ship Coating Reveals 2,200-Year Secrets

Scientists have uncovered new details about ancient Roman shipbuilding techniques after studying a 2,200-year-old shipwreck off the coast of present-day Croatia.

The study, published in Frontiers in Materials, examined the wreck known as Ilovik-Paržine 1, revealing that Roman ships were coated with a combination of pine tar (pitch) and beeswax to protect them from seawater and marine damage.

Researchers from France and Croatia found that the vessel had undergone multiple repair and coating applications over time, using materials sourced from different regions of the Mediterranean. Using advanced molecular and pollen analysis, scientists identified traces of surrounding vegetation, helping them trace where repairs may have been carried out—ranging from coastal Adriatic areas to inland forests.

Experts say the findings shed light on ancient naval engineering skills and highlight the sophisticated waterproofing methods used by Roman-era shipbuilders to enable long-distance sea navigation.

The study also revealed that the protective coating preserved microscopic pollen grains, allowing researchers to reconstruct the ancient environment in which the materials were produced and applied. Experts say the discovery not only deepens understanding of Roman maritime technology but also highlights how ancient shipbuilders maintained and repaired vessels over long voyages, reflecting advanced knowledge of materials and long-distance naval trade networks.

SRI SWAMIJI'S 14TH PATTABHISHEKA CELEBRATED

> Vikrama Vahini | Mantralayam
The 14th Vedanta Samrajya Pattabhisheka Mahotsava of H.H. Sri Subudhendra Teertha Swamiji was celebrated with devotion and grandeur at Sri Mutt, Mantralayam, on May 1, 2026.



On this auspicious occasion, several sacred rituals were performed. In the morning, H.H. Sri Swamiji offered Sri Brahmakararchita Sri Moola Ramadevara Pooja, followed by Sri Shodashabahu Narasimha Devara Pooja with deep devotion. In the evening, devotees, disciples, and residents of Mantralayam gathered at Sri Mutt to offer heartfelt felicitations to the Swamiji. As a mark of reverence and gratitude, the staff of Sri Mutt performed Tulabhara Seva, offering

coins to H.H. Sri Swamiji. A significant highlight of the event was the release of a commemorative book titled "Glimpses and Achievements of H.H. Sri Subudhendra Teertha Swamiji (2013-2026)", authored by Sri Mutt Manager

Sri S.K. Sreenivasa Rao. The book was formally released by H.H. Sri Swamiji.

The celebration reflected deep spiritual devotion and the continued reverence of devotees towards the sacred traditions of Sri Mutt.

Hyd Cyber Police Bust 184 Profiles, Block 801 Scam Ads

> Vikrama Vahini | Hyderabad
The Cyber Crime Unit of Hyderabad City Police has busted 184 social media profiles and blocked 801 advertisements promoting illegal online betting and fake investment schemes during April.

Police said the profiles on platforms like Facebook and Instagram lured users with promises of easy money, IPL predictions, and high returns, often using deepfake videos of celebrities. Six FIRs have been registered in connection with the case.

Authorities confirmed that a total of 427 profiles and 1,903 ads have been removed so far as part of ongoing cyber patrol efforts. Further investigation is underway to trace those involved, while citizens have been urged to stay alert and report suspicious activities. Police also warned that such scams can lead to serious financial losses and misuse of personal data, urging users to avoid clicking on suspicious links or downloading unknown apps.



BJP National General Secretary (Organisation) B.L. Santhosh ji made a cordial visit to the residence of former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and shared breakfast with him. During the meeting, B.L. Santhosh ji expressed confidence that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP will achieve a historic victory in the upcoming Assembly elections across five states. He also extended warm wishes to B.S. Yediyurappa on completing 50 years of a successful political journey. B.S. Yediyurappa, in turn, appreciated B.L. Santhosh ji's organisational skills and leadership acumen, stating that they serve as an inspiration to party workers.

Shivakumar Rejects Exit Polls, Backs INDIA Win



> Vikrama Vahini | Guwahati
Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister and KPC President D.K. Shivakumar on Friday said he does not believe in exit polls and expressed confidence that the INDIA alliance will come to power in all states that went to polls last month.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with Congress candidates in Guwahati, Shivakumar said exit polls cannot be relied upon as they are based on a very small sample size. "Whether exit polls are in our favour or not, I do not believe in them. My assessment is different. This time, the INDIA alliance will come to power in all

states," he said. He added that he was in Assam to guide party candidates, support legislators, and boost their morale ahead of results. Commenting specifically on Assam, he said the INDIA alliance is confident of forming the government in the state. "Our workers are different. We have full

confidence in our leaders, and they have worked hard. People want change, and I am confident that change will come," he said. On Tamil Nadu, he reiterated that the INDIA alliance would form the government. Responding to a question on West Bengal, he maintained that the alliance would come to power there as well.

Prasoon Joshi Appointed Prasar Bharati Chairman

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has appointed renowned lyricist, writer, and communication expert Prasoon Joshi as the Chairman of Prasar Bharati, India's public service broadcaster. Joshi is widely known for his contributions to literature, advertising, cinema, and public communication. His work includes acclaimed film lyrics, impactful advertising campaigns, and socially relevant



storytelling that resonates with audiences across the country. Welcoming the appointment, Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw said Joshi's leadership will bring "renewed energy, deeper purpose, and a fresh creative voice" to Prasar Bharati. He noted that Joshi's creative vision reflects India's cultural essence and heritage. Before this role, Joshi served as Chairperson of the Central Board of

Film Certification (CBFC) since 2017, where he focused on balancing creative expression with regulatory responsibilities. He has also held senior positions in global advertising firms and is a trustee of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. Prasar Bharati, established under the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990, is India's autonomous public broadcaster comprising All India Radio and Doordarshan. It plays a key role in information dissemination, cultural promotion, and national integration across the country.

Agri Practical Workshop for Farmers' Quota on May 4

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
A one-day workshop will be held on May 4 to train students from farming families for the agricultural practical exam required for admission to agri courses under the 50% farmers' quota. Organised by Viksit47 Academy at Aurobindo School near GVKK, the session will guide II PUC students preparing for the exam. Registration can be done by contacting 8217413646. The training will cover key aspects of the agriculture practical examination, helping students understand the format, evaluation process, and important topics. Experts will also provide tips to improve performance and confidence during the test.

BENGAL REPOLL: TMC-BJP CLASH

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Repolling in parts of West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district turned violent on Saturday as supporters of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) clashed at multiple locations, officials said.



The Election Commission of India had ordered fresh polling in 15 booths across two assembly constituencies—11 booths in Magrahat Paschim and four in Diamond Harbour—following complaints of irregularities during earlier voting. According to officials, polling initially began peacefully but tensions escalated later in the day, particularly in the Falta area, where local residents staged protests alleging intimidation ahead of the vote counting scheduled for Monday. The situation quickly deteriorated as groups from both parties confronted each other.

Residents alleged threats and violence in the run-up to counting. A local resident claimed that TMC workers had issued warnings of consequences if opposition-backed candidates won. Another woman voter alleged she was attacked despite supporting the TMC and demanded action and protection for women in the area. Despite the unrest, the Election Commission reported steady voter participation. By 2 pm, turnout stood at 56.33% in Magrahat Paschim and 54.9% in Diamond Harbour, with an overall turnout of 55.57% across all 15 booths. Security forces were deployed in sensitive pockets to prevent further escalation, and polling officials continued monitoring the situation closely. In a separate development, controversy also emerged over alleged irregularities involving electronic voting machines. The TMC filed a complaint against a returning officer at Khudiram Anushilan Kendra, alleging improper handling of postal ballot covers. The BJP, meanwhile, claimed that a strong room was opened without authorisation. Election authorities have initiated an inquiry into both complaints. Officials said further action will be taken based on the findings of the investigation as counting day approaches.

ENTERTAINMENT

Mahesh Babu Trains in Germany for Rajamouli's 'Varanasi'

> Vikrama Vahini | Germany
Superstar Mahesh Babu has begun an intensive physical training and trekking schedule in Germany as part of preparations for director S. S. Rajamouli's much-anticipated film "Varanasi", one of the biggest upcoming Indian cinematic projects. The actor recently shared glimpses of his preparation on social media, revealing that he is currently training in Germany's Black Forest region along with renowned fitness expert Dr Harry Koenig. The visuals show Mahesh Babu trekking through dense forest trails, undergoing physically demanding routines designed for the film's high-intensity adventure sequences. **Training in Germany's Black Forest** Located in the Baden-

Württemberg region near the borders of France and Switzerland, the Black Forest is known for its rugged terrain, dense woodlands, rivers, and valleys. The location has become a key training base for the actor due to its challenging landscape, ideal for endurance and adventure preparation. This is not Mahesh Babu's first visit to the region. Following the release of "Guntur Kaaram" in 2024, he had previously visited the same area for trekking sessions with Dr Koenig. His return now is believed to be directly linked to the physically demanding role in "Varanasi". **Global Adventure Film by Rajamouli** Directed by S. S. Rajamouli, "Varanasi" is being developed as a large-scale international adventure film with a globe-trotting storyline. The project is expected to feature multiple international locations and high-end action sequences, positioning it as one of the most ambitious Indian films in production. Reports suggest that the film's narrative revolves around an adventurous journey across remote and challenging landscapes, requiring extensive physical preparation from the lead actor. **International Release Plans** The film's production team is also targeting a wide international audience. During a recent visit to Mexico, producer S. S. Karthikeya confirmed that "Varanasi" will be released in Spanish as well, aiming to reach audiences across Latin America and South America. With Rajamouli's global vision and large-scale production backing, "Varanasi" is shaping up to be one of the most awaited Indian films. The film is currently scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on April 7, 2027.

Meghana Raj Remembers Chiru

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Actress Meghana Raj shared an emotional post remembering her late husband Chiranjeevi Sarja after meeting superstar Rajinikanth during the shoot of her upcoming film. Chiranjeevi Sarja, who passed away suddenly in June 2020, is still fondly remembered by Meghana, who continues to raise their son while remaining active in the film industry. On their wedding anniversary (May 2), Meghana posted old pictures with Chiru Sarja and wrote that a dream they once shared has now come true, adding that he remains the strength behind her journey. Chiranjeevi Sarja was a huge admirer of Rajinikanth. Meghana also shared nostalgic photos of Chiru with Rajinikanth, including a selfie and a moment where the superstar is seen blessing their son. Interestingly, Meghana Raj is currently acting

in Rajinikanth's upcoming film Jailer 2, directed by Nelson Dilipkumar, which also features Kannada star Shiva Rajkumar in a key role. Meghana, who continues to stay active in films, has completed projects including Buddhivantha 2 and has also acted in the Malayalam film Ottakomban, which is yet to release.



VARANASI TO FEATURE 20-MIN RAMAYANA SEQUENCE

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Ace filmmaker S. S. Rajamouli's upcoming magnum opus Varanasi has generated massive buzz, with producer S. S. Karthikeya revealing that the film will include a 20-minute sequence inspired by the Indian epic Ramayana. The highly anticipated film stars Mahesh Babu, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, and Prithviraj Sukumaran in lead roles, and is already being hailed as one of the biggest Indian cinematic projects in development. Speaking at the Comic Con Experience Mexico 2026, Karthikeya highlighted cultural parallels between India and Latin America, noting that just as Mexican stories draw from Aztec and Mayan histories, Indian cinema often takes inspiration from epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. He said the inclusion of a Ramayana segment in Varanasi aims to connect emotionally with global audiences. The film recently made waves internationally with its first glimpse showcased at the Le Grand Rex in Europe, where it received an enthusiastic response from viewers. The visuals featuring Mahesh Babu as Rudhra, Priyanka Chopra as Mandakini, and Prithviraj Sukumaran as Kumbha have already gone viral, amplifying excitement among fans. Karthikeya also emphasised that Varanasi will explore themes of family values, culture, and shared human emotions, making it relatable across borders. With its global narrative, high production scale, and mythological elements, the film is



BUSINESS

Gold Down, Silver Up This Week



> Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata
Gold and silver prices moved in opposite directions over the past week, reflecting changing global trends and market demand. While gold prices witnessed a decline, silver continued its upward momentum, attracting investor attention. According to market data, gold prices fell by ₹1,260 over the week, hovering around ₹1.51 lakh per 10 grams. At the beginning of the week, 24-carat gold was priced at ₹1,53,070 per 10 grams, which dropped to ₹1,51,810 by May 2. During the week, prices even dipped below the ₹1,50 lakh mark before slightly recovering. In contrast, silver prices surged by more than ₹5,000, reaching ₹2,51 lakh per kilogram. The price of 999 purity silver rose from ₹2,46,110 on April 26 to ₹2,51,170 by May 2, indicating strong demand for the metal. City-wise gold prices for 1 gram show minor variations across India. In Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kerala, Pune, and Kolkata, 24-carat gold is priced at ₹15,037, 22-carat at ₹13,784, and 18-carat at ₹11,278. In Delhi and Ahmedabad, 24-carat gold stands at ₹15,042, while Chennai records the highest at ₹15,185 per gram. Silver prices also vary by location. Chennai, Hyderabad, and Kerala report higher rates at ₹2,64,900 per kg, while cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Pune, Vadodara, and Ahmedabad have silver priced at around ₹2,55,100 per kg. Market analysts attribute the contrasting trends to global economic cues, currency fluctuations, and shifting investor preferences between gold and silver.

SPORTS

India Announce Squad for Women's T20 WC

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced the 15-member Indian women's team for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026, scheduled to be held in England from June 12 to July 5.

Harmanpreet Kaur will lead the side, while Smriti Mandhana has been named vice-captain. Riding high on their historic ODI World Cup triumph in 2025, where they defeated South Africa in the final, the Indian women's team will be aiming to secure their second ICC title.

The tournament will feature 12 teams divided into two groups of six, with a total of 33 matches to be played. India have been placed in Group A alongside Australia, South Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Netherlands.

India will begin their campaign against Pakistan on June 14, followed by matches against the Netherlands (June 17), South Africa (June 21), Bangladesh (June 25), and Australia (June 28).

The squad includes key players such as Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh, Yastika Bhatia, Renuka Singh Thakur, Radha Yadav, and Shreyanka Patil, among others.

With a balanced mix of experienced players and emerging talent, Team India will look to build on its recent success and make a strong impact in the global tournament.

RCB's Crucial Matches Ahead in IPL

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) are gearing up for a decisive phase in IPL 2026, with five crucial league matches set to determine their playoff chances. The team has played nine matches so far, winning six and losing three against Gujarat Titans, Delhi Capitals, and Rajasthan Royals.

Despite a recent setback against Gujarat Titans on April 30, RCB remain strong contenders for a playoff berth. With 12 points already in hand, the team is optimistic that just one or two more wins from the remaining matches could secure qualification.

RCB's next match is against Lucknow Super Giants on May 7 at the Ekana Stadium in Lucknow. A win in this match would take them to 14 points, putting them in a strong position for the playoffs. Following this, RCB will face Mumbai Indians on May 10 in Raipur, Kolkata Knight Riders on May 13 (also in Raipur), Punjab Kings on May 17 in Dharamshala, and Sunrisers Hyderabad on May 22 in Hyderabad in their final league game.

The team management believes that winning at least two of the remaining matches will almost their place in the playoffs. However, a strong performance in all five games could even push RCB to the top of the points table.

With the tournament entering a critical stage, RCB will look to deliver consistent performances and maintain momentum in their bid for a successful IPL 2026 campaign.

UP Peon in ₹8 Cr Scam; 7 Women Arrested

> Vikrama Vahini | Pilibhit/New Delhi

A class-IV employee posted at the District Inspector of Schools (DIOS) office in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit has been arrested for allegedly masterminding a ₹8 crore fraud involving government funds, police said.

The accused, identified as Ilham-ur-Rehman Shamsi, is alleged to have created fake beneficiary IDs and diverted government money into multiple bank accounts through 98 transactions. Officials said funds were routed into 53 different accounts linked to his relatives and associates.

Investigators revealed that Shamsi allegedly transferred over ₹1 crore to his wife Arshi Khatoon's account. Police described the case as a well-planned financial fraud carried out using forged records and manipulated salary bill tokens.



Following the exposure of the scam, police arrested seven women alleged to be his accomplices. The arrested have been identified as Lubna, Fatima, Parveen Khatoon, Aashkara Parveen, Azara Khan, Nahid, and Aafia Khan.

Superintendent of Police Vikram Dahiya said that around ₹5.5 crore linked to

suspicious accounts has been frozen and further investigation is underway to trace the remaining funds and other possible beneficiaries. Officials said the scam has raised serious questions about internal monitoring and financial controls within the education department. Further action is expected as the probe continues.

Pulwama Terror Associate Arrested, Arms Seized

> Vikrama Vahini | Srinagar

Security forces have arrested a terrorist associate in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir during a joint operation, police said on Saturday.

The operation was conducted by Pulwama Police in coordination with 44 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) Shadimarg and the 183 Battalion of the CRPF at Qasbayar on CB Nath Road. During the operation, a suspect identified as Mohd Umar Malik, a resident of Kachipora, was apprehended.

Arms and Explosives Seized

Police said that a search of the suspect led to the recovery of incriminating materials, including a star pistol, a pistol magazine, two live rounds, and two hand grenades.

Case Registered Under UAPA

A case has been registered at Police Station Rajpora under FIR No. 75/2026 under relevant sections of the Arms Act and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Allahabad HC Fines UP Govt ₹10 Lakh Over Illegal Detention

> Vikrama Vahini | Lucknow

The Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court has imposed a penalty of ₹10 lakh on the Uttar Pradesh government for the alleged illegal detention of a man who was kept in jail for three months without being informed of the reasons for his arrest.

A division bench comprising Justice Abdul Moyn and Justice Pramod Kumar Srivastava, while hearing a habeas corpus petition, held the state's action as "unconstitutional" and a violation of fundamental rights.

The court also directed that the compensation amount may be recovered from the officials responsible for the unlawful detention.

The High Court strongly criticised the functioning of the state administration, observing that if senior officials such as the Additional Chief Secretary (Home) could act in such a manner, it raised serious concerns about



Allahabad High Court slams Uttar Pradesh government for illegally detaining a man for three months without charges or proper explanation, calling it unconstitutional and ordering ₹10 lakh compensation while directing immediate release of the petitioner.

governance at lower levels.

The court noted that the affidavit filed by the state failed to justify why the penalty should not be imposed and emphasised that providing written grounds for arrest is a constitutional obligation. Failure to do so amounts to a direct violation of citizens' rights, it said.

CBI BRINGS BACK FUGITIVE PAREKH FROM UAE

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has successfully brought back fugitive accused Kamlesh Parekh from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as part of its ongoing "Operation Global Hunt", officials said on Friday.

The extradition was carried out in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Parekh was arrested by the CBI upon his arrival in Delhi on May 1, 2026.

Parekh is accused in a major bank fraud case involving alleged losses of

several hundred crore rupees to a consortium of banks led by the State Bank of India.

Investigators allege that he, along with other directors and promoters, diverted loan funds through overseas entities and engaged in fraudulent financial transactions, including misuse of export-related processes.

Following the registration of the case, the CBI secured an Interpol Red Notice against Parekh.

Based on India's request, his location was traced in the UAE, where he was subsequently detained by local authorities before being extradited to India after legal formalities.



ECI Boosts West Bengal Counting Security

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has deployed additional observers in West Bengal to ensure free, fair, and transparent counting of votes for the Assembly elections scheduled on May 4.

In an official statement, the Commission said it has appointed 165 Additional Counting Observers and 77 Police Observers to strengthen supervision and security at counting centres across the state.

The ECI said the move is aimed at ensuring strict monitoring, law and order, and transparency during the counting process.

Additional observers will be deployed in constituencies with multiple counting halls.

Police Observers will monitor security outside counting centres but will not be allowed inside counting halls under any circumstances.

The Commission has also introduced QR code-based identity cards for entry and restricted mobile phone usage inside counting halls to maintain strict access control.

Officials said the measures are intended to ensure a peaceful, transparent, and credible counting process.

SC UPHOLDS EC AUTHORITY, REJECTS TMC PLEA

The Supreme Court has dismissed the Trinamool Congress plea challenging the Election Commission's decision to appoint only central government officials as counting observers for West Bengal polls, upholding EC's authority and noting that no political party's consent is required for such appointments.

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Saturday dismissed a petition filed by the Trinamool Congress (TMC) challenging the Election Commission's (EC) decision to appoint only central government officials as counting observers for the West Bengal Assembly elections.

The TMC had approached the apex court arguing that the EC's decision was unfair and that state government officials should also be included.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the party, questioned the timing of the notification and the exclusion of state officers, stating that micro-observers were already deployed.

He also contended that the EC's own guidelines allowed the involvement of state government officials, but such appointments were not made in this case.

However, a bench comprising Justices P.S. Narasimha and Joymalaya Bagchi ruled that the Election Commission has full authority under the rules to appoint officials and no political party's consent is required for such decisions.

The court observed that both central and state government employees fall under the

category of government officials and that choosing officers from a particular pool cannot be considered illegal.

"The option is open that the counting supervisor and assistant may be from the central or state government. When such an option exists, the notification cannot be held contrary to regulations," Justice Bagchi observed.

Appearing for the Election Commission, senior advocate Dama Seshadri Naidu assured the court that a state government nominee would also be present during the counting process.

Taking note of the submissions, the Supreme Court stated that no further orders were required and recorded the EC's assurance that its circular would be followed in both letter and spirit.

The counting of votes for the West Bengal Assembly elections is scheduled to take place on Monday, May 4.

The court further clarified that administrative decisions of the Election Commission cannot be interfered with unless there is a clear violation of law or constitutional provisions.

It also reiterated that the integrity and transparency of the counting process must be ensured as per established guidelines.

Trump Rejects Iran Nuclear Deal

> Vikrama Vahini | Florida

US President Donald Trump has reiterated that Iran must not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons, citing serious security concerns for the Middle East, Israel, and Europe. He also rejected Tehran's latest proposal, calling it "unacceptable," and warned that military action remains an option if diplomacy fails.

Speaking at The Forum Club of the Palm Beaches Dinner, Trump said a nuclear-armed Iran would destabilise global security. "You cannot give Iran a nuclear weapon," he said, adding it could threaten Israel, Europe, and eventually the United States.

Trump claimed previous US military actions had weakened Iran's defence systems and alleged that its leadership structure is fragmented. He also said ongoing negotiations have made little progress, with Iran not offering an acceptable deal.

He reiterated that Iran must abandon its nuclear ambitions while stating that the US remains open to either a diplomatic agreement or potential action if required.

Trump said the United States would continue to closely monitor Iran's nuclear activities through international channels and allied intelligence cooperation. He stressed that global partners share similar concerns over Tehran's nuclear intentions and regional behaviour. The statement comes amid continuing tensions between Washington and Tehran over stalled nuclear negotiations.



VIKRAMA VAHINI | INFOGRAPHICS

BANK ACCOUNT NOMINEE RULES

WHAT HAPPENS IF BOTH ACCOUNT HOLDER AND NOMINEE DIE?

Complete Guide to Legal Heir Claim Process in India

- NOMINEE IS NOT THE OWNER!**
As per the Supreme Court judgments (e.g., Sharbati Devi vs. Usha Devi case), a nominee is only a 'Trustee' or 'Custodian', not the owner of the money.
- WHO GETS THE MONEY IF BOTH DIE?**
The amount in the account goes to the legal heirs of the account holder.
 - IF WILL EXISTS:** given to the person mentioned in the will of the account holder.
 - IF NO WILL EXISTS:** The money will be distributed among the legal heirs as per the personal law (e.g., Hindu Succession Act) - wife, children, parents, etc.
- DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE MONEY**
 - DEATH CERTIFICATE
 - Identity Proof and Address Proof of the Legal Heirs
 - Legal Heir Certificate / Family Tree
 - Succession Certificate from the Court (for large amounts)
 - Other documents as required by the bank
- WHAT IF NO ONE CLAIMS THE MONEY?**
If there is no transaction in the account for 10 years and no one claims the amount, the money is transferred to RBI's DEPOSITORS EDUCATION AND AWARENESS FUND (DEAF). However, the legal heirs can claim the money back anytime by submitting the correct documents.
- WHAT HAPPENS IN JOINT ACCOUNT?**
 - If one account holder dies, the entire balance and rights belong to the surviving account holder.
 - If both account holders die, then the nominee or legal heirs can claim the money.
- EXPERT TIPS: WHAT YOU SHOULD DO?**
 - UPDATE NOMINEE DETAILS REGULARLY:** Check and update nominee details in your bank accounts from time to time.
 - KEEP DOCUMENTS SAFE:** Share information about your bank accounts and investments with family.
 - CREATE A WILL:** A will helps avoid legal disputes and ensures smooth transfer of your assets.