



**Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas has teamed up with Orlando Bloom for the upcoming Hollywood survival thriller *Reset*. Directed by Matt Smukler, the film follows a woman stranded in the wilderness with no memory, forced to trust a mysterious stranger to survive.**

**India on Thursday called on Bangladesh to expedite nationality verification of illegal migrants, stressing that delays in over 2,860 pending cases are slowing down the repatriation process.**



**INSIDE**

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*Good morning*

Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts.

**BRIEFS**

**BJP Leader Suvendu Adhikari's Aide Cremated**

**> Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata**  
Slain BJP Leader's Aide Chandranath Rath Cremated Amid Massive Public Tribute  
The mortal remains of Chandranath Rath, aide of senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari, were cremated in his native village in Purba Medinipur district on Thursday amid large public turnout and emotional scenes.  
Rath, a former Indian Air Force employee, was given a guard of honour-like tribute as his body, draped in the national flag, was placed in Kulup village for last respects. Thousands of villagers gathered to pay homage.  
Several BJP leaders, including Dibyendu Adhikari, brother of Suvendu Adhikari, attended the funeral ceremony and offered tributes to the deceased. The incident has triggered political attention in the region, with leaders expressing grief over the killing and calling for justice.

**11 Indian Ships Clear Hormuz Strait; 13 Await Passage**

**> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi**  
11 Indian Ships Exit Strait of Hormuz; 13 Still Await Clearance Amid Rising Tensions  
India on Thursday said that 11 Indian vessels have successfully exited the Strait of Hormuz, while 13 ships remain in the Persian Gulf as diplomatic efforts continue with Iran to ensure their safe passage. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India is in continuous contact with Iranian authorities to facilitate the movement of remaining ships to their destination in India.  
The development comes amid heightened tensions in the region, with Iran reportedly introducing new transit regulations for ships passing through the strategic waterway, a key global energy route.

**Nepal Airport Corruption Case Filed**

**> Vikrama Vahini | Kathmandu**  
Nepal's anti-corruption body has filed a case against 14 individuals, including former finance minister Gyanendra Bahadur Karki and a Chinese company, over alleged irregular tax exemptions linked to the China-funded Pokhara International Airport project.  
The Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) filed the case before the Special Court, alleging that tax waivers were granted to the Chinese contractor in violation of the original agreement during construction.  
Officials said the charges relate to misuse of authority and financial irregularities in one of Nepal's major infrastructure projects, which has previously faced allegations of large-scale misappropriation.

**KSCA Ticket Row Costs Bengaluru IPL Final**

**> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**  
The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has alleged that the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) demanded over 10,000 additional complimentary tickets beyond permitted limits, leading to the shifting of IPL final and playoff matches from Bengaluru.  
The Board was "shocked" by KSCA's demand, which reportedly included special allocations for MLAs, MLCs, and the Karnataka government in addition to the standard 15% complimentary quota.  
Saikia stated that as per IPL regulations and Supreme Court guidelines, state associations are allowed only 15% complimentary tickets, while the remaining tickets must be sold to the public through official channels.  
He said KSCA's additional request included hundreds of tickets for political representatives and members, which would have significantly reduced public access.  
Following the dispute, the BCCI moved the IPL final to the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad and shifted playoff matches to Dharamshala and Mullanpur.  
The BCCI said Bengaluru was originally scheduled to host key playoff matches and the final as Royal Challengers Bengaluru were the defending champions.  
Saikia defended the decision to shift the final, citing the massive capacity of the Ahmedabad stadium and its ability to accommodate global cricket audiences.  
He added that the IPL has now become an international sporting event, attracting fans from across the world. The controversy has sparked debate over ticket allocation policies and hosting rights ahead of the high-profile IPL playoffs.

**WB Assembly Dissolved; Mamata Out**

**> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**  
The West Bengal Legislative Assembly was officially dissolved on Thursday after completing its five-year term, marking the formal end of the Trinamool Congress government led by Mamata Banerjee.



Governor R. N. Ravi issued the dissolution order under Article 174(2) (b) of the Constitution of India with immediate effect, according to an official statement from Raj Bhavan.  
**Constitutional Dissolution Process**  
The Raj Bhavan communiqué stated that the Governor exercised constitutional powers to dissolve the Assembly following the completion of its tenure. The order was issued in accordance with constitutional provisions governing the expiry of legislative terms.

**TVK Rules Out NDA Alliance Amid Majority Talks**

**> Vikrama Vahini | Chennai**  
Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) chief C. Joseph Vijay is unlikely to be sworn in as Chief Minister immediately, as Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar continues to wait for confirmation that the party has the required majority support to form the government.  
Sources said the Governor is yet to receive clear proof of numbers, despite support extended by the Congress and ongoing discussions with other potential allies.  
**TVK Emerges as Single Largest Party**  
TVK, in its electoral debut, emerged as the single largest party with 108 seats in the 234-member Assembly, but remains short of the 118-seat majority mark. The Congress has extended conditional support, stating that the alliance must exclude "communal forces".

**Alliance Talks and Political Moves**  
TVK has sought support from VCK, CPI, CPI(M), and IUML, while discussions continue among opposition groups. VCK and Left leaders met outgoing Chief Minister M. K. Stalin and are expected to take a final decision after internal consultations.

**Rangasamy Limits BJP Role in Puducherry Cabinet**

**> Vikrama Vahini | Puducherry**  
Puducherry Chief Minister-designate N. Rangasamy has reportedly moved to restrict the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to a single ministerial post in the upcoming cabinet, despite the party's expectations of a larger share of power in the new government.  
According to sources, Rangasamy is prepared to allot only one ministerial berth to the BJP along with the Deputy Speaker's post, significantly reducing its influence compared to the previous term, when it held the Speaker's position and two ministerial posts.  
**Cabinet Talks Turn Tense**  
The decision has created friction within the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Puducherry, as the BJP had expected continuity in its earlier representation. Rangasamy has also reportedly declined to meet senior BJP leaders, including Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, who were scheduled to discuss cabinet formation on Thursday.  
**Election Numbers and Political Balance**  
In the 30-member Puducherry Assembly, the All India NR Congress (AINRC) secured 12 seats, while the BJP won 4. Alliance partners AIADMK and IJP secured one seat each.  
Independents and smaller parties are also seen as crucial in shaping the final government formation.  
**Government Formation Underway**  
Rangasamy has already submitted his resignation to the Lieutenant Governor, marking the formal beginning of the new government formation process. He is expected to be sworn in for a second consecutive term soon.



**Puducherry Chief Minister-designate N. Rangasamy is reportedly seeking to limit the BJP to a single ministerial post in the new cabinet, sparking friction within the NDA. While the BJP expected a larger share of power based on its previous role, Rangasamy has signalled a reduced representation and is exploring support from other allies and independents to stabilise the government formation process.**

**Bihar Cabinet Expanded; 32 MLAs Sworn In as Ministers**

**> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi**  
The Bihar cabinet expansion of the Samrat Choudhary-led government was held on Thursday in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior leaders of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). A total of 32 MLAs from the ruling coalition took oath as ministers in the expanded cabinet.  
Of the newly inducted ministers, 15 belong to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), while 13 are from the Janata Dal (United). Two ministers are from Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), and one each from Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustani Awam Morcha and Upendra Kushwaha's RLM.



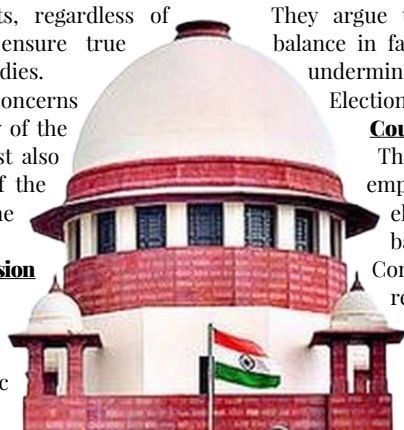
**A boy riding a bicycle with a "Jai Shri Ram" flag tied to it was seen in Kolkata on Thursday, reflecting the post-election political shift in West Bengal.**

**SC SLAMS POLITICAL HYPOCRISY ON EC INDEPENDENCE**

**The Supreme Court has criticised political parties for showing "hypocrisy" on Election Commission independence, noting that demands for reforms are raised in opposition but ignored in power. Calling the trend "very unfortunate," the court said all governments tend to undermine institutional autonomy, stressing that free and fair elections require an independent Election Commission free from executive influence.**

**> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**  
Supreme Court Slams Political Hypocrisy Over EC Independence, Calls It "Very Unfortunate"  
The Supreme Court on Thursday criticised political parties for demanding an independent Election Commission while in opposition, but remaining silent or taking contrary positions once in power, calling the trend "very unfortunate" for the country.  
A bench comprising Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma made the observation during the hearing of petitions challenging the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023.  
**"Tyranny of the Elected"**  
During the hearing, the court observed that whichever party comes to power tends to act in a similar manner regarding institutional independence. Justice Datta remarked that it was unfortunate that governments, regardless of political affiliation, fail to ensure true autonomy for constitutional bodies.  
The bench also referred to concerns raised in court about "tyranny of the unelected," stating that it must also be seen alongside "tyranny of the elected" and "tyranny of the majority."  
**Arguments on Election Commission Independence**  
Senior advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the Association for Democratic

Reforms (ADR), argued that successive governments have taken advantage of the absence of a statutory framework ensuring independence of the Election Commission.  
He said that political parties often demand reforms while in opposition but ignore them once in power, weakening institutional independence.  
Bhushan also referred to the Supreme Court's 2023 judgment, which had directed that appointments of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners should be made by a committee comprising the Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition, and the Chief Justice of India.  
**Challenge to 2023 Law**  
The petitioners have challenged the constitutional validity of the 2023 law, which excludes the Chief Justice of India from the selection panel and replaces the judicial presence with a Union Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.  
They argue that this change tilts the balance in favour of the executive and undermines the independence of the Election Commission.  
**Court's Key Concern**  
The Supreme Court emphasized that free and fair elections form part of the basic structure of the Constitution, and therefore require an independent and impartial Election Commission free from executive influence.



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Editorial

Democracy Beyond Disorder

The political turbulence unfolding after the Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal has once again exposed the fragile relationship between electoral verdicts and political morality in India. In Tamil Nadu, actor-turned-politician Vijay has emerged as the leader of the single largest party through TVK, yet without securing a clear majority. The Governor's insistence on letters of support before inviting the party to form the government is constitutionally sound and politically prudent. However, opposition parties have attempted to portray this as partisan conduct. In reality, the mandate remains fractured, and no party can claim an unquestionable right to power without demonstrating majority support on the floor of the House. The eagerness to occupy office without first ensuring stability only deepens public distrust in coalition-era politics.

The situation in West Bengal is even more disturbing. Despite suffering an electoral setback, the ruling All India Trinamool Congress under Mamata Banerjee has been accused of allowing political violence and intimidation to continue unchecked. Reports of attacks, bomb explosions, and the killing of an associate linked to the BJP's chief ministerial candidate have shocked observers across the country. Such incidents tarnish the democratic image of a state that has already witnessed years of politically charged violence. Refusing to gracefully accept defeat or attempting to create instability after losing public confidence amounts to disrespecting the people's mandate. Electoral setbacks must be met with introspection, not intimidation.

India remains one of the world's largest and most vibrant democracies, but episodes like these raise serious concerns about the health of democratic ethics. Elections are not merely contests for power; they are tests of political maturity and institutional respect. Political parties must remember that democratic legitimacy flows from the people, not from street power or post-poll manipulation. Yet, despite periodic chaos and confrontation, India's democratic framework continues to endure. Seventy-five years after Independence, institutions still hold firm because, in the end, the will of the voter prevails over political disorder.

-Editor

SUMMER CAMPS NURTURE TALENT, VALUES: PAGOZI

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Senior journalist Shankar Pagozi said that summer camps serve as important platforms for identifying and nurturing the hidden talents of children.

He was speaking after inaugurating the valedictory function and talent showcase programme of a children's summer camp organised by Kalabhoomi Trust at Kalagrama in Bengaluru.

Speaking on the occasion, Pagozi expressed concern that in today's highly competitive environment, many parents are treating children like "machines for scoring marks," which is leading to mental stress among youngsters.

He said education alone is not enough and children must also learn values, discipline, and respect for elders.

He noted that summer camps provide children opportunities to learn dance, music, drama, and important life lessons alongside academics. "Today's children need



wisdom along with education," he added.

Presiding over the programme, writer Yogesh Master said parents should not force children to grow according to their own expectations.

He stressed that children should be allowed to develop according to their interests and aspirations.

President of the Akhila Karnataka Music Teachers Association, S. A. Chaya, who attended as chief guest, said children should be given opportunities to showcase their talents without unnecessary pressure regarding specific fields of

learning.

Actor Munikrishna and child actor Master Tarun were also present at the event. Kalabhoomi founder-president Oscar Krishna delivered the introductory remarks, while Shanthala Lakshman compered the programme.

The event featured music and dance performances by children, along with the staging of the play Sharana Samsara, written by Shankar Pagozi and directed by Poornima Pawar, performed by the Kala Kousthubha troupe and students.

Urgent Desilting Ordered Before Monsoon

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Bengaluru South Zone Commissioner K. N. Ramesh has directed officials to expedite desilting works in Rajakaluve and stormwater drains as part of monsoon preparedness measures in the city.

During an inspection near Sindhoora Kalyana Mantapa on Outer Ring Road at Sarakki, J.P. Nagar, the Commissioner reviewed ongoing cleaning works and issued strict instructions for the immediate removal of silt, waste, and debris from drains within the corporation limits.

He also instructed engineers to remove slabs covering roadside drains and ensure complete clearance of garbage and weeds to prevent waterlogging during heavy rains.

Focus on Unhindered Water Flow

Officials were directed to clear plastic waste from Rajakaluve bridge junctions, which often obstruct smooth water flow during rainfall.

The Commissioner stressed the



need for continuous monitoring and removal of such waste in sensitive areas.

Disaster Management Review in Bommanahalli

In a parallel exercise, Additional Commissioner (Development) Dr. Naveen Kumar Raju led a disaster management inspection in Bommanahalli Zone.

The officials reviewed the progress of desilting works, drainage flow conditions, and removal of encroachments along stormwater drains.

The Additional Commissioner directed immediate and effective preventive action to avoid flooding during the upcoming monsoon season.

WB Assembly Dissolved; Mamata Out

From PG1

Officials confirmed that the dissolution took effect immediately, thereby ending the mandate of the outgoing House.

End of TMC Government's Term

The dissolution formally brings an end to the tenure of the Trinamool Congress government headed by Mamata Banerjee, which came to power in 2021. With this, Mamata Banerjee ceases to function as Chief Minister of the state as the Assembly term concludes.

The political transition follows the announcement of election results earlier this week, which reshaped the state's political landscape.

Election Outcome and Political Shift

In the recently concluded Assembly elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party secured a majority by winning 207 seats in the 294-member House, while the Trinamool Congress was reduced to 80 seats. The outcome is being viewed as one of the most significant political shifts in West

Bengal in recent years, altering the balance of power in the state.

Governor's Official Statement

"In exercise of the powers conferred under sub-clause (b) of Clause (2) of Article 174 of the Constitution of India, the Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal has ordered the dissolution of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly with effect from 07 May 2026. The order has come into force in accordance with constitutional provisions."

Mamata Banerjee's Stand

Following the electoral setback, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee stated that she would not resign voluntarily. She alleged that the election outcome was influenced by "conspiracy" rather than public mandate.

She also reiterated her position during a closed-door party meeting, stating that she was prepared to face any constitutional action, including the possibility of President's Rule or dismissal.

Bihar Cabinet Expanded; 32 MLAs Sworn In as Ministers

From PG1

Key Political Presence

Former Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's son Nishant Kumar was among those sworn in as ministers, marking a notable inclusion in the new cabinet lineup.

Senior Leaders Present

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP national president Nitin Nabin, and other senior NDA leaders attended the swearing-in ceremony along with the Prime Minister.

The cabinet expansion is seen as part of the NDA's effort to strengthen governance and balance representation among alliance partners in Bihar.

TVK Rules Out NDA Alliance Amid Majority Talks

From PG1

Meanwhile, AIADMK has moved its newly elected MLAs to a resort in Puducherry, and reports suggest that TVK legislators are also being kept together in a monitored setting to prevent defections during the government formation process.

Governor Arlekar has reportedly informed TVK leadership that the required majority has not yet been established, and therefore an invitation to form the government cannot be extended at this stage.

He also clarified that constitutional procedure requires clear proof of support before inviting any party to form the government.

Political Tensions Rise

TVK leaders maintain that, as the single largest party, they should be invited first to form the government. However, rival parties argue that numerical majority in the House is essential.

The BJP has criticised opposition parties over alliance strategies, alleging opportunistic politics driven by power-sharing ambitions.

R. Ashok Slams Mamata; Modi Set for Bengaluru Visit

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Leader of Opposition R. Ashok on Wednesday strongly criticised Mamata Banerjee, accusing her of disrespecting the Constitution by refusing to resign after the Assembly election defeat in West Bengal.

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Ashok alleged that Banerjee was attempting to create political drama instead of seeking legal remedies. "If she has any problem, she should approach the court instead of encouraging violence," he said.

Ashok further claimed that the Trinamool

Congress leadership was trying to create unrest in the state and alleged political motives behind the murder of BJP worker Chandranath Rath. He said any leader with self-respect should step down gracefully after losing public support.

Preparations Underway for Modi Visit

Ashok also announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will soon visit Bengaluru following the Assembly election

results in five states. He said the BJP plans to organise a grand public programme to welcome the Prime Minister.



According to Ashok, a preparatory meeting has already been held to finalise arrangements for the event. BJP workers and members of the public have been invited to participate in large numbers.

He said party workers from several Assembly constituencies, including areas near Tumakuru Road and Bengaluru Urban district,

are expected to attend the programme.

BJP Confident After Bengal Victory

Ashok described the BJP's first-ever government formation in West Bengal as a historic achievement for the party and credited Prime Minister Modi's leadership for the victory.

Referring to by-election results, he added that by-poll victories alone should not be treated as indicators of future Assembly election outcomes, noting that political situations can change over time.

NEWS

"Congress depends heavily on vote bank"

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Leader of Opposition in the Karnataka Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy has sparked a political controversy after alleging that the Congress party depends heavily on Muslim votes and would lose its relevance without minority support.

Speaking at the BJP state headquarters in Bengaluru on Thursday, he claimed that Congress survives only on a vote-bank politics model and used strong language to criticise the party's electoral base.

Narayanaswamy alleged that Congress has been misleading Muslim voters by creating fear narratives against the BJP. He further claimed that Scheduled Castes, backward classes and "Ahinda" communities are increasingly supporting the BJP under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

He also referred to election results in other

states, claiming they exposed Congress's dependence on minority votes.

The BJP leader also criticised Congress alliances in other states, alleging organisational weakness and declining influence. He remarked that the party was seeking political space through regional alliances due to reduced electoral strength.

Charges on Karnataka Government Narayanaswamy also attacked the Karnataka government over civic issues in Bengaluru, alleging corruption in road maintenance and garbage management contracts. He questioned the government's financial management and preparedness for upcoming civic body elections.

He further claimed large-scale irregularities in pothole repair works and alleged misuse of public funds, calling for greater transparency in tendering processes.



K'taka to Challenge Centre Over MGNREGA Rename

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Karnataka to Challenge Centre Over MGNREGA Name Change  
The Karnataka Cabinet led by Chief Minister Sidda ramaiah on Thursday decided to move court against the Centre's move to rename the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) as "VB-G RAMJI".

Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil said the decision was taken during the Cabinet meeting, where several issues were discussed,

including the alleged impact of the name change on the rural employment scheme.

The state government argued that the altered nomenclature has not yet been properly notified and has created confusion in implementation.

It also claimed that delays and lack of central funds are affecting rural employment works, especially amid current water and drought-related concerns.

The Cabinet also discussed a State Education

Policy report and decided to form a sub-committee to study its recommendations before implementation.

The state government further stated that it would intensify its legal and administrative efforts to ensure

uninterrupted implementation of rural employment schemes, while also urging the Centre to release pending funds without delay to safeguard livelihoods in drought-affected regions.



HEALTH & Lifestyle

WHY CAVITIES PERSIST DESPITE BRUSHING

Many people believe that brushing their teeth every day is enough to maintain good oral health. However, dental experts warn that cavities can still develop even among people who brush regularly if proper dental care practices are not followed. According to specialists, the technique of brushing, food habits, and overall oral hygiene play a major role in preventing tooth decay.

Cavities Becoming a Common Problem

Dental professionals say cavity-related problems are increasingly common among both children and adults. Cavities, also known as tooth decay, occur when bacteria damage the outer surface of the teeth. Over time, this damage creates small holes that can gradually become painful and serious if left untreated.

Experts explain that many people treat brushing as a routine task and complete it in a hurry without properly cleaning all parts of the mouth. As a result, food particles and plaque remain trapped between the teeth and near the gums, creating an ideal environment for bacteria to grow.

Improper Brushing Technique a Major Cause

According to dentists, brushing daily alone does not guarantee healthy teeth. The method and duration of brushing are equally important. Specialists recommend brushing at least twice a day for a minimum of two minutes using gentle circular motions instead of harsh horizontal scrubbing.

Dentists also stress the importance of cleaning hard-to-reach areas, especially



the spaces between teeth and the back molars, where food particles often remain unnoticed. Failure to clean these areas properly increases the chances of bacterial growth and acid formation that weakens tooth enamel.

Sugary Foods Increase Risk

Experts say excessive consumption of sweets, chocolates, soft drinks, and junk food is one of the leading causes of cavities. Sugary food particles sticking to teeth become a food source for bacteria inside the mouth. These bacteria release acids that slowly damage the protective layer of the teeth.

Doctors advise people to rinse their mouths with water after eating sugary items and avoid frequent snacking between meals. Limiting sugary beverages before bedtime is also considered important for maintaining oral health.

Early Warning Signs Should Not Be Ignored

Dental specialists warn that cavities often begin with mild symptoms that many people ignore during the early stages. Some common warning signs include sensitivity to hot or cold foods, mild tooth pain, visible black or brown spots on teeth, bad breath, and discomfort while chewing food.

SCIENCE & Technology

Musk Merges xAI Into 'SpaceXAI'

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Tech billionaire Elon Musk has announced that his artificial intelligence company xAI will no longer function as a separate entity and future AI products will instead operate under a new banner called "SpaceXAI" within SpaceX.

The announcement came shortly after SpaceX signed a major computing partnership with AI firm Anthropic, granting the company access to the massive Colossus 1 data centre in Memphis.

xAI to Become Part of SpaceX

Musk indicated that xAI, launched in 2023 as a competitor to major AI firms, would be integrated directly into SpaceX's broader technology ecosystem.

He stated that future AI tools, including the Grok chatbot, may undergo major restructuring under the new "SpaceXAI" identity.

Although no official "SpaceXAI" branding currently appears on SpaceX platforms, Musk's comments suggest a major consolidation of his artificial intelligence and aerospace ventures.

Massive AI Infrastructure Deal

Under the new partnership, Anthropic will reportedly receive full compute access to SpaceX's Colossus 1 supercomputing facility, which is expected to provide more than 300 megawatts of computing power.

Challenges Faced by xAI

Since its launch, xAI's Grok chatbot gained attention for offering less restricted responses compared to rival AI platforms. However, the company also faced criticism over controversial AI-generated content and struggled to keep pace with larger competitors in the rapidly growing AI market.

## DGCA Tightens Power Bank Rules After IndiGo Flight Fire

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has introduced stricter guidelines on carrying and using power banks during flights following a recent fire incident onboard an IndiGo aircraft at Chandigarh airport. The incident, which occurred after landing, led to smoke inside the cabin and triggered an emergency evacuation, causing panic among passengers.

The aviation regulator said the new measures aim to reduce risks associated with lithium-ion batteries, which have been linked to multiple in-flight overheating and fire incidents in the past.

### Power Banks Only in Hand Baggage

As per the revised guidelines, passengers are allowed to carry power banks only in hand baggage. Carrying them in checked-in luggage remains strictly prohibited. DGCA has also warned passengers against storing power banks in overhead cabins, citing safety concerns in case of overheating or fire.

### Complete Ban on In-Flight Usage

A key update in the new rules is the complete prohibition on using power banks during flights. Passengers will no longer be allowed to charge mobile phones, laptops, tablets, smartwatches, or any other electronic devices using



power banks onboard.

The restriction also extends to in-seat charging ports when used in connection with power banks. Airlines have been directed to clearly communicate these rules through announcements before and during flights.

### Safety Measures and Crew Instructions

DGCA has instructed cabin crew to remain vigilant and report any signs of overheating, smoke, sparks, or unusual odours from electronic devices immediately. Passengers are also advised to inform crew members without delay in case of any such incidents.

### Guidelines for Lithium Battery Safety

The regulator has further advised passengers to handle spare lithium batteries with care. Recommendations include using protective pouches, insulating exposed terminals with tape, and avoiding conditions that may lead to short circuits.

## BJP's Arjun Singh Accuses Abhishek Banerjee in Rath Murder Case

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Political tensions in West Bengal have escalated sharply following the murder of Chandranath Rath, a close aide and personal secretary to senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari. The incident, which took place in Madhyamgram in North 24 Parganas district, has triggered fresh allegations and counter-allegations between the BJP and the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

Police suspect the killing to be a planned and targeted attack, further deepening concerns over post-poll violence in the state.

BJP leader and former MP Arjun Singh has accused TMC General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee of orchestrating the murder. He alleged that the killing was politically motivated and aimed at sending a message to opposition leaders.

"They will get their answer," Singh said, alleging involvement of political leadership and certain police officials. He also claimed that the murder was a "planned assassination" carried out by a sharpshooter, though these claims remain unverified. The Trinamool Congress has strongly denied all accusations, calling them politically motivated. The party has condemned the murder and demanded a court-monitored investigation into the incident.



## CONGRESS HIGH COMMAND TO DECIDE KERALA CM

Following the UDF's victory in Kerala, Congress MLAs have authorised the party high command to take the final call on the next Chief Minister. Senior leaders including V.D. Satheesan, Ramesh Chennithala and K.C. Venugopal are among the frontrunners for the top post.

► Vikrama Vahini | Thiruvananthapuram

The newly elected Congress legislators in Kerala on Thursday passed a resolution authorising the party high command to take the final decision on the selection of the next Chief Minister following the United Democratic Front's (UDF) decisive victory in the Assembly elections.

The resolution was adopted during the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting held in Thiruvananthapuram in the presence of All India Congress

Committee (AICC) observers Mukul Wasnik and Ajay Maken, who were deputed by the party leadership to oversee the process.

The observers reportedly held separate discussions with newly elected MLAs and senior party leaders to gather opinions regarding the leadership choice.

A detailed report based on these consultations is expected to be submitted to the Congress high command in New Delhi. Party sources said the leadership is attempting to build consensus and avoid factional disagreements while

selecting the next Chief Minister.

Among the prominent names being discussed for the top post are V. D. Satheesan, senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala and AICC General Secretary K. C. Venugopal.

The Congress leadership is expected to continue consultations over the coming days before announcing its final decision.

The UDF's strong performance in the Assembly elections has brought Congress back to power in Kerala after a closely fought campaign.

## B'luru Couple Completes Sri Lanka-India Swim

► Vikrama Vahini | Dhanushkodi(TN)

A Bengaluru-based couple has completed a remarkable open-water swimming challenge by crossing from Sri Lanka to India through the historic Ram Setu route. The achievement has drawn widespread attention on social media, with many praising the duo's determination and endurance.

Danish Abdi and Vrushali Prasade swam nearly 32 kilometres from Talaimannar in Sri Lanka to Dhanushkodi in Tamil Nadu, completing the journey in 10 hours and 45 minutes. The couple, both IT professionals in their early 30s, are being recognised as the first couple to complete the demanding swim together.

After successfully finishing the challenge, the duo shared their achievement on Instagram, where the post quickly went viral. "We did it! Sri Lanka to India. 10 hrs 45 mins. Tough day out in the water," they wrote.

The swim was reportedly undertaken as part of an initiative supported by Manipal Hospitals. The



couple had previously participated in relay swims in the Indian Ocean but had never attempted a long-distance international swim together.

The challenging expedition was carried out under close supervision with escort boats, paramedics, and coast guard teams monitoring their safety throughout the journey. Sea conditions during the swim were said to be demanding, with the total duration depending heavily on tides and currents. Beyond the sporting accomplishment, the swim also highlighted the historical and cultural connection between India and Sri Lanka through the Ram Setu route.

## Caste Politics Will Fade: Bhagwat

► Vikrama Vahini | Mysuru

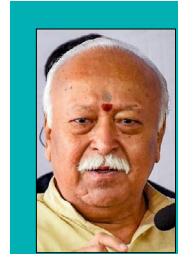
Caste Politics Will Fade When Society Moves Beyond Caste: RSS Chief Bhagwat RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Thursday said caste-based politics would automatically decline once society itself moves beyond caste identities, triggering a fresh debate on social and electoral issues.

Speaking at an interactive session at JSS Mahavidyapeetha in Mysuru, he said political parties only reflect existing social divisions and that lasting change must begin at the societal level.

### 'Stop Blaming Politicians'

Bhagwat said politicians operate within the realities of society and urged people not to blame political parties alone for caste-based mobilisation.

"Try to make society forget caste. Politics will follow," he said, adding that repeated campaigns against caste often end up strengthening caste



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said caste-based politics will decline naturally when society moves beyond caste identities, urging people to focus on social change rather than blaming political parties. Speaking in Mysuru, he called for everyday social integration and harmony through behaviour and relationships, noting that politics only reflects existing societal divisions.

consciousness.

### Call for Social Integration

He stressed that real change should come through everyday behaviour and social interactions rather than slogans.

Referring to inter-caste relationships, he said social harmony would grow naturally through "roti and beti" connections across communities.

He also cited historical examples to support inter-caste marriages as a means of reducing social divisions.

### Views on Society and Harmony

Bhagwat reiterated that all religions ultimately seek the same truth and called for harmony and cooperation in society. He also highlighted family as the basic unit of social stability and described marriage as an important institution for building society.

### Political Context

His remarks come amid continuing debates over caste census, reservation policies and caste-based political mobilisation across India, which remain key issues ahead of upcoming elections.

## Broker Arrested in BDA Land Scam

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) vigilance wing has busted a land-grabbing racket involving forged documents and impersonation of officials.

A broker identified as Nagaraj has been arrested for allegedly posing as a Group-D employee and illegally acquiring over 10 BDA sites using fake documents. Officials suspect the involvement of some BDA staff in the scam.



MLA Samarth Shamanur, who won from Davanagere South constituency, met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah today to express gratitude and seek his blessings. Minister S.S. Mallikarjun and MP Prabha Mallikarju were also present on the occasion.

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Urvashi Reacts to Dabidi Dibidi Row

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Actress Urvashi Rautela has finally reacted to the controversy surrounding the song Dabidi Dibidi from the film Daaku Maharaja, which also stars veteran Telugu actor Nandamuri Balakrishna.

The song had sparked criticism on social media following its release, with many viewers objecting to its choreography, lyrics, and the perceived over-sexualised presentation. The significant age gap between the lead actors also became a major talking point online.

Speaking in a recent interview, Urvashi described her experience of working with Balakrishna as "amazing" and praised the actor's personality and energy on set. She said Balakrishna was approachable, energetic, and "very childlike," adding that he enjoyed interacting with people and especially children. Urvashi also rejected the perception that the actor was always serious or aggressive in public appearances, calling him down-to-earth and friendly.

The actress further stated that audiences also enjoyed the song despite the criticism and claimed that fans had reacted positively during public interactions.

Following the release of Dabidi Dibidi, several social media users criticised the choreography and lyrics, calling them vulgar and inappropriate. Discussions online also focused on the age difference between Balakrishna, who is 64, and Urvashi, who is 30.



## Avatar Neytiri Sparks Lawsuit



► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

James Cameron and Disney Sued Over Alleged Use of Actress' Features for Avatar Character Neytiri

### Acclaimed filmmaker James

Cameron and The Walt Disney Company are facing legal action after actress Q'orianka Kilcher alleged that her facial features were used without permission in the creation of Neytiri, one of the lead characters in the blockbuster Avatar franchise.

### Kilcher, best known for portraying

Pocahontas in The New World, has reportedly filed a lawsuit claiming that Cameron used a photograph of her face as inspiration for Neytiri, the Na'vi character played by Zoe Saldana in the film series.

### Allegations in the Lawsuit

According to the complaint, Kilcher alleged that Cameron informed her during a past interaction that her facial structure had inspired the visual design of Neytiri. The lawsuit claims that her facial features were extracted from a photograph and shared with the film's design team during the character creation process.

### Her legal team argued that

Hollywood filmmakers exploited the biometric identity and cultural heritage of a young Indigenous actress without

providing credit, consent, or compensation. The complaint also alleged that the globally successful franchise benefited commercially from the use of her likeness while presenting itself as supportive of Indigenous narratives.

### Charity Event and Signed Sketch

The lawsuit further details an earlier meeting between Cameron and Kilcher at a charity event, where Cameron allegedly presented her with a framed sketch of Neytiri along with a handwritten note.

### Actress Seeks Compensation

In the complaint, Kilcher said she learned the extent of the alleged use of her facial features only after an interview clip featuring Cameron resurfaced online last year. In the clip, Cameron reportedly referred to her photograph as an early visual reference for Neytiri's appearance.

### Avatar Franchise's Global Success

Released in 2009, Avatar became one of the highest-grossing films in cinematic history and was praised for its groundbreaking visual effects and storytelling. The franchise later expanded with Avatar: The Way of Water and Avatar: Fire and Ash, cementing its place as one of Hollywood's most successful film series.

## TRISHA SET FOR TVK POLITICAL ENTRY?

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Rumours surrounding actress Trisha Krishnan entering politics have intensified following the electoral victory of actor-turned-politician Vijay and his party Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) in the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

According to reports, senior leaders within TVK are keen on bringing Trisha into the party fold and may even consider fielding her in a future by-election from the Tiruchirappalli East Assembly constituency.

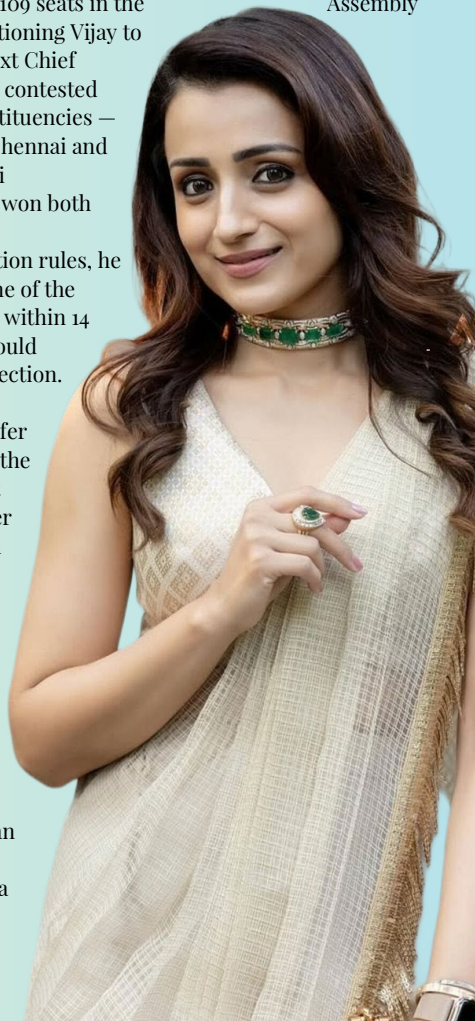
### TVK's Strong Electoral Performance

TVK emerged as a major political force in Tamil Nadu after securing 109 seats in the Tamil Nadu Assembly

elections, positioning Vijay to become the next Chief Minister. Vijay contested from two constituencies — Perambur in Chennai and Tiruchirappalli East — and won both seats.

As per election rules, he must vacate one of the constituencies within 14 days, which would trigger a by-election. Party insiders reportedly prefer Vijay to retain the Perambur seat due to its larger victory margin and strategic proximity to the state secretariat

Tiru chirappalli East, speculation suggests that Trisha Krishnan could be considered as a potential candidate for the bypoll.



## BUSINESS

### Weak Rupee Hits Travel, Investments



► Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata

Rupee Hits Record Low, Raises Cost of Imports and Foreign Travel. The Indian rupee has fallen to a record low against the US dollar amid rising tensions between the United States and Iran and a sharp increase in global crude oil prices.

The rupee reportedly touched 95.43 against the dollar earlier this week as oil prices surged beyond \$110 per barrel. Experts say the weakening rupee is likely to increase the cost of imported goods such as smartphones, electronics, cosmetics, cars and other products that depend on foreign components. Gold prices are also expected to rise further as India imports a major share of its gold requirements.

The falling currency has also affected stock market sentiment, with foreign investors reducing investments in Indian equities due to weaker dollar returns.

In addition, foreign travel and overseas education are expected to become more expensive, as Indians will need to spend more rupees to purchase foreign currency for expenses abroad. Financial experts have advised people to remain cautious amid ongoing global economic uncertainty.

Analysts said India's heavy dependence on crude oil imports makes the rupee highly vulnerable to global geopolitical tensions and fluctuations in energy prices.

They noted that if the West Asia crisis continues for a prolonged period, inflationary pressure could rise further, affecting transportation costs, household expenses and overall consumer spending across the country.

SPORTS

**Virat Kohli Mourns Death of Former U-19 Teammate**

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Indian cricket star Virat Kohli paid an emotional tribute to his former India Under-19 teammate Amanpreet Singh Gill, who passed away at the age of 36 in Chandigarh on Wednesday.

Gill, a former Punjab fast bowler, was remembered by several members of the cricket fraternity for his contribution to domestic cricket.

The cause of Gill's death has not yet been officially disclosed. He represented Punjab in six first-class matches and claimed 11 wickets during his domestic career.

Gill was also part of the Kings XI Punjab squad, now known as Punjab Kings, during the inaugural season of the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Kohli expressed shock and grief over the news through a social media post. "Shocked and saddened to hear about Amanpreet Gill's passing. Sending prayers and strength to his family and loved ones. Rest in peace. Om Shanti," Kohli wrote.

The Punjab Cricket Association also confirmed Gill's passing and mourned the loss of a former cricketer and member of its senior selection committee.

Former India cricketer Yuvraj Singh offered condolences to Gill's family and prayed for peace for the departed soul.

Punjab Kings also paid tribute through a statement expressing sorrow over the death of their former player.

The franchise extended condolences to Gill's family, friends, and the cricketing community.

**Ahmedabad to Host First World Yogasana Championship**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Ahmedabad**

India will host the inaugural World Yogasana Championship from June 4 to 8, 2026, at TransStadia in Ahmedabad, with participation expected from over 40 countries.

The event, organised under World Yogasana and hosted by Yogasana Bharat, aims to bring global athletes together in competitive Yogasana disciplines.

**National Selection Process Completed**

Selection trials for the Indian team were held at the Sports Authority of India centre in Sonapat, where athletes competed in traditional, artistic, rhythmic, and athletic categories. Selected participants will now undergo a national training camp in Ahmedabad ahead of the championship.

**Global Platform for Yogasana**

Yogasana Bharat president Udit Sheth said the championship marks a historic step in taking Yogasana to the global sporting stage.

He said India, under the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, aims to promote Yoga among youth worldwide and strengthen their chances of inclusion in future multi-sport events, including the Olympics.

**World Yogasana Secretary General**

Jaideep Arya said the strong turnout in national trials reflects the rapid growth of Yogasana in India and its rising international recognition.

**Growing Competitive Sport**

World Yogasana governs competitive Yogasana globally, with athletes judged on precision, balance, flexibility, control, stability, and difficulty under standardised rules.

Officials said the championship will provide athletes with a major international platform while accelerating the sport's global development.

**India Urges Bangladesh on Verification, Teesta Mechanism**

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

India Urges Bangladesh to Speed Up Nationality Verification; Reaffirms Bilateral Mechanism on Teesta.

India on Thursday called on Bangladesh to expedite nationality verification of illegal migrants, stressing that delays in over 2,860 pending cases are slowing down the repatriation process.

Addressing the weekly briefing, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India maintains a clear policy that any foreign national staying illegally in the country will be repatriated strictly as per law and established bilateral procedures.

He urged Dhaka to fast-track verification of pending cases, some of which have been unresolved for more than five years, to ensure smooth repatriation of illegal migrants.



**India has urged Bangladesh to expedite nationality verification of over 2,860 pending cases to speed up the repatriation of illegal migrants, reiterating that deportations will follow established legal and bilateral procedures. New Delhi also reaffirmed that the Teesta water-sharing issue will be handled strictly through structured mechanisms between the two countries amid rising diplomatic exchanges.**

On the Teesta water-sharing issue, Jaiswal reiterated that India and Bangladesh share 54 rivers and all water-related matters are discussed through structured bilateral mechanisms that meet regularly.

He clarified that any discussion on river water sharing, including Teesta, must remain

within the established diplomatic framework.

The remarks come amid escalating exchanges between the two countries over border and water issues. Bangladesh has recently raised concerns over Teesta water sharing and indicated that it may consider alternative measures if disputes continue.

**TMC Rift Buzz Grows After MLAs Skip Mamata Meet**

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Speculation over internal divisions within the Trinamool Congress (TMC) intensified after around 10 newly elected MLAs skipped a crucial post-election meeting convened by party chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee following the party's defeat in the Assembly elections.

The meeting, held to discuss the party's future strategy and leadership structure after losing power to the BJP after 15 years, was attended by only 70 of the party's 80 newly elected legislators.

**Mamata Refuses to Resign**

During the meeting, Banerjee reportedly rejected calls for resignation and alleged large-scale irregularities in the election process. She claimed that mandates in nearly 100 seats had been "looted" and accused certain party members of sabotage during the polls.

"I won't resign. Let them dismiss me," Banerjee reportedly told party legislators, while urging them to remain united and continue fighting politically despite the setback.

She also asked MLAs to wear black clothes on the first day of the

Assembly session as a mark of protest, calling the BJP's victory a "black day" for the state.

**Leadership and Strategy Discussions**

The closed-door meeting reportedly focused on reorganising the party structure, deciding its Assembly strategy, and discussing the appointment of the next Leader of the Opposition.

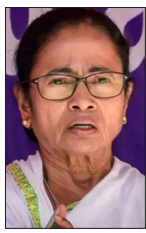
Party sources said Banerjee told legislators that many defeated candidates had been "forcibly defeated" and assured them that allegations of internal sabotage would be investigated.

**TMC Denies Rift Claims**

Responding to growing speculation over internal differences, TMC leaders denied reports of any rift within the party.

Official sources clarified that all absent MLAs had either informed the leadership in advance or had been specifically asked not to attend, especially some members from North Bengal.

The party maintained that there was no cause for concern regarding the absentees and dismissed media reports suggesting internal instability.



**SUVENDU ALLEGES PLANNED MURDER OF AIDE RATH**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata**

Senior BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari on Wednesday alleged that his close aide Chandranath Rath was "cold-bloodedly murdered" in a planned attack after being under surveillance for several days.

Adhikari made the remarks outside a hospital in Madhyamgram while accompanied by Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar following Rath's death in a shooting incident.

According to preliminary information, unidentified assailants arrived on motorcycles and opened fire on the vehicle carrying Rath at Doharia in Madhyamgram on Wednesday night. Rath, considered a close associate of Adhikari, succumbed to injuries after the attack.

Adhikari said there could be political reasons behind the murder but added that he did not want to make detailed comments while the investigation was underway.

"I have confidence in the police investigation," he told reporters, adding that he had spoken to West Bengal Director



General of Police Siddhanath Gupta regarding the case.

The DGP later confirmed that police had begun a detailed investigation and recovered important clues from CCTV footage collected from the area.

Police have also seized a four-wheeler allegedly linked to the crime. Officials said the vehicle carried a registration number traced to Siliguri, though investigators suspect the number plate may be fake.

Some bullets and used cartridges were also recovered from the crime scene. Police said the immediate priority is to identify and arrest those involved in the attack.

Adhikari alleged that political violence had continued in West Bengal for several years and cited recent attacks on BJP workers in different parts of the state, including Khardah, Baranagar, and Basirhat.

**Saudi Pressure Halts Trump Plan?**

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

A reported denial of airspace access by Saudi Arabia has forced US President Donald Trump to pause a planned naval escort mission titled "Project Freedom", according to a report by NBC News.

The mission was aimed at protecting commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz amid rising tensions with Iran.

However, Saudi Arabia reportedly refused to allow US military aircraft to use its airspace or operate from the

Prince Sultan Air Base, leading to the suspension of the operation.

Reports suggest that a phone call between Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman failed to resolve the disagreement, resulting in the temporary halt of the mission. Rising Gulf Concerns

The development highlights growing concerns among Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar, about

being drawn into a wider regional conflict between the US and Iran.

While these nations host major US military facilities, they remain cautious due to the economic and security risks of escalating tensions in the region.

The Strait of Hormuz continues to be a critical global energy route, with any disruption directly impacting oil prices and international shipping.



**Stalin Keeps MLAs in Chennai**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Chennai**

DMK chief M.K. Stalin on Thursday directed all party MLAs to remain in Chennai until May 10 as political uncertainty continues over government formation in Tamil Nadu.

During a meeting with party legislators, Stalin said key decisions will be taken soon in the interest of the party and all members must remain committed to the party's stand.

He added that while he prefers to function as a responsible opposition, certain strategic decisions required based on the current political situation.

**India Gave Clear Message to Every Threat: Deve Gowda**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**

Former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda on Thursday said that India, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, has sent a "clear message" to every threat facing the nation through Operation Sindoor.

Marking one year of the operation, the JD(S) patriarch said

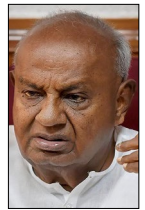
the mission reflected India's strength, unity, and determination in defending its sovereignty.

Deve Gowda described Operation Sindoor as more than a military exercise, calling it a symbol of the courage of the armed forces and the resilience of the

people. He said it demonstrated the nation's collective resolve to stand firm against any challenge.

He added that India remains "united and unshaken" in protecting its sovereignty and peace.

The former Prime Minister paid tribute to the armed



forces, expressing deep respect for their sacrifice, discipline, and commitment in safeguarding the country.

He also urged citizens to work towards building a "stronger, safer and united Bharat."

Deve Gowda concluded his message with "Jai Hind" and the hashtag OperationSindoor.

**Hormuz Crisis Brings Business Boom to Kollam Port**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Kollam**

Rising tensions in the Strait of Hormuz have unexpectedly brought increased international maritime activity to Kerala's Kollam Port, with several foreign cargo vessels seeking emergency support and safe anchorage amid growing security concerns in West Asian waters.

Port authorities said multiple international ships, including LPG carriers and merchant vessels, have approached Kollam Port in recent days for fuel supply, technical assistance, logistics support, and temporary shelter as fears of military escalation continue in the Gulf region.

**Foreign Ships Seek Safer Routes**

Officials stated that vessels which usually operate through the Strait of Hormuz are reconsidering their routes and schedules due to concerns over attacks on commercial shipping and regional instability.

One major incident involved a Mongolian LPG tanker travelling from China to Sharjah that reportedly approached Kollam Port after running critically low on fuel. Authorities arranged emergency refuelling and essential services

**Rising tensions in the Strait of Hormuz have unexpectedly boosted activity at Kerala's Kollam Port, as foreign cargo vessels seek emergency fuel, logistics support, and safe anchorage. Port authorities say the diversion of international ships has generated significant revenue and opened new opportunities for smaller Indian ports amid growing instability in Gulf shipping routes.**

before the vessel resumed its voyage.

**Revenue Boost for Kollam Port**

The unexpected diversion of ships has generated substantial revenue for the port through fuel supply operations, emergency maritime services, and logistics assistance.

Officials said the situation has opened new opportunities for smaller Indian ports like Kollam, which do not usually handle large-scale international maritime emergencies.

**Global Shipping Impact**

The Strait of Hormuz is considered one of the world's most critical oil transit routes, handling a major share of global crude oil and liquefied natural gas shipments. Any disruption in the narrow passage can directly impact international

trade, fuel prices, and shipping insurance costs worldwide.

Maritime experts believe that if tensions in the Gulf region continue, more vessels may increasingly depend on ports along India's western coastline, including those in Kerala, for operational and emergency support.

Port officials said the recent rise in international vessel movement could help strengthen Kollam Port's position as an emerging support hub along India's western coast. Maritime experts believe that if geopolitical tensions persist in West Asia, Indian ports capable of providing emergency logistics, refuelling and technical assistance may witness a sustained increase in global shipping traffic in the coming months.

**Rajnath Singh Releases OP Documentary**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Jaipur**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday released a documentary on Operation Sindoor, marking the first anniversary of the military action carried out in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

The 28-minute documentary was unveiled during the Joint Commanders' Conference in Jaipur and highlights India's precision air strikes on nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) launched on May 7 last year.

The film showcases the role of the armed forces in the operation and the use of ISRO satellites in identifying cross-border targets, along with details of the planning and execution of the mission. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also features in the documentary.

Singh described Operation Sindoor as a benchmark in modern warfare, praising the coordination and accuracy of India's armed forces.

**BJP Slams Opposition Over TVK Govt Formation Row**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Chennai**

BJP spokesperson Narayanan Thirupathi on Thursday strongly criticised opposition parties, calling their allegations that the BJP is obstructing the formation of a Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) government "cheap politics."

He said the Congress, Communist parties, and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) were making baseless claims and trying to mislead the public after the recent Assembly election results.

Thirupathi said that since no single party has secured a clear majority, the Governor must act strictly according to constitutional provisions. He stressed that government formation should follow due process and warned against "horse-trading" of elected legislators.

He added that under Article 164 of the Constitution, the Governor must verify majority support and allow a reasonable time for any party claiming to form the government to prove its strength on the floor of the Assembly.

The BJP spokesperson also targeted VCK leader Thirumavalavan, calling his statements "shameful" and accusing opposition parties of ignoring factual developments regarding post-poll alliances and support letters.

**Madras HC Plea Seeks FIR, PMLA Probe Against Vijay**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Chennai**

A writ petition has been filed in the Madras High Court seeking registration of an FIR and a probe under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) founder and actor-politician Vijay in connection with a 2015 Income Tax case related to the film Puli.

The plea refers to Income Tax Department findings from searches conducted on Vijay's premises, which reportedly led to the seizure of documents indicating cash and cheque payments from film producers

The IT department later assessed his taxable income and imposed penalties after concluding that additional income had not been disclosed voluntarily.

Vijay later challenged the assessment and penalty orders through legal appeals, some of which are still pending before higher courts.

The petitioner has also sought directions to the Income Tax Department to forward the case materials to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to determine whether offences under PMLA have been committed.

**Trump Proposes New Iran Ceasefire Plan**

► **Vikrama Vahini | Washington**

Trump Proposes 14-Point Ceasefire Plan to Iran Amid Rising Tensions

US President Donald Trump has proposed a new 14-point ceasefire framework to Iran aimed at ending ongoing hostilities and reopening the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

According to officials, the US has given Iran 48 hours to respond to the proposal, which includes conditions to halt military escalation and ensure free movement through the key waterway.

The development comes amid heightened tensions in the Middle East, with both sides yet to reach a final agreement despite ongoing diplomatic talks. Iran has maintained that it will only accept "fair and balanced" conditions and has rejected previous US proposals.

Meanwhile, Trump has warned of intensified military action if Iran fails to comply or blocks the Strait of Hormuz, stating that further escalation would depend on Tehran's response to the peace offer. Negotiations between the two countries are reportedly at a critical stage, with global attention focused on whether the latest proposal can prevent further conflict in the region.