



VIKRAMA VAHINI

WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION DAY



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Suriya and Trisha Krishnan's Tamil action drama Karuppu has opened to a strong box office response despite a one-day delay caused by financial issues. The film, released on May 15, is reportedly performing well in theatres and is on track for blockbuster status.

Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Saturday issued a strong warning to Pakistan, stating that India will not tolerate continued cross-border terrorism and hinting at a decisive military response similar to Operation Sindoor if such activities persist.

INSIDE

Good morning

Thanks to the morning sun for reminding us every day that it's not dark forever. Whatever obstacles you face, they will not last forever.

BRIEFS

ISIS Deputy Killed in US-Nigeria Operation: Trump

> Vikrama Vahini | Washington
US President Donald Trump has announced that Abu-Bilal al-Minuki, described as the second-in-command of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), was killed in a joint operation conducted by US and Nigerian forces.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said the "meticulously planned" operation targeted al-Minuki in Africa, where he was reportedly hiding. He credited intelligence support and cooperation from the Nigerian government for the success of the mission.

Trump said al-Minuki's elimination would significantly weaken ISIS operations globally and prevent further attacks against civilians and US interests.

Al-Minuki was designated a Specially Designated Global Terrorist by the US in 2023 and was believed to be linked to ISIS activities across West Africa, particularly in the Lake Chad Basin region.

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Gadchiroli Now Naxal-Free

> Vikrama Vahini | Gadchiroli

In a major anti-Naxal operation, Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district has been declared "Naxal-free" after police arrested eight Naxals and secured the surrender of five others. The operation, codenamed 'Antim Prahar', was carried out jointly by district police and CRPF in border areas near Chhattisgarh and Telangana. Officials said all six active armed cadres in the district have now been neutralised.

Police recovered ₹65.34 lakh in cash and 51 firearms, including AK-47s and LMGs. Authorities termed the operation a significant blow to Left Wing Extremism in the region.

NTA Revamp After NEET Row

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi

In the wake of the NEET-UG paper leak controversy and ongoing CBI investigation, the Central Government has initiated a major restructuring of the National Testing Agency.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the immediate induction of two Joint Secretaries and two Joint Directors to strengthen the agency's functioning. Anuja Bapat (ISS: 1998) and Ruchita Vij (IRS Customs: 2004) have been appointed as Joint Secretaries for a five-year term. Akash Jain (IRS Income Tax: 2013) and Aditya Rajendra Bhojagadia (IA&AS: 2013) have been named Joint Directors.

Officials said the move is aimed at plugging systemic loopholes and restoring credibility to the examination body, which has come under scrutiny following allegations of irregularities.

FUEL HIKE MAY RAISE OLA, UBER FARES

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Commuters in Karnataka may soon face higher travel expenses as app-based cab services like Ola and Uber consider fare hikes following the recent increase in petrol and diesel prices.

Industry sources said aggregators are reviewing fares as rising fuel costs have significantly increased operating expenses. The current government-fixed cab fare stands at ₹22 per kilometre, though some drivers have already begun charging more.

The ripple effect of the fuel price hike is being felt across the transport sector. Private bus operators have



announced a 10-20 per cent increase in ticket prices, citing an additional fuel burden of around ₹450 per trip. This has reportedly pushed fares up by ₹100-200 on several routes.

School van operators are also set to raise fares by about 10 per cent from next month, while the Karnataka State Travel Operators Association is expected to increase passenger vehicle fares by 10-15 per cent.

Beyond transport, the hike is likely to impact daily essentials as well. Prices of vegetables and fruits may rise by 5-10 per cent, while grocery costs could increase by 2-5 per cent due to higher transportation charges.

Online delivery services are also expected to add a small surcharge of ₹2-5.

The developments are set to add further financial strain on households already coping with rising living costs.

Experts warn that if fuel prices continue to remain high, the cumulative impact could further push up inflation in the coming months, affecting not just transport but a wide range of goods and services.

They emphasise the need for policy intervention and cost-control measures to prevent prolonged financial pressure on both service providers and consumers.



Modi in Netherlands: India Dreams Big

> Vikrama Vahini | The Hague (Netherlands)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Indian community in The Hague during his visit to the Netherlands, highlighting India's cultural strength, democratic progress, and growing global ambitions.

Speaking to the diaspora, PM Modi said the spirit of Indianness remains unchanged regardless of geography. "The colour of passports, address, or time zone may change, but not Indianness," he said, thanking the community for their warm welcome.

Recalling India's political journey, the Prime

Minister referred to the 2014 general elections, calling it a turning point that led to stronger governance and national transformation.

Emphasising India's future goals, PM Modi said the country "wants to dream big" and is focusing on innovation, start-ups, and manufacturing to strengthen its role in the global economy. He noted that India now has the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem, growing from around 500 start-ups a decade ago to more than two lakh today.

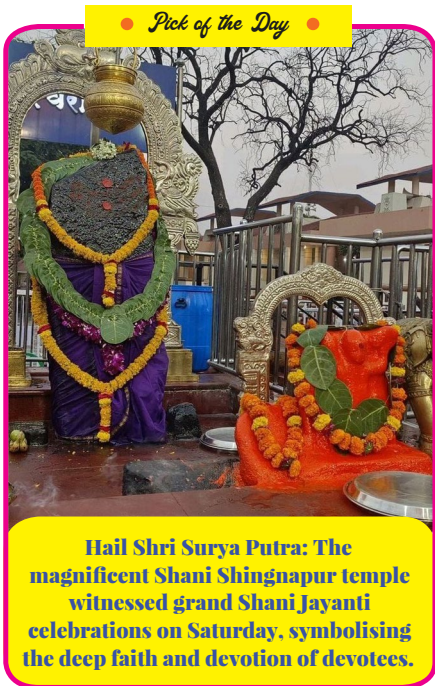
He also underlined the strength of Indian democracy, citing high voter turnout in recent

elections across several states and increased participation of women voters as a positive sign of democratic engagement.

Highlighting bilateral ties, PM Modi said India and the Netherlands share strong cultural and sporting connections, symbolically comparing the Dutch tulip and the Indian lotus. He also appreciated contributions from Dutch coaches in Indian hockey and praised the Netherlands cricket team's performance on the global stage, expressing hope for deeper sporting cooperation ahead of the Olympic Games.

The Prime Minister's address comes as part of his broader multi-nation visit aimed at strengthening India's diplomatic and economic partnerships.

He further said that India's growing global footprint is driven by its young population, technological innovation, and strong democratic institutions. PM Modi also emphasized that the India-Netherlands partnership will play a key role in expanding cooperation in trade, renewable energy, and emerging technologies in the coming years. **PG2**



Pick of the Day

Hail Shri Surya Putra: The magnificent Shani Shingnapur temple witnessed grand Shani Jayanti celebrations on Saturday, symbolising the deep faith and devotion of devotees.

Delhi Slashes ATF VAT to 7%, Airfares May Drop

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

In a major boost to the aviation sector, the Delhi government led by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has reduced the Value Added Tax (VAT) on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) from 25 per cent to 7 per cent, a move expected to lower airfares and ease operational costs for airlines.

Officials said the decision, approved by the Delhi Cabinet, aims to provide relief to carriers grappling with high fuel prices, which account for nearly 30-40 per cent of total operating expenses. The reduction is also likely to benefit passengers through more affordable ticket prices.

Delhi government slashes VAT on Aviation Turbine Fuel from 25% to 7%, a move expected to reduce airfares, ease airline operating costs, and boost Indira Gandhi International Airport's role as a major global transit hub.

The move is expected to strengthen Indira Gandhi International Airport as a major global transit hub by attracting more domestic and international airlines. Experts believe lower fuel costs could encourage airlines to expand routes and increase flight frequency from Delhi.

In addition, higher passenger traffic is likely to boost non-aeronautical revenues at the airport, including retail, food outlets, and

parking services, further enhancing Delhi's position in the aviation sector.

The VAT reduction is also expected to improve the financial health of domestic airlines, many of which have been under pressure due to volatile global crude oil prices and rising operational costs. Aviation experts say the policy could help carriers stabilise fares and improve fleet utilisation in the coming months.

Monsoon Advances Early Over Andaman Region

> Vikrama Vahini | Chennai.

The southwest monsoon has advanced ahead of schedule into parts of the southeast Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, and large areas of the Andaman Sea, covering the entire Nicobar Islands and parts of the Andaman Islands, the Meteorological Department said on Saturday.

Officials noted that widespread rainfall over the Nicobar and adjoining Andaman regions over the past two days, along with strengthening westerly winds reaching speeds of up to 45 kmph, have created favourable conditions for the early onset. Meteorological indicators, including low outgoing longwave radiation levels, confirm strong cloud activity in the region. **PG2**

AP Offers ₹40,000 for 4th Child to Boost Population

> Vikrama Vahini | Amaravathi

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has announced financial incentives of ₹30,000 for the birth of a third child and ₹40,000 for the fourth child, as part of efforts to address the state's declining population trend.

Incentive plan to encourage higher birth rate

Speaking at a public meeting in Narsannapeta in Srikakulam district, the Chief Minister said the government would provide ₹30,000 immediately after the birth of a third child and ₹40,000 for the fourth child. He said further

details of the scheme would be announced within a month.

"I have made a new decision. We will provide ₹30,000 immediately after the birth of a third child and ₹40,000 for a fourth child. Isn't this the right decision?" Naidu said during the SwarnaAndhra-SwachAndhra programme.

Earlier incentives for second child

The state government had earlier announced an incentive of ₹25,000 for couples having a second child. Officials had indicated that the policy could be extended further to encourage larger families.

Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav had also stated that the government was considering additional incentives for third or subsequent children as part of the broader population policy.

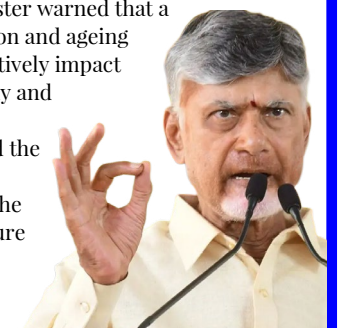
Concern over declining population

Naidu expressed concern over the declining birth rate in the state, noting that rising incomes and changing family preferences have led many couples to opt for only one or two children.

He said maintaining a total fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman is essential for population stability and long-term economic balance.

Economic and demographic implications

The Chief Minister warned that a declining population and ageing society could negatively impact the state's economy and workforce in the future. He stressed the need for collective effort to increase the birth rate and ensure sustainable demographic growth.



Panchatantra Stories

The Wedding of the Mouse

On the serene banks of the sacred river Ganges stood a quiet hermitage where Guru Yadnyavalkya lived with his disciples. The Guru was known for his deep meditation, wisdom, and strict discipline. Life in the hermitage was peaceful and devoted to learning and spirituality.

One day, while the Guru was bathing in the river, he saw a hawk flying overhead carrying a mouse in its claws. Suddenly, the mouse slipped and fell directly into his hands. Realising that the mouse would be in danger if left alone, the compassionate Guru decided to protect it. Using his spiritual powers, he transformed the tiny mouse into a human girl.

The Guru took the girl home and told his wife, "Let us raise her as our own child, for we have none." His wife gladly accepted, and the girl grew up in the hermitage surrounded by love, care, and knowledge. Under the Guru's guidance, she became intelligent, graceful, and well-versed in many sciences.

As the years passed, the girl reached marriageable age. The Guru and his wife began searching for a worthy groom. Considering her special origin, the Guru thought of finding the most powerful being in the universe for her.

He first invited the Sun God, believing no one could be greater. However, the girl refused, saying the Sun was too hot and harsh for her liking. The Sun then suggested the King of Clouds, who could cover his light. Yet, the girl found the Cloud too dark and gloomy.

The Cloud recommended the Lord of Winds, but she declined again, describing him as restless and unstable. The Wind then suggested the Lord of Mountains, who was strong enough to stop him. But the girl rejected the Mountain too, calling him rigid and unmovable.

Finally, the Mountain advised the Guru to approach the King of Mice, saying that even he could be pierced by a mouse. When the King of Mice appeared, the girl felt an instant sense of belonging and happiness. She shyly agreed to marry him.

Understanding her true nature, the Guru transformed her back into a mouse. She was then married to the King of Mice and lived happily among her own kind.

The story teaches a timeless lesson: no matter how much one changes outwardly, one's true nature always remains the same.

CONGRESS MLA REDUCES CONVOY AFTER PM APPEAL

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Karnataka Congress MLA and Chief Minister's Legal Advisor A.S. Ponnanna has voluntarily requested the withdrawal of one of his official escort vehicles following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for fuel conservation.

The move comes amid growing discussions on reducing fuel consumption and unnecessary expenditure in official convoys, especially in the context of global economic uncertainties.

Ponnanna, who receives Cabinet-rank security cover due to his official position, said public representatives must lead by example and promote austerity.

He has reportedly requested that one escort vehicle attached to his convoy be removed as part of the cost-cutting measure.



The decision has sparked political debate, with observers noting it as a rare instance of a public representative acting in line with the Prime Minister's appeal on fuel saving. Supporters have described it as a step towards responsible governance, while critics see it as a symbolic political gesture.

The issue has also renewed discussions on VIP convoy culture and government spending on security arrangements, with calls from various quarters for elected representatives to voluntarily reduce official vehicle usage.

Modi in Netherlands: India Dreams Big

From PGI

He also interacted with members of the Indian diaspora who shared experiences of contributing to Dutch society while staying connected to their roots. PM Modi praised their achievements and said the overseas Indian community plays a crucial role in strengthening India's global image and building people-to-people ties between nations.

He encouraged the diaspora to actively participate in India's development journey through investment, innovation, and cultural exchange.

ASHOK QUESTIONS CONGRESS 'SADHANA' MEET

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Karnataka Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok on Saturday criticised the Congress government for allegedly halting pensions and subsidies to vulnerable sections, questioning its "moral right" to hold a 'Sadhana Samavesha' (achievement convention).

Addressing a press conference, Ashok alleged that pensions for orphans, senior citizens, acid attack victims, and transgender persons have not been disbursed for months.

He claimed that despite budget allocations, benefits under several

Two Killed in Lightning Strikes

Vikrama Vahini | Mysuru/Ballari

Two people, including a woman farmer and a young man, were killed in separate lightning strike incidents amid heavy rainfall activity in Karnataka on Friday evening.

In Mysuru district's Piryapatna taluk, Vinoda, a woman farmer from Alanahalli, died after being struck by lightning while returning home from her field during rain. In another incident in Ballari district's D. Naganahalli village, 32-year-old Gadilnagappa died after being struck by lightning while working in a sapota orchard.

He was reportedly caught in sudden thunderstorm activity and died on the spot. The Meteorological Department has warned of continued heavy rain and thunderstorms across the state, advising the public to avoid open fields and seek shelter in safe buildings during adverse weather conditions.

Vijayendra Takes Metro Ride on Fuel-Saving Appeal

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Karnataka BJP President and MLA B.Y. Vijayendra travelled by Bengaluru Metro on Friday in support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for fuel conservation and austerity measures.

Vijayendra boarded the Metro from Majestic and travelled along the Challaghatta-Kengeri corridor while heading to a party programme at Kumbalagodu. His journey drew public attention amid ongoing discussions on rising fuel prices and sustainable transport usage.

Speaking to reporters, Vijayendra said the Prime Minister's call for reduced fuel consumption was timely, given global economic challenges and geopolitical tensions. He added that greater use of public transport would help reduce fuel usage and ease urban traffic congestion.



He further stated that Prime Minister Modi himself had reduced protocol-related vehicle usage, and that BJP leaders across the country were also adopting austerity measures in line with the appeal.

Party sources said several NDA-ruled states have already initiated steps to cut down official vehicle usage and fuel expenditure. Senior BJP leader and former Karnataka Minister R. Ashoka had earlier indicated that official convoy sizes would be reduced wherever possible.

'Corporate Jihad' Seminar Held in Bengaluru

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

A special dialogue on "Corporate Jihad: Myth and Reality" was organised by the Hindu Janajagruiti Samiti at Sathyapramoda Kalyana Mantapa in Basavanagudi, with around 300 participants attending the event.

Addressing the gathering, state spokesperson Mohan Gowda expressed concern over what he described as evolving forms of ideological influence, stating that such tendencies are no longer limited to warfare but are extending into social and corporate spaces.

He also referred to broader narratives such as "Vision 2047" and "Ghazwa-e-Hind," alleging attempts to impact social cohesion and demographic balance.

Gowda further claimed that instances of religious pressure and



discrimination were being reported in workplaces and stressed the need for awareness under initiatives like "Beti Suraksha - Rashtra Suraksha." He highlighted the importance of cultural awareness and vigilance in society.

Ranaragini Wing state spokesperson Bhavya Gowda spoke about women's safety, citing incidents from various regions, including Hubballi. She urged parents to closely monitor children's social interactions

welfare schemes have not reached beneficiaries.

He further alleged that funds under key schemes such as Gruha Lakshmi and Annabhagya were pending, and grants meant for Scheduled Castes and orphan welfare had not been released.

According to him, around 81.88 lakh beneficiaries dependent on pensions have been affected.

Ashok also accused the government of failing to deliver on promises made to Asha workers and

other sections, while criticising rising prices of fuel, milk, electricity, and public transport under the current administration.

Taking aim at governance, he alleged irregularities in civic administration, including increased costs in BBMP tenders and alleged corruption in property documentation processes.

On the issue of electoral roll revision, Ashoka supported the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), claiming it would help identify illegal voters, while asserting that

genuine voters would not be affected.

He also defended the Centre's fuel pricing policies, stating that price increases in India were comparatively lower than in several other countries.

Ashok concluded by asserting that the BJP would address these issues if voted back to power, promising reforms in taxation and governance.

He said the BJP would continue to raise these issues and hold the government accountable for delays in welfare delivery.

Ramesh Babu urges caution in voter list revision

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

MLC Ramesh Babu has urged the Election Commission to exercise utmost caution during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Karnataka, ensuring that eligible voters are not wrongly removed from the list.

In a letter to the Chief Electoral Officer of Karnataka, he said that voters who have shifted constituencies due to delimitation, marriage, education, employment, or transfer of residence must not be deleted during the revision process. He specifically highlighted women voters, government employees, migrant workers, and those belonging to nomadic, tribal, and

indigenous communities as groups that must be protected.

Ramesh Babu said the exercise should strictly follow constitutional provisions under Article 326 and the Representation of the People Act, 1950, ensuring fairness and non-discrimination.

The Election Commission has launched the third phase of SIR covering 16 states and 3 Union Territories, with Karnataka's voter roll revision involving over 5.5 crore voters scheduled to begin from June 20. Ramesh Babu welcomed the EC's assurance of a strict verification process but warned against any exclusion of genuine voters under the guise of revision.



NEWS

37 Odisha Workers Rescued in K'taka Brick Kiln Raid

Vikrama Vahini | Vijayanagara

In a major crackdown on bonded labour, authorities in Vijayanagara district have rescued 37 migrant workers from Odisha who were allegedly being subjected to exploitative working conditions at a brick kiln in Nandibandi village of Mariyammanahalli Hobli, Karnataka.

The rescue operation was conducted on May 14 following inputs from a Belagavi-based NGO, Spandana.

The operation was carried out under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Kavitha S. Mannikeri, with Assistant Commissioner Vivekananda leading the field team.

Officials said the rescued group included 10 children, 11 women, and 16 men, who had been brought from Odisha's Balangir and Nabarangpur

Authorities in Karnataka's Vijayanagara district rescued 37 Odisha migrant workers, including children and women, from alleged bonded labour at a brick kiln, with an FIR registered against the owners.

districts about six months ago with promises of better wages and employment. Each family was allegedly given an advance of ₹40,000 by labour contractors and kiln owners.

However, the workers claimed they were forced to work in harsh conditions and paid only around ₹500 per week despite long working hours.

They also alleged that they were not allowed to leave the premises freely and were threatened when they attempted to return home.

Authorities further stated that

security personnel had allegedly been deployed to restrict movement and prevent contact with outsiders.

During the raid, officials found the workers living in cramped, makeshift shelters with poor sanitation, inadequate drinking water, and no proper living facilities.

The administration described the conditions as inhuman, noting that several children had no access to education or healthcare.

Following the rescue, the workers were provided immediate assistance and safely transported back to Odisha by train.

Karnataka Pushes to Scrap NEET from 2026

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka government has urged the Centre to abolish NEET-UG from the 2026 academic year and allow states to conduct their own entrance exams through CET.

Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil cited repeated controversies, including alleged paper leaks, to question the credibility of the national examination system. He said Karnataka's CET model is more transparent and student-friendly.

The state has written to the Centre seeking permission to

restore CET-based admissions and demanded a thorough probe into the latest NEET leak allegations.

The minister also alleged that recurring issues such as paper leaks, impersonation, and technical glitches have eroded public trust in NEET, causing stress and uncertainty among students and parents across the country. He emphasised that medical admissions should be handled through a fair and regionally sensitive system, and asserted that Karnataka would continue to press for decentralised entrance examinations to safeguard students' interests.



Monsoon Advances Early Over Andaman Region

From PGI

The department stated that conditions remain favourable for the monsoon to advance further into additional parts of the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, and the remaining Andaman region over the next three to four days.

Rainfall has already been recorded across several parts of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Heavy rain is likely at isolated places in districts such as Ramanathapuram, Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, Karaikal, Theni, Dindigul, Madurai,

Coimbatore, and the Nilgiris over the next few days.

Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds reaching speeds of 30-40 kmph are also expected in parts of the state. From May 20 onwards, light to moderate rainfall is likely to continue across Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Karaikal.

In Chennai and surrounding areas, the sky is expected to remain partly cloudy, with light to moderate rain and thunderstorms forecast over the next two days.

SCIENCE & Technology

AI Balcony Defence System Goes Viral

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

A unique do-it-yourself innovation combining artificial intelligence and home automation has taken social media by storm, after a Reddit user developed an AI-powered system that detects pigeons and sprays them with water automatically.

The creator shared details of the project online, explaining that the system was built to address a recurring problem of pigeons nesting on his balcony. Instead of using conventional deterrents like spikes or nets, he designed a smart, automated solution using computer vision and motion tracking technology.

The setup consists of a USB camera connected to an Orange Pi 5 computer, which processes live video feeds using the YOLO World V2 AI model. The model is capable of identifying objects in real time, allowing the system to detect pigeons as soon as they land on the balcony.

Once a pigeon is identified, an electric water gun mounted on a servo motor is automatically activated. The motor adjusts the direction of the spray to target the bird, releasing a burst of water without any human intervention. The system uses basic electronic components such as resistors, a transistor, and battery-powered hardware, making it both efficient and relatively low-cost.

Experts note that such innovations reflect a growing trend in consumer technology, where affordable AI tools and compact computing devices are enabling individuals to build advanced automation systems at home. The creator also highlighted that the system can be adapted to detect other animals such as squirrels, cats, or raccoons, thanks to its flexible AI model.

BJP PUSHES 'ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION' PLAN

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

A Joint Parliamentary Committee from the Lok Sabha Secretariat held discussions with political parties in the city on the proposed constitutional amendment for implementing 'One Nation, One Election'.

During the meeting at Taj West End, the Karnataka unit of the BJP submitted a memorandum urging the implementation of simultaneous elections across the country. The discussion saw participation from BJP state president and MLA B. Y. Vijayendra along with other senior party leaders.

Among those present were MPs P. C. Mohan, Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar and C. N. Manjunath, along with MLAs and MLCs including L. Ravi Subramanya, Suresh Gowda, Jyothi Ganesh, K. S. Naveen, and party leaders Nandeesh Reddy and Ashwathnarayan.

The committee is engaging with various stakeholders



to gather views on the feasibility and implications of conducting simultaneous elections nationwide.

The proposal for 'One Nation, One Election' aims to synchronise Lok Sabha and State Assembly polls to reduce election-related expenditure, minimise governance disruptions, and ensure efficient utilisation of resources.

NEET-UG 2026 Leak: CBI Nabs 2nd Kingpin

Telegram used to circulate NEET-UG 2026 leaked question papers: CBI

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested a second alleged mastermind in the NEET-UG 2026 question paper leak case.

The accused, identified as biology lecturer Manisha Mandhare, is alleged to have been part of the National Testing Agency (NTA) paper-setting committee and played a key role in leaking examination material, officials said on Saturday.

The arrest comes a day after the CBI detained retired chemistry lecturer P.V. Kulkarni, described by investigators as the prime accused in the racket.

According to officials, Mandhare allegedly followed a similar modus operandi to

Kulkarni. She is said to have dictated leaked questions along with multiple-choice options and correct answers to candidates who paid several lakhs of rupees for access to the material.

Investigators revealed that two sets of question papers—one handwritten and another typed—were allegedly leaked from within the NTA system. Officials believe both Kulkarni and Mandhare were directly involved in the operation.

"This is the first time in paper leak investigations that the source has been traced to the NTA itself. Once the paper was circulated as PDFs through messaging

platforms, there could be hundreds of beneficiaries. We are tracing all of them, but our primary focus is identifying the source and its associates," a CBI officer said.

The agency further stated that students were allegedly gathered at Kulkarni's residence in Pune during the last week of April, with the help of co-accused Manisha Waghmare, who allegedly collected payments from candidates.

Waghmare, who runs a beauty parlour, has also been arrested.

Officials said Kulkarni allegedly dictated questions, answer options, and solutions while students recorded them in notebooks.

The investigation has also uncovered a wider network involving the circulation of leaked material through messaging platforms such as Telegram.

According to the CBI, individuals based in Nashik and Gurugram were involved in transferring and distributing the leaked content in exchange for money.

In one instance, a candidate's family allegedly paid ₹10-12 lakh for access to the leaked paper.

Investigators said that around 500-600 questions across Physics, Chemistry, and Biology were offered with claims that they could ensure admission to reputed medical colleges.



TMC MLA's Brother Held in Attack Case

► Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata

In a significant development, Uttam Das, brother of Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLA Paresw Ram Das from Canning West in South 24 Parganas district, was arrested by police on Friday night in connection with an alleged attempt to murder a BJP worker during post-poll violence.

Police said Uttam Das, who is also the president of the Canning-I Panchayat Samiti and a prominent local leader, was taken into custody from near his residence in Mithakhali village. Central forces accompanied the police team during the operation and secured the area.

The arrest is linked to an incident on May 4 in Dighirpar village, the day of the West Bengal Assembly election results, when BJP worker Arghyadeep Basu was allegedly attacked. According to allegations, unidentified assailants opened fire during vote counting, leaving Basu injured with a bullet wound on his right leg.

SHANI IDOL THEFT SOLVED

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The North District Police have solved the theft case of a 104-year-old Shri Shiv Navgrah Temple in Chandni Chowk and recovered the stolen Ashtadhatu idol of Lord Shani Dev along with other valuables. Two persons, including a habitual offender and a receiver, have been arrested in the case.

According to North DCP Raja Banthia, the complaint was filed on May 12, 2026, by temple priest Mukesh Sharma, reporting the theft of the ancient idol and other brass items from the temple premises. The incident is believed to have occurred between 3 am and 5 am. A case was registered at Kotwali Police Station under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and an investigation was launched

immediately.

Given the sensitivity of the case ahead of Maha Shani Jayanti, a special police team was constituted under ACP Kotwali Shankar Banerjee and led by Inspector Kuldeep Singh. Police examined footage from over 300 CCTV cameras across the area to trace the accused.

Based on technical surveillance and local intelligence, the main accused, identified as Dilshad alias Banta (45), was arrested near Kalkattia Gate in the Yamuna Bazaar area. Police said he is a habitual offender with around 15 previous cases of theft and burglary and had been living on the footpath.

During interrogation, police also arrested a receiver, Geeta Kumari, who was allegedly involved in handling the stolen property.

TN Gov Cuts Convoy on Modi Fuel Call

► Vikrama Vahini | Chennai

Tamil Nadu Governor R. N. Ravi (Note: Actually Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar - correcting below) has ordered a major reduction in his official convoy size, bringing it down from 10 vehicles to just four in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for fuel conservation.

According to an official statement, Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar directed the move to cut fuel usage and promote austerity in public life. The revised convoy strength has been implemented immediately for all official engagements.

The decision follows the Prime Minister's call to reduce petrol and diesel consumption amid global energy concerns, and is seen as a symbolic step towards responsible governance and sustainable practices.

Father Breaks Laptop Over Class 12 Result

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

A viral Reddit post by a Class 12 CBSE student has sparked widespread discussion online over academic pressure and parenting, after he alleged that his father reacted violently to his board examination results.

The post, shared on the r/CBSE subreddit, was titled: "I know I am late here, but this is what my father did after 12th results were out."

The student also shared an image showing a damaged laptop, which appeared to have been broken and scattered on the floor.

In the post, the student claimed that his father smashed his laptop after he scored 57.4% in the CBSE Class 12 examinations, in which he



reportedly received an "Essential Repeat" status, requiring him to reappear in certain subjects.

The student further alleged that he was denied basic comfort at home after the results, claiming he was made to sleep on the floor and faced continued verbal, physical,

mental, and emotional distress.

The post quickly gained traction on social media, with users expressing concern over the student's well-being and criticising the reported response of the parent.

Many commenters urged the student to seek help and prioritise his safety, while others highlighted the growing pressure faced by students following examination results in India.

The incident has once again triggered debate online about academic expectations and the emotional toll of exam-related stress, with several users calling for greater awareness and sensitivity towards student mental health.

Deve Gowda Questions 20,000 Acres Around Bengaluru

► Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda on Saturday intensified opposition to the proposed Bidadi township project, raising concerns over nearly 20,000 acres of land around Bengaluru and calling for a statewide agitation against what he termed a "land grab."

Addressing a press conference at the JD(S) headquarters, Deve Gowda urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to order a probe into large-scale land ownership in the region, questioning in whose names the vast land parcels are



Former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda has intensified opposition to the proposed Bidadi township, alleging a large-scale land grab involving nearly 20,000 acres around Bengaluru. Calling for a statewide agitation, he urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to order a probe into land ownership, while warning of growing farmer unrest and political tensions over the project.

registered. Describing the township proposal as a "business deal in the name of development," he alleged that fertile agricultural land was

being targeted despite strong opposition from local farmers engaged in dairy and horticulture activities.

"My fight begins today. Attempts to snatch farmers' land must be stopped," he said, warning of growing public anger and resistance against the project.

The JD(S) leader also invited the Chief Minister to visit Bidadi and directly interact with affected farmers, stating that many were in distress over the proposed development.

The issue is likely to escalate political tensions between the ruling Congress government and the JD(S), with the Bidadi township project emerging as a key flashpoint

over land acquisition and urban expansion around Bengaluru.

Political observers note that the controversy could significantly impact the state's political landscape, especially in the Bengaluru region where rapid urban expansion has already triggered multiple land disputes. The issue is expected to intensify debates over balancing development with farmers' rights, with opposition parties likely to mobilise public support and demand greater transparency in land acquisition processes.

ENTERTAINMENT

Dhurandhar OTT Cut Sparks Shock

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Ranveer Singh's action drama Dhurandhar: The Revenge has returned to public discussion following its international OTT release, with viewers claiming significant differences between the streaming version and the theatrical cut shown in Indian cinemas.

The film, which began streaming on Netflix in the US and Canada nearly eight weeks after its theatrical release, has been promoted as a "raw and undekha" version.

However, soon after its digital debut on May 14, social media users began sharing comparisons, alleging that the OTT version includes restored scenes, extended violent sequences, and several editorial changes.

Directed by Aditya Dhar, the film has reportedly crossed the ₹3,000 crore mark globally, making it one of the biggest Hindi commercial successes of the year.

Fans spot differences between versions

Viewers online have posted side-by-side comparisons, claiming that several sequences appear longer and more graphic in the OTT release compared to the theatrical cut. Many users alleged that certain violent moments, previously trimmed for certification in India, have been restored in full.

One viewer commented on a key emotional sequence involving Ranveer Singh's character Hamza, claiming that his reaction appears different in the streaming version.

Others also pointed to the so-called "hammer scene," stating that portions of it were shortened in theatres.

Debate over violent content

The restored sequences have sparked intense debate online, particularly regarding the film's

violent content. Some users said the OTT version presents a darker and more intense tone, while criticising censorship decisions in the theatrical release.

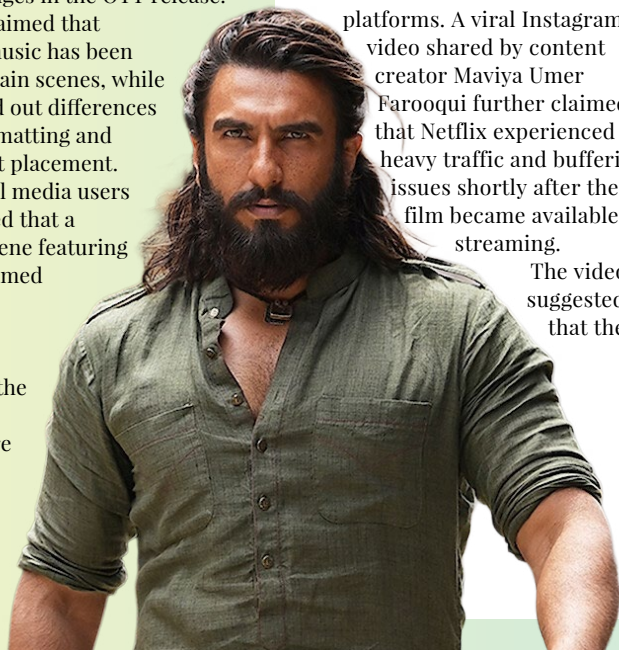
One viewer wrote that the uncensored version "feels like the true film experience," while another remarked that the censor board had "ruined an A-rated film experience" by cutting key scenes.

Character scene draws attention

Actor Danish Pandor has also come under discussion following the OTT release. A particular scene involving his character Uzair—reportedly depicting extreme brutality—has been widely shared online, with users claiming that additional footage had been removed from the theatrical version.

The sequence has become one of the most talked-about moments of the streaming cut. Apart from content differences, viewers have also noted technical changes in the OTT release. Some users claimed that background music has been altered in certain scenes, while others pointed out differences in subtitle formatting and on-screen text placement.

Some social media users further claimed that a post-credit scene featuring a character named Omar, which appeared in theatres, is missing from the OTT version. However, there has been no official confirmation regarding this reported change.



Dhurandhar 2 Tops Netflix Pakistan: Viral Claim

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Ranveer Singh's Dhurandhar: The Revenge has once again become a topic of discussion online after reports and viral social media claims suggested that the film topped Netflix Pakistan charts shortly after its OTT release.

The spy thriller, which premiered on Netflix Pakistan on May 14, reportedly surged to the number one trending position within hours of release, according to several social media posts and user-shared screenshots.

The film's sudden popularity has sparked widespread discussion across entertainment platforms. A viral Instagram

video shared by content creator Maviya Umer Farooqui further claimed that Netflix experienced heavy traffic and buffering issues shortly after the film became available for streaming.

The video suggested that the

platform's servers were strained due to a large number of users accessing the film simultaneously.

In the clip, the creator said audiences in Pakistan were eagerly waiting for the midnight release and rushed to stream the film as soon as it dropped.

He also claimed that streaming interruptions began almost immediately after release. However, there has been no official confirmation from Netflix regarding any technical disruption.

The creator added that, despite differing opinions about the film's storyline, there was significant curiosity among Pakistani viewers about its production and Ranveer Singh's character portrayal. He also claimed in a follow-up update that the film had reached the top trending position on Netflix Pakistan.

The circulating video also showed instances of buffering during playback, which the creator attributed to platform issues rather than personal internet connectivity.

The clip quickly went viral across entertainment pages and fan accounts, further amplifying discussions around the film's international OTT performance.

The international streaming release of Dhurandhar: The Revenge has already been in the spotlight due to claims that it features a "raw and uncut" version compared to the theatrical release in India.

Huma Qureshi Stuns in Banarasi Saree at Cannes

► Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Actor Huma Qureshi brought Indian handloom craftsmanship to the global stage at the Cannes Film Festival 2026, turning heads in a purple and gold Banarasi saree on the red carpet.

For her appearance at the French Riviera, Huma chose a traditional ensemble designed by Shanti Banaras, featuring intricate gold brocade work and palm-inspired motifs that blended heritage weaving with contemporary design elements. The actor paired the saree with a matching silk blouse and traditional Indian jewellery, highlighting India's rich textile legacy at one of the world's most prestigious film festivals.

Sharing images of her look on social media, Huma described the emotional significance of wearing the Banarasi weave at Cannes, saying it felt like "something that has lived through time" and reflected both nostalgia and modern creativity.

The blouse featured a structured modern silhouette with a plunging neckline and cropped fit, adding a contemporary touch to the traditional attire.

Huma accessorised her look with jewellery from Amrapali Jewels, including a gold necklace with polki detailing, matching earrings, and a statement ring. She also carried an embroidered clutch from an Indian designer label.

Her styling was curated by Nikhil Mansata and Leepakshi Ellawadi, while Mira Parmar handled hair and makeup. The actor opted for soft glam makeup with subtle tones and styled her hair in loose waves, allowing the saree and jewellery to remain the focus.

Huma Qureshi, known for films such as Gangs of Wasseypur, Dedh Ishqiya, and Badlapur, continues to be recognised for her strong performances in Indian cinema. Her Cannes appearance once again spotlighted Indian textiles and craftsmanship on an international platform.



SPORTS

Samarthanam Bengaluru Win Blind Cricket Title

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Samarthanam Bengaluru emerged champions of the Karnataka Men's Cricket Tournament for the Blind, defeating JSB Ramanagara by 35 runs in a thrilling final on Friday.

The four-day tournament, organised by Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled, was held from May 12 to 15 at the Ramu Sports Arena on Varthur-Sarjapur Road in Bengaluru.

Batting first, Samarthanam Bengaluru posted a strong total of 158/5 in 10 overs, powered by a brilliant 118 off 41 balls from Ravi Bandiwaddar, who struck 27 boundaries. JSB Ramanagara responded with a competitive 123/3 in 10 overs but fell short by 35 runs. Abhi A.S. remained unbeaten with 61 runs for the runners-up.

Samarthanam Bengaluru reached the final after defeating Kumareshwara Haveri, Vinyasa Bengaluru, JSB Ramanagara, and Asha Kirana Chikkaballapura in earlier rounds. JSB Ramanagara secured their place in the final after victories over Kumareshwara Haveri, Vinyasa Bengaluru, and Deepa Academy Bengaluru. The valedictory ceremony saw the winners awarded trophies, medals, and cash prizes. The champions received ₹31,000, while the runners-up were awarded ₹21,000. Individual awards for best batsman and best bowler were also presented.

KKR Defeat GT by 29 Runs, Capitalise on Poor Fielding

> Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata
Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) kept their playoff hopes alive with a commanding 29-run victory over Gujarat Titans (GT) in the 60th match of IPL 2026 at Eden Gardens.

Batting first after losing the toss, KKR posted a massive 247/4 in 20 overs, their highest-ever total against Gujarat. Despite losing skipper Ajinkya Rahane early for 14, KKR recovered strongly through Finn Allen's explosive 93 off 35 balls, including a quick half-century off just 21 deliveries. Allen's innings was aided by two dropped chances from the Gujarat fielders.

Angkrish Raghuvanshi (82 not out off 33) and Cameron Green (52 not out) then stitched a powerful unbeaten 108-run stand off just 52 balls for the third wicket, taking KKR to a daunting total. Mohammed Siraj and Sai Kishore picked up one wicket each for Gujarat.

In reply, Gujarat Titans managed 218 all out, falling short despite a fighting effort from their top order. Poor fielding and missed opportunities proved costly for GT, which allowed KKR to dominate the game. The result strengthens KKR's position in the playoff race, while Gujarat will need to regroup ahead of their remaining matches.

With this victory, KKR also sent a strong message to the rest of the teams in the tournament, showcasing their improved batting firepower and ability to capitalise on opposition errors. Team management praised the middle order's consistency, while stressing the need to tighten bowling execution in upcoming crucial fixtures.

Chola Copper Plates Return to India After 300 Years

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
In a landmark moment for India's cultural heritage, the Netherlands has returned the 11th-century Anaimangalam Chola copper plates during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit, marking a major step in the repatriation of historically significant artefacts taken during the colonial era.

The copper plates, which date back to the reigns of Rajaraja Chola I and his son Rajendra Chola I, are among the most valuable epigraphic records of medieval India.

Comprising 21 large plates and a few smaller ones, the artefact is bound together by a copper ring bearing a royal seal. The inscriptions, written in both Tamil and Sanskrit, document royal land grants, administrative orders, and socio-cultural details of the Chola period.

Historians note that the plates were issued in connection with the Chudamani Vihara, a prominent Buddhist monastery located in Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu.

The records highlight the Chola Empire's support for religious institutions as well as its strong maritime and cultural links with Southeast Asia, underlining the



empire's global outlook and administrative sophistication.

The artefacts had been in the Netherlands for more than 300 years, believed to have been taken during Dutch colonial presence in the Coromandel region.

They later became part of the collection at Leiden University in the 19th century. India had been pursuing their return for over a decade through sustained diplomatic engagement.

The repatriation gained momentum after the Netherlands introduced a policy in 2022 to return colonial-era artefacts to their countries of origin. Following nearly 14 years of negotiations, the copper plates



have now been formally handed back to India.

Describing the development as a "joyous moment for every Indian," Prime Minister Modi emphasised the importance of preserving and reclaiming the nation's cultural legacy.

He also expressed gratitude to the Dutch government and Leiden University for facilitating the return.

Experts believe the artefacts will significantly contribute to research on India's medieval history and are likely to be preserved and displayed in Tamil Nadu.

The return is also seen as part of a broader global trend towards restoring cultural property to its rightful origins, strengthening international cooperation in heritage conservation.

NIA CHARGESHEETS CAMBODIA TRAFFICKING MASTERMIND

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed a chargesheet against five individuals, including an absconding mastermind, in a Cambodia-linked human trafficking and cyber slavery case. The accused include Anand Kumar Singh alias Munna Singh, identified as the alleged kingpin, along with four co-accused. The chargesheet was filed before the NIA Special Court in Patna under relevant



The NIA has filed a chargesheet against five individuals, including an absconding mastermind, in a Cambodia-linked human trafficking and cyber slavery case involving the exploitation of Indian youths lured with fake job promises.

provisions of the Indian Penal Code. According to officials, three of the accused—Abhay Nath Dubey, Abhiranjan Kumar, and Rohit Yadav—were arrested in February upon their return from Cambodia. Another accused, Prahlad Kumar Singh,

is currently out on bail. The NIA said the group was involved in luring Indian youths to Cambodia on the promise of lucrative jobs and salaries.

Once abroad, victims were allegedly forced to work for scam-linked companies, with

their passports confiscated and subjected to physical and mental abuse, including torture and confinement. Investigators stated that Anand Kumar Singh operated as the main recruiter, coordinating with agents in India and associates in Cambodia. He allegedly charged between USD 2,000 and 3,000 per victim.

The agency further said efforts are underway to trace other members of the syndicate and uncover the full extent of the conspiracy.

Army Chief Warns Pakistan: Geography or History Choice

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Saturday issued a strong warning to Pakistan, stating that India will not tolerate continued cross-border terrorism and hinting at a decisive military response similar to Operation Sindoor if such activities persist.

Responding to questions on how the Indian Army would react if a situation like the one that triggered Operation Sindoor arises again, General Dwivedi said Pakistan must choose its future carefully.

"If Pakistan continues to harbour terrorists and operate against India, then they have to decide whether they want to be part of geography or history," the Army Chief said.

He reiterated his earlier remarks, stressing that India's armed forces would respond firmly if provoked again. He also indicated that the restraint shown during earlier operations would

not be repeated if terrorism continues to be supported from across the border.

The warning comes in the backdrop of recent comments by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who highlighted concerns over Pakistan's increasing military activity near Sir Creek, the marshland region along the Gujarat-Sindh border.

Singh warned that any aggressive move in the area would be met with a strong response from India, with the Army and Border Security Force maintaining close surveillance.

Referring to Operation Sindoor, the Army Chief said the Indian armed forces had carried out strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in response to earlier attacks, leading to an intense military confrontation that lasted nearly 88 hours before both sides reached an understanding.



Lucknow Professor Arrested in paper Leak Case

> Vikrama Vahini | Lucknow

A Lucknow University assistant professor has been arrested after an audio clip of alleged obscene conversations with a female student went viral on social media, triggering a police complaint and an internal university

university authorities. Acting on the complaint, Controller of Examinations Vidyanand Tripathi approached the police and lodged a formal FIR at Hasanganj Police Station. The accused, however, has denied all allegations, claiming he is being falsely implicated due to internal politics within the university.

Meanwhile, Vice Chancellor J.P. Saini has directed the Internal Complaints Committee to conduct a detailed inquiry and submit its report within 24 hours.

The university administration stated that any act harming its academic environment and institutional dignity would not be tolerated and reiterated its zero-tolerance policy.

Following the incident, members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) staged protests on campus demanding the professor's immediate suspension.

The accused, identified as Paramjeet Singh, a faculty member in the Zoology Department, is alleged to have made inappropriate phone calls to a final-year BSc student and attempted to offer access to an examination question paper in exchange for sexual favours.

In the viral audio clip, the professor is purportedly heard saying, "Darling, I have arranged the exam paper for you. Come back before the exam, and I will give it to you here."

According to reports, the student suffered severe mental distress following the alleged conversations and later informed



Chennithala Set for Home as UDF Nears Cabinet Deal

> Vikrama Vahini | Thiruvananthapuram

Senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala is likely to be assigned the key Home and Vigilance portfolios in the upcoming United Democratic Front (UDF) government, as intense negotiations over Cabinet formation near conclusion.

Chief Minister-designate V. D. Satheesan held multiple rounds of talks with Chennithala to resolve internal differences and ensure smooth ministry formation ahead of the swearing-in.

Discussions are also underway on portfolio distribution, community representation, and

inclusion of both senior and young leaders. The Congress is expected to retain 11 Cabinet berths, while alliance partners including IUML are likely to get representation. The final list of ministers is expected to be announced soon as the UDF leadership works to strike a balance between experience and fresh faces.

PUTIN TO VISIT CHINA AFTER TRUMP-XI TALKS

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Russian President Vladimir Putin is set to visit China on May 19 for a two-day official trip, following US President Donald Trump's recent visit to Beijing, according to a statement from the Kremlin.

During the visit, Putin will hold talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping aimed at strengthening strategic cooperation and expanding bilateral relations between Moscow and Beijing.

The two leaders are expected to discuss key international and regional issues and sign a joint declaration after their meeting. Putin is also scheduled to meet Chinese Premier Li Qiang to review economic and trade cooperation between the two countries.

The visit comes shortly after Trump's high-profile trip to China, which has



drawn global attention to Beijing's growing role in international diplomacy. Analysts say the back-to-back engagements with global leaders underline China's expanding influence on the world stage. Reports indicate that discussions between Putin and Xi will focus on regional security, trade, energy cooperation, and broader global developments.

VIKRAMA VAHINI | INFOGRAPHICS

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO MAKE MANGO RABDI AT HOME

Loved for its luscious texture and festive appeal, this traditional dish is surprisingly easy to prepare at home with just a few simple ingredients and a bit of patience.

Mango rabdi is a rich, creamy and indulgent Indian dessert that combines the sweetness of ripe mangoes with thickened milk, making it a perfect summer treat.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 litre of full-cream milk
- 2 raw mangoes
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cardamom powder
- 2 tablespoons chopped nuts
- Chopped mango (for garnish)

- 1** At first, heat the milk and simmer, stirring constantly, until it reduces to about 1/3 of its original volume.
- 2** After the milk is thickened, add sugar, cardamom powder, and chopped nuts.
- 3** Once you get the desired consistency, remove from the heat and let the rabdi cool.
- 4** Next, blend raw mangoes to make a puree.
- 5** Fold the mango puree into the rabdi.
- 6** Refrigerate for at least 2 hours, garnish with chopped mango pieces and serve.