



VIKRAMA VAHINI

19 May, 2026 | Tuesday | Shukla Paksha | Tritiya | Vikrama Samvata | Bengaluru | Volume: 09 | Issue: 65

Kannada actress Disha Madan made a striking appearance on the red carpet at the 79th Cannes Film Festival, capturing global attention with her elegant style. Representing Karnataka at the prestigious international event, she received widespread appreciation from fans and the Kannada film industry.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday extended warm birthday wishes to former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, lauding his decades-long contribution to public life and his commitment to the marginalised.



INSIDE

Good morning

Never stop doing small things for others. Sometimes those little things occupy the biggest part of their hearts.

Iran Forms Hormuz Authority

Sets up Persian Gulf Strait Authority amid rising US-Iran tensions

Vikrama Vahini | Tehran

Amid rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, Iran has announced the formation of a new authority to manage the strategic Strait of Hormuz and provide real-time updates on maritime operations in the waterway.

Iranian officials stated that the newly established Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA) will oversee traffic management and coordination in the region. According to reports, the initiative aims to strengthen Iran's oversight of the key shipping route that connects the Gulf region to global markets.

Ebrahim Azizi, head of Iran's parliamentary national security commission, said that Tehran has



developed a "professional mechanism" to regulate vessel movement through the strait. The state broadcaster further reported that a system has been put in

place to exercise greater control over the passage, with shipping instructions reportedly being communicated to vessels via email.

However, the specific operational mandate of the new body has not yet been officially clarified.

The Strait of Hormuz remains one of the world's most critical energy corridors, with a significant share of global crude oil and liquefied natural gas shipments passing through it. Any disruption in the waterway has historically led to volatility in global energy markets and commodity prices.

Tensions in the region have escalated in recent months, with Iran and the United States exchanging warnings over

maritime security and sanctions-related disputes. Reports suggest that Washington has opposed certain shipping arrangements, further intensifying diplomatic friction.

Meanwhile, Iran has responded to recent US proposals aimed at de-escalating tensions over its nuclear programme. Iranian officials described the US demands as excessive, according to state-linked media reports.

The situation comes after renewed warnings from former US President Donald Trump, who cautioned Iran over its actions and stressed urgency in reaching an agreement, further heightening concerns over regional stability.

BRIEFS

KARNATAKA BUS STRIKE LIKELY FROM MAY 20

Vikrama Vahini | B'luuru

Karnataka is bracing for a major disruption in public transport as employees of State-run transport corporations have threatened to launch an indefinite statewide bus strike from May 20, potentially affecting lakhs of commuters.

Unions representing workers of the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation and other transport bodies warned that services could begin slowing down from the night of May 19 if their demands are not addressed. The primary demand of the employees is a 25 per cent wage hike with retrospective effect from January 1, 2024. **PG2**

SC Rejects Plea on Temple Priests' Wage Review

Vikrama Vahini | Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday declined to entertain a Public Interest Litigation seeking the formation of a judicial commission or expert panel to review wages and service conditions of priests, sevadars and staff working in state-controlled temples. A bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta expressed disinclination to interfere in the matter and dismissed the plea after hearing submissions from the petitioner, Advocate Ashwini Upadhyay.

The petitioner argued that the issue related to the dignity and livelihood of temple workers and sought uniform wage standards across states. However, the court refused to intervene, following which the plea was withdrawn.

RBI Eyes Inflation Risks

Vikrama Vahini | Mumbai

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is closely monitoring whether supply shocks are becoming embedded in overall price levels, which may require monetary policy action, Governor Sanjay Malhotra has said amid ongoing global uncertainties.

He noted that the central bank has maintained a neutral stance since June 2025, allowing it flexibility to respond promptly to incoming data and evolving economic conditions.

Speaking at a panel discussion titled "Monetary Policy in a Time of Heightened Uncertainty", jointly organised by the Swiss National Bank (SNB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Switzerland last week, Malhotra said India is accustomed to frequent supply-side shocks and continues to manage their impact on inflation dynamics. He added that the RBI will continue to act cautiously while balancing growth and price stability in a volatile global environment.

WB ENDS IMAM, PRIEST HONORARIUM SCHEME

Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata

The West Bengal government led by Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari has decided to discontinue monthly honorarium schemes for Imams, muezzins, and Hindu purohits from June this year, according to a cabinet decision announced on Monday.

Women, Child and Social Welfare Minister Agnimitra Paul said the cabinet has approved the withdrawal of schemes that provided financial assistance based on religious

categorisation. An official notification will be issued soon, she added.

The scheme,



introduced by the previous TMC government, provided ₹3,000 per month to Imams of registered mosques and ₹2,000 each to muezzins and purohits as part of socio-economic support measures.

Paul clarified that existing scholarship schemes for students will continue and will not be affected by the decision.

Alongside this, the cabinet also approved a new monthly assistance scheme for women, under which eligible beneficiaries will receive ₹3,000 from June 1. The government also cleared free travel for women in state-run buses.

The minister further announced that the government has decided to scrap the existing OBC list following a Calcutta High Court ruling and has approved the formation of the Seventh State Pay Commission to revise salaries of government employees.

The new decisions are part of the government's policy restructuring following recent electoral commitments, officials said.

Row Over Vande Mataram at Kerala Swearing-In

Vikrama Vahini | Thiruvananthapuram

CPI(M) leader P A Mohamed Riyas has raised concerns over the singing of the full version of Vande Mataram during the swearing-in ceremony of the UDF Cabinet in Kerala, stating that officially only the first two stanzas are traditionally sung. In a Facebook post, Riyas congratulated Congress leader V D Satheesan on assuming office and extended support to the new government. However, he questioned the use of the full version of the national song at the ceremony.

His remarks drew a sharp response from BJP MLA V Muraliedharan, who asked what portion of the national song had caused concern.

The BJP leader defended the rendition, stating that Vande Mataram is a symbol of national pride and unity, and should not be viewed through a political lens. The issue has sparked a fresh political debate in Kerala, with leaders from both sides exchanging strong statements on the matter.

China Rejects Pakistan Nuclear Submarine Request

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

A report has claimed that Pakistan sought sea-based nuclear second-strike capability from China in exchange for granting military access to Gwadar port, but Beijing rejected the request, citing non-proliferation commitments and possible international repercussions.

According to the report, the demand was made during bilateral discussions in 2024 between Pakistan's military leadership, headed by Field Marshal Asim Munir, and Chinese officials.

Pakistan is said to have offered expanded military use of the strategically located

Gwadar deep-sea port in return. The report further states that Pakistan's list of demands included assistance in military modernisation, assurances against US retaliation, and nuclear second-strike capability to match India's strategic strength.

China, however, reportedly termed the requests unreasonable, noting that such support would amount to direct involvement in nuclear proliferation in South Asia and could invite global consequences.

A sea-based nuclear second-strike capability refers to the ability of a country to launch retaliatory nuclear strikes from stealth

nuclear-powered submarines after absorbing a first strike. It is

considered the most survivable element of a nuclear deterrent triad. **PG2**



Oil Firms Urge Against Panic Buying

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Public sector oil marketing companies have assured that there is no shortage of petrol and diesel in Karnataka and urged citizens not to resort to panic buying or hoarding amid reports of possible transport disruptions.

Adequate fuel stocks available

Siddharth Agarwal, Karnataka State-Level Coordinator representing Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), said that sufficient fuel stocks are available across all retail outlets in the state.

He stated that supply operations remain stable and uninterrupted, with petrol pumps fully equipped to meet current and future demand.

Supply chain operating normally

Agarwal clarified that the entire fuel distribution network — including terminals, depots, transportation systems, and retail outlets — is functioning smoothly. He added that fuel replenishment is being carried out continuously across Karnataka without any logistical issues.

Public urged to avoid panic buying

Following reports of increased rush at some fuel stations, authorities appealed to the public not to panic or stockpile fuel unnecessarily. Officials said that misinformation about possible



Oil marketing companies in Karnataka have assured adequate petrol and diesel stocks, stating that supply chains are operating smoothly and urging citizens to avoid panic buying or unnecessary hoarding.

disruptions had triggered unnecessary concern in certain areas.

"The public is advised to maintain normal consumption patterns. There is no need for panic buying or overstocking," Agarwal said in an official statement.

Continuous monitoring of supplies

Oil companies also confirmed that fuel availability is being closely monitored in coordination with logistics teams to ensure uninterrupted supply across the state. They reiterated that the system is fully prepared to handle current demand levels without disruption.

India Steps Up Vigilance Over Ebola Threat

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Union Health Ministry has intensified surveillance and preparedness measures at all points of entry and across the public health system as a precaution following the recent Ebola outbreak reported in parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Uganda. Official sources said the

Ministry is closely monitoring the situation after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

Senior officials from the Union Health Ministry, including representatives of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Integrated Disease

Surveillance Programme (IDSP), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and other concerned divisions, have reviewed the evolving situation. They have also initiated precautionary public health measures to ensure early detection, preparedness and response readiness, the sources added.

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Editorial

Beyond Political Rhetoric

The Karnataka government's three-year achievement convention scheduled for today should emerge as more than a political celebration marked by speeches and self-praise. Such a significant public event must serve as a platform to present measurable facts and transparent governance details before the people of the State. Citizens today expect accountability supported by data rather than rhetoric driven by political narratives. The true success of any government lies not merely in announcing schemes, but in demonstrating how effectively those programmes have reached beneficiaries and improved public life.

In this context, the government would do well to release a comprehensive white paper detailing its performance over the past three years. The convention should clearly explain how much has been spent on the guarantee schemes, the number of beneficiaries covered, and the social and economic impact created across rural and urban Karnataka. Equally important is the disclosure of expenditure on development sectors such as infrastructure, irrigation, education, healthcare, employment generation and industrial growth. Transparent presentation of such technical and financial information would provide people with a realistic understanding of the State's administrative priorities and fiscal condition.

Public accountability is the cornerstone of democracy, and governments have a responsibility to keep citizens informed about how public resources are utilised. If the convention remains confined to political speeches and partisan messaging, it risks being viewed merely as another political gathering. However, if it becomes a forum for transparency, facts and policy-based assessment, it can strengthen public trust in governance. Informing citizens with honesty and clarity would itself be a notable achievement. It is in this spirit that the people of Karnataka would hope to see the convention conducted.

-Editor

Bengaluru-Mumbai Train Flagged Off

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Monday virtually flagged off a new train service between Bengaluru and Mumbai, marking a significant step in strengthening rail connectivity between Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Addressing the event, Vaishnaw said that long-pending demands of both South and North Karnataka regions are now being fulfilled through sustained railway development initiatives. He announced that a Vande Bharat Sleeper service between Bengaluru and Mumbai is expected to commence soon, further enhancing passenger comfort on the busy corridor.

Highlighting infrastructure growth, the Minister noted that railway funding for Karnataka has increased substantially in recent years, leading to faster execution of key projects. Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, as many as 61 railway stations across the state are being redeveloped at a cost of ₹2,160 crore, of which



nine have already been completed. Bengaluru Cantonment station is being upgraded at ₹485 crore, while Yeshwantpur station is undergoing redevelopment at ₹367 crore.

Vaishnaw stated that since 2014, nearly 1,750 km of new railway lines have been constructed in Karnataka. Electrification of the challenging Hassan-Mangaluru section has been completed and testing is currently underway.

On the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project,

he said work is progressing across all four corridors. Land acquisition has been completed for the Baiyappanahalli-Chikkabanavara and Heelalige-Rajanukunte routes, with station construction in progress. The KSR Bengaluru-Devanahalli alignment has received joint approval from the State Government and the Railways, and geotechnical surveys are complete. The Kengeri-Whitefield corridor has also been approved, with survey work set to begin soon.

The suburban rail network is expected to connect major hubs including Kempegowda International Airport, Electronic City, Marathahalli, and Hebbal.

The Minister further noted that Karnataka currently operates 12 pairs of Vande Bharat trains. Testing on the Bengaluru-Mangaluru route is in progress and is expected to improve coastal connectivity up to Madgaon in Goa.

Vaishnaw also revealed that bullet train corridors connecting Bengaluru with Hyderabad and Chennai have been approved as part of a long-term vision to expand the high-speed rail network to 7,000 km across the country.

Union Minister V. Somanna, who addressed the gathering during the flagging-off ceremony of Train No. 16553/54 SMVT Bengaluru-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express, thanked Vaishnaw for sanctioning the new service. He said the train would benefit passengers on one of the country's busiest routes and further accelerate Karnataka's development.

Gruha Lakshmi 30th Installment Released

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka government has released the 30th installment of the "Gruha Lakshmi" scheme, one of its flagship welfare programmes, according to Dinesh Gooligowda, Vice President of the State Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority, said on Monday.

A total of 1,24,10,668 women beneficiaries have received ₹2,000 each directly into their bank accounts under the scheme.

He said that over the past three years, beneficiaries have received a cumulative assistance of ₹60,000 each through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Gooligowda stated that the

scheme, implemented under the leadership of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, reflects the government's commitment to its pre-election promises. He said the benefits have been delivered without corruption or middlemen.

He added that the financial assistance has helped women achieve greater economic independence and has supported household expenses such as daily needs, children's education, healthcare, and food costs. The scheme, he said, has contributed significantly to improving the living standards of rural and economically weaker families across the state.



UDF Govt Orders Fresh Probe into Alappuzha Assault Case

From PGI

The incident occurred during the Nava Kerala Sadas programme led by the previous Chief Minister and Cabinet ministers in Alappuzha, where Youth Congress and KSU activists who protested with black flags were allegedly assaulted by police personnel and political workers. The visuals of injured protesters had sparked widespread outrage at the time.

The earlier LDF government had defended the police action as a "rescue operation," a statement that drew significant political controversy.

The fresh probe is expected to examine the role of police officials, political leaders, and security personnel allegedly involved in the incident. Authorities said video footage from the scene will be treated as key evidence in the investigation.

Government sources indicated that officers found guilty of unlawful actions may face both departmental and criminal proceedings.

The move is being seen as a significant political and administrative step by the new government within hours of assuming office, with the UDF aiming to reopen one of the most controversial incidents of the previous regime.

Political observers say the decision could further intensify the ongoing rivalry between the UDF and LDF in Kerala.

China Rejects Pakistan Nuclear Submarine Request

From PGI

as submarines are difficult to detect and destroy compared to land-based or air-based systems.

Currently, only six countries—the United States, Russia, China, France, the United Kingdom, and India—are known to possess operational sea-based nuclear second-strike capabilities. India achieved this capability through its indigenous

Arihant-class nuclear submarine programme, which continues to expand as part of its strategic deterrence framework.

India, which already operates nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, is among the few countries with an operational sea-based second-strike capability, strengthening its strategic deterrence posture in the region.

KARNATAKA BUS STRIKE LIKELY FROM MAY 20

From PGI

However, the State government has approved only a 12.5 per cent increase effective from March 2025, which unions have termed "unacceptable."

Workers are also pressing for full clearance of salary arrears pending since the Covid-19 period. Although the government has released ₹450 crore as an initial instalment, unions are insisting on a one-time settlement instead of phased payments.

In an effort to avert the strike, the government has scheduled fresh conciliation talks with union leaders under the Labour Commissioner in Bengaluru.

Earlier rounds of negotiations failed to yield a resolution.

Union leaders have warned that even strict measures like the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) will not deter the protest.

The proposed strike is expected to significantly impact daily commuters,

especially in Bengaluru and other major urban centres, where state-run buses form the backbone of public transport. Authorities have advised passengers to plan alternate travel arrangements if the situation escalates.

Transport officials said contingency plans, including deployment of additional services through alternative arrangements, are being explored to minimise inconvenience to the public in case the strike goes ahead.

Meanwhile, commuter associations have urged both the government and unions to arrive at an amicable settlement, warning that a prolonged disruption could affect education, work schedules and essential services across the state.

Officials indicated that all efforts are being made to resolve the dispute through dialogue, but cautioned that any escalation could place additional pressure on the state's already burdened transport system and economy.

NEWS

Ashok Slams Congress Over Farmer Crisis

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Opposition Leader R. Ashok launched a sharp attack on the Congress government, accusing it of neglecting farmers while spending crores on political conventions.

He said holding a "Sadhana Samavesh" (Achievement Convention) at a time when farmers are facing crop losses and suicides amounts to "doing politics on farmers' graves."

He alleged that the government's guarantees have turned into "no compensation, no water, and no power guarantees" for farmers.

Ashok claimed that large-scale

crop damage has been reported across multiple districts, but no officials have visited affected areas or initiated compensation.

He also alleged that promised disaster relief funds have not been released, while ₹20 crore was spent on the Ballari convention and ₹12 crore is being spent on the Tumakuru event.

He further said Karnataka's agriculture growth rate has fallen, farmer suicides have increased, and the state is ranked second in the country in such cases, according to NCRB data.

Accusing the government of misusing public funds, he said

taxpayers' money is being spent on party programmes instead of supporting farmers.

He demanded immediate compensation for crop loss and proper relief measures for the agriculture sector.

He further urged the state government to immediately conduct a comprehensive survey of crop loss across all affected districts and release compensation without delay. Ashok also warned that continued negligence towards the farming community would lead to serious public anger and political consequences, and said the opposition would intensify its agitation if farmers' issues are not addressed on priority.



Ravi Kumar Slams Congress Over 3-Year Rule

Ravi Kumar accused the Congress government of misrule, debt burden, poor Bengaluru infrastructure, and administrative paralysis, saying it has no moral right to celebrate its three-year tenure.

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Chief Whip of the Opposition in the Legislative Council N. Ravi Kumar on Monday launched a strong attack on the Congress government, stating that it has "no moral right" to celebrate its three-year tenure, which he described as a period of misrule and poor governance.

In a statement, Ravi Kumar said the Congress government under Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has pushed Karnataka into a "huge debt trap" and accused it of indulging in minority appeasement and allowing law and order to deteriorate.

He further criticised the state of infrastructure in Bengaluru, saying the condition of roads and civic facilities in the capital city was "pathetic and

miserable." He warned that if Bengaluru is in such a condition, the situation in rural areas could be even worse.

Ravi Kumar also alleged that internal political differences between the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister have affected governance, leading to administrative paralysis and chaos across the state.

He claimed that the administrative machinery has become inactive, while officers at various levels are demoralised due to political interference and alleged misuse of party workers. He further said that the overall governance under the Congress regime has resulted in widespread disorder and inefficiency in the state administration.



HEALTH & Lifestyle

WATERMELON JUICE BOOSTS HEART HEALTH

Watermelon, long enjoyed as a refreshing summer fruit, is now gaining attention for its potential heart health benefits. Recent scientific findings suggest that watermelon juice may improve blood circulation, support healthy blood pressure, and contribute to better overall cardiovascular function.

Nutrition experts have traditionally praised watermelon for its high water content, low calories, and essential vitamins. However, emerging research indicates that this fruit may play a deeper role in supporting heart and blood vessel health.

Key Findings from Recent Research

Regular watermelon consumers show better diet quality, including higher intake of vitamins, fibre, and antioxidants saturated fats observed among watermelon eaters.

A clinical study found watermelon juice may help maintain blood vessel function during high blood sugar levels Potential improvement in heart rate variability, an indicator of cardiovascular health

How Watermelon Supports Heart Health

Scientists attribute watermelon's benefits to its unique nutritional composition:

L-citrulline and L-arginine: Help produce nitric oxide, which relaxes blood vessels and improves blood flow
Lycopene: A powerful



antioxidant that may reduce oxidative stress and protect the heart
Vitamin C and carotenoids: Support overall cardiovascular health

These compounds work together to enhance vascular function and may help regulate blood pressure.

Hydration and Nutritional Benefits

Watermelon is composed of about 92% water, making it an excellent choice for hydration, especially in hot weather.

Low in calories: Around 80 calories per two cups

Provides essential nutrients like vitamin C, vitamin B6, and potassium
Helps replenish fluids and electrolytes after physical activity

Additional Health Advantages

Supports better digestion and metabolism due to fibre content

Contributes to reduced risk of chronic diseases when included in a balanced diet

Offers a healthy alternative to processed snacks and sugary desserts

SCIENCE & Technology

Anduril Unveils AI Battle Management System

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Defence technology company Anduril Industries is developing an AI-powered battle management system under a US Army contract aimed at strengthening air and missile defence capabilities in the Western Pacific region.

At the core of the initiative is Anduril's Lattice AI software, which is designed to connect disparate sensors, weapons systems, and defence platforms into a unified real-time operational network. The system is expected to improve threat detection, coordination, and response times in complex battlefield environments.

According to the company, the platform will enable allied forces to process large volumes of tactical data, identify potential threats such as drones and missiles, and recommend rapid response options. It will also dynamically allocate tasks across available defence assets and continuously update assignments as battlefield conditions change.

The system further integrates advanced command-and-control functions, allowing data from multiple military platforms to be combined into a single operational picture. This is intended to streamline decision-making and enhance coordination among joint forces. Anduril also said the platform includes simulation capabilities, enabling military planners to test operational scenarios in virtual environments before execution. These tools are aimed at identifying vulnerabilities and improving strategic planning. The Western Pacific region, a key global trade and security corridor, has seen rising geopolitical tensions in recent years, prompting increased focus on integrated defence technologies.

KSRTC: No Work, No Pay for Strike

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation has issued a stern warning to its

employees ahead of the indefinite strike called from May 20, stating that the 'No Work, No Pay' rule will be strictly enforced.

Transport employees, under the joint action committee of unions, have announced the strike demanding fulfilment of various demands, raising concerns over disruption of bus services across the state.

The KSRTC management has directed all staff to report to duty and not participate in the strike. Officials have also

been instructed not to grant leave except in unavoidable circumstances, and weekly offs may be cancelled if required.

Managing Director Akram Pasha has asked divisional heads to take precautionary measures and ensure smooth operations.

The corporation has warned that disciplinary action will be taken against employees who remain absent or support the strike.

According to the Transport Department, the strike notice is currently under conciliation before the State Labour Commissioner.

Key demands of employees include a 25% salary hike, implementation of

revised pay from January 1, 2024, and an increase in allowances. However, the government has maintained that the already announced 12.50% hike is final and further revision is not feasible at present.

KSRTC officials said alternative arrangements are being strengthened to maintain essential bus services, especially on busy intercity and urban routes, to minimise inconvenience to commuters if the strike materialises.

Meanwhile, transport unions have reiterated that the strike will go ahead as planned unless their demands are met, setting the stage for a possible standoff between employees and the state government.



Kodagu Elephant Mishap: Woman Dies

Vikrama Vahini | Kushalnagar
A 33-year-old woman tourist from Chennai was killed in a tragic incident during an elephant bathing session at the Dubare Elephant Camp on Monday.

The deceased has been identified as Jinnu, while her husband Joel sustained serious injuries and has been admitted to a hospital.

According to officials, the couple from Pallavaram in Chennai had visited the popular tourist camp early in the morning. After paying the prescribed fee, they participated in the elephant bathing activity and also took photographs with the animals. The incident occurred



when two elephants, identified as Marthanda and Kanjan, suddenly began fighting during the bathing session. In the chaos, one elephant fell and landed on the woman, while the other attacked the fallen elephant. During the struggle, the fallen elephant reportedly struck the woman with its leg, leading to her death on the spot.

Satheesan Sworn In as Kerala CM Amid Grand Show

Vikrama Vahini | Thiruvananthapuram
V. D. Satheesan was on Monday sworn in as the 13th Chief Minister of Kerala in a grand ceremony at the Central Stadium, marking the return of the United Democratic Front (UDF) to power after a decade.

The oath of office was administered by Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar in the presence of a massive gathering of supporters, party workers, and national leaders. The event witnessed unprecedented public turnout, with thousands thronging the venue, turning the ceremony into a large-scale political celebration.

Senior Congress leaders including Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, and Mallikarjun Kharge were present. Chief Ministers Siddaramaiah, Revanth Reddy, and Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu also attended, along with Karnataka



Deputy CM D. K. Shivakumar.

Alongside Satheesan, a 20-member Council of Ministers was sworn in. Key leaders including P. K. Kunhalikutty, Ramesh Chennithala, and K. Muralaeeharan took oath as ministers.

The ceremony saw an overwhelming turnout, leading to crowd management challenges, with even senior leaders and MLAs finding it difficult to access designated seating areas. Despite this, the atmosphere remained festive, with loud cheers and slogans welcoming the new government.

DEVE GOWDA BACKS BJP-JD(S) ALLIANCE FOR 2028

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda on Monday said he will continue to remain politically active and reaffirmed that the BJP-JD(S) alliance will continue into the 2028 Karnataka Assembly elections.

Marking his 94th birthday celebrations, which saw a strong show of support from Janata Dal (Secular) workers and leaders, Deve Gowda said he remains committed to public service and strengthening the party organisation despite his age.

"I want to stay active for some

more time to fight for the people's cause," he said, addressing party cadres who gathered to extend birthday greetings.

In a significant political statement, the JD(S) patriarch confirmed that the alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party, formed during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, would be sustained for the upcoming state polls, signalling continuity in the partnership.

The announcement comes amid ongoing speculation about the future of the coalition and shifting political

equations in Karnataka ahead of the 2028 Assembly elections.

Deve Gowda also noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, currently on an overseas visit to Sweden, had called him to convey birthday wishes, highlighting cordial relations between the alliance partners.

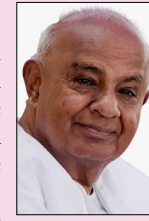
A former Karnataka Chief Minister and Prime Minister of the United Front government (1996-97),

Deve Gowda continues to hold significant influence in state politics, particularly within the Vokkaliga

community.

His birthday celebrations also turned into a political mobilisation event, with senior leaders and party workers using the occasion to display unity and strengthen the JD(S) organisational base ahead of future electoral battles.

Political analysts say Deve Gowda's reaffirmation of the alliance is likely to boost morale within JD(S) cadres and provide strategic clarity ahead of the 2028 polls, even as opposition parties continue to question the durability of the partnership.



Save water from pollution and gift it to next generation.

FIR Ordered Against Anurag Kashyap in Brahmin Row

Vikrama Vahini | Surat

A court in Gujarat's Surat has directed the registration of a criminal case against Bollywood filmmaker and actor Anurag Kashyap over alleged derogatory remarks made against the Brahmin community on social media.

Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) A.S. Jani passed the order after hearing a private complaint filed by Vishwa Hindu Parishad leader and advocate Kamlesh Rawal.

The court observed that there was sufficient ground to believe that the accused had circulated social media posts that could be interpreted as defamatory towards a specific community.

According to the complaint, the controversy arose after the All India Brahmin Samaj objected to the trailer of the film Phule. In response, Anurag Kashyap allegedly posted content on his X (formerly Twitter) account that was considered offensive by members of the Brahmin community.

The complainant further alleged that Kashyap had previously made objectionable remarks in 2020 as well.

The court noted in its order that the posts in question appeared to target a particular community in a manner that warranted criminal investigation. Acting on this observation, it directed police authorities to register an FIR and

proceed with further investigation.

The complaint also referenced another post allegedly made by Kashyap in which he commented on caste-related issues and made remarks involving political and social references, which triggered objections from community groups.

The matter has now been forwarded for investigation, and further legal proceedings are expected.



HC Orders Takedown of Dharmasthala Deepfakes

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka High Court has directed the State government and police to remove alleged AI-generated and morphed content targeting Dharmasthala Dharmadhikari Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade and his family from social media platforms and online sources.

The interim order was issued on May 14 by a vacation bench of Justice S.R. Krishna Kumar while hearing a petition seeking urgent action against



the circulation of deepfake content allegedly intended to defame the family.

The court observed that authorities had not acted effectively despite the seriousness of the issue and instructed them to ensure the immediate

takedown of objectionable material from digital platforms.

According to the petition, several AI-generated videos, edited visuals, and fabricated posts were being widely circulated online to malign the reputation of Dr. Heggade and his relatives. The court also stressed the urgent need to address the growing misuse of artificial intelligence in creating deepfake content, citing its potential to cause serious reputational harm through rapid online spread.

ENTERTAINMENT

Peddi Trailer Today: Ram Charan's Grand Launch

Vikrama Vahini | Mumbai

The much-awaited trailer of Peddi, starring Ram Charan, is set to be unveiled today at a grand promotional event in Mumbai, marking a major milestone in the film's promotional campaign and further building anticipation for one of the most awaited Indian films of 2026.

The trailer launch event will take place at Mansion PVR, Audi 4, Jio World Drive in Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) at 4 pm. The venue is expected to witness a star-studded gathering, with the film's lead cast, crew members, and invited guests in attendance. Organisers have planned the event on a large scale, reflecting the film's massive production value and nationwide appeal.

The film features Ram Charan in the lead role, alongside an ensemble cast including Janhvi Kapoor, Boman Irani, Divyendu Sharma, and Kannada superstar Shiva Rajkumar.

The presence of such a diverse and prominent cast has significantly increased expectations surrounding the film across multiple language markets.

Peddi is directed by Buchi Babu Sana and produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru

under Vrriddhi Cinemas, in association with Mythri Movie Makers. The film's music is composed by Oscar-winning musician A. R. Rahman, whose soundtrack is expected to play a key role in shaping the film's emotional and dramatic narrative.

Ahead of the trailer release, the makers have also announced a large-scale musical event in Bhopal, where a special song from the film will be launched.

Director Buchi Babu Sana described it as one of the "biggest musical events" in the city, with the entire team expected to participate.

Set in rural Andhra Pradesh during the 1980s, Peddi is a sports drama that explores themes of struggle, resilience, and human emotion against the backdrop of rural life and competitive sport. The film is scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on June 4, 2026, in multiple languages.

With strong buzz already surrounding the project, today's trailer launch is expected to further amplify excitement and set the tone for the film's final promotional phase leading up to its global release.



DRISHYAM 3 SET FOR STRONG OPENING

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The upcoming Malayalam thriller Drishyam 3, starring superstar Mohanlal, is expected to open strong at the box office, with early trade estimates suggesting collections of over ₹10 crore on its first day in South India.

Directed by Jeethu Joseph, the film is scheduled for theatrical release on May 21, 2026. It marks the return of Mohanlal as Georgekutty, the iconic character who once again finds himself protecting his family against new challenges.

According to trade analyst Ramesh Bala, the film is witnessing strong buzz in key southern markets, particularly Kerala and Bengaluru, where advance bookings have shown promising trends.

He noted that the film's opening day performance could comfortably touch the ₹10 crore mark in the southern region alone, which is considered a solid start for a Mohanlal-starrer.

Industry trackers report that Drishyam 3 has already generated over ₹14 crore in worldwide advance bookings for its opening day. Kerala continues to lead in ticket sales, followed by Karnataka and Telugu-speaking regions.

Experts attribute the strong response to the franchise's massive popularity and loyal audience base. However, some analysts have pointed out that the third installment leans more towards emotional drama than high-intensity thriller elements, which may influence audience reception.

The Drishyam franchise, originally in Malayalam, was later remade in Hindi starring Ajay Devgn. However, the Hindi version of the third installment is expected to follow a different screenplay and narrative approach while continuing the story from the previous film.

With just days left for release, industry watchers are closely monitoring final booking trends to assess whether the film can maintain its momentum at the box office.

The film's promotional campaign has also played a key role in building anticipation, with the makers strategically releasing teasers and updates to sustain audience interest ahead of the release.

Fans of the franchise are particularly eager to see how the storyline of Georgekutty evolves, as the previous two installments were widely praised for their gripping narrative and



unexpected twists.

If the opening predictions hold true, Drishyam 3 could emerge as one of the strongest Malayalam openings of 2026, further strengthening Mohanlal's box office standing across South Indian markets.

Advance booking figures indicate sustained demand across multiple regions, with evening and weekend shows already witnessing near-full occupancy in several major cities.

Exhibitors in Kerala have reportedly increased the number of screens and shows to accommodate the high pre-release rush, reflecting strong confidence in the film's opening performance.

Trade experts suggest that word-of-mouth will play a crucial role in determining the film's long-term box office run, especially given the franchise's reputation for layered storytelling.

Meanwhile, overseas markets with a strong Malayalam-speaking diaspora, particularly the Gulf region, are also expected to contribute significantly to the film's opening weekend collections.

BUSINESS

SGB 2020-21 Series VIII Offers 210% Return



Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Investors opting for premature redemption of Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) 2020-21 Series VIII will earn substantial returns of over 210% based on the redemption price fixed for May 18, 2026.

The redemption value has been set at ₹16,012 per unit, translating into an estimated capital gain of around 212% for online investors and nearly 209% for offline subscribers, excluding interest income earned during the holding period.

The bonds were originally issued in November 2020 at ₹5,127 per gram for online investors and ₹5,177 per gram for offline investors. In addition to capital appreciation, investors also received a fixed annual interest under the scheme.

Officials stated that the redemption price is calculated based on the simple average of closing gold prices (999 purity) published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA) for the three trading days prior to redemption—May 13, 14, and 15, 2026.

Under the Sovereign Gold Bond scheme, premature redemption is allowed after the fifth year from the date of issue on interest payment dates. Since the bonds were issued on November 18, 2020, May 18, 2026 marks the eligible redemption date.

Meanwhile, revised tax rules effective from April 1, 2026 state that capital gains tax exemption on redemption at maturity will apply only to original subscribers who hold the bonds till maturity. Investors purchasing from the secondary market will not be eligible for tax-free redemption benefits, even if held until maturity. Analysts say the sharp surge in gold prices highlights strong investor demand for safe-haven assets amid global economic uncertainty.

SPORTS

Rajat Patidar Ruled Out Under ICC Rule!

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) captain Rajat Patidar missed the IPL 2026 clash against Punjab Kings due to ICC concussion protocols, which mandate mandatory rest for players showing symptoms of head injury.

In the match at Bengaluru, RCB posted a strong total of 222/6 in 20 overs and went on to register a 23-run victory after restricting Punjab Kings to 199/8.

Patidar had suffered a blow to his helmet from a bouncer bowled by KKR pacer Kartik Tyagi during the previous match on May 13. Although he initially passed the on-field medical assessment and continued playing, he later developed signs of concussion after the match.

As per ICC regulations, any player diagnosed with concussion or showing symptoms must be rested for the next match, with a minimum recovery period depending on severity. Following medical advice, the RCB management decided to rest Patidar as a precautionary measure.

Team officials confirmed that the injury is not serious, and Patidar is expected to return for the upcoming match against Sunrisers Hyderabad on May 22 in Hyderabad.

The match marked a key win for RCB as they continue their push towards the playoff stage of the tournament.

RCB's Last League Match: Date & Opponent Revealed

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) have secured a playoff berth in IPL 2026 after a commanding 23-run victory over Punjab Kings in the 61st match of the tournament.

Batting first, RCB posted a strong total of 222/4 in 20 overs. In response, Punjab Kings managed 199 runs, falling short by 23 runs. With this win, RCB continued to remain at the top of the points table, strengthening their position ahead of the playoffs. RCB's final league match will be crucial in determining whether they finish the group stage in pole position. The team will face Sunrisers Hyderabad in their last league fixture.

The match is scheduled to be played on May 22 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad. It will begin at 7:00 pm IST, with the toss scheduled at 6:30 pm.

This will be the second meeting between the two sides this season. In their previous encounter during the opening match of the tournament, RCB chased down a target of 201 with ease, securing a comfortable win. Sunrisers Hyderabad will be looking to avenge that defeat, while RCB will aim to finish the league stage on a high and retain their top position on the table.

The match will be broadcast live on the Star Sports Network. Fans can also stream the game live on the JioHotstar app and website for mobile and digital viewing.

RCB will look to carry their winning momentum into the playoffs, with team management expected to fine-tune combinations and rest key players strategically ahead of the knockout stage.

The match is also seen as an important opportunity to test bench strength and maintain consistency before the high-pressure playoff battles.

MODI GREETES DEVE GOWDA, PRAISES POLICY INSIGHT

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday extended warm birthday wishes to former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, lauding his decades-long contribution to public life and his commitment to the marginalised.

In a post on social media platform X, Modi praised Deve Gowda's "deep understanding of policy-related issues" and his dedication to serving the underprivileged, while wishing him a long and healthy life.

Deve Gowda, who turned 93, served as



India's 11th Prime Minister from June 1996 to April 1997. A veteran leader from Karnataka, he began his political journey in the 1950s and

later rose to become Chief Minister of the state in 1994. He is widely known for his focus on agriculture, irrigation, and rural development.

Currently a Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament, Deve Gowda continues to lead the Janata Dal (Secular) and remains an influential figure in national and state politics.

Leaders across party lines also conveyed greetings to the veteran statesman, recalling his role in coalition-era politics and his advocacy for farmers' welfare.

Trump Seals \$17bn Farm Deal in China Summit

> Vikrama Vahini | Washington
In a landmark summit, US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping reached a wide-ranging agreement aimed at strengthening economic ties and stabilising bilateral relations.

Under the deal, China has committed to purchase at least \$17 billion worth of US agricultural products annually over the next three years, in addition to earlier soybean agreements.

The pact also includes China's approval of an initial order for 200 aircraft from Boeing, marking its first major commitment of this kind since 2017.

To enhance economic coordination, both nations agreed to establish two new mechanisms — the US-China Board of Trade and the US-China Board of Investment — to manage trade and investment issues more effectively.



The agreement also addresses concerns over rare earth supply chains, with China committing to ease restrictions on production and processing technologies and ensure smoother access to critical materials.

In agriculture, China will restore market access for US beef by renewing approvals for over 400 facilities and resume poultry imports from certified regions.

Beyond trade, both leaders reaffirmed cooperation on key geopolitical issues, including opposition to Iran acquiring nuclear weapons and support for the denuclearisation of North Korea. They also called for ensuring free access through the Strait of Hormuz.

AIADMK Jolt: Semmalai Quits Party

> Vikrama Vahini | Chennai
The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam suffered another setback on Monday as senior leader and former Minister S. Semmalai resigned from the party amid ongoing internal turmoil and a string of electoral defeats.

A four-time MLA from Mettur and the party's Organising Secretary, Semmalai announced his resignation "with pain and a heavy heart," citing dissatisfaction over the party's repeated poll failures and lack of corrective measures by the leadership.

He submitted his resignation to party General Secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami and clarified that he has stepped down from all party posts as well as primary membership. Expressing concern over internal divisions, Semmalai urged party leaders to set aside differences and work collectively to revive the organisation.

He noted that the AIADMK, founded by M. G. Ramachandran and later led by J. Jayalalithaa, continues to hold significant



AIADMK faces another setback as senior leader S. Semmalai resigns, citing internal rifts and repeated poll defeats, while urging unity to revive the party's strength in Tamil Nadu politics.

importance in Tamil Nadu politics. Referring to recent rebellion within the party, including MLAs supporting the confidence motion of Chief Minister Vijay, Semmalai called for unity among factions led by senior leaders and warned that the party risks losing its grassroots connect.

He also lamented that party cadres were feeling neglected and emphasised that only internal unity could help the AIADMK overcome its present crisis and regain its political strength.

23-Year-Old Tushar Kumar Makes History in UK

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
In a historic achievement, 23-year-old Tushar Kumar has become the youngest Indian-origin mayor in the United Kingdom after being elected Mayor of Elstree and Borehamwood in Hertfordshire.

Kumar, a Labour Party councillor, was officially appointed during the annual "Mayor Making Ceremony" held by the local council earlier this week. His

elevation marks a significant milestone in youth representation in British local governance.

He began his political journey while studying Political Science at King's College London and was elected to the council at the age of 20. He later served as Deputy Mayor before taking on the ceremonial mayoral role in the Hertsmere borough.



Expressing gratitude after his appointment, Kumar described the role as "an incredible honour" and said he aims to stay closely connected with the community while encouraging greater youth participation in public service.

Reports indicate that he has also worked as a policy adviser with the UK's Department for

Work and Pensions and has been actively involved in community initiatives, including teaching Hindi to British-Indian children and participating in cultural events such as Diwali and Holi celebrations. During his tenure, Kumar has chosen Wd6 Food Support as his official charity initiative, focusing on supporting vulnerable residents and strengthening local welfare programmes.

INDIGO FLIGHT HIT BY 25-MINUTE POWER FAILURE

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Passengers aboard an IndiGo flight experienced panic and discomfort after the aircraft's air-conditioning system and cabin lights reportedly failed for around 25 minutes during the journey.

According to reports, the sudden outage left the cabin in complete darkness, causing distress among passengers. With the air-conditioning also non-functional, passengers complained of rising heat and

suffocating conditions inside the aircraft.

The incident led to commotion onboard, with several passengers expressing concern over the situation. A video recorded by one of the passengers has surfaced, showing the darkened cabin and distressed travellers attempting to manage the situation. Further details regarding the cause of the technical issue and whether any emergency procedures were initiated by the crew are awaited.

Trump's Iran Map Post Escalates Tensions

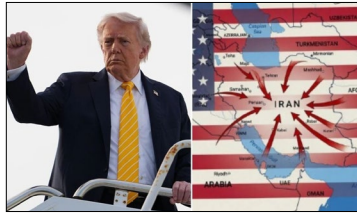
> Vikrama Vahini | Washington
US President Donald Trump has escalated tensions with Iran by posting a provocative map on his social media platform, showing the country surrounded by red arrows and overlaid with the American flag.

The post, shared without context, was widely interpreted as a signal of strategic pressure on Tehran.

It came shortly after Trump issued a stern warning, saying Iran must act quickly or face severe consequences. The development follows ongoing diplomatic deadlock between the US and Iran over a proposed peace framework aimed at ending hostilities that began after joint US-Israeli strikes on Iranian targets earlier this year. Despite a fragile ceasefire in place since April, negotiations have failed to achieve a breakthrough.

According to reports, Trump's move came after discussions with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu regarding possible future military options.

The US has proposed a new set of



conditions to Iran, including restrictions on its nuclear programme and transfer of enriched uranium, while Iran has demanded sanctions relief, compensation, and recognition of its strategic interests.

Meanwhile, tensions continue to impact global trade routes, with the Strait of Hormuz facing disruptions, raising concerns over oil supply chains. With both sides holding firm on key demands, prospects for a resolution remain uncertain, even as warnings and rhetoric intensify from both Washington and Tehran.

The post has sparked sharp reactions globally, with analysts warning that such symbolic messaging could further deepen diplomatic tensions and reduce the chances of renewed negotiations.

Congress Event May Enter Guinness Record

> Vikrama Vahini | Tumakuru
The Congress government's third-year achievement convention will be held on May 19 at 11 am at the Pre-University College ground in Tumakuru, said district in-charge minister Dr. G. Parameshwara.

Speaking to the media in the city, he said that the government's key achievements include the declaration of Thandas as revenue villages and the distribution of land titles to 13.5 lakh people across the state.

He further noted that in Tumakuru district alone, 1,52,492 beneficiaries have received land titles, placing the district at the top position in Karnataka in this regard.

Parameshwara claimed that this achievement has been recognised for inclusion in the Guinness World Records. He added that representatives from the Guinness organisation are expected to attend the convention to present the certificate acknowledging the record.



VIKRAMA VAHINI | INFO GRAPHICS

KARNATAKA'S CUCUMBER TAMBULI

A COOLING & PROBIOTIC-RICH SUMMER MEAL

COOLING
Helps cool the body in summer

PROBIOTIC-RICH
Curd supports digestion and gut health

LIGHT & REFRESHING
Easy on the stomach

NO-COOK
Quick, easy and perfect for hot days

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup – diced or grated cucumber
- 1 cup – well-whisked curd
- 2-3 tablespoons – freshly grated coconut
- 1/2 tsp – cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp – black peppercorns
- 1-2 – green chillies
- 2-3 – garlic cloves
- Handful of – fresh coriander leaves
- 1 tsp – oil
- 1/2 tsp – mustard seeds
- 1/2 tsp – cumin seeds
- Pinch of – asafoetida (hing)
- 2 – dry red chillies
- Curry leaves

PREPARATION METHOD

- 1 Place grated coconut, cumin seeds, black peppercorns, green chillies, garlic cloves and coriander leaves in a blender jar.
- 2 Add a little water and blend until the mixture turns smooth and creamy.
- 3 Add the diced or grated cucumber and pulse briefly so the cucumber keeps a slight crunch.
- 4 Transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Add whisked curd and salt to taste. Mix everything evenly.
- 5 For tempering, heat oil in a small pan. Add mustard seeds, cumin, dry red chillies, curry leaves and asafoetida.
- 6 Allow the spices to crackle well.
- 7 Pour the hot tempering over the tambuli and mix gently. Serve fresh with warm rice.

SERVING SUGGESTION

Best enjoyed with hot rice, pickles or papad for a simple and satisfying summer meal.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

- Rich in probiotics & nutrients
- Hydrating & cooling for the body
- Supports digestion naturally
- No cooking – saves time & energy
- A perfect summer comfort food