



VIKRAMA VAHINI

WORLD TURTLE DAY



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"Land Lord" to Premiere on TV: The Kannada blockbuster starring Duniya Vijay, Rachita Ram and Raj B. Shetty will be telecast on Zee Kannada on May 23 at 4 PM, bringing its powerful story of social justice and resistance to small-screen audiences.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute more than 51,000 appointment letters to newly recruited candidates in various government departments under the 19th edition of the Rozgar Mela on May 23, the government said on Friday.

INSIDE

Good morning

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

BRIEFS

Agni-1 Test Fired Successfully

Vikrama Vahini | Chandipur India successfully test-fired the short-range ballistic missile Agni-1 from the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur, Odisha, on May 22, 2026, the Defence Ministry said.

The launch, conducted under the Strategic Forces Command, validated all operational and technical parameters, reaffirming the credibility of India's strategic deterrence capability.

Officials noted that the Agni series missiles, with ranges between 700 km and 3,500 km, are already in service.

The ministry added that recent defence developments also include successful trials of the UAV-launched Precision Guided Missile-V3 by DRDO.

The successful test is seen as part of India's continued efforts to strengthen its strategic defence preparedness and maintain credible deterrence amid evolving regional security challenges.

Defence experts said the consistent performance of the Agni series underscores the reliability of India's indigenous missile technology and its advanced operational readiness.

Rubio Begins India Visit for Key Talks

Vikrama Vahini | Delhi US Secretary of State Marco Rubio will arrive in India on Saturday for a four-day visit aimed at strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. This marks his first visit to India since taking office.

Rubio is expected to hold wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, attend the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi, and may also call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The discussions are likely to focus on energy security, trade, investment, critical technologies, and regional stability. PG2

Trump Trading Storm Sparks Market Row

Vikrama Vahini | Washington US President Donald Trump is facing renewed scrutiny over allegations of insider trading and market manipulation linked to his social media activity and personal investment decisions.

According to a US ethics report released in May 2026, accounts linked to Trump executed over 3,600 stock trades between January and March, with an estimated value ranging between \$211 million and \$721 million. Allegations suggest that several market-sensitive posts on Trump's Truth Social platform may have influenced trading patterns, including statements made shortly before major policy announcements and global market movements.

SC Questions Quota for IAS Officers' Children

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday questioned the continuation of reservation benefits for children of parents who are both IAS officers, making significant observations on the concept of the creamy layer within the reservation system.

A bench comprising Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan observed that when families have already achieved high levels of social and economic advancement through

government service, the rationale for extending reservation benefits to the next generation requires reconsideration.

The court remarked that social and educational backwardness must be the basis for reservation, and questioned whether children of highly placed officers should continue to receive such benefits when their families have already attained upward mobility.

The observation came during the

hearing of a petition challenging the denial of a caste validity certificate to a candidate whose parents were government employees and whose combined income exceeded the prescribed creamy layer limit.

The petitioner had been selected for the post of Assistant Engineer in a Karnataka power utility under the reserved category, but authorities rejected his claim, stating that his family fell within the creamy layer criteria due to parental income.

The court noted that several government policies already seek to exclude the creamy layer from reservation benefits, though such provisions continue to face legal challenges.

The matter highlights the ongoing debate over the scope of reservation and the application of the creamy layer principle in determining eligibility for affirmative action benefits. The court's remarks are expected to further fuel national

debate on reservation policy and the scope of creamy layer exclusion in India.

The bench also indicated that clearer legal standards may be required to ensure uniform implementation of creamy layer exclusion across states.



Rajya Sabha Polls for 24 Seats on June 18

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Election Commission of India on Friday announced elections to 24 Rajya Sabha seats across 10 states, scheduled to be held on June 18.

Election Schedule Finalised

According to the official notification, nominations for the polls can be filed between June 1 and June 8. Scrutiny and withdrawal will follow as per schedule, with voting set from 9 am to 4 pm on June 18. Counting of votes will commence the same day at 5 pm.

Seats Falling Vacant

A total of 24 seats are becoming vacant in June and July due to the completion of members' terms. This includes prominent leaders such as Mallikarjun Kharge and former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda from Karnataka.

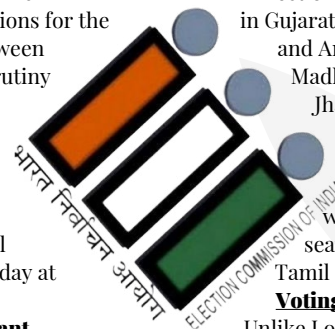
Additionally, one seat each in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra has fallen vacant due to resignations. The Maharashtra vacancy followed the resignation of Sunetra Ajit Pawar.

States Going to Polls

Elections will be held for five seats in Gujarat, four each in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, three in Madhya Pradesh, two in Jharkhand, and one each in Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram. By-elections will also take place for one seat each in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

Voting Process Explained

Unlike Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, Rajya Sabha polls are conducted through ballot papers instead of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). MLAs will cast their votes using a designated violet-colour sketch pen, as per the Election Commission's guidelines.



EBOLA SPREAD RISK RAISES GLOBAL ALARM

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

A fresh alert has been issued amid concerns over a potential spread of Ebola, following a warning by former Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Robert Redfield that the ongoing outbreak in Africa could escalate into a major global health threat.

Speaking during a media interaction, Redfield cautioned that the outbreak, currently affecting regions in Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, may spread to neighbouring countries such as Tanzania, South Sudan, and Rwanda.

He termed the situation "very disruptive" and raised concerns over delayed detection, noting that the outbreak was identified only after cases crossed 100, unlike previous instances where early detection limited spread.

In response, authorities at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport have issued a precautionary alert for passengers arriving from affected African nations.

Officials clarified that no Ebola case has been reported in India so far and the measures are purely preventive. PG2

30+ Karnataka MLAs Push for Cabinet Reshuffle

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

More than 30 Karnataka legislators are preparing to travel to New Delhi to meet the Congress high command, stepping up pressure for a long-pending cabinet reshuffle in the state, MLA Krishna said on Thursday.

According to Krishna, the group of MLAs will soon visit the national capital to present their case before senior leaders of the Indian National Congress, seeking greater representation in the Siddaramaiah-led Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Party sources said the move reflects rising aspirations among Congress legislators for ministerial positions, especially among first-time MLAs and those who have been awaiting inclusion in the state Cabinet.

They added that demands for a reshuffle have gained momentum following repeated discussions within the legislature party, with several MLAs arguing that a



performance-based and balanced representation in the Cabinet is necessary.

In recent weeks, similar lobbying efforts have been witnessed, with multiple legislators visiting Delhi to press for organisational and ministerial changes following bypolls and internal consultations.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has maintained that decisions related to cabinet expansion or reshuffle rest with the party high command and will be taken after consultations with state leaders, including Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar.

SC ORDERS FIRS, BOOSTS ANTI-TRAFFICKING UNITS

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Expressing serious concern over the rising number of missing children in the country, the Supreme Court on Friday directed police authorities nationwide to immediately register FIRs in all cases of missing persons and ensure that anti-human trafficking units are made fully operational within four weeks.



A bench comprising Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and R. Mahadevan noted that as many as 47,000 children remain untraced across India, describing the situation as alarming and indicative of



Supreme Court orders immediate FIR registration in all missing persons cases, flags 47,000 untraced children, and directs states to operationalise anti-human trafficking units within four weeks along with a national police grid to improve coordination and tracking.

organised interstate trafficking networks.

The Court observed that missing children and persons are often victims of well-organised syndicates operating across state borders, necessitating stronger coordination among law enforcement agencies.

Issuing a series of directions, the apex court

instructed the Ministry of Home Affairs to establish an all-India integrated police grid connecting every police station on a single platform.

The proposed system will include a dedicated portal for tracking human trafficking cases, including those involving missing children and women.

The bench stressed that failure to treat missing complaints with urgency often leads to critical delays in tracing victims, and therefore mandated immediate registration of FIRs without procedural hesitation.

The Court also directed all states and Union Territories to activate and strengthen their anti-human trafficking units within a strict four-week timeframe, ensuring proper staffing, coordination and functioning.

The judgment underscores the judiciary's continuing concern over human trafficking and child protection mechanisms, urging a more coordinated national response to tackle the issue effectively.

CJP Trend Spreads to Pakistan Politics



Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The rise of India's satirical outfit, the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP), has now found echoes across the border, with several similarly themed political groups emerging in Pakistan.

Inspired by the viral popularity of CJP, new social media-driven outfits such as Cockroach Awami Party, Cockroach Awami League, and Muttahida Cockroach Movement have surfaced in Pakistan.

These groups, operating largely online, have created their own identities, objectives and messaging, often positioning themselves as youth-driven alternatives to traditional political parties.

The Indian-origin CJP, founded by Abhijeet Dipke, gained rapid traction on social media within days of its launch on May 16, amassing millions of followers.

The movement draws symbolic inspiration from the resilience and rapid multiplication associated with cockroaches, presenting itself as a voice for overlooked sections of society.

In Pakistan, the newly formed groups have adopted similar branding, with logos resembling that of CJP but incorporating local colour themes. Their social media profiles suggest a focus on representing common citizens, particularly youth who feel neglected by mainstream politics. PG2

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WHERE YOUR SUCCESS MAKES HEADLINES

SPIRITUAL

First-Ever Rail Yatra to Pashupatinath Launched

In a landmark initiative to promote spiritual tourism, Indian Railways is set to launch its first-ever international journey under the Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train scheme, offering a special pilgrimage tour to Nepal. Organised by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation, the 'Pashupatinath Nepal Darshan Yatra' will commence from Indore on June 12, marking a historic milestone in railway tourism.

This 9 nights and 10 days journey is designed as a comprehensive spiritual and leisure travel package, covering some of Nepal's most revered religious and scenic destinations. The tour will include visits to the world-famous Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu, along with other prominent locations such as Pokhara, Chitwan National Park, and the Manakamana Temple.

Officials said the initiative is the first instance of a Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train crossing international borders, reflecting Indian Railways' expanding vision in promoting cultural and religious tourism beyond the country. The all-inclusive package aims to provide a seamless and hassle-free travel experience, covering train travel, accommodation, meals, local transport and guided sightseeing.

The itinerary offers a mix of spirituality, culture and nature. In Kathmandu, travellers will get an opportunity to explore the city's rich heritage and seek blessings at the sacred Pashupatinath Temple. The journey also includes a visit to Pokhara, known for its serene lakes and stunning Himalayan views, and Chitwan National Park, where tourists can enjoy jeep safaris and witness diverse wildlife. A ropeway ride to the hilltop Manakamana Temple is another major attraction of the tour.

To ensure accessibility, the train will halt at several key stations across Madhya Pradesh, including Indore, Ujjain, Shujalpur, Bhopal, Itarsi, Narsinghpur, Jabalpur, Katni and Satna, allowing passengers from different regions to board conveniently.

The specially designed deluxe AC tourist train will consist of 14 coaches, offering accommodation in First AC, Second AC and Third AC classes. The pricing has been structured to cater to different budgets, with packages starting at ₹62,710 for Third AC, ₹76,550 for Second AC, and ₹90,400 for First AC.

The package includes stay in three-star hotels in Nepal, hygienic meals throughout the journey, AC bus transportation for local sightseeing, travel insurance and services of experienced tour guides.

IRCTC officials stated that the initiative is aimed at providing a safe, comfortable and spiritually enriching travel experience for pilgrims and tourists alike. The launch of this international train service is expected to boost religious tourism and strengthen cultural ties between India and Nepal.

KUMARASWAMY FLAGS OFF HMT EXPORT, BACKS PSU GROWTH

Vikrama Vahini | Kalamassery (Kerala)
Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H. D. Kumaraswamy undertook an extensive visit to HMT Machine Tools Limited (HMT) in Kalamassery, reviewing its manufacturing capabilities, inaugurating an export dispatch, and interacting with officials, workers and labour unions.

The highlight of the visit was the flagging off of an NH Series machine tool manufactured at the Kalamassery unit for export to South Africa, signalling growing global confidence in India's indigenous engineering and manufacturing strength. Officials said HMT has been steadily expanding its international footprint with export orders for precision-engineered machine tools and industrial systems.

During his tour of the facility, Kumaraswamy inspected the Machine Tool Division, Foundry Division and strategic manufacturing sections. He observed the manufacturing, assembly and testing processes of CNC systems, precision machine tools, specialised engineering equipment and



indigenously developed Sonar Directing Gear systems used in Indian naval platforms.

The Minister was briefed on HMT's role in key sectors such as defence, railways, aerospace and heavy engineering. He noted that institutions like HMT reflect the strength of India's public sector engineering ecosystem and continue to contribute significantly to

strategic self-reliance.

Kumaraswamy also chaired review meetings with senior officials of HMT, Fluid Control Research Institute (FCRI) and Instrumentation Limited (IL). Discussions focused on operational performance, technology upgradation, modernisation, innovation-driven growth and enhancing

participation in strategic sectors, along with improving efficiency and global competitiveness.

As part of the visit, the Union Minister interacted with representatives of labour unions and employee associations, addressing their concerns related to welfare, modernisation and future growth. He assured full support to the workforce, emphasising their crucial role in India's industrial development.

Highlighting the Centre's focus on strengthening public sector undertakings, Kumaraswamy reiterated that under the leadership of Narendra Modi, efforts are being made to modernise infrastructure, boost competitiveness and create greater opportunities for growth, innovation and employment.

The visit reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening indigenous manufacturing, advancing technological self-reliance, and promoting national initiatives such as Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047.

BBMP Chief Inspects Jayanagar Complex Upgrade Plan



Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
In a move aimed at improving infrastructure and public convenience, BBMP Commissioner K N Ramesh conducted a detailed inspection of the Jayanagar Commercial Complex, a key commercial hub under the Bengaluru South City Municipal Corporation limits.

During the visit, the Commissioner reviewed plans for comprehensive redevelopment of the complex, with a major focus on improving parking facilities. Officials were directed to explore the possibility of converting the existing basement area into a dedicated parking space and to develop a well-organised parking system within the premises to address long-standing issues faced by the public.

The inspection also covered redevelopment

proposals for Blocks 2, 3, and 4 of the old structure. The Commissioner instructed officials to prepare an action plan to modernise these blocks and repurpose them for commercial use, enhancing the utility and value of the complex. Additionally, the feasibility of accommodating various BBMP administrative offices within the upgraded complex was examined, with an aim to streamline civic operations and improve service delivery.

During the site visit, the Commissioner interacted with members of the public and listened to their grievances. He directed officials to prioritise the removal of encroachments on nearby footpaths and ensure cleanliness and better maintenance of pedestrian walkways around the complex.

KARNATAKA BJP BACKS YATNAL'S CLASSROOM REMARK

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Bharatiya Janata Party in Karnataka has backed former MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal's controversial call urging students to say "Jai Shri Ram" instead of "Yes Sir" during classroom

division on campuses.

Yatnal had recently suggested that students should respond with "Jai Shri Ram" during attendance once schools reopen in June, instead of the conventional "Yes Sir" or "Present Sir". He had also announced plans to distribute saffron shawls to students, drawing criticism from opposition parties and secular groups.



Reddy, who rejoined the BJP ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections after launching his own political outfit, accused the Siddaramaiah-led government of promoting divisive politics in the name of secularism.

BJP MLA G Janardhan Reddy extended "100 per cent support" to Yatnal's remarks and also endorsed the use of saffron shawls and attire in educational institutions, stating that Hindu traditions and cultural expressions should be respected in schools and colleges.

The comments come amid renewed political debate in Karnataka over the Congress government's decision allowing students to wear hijab and other religious symbols in educational institutions. BJP leaders have accused the government of minority appeasement and creating

The issue has revived memories of the 2022 Karnataka hijab controversy, which triggered widespread protests and counter-protests in educational institutions and led to temporary closures of several schools and colleges.

CJP Trend Spreads to Pakistan Politics

From PGI
These emerging outfits are attempting to carve space alongside established political forces such as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League (N) (PML-N), and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

While the Indian CJP operates under a central leadership, the Pakistani counterparts appear more decentralised, with multiple

creators and varying objectives. Despite their satirical origins, the rapid spread of such movements highlights the growing influence of social media in shaping unconventional political narratives across the region.

Meanwhile, reports indicate that the founder of CJP has faced threats and pressure, underlining the sensitivity surrounding such viral political experiments.

Rubio Begins India Visit for Key Talks

From PGI
The visit comes amid ongoing global energy concerns and recent strains in India-US relations following tariff-related issues. According to officials, both sides will also deliberate on developments in West Asia and their impact on global energy markets.

Rubio is also scheduled to visit Kolkata, Agra, and Jaipur during his trip, under scoring efforts to deepen people-to-people

and cultural ties between the two nations.

Officials said the visit is expected to further reinforce strategic cooperation between India and the United States at a time of shifting global alliances. Both sides are likely to explore new frameworks for defence collaboration, supply chain resilience, and technology partnerships, while reaffirming their commitment to a free, open, and stable Indo-Pacific region.

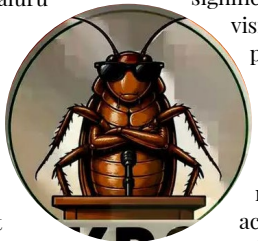
NEWS

Cockroach Janata Party Protest in Bengaluru

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

What began as a meme-driven social media joke under the label "Cockroach Janata Party" has now turned into a large-scale digital protest trend in Karnataka, with a proposed human chain demonstration in Bengaluru on May 24 triggering political reactions and online debate.

Posts circulating on social media have called for a peaceful human chain protest in front of Town Hall at 11 am on Sunday. The campaign, which initially started as satire and parody, is now being projected by supporters as a symbolic youth movement highlighting concerns over unemployment, alleged NEET examination irregularities, rising prices, and broader governance issues.



The online trend has quickly moved beyond memes, with users sharing posters, slogans, and even self-styled titles such as "state president" and "national president" of the so-called Cockroach Janata Party, significantly increasing its visibility across platforms.

The issue has now entered mainstream political discourse, with Karnataka ministers acknowledging the growing digital mobilisation.

Karnataka Minister Sharan Prakash Patil said the surge in online participation reflects growing frustration among youth over unemployment and exam-related issues, alleging that the Centre has failed to address their concerns.

Minister Santosh Lad also said such digital expressions should be seen as part of democratic space, describing them as a reflection of public frustration rather than disorder.

However, the campaign has also drawn criticism, with some sections questioning its intent and alleging political forces may be attempting to channel online anger for political gain.

The controversy escalated after BJP MLA Suresh Kumar shared a post claiming that a significant portion of the campaign's online traction originated from Pakistan. The claim was later found to be false and the post was deleted.

At the same time, Kannada activists and social commentators have defended the movement, describing it as a symbolic expression of youth anger over issues such as NEET irregularities and limited job opportunities.

EBOLA SPREAD RISK RAISES GLOBAL ALARM

From PGI

According to health reports, the outbreak has recorded over 500 suspected cases, with confirmed infections and deaths reported in affected regions.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has also flagged the risk of local and regional spread, particularly in Congo's Ituri Province and Uganda's capital Kampala.

Meanwhile, the United States

has initiated enhanced screening for travellers from affected regions at major entry points, including Washington Dulles International Airport.

Health experts emphasise that Ebola spreads through direct contact with bodily fluids of infected individuals or contaminated materials, making early detection and screening at international airports critical in preventing wider transmission.

Public health authorities have urged countries to strengthen surveillance systems, improve rapid testing capacity, and ensure adequate isolation facilities in high-risk zones.

Experts warned that weak healthcare infrastructure in certain African regions could further complicate containment efforts if the virus continues to spread.

HEALTH & Lifestyle

KNEE PAIN HITS YOUNG ADULTS

Knee pain, once considered a problem of old age, is increasingly being reported among people in their late 20s and early 30s, raising concerns among health experts. Doctors say changing lifestyles, lack of physical activity and rising obesity levels are major contributors to the trend.

Lifestyle Changes Behind the Rise

According to orthopaedic experts, prolonged sitting due to desk jobs, minimal movement, and unbalanced fitness routines are placing excess stress on knee joints. The knee, being one of the most important joints for daily movement, is highly vulnerable when surrounding muscles weaken due to inactivity.

Key Causes Identified

Medical professionals highlight several factors contributing to early knee pain among young adults. Long hours of sitting reduce blood circulation and joint mobility, leading to stiffness and discomfort. Increasing body weight adds extra pressure on the knees, accelerating wear and tear. Additionally, gradual damage to cartilage—the cushioning tissue within the knee—can lead to long-term issues

such as osteoarthritis.

Symptoms Not to Ignore

Experts warn that certain early signs should not be overlooked. These include pain while climbing or descending stairs, stiffness after prolonged sitting, swelling or instability in the knee, clicking sounds during movement, and persistent pain even after exercise.

Preventive Measures Suggested

To maintain knee health, doctors recommend keeping body weight under control and incorporating regular movement into daily routines. Simple steps such as standing or walking every 40-45 minutes can help. Low-impact exercises like walking, cycling and swimming are considered beneficial. A balanced diet rich in protein and adequate sleep also play a crucial role.

Early Attention is Key

With knee pain now affecting younger age groups, experts stress the importance of not ignoring symptoms. Seeking medical advice at an early stage can help prevent long-term complications and ensure better joint health. Ignoring early warning signs can lead to chronic joint damage, making timely intervention crucial for long-term mobility.



SCIENCE & Technology

WhatsApp to Show Online Contacts Instantly

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

WhatsApp is reportedly working on a new feature that will allow users to see which of their contacts are currently online without opening individual chats, aiming to make communication faster and more convenient.

The upcoming feature, spotted in beta versions for both Android and iOS, will introduce a dedicated "Contacts Hub" within the app. This section is expected to display active users at the top, along with recently active contacts, helping users quickly identify who is available for real-time conversations. According to reports, the feature was first observed in Android beta version 2.26.13.3 and later in the iOS beta version 26.20.10.70 via TestFlight. The update is designed to eliminate the need for users to open multiple chats to check online status, a process that can currently be time-consuming. The new hub is also expected to highlight favourite contacts for quick access and mark online users with a green indicator on their profile pictures. Recently active users will be listed below, providing a clearer view of contact availability.

In addition, the feature will include search and sorting options, allowing users to find contacts easily or arrange them alphabetically. Users may also be able to add new contacts directly through phone numbers or QR code scanning within the hub.

Despite these enhancements, WhatsApp's existing privacy settings will remain unchanged. Users who have restricted their "last seen" or online status will not appear in the online contacts list, ensuring continued control over visibility.



CJP-AAP LINK ALLEGATIONS SPARK ROW

A satirical political outfit, Cockroach Janta Party, has gone viral online, but questions over its alleged links with AAP and concerns about its independence have sparked debate among former officials and experts.

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

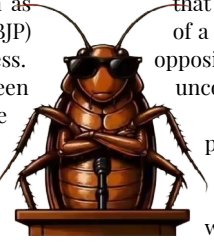
The emergence of the satirical political movement, Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), has sparked widespread discussion across India, with questions being raised about its alleged links to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

Founded by Abhijeet Dipke, currently based in Boston, the movement has rapidly gained popularity on social media. Notably, its Instagram following has reportedly surpassed that of major political parties such as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian National Congress.

However, concerns have been raised regarding the independence of the initiative. Reports suggest that Dipke may have had prior associations with AAP, leading

to speculation about possible connections between the two.

Former civil servant Ashish Joshi publicly questioned the nature of CJP, urging clarification on whether it is a truly independent movement. In posts on social media platform X, he stated that while the initiative shows potential, he would refrain from associating with it unless its independence is clearly established. Educationist Sandeep Manudhan also advised caution, alleging that the movement could be part of a broader attempt to influence opposition space through unconventional means.



Despite the growing popularity of CJP, no official confirmation has been made regarding any direct link with AAP.

Kalaburagi to Host Farmers' Mega Seminar

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Nava Karnataka Raitha Sangha will organise a three-day national seminar in Kalaburagi from July 25 to 27 to discuss key issues affecting farmers, including Gram Swaraj, food systems and minimum support price (MSP).

Former minister Mallikarjun Guttedar said the initiative aims to address agrarian distress and ensure fair pricing for farmers, alleging that intermediaries are exploiting their labour.

The event is expected to see participation from prominent figures including Anna Hazare, Nana Patekar and Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, along with large numbers of farmers from across the country.

Organisers said the seminar will also focus on long-term policy solutions to strengthen rural livelihoods and improve agricultural sustainability.

97 Indian Cities Among World's Hottest

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

India witnessed an intense heatwave on Friday, with as many as 97 Indian cities featuring among the world's top 100 hottest locations, according to data from AQLin. The extreme temperatures highlight the severity of heat conditions gripping large parts of the country.

Among the hottest cities, Balangir in Odisha recorded a scorching 48°C, making it the hottest globally at the time of reporting. Sasaram in Bihar also touched 48°C, while Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh followed closely at 47°C.

Apart from India, only three cities in the global top 100 list were from Nepal—Dhangadhi, Nepalgunj and Lumbini Sanskritik—where



temperatures ranged between 45°C and 46°C.

Several other Indian cities also reported extremely high temperatures, including Muzaffar nagar, Ayodhya, Patiala, Warangal and Haridwar. Cities such as Sri Ganganaga, Gwalior, Dhanbad, Chandigarh, Bharatpur and Singrauli also featured in the list, reflecting widespread heatwave conditions across regions.

The India Meteorological

Department (IMD) has warned that the heatwave is likely to persist over the plains of northwest, central and eastern India, as well as parts of peninsular India in the coming days. Severe heatwave conditions are expected in parts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh between May 22 and May 28.

The IMD further stated that Rajasthan is also likely to experience heatwave conditions during the same period, with severe heat expected in isolated areas of western Rajasthan between May 24 and May 28. Authorities have advised people to take precautions, avoid prolonged exposure to the sun, and stay hydrated as the country continues to battle one of the season's most intense heatwaves.

SC Lifts Ban on NCERT Chapter Academics

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi

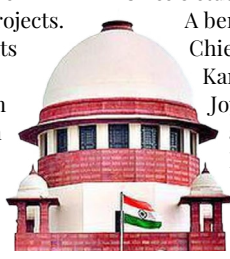
The Supreme Court of India on Friday recalled its earlier order restraining three academics associated with the controversial NCERT Class 8 chapter on corruption in the judiciary from participating in academic projects in Central and State universities and public educational institutions.

The Court clarified that

the Union and State governments are free to independently decide whether to engage the academics in such projects.

It also expunged its earlier adverse observations made in its March 11 order, in which it had stated that the academics had "deliberately and knowingly

misrepresented facts to project a negative image of the Indian judiciary before Class 8 students."



A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul Pancholi passed the order after hearing applications filed

by Professors Michel Danino, Suparna Diwakar, and Alok Prasanna Kumar, seeking recall of the restrictions imposed on them.

The Court was hearing a suo motu case relating to the NCERT textbook chapter on corruption in the judiciary and judicial delays. Earlier, it had also ordered removal of the chapter and a ban on its inclusion in textbooks.

PwD Checks from 26: CET

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA) will conduct medical verification for candidates under the Persons with Disabilities (PwD) quota from May 26 to June 2 for professional course admissions.

Candidates must book appointments in advance via the KEA website before appearing for examination at designated hospitals. Eye-related tests will be held at Minto Hospital, while other disability assessments will be conducted at Victoria Hospital. Eligible candidates after verification will be considered for seat allotment.

Yatnal Targets Cong Govt, BJP Leadership

> Vikrama Vahini | Vijayapura

Expelled BJP leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal on Thursday intensified his criticism of both the Karnataka Congress government and his former party leadership, alleging "appeasement politics" and organisational weakness within the state BJP unit.

Speaking to reporters in Vijayapura, Yatnal accused Chief Minister Siddaramaiah of withdrawing cases related to communal violence incidents, claiming such decisions would weaken law and order and encourage anti-social elements. He referred to incidents such as the KG Halli-DJ Halli violence and the Hubballi police station attack.

He also targeted the state BJP leadership, alleging a "leadership vacuum in Karnataka" and stating that the party was failing to mount an effective opposition against the ruling Congress government. He said internal dissatisfaction was growing among several sections of party workers and leaders. Taking aim at BJP state president Vijayendra Yediyurappa, Yatnal alleged that the process of selecting leadership was not transparent and called for wider



Expelled BJP leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal has intensified his attack on both the Karnataka Congress government and his former party leadership, alleging appeasement politics, withdrawal of cases linked to communal violence, and a leadership vacuum within the state BJP unit.

consultations involving sitting and former legislators to reflect internal opinion within the party. He further claimed that certain influential groups, including religious leaders and party office-bearers, were attempting to influence leadership decisions in favour of maintaining continuity.

Political observers noted that his remarks come amid ongoing speculation over possible organisational changes within the Karnataka BJP, with internal factional dynamics becoming increasingly visible ahead of future political developments in the state.

KARNATAKA MAY MOVE SC OVER VOTER ROLL REVISION

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

The Karnataka government is considering approaching the Supreme Court of India over the proposed Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, amid concerns that the exercise could lead to large-scale deletion of genuine voters and affect electoral transparency.

The issue was discussed during Thursday's Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, where ministers examined legal and administrative options to protect voter rights ahead of the SIR process scheduled to begin next month. Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil said the government will take a final decision within three to four days on whether to move the apex court.



Karnataka government is considering moving the Supreme Court over the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, citing concerns over possible deletion of genuine voters and electoral transparency. The issue was discussed in the Cabinet, with a final decision expected within days.

He said discussions included whether to approach the Supreme Court during the process or after publication of the final electoral roll, with a decision expected by May 24 or 25.

Patil alleged that similar voter roll revision exercises in other states had led to large-scale deletions, raising concerns over transparency and public trust in the electoral system. He cited figures from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu,

claiming that millions of voters had been affected. He said the Cabinet is committed to ensuring that no eligible voter is denied voting rights and asserted that corrective steps would be taken if any wrongful deletions occur.

The minister also indicated that one of the legal questions under review is whether the final electoral roll should be submitted to the Supreme Court before publication.

The Election Commission has announced that the SIR exercise in Karnataka will begin on June 20, covering over 5.5 crore voters through nearly 59,000 Booth Level Officers. The draft roll will be published on August 5, while the final roll is scheduled for October 7.

The Congress government has repeatedly expressed reservations about the exercise, alleging possible risks to voter inclusion and electoral fairness.

Political observers note that the move reflects growing friction between the state government and the Election Commission over voter list management, and may set the stage for a broader legal and constitutional debate on the scope and transparency of electoral roll revisions in the country.

ENTERTAINMENT

Drishyam 3 Opens Strong Despite Mixed Reviews

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The much-anticipated Malayalam film Drishyam 3, featuring Mohanlal in the lead, has opened to an impressive response at the box office, despite receiving mixed reviews from critics and audiences. Released on May 21, the film has recorded the biggest opening in the Drishyam franchise in Malayalam cinema.

On its first day, the film earned around ₹15.85 crore in India and grossed approximately ₹43.37 crore worldwide. As per trade estimates, the domestic gross stood at ₹18.37 crore, while overseas markets contributed about ₹25 crore, highlighting the film's strong global appeal.

The Malayalam version dominated the collections, contributing nearly ₹13.07 crore on Day 1. The dubbed versions in Telugu and Tamil added ₹1.50 crore and ₹0.45 crore respectively. Kerala emerged as the primary market, accounting for ₹11.15 crore, with an overall occupancy of 66.79 per cent, indicating robust audience turnout.

Despite being the third installment, the film has surpassed the opening figures of its predecessors. The original Drishyam (2013) had a slow start but went on to

become a blockbuster through positive word-of-mouth, while Drishyam 2 opted for a direct OTT release, premiering on Amazon Prime Video during the pandemic.

Directed by Jeethu Joseph, Drishyam 3 continues the story of Georgekutty, a character that has become iconic in Indian cinema. In this installment, Georgekutty is seen preparing for his daughter's wedding while dealing with new adversaries and growing suspicion from authorities. The narrative builds on tension and psychological drama, with the protagonist gradually losing control over the carefully constructed narrative that once protected him.

The Drishyam franchise has also enjoyed massive success beyond Malayalam cinema. Its Hindi adaptations, starring Ajay Devgn, were major hits, with the first part collecting ₹110 crore and Drishyam 2 earning ₹342 crore worldwide.

Trade analysts believe that despite mixed critical reception, Drishyam 3 is likely to witness further growth over the weekend, driven by strong fan following, franchise loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth among audiences.

Early trends indicate strong advance bookings and steady footfall across major centres, signalling sustained audience interest over the weekend.

CHAND MERA DIL OPENS SLOW ON DAY 1

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The romantic drama Chand Mera Dil, starring Lakshya Lalwani and Ananya Panday, has opened below trade expectations on its first day, with industry experts attributing the slow start to minimal promotions and lack of pre-release buzz.

Trade estimates suggest that the film is likely to collect around ₹2.5 to ₹3 crore on Day 1, falling short of earlier projections of ₹3.5 to ₹6 crore. Exhibitor and distributor Raj Bansal noted that the film suffered from low visibility, with even regular moviegoers largely unaware of its release.

Trade analyst Girish Johar described the film as a "slow burner," stating that its box office performance will largely depend on word-of-mouth in the coming days.

He also remarked that Lakshya shows promise as an actor but needs to explore diverse roles to establish a stronger foothold in the industry.

The film's release comes after mixed fortunes for its lead actors. While Ananya Panday's previous outing failed to make an impact at the box office, Lakshya's earlier film Kill had performed comparatively well.

Interestingly, the makers, including Dharma Productions, adopted a strategy of affordable ticket pricing to attract younger audiences. Tickets for shows before 5 pm on opening day were priced at ₹149, while evening shows were available at ₹199.

Trade analyst Taran Adarsh highlighted that the pricing strategy was aimed at making the film more accessible to college-going and Gen Z viewers, who are often deterred by high ticket costs.

Directed by Vivek Soni and produced by Karan Johar along with Adar Poonawalla, Apoorva Mehta, Somen Mishra and Marjike Desouza, the film released in theatres on May 22, 2026.

Despite the subdued opening, industry observers believe the film's performance over the weekend will depend heavily on audience response and word-of-mouth.

Early audience feedback suggests a mixed response, with appreciation for the film's music and performances but criticism over its pacing and storyline. Trade experts believe that if

positive word-of-mouth picks up over the weekend, the film may witness gradual growth, particularly in urban centres targeting younger audiences.



BUSINESS

RBI Transfers Record ₹2.87 Lakh Crore to Govt

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved a record dividend transfer of ₹2.87 lakh crore to the Central Government for the financial year 2025-26, marking the highest-ever surplus payout in its history.

The decision was taken at the 623rd meeting of the RBI's Central Board of Directors held in Mumbai under the chairmanship of Governor Sanjay Malhotra. The massive transfer is expected to provide significant fiscal support to the government amid global economic uncertainties and rising crude oil prices.

This year's dividend surpasses last year's transfer of ₹2.60 lakh crore (FY25), reflecting a substantial increase in the central bank's earnings.

RBI reported a 26.42 per cent rise in total income for FY26, with net income before provisions reaching ₹3,95,972 crore, up from ₹3,13,455 crore in the previous year. The surge has been attributed to higher gold prices and gains from foreign exchange operations.

The RBI's balance sheet expanded by 20.61 per cent to ₹91.97 lakh crore as of March 31, 2026. Alongside the dividend payout, the central bank also significantly increased its Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB), allocating ₹1,09,379.64 crore this year compared to ₹44,861 crore in the previous year. The CRB has been maintained at 6.5 per cent of the balance sheet to safeguard against financial risks.

Although the dividend is slightly below the government's budget estimate of ₹3.16 lakh crore from RBI and public sector banks, it falls within market expectations, which ranged between ₹2.7 lakh crore and ₹3 lakh crore.

The transfer is expected to help the government manage its fiscal deficit and support infrastructure spending, especially at a time when geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have pushed up crude oil prices, increasing India's import bill.



SPORTS

Star Indian All-Rounder Retires from Cricket Amid IPL Season

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Indian all-rounder Vijay Shankar has announced his retirement from the Indian Premier League (IPL) and domestic cricket, bringing an end to a career spanning over a decade across formats.

Shankar, who has represented Tamil Nadu in domestic cricket, played for multiple IPL franchises including Chennai Super Kings, Delhi Capitals, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Gujarat Titans. He made the announcement ahead of the IPL 2026 playoff stage through a post on social media.

In his statement, Shankar expressed gratitude to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), his teams, coaches, support staff and teammates for their support throughout his career. He said cricket has been an integral part of his life since childhood and thanked everyone who contributed to his journey.

He also recalled key career moments, including bowling the final over in India's 500th ODI and taking a wicket on the first ball in the 2019 ICC World Cup, calling them unforgettable memories.

At the international level, Shankar played 12 ODIs and 9 T20 Internationals for India. He also had a solid domestic record with over 4,000 first-class runs, including 13 centuries, and consistent performances across List A and T20 formats.

Shankar's retirement marks the end of a versatile career as a batting all-rounder who contributed significantly to both domestic and IPL cricket over the years.

RCB Stay Top Despite Loss to SRH

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) defeated Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in a high-scoring encounter in Match 67 of IPL 2026, but the result did not alter the top position in the points table as RCB managed to retain their No. 1 spot despite the loss.

The match was crucial for both sides, with top-two qualification at stake. SRH needed a massive win to strengthen their chances of finishing in the top two, while RCB aimed to secure their dominance at the top of the table.

Batting first, Sunrisers Hyderabad delivered a powerful performance, posting a formidable total of 256 runs, powered by aggressive stroke play and consistent scoring throughout the innings. Chasing a massive target, Royal Challengers Bengaluru fought hard but failed to maintain the required momentum. Despite a strong start, they eventually fell short of the target, handing SRH a convincing victory in their final league match.

RCB, despite the defeat, succeeded in holding on to their top position in the points table, benefiting from earlier strong performances in the tournament. The result ensures they remain well placed ahead of the playoffs.

The match once again highlighted the intense competition in IPL 2026, with both teams showcasing explosive batting displays in a contest dominated by runs and high scoring momentum.

Two Indians Die During Everest Descent

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Two Indian mountaineers died while descending Mount Everest after successfully reaching the summit, according to officials in Nepal.

The deaths were reportedly caused by extreme exhaustion during the descent, a phase considered one of the most dangerous in high-altitude climbing.

One climber died near the Hillary Step, while the other succumbed at Camp II despite rescue efforts.

Rishi Bhandari, Secretary General of the Expedition Operators Association of Nepal, said one of the climbers became severely exhausted while descending. Sherpa guides made extensive efforts to assist him and



managed to bring him from the Balcony to the South Col overnight, but he could not be saved.

The second climber has been identified as Arun Tiwari, who summited Everest at around 5:30 pm on Thursday. Despite being accompanied by two experienced Sherpa guides, he became exhausted near the Hillary

Step. Rescue attempts by multiple Sherpas were unsuccessful.

The first deceased was identified as Sandeep Are, who died at Camp II after being brought down by Sherpa guides.

The incident comes amid a busy climbing season on Everest, with several Indian climbers, including 21-year-old Saanika Shah, and the all-women team of the Border Security Force successfully reaching the summit.

Nepal has issued a record 493 permits for Everest expeditions this year. On a single day, 274 climbers reached the summit, marking one of the highest single-day achievements since Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary first summited the peak in 1953.

INDIA LAUNCHES CHENAB PROJECTS AMID TREATY FREEZE

► **Vikrama Vahini | Delhi**

India has initiated work on two major infrastructure projects on the Chenab River system, marking a significant move after suspending engagement under the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan.

The projects, estimated at around ₹2,600 crore, aim to enhance India's utilisation of its upstream water rights while strengthening infrastructure along the northern frontier. The initiatives are being executed by National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC).

One of the key projects is the ₹2,352 crore Chenab-Beas Link Tunnel in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul-Spiti region. The plan includes constructing an 8.7-km tunnel to divert surplus water from the Chenab basin to the Beas river system, along with a proposed 19-metre-high barrage in the Lahaul valley. The project is part of a broader inter-basin water transfer initiative aimed at maximising



water usage.

The second project, Dulhasti Stage-II in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district, is expected to boost hydropower generation in the region.

Additionally, restoration work at the Salal Dam is underway to improve sediment management and operational efficiency.

The Indus Waters Treaty, signed in 1960 and brokered by the World Bank, allocates eastern rivers to India and western rivers — including the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab — primarily to Pakistan, while allowing India limited usage rights. India has long argued

that a significant portion of water from western rivers flows unutilised due to infrastructure constraints.

Pakistan has consistently objected to India's projects on the Chenab, citing concerns over downstream water flow. However, India maintains that all developments comply with treaty provisions, as they are designed as run-of-the-river projects without large storage facilities.

The latest move underscores India's push towards maximising its water resources while reinforcing strategic and infrastructural capabilities in the Himalayan region.

Umar Khalid Gets 3-Day Interim Bail

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

The Delhi High Court has granted three-day conditional interim bail to former JNU student leader Umar Khalid, an accused under the UAPA in the 2020 Delhi riots case.

Khalid had approached the court seeking 15 days interim bail to attend his mother's surgery, take care of her, and participate in the 'chehellum' ritual of his late uncle.

However, the court granted him limited relief, allowing bail only from June 1 to June 3.

The court imposed strict conditions on his release, directing that he must remain within the Delhi-NCR region throughout the bail period and stay only at the address already disclosed to the investigating officer.

It further ordered that he shall not travel to any location except for medical emergencies and must use only one mobile number, which should remain active at all times.

The court clarified that the interim bail is strictly conditional in nature and directed complete compliance with all restrictions imposed.

PM to Distribute 51,000 Appointment Letters at Rozgar Mela

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute more than 51,000 appointment letters to newly recruited candidates in various government departments under the 19th edition of the Rozgar Mela on May 23, the government said on Friday.

The Prime Minister will address the newly inducted recruits via video conferencing at 11 am during the nationwide event.

According to an official statement, the Rozgar Mela is part of the Centre's employment generation initiative aimed at accelerating recruitment in government departments and providing job opportunities to youth across the country.

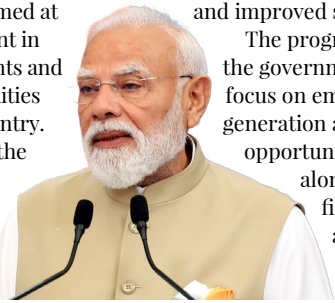
The 19th edition of the programme will be held at 47 locations across India, with selected candidates joining several

ministries and departments, including the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Department of Financial Services, and the Department of Higher Education.

The government stated that nearly 12 lakh appointment letters have been issued so far through 18 previous editions of the Rozgar Mela conducted across the country.

Officials said the initiative is designed to strengthen manpower in government institutions while ensuring time-bound recruitment and improved service delivery.

The programme reflects the government's continued focus on employment generation and skill-based opportunities for youth, along with efforts to fill vacancies across key public sector departments.



Pakistan May Return to Ancestral Roots: RSS Affiliate Chief

► **Vikrama Vahini | Delhi**

People of Pakistan will eventually realise their historical and cultural roots and may return to their "ancestral traditions" in India, said Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram president Satyendra Singh,

while advocating that an open channel for people-to-people contact should be maintained. Singh made the remarks during an exclusive interview, where he also supported RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale's recent statement that people-to-people engagement remains crucial to breaking the long-standing diplomatic deadlock between India and Pakistan.

He said there is currently "no trust" in the political and

military leadership of Pakistan, and therefore emphasis should be placed on cultural and civilisational connections between the people of the two countries.

Singh further stated that although Pakistan was created as a separate nation after India's Independence, many people living there continue to share historical, cultural and civilisational links with India. According to him, these connections remain intact despite political boundaries.

Advocating a long-term civilisational perspective, Singh said that keeping a "window open" for engagement would help preserve shared heritage and enable future reconciliation between the people of the two nations.



Hormuz Alert: Drone, GPS Risks for Ships

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Global maritime bodies have issued fresh guidance for vessels transiting the strategically crucial Strait of Hormuz, warning of emerging threats such as drone attacks, GPS interference, and heavy traffic congestion.

The advisory, released for May 2026, highlights growing concerns over navigation and security risks in the region, which remains one of the busiest and most sensitive shipping routes in the world. The waterway connects the Gulf with the Arabian Sea and is a key passage for global oil, gas, and commercial cargo shipments.

According to the guidance, ships may face risks including GNSS jamming and spoofing, AIS anomalies, missile or drone threats, small craft harassment, and possible mine dangers. It also cautions about extreme congestion, especially during high-risk periods when multiple vessels attempt transit simultaneously, increasing the likelihood of collisions and grounding.

Maritime authorities have stressed that ship operators must carry out voyage-specific risk assessments before entering the region. They have also urged crews not



to rely solely on digital navigation systems, advising the use of radar, visual checks, and traditional navigation methods in case of electronic interference.

The guidance further recommends enhanced bridge management, including senior crew presence, manual steering if required, and continuous monitoring of vessel movement. Operators are also advised to ensure crew preparedness, check critical systems, and maintain communication with international maritime security agencies.

The advisory underscores the importance of prioritising crew safety, secure navigation, and environmental protection, particularly during periods of heightened geopolitical tension in the Gulf region.

Punjab Man Held for CCTV Spy Network

► **Vikrama Vahini | Chandigarh**

Punjab Police in Pathankot have busted an alleged espionage network and arrested a man accused of sharing sensitive information on Indian Army and paramilitary movements with handlers based in Pakistan.

The accused, Baljit Singh alias Bittu from Chak Dharival village, had allegedly installed an internet-based CCTV camera at a shop near a bridge on the Pathankot-Jammu stretch of National Highway-44 to monitor troop movements, police said.

Officials added that the surveillance footage was transmitted electronically to handlers in Pakistan and other countries.

According to police, the accused received instructions from an unidentified person based in Dubai and was paid around ₹40,000 for his activities. Several items, including a CCTV camera and Wi-Fi router, have been seized.

Police have also booked three others in connection with the case and launched a wider investigation to trace cross-border links and funding sources behind the alleged espionage network.

Officials said the investigation is ongoing to determine the extent of the network and identify other individuals involved in the alleged spying operation.

TULSI GABBARD RESIGNS FROM TRUMP CABINET

► **Vikrama Vahini | Washington**

Tulsi Gabbard, who served as the U.S. Director of National Intelligence in President Donald Trump's Cabinet, has resigned from her position, citing her husband's serious health condition.

According to reports, Gabbard informed President Trump during a meeting on Friday that she is stepping down as her husband Abraham has been diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer. She said she wishes to remain by his side during this difficult period.

Sources said her tenure is expected to formally conclude on June 30, with a smooth transition of responsibilities planned before her exit.

In her resignation letter, Gabbard stated that her husband has been her strongest support for over 11 years of marriage and that she could not continue in a demanding public office while he is undergoing critical treatment. She also expressed gratitude to President Trump for entrusting her with the responsibility and assured full cooperation during the transition process.



Tulsi Gabbard has resigned from her role as U.S. Director of National Intelligence, citing her husband's serious health condition. She informed President Donald Trump of her decision and is expected to complete a smooth transition by June 30.

However, some reports have suggested that her resignation may also be linked to internal pressure within the administration, although there has been no official confirmation from the White House.

Gabbard, a former U.S. Congresswoman and National Guard officer, has had a long public career. She has often been noted for her interest in Indian spiritual traditions and has publicly expressed admiration for Hindu philosophy and the

Income Tax Dept Simplifies First-Time ITR Filing

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

The Income Tax Department on Friday shared basic guidance for first-time Income Tax Return (ITR) filers through a post on social media, aiming to make the filing process simpler and more accessible.

In its message, the department said, "Filing your ITR for the first time? Don't worry, it's simpler than you think."

It outlined key steps including collecting all income details, reviewing Form 26AS and AIS, selecting the appropriate ITR form, and completing the process with e-verification.

The department also informed taxpayers that online filing and Excel utilities for ITR-1 and ITR-4 for Assessment Year 2026-27 are now available on the e-filing portal.

Officials said the initiative is part of ongoing efforts to encourage voluntary compliance and make tax filing easier for new taxpayers across the country.

Tamil Nadu Cabinet Expanded; Two Ministers Sworn In

► **Vikrama Vahini | Chennai**

The Tamil Nadu government led by Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay has expanded its cabinet once again, with one leader each from the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) and Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) taking oath as ministers on Saturday.

In a simple ceremony held at the Raj Bhavan in Chennai, IUML leader A.M. Shahjahan, elected from the Papanasam constituency, and VCK legislator Vanniarasu from the Tindivanam constituency were sworn in as ministers.

A.M. Shahjahan has been allotted the Minority Welfare portfolio and will also handle the Waqf Board. Vanniarasu has been given the Social Justice portfolio, which includes the Adi Dravidar Welfare and Hill Tribes Welfare departments.

With this expansion, the representation of alliance parties in the TVK government has increased further. Earlier, 23 ministers were inducted in a major cabinet expansion, which also marked the entry of the Congress party into the Tamil Nadu government after nearly 59 years.

The cabinet expansion is seen as a move to further strengthen the ruling alliance's social and political outreach across key communities in the state.

Political observers note that the inclusion of leaders from IUML and VCK reflects the government's strategy to maintain coalition balance and ensure wider representation in governance.

Meanwhile, opposition parties have reacted cautiously to the development.