



Ananya Panday's dance scene from 'Chand Mera Dil' has gone viral for all the wrong reasons. The fusion Bharatanatyam performance has triggered strong criticism from netizens and classical dancers. The clip is being widely trolled on social media for its lack of classical authenticity.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Tuesday projected a united front in New Delhi as the Congress leadership held key discussions on the state's political future amid ongoing speculation over leadership arrangements.



Good morning

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BRIEFS

Adhikari Announces ₹5 Meals, Liquor Curbs in Bengal

> Vikrama Vahini | Kalyani
West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Tuesday announced new welfare measures, including ₹5 fish-rice meals at 400 canteens twice a week and a ₹3,000 monthly aid scheme for women under the proposed Annapurna Yojana. He also said liquor shops will not be allowed within one kilometre of schools, colleges and religious places. The existing Lakshmir Bhandar scheme will continue until the new programme is fully implemented. The Chief Minister further indicated plans to restructure the AYUSH department and introduce free bus travel for women, with a card-based system to be implemented at a later stage.

BJP Seeks Waqf Board Dissolution, Warns HC Move

> Vikrama Vahini | Kochi
The BJP in Kerala on Tuesday demanded the dissolution of the State Waqf Board, alleging that it was constituted in violation of provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025. Addressing a press conference, BJP leader Shaun George said the Board did not comply with mandatory composition norms and warned that the party would move the Kerala High Court if the government fails to act. He also raised objections over the registration of Munambam land on the UMEED portal, claiming legal procedures were not followed. The BJP has urged Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan to cancel the notification and dissolve the Board.

Quad Launches \$20B Minerals Push

> Vikrama Vahini | Delhi
The United States, India, Japan and Australia on Tuesday unveiled a landmark critical minerals framework, committing up to USD 20 billion to secure key raw materials used in electric vehicles, semiconductors and defence technologies, in a move aimed at reducing dependence on China-dominated supply chains. The initiative, announced at the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in New Delhi, outlines a comprehensive strategy to strengthen mining, processing, recycling and financing of critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and rare earths. Under the framework, the Quad will mobilise up to USD 20 billion through government and private financing, including export credit agencies, development finance institutions, equity investments and loan guarantees.

Storm Brews in State Politics

SIDDARAMAIAH EXIT BUZZ: DK SHIVAKUMAR AS NEXT CM?

Siddu Camp Uneasy, DK Camp Jubilant

Climax Likely Today or Tomorrow

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
The Congress on Tuesday sought to quell speculation over a leadership change in Karnataka, stating that the high-level meeting in Delhi involving Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar focused primarily on upcoming Rajya Sabha and Legislative Council elections.

The meeting, held at the residence of Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, was attended by senior leader Rahul Gandhi and AICC General Secretary K. C. Venugopal. Party leaders emphasised that discussions were limited to electoral strategy and dismissed reports suggesting a change in the state's leadership.

Venugopal clarified that "all discussions were centred on the Rajya Sabha and Council polls," adding that rumours about a leadership shift were unfounded. The Congress reiterated that Siddaramaiah would continue as Chief Minister, putting to rest speculation of an imminent transition.

However, political buzz persists, with some reports suggesting that the party high command may consider moving Siddaramaiah to the Rajya Sabha and assigning him a larger role at the national level. These claims remain unconfirmed by the party. Meanwhile, the opposition BJP intensified its criticism, accusing the state leadership of neglecting governance due to frequent visits to Delhi. Despite the ongoing speculation, the Congress maintained that there is no change in leadership and urged leaders and cadre to focus on organisational and electoral priorities.



Congress Denies K'taka Leadership Change Rumours!

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
The Congress on Tuesday dismissed speculation of a leadership change in Karnataka, asserting that discussions at the high-level meeting in Delhi were focused solely on upcoming Rajya Sabha and Legislative Council elections.

The meeting, convened by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, was attended by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, and AICC General Secretary K. C.

Venugopal, among others.

Addressing the media, Venugopal clarified that "all discussions were limited to the Rajya Sabha and Council elections," and termed reports of a leadership change as "mere speculation with no reality." Siddaramaiah also reiterated that there was no discussion on stepping down or any cabinet reshuffle.

Despite the party's official stance, political chatter continues over the long-standing leadership tussle between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar, with reports suggesting demands for a power-

sharing arrangement.

The party is expected to finalise candidates for the Rajya Sabha and Legislative Council elections in Karnataka, along with nominees from other states, in the coming days.

Meanwhile, party sources indicated that the high command is closely monitoring the situation in Karnataka to ensure unity within the state unit, with an emphasis on maintaining political stability ahead of upcoming elections and avoiding any internal rift that could impact governance.

K'taka Power Tussle Intensifies in Congress

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
The Congress High Command on Tuesday engaged in intense closed-door deliberations in Delhi as it attempted to resolve the growing leadership tussle in Karnataka between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar.

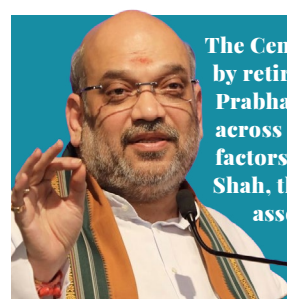
Rahul Gandhi meets key leaders separately
Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi reportedly held separate meetings with Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar before joining a broader strategy discussion attended by party president Mallikarjun Kharge, KC Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala. **PG2**

Centre Sets Up Panel on Demographic Change

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
The Centre has constituted a high-level committee headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar to assess demographic changes across India reportedly linked to "illegal immigration and other unnatural causes", Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday.

Committee to Study Population Shifts Nationwide

In a post on 'X', Shah said the committee has been formed following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's



The Centre has set up a high-level committee headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar to study demographic changes across India linked to illegal immigration and other factors. Announced by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the panel will examine population shifts, assess their impact on national security and social structure, and submit a time-bound report with recommendations.

Independence Day announcement in 2025 regarding a national-level initiative on demographic change. He said the panel will examine

patterns of "abnormal population shifts" across religious and social communities and submit a time-bound action plan.

Panel Composition Announced

The committee will be chaired by Justice Naolekar (ret'd) and include the Census Commissioner, retired IAS officer Durga Shankar Mishra, former IPS officer Balaji Srivastava, and Dr Shamika Ravi as members.

The Joint Secretary (Foreigners-I), Ministry of Home Affairs, will serve as Member Secretary.

Focus on Security and Social Impact

Shah said demographic change poses challenges to national security, law and order, social structure, and tribal communities. The committee

will also study the impact of illegal immigration and related factors on population distribution.

Background of the Initiative

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had earlier flagged the issue in his Independence Day address, describing illegal infiltration as part of a "pre-meditated conspiracy" affecting India's demographic balance, particularly in border regions.

The new committee is expected to submit its findings and recommendations after a comprehensive nationwide study. **PG2**

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Editorial

Securing India's Borders

Border security remains the foundation of any nation's sovereignty and internal stability. India, owing to its geographical location and long international boundaries, has faced persistent security challenges for decades. While Pakistan continues to promote cross-border terrorism and destabilizing activities, concerns have also been raised over the misuse of the Nepal route for illegal infiltration and anti-national operations. Equally alarming is the large-scale illegal immigration from Bangladesh through the West Bengal border, an issue that has gradually evolved into a demographic, economic, and national security concern. The porous nature of the eastern border has not only enabled unauthorized entry but has also created opportunities for criminal networks, human trafficking, and extremist elements to operate under the radar.

Over the years, the Union Government has initiated several measures to strengthen border management, including fencing projects, surveillance systems, enhanced deployment of border security forces, and tighter documentation processes. However, political disagreements between the Centre and the previous state administration in West Bengal often weakened coordinated implementation. With the recent political shift in the state, the Centre now appears determined to accelerate efforts aimed at securing the Indo-Bangladesh border. The formation of a high-level committee and the renewed focus on border infrastructure indicate a more serious and strategic approach toward preventing further infiltration. Such measures are essential not only for national security but also for maintaining social harmony and administrative balance in border states.

Yet, preventing fresh infiltration is only one part of the larger challenge. Identifying and addressing the issue of illegal immigrants who have already settled across different parts of the country is a far more complex task. Any action in this regard must strictly follow constitutional and humanitarian principles while ensuring that national interests are not compromised. India cannot afford to treat border security merely as a political debate between parties or governments. A coordinated national policy, backed by cooperation between the Centre and states, is the need of the hour. Strong borders ultimately translate into a stronger, safer, and more secure India.

-Editor

K'taka MLC Elections on June 18

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
The Election Commission of India has announced the schedule for the biennial elections to seven seats of the Karnataka Legislative Council from the Legislative Assembly, with voting set to be held on June 18.

According to the notification, the election process will begin on June 1, which is the date for issuing the notification.

The last date for filing nominations is June 8, while scrutiny will be held on June 9. Candidates can withdraw nominations until June 11. Counting of votes will also be taken up on June 18, immediately after polling.

The terms of seven MLCs, including Govindaraju, Naseer Ahmed, M.T.B.

Nagaraj, Pratap Simha Nayak, K. Tippanna, Sunil Vallyapur and B.K. Hariprasad, will end on June 30, necessitating the elections.

Along with Karnataka, nine Legislative Council seats in Bihar will also go to polls on June 18.

Of the seven outgoing members, four belong to the BJP and three to the Congress. Political observers suggest a likely contest dynamic where Congress may secure four seats, while the BJP-JD(S) alliance could aim for three seats, depending on vote transfers and coordination.

The BJP is expected to field new candidates, keeping the 2028 Assembly elections in mind and considering internal organisational strategy.

Rajanna Backs Parameshwara, Seeks Clarity in Cong Row

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
Former Karnataka Minister K N Rajanna on Tuesday reiterated his support for senior Congress leader G Parameshwara as a potential Chief Minister if a leadership change takes place, while urging the party high command to quickly resolve the ongoing uncertainty within the state unit.



Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru ahead of the Congress high command's meetings with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Rajanna said he continues to stand by his earlier position that Parameshwara should be considered for the top post if a change is made.

"If there is a change of Chief Minister, Parameshwara should be given an opportunity.

However, the high command will take an appropriate decision," he said.

Rajanna cautioned that prolonged confusion over leadership could adversely impact governance in the state. "If confusion continues in the party, it will impact administration. Officials may lose focus and functioning could be affected. The issue must be resolved at the earliest," he said.



Villagers in Kallipura village of Kolar taluk celebrated a rare and traditional "Seemantha" (baby shower) ceremony for a pregnant cow, treating it as a revered member of the family. The cow was beautifully decorated with floral adornments, braided tail ornaments and colourful bands on its legs, while women from the village gathered to perform rituals similar to those conducted for a pregnant woman. They applied turmeric and kumkum, sang traditional songs, offered sweets, performed aarti and symbolically filled the cow's lap (madilu tumbi) as a mark of prosperity and well-being. The ceremony concluded with distribution of turmeric, kumkum, betel leaves and sweets to the women, reflecting the community's deep cultural reverence for 'Gomata' and its significance in rural traditions.

QUAD LAUNCHES \$20B MINERALS PUSH

> From PG1

The funds will support mining, processing and recycling projects within partner countries.

Regulatory and Security Alignment

The agreement also focuses on aligning regulatory systems, streamlining approvals for mining projects, and developing coordinated mechanisms to block transactions involving strategic mineral assets that could pose national security risks.

Focus on Recycling and Supply Diversification

A key component of the plan includes building large-scale recycling and e-waste recovery systems

to reduce reliance on primary mining and create a circular supply chain across Quad nations.

Strategic Shift in Global Supply Chains

Officials said the initiative marks a major step in reshaping global supply chains, as China currently dominates processing capacity for several critical minerals. The Quad aims to build a "diversified and fair" supply ecosystem through joint investment and policy coordination.

The minerals initiative was one of three major outcomes of the ministerial meeting, alongside maritime surveillance cooperation and a new energy security forum.

Suspected Ebola Case Reported?

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

A suspected case of Ebola has been reported in Karnataka, raising health concerns as authorities await confirmation through laboratory testing.

According to health officials, a woman who recently travelled from Uganda to Bengaluru via Ahmedabad exhibited symptoms consistent with Ebola during screening at the airport. She was immediately shifted to Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases for further observation and treatment.

Officials said the woman has been placed

under strict quarantine for 21 days as a precautionary measure. Her samples have been collected and sent to a laboratory for testing, with results awaited.

Health authorities have stated that if the test returns positive, it would mark the first confirmed case of Ebola in the state and potentially in the country.

Meanwhile, surveillance and precautionary protocols have been intensified to prevent any possible spread, and officials have urged the public not to panic while following health advisories.

HEAVY RAIN EXPECTED ACROSS KARNATAKA FOR NEXT FIVE DAYS

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

Yellow Alert Issued in Several Districts Bengaluru, May 26: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a warning of widespread rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and strong winds across coastal and inland districts of Karnataka for the next five days. The department also indicated that the southwest monsoon is likely to arrive in the state during the first week of June. A yellow alert has been declared for parts of the state for the next two days due to changing weather conditions. IMD said

favourable atmospheric conditions are helping the southwest monsoon advance further into the southeast Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and parts of the Andaman Sea.

Strong Winds, Thunderstorms Forecast in Bengaluru

In Bengaluru, partly cloudy conditions are expected over the next 24 hours, with chances of moderate rain or thunderstorms during afternoon or evening hours.

Wind speeds may reach 40-50 kmph, with isolated heavy rainfall and possible hailstorms in some areas. Maximum temperature is

expected to be around 34°C, while the minimum may be around 21°C.

District-Wise Rain Alert Issued

Heavy rain with strong winds is likely in Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Chamaraajanagar, Kolar, Ramanagara, Mandya and Hassan districts.

Moderate rain or thunderstorms are expected in Dharwad, Gadag, Haveri, Koppal, Bagalkot, Vijayapura and Raichur districts. Coastal districts including Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada may receive light to moderate rainfall at isolated places.

IMD Issues Safety Advisory for Fishermen and Public

Following recent rain-related incidents, the IMD has advised fishermen to exercise caution and avoid venturing into the sea.

People have also been urged not to enter rivers or water bodies during heavy rain and to strictly follow safety advisories issued by authorities due to strong winds and lightning risks. The IMD has advised residents to remain cautious, especially during thunderstorms, and avoid unnecessary travel during periods of intense rainfall.

NEWS

NIKHIL TOURS 26 VILLAGES OVER BIDADI ROW

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

JD(S) Youth Wing President Nikhil Kumaraswamy will visit 26 villages in the Magadi constituency on May 27 to interact with farmers opposing the proposed Bidadi Township land acquisition by the Greater Bengaluru Development Authority (GBDA).

Terming the project "anti-farmer," Nikhil has strongly opposed the acquisition under the slogan "Our Land, Our Right," and said the visit aims to highlight the ground reality of affected villages. He announced that he would meet farmers and listen to their grievances starting from 10 am.

Taking a direct dig at Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's reported statement that "there are no farmers in Bidadi," Nikhil said the field visit would expose the truth. He challenged the claim, stating that the issue is not just about a township but about the livelihood of farmers.

Calling the project "destructive rather than developmental," he alleged that around 9,600



acres of fertile land is being acquired, which could lead to the loss of over 10 lakh trees and severely impact milk production in the region.

Nikhil also questioned whether any development can justify the displacement of farmers from land he described as "mother earth," adding that even massive compensation cannot replace agricultural heritage and livelihood.

The interaction will begin at Byramangala and cover key villages including Kanchagaranahalli, Alalansandra, Hosur, and Bamigiri, where he will be accompanied by former MLA A. Manjunath to hear farmers' concerns directly on the ground.



The "Srinivasa Kalyanotsava" organised by the family of N.S. Narasimha Murthy was held in a grand manner on Saturday at Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatha Kalyana Mantapa in Basavanagudi, Bengaluru. Sri Sri Vidyaprasanna Theertha Swamiji of Kukke Sri Subramanya Mutt participated and delivered his blessings. Basavanagudi MLA Ravi Subramanya and several others were also present on the occasion.



Centre Sets Up Panel on Demographic Change

> From PG1

Officials said the committee is likely to engage with state governments, security agencies and demographic experts to gather comprehensive data and ground-level inputs before finalising its report. It may also examine trends in border districts and urban centres where population shifts have been

more pronounced.

The panel's recommendations are expected to guide future policy decisions, including measures to strengthen border management, streamline immigration monitoring and address socio-economic impacts arising from demographic changes across regions.

SCIENCE & Technology

WhatsApp Launches Meta AI Tab, File Sharing Feature

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

WhatsApp is significantly expanding the role of artificial intelligence within its platform by introducing a dedicated Meta AI tab and testing a new document-sharing feature for Android users.

The changes are currently available only to a limited number of beta testers and are being gradually rolled out via updates on the Google Play Store.

The newly introduced Meta AI tab replaces the earlier floating shortcut that appeared within the Chats section. Instead, users will now find a dedicated AI option on the bottom navigation bar, giving the assistant a more prominent and accessible position within the app interface.

The tab centralises all AI-related features, allowing users to interact with Meta AI through text and voice conversations, generate images, view suggested prompts, and access previous chat history in one place.

According to reports, the redesign aims to improve discoverability and usability of AI tools within WhatsApp. The integration is part of Meta's broader strategy to make its AI assistant a core feature of the messaging ecosystem, rather than an optional add-on.

In addition to the new tab, WhatsApp is also testing a document-sharing capability that allows users to upload files directly to Meta AI for analysis and assistance. As observed in beta versions for Android, users can attach documents via the "Attach to chat" menu or import files from external applications such as file managers. This update enables the AI to process full documents instead of relying on screenshots or cropped images, significantly improving its ability to understand and respond to user queries.

K'taka Power Tussle Intensifies in Congress

> From PG1

Siddaramaiah refuses to step down

Sources indicated that Siddaramaiah firmly conveyed he would not resign and intends to complete his full five-year term as Chief Minister. Party insiders say his leadership continues to be backed by leaders who cite his mass appeal and electoral strength.

Pressure to accommodate Shivakumar

The High Command is also under pressure to recognise Shivakumar's role in the 2023 Assembly victory. Considered a key organisational force, he has strong backing within sections of the party for a larger leadership role.

No consensus on leadership formula

Reports suggest that an informal proposal to shift Siddaramaiah to a national organisational role did not progress, as he is said to prefer continuing in state politics. No final agreement emerged from the meetings.

Concerns over internal stability

Congress leaders are wary that any abrupt leadership change could trigger factional unrest within the Karnataka unit. Several ministers are reportedly aligned with Siddaramaiah, adding to the complexity.

Possible compromise under consideration

With no immediate resolution, the party is now believed to be exploring a compromise, including a possible Cabinet reshuffle or organisational adjustments to ease tensions temporarily.

SIDDARAMAIAH, SHIVAKUMAR SHOW UNITY AHEAD OF DELHI TALKS

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**
Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Tuesday projected a united front in New Delhi as the Congress leadership held key discussions on the state's political future amid ongoing speculation over leadership arrangements.



The meeting, convened by the party high command at Indira Bhawan, brought together senior leaders including Rahul Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, K.C. Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala. Discussions were focused on resolving internal differences within the Karnataka unit and addressing continuing questions over power-sharing in the state government.

According to party sources, the Congress leadership is keen to put

an end to prolonged uncertainty surrounding the Chief Ministerial arrangement and reduce factional tensions that have surfaced periodically within the state unit.

Before the meeting, both Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar refrained from making detailed comments on the agenda. Responding to queries on leadership change speculation, Siddaramaiah said, "It is always there," while Shivakumar declined to comment, stating it was "not my job".

Online Job Scams Target Youth, Warn Experts

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**
Online job scams are increasingly targeting young job seekers, with a recent survey indicating that nearly half of Gen Z candidates have encountered or narrowly escaped such frauds.

Experts say factors like unemployment pressure, fear of missing out (FOMO), and highly sophisticated scam tactics are making even tech-savvy youth vulnerable. Fraudsters often use fake company profiles, professional-looking websites, and shift conversations to private messaging apps like WhatsApp or Telegram.

Authorities have warned candidates to verify company credentials, avoid paying any fees for job offers, and refrain from sharing personal or financial details without proper authentication, urging greater caution in the digital job market.

Bengaluru Food Prices May Rise After Wage Hike

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**
Food prices in Bengaluru are likely to rise as hotel and restaurant owners warn of higher menu rates following the Karnataka government's revised minimum wage structure for workers. The new wage order, issued on May 22, covers 81 scheduled sectors and impacts around two crore workers across the state.



Bengaluru's food prices are expected to rise after the Karnataka government revised minimum wages across 81 sectors, prompting hotel and restaurant owners to consider higher menu rates. Industry bodies say increased labour and input costs could push up prices of popular items like dosa, idli and biryani, with the impact likely to be passed on to consumers.

Hotel associations say the increased wage burden, along with rising costs of raw materials, LPG, fuel and other essentials, will make it difficult to maintain existing menu prices. Industry representatives have indicated that the impact will be directly passed on to customers.

According to the Karnataka State Hotels' Association, the cost of popular items could see a sharp rise. A masala dosa may increase from

around ₹80 to ₹150, vegetarian meals from ₹150-₹200 to ₹250-₹300, and biryani from ₹300-₹350 to nearly ₹500. Idli prices, currently around ₹50, may also rise to ₹80 or more.

The revised wage structure divides the state into three zones and classifies workers into skilled and unskilled categories.

In Bengaluru and other major urban areas, the monthly minimum wage for unskilled workers has reportedly increased from about ₹19,000 to ₹23,276.

Hotel owners say the overall cost per employee could rise significantly when benefits such as PF, ESI, food and accommodation are included.

Industry bodies have described the move as an additional burden on an already stressed sector facing rising input costs.

Delhi to Decide Karnataka Cong Leadership Issue: Moily

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**
Senior Congress leader and former Union Minister M Veerappa Moily on Tuesday indicated that the Karnataka Congress leadership issue is likely to be resolved soon by the party high command in New Delhi, saying the matter has reached a "final" stage of decision-making.



Speaking to reporters, Moily said internal discussions within the party over leadership and organisational matters had concluded and the issue was now before the top leadership at the AICC level.

"All debates, discussions and deliberations are over. It is now at the point of taking the ultimate decision.

The leaders are sitting at the AICC headquarters to resolve the issue," he said.

His remarks are seen as an indication that the Congress central leadership may soon announce a clear political formula to address the ongoing uncertainty over leadership arrangements, Cabinet reshuffle possibilities, and factional expectations in Karnataka.

Moily said that once the high command takes a decision, all leaders must abide by it to ensure stability ahead of the 2028 Assembly elections.

"The Congress is a democratic party. But once a decision is taken by the high

command, everyone must adhere to it," he said. The veteran leader also stressed the need for unity within the state unit amid continuing speculation over internal differences.

On other issues, Moily criticised the BJP-led Central government over rising fuel prices, alleging that the Centre was burdening citizens despite lower global crude rates. He also questioned the Prime Minister's appeal for austerity, asking whether the same was being followed by the government.

On his political future, Moily said he has expressed interest in entering the Rajya Sabha and is unlikely to contest future Lok Sabha elections, adding that he believes he can contribute more in the Upper House.

Pakistan Rejects Trump's Call to Join Abraham Accords

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**
Pakistan has firmly rejected US President Donald Trump's call to join the Abraham Accords and recognise Israel, reaffirming its long-standing support for Palestine and citing domestic political sensitivities, the Gaza conflict, and regional diplomatic considerations.

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, in an interview with Samaa TV, said joining the accords would go against the country's "fundamental ideologies." He also questioned engagement with Israel, stating, "How will you sit down with those people whose word cannot be trusted even for a single day?"

Trump has recently urged several Muslim-majority countries, including Pakistan, to consider normalising ties with Israel as part of an expanded Abraham Accords framework. The US-led initiative, launched in 2020, has already seen the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan and Kazakhstan establish or strengthen ties with Israel.

Pakistan, however, has maintained its position of not recognising Israel since its formation in 1947. Islamabad continues to insist that recognition will only come after the establishment of an independent Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

AIADMK CRISIS: ANOTHER REBEL MLA RESIGNS

► **Vikrama Vahini | Chennai**
Political instability within the AIADMK intensified on Tuesday as another rebel MLA resigned from the Tamil Nadu Assembly, even as rival factions within the party held separate meetings to address the widening crisis triggered by a series of defections and resignations.

AIADMK Ambasamudram MLA and former minister Isakki Subbiah met Speaker J C D Prabhakar at the Secretariat and submitted his resignation. The Speaker initially refused to accept a typed letter, citing Assembly rules, and directed that the resignation be handwritten. The MLA later complied and submitted a handwritten resignation, which the Speaker said would be examined before a decision is taken.

Subbiah, a three-time MLA, said he was resigning as he felt unable to effectively serve his constituency over the past five years. When asked about his future political plans, including a possible move to TVK, he declined to comment, saying he would consider opportunities if they arose.

His resignation comes amid a wave of exits from the rebel camp,

which had supported the recent trust vote aligned with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and TVK founder Vijay. In the last two days, four MLAs from the faction led by former ministers S P Velumani and C Ve Shanmugam have stepped down, with more expected to follow.

On Monday, three MLAs — Maragatham Kumaravel, S Jayakumar and P Sathyabama — resigned and later joined TVK after meeting senior party leader Aadhar Arjuna and Vijay. Their resignations were accepted by the Speaker, who confirmed that the procedural requirements had been met.



The Assembly Secretariat subsequently issued a gazette notification declaring the seats vacant.

With the latest resignation, the total number of MLAs who have quit rises to four, while several others have reportedly returned to the AIADMK camp and sought forgiveness from party leadership.

The developments mark an unprecedented situation in Tamil Nadu politics, with MLAs resigning amid anti-defection law concerns after voting against party whips during the trust vote.

Tata Power Entry Triggers Protest Threat

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**
Tata Power's proposal to enter electricity distribution in Karnataka has sparked strong opposition from employee unions and raised concerns of statewide protests as the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission begins examining the application.

The company has sought a licence to operate across parts of BESCO, CESCO, HESCO and MESCOM covering around 15 districts, mainly focusing on urban and commercial

areas. If approved, it would compete with existing state-run electricity supply companies.

Union leaders have warned that private entry into the distribution sector could affect job security and financial stability of ESCOMs, and threatened protests if the plan is cleared.

Tata Power, however, has said it aims to serve over 1.86 lakh consumers within three years and cited its experience in reducing power losses

in other major cities.

The regulator is expected to take up the application for detailed scrutiny in the coming weeks amid rising political and labour concerns.

The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission is currently reviewing the application and will examine stakeholder objections in detail. Officials say the final decision will be taken in accordance with provisions under the Electricity Act, 2003.

ENTERTAINMENT

Ranveer Visits Chamundeshwari Temple Amid Kantara Row

► **Vikrama Vahini | Mysuru**
Actor Ranveer Singh on Tuesday morning visited the Chamundeshwari Temple in Mysuru and offered prayers, amid ongoing legal and industry-related developments surrounding him, including the "Don 3" controversy and the earlier Kantara mimircy case.

The actor's temple visit comes shortly after compliance with a Karnataka High Court directive linked to the Kantara case, in which he had submitted a revised affidavit and issued an unconditional apology.

The court had directed him to offer prayers at the Chamundeshwari Temple within four weeks, following the matter raised in connection with his remarks and actions during a public event.

Ranveer Singh was seen arriving discreetly at the temple premises, reportedly maintaining a low profile and wearing a mask until he reached the sanctum sanctorum. He later offered special prayers to Goddess Chamundeshwari and visited the garbhagriha before leaving the temple.

The visit also comes at a time when the actor is in the spotlight following his exit from Farhan Akhtar's upcoming film Don 3. On Monday evening, the Federation of Western Cine Employees (FWICE) issued a non-cooperation directive against him, adding further attention to his recent professional setbacks. Reports also suggested that Excel Entertainment had claimed losses of around ₹45 crore following his exit from the project.

The controversy surrounding Ranveer Singh dates back to November 2025, when a video from the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa went viral.

In the clip, the actor was seen imitating a scene inspired by the film Kantara, particularly the "Daiva" sequence, which sparked strong criticism from sections of the Kannada community.

Following the backlash, Ranveer Singh issued a public apology, stating that his intention was to appreciate actor Rishab Shetty's performance. He said he held deep



respect for all cultures and traditions and regretted if any sentiments were hurt.

The issue gained further sensitivity after filmmaker and actor Rishab Shetty commented on the matter, describing the "Daiva" representation as sacred and emotionally significant, and urged that it should not be mimicked or performed casually.

With the legal proceedings now largely addressed and the court directive fulfilled, the matter is expected to be formally disposed of in due course, according to legal sources.

Authorities at the Chamundeshwari Temple said the visit was peaceful and conducted under routine security arrangements, with devotees continuing their darshan without disruption. No special protocol beyond standard VIP movement procedures was reportedly required.

Meanwhile, industry observers noted that Ranveer Singh's recent developments reflect a challenging phase in his career, with both legal and professional issues converging at a time when major film commitments are under review.

HEMA MALINI ON DHARMENDRA HONOUR

► **Vikrama Vahini | Mathura**
Actor-politician Hema Malini on Tuesday said that veteran actor Dharmendra embodied India's "soul and humility", as she received the Padma Vibhushan on his behalf from President Droupadi Murmu at a ceremony held in New Delhi.

The late actor was conferred the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award, posthumously at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday in recognition of his exceptional contribution to Indian cinema and his lifelong service to the arts. Dharmendra passed away in November last year at the age of 89.

Speaking after receiving the honour, Hema Malini said the award is a tribute to Dharmendra's "extraordinary lifetime of service to art and the nation" and reflects the immense respect he continues to command even after his demise.

She said the recognition was not just an honour for the family but for millions of

fans who admired the actor across generations. "This award symbolises his dedication, simplicity and the values he stood for throughout his life," she said.

Visibly emotional during the interaction, Hema Malini said receiving the award on behalf of her late husband was a deeply personal moment for her and the family.

She expressed gratitude to the Government of India for recognising Dharmendra's contribution to Indian cinema. Dharmendra, one of Indian cinema's most iconic and enduring stars, enjoyed a career spanning several decades and was known for his versatility, ranging from action roles to romantic and dramatic performances.

His work left a lasting impact on Hindi film industry and continues to be celebrated by audiences worldwide.

The Padma Vibhushan honour adds to his legacy as one of the most influential figures in Indian cinema.



BUSINESS

Kiyosaki Warns Dollar Decline, Backs Gold & Bitcoin

► **Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata**
US author and investor Robert Kiyosaki has warned of a potential weakening of the US dollar, claiming that global economic shifts could accelerate a decline in its dominance.

Kiyosaki pointed out that Iran has begun accepting payments for crude oil in Chinese yuan instead of US dollars, calling it a sign of changing global trade patterns. He said such developments could weaken long-standing dependence on the dollar in international markets.

Referring to comments by investor Ray Dalio, Kiyosaki noted that reduced global reliance on the dollar in oil trade could lower demand for US currency, potentially increasing debt pressure, interest rates, and money supply in the United States.

He also highlighted concerns over rising US Treasury yields and warned that global financial instability could increase if the dollar weakens further. According to him, the impact would not be limited to the US but could affect markets worldwide.

Kiyosaki reiterated his long-standing preference for alternative assets, calling gold "God's money" and Bitcoin "people's money." He said he continues to invest in gold, silver, Bitcoin and Ethereum, while expressing distrust in the US Federal Reserve and traditional financial systems.

He added that many countries are increasingly exploring alternatives to the US dollar in bilateral trade agreements, which he believes could gradually reshape the global monetary system.

According to him, this shift reflects growing geopolitical tensions and efforts to reduce dependence on a single reserve currency.

Kiyosaki also advised individuals to strengthen their financial literacy and diversify their investments to protect themselves from potential economic shocks. He said relying solely on traditional savings and fiat currency could be risky in an uncertain global environment.

SPORTS

Kohli Sets New IPL Playoff Record

> Vikrama Vahini | Dharamshala
Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) star batter Virat Kohli has created a new milestone in IPL history by playing his 18th playoff match during the IPL 2026 Qualifier 1 against Gujarat Titans (GT).
With this appearance, Kohli joined an elite list of players with the most playoff matches in IPL history, equalling records held by players like Shikhar Dhawan, Dinesh Karthik and Kieron Pollard. Chennai Super Kings legend MS Dhoni leads the chart with 28 playoff appearances, followed by Ravichandran Ashwin and Suresh Raina (24 each), Rohit Sharma, Ambati Rayudu and Ravindra Jadeja (23 each), and Dwayne Bravo (19).
Kohli has been the backbone of RCB since the league's inception and continues to play a key role in the team's success in the ongoing season.

Playoff Performance Record
In IPL knockout matches, Kohli has had a mixed record. In four IPL final appearances, he has scored at an average of 34.75 with a strike rate of 126.36. However, his record in Eliminator matches has been less impressive, with 115 runs in five games at an average of 23.00 and a strike rate of 108.49.
Strong Form in IPL 2026
Kohli has been in excellent form in IPL 2026, scoring consistently in the league stage with an average above 50 and a strike rate of 162.03 across 14 matches. His performances have been crucial in RCB's journey to the playoffs.
In the Qualifier 1 clash against Gujarat Titans, Kohli added a solid 43 runs off 25 balls, providing a strong start for RCB before being dismissed.

Patidar's 93 off 32 Powers RCB, Gujarat Stunned

> Vikrama Vahini | Dharamshala
Royal Challengers Bengaluru captain Rajat Patidar delivered a sensational knock of 93* off just 32 balls to power his team to a massive total against Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 1 of IPL 2026.
Walking in under pressure after early setbacks, Patidar steadied the innings before unleashing an aggressive counterattack. He reached his half-century in just 21 balls and went on to smash nine sixes and five boundaries, remaining unbeaten till the end. His explosive innings guided RCB to a formidable 254 for 5 in 20 overs.
Earlier, Virat Kohli and Devdutt Padikkal provided a solid start with a quick partnership, taking the team past 70 in the powerplay. However, Gujarat struck back as Jason Holder dismissed both set batters in the same over, putting RCB under pressure.
Patidar then stitched a crucial partnership with Krunal Pandya, initially rebuilding cautiously before accelerating dramatically. Despite being dropped twice, he made the most of the reprieves and dominated the Gujarat bowling attack with fearless strokeplay.
His match-defining innings not only rescued RCB from a tricky situation but also put them in a commanding position in the high-stakes playoff encounter.

MEKEDATU DAM ROW: VIJAY URGES MODI TO REJECT KARNATAKA DPR

> Vikrama Vahini | Chennai
Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Tuesday raised strong objections to Karnataka's proposed Mekedatu dam project across the Cauvery river, urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to reject the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and prevent any unilateral move without consent of riparian states.
'Violation of SC verdict'
In a detailed representation to the Prime Minister, Vijay said the Mekedatu project directly violates the Supreme Court judgment of February 16, 2018, and the final award of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) dated



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to reject Karnataka's Mekedatu dam project, alleging it violates the Supreme Court verdict and CWDT award on Cauvery water sharing. He warned that the proposed reservoir could disrupt mandated water flows and escalate tensions between riparian states.

February 5, 2007.
He also sought directions to the Jal Shakti Ministry and the Central Water Commission (CWC) to reject Karnataka's DPR, stating that no new project should be taken up without concurrence of co-basin states.
Concerns over K'taka's statements

argued that the Cauvery basin is already a deficit basin and that water allocation has been fully determined by the tribunal and upheld by the Supreme Court, leaving no scope for additional storage projects. He said any attempt to construct a 67.16 TMC reservoir at Mekedatu would affect scheduled water flows to Tamil Nadu and violate legal rulings.
Urges for central intervention
He urged the Centre to ensure strict compliance with Supreme Court directions and prevent Karnataka from proceeding with the project, warning that it would escalate tensions between the riparian states.

India, US Seal Critical Minerals Pact at Quad Meet

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
India and the United States on Tuesday signed a bilateral framework on critical minerals and rare earths on the sidelines of the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in New Delhi, in a major step towards strengthening resilient and diversified global supply chains.
The agreement aims to boost cooperation in securing supplies of critical minerals needed for semiconductors, electric vehicles, clean energy systems and defence technologies. It was signed in the presence of External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio.
Jaishankar said the framework covers the entire value chain, including mining, processing, recycling and investment. He noted that the initiative would help both countries work together on



financing and improving the management of critical mineral resources, while strengthening supply chain resilience.
Describing the pact as a "tangible example" of strategic cooperation, Rubio said it reflects the deepening partnership between India and the US. He also stressed the importance of reducing dependence on single-source supply chains, warning that such vulnerabilities could pose geopolitical risks.
The agreement is part of wider Quad cooperation and follows months of discussions between the two sides.

Gadkari: Maruti Suzuki to Launch Flex-Fuel Car on June 5

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday said Maruti Suzuki is set to unveil a new flex-fuel passenger vehicle on June 5, which coincides with World Environment Day. The upcoming model is expected to run on E100 fuel, or 100 per cent ethanol.
Speaking at an event in Nagpur, Gadkari said the move marks a major step towards promoting alternative fuels and reducing India's dependence on imported fossil fuels. However, Maruti Suzuki has not yet officially confirmed the launch.
The minister added that the government is actively pushing ethanol-based fuel adoption as part of its clean energy transition strategy. India has already introduced E20 fuel standards, with higher ethanol blends such



as E22, E25, E27 and E30 under consideration. While the company has previously showcased flex-fuel concepts of models like Wagon R and Fronx at auto expos, industry sources suggest these could be among the possible candidates for the launch.
Flex-fuel vehicles require significant engineering modifications to handle ethanol, including upgraded fuel systems and engine components, which may increase production costs.
Officials say the shift towards ethanol-based mobility is aimed at cutting emissions, improving energy security, and reducing the country's fuel import burden.

China, Pakistan Vow to Deepen Strategic Ties

> Vikrama Vahini | Islamabad
Pakistan and China have agreed to "unswervingly safeguard" and further strengthen their bilateral relations, committing to deepen cooperation and build a shared future, according to a joint statement issued on Tuesday. The statement came at the conclusion of Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's official visit to China from May 23 to 26 at the

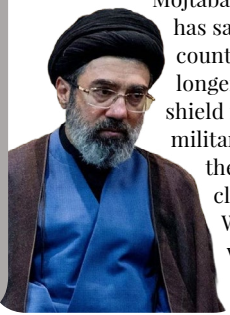
invitation of Chinese Premier Li Qiang.
Leaders Hold High-Level Talks
During the visit, Prime Minister Sharif held separate meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, where both sides reviewed the progress of the China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.
Cooperation Across Multiple Sectors
The two countries signed several cooperation

agreements across various sectors, further expanding economic, strategic, and development collaboration.
Shared Vision for Regional Stability
Both sides also reached consensus on strengthening coordination on international and regional issues of mutual interest, reaffirming their long-standing strategic partnership.

Khamenei Warns US: No Safe Haven in Gulf

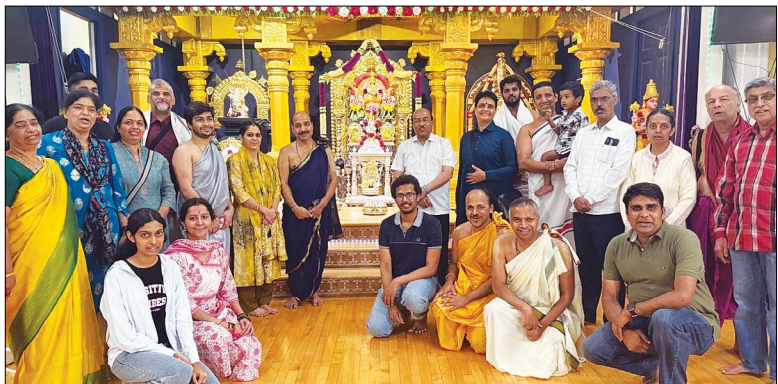
> Vikrama Vahini | Tehran
Amid escalating tensions with the United States, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei has said Gulf countries will no longer act as a shield for US military bases in the region, claiming Washington will have "no haven" for its operations.

In a social media statement, he said US influence in West Asia was weakening, even as reports of strikes on Iranian missile sites and retaliatory attacks on US bases continue to intensify regional tensions.
Khamenei also reiterated Iran's firm stance on retaining its near-weapons-grade uranium within the country, complicating ongoing diplomatic efforts with Washington over a potential nuclear deal.



SAN JOSE HOSTS GRAND TRIBUTE TO SHRI BANNANJE

> Vikrama Vahini | San Jose (USA)
A grand cultural and spiritual tribute titled "Bannanje 90 Vishwa Naman" concluded with grandeur at the Puthige Matha premises in San Jose, marking a memorable celebration of the literary and spiritual legacy of Shri Bannanje.
The event was held under the divine blessings of His Holiness Shri Sri Sugunendra Tirtha Swamiji of Puthige Matha. Organized by the Bannanje Pratishthana in association with the Puthige Matha in the United States, the program concluded with a vibrant Rathotsava dedicated to Sri Hari, Vayu, and Guru deities, witnessed by devotees in large numbers.
The concluding ceremony featured a devotional fusion of Dasara pada singing and classical dance presentations offered to Lord Sri Venkata Krishna. The celebration was graced by noted personalities including Dr. Gururaj Karjagi, who inaugurated the event by lighting the ceremonial lamp and spoke about the literary style and contributions of Bannanje.
The programme began with a grand procession of portraits of Sri Hari, Vayu, and Guru, setting a devotional tone for the multi-day event. Several



disciples and scholars, including Vidwan Gopinath Galagali, Purnaprasad, Balachandra Krishna, Prabhu Murthy, Prasanna Krishna, Harish Vasudeva, Anand Deshpande, Jagannath, M. S. Satyanarayana, and others, shared their experiences and recollections of Bannanje Acharya's teachings and works.
Devotional music presentations by Divya Ramesh and her students added musical elegance to the occasion. Prabhu Nandan Murthy presented Sanskrit compositions dedicated to Bannanje, performed by children in a melodious rendition.
The event also featured interactive sessions, a question-and-answer segment, and poetic recitations by

Kavita Udupa, making the programme culturally rich and engaging. Senior dignitaries including Asha, Sridhar Gopal, and others participated in the gathering.
The programme was welcomed by Prasannacharya, International Secretary of Puthige Matha, while Dr. Veena Bannanje delivered the vote of thanks. The event was anchored by Saraswati Vattam, Murali Bati, and Satish Jamkhandi.
Under the guidance of Shankar Narayana Bhat, chief priest of Krishna Vrindavana, San Jose, and with the support of devotees, the Bannanje Vishwa Naman programme concluded successfully as a deeply spiritual and culturally enriching global tribute.

VIKRAMA VAHINI | INFO GRAPHICS

IS SUPER EL NIÑO THIS YEAR DIFFERENT FROM 1877?
This year's Super El Niño may bring extreme heat, droughts, floods and a glimpse of the world 10 years from now.

WHAT IS EL NIÑO? El Niño is the warming of Pacific Ocean waters. It is the warm phase of ENSO.	1877 vs THIS YEAR Severe droughts, floods and extreme heat. Famines in India, China, Egypt, Brazil. Limited scientific data.	One of the strongest El Niños in recorded history. More intense and frequent extreme weather. Advanced tech for better monitoring and forecasting.			
EXPERT WARNING El Niño may hit Earth by June this year. May break the 1877 record.	WILL EL NIÑO IMPACT INDIA? Rising temperatures and erratic rains threaten agriculture, water and food security. Poor and vulnerable communities will be hit the hardest.				
HOW SUPER EL NIÑO MAY IMPACT EARTH					
HIGH TEMPERATURES	HIGH HUMIDITY	DROUGHTS	FLOODS	FOOD SECURITY AT RISK	HEALTH THREATS