

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Goa will play significant role in building Viksit Bharat: Murmu on statehood day

NEW DELHI, MAY 30: President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday greeted the people of Goa on statehood day and said the state would play a significant role in building a Viksit Bharat.

Goa, which was a part of the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu, was accorded statehood on this day in 1987.

"Heartiest greetings to the people of Goa on Statehood Day! Goa is renowned not only for its rich cultural her-



itage and warm hospitality, but also for its remarkable progress in education, technology, startups and sustainable development," Murmu said in a post on X.

"With commitment to innovation, environmental conservation and inclusive growth, Goa will play a significant role in building Viksit Bharat, she said.

The president also wished the people of the state continued prosperity and happiness. (Agencies)

D K Shivakumar Elected Cong Legislature Party Leader, Set To Be New Karnataka CM

BENGALURU, MAY 30: Karnataka state Congress President D K Shivakumar was elected leader of the legislature party on Saturday, paving the way for him to take over as the next chief minister of the state.

Senior leader Siddaramaiah, the outgoing chief minister, proposed Shivakumar's name as the new leader of the legislature party at the meeting held at Vidhan Soudha. The meeting was overseen by AICC general secretaries K C Venugopal and Randeep Singh Surjewala.

However, the CLP meeting to elect the new leader took a ten-minute break, and top leaders including Siddaramaiah, Venugopal and Surjewala, huddled in a separate room, according to sources.

Announcing Shivakumar's election as CLP leader, Karnataka Congress said in a statement that Siddaramaiah proposed Shivakumar's name for the top position, G Parameshwara seconded the proposal, and the meeting unanimously endorsed it. Party general secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal announced Shivakumar's election as the new CLP



leader.

Earlier, at the beginning of the meeting, Surjewala, announced that the process of electing the new CLP leader would proceed based on a proposal from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and formally initiated the proceedings, the statement said.

Subsequently, Siddaramaiah moved a one-line resolution and Parameshwara seconded it and all the legislators supported it. Later, Surjewala announced a 10-minute break, and he

along with Siddaramaiah and Venugopal, proceeded to the Chief Minister's chamber. After the three leaders returned to the conference hall, where the legislators had assembled, the process of electing the new leader was declared completed.

Subsequently, the newly elected CLP leader, Shivakumar, moved a resolution praising the services rendered by outgoing leader Siddaramaiah during his tenure as Chief Minister and sought the meeting's sup-

port, the statement said, adding that, the resolution was unanimously approved.

Shivakumar's swearing-in as the new CM will take place on June 3 at the Glass House of Lok Bhavan here. Shivakumar served as the Deputy Chief Minister in the Siddaramaiah government. Siddaramaiah resigned as Chief Minister on Thursday and Governor Thawarchand Gehlot, accepted his resignation the next day and dissolved the Council of Ministers. (Agencies)

Hegseth reassures Pacific allies as he softens China threat rhetoric

SINGAPORE, MAY 30: US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth assured Pacific allies on Saturday that Washington remained committed to the region, but toned down previous comments calling China a threat.

Speaking to a group of world leaders, diplomats and top security officials at the Shangri-La defense conference in Singapore, Hegseth said that the region "has profound implications for US security and prosperity" and that Washington's priority was to "achieve a lasting and favorable balance of power in the Pacific."

It was his second time addressing the forum. Last year, he raised the ire of Beijing by warning of rapidly developing threats from China, particularly its aggressive stance toward Taiwan.

He said China is no longer just building up its military

forces to take Taiwan, it's "actively training for it, every day."

This year, however, the meeting comes only about two weeks after US President Donald Trump visited Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Beijing, following which Trump called Xi a "great leader" and said that they were going to have a "fantastic future together."

Hegseth, who was with Trump in Beijing, said the two leaders had agreed that China and the US should "build a constructive relationship of strategic stability, based on fairness and reciprocity, reaffirming that while our nations will vigorously protect our respective interests, we can secure practical, mutually beneficial agreements where our interests align."

However, he said it was still an American priority to ensure that China is not al-

lowed to dominate the Indo-Pacific.

"There is rightful alarm regarding China's historic military buildup and the expansion of its military activities in the region and beyond," he said.

"We share a clear-eyed assessment of that security environment and a mutual understanding that a Pacific dominated by any hegemon would unravel the regional balance of power and undermine the equilibrium we all seek to preserve."

US Sen. Tammy Duckworth, part of a congressional delegation to the conference, accused the Trump administration of "cozying up" to China.

"I worry that this administration is being distracted into wars that they've started in other parts of the world at the expense of our commitment here in the Indo-Pacific," the Illinois Democrat

told reporters on the sidelines.

"I am concerned that it seems like our president is entering into, you know, policies where he's doing what Beijing wants him to do," she added.

After the meetings between Xi and Trump, the American president raised questions about Washington's willingness to defend Taiwan, calling a new \$14 billion arms package that he has yet to greenlight "a very good negotiating chip for us" with China.

China claims the democratic self-governing island as its own, and Xi has not ruled out using force to take it. The US is required by law to help provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself, though follows a policy of "strategic ambiguity" on whether it would intervene militarily if China were to attack the island.

Claims Of Being Vishwaguru But Can't Conduct Single Exam: Rahul's Dig At PM

NEW DELHI, MAY 30: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of having "completely destroyed" the country's education system and said the government has been unable to conduct even a single examination properly while making claims of being a "vishwaguru".

His remarks came after the National Testing Agency said the CUET-UG 2026 for admissions into undergraduate degree programmes across India was delayed at some centres on Saturday due to a technical glitch.

In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said, "NEET, CBSE,



SSC, and today, CUET. Four examinations. One crore students. Not a single one could be conducted honestly."

"Claims of being a 'vishwaguru', but are unable to

conduct even a single examination within the country — Modi Ji has completely destroyed the entire education system," Gandhi said.

"The very generation

whose future you are ruining — that same generation will hold you accountable," the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha said, attacking the PM.

Gandhi had on Friday said Modi's silence on the CBSE debacle and inaction against the education minister showed he cared only about the survival of his government and not the future of lakhs of students.

The Congress leader had also shared a video of his earlier interaction with students who had taken the NEET exam and expressed their concerns over the exam system in the wake of the paper leak. (Agencies)

Massive Dust Storm Sweeps Rajasthan; Rain Brings Relief To Most Parts Of North India

NEW DELHI, MAY 30: A massive dust storm barreled through several parts of Rajasthan on Saturday, even as an active western disturbance triggered rain at most parts of north India, bringing much-needed relief from the sweltering heat that baked the region for the past few days.

In Rajasthan, the storm triggered by a western disturbance affected Churu, Bikaner, Hanumangarh, Sri Ganganagar, Nagaur, Didwana-Kuchaman, Alwar and Sikar districts, while Jaipur witnessed strong winds followed by rain.

Clouds of dust and sand engulfed many towns, reducing visibility to zero and forcing motorists to switch on headlights during the day.

Winds initially picked up in Hanumangarh and Sri Ganganagar regions, reaching speeds of around 56 kmph, officials said.

While the storm disrupted normal life, the accompanying rain brought relief from the intense heatwave conditions in several parts of the desert state.

"We never imagined such a massive dust storm could engulf the city. The sky turned dark around 2 pm, almost like nightfall. People were moving with their vehicle headlights on... Normal life has been disrupted as we are facing many difficulties," a Churu resident said.

A dust storm with lesser intensity also hit parts of Delhi on Saturday amid red and orange alerts, as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast thunderstorms, lightning, hail and rain.

According to the weather



office, a dust storm followed by a severe thunderstorm accompanied by lightning, hail and light to moderate rain is very likely over parts of central, northeast, southwest, west, northwest and north Delhi. The wind speeds are expected to range between 70 and 90 kmph, gusting up to 100 kmph, it said.

The weather change is being driven by an active western disturbance affecting north-west India, along with an associated cyclonic circulation, which has enhanced moisture and instability over the region, the IMD said.

Rain also lashed several parts of Punjab and Haryana on Saturday, bringing respite from the scorching heat as the maximum temperatures dropped several notches below normal in both states.

In Punjab, showers were reported in Mohali, Pathankot, Hoshiarpur, Rupnagar, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Patiala, Fazilka and Ferozepur, while Pathankot witnessed a hailstorm.

In Haryana, Narnaul, Sirsa, Gurugram, Rohtak, Sonapat and Karnal saw rain, according to the local weather office. Chandigarh, the joint capital of Punjab

and Haryana, received 18.2 mm of rainfall, and logged a maximum temperature of 25.3 degrees Celsius, 14 notches below the season's average.

Most places in the two states reported maximum temperatures 8-10 degrees Celsius below normal, weather data showed. Uttar Pradesh also experienced relief as rain brought temperatures down in parts of the state.

Rainfall ranging from 3 mm to 18 mm was recorded in Bahraich, Muzaffarnagar, Lakhimpur Kheri, Najibabad and Meerut. Though Lucknow didn't report rainfall, its maximum temperature settled at 34 degrees Celsius, 6.1 degrees below normal, the Met department said.

Moradabad was the hottest in the state at 38.5 degrees Celsius, well below the over 40-degree temperatures seen in the past more than a week. Thunderstorms/lightning accompanied by gusty winds are likely at isolated places over the state, the Met department said.

Parts of Himachal Pradesh also witnessed light to moderate rain and hailstorms, prompting the Met depart-

ment to issue a yellow warning for adverse weather conditions in most parts of the state.

A hailstorm accompanied by heavy downpour lashed Shimla and its adjoining areas on Friday evening. Hailstorms were also reported from Chopal and Kotkhai in Shimla district.

The weather office has warned of hail, thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds at isolated places in 10 out of the 12 districts in the state on Sunday. The tribal districts of Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti have been excluded from the alert, which said the wet spell is likely to remain across the state till June 5.

According to the weather office in Shimla, Pandoh in Mandi district recorded the highest rainfall at 37.4 mm, while Una, Naina Devi, Guler, Sundernagar, Kangra, Jot, Sarahan and Dehra Gopipur also receive rain ranging from 15 to 34 mm, weather data showed.

The maximum temperatures saw a significant drop across the state, with Una the hottest at 28.8 degrees Celsius, about 11 degrees less than Friday's high. (Agencies)

Donald Trump's Daughter Visits Taj Mahal



AGRA (UP), MAY 30: American President Donald Trump's daughter Tiffany visited the iconic Taj Mahal with her husband Michael Boulos on Saturday and spent about an hour exploring the monument, officials said.

Mahal around 11 am along with Boulos and a few close friends. During her visit, she extensively toured the monument and clicked pictures at various locations within the complex.

Tourist guide Ramesh Diwan said she showed keen interest in the history and ar-

chitecture of the monument and asked several questions about its construction.

After completing the visit, Trump praised the beauty of the monument, according to people present during the tour.

Police said she arrived in Agra from Delhi by a char-

tered aircraft and landed at the city's Agra Airport. She then travelled by road to a hotel before proceeding to the Taj Mahal through the golf course route.

Elaborate security arrangements were made for the high-profile visit, with authorities creating a high-

Education system has fallen into hands of mafia: Arvind Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, MAY 30: AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday slammed the central government over the alleged NEET paper leak, saying the country's education system has fallen into the "clutches of the mafia".

Reacting to reports that NEET papers would be transported to exam centres by the Indian Air Force, Kejriwal said that Centre has no intention of getting to the bottom of the paper leaks, and was instead making such bizarre moves (nautanki).

"Air Force will be used to prevent paper leaks in NEET. Will this stop pa-



per leaks? How is our government talking like uneducated people?"

World over so many exams are conducted, have we ever heard any such bizarre thing" Kejriwal said in a post on X in Hindi.

"They don't even have the intention to stop paper leaks. The country's education system has completely fallen into the clutches of the mafia," the former Delhi chief minister said.

To fix this, everyone will have to come together and do something, Kejriwal said in a video message. "It won't happen with just one person doing something alone." The country needs an educated prime minister, he said. (Agencies)