

May 19, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has once again emphasized that peaceful solutions to the conflicts in West Asia and the Ukraine–Russia war must be achieved through dialogue and diplomatic means.

(i) After concluding his visit to Sweden, Prime Minister Modi travelled to Norway. In the capital city of Oslo, he met and held talks with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre. During the meeting, the leaders decided to focus more on strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

(ii) Prime Minister Modi stated that both nations agreed on the need to reform international institutions in order to address global challenges effectively. He also reaffirmed that terrorism, in whatever form it exists, must be eradicated completely.

(iii) He further welcomed Norway's decision to join the India-led Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). As two major maritime nations, India and Norway can work together to strengthen cooperation in maritime security and the blue economy, he said.

(iv) Norwegian honour for Modi

- At an event held in Norway, Prime Minister Modi was presented with the "Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit," regarded as the country's highest civilian honour, in recognition of his leadership and contribution to strengthening India–Norway relations. The award was presented by King Harald V of Norway.
- This is the 32nd international award received by Prime Minister Modi. Modi expressed his happiness over the honour in a post on X.

2. Restrictions have been imposed on horse riding at tourist destinations due to the outbreak of the bacterial disease "Glanders." Accordingly, the Animal Husbandry Department has instructed that horses showing symptoms of the disease should not be used for rides.

(i) In Chennai, a horse infected with the bacterial disease Glanders died. Since the infection spreads rapidly among animals and can prove fatal to domestic animals, the Chennai Corporation conducted blood tests on more than 140 horses.

(ii) Since the disease can also spread to caretakers through fluids and secretions from infected horses, the Public Health Department has initiated precautionary measures.

(iii) Meanwhile, restrictions have been imposed on horse riding at all tourist destinations, including beaches and hill stations such as Ooty and Kodaikanal. The Tamil Nadu Animal Husbandry Department has also advised horse owners to follow the already issued guidelines for horse care.

3. Following talks between U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, China has agreed to increase imports of American agricultural products.

(i) Under the agreement, China will purchase agricultural products such as beef and poultry worth nearly \$17 billion annually from this year through 2028, according to an official White House announcement.

(ii) American farmers had been severely affected by the trade war initiated last year by the Trump administration against China and several other countries.

(iii) To reduce these losses, President Trump recently paid an official visit to China and held extensive discussions with President Xi Jinping. As part of the agreement reached, China will once again allow market access for American beef.

(iv) China has also agreed to import poultry products from U.S. states certified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as free from bird flu. This new trade agreement comes in addition to the soybean procurement deal signed last year. China had previously been one of the largest markets for American agricultural exports. U.S. agricultural exports to China, which stood at \$38 billion in 2022, reportedly fell sharply to \$8 billion last year because of the trade war between the two nations. With soybean and beef exports badly affected, the current agreement is expected to provide renewed hope and partial economic relief to American farmers.

(v) The two countries have also agreed to establish two new bodies – a “Trade Council” and an “Investment Council” – to further strengthen economic cooperation.

(vi) According to China’s Commerce Ministry, these mechanisms are intended to regulate trade in non-sensitive goods, address bilateral concerns, and facilitate mutual tariff reductions.

4. Former captain of the Indian women’s basketball team and Olympian Jennifer Paes (72) passed away after a prolonged battle with cancer. She was the mother of Indian tennis star Leander Paes.

5. Italian tennis player Jannik Sinner won the Italian Open title. With this victory, he created history by winning all nine Masters tournaments and achieving the Career Golden Masters milestone.

- Sinner became only the second player in tennis history to win all nine Masters tournaments. Serbia’s Novak Djokovic was the first to achieve the feat in 2018.
- Sinner also became the first player to win six consecutive Masters titles. Previously, Djokovic and Rafael Nadal had each won a maximum of four consecutive Masters titles. Sinner won titles consecutively at Paris, Indian Wells, Miami, Monte Carlo, Madrid, and Rome.
- He became the first Italian player in 50 years to win the Italian Open title. Before him, Adriano Panatta had won the title in 1976. In the women’s category, Jasmine Paolini won the tournament in 2025.
- Sinner became only the second player after Nadal to win all three clay-court Masters tournaments – Monte Carlo, Madrid, and Rome – in a single season.
- He continues his unbeaten streak in Masters tournaments with 34 consecutive victories.
- Sinner has now won 10 Masters titles, and notably, he won all those finals in straight sets without conceding even a single set to his opponents.

6. According to informed sources, a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Quad grouping will be held in India next week.

(i) The Quad consists of India, the United States, Australia, and Japan. The grouping primarily aims to promote peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

(ii) As one member nation assumes leadership each year, India is set to host the Quad Summit this year. However, official dates for the summit have not yet been announced. Meanwhile, sources stated that the Quad Foreign Ministers’ meeting will take place in New Delhi on May 26.

(iii) The discussions are expected to focus extensively on regional and international issues, including the

Ukraine war, the West Asia situation, and China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

7.The West Bengal Cabinet has approved a monthly financial assistance scheme of ₹3,000 for women starting from June 1.

(i) The second cabinet meeting under Chief Minister Suvendu was held at the state Secretariat in Howrah, West Bengal. After the meeting, State Minister for Women, Children and Social Welfare Agnimitra Paul told reporters:

- Under the "Anna Poorna" scheme, women in West Bengal will receive ₹3,000 per month from June 1. Women who applied for citizenship under the Citizenship Amendment Act and those who applied for re-entry into the electoral roll will also receive the benefit.
- The cabinet also approved free bus travel for women in state-run buses from June 1.
- OBC list revision: The cabinet decided to revise and cancel the inclusion of Muslims in the Other Backward Classes (OBC) list made during the Trinamool Congress Government. It also decided to discontinue the monthly allowance given to registered imams and other religious leaders in mosques.

8.The Central Information Commission (CIC) has stated that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is not a public authority under the Right to Information (RTI) Act and therefore is not obligated to answer queries filed under the Act.

(i) The CIC was hearing an appeal seeking details under the RTI Act regarding the legal provisions and authority under which the BCCI functions as India's representative in national and international cricket tournaments and selects players for such events. Following the hearing, Information Commissioner P.R. Ramesh stated:

- The BCCI is an autonomous private body registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act. It was not established under the Constitution, by Parliament, by a State Legislature, or through a Government notification.
- Therefore, under Section 2(h) of the RTI Act, the BCCI cannot be classified as a public authority.
- Hence, based on the facts and circumstances of the case, the provisions of the RTI Act do not apply to the BCCI.

8.Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited Swedish companies to invest in India.

(i) During his visit to Sweden, Prime Minister Modi met Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson in Gothenburg. The leaders reviewed bilateral relations and discussed ways to strengthen diplomatic, economic, and technological cooperation, along with regional and international issues.

(ii) The two leaders agreed to double bilateral trade and investments between India and Sweden over the next five years. Swedish Crown Princess Victoria was also present during the meeting.

(iii) Following the meeting, a joint statement was released stating that Sweden supports India's bid for permanent membership in a reformed and expanded United Nations Security Council.

(iv) Invitation to Swedish companies:

- Speaking at an event attended by European companies in Gothenburg, Modi said that reforms in India are progressing rapidly. He invited Swedish firms to invest in sectors such as green hydrogen,



clean energy, manufacturing, telecommunications, digital infrastructure, electronics, artificial intelligence, and healthcare.

- The event was attended by Swedish Prime Minister Kristersson, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, European industry leaders, and heads of Indian companies.

