

# NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

## US Vice President JD Vance to join his wife in Greenland on Friday

**WASHINGTON, MAR 26:** Vice President JD Vance said that he's joining his wife on a Friday trip to Greenland, suggesting in an online video that global security is at stake.

"We're going to check out how things are going there," Vance said in a video shared Tuesday. "Speaking for President Trump, we want to reinvigorate the security of the people of Greenland because we think it's important to protecting the security of the entire world."

President Donald Trump irked much of Europe by suggesting that the United States should in some form control the self-governing, mineral-rich territory of American ally Denmark. As the nautical gateway to the Arctic and North Atlantic approaches to North America, Greenland has broader strategic value as both China and Russia also seek access to its waterways and the nearby natural resources.

The vice president's decision to visit a US military base in Greenland has removed the risk of violating potential diplomatic taboos by sending a delegation to another country without an official invite. Yet Vance has also criticized longstanding European allies for relying on military support from the United States, openly antagonizing partners in ways that have generated concerns about America's reliability.

Ahead of the vice president's announcement that he would join his wife, discontent from the governments of Greenland and Denmark



had been growing sharper, with the Greenland government posting on Facebook Monday night that it had "not extended any invitations for any visits, neither private nor official."

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told Danish national broadcasts Tuesday that it was "unacceptable pressure."

The office of second lady Usha Vance said Sunday that she would depart Thursday for Greenland and return Saturday. Vance and one of her three children had planned to visit historic sites and learn about Greenland's culture, but her husband's participation has reoriented the trip around national security.

The vice president said he didn't want to let his wife "have all that fun by herself" and said he plans to visit a Space Force outpost in the northwest coast of Greenland. Vance said that other countries have threatened Greenland as well as the United States and Canada.

Trump's national security adviser, Mike Waltz, was initially listed among the group of US officials also heading to Greenland — but his name was omitted when it was announced that the vice president was now attending.

The White House didn't say Tuesday if Waltz's travel plans had been altered after it was revealed that he had errantly added a journalist to a secure messaging app conversation about a military strike in Yemen.

Vance said leaders in Denmark and North America had "ignored" Greenland for "far too long."

The visit to Pituffik Space Base will take place instead of Usha Vance's previously announced trip to the Avan-naata Qimussersu dogsled race in Sisimiut.

But Dwayne Ryan Menezes, founder and managing director of the Polar Research Policy Initiative, said that the Trump administration's "intimidation" of Greenland could backfire. Menezes said if Trump

was "smart enough" to understand Greenland's strategic importance that he should also be "smart enough to know there is no greater way to weaken America's hand and hurt its long-term interests than turning its back on its allies, the principal asymmetrical advantage it enjoys over its adversaries."

Despite officials in Greenland and Denmark becoming more vocal in expressing objections, Vance is allowed to visit the space base, said Marc Jacobsen, a professor at the Royal Danish Defense College, because of a 1951 agreement between Denmark and the US regarding the defense of Greenland.

"What is controversial here is all about the timing," he said. "Greenland and Denmark have stated very clearly that they don't want the US to visit right now, when Greenland doesn't have a government in place."

During his first term, Trump floated the idea of purchasing the world's largest island, even as Denmark, a NATO ally, insisted it wasn't for sale. The people of Greenland also have firmly rejected Trump's plans.

Trump's return to the White House has included a desire with territorial expansion, with the US president seeking to add Canada as a 51st state and resume control of the Panama Canal. He has also indicated that US interests could take over the land in the war-torn Gaza Strip from Israel and convert it into a luxury outpost.

## Suspended Congress MLAs 'evicted' from Odisha Assembly

**NEW DELHI, MAR 26:** The suspended Congress MLAs, who were staging a sit-in in the Well of the House protesting action against them, were forcibly evicted from the Assembly and dropped from the Congress Bhawan, a party leader alleged on Wednesday.

The MLAs were "forcibly evicted" from the Assembly on Tuesday night and they had to spend the night on the street at Master Canteen, he said.

"We were manhandled and forcibly evicted from the Assembly at the dead of the night. This is grossly illegal and undemocratic," alleged party MLA Tarapasad Bahinipati, one of the two Congress MLAs who was not suspended.

Odisha Congress president Bhakta Charan Das and AICC in-charge of Odisha, Ajay Kumar Lallu are sitting on dharna in the Master Canteen area on Wednesday protesting the suspension of 12 party MLAs.

Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Rama Chandra Kadam alleged that the party MLAs during their stay in the Assembly, were denied food, water and even toilet facility. Kadam was injured in the Assembly on Tuesday night as a security man slammed the door on his hand. He sustained injury on his finger.



The Congress MLA were on Tuesday suspended from the House for seven days on a charge of 'indiscipline'. They were demanding formation of a House Committee to inquire into the rising crimes against women across the state after the BJP came to power in June last year.

The suspension of 12 Congress MLAs also triggered a face-off outside the Assembly on Tuesday night as police prevented the entry of senior Congress leaders to Assembly premises. The police later took the leaders to reserve ground and released

them later. Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena said that the Congress leaders and activists were taken on preventive arrest and released at the reserve ground.

Taking to X, Congress Odisha in-charge Ajay Kumar Lallu said: "The Congress party is fighting from the streets to the House for investigation of the exploitation and atrocities on women in Odisha. Our 12 MLAs were expelled from the House, and now when state president Bhakta Charan Das Ji and former state pres-

ident Jaydev Jena Ji were going to meet the MLAs sitting on strike in the Assembly, the police forcibly arrested them. Why is the government afraid of a high-level investigation? What does it want to hide by not forming an investigation committee?"

Suspended Congress MLA Sofia Firdous on Wednesday said: "Let this be clear—suspension and intimidation cannot stop us.

We will continue our fight, inside and outside the Assembly, until every woman in Odisha feels safe and justice is served."

## AAP accuses UP govt of promoting liquor with 'free bottles'

**NEW DELHI, MAR 26:** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday accused the Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government of encouraging alcoholism by allegedly allowing a "one plus, one free" liquor scheme in the state.

There was no immediate response to the allegation from the BJP, which rules the state.

Addressing a press conference, Delhi AAP chief Saurabh Bharadwaj also wondered why no action had been taken against liquor shops reportedly offering free bottles of alcohol.

"We are seeing many videos on social media from across Uttar Pradesh where long queues are forming outside liquor shops. It's a conspiracy to make people alcoholics. I want to ask UP CM Yogi Adityanath why there has been no bulldozer action against these shops," Bharadwaj said.



The former Delhi minister asked if the scheme had the approval of the BJP's central leadership.

"Has CM Yogi started this 'one plus, one free' alcohol scheme after consulting the BJP leadership? If not, why

is the central BJP leadership silent on this?" he asked. The party attacked the UP government also in a post on X.

"A river of liquor is flowing in BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh. At liquor shops in

Noida, a free bottle of alcohol is being given with each purchase. Do the BJP and Congress not see any scam or irregularity in this? Will the BJP central government order a CBI-ED investigation into this?" it posted.

## BJP's 'Saugat-e-Modi' purely political: Mayawati

**LUCKNOW, MAR 26:** Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati called the BJP's 'Saugat-e-Modi' for the minorities a political move on Wednesday, a day after it was announced.

The Bharatiya Janata Party had on Tuesday launched the nationwide programme aimed at engaging with the minorities, starting with the distribution of kits containing eatables and clothes for women.

In a post on X, Mayawati said, "While the BJP's announcement to send the Prime Minister's 'love message and gift' as 'Saugat-e-Modi' to 32 lakh poor minority families on occasions



such as Eid, Baisakhi, Good Friday, and Easter may seem like a benevolent gesture, it only serves their political interests."

She said she wonders what good the move would do when "the Muslim and

Bahujan community" continue to live in fear and poverty.

Mayawati said the BJP should have focused on addressing the root causes of these communities' struggles by giving them job opportunities and a safe environment to live in.

"Instead of distributing temporary gifts, the central and state governments should have made permanent arrangements to combat the immense poverty, unemployment, and backwardness that these communities face. Ensuring their security and stability should be a priority," she said.

## Japanese court orders dissolution of Unification Church

**TOKYO, MAR 26:** A court ordered the dissolution of the Unification Church in Japan, upholding a government request for a revocation spurred by the investigation into the 2022 assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

The Tokyo District Court's revocation of the church's legal status means it will lose its tax-exempt privilege and must liquidate its assets. However, the church can still appeal the decision to higher courts.

The order follows a request by Japan's Education Ministry in 2023 to dissolve the influential South Korea-based sect, citing manipulative fundraising and recruitment tactics that sowed fear among followers and harmed their families.

The Japanese branch of the church had criticised the request as a serious threat to religious freedom and the human rights of its followers.

The investigation into the 2022 assassination of Abe revealed decades of cozy ties between the South Korea-based church and Japan's governing Liberal Democra-



tic Party.

The church obtained legal status as a religious organisation in Japan in 1968 amid an anti-communist movement supported by Abe's grandfather, former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi.

The man accused of killing Abe resented the church and blamed it for his family's fi-

nancial troubles.

The church, which officially calls itself the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, is the first religious group to face a revocation order under Japan's civil code.

Two earlier case involved criminal charges -- the Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult,

which carried out a sarin nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway system and Myokakuji group, whose executives were convicted of fraud. Japan has in place hurdles for restraining religious activities due to lessons from the prewar and wartime oppression of freedom of religion and thought.

## Communist parties will enter 21st century, but it may only be in 22nd: Tharoor's swipe at LDF

**NEW DELHI, MAR 26:** In a stinging jibe at Kerala's LDF government, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Wednesday said the Communist parties will one day finally enter the 21st century, but it may only be in the 22nd.

His remarks came after the Kerala Assembly on Tuesday passed the Kerala State Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Bill, 2025, which marks a break from the CPI(M)-led government's long-standing opposition to the privatisation of education.

Tharoor said, "So Kerala's LDF government has finally done the right thing, by permitting private universities to open in the state. As usual, the decision comes about 15 to 20 years late, which is usually the case with those anchored in a 19th century ideology."

Never forget that when computers first came to India, Communist goons entered public sector offices to smash them, the MP from Thiruvananthapuram said in his post on X.

The only parties to object to the introduction of mobile telephones in India were also the communist ones, Tharoor



said. It took them years to realise that the real beneficiary of these changes was the common man, for whom they claimed to speak, he said.

"I'm sure they will one day finally enter the 21st century, but it may only be in the 22nd!" Tharoor said, taking a dig at the communist parties.

The bill was passed by voice vote following detailed discussions on Monday

and Tuesday.

Leader of Opposition V D Satheesan stated that the UDF was not opposing the bill in principle but urged the government to conduct a thorough study and scrutiny before implementing it.

He suggested giving preference to credible corporate education agencies that have been operating in the state for decades when establishing private universities.