

THE HINDU REVIEW

MAY 2026

→ **Current Affairs**
→ **Monthly Capsule**

- IPL 2026: Final Award Winners
- International Booker Prize 2026

- Florence Nightingale Awards 2026
- Pulitzer Prize 2026

- PM Modi's Visit
- World Press Freedom Index 2026 Report

- Sansad Ratna Awards 2026
- Third India-Nordic Summit 2026

- BHAVYA Sc
- SARTHAK-PDS Scheme



Contents

Most Important News of the Month.....	3
National News.....	12
GOVT SCHEMES	21
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	22
BANKING & FINANCE	26
MoU's & AGREEMENTS	33
APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS	33
AWARDS.....	36
SUMMITS, EVENTS & CONFERENCE.....	38
INDEX.....	38
DEFENCE.....	39
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY.....	41
SPORTS	43
BOOKS & AUTHORS.....	46
OBITUARY.....	46
IMPORTANT DAYS	47
Miscellaneous	49
Static Takeaways	50

Most Important News of the Month

World Press Freedom Index 2026 Report

India has been ranked at 157th out of 180 countries in the latest World Press Freedom Index 2026. Press freedom has reached its weakest point in decades across the globe, according to the latest annual report by Reporters Without Borders. The group's World Press Freedom Index, which evaluates 180 countries, recorded its lowest average score in the index's 25-year history. For the first time ever more than half of the countries assessed fall into the 'difficult' or 'very serious' category.

Understanding the World Press Freedom Index

The World Press Freedom Index evaluates the all countries based on these five key indicators.

1. Political environment
2. Legal framework
3. Economic conditions
4. Social context
5. Safety of journalists

It provides the comprehensive picture of how free and safe journalism is in each individual country.

Top 10 Countries with the Best Press Freedom

For this year once again the European nations have dominated the list and they are known for strong institutions and media protections.

Top 10 Best Countries (2026)

1. Norway
2. Netherlands
3. Estonia
4. Denmark
5. Sweden
6. Finland
7. Ireland
8. Switzerland
9. Luxembourg
10. Portugal

Norway has retained the top position for the 10th consecutive year which reflects the its strong commitment to the press freedom and journalist safety.

Top 10 Countries with the Worst Press Freedom

Top 10 Worst Countries (2026)

- Azerbaijan (171)
- Russia (172)
- Turkmenistan (173)
- Vietnam (174)
- Afghanistan (175)
- Saudi Arabia (176)
- Iran (177)

- China (178)
- North Korea (179)
- Eritrea (180)

For the third consecutive years Eritrea remains the worst performing country with severe restrictions on media.

India's Rank Falls Amid Crisis

As per the report India's position showcases the continued decline over the past decade. In the year 2014 India was ranked at 140 and there have been slight fluctuations in the recent years and this trend shows the steady downfall in the press freedom conditions.

The report also highlights that India is among more than 110 countries where the legal framework governing media was weakened and raising the concerns about the ability of journalists to report freely without any fear or legal consequence.

India and Its Neighbors Comparison

India now ranks below the neighborhood countries.

- Nepal (87)
- Maldives (108)
- Sri Lanka (134)
- Bhutan (150)
- Bangladesh (152)
- Pakistan (153)

'Criminalisation of Journalism' The Key Concern For 2026

One of the most alarming observations from the 2026 index is the rise of terms called 'criminalisation of journalism.' This refers to the increasing usage of the laws to restrict or penalize journalistic work.

Major Issues Identified

- The misuse of national security laws.
- Also the use of emergency provisions and enforcement of legal tools to restrict them to reporting.
- Also growing challenges like legal harassment and pressure on independent journalists.

Global Press Freedom Hits 25-Year Low

The 2026 index has also reveals the concerning global picture as the press freedom reaching its lowest level since 2001.

Key Global Trends

- Over the 50% of countries fall under 'difficult' or 'very serious' categories.
- Also the legal indicators of press freedom have been declined in over 60% of nations.
- And protection mechanisms for journalists are becoming weak or ineffective in 80% of countries.

This indicates that the crisis is not just limited to a few regions but it is the widespread global phenomenon.

PM Modi's UAE Visit: India and UAE Sign 7 Major Strategic Agreements

Honorable Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi has paid the visit to United Arab Emirates (UAE), both countries have significantly strengthened the bilateral ties between the both nations. This high level meetings between both nations has featured several outcomes with the signing of seven major agreements in the sectors like, over energy security, defense cooperation, artificial intelligence, maritime infrastructure, workforce development and large scale investments.

List of Agreements Signed

1. Major Energy Security with Strategic Petroleum Reserve Partnership

One of the most important agreements involves the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL) and the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC).

This partnership is strategically important because it will strengthens the India's long-term energy resilience.

The collaboration is expected to support the strategic petroleum reserve cooperation, stronger crude oil energy security, potential collaboration in LNG infrastructure and also focus on future LPG infrastructure expansion.

As India is heavily depends on imported energy, this strategic reserve partnerships are crucial during the global supply disruptions.

2. Long-Term LPG Supply Agreement

India and the UAE also signed the dedicated agreement for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) supply.

This is important because LPG remains a key household and industrial fuel source in country.

A stable long term supply arrangement helps to,

- Reduce the supply uncertainty
- Also strengthen household fuel security
- Improve energy planning predictability
- And support the India's growing energy demand

3. India-UAE Strategic Defence Partnership

A major highlight of the visit is the Strategic Defence Partnership framework agreement.

This agreement will expands bilateral defense cooperation.

The agreement covers the,

- Defence manufacturing
- Military innovation
- Armed forces training
- Maritime security cooperation
- Cyber defence collaboration
- Secure communications systems

This reflects the shift from purely economic ties toward deeper security alignment.

4. Gujarat's Vadinar Set for Major Maritime Infrastructure Project

Also a proposed ship repair and maritime infrastructure cluster at Vadinar, Gujarat forms the another major outcome.

This aligns with the India's Make in India industrial ambitions.

The project could help the India to strengthen its maritime industrial ecosystem through the,

- Ship repair infrastructure
- Marine engineering growth
- Port-linked industrial activity
- Global maritime service competitiveness

5. Skill Development Push for India's Maritime Workforce

Also a dedicated arrangement on ship repair skill development was also announced.

This focuses on the workforce capacity building.

The main objective is to make India a stronger hub for the,

- Shipbuilding professionals
- Ship repair specialists
- Maritime engineering talent
- Industrial marine services

This agreement is vital because infrastructure growth without the skilled labor limits competitiveness.

6. India-UAE AI Partnership: 8 Exaflop Supercomputer Cluster Announced

One of the most futuristic announcements was the plan to establish the eight Exaflop supercomputer cluster.

This project will involve the collaboration between Centre for Development of Advanced Computing and G42.

This will be major AI and computing milestone.

Exaflop scale computing is associated with the extremely advanced computational capacity and it is useful in,

- Artificial intelligence
- Weather modelling
- Defence simulations
- Scientific research
- Large-scale data analytics
- Advanced computing innovation

7. UAE Commits \$5 Billion Investment in India

The UAE also committed the \$5 billion in investments across Indian infrastructure and financial institutions.

This could support sectors such as the,

- Transport infrastructure
- Urban development
- Logistics
- Industrial expansion
- Financial ecosystem strengthening

Also the large sovereign and strategic investments are often improve long-term economic confidence.

Pulitzer Prize 2026

Two Indian journalists have won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for their reporting on cyber fraud and digital surveillance. This award recognizes their impactful storytelling which sheds the light on the growing threat of the digital scams in the modern world. This work not just highlights the real life consequences but also raise the awareness about the misuse of the technology.

Indian Journalists Win Pulitzer Prize 2026

Indian journalists R K Anand and Suparna Sharma have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize 2026 in the category of Illustrated Reporting and Commentary.

They have shared the award with Natalie Obiko Pearson for their collaborative work which was published in Bloomberg.

The award was announced on the May 4th 2026 and recognized their exceptional storytelling form and investigative depth.

A'trAPped' Story Which Have Exposed Digital Exploitation

The award-winning project which titled as 'trAPPed' presents the gripping narrative of a neurologist in the India who have become a victim of a 'digital arrest' scam.

The story uses the powerful mix of the,

- Visual storytelling
- Data-driven insights
- Narrative reporting

It also highlights how the cybercriminals exploit the technology to manipulate and control victims remotely and exposing the dark side of digital connectivity.

Why This Story Matters in Today's Digital World

The investigation will also brings attention to the growing global threat of the cyber fraud and digital surveillance.

As the increasing dependence on smartphones and online platforms these types of such crimes are becoming more sophisticated.

The report also underscores the,

- Risks of the digital scams and online fraud.
- Also the misuse of surveillance technologies.
- And lack of awareness among users.

It also serves as the wake-up call for individuals, institutions and governments to strengthen the cybersecurity measures.

About the Pulitzer Prize

The Pulitzer Prize is one of the most respected honors in the fields of journalism, literature and music.

This award is administered by Columbia University and recognizes the excellence in,

- Investigative reporting
- Public service journalism
- Storytelling and commentary

To win this award is considered as a global benchmark of journalistic excellence.

Florence Nightingale Awards 2026

Respectable President of India Shri. Droupadi Murmu has presented the National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026 at Rashtrapati Bhavan on International Nurses Day. This ceremony recognized the outstanding nursing professionals from across the country for their dedication and commitment to the healthcare.

Key Highlights of National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026

This prestigious awards are instituted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) to honor the excellence in nursing services.

- Awards are presented at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.
- It recognizes the service, compassion and resilience.
- It also includes a Certificate of Merit, ₹1 lakh cash prize and a medal.
- The ceremony also attended by Union Health Minister Shri. Jagat Prakash Nadda.

These awards represent the one of the highest recognitions for the nursing professionals in India.

Who Are the Awardees?

This year the nursing personnel from various states, Union Territories and institutions were honored.

Some of the notable awardees include,

- Kulwinder Parhi (Leh)
- Ujwala Mahadev Soyam (Maharashtra)
- Lalenthangi Hnamte (Mizoram)
- Madhu Mala Gurung (Sikkim)
- Gita Karmakar (West Bengal)
- Poonam Verma (Chandigarh)
- Kabitha Jagannath (Karnataka)
- Aysha Beebu K. (Lakshadweep)
- Dr. R Shankar Shanumugam (Tamil Nadu)
- Maj Gen Lissamma PV (Indian Army)

Who Is Eligible for the Award?

The awards are given to te,

- Registered Nurses
- Midwives
- Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs)
- Lady Health Visitors (LHVs)

They can belong to the,

- Central or State Governments
- Union Territories
- Voluntary organisations

This ensures the recognition across the all levels of healthcare services.

International Nurses Day 2026: Theme and Significance

The International Nurses Day is celebrated every year on the May 12 to mark the birth anniversary of the Florence Nightingale.

Theme of the 2026 is 'Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives'

The theme emphasizes the,

- Better working conditions for nurses.
- Fair salaries and staffing support.
- Leadership opportunities.
- Access to the quality education and training.

International Booker Prize 2026

Taiwan Travelogue wins the prize of the International Booker Prize 2026, put the Taiwan's storytelling, history and literary culture firmly on the world map. It was written by the Yang Shuang-zi and translated by Lin King and this novel has made the first work translated from Mandarin Chinese to win the prestigious award.

Taiwan Travelogue Wins International Booker Prize 2026

The prestigious International Booker Prize 2026 has gone to the Taiwan Travelogue, it is a novel originally published in Taiwan in 2020.

The book is written by the Yang Shuang-zi and translated into the English by Lin King.

This victory is historically significant because it marks the first Mandarin Chinese translated work to win the International Booker Prize.

The award recognizes both the author and translator equally and highlighting the importance of literary translation in global publishing.

What Is Taiwan Travelogue About?

The novel presents the inventive and layered storytelling structure.

It is written as a fictional memoir of a supposed Japanese writer named Aoyama Chizuko, set in the year 1938 during that period when Taiwan was under Japanese colonial rule.

But there is a literary twist as the "memoir" is fictional and the real author frames herself as a merely the translator rather than the creator.

This metafictional style makes the narrative intellectually engaging.

A Story of Travel, Food, Friendship, and Colonial History

At the centre of this story is a journey across the colonial Taiwan. Aoyama Chizuko travels through Taiwan on a government sponsored lecture tour.

She is accompanied by her interpreter Ō Chizuru (Chi-chan).

Their relationship develops into the complex emotional bond shaped by the,

- Friendship
- Cultural exchange
- Unspoken desire
- Colonial tension
- Personal freedom

The novel uses the travel and food as narrative tools.

Taiwanese cuisine becomes a central storytelling part of this novel, and it offers the readers a vivid sensory experience while also revealing social and political realities.

Full List of Shortlisted Books and Authors

Below the six novels shortlisted for the International Booker Prize 2026.

1. 'The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran' – Shida Bazayr

It is the deeply moving narrative following the Iranian family from the 1979 revolution to their life in the exile. It also highlights the political upheaval and generational trauma.

2. 'She Who Remains' – Rene Karabash

A unique story which is set in the Albanian mountains. It focusing on the identity and survival through the life of the woman living as a man.

3. 'The Director' – Daniel Kehlmann

It was written by Daniel Kehlmann and this novel explores the life of filmmaker G.W. Pabst. The book is navigating Hollywood and Nazi-era Austria.

4. 'On Earth As It Is Beneath' – Ana Paula Maia

It is the dark and gripping tale which set in a brutal penalty colony. In where the morality and survival collides.

5. 'The Witch' – Marie NDiaye

it was authored by Marie NDiaye and this novel presents the strange dreamlike story of the sorceress and her daughters.

6. 'Taiwan Travelogue' – Yang Shuang-zi

A historical narrative set as the year like 1930s in Taiwan. And also following a Japanese writer and her translator on the journey of culture and identity.

Themes That Define This Year's Shortlist

The 2026 shortlisted books are stand out because of the the strong emotional and social themes.

Several books which are focus on displacement and identity, particularly the,

- Life in exile
- Cultural belonging
- Political resistance
- Human Resilience amid Hardship situation

Despite themes related to violence and oppression the stories emphasize the,

- Hope and endurance
- Emotional strength
- Human connection
- Blending History with Fiction

Why the International Booker Prize Matters

The International Booker Prize plays the important role in global literature by the promoting translated works and also giving voice to non-English author.

It is also encouraging the cross-cultural understanding.

Since 2016 for its inception the award has been given to the single book with the 50,000 Pound prize money equally shared between the author and translator.

Sansad Ratna Awards 2026

For the year 2026, the Sansad Ratna Awards have been announced the outstanding performance by the Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Standing Committees. This year jury has selected the 10 Lok Sabha MPs, 2 Rajya Sabha MPs and 4 Parliamentary Standing Committees for the prestigious honors. Also among those awardees Rajya Sabha MP Medha Kulkarni from Pune and Lok Sabha MP Smita Uday Wagh from Jalgaon are the standout names.

Women MPs Among Major Award Winners

The inclusion of the Medha Kulkarni and Smita Uday Wagh has drawn special attention.

Smita Uday Wagh's recognition is particularly significant because of her dedication to the parliamentary duties despite battling cancer.

According to the awards committee, she had continued attending Parliament sessions even while undergoing chemotherapy treatment which reflects the extraordinary commitment to public service.

Full List of Sansad Ratna Awards 2026 Individual Winners

The MPs selected for the outstanding parliamentary performance includes the,

1. Jagdambika Pal (Uttar Pradesh)
2. P.P. Chaudhary (Rajasthan)
3. Nishikant Dubey (Jharkhand)
4. Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde (Maharashtra)
5. Praveen Patel (Uttar Pradesh)
6. Bidyut Baran Mahato (Jharkhand)
7. Lumbaram Chaudhary (Rajasthan)
8. Dr Hemant Vishnu Savara (Maharashtra)
9. Smita Uday Wagh (Maharashtra)
10. Naresh Ganpat Mhaske (Maharashtra)
11. Dr Medha Vishram Kulkarni (Maharashtra)
12. Narhari Amin (Gujarat)

The awards are based on the parliamentary performance up to the end of the Budget Session 2026.

Parliamentary Committees That Won Awards

Also the Four Parliamentary Standing Committees have also been recognized for the exceptional work.

These includes the,

1. Committee on Agriculture – chaired by Dr Charanjit Singh Channi
2. Finance Committee – chaired by Bhartruhari Mahtab
3. Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Committee – chaired by Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka
4. Coal and Mines Committee – chaired by Anurag Thakur

These committees were selected for their effective legislative oversight and impactful parliamentary functioning.

What Is the Sansad Ratna Award?

The Sansad Ratna Award was instituted in the year 2010 by Chennai-based NGO Prime Point Foundation.

The main idea was inspired by the former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, who also launched the first awards ceremony.

The honour also recognizes the parliamentarians who demonstrate outstanding legislative performance, active participation and effective public representation.

How Winners Are Selected

The selection process is based on data-driven.

The performance of evaluation is based on official parliamentary data including the,

- Questions asked
- Debates participated in
- Private member bills introduced
- Committee participation
- Attendance and legislative engagement

Data support comes from the,

- PRS Legislative Research
- Lok Sabha Secretariat
- Rajya Sabha Secretariat

The independent jury comprising former parliamentarians, constitutional experts and academicians finalizes the winners.

Third India-Nordic Summit 2026

India just recently concluded the Third India-Nordic Summit which was held Oslo on May 19, 2026. India and five other Nordic nations has been agreed to transform their relationship into a Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership and signals the stronger cooperation in the clean energy, climate action, Arctic research, digital innovation, trade and defense.

What is the India-Nordic Summit?

The India-Nordic Summit is the high-level diplomatic platform between India and five Nordic countries,

- Denmark
- Finland
- Iceland
- Norway
- Sweden

The partnership has began formally at the First India-Nordic Summit in the year 2018.

The primary objective was to build cooperation in the sector like,

- Innovation
- Green technologies
- Renewable energy
- Sustainable development
- Skill development
- Economic growth

Over a period of time, the relationship has expanded into a strategic sectors like maritime security, Arctic cooperation, defense and emerging technologies.

Why the Third India-Nordic Summit Matters

The 2026 summit marks the major diplomatic upgrade.

India and Nordic countries have now agreed to elevate their ties into a Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership.

This is important because the Nordic nations are global leaders in to the,

- Clean energy technologies
- Green manufacturing
- Digital governance
- Sustainable urban development
- Innovation ecosystems
- Climate solutions

India offers the,

- Large-scale markets
- Skilled talent
- Manufacturing capacity
- Growing digital economy
- Strategic geopolitical relevance

This makes this partnership highly complementary with the partners.

Major Outcomes of the Summit

Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership

The biggest announcement was the formal launch of the new Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership.

This partnership will focus on to the,

- Renewable energy
- Green hydrogen
- Sustainable technologies
- Climate mitigation
- Digital governance
- Water management
- Smart innovation systems

Trade and Investment Cooperation Gets a Big Push

Also the economic ties between the India and Nordic countries have grown rapidly.

According to summit discussions the,

- Bilateral trade has quadrupled in the last decade
- Also the investment inflows have increased by nearly to 200%

India aims to attract the greater Nordic investments in the,

- Advanced manufacturing
- Renewable energy
- Infrastructure
- Technology
- Health-tech

India-EFTA Trade Deal Adds Momentum

A major factor which boost the India-Nordic relations is the India-European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA).

EFTA includes the,

- Iceland
- Norway
- Switzerland
- Liechtenstein

Arctic Cooperation Becomes Strategically Important

One of the most important strategic themes of the summit was Arctic cooperation.

India's partnership with Nordic countries is closely linked to the its Arctic interests.

Why Arctic Matters for India

Climate changes in the Arctic affects the,

- Indian monsoon patterns
- Food security
- Water resources
- Coastal sustainability
- Island ecosystems

India's Arctic policy, which titled as the 'India and the Arctic: Building a Partnership for Sustainable Development' put strong focuses on to the,

- Scientific research
- Climate protection
- Sustainable development
- Connectivity
- Governance cooperation
- Capacity building

Blue Economy and Maritime Cooperation

The summit has also strengthened the cooperation in the blue economy.

Blue economy refers to the sustainable use of ocean resources for a,

- Economic growth
- Maritime trade
- Fisheries
- Marine conservation
- Coastal development

India plans the Blue economy collaboration with a Norway and improve the maritime sustainability partnerships with Nordic nations.

Digital Innovation and Emerging Technologies

Digital transformation was another important focus area.

Collaboration are planned in the areas like,

- Artificial intelligence
- 6G technologies
- Telecom
- Cybersecurity
- Digital infrastructure
- Smart governance systems

Nordic countries have the advanced expertise in digital ecosystems which makes them strong innovation partners.

STEM Research and Talent Mobility

Research collaboration has received strong emphasis.

Planned cooperation includes the,

- Science
- Technology
- Engineering
- Mathematics
- Academic partnerships
- Innovation research

This could benefit the multiple Indian students and researchers.

Defense and Strategic Manufacturing Cooperation

The summit has also discussed defense cooperation.

Potential collaboration areas are the,

- Defense production
- Technology transfer
- Industrial manufacturing
- Strategic innovation

India's liberalized defense investment policies make this as an emerging partnership area.

India's Bilateral Trade With Nordic Nations

Sweden

Bilateral trade: USD 6.96 billion (2024)

Denmark

Goods trade: USD 2.05 billion (2025)

Norway

Bilateral trade: USD 1.05 billion (2024-25)

Finland

Goods trade: USD 1.017 billion (2024-25)

Iceland

It is small but strategically important for the Arctic and geothermal cooperation.

Supreme Court Collegium Recommends Five New Judges Including Senior Advocate V Mohana

The Supreme Court Collegium led by the Respectable Chief Justice of India Surya Kant has recommended the appointment of the five new judges to the top court after the recent increase in the court's sanctioned strength from 34 to 38 judges. This recommendations has included the four High Court Chief Justices and senior advocate V Mohana. V Mohana's elevation is truly historic as she is set to become only the second woman directly appointed from the bar to the Supreme Court after Justice Indu Malhotra.

Supreme Court Judge Strength Increased to 38

Recently, the Honorable President has promulgated an ordinance to increasing the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court judges from 34 to 38 judges.

The move was aimed at addressing the,

- Rising case pendency
- Judicial workload
- Faster disposal of cases

Following this expansion, the collegium has recommended the five new appointments to fill the increased vacancies.

If it gets approved, the Supreme Court's working strength will rise from 32 to 37 judges and leaving only one vacancy.

Who Are the Recommended Judges?

The collegium has recommended the following names,

- Justice Sheel Nagu
- Justice Shree Chandrashekhar
- Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva
- Justice Arun Palli
- Senior Advocate V Mohana

These recommendations were finalized after the extensive discussions within the collegium.

V Mohana's Historic Elevation

Senior advocate V Mohana is set to create a history with her appointment as judge in top court.

She will become the second woman directly elevated from the bar to the Supreme Court

The first woman was Justice Indu Malhotra.

About V Mohana

She comes from Coimbatore and a first-generation lawyer.

She became an Advocate-on-Record in the year 1996.

She also designated as Senior Advocate in 2015 and had over the 37 years of legal practice.

Her elevation is can be seen as the significant moment for the gender representation in the higher judiciary.

Justice Sheel Nagu

Justice Sheel Nagu is currently serving as the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

He appointed judge of Madhya Pradesh HC in the year 2011 and then became the Chief Justice of Punjab & Haryana HC in July 2024.

He was also member of inquiry panel related to Justice Yashwant Varma matter.

His retirement scheduled to 31 December 2029.

He is expected to have the tenure around three and a half years in the Supreme Court.

Justice Shree Chandrashekhar

Justice Shree Chandrashekhar, is currently the Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, has also been recommended to to court.

He earlier served on the Judges Inquiry Committee related to the Justice Yashwant Varma inquiry.

He will hold the office until 24th May, 2030.

Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva

Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, who is currently Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court has been also elevated to the top court.

He is expected to have around 3.5 years of tenure in the Supreme Court.

Justice Arun Palli

Current Chief Justice of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court Justice Arun Palli has also been recommended.

He is expected to serve around 3 years and 4 months as Supreme Court judge..

Collegium Discussion and Selection Process

The recommendations reportedly followed with the intense discussions within the collegium.

The collegium currently comprises the,

- CJI Surya Kant
- Justice Vikram Nath
- Justice J.K. Maheshwari
- Justice B.V. Nagarathna
- Justice M.M. Sundresh

Some of the names were reportedly dropped after differences of opinion among members.

The final recommendations were approved after the consensus-building.

What is the Supreme Court Collegium System?

The collegium system is the mechanism through which the judges are appointed and transferred in the higher judiciary.

Composition

For the Supreme Court appointments, the collegium consists of the,

- Chief Justice of India
- Four senior-most Supreme Court judges

This system has been evolved with the multiple Supreme Court's judgments and is not directly mentioned in the Constitution.

WHO Declares Ebola Global Health Emergency

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) for the latest Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Uganda. This decision comes after a surge in the suspected infections and deaths in the respected country. However, the WHO clarified that this is not a pandemic emergency like COVID-19.

WHO Declares Global Health Emergency Over Ebola

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has announced the emergency declaration after the outbreak showed signs of regional spread.

Around more than 300 suspected cases and 88 deaths have raised the major concern among global health agencies.

WHO has also said that international border closures are not necessary at this stage.

Where the Outbreak is Happening

The outbreak is mainly centered in the Ituri Province in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The respected authorities have reported 8 laboratory confirmed cases, 246 suspected cases and 80 suspected deaths.

Uganda has also confirmed the two Ebola cases which includes the one death.

Both the cases involved the travelers who are arrived from Congo.

Health experts believe that the real number of infections could be much higher.

What is Ebola Virus?

Ebola is a highly dangerous viral disease which causes severe haemorrhagic fever in humans.

It belongs to the Orthoebolavirus family.

The current outbreak is linked to the Bundibugyo virus strain which is a rare form of Ebola.

This strain is particularly concerning because the treatment and vaccine coverage remain limited.

How Ebola Spreads

Ebola is a zoonotic disease means that it can spread from animals to humans.

The fruit bats are considered as the natural host.

Humans can get infected through the contact with infected animals like monkeys, gorillas, chimpanzees or contaminated meat.

Also human to human spread happens through direct contact with infected,

- Blood
- Vomiting
- Saliva
- Sweat
- Semen
- Body fluids

It can also spread through the contaminated bedding or surfaces.

Ebola does not spread through the air like COVID-19.

Symptoms of Ebola

Symptoms of Ebola virus usually appear between 2 and 21 days after infection.

Early signs includes the high fever, weakness, headache, sore throat and muscle pain.

As the disease worsens, patients may develop the vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, rash and organ failure.

In the severe cases, internal and external bleeding can occur.

Some patients also experience the confusion and neurological complications.

Why Ebola is So Dangerous

Ebola is one of the deadliest infectious diseases in the world.

The average fatality rate is around 50 percent though some outbreaks have recorded even higher death rates.

The virus spreads quickly in the healthcare settings if strict precautions are not followed.

Also delayed diagnosis makes the situation even more dangerous.

How Ebola is Diagnosed

As Ebola symptoms look similar to the malaria and other viral infections, testing is essential.

The doctors are uses RT-PCR tests, ELISA tests, antigen detection and virus isolation methods.

Early testing improves the survival chances significantly.

Treatment Options

WHO has recommended the monoclonal antibody treatments like Ansuvimab (mAb114) and Inmazeb (REGN-EB3) for some Ebola strains.

However, the effectiveness depends on the virus variant.

Also supportive care remains the main treatment.

This includes hydration, oxygen support and infection management.

Are Ebola Vaccines Available?

Yes, vaccines for Ebola virus are present.

The currently approved vaccines include the Ervebo, Zabdeno, and Mvabea.

But protection against the current Bundibugyo strain remains uncertain right now.

This is the main reason behind the health agencies are highly alert.

What is a Public Health Emergency of International Concern?

A PHEIC is the WHO's highest emergency alert under international health regulations.

It means that the outbreak poses a risk beyond one country and needs coordinated global action.

Previously the PHEIC declarations include COVID-19, Mpox, Zika, Polio and earlier Ebola outbreaks.

Background of Ebola Outbreak History

Ebola virus was first discovered in the year 1976 near the Ebola River in present day Democratic Republic of Congo.

Since then, the Africa has witnessed multiple outbreaks.

The deadliest Ebola epidemic occurred between the year 2014 and 2016 in West Africa which have killed 11,000 people.

From Rodents to Cruise Cabins How Hanta Virus Is Spreading Concern

Health Experts around the world are raising the concerns after the recent cases of hantavirus which is linked to cruise ship travel. This virus is rare but have the potential to become deadly as it mainly spread by rodents and it can lead to severe lung complications within few days. As the infections remain uncommon the closed environment of cruise ships has made it tougher to trace the exposure sources. Several authorities are now urging stronger sanitation, pest control and early medical attention to prevent the any further risks.

What Is Hantavirus and How Does It Spread?

Hantavirus refers to that group of viruses which are primarily transmitted through rodents such as rats and mice.

Also humans usually get infected when they come into direct contact with rodent urine, saliva or any droppings.

The virus can also spread via airborne particles and specially in enclosed or poorly ventilated areas where the contaminated dust is inhaled.

As compare to diseases like COVID-19 hantavirus does not commonly spread from person to person which limits the large-scale outbreaks.

Why Cruise Ship Cases Are Raising Alarm

Recently the hantavirus cases associated with cruise ships which have drawn attention of the health experts due to the unique risks which ships environments pose.

Cruise ships often have the large numbers of people in confined spaces.

It also have the complex storage and waste management systems.

And this areas rodents may access the food supplies or cargo zones.

Health experts believe that rodents may have contaminated certain sections of ships which leading to exposure.

Although there is no clear evidence of human to human transmission onboard and its difficulty to tracing exposure has raised concerns.

Symptoms of Hantavirus

Hantavirus symptoms are initially resemble common viral infections and making early diagnosis challenging.

Early Symptoms Include

- Fever
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea and vomiting

In the severe cases this disease can progress into Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) which affects the lungs and can cause breathing failure.

Doctors have warned that symptoms can worsen rapidly within a few days and making early medical attention critical.

How Dangerous Is Hantavirus?

Although in minor cases hantavirus infections can be highly deadly and specially if it is not treated in time.

There is currently,

- No specific antiviral cure for this virus.
- Also the treatment focused on supportive care which includes the oxygen therapy.
- And there is a need for intensive monitoring in hospitals.

Early diagnosis can significantly improves the survival chances which makes awareness crucial. \

Where Has Hantavirus Been Found Before?

The cases of Hantavirus have been reported in the several parts of the world, including,

- United States
- South America
- Parts of Asia

Outbreaks are usually linked to the environments with high rodent activity such as the,

- Farms and warehouses
- Cabins and campsites
- Abandoned or poorly maintained buildings

National News

Cabinet Approvals

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, approved the introduction of **the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026**, to increase the strength of **Supreme Court judges from 33 to 37**, excluding the Chief Justice of India. The move aims to improve judicial efficiency, reduce case pendency, and ensure speedier delivery of justice. The expenditure on additional judges, supporting staff, and related facilities will be met from the Consolidated Fund of India. The proposal builds upon a series of amendments that have progressively increased the Supreme Court's sanctioned strength since the enactment of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956.
- The Cabinet also approved two new semiconductor projects under the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** with a cumulative investment of around **₹3,936 crore in Gujarat**. Crystal Matrix Limited will establish India's first commercial Mini/Micro-LED display facility based on Gallium Nitride (GaN) technology at Dholera, while Suchi Semicon Private Limited will set up a semiconductor assembly and testing facility in Surat. Together, these projects are expected to create around 2,230 skilled jobs and strengthen India's semiconductor ecosystem. With these approvals, the total number of semiconductor projects under ISM has reached 12, attracting investments of approximately ₹1.64 lakh crore.
- The Union Cabinet approved the **Mission for Cotton Productivity** with a financial outlay of **₹5,659.22 crore** for the period 2026-27 to 2030-31. The mission seeks to improve cotton productivity, quality, and sustainability through the development of high-yielding and climate-resilient seed varieties, adoption of advanced farming technologies, modernization of ginning facilities, strengthening testing infrastructure, and promoting the Kasturi Cotton Bharat initiative. The mission targets cotton production of 498 lakh bales by 2031 and aims to increase productivity from 440 kg per hectare to 755 kg per hectare while benefiting nearly 32 lakh farmers.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved three major railway multi-tracking projects worth approximately ₹23,437 crore. These include the **Nagda–Mathura 3rd and 4th Line, Guntakal–Wadi 3rd and 4th Line, and Burhwal–Sitapur 3rd and 4th Line projects**. Covering 19 districts across six states, these projects will add about 901 kilometers to the railway network, improve connectivity for around 83 lakh people, support freight movement, reduce logistics costs, and contribute to environmental sustainability through lower fuel consumption and carbon emissions.
- In another significant infrastructure decision, the Cabinet approved the development of a modern ship repair facility at **Vadinar, Gujarat, with an investment of ₹1,570 crore**. The project will be jointly implemented by Deendayal Port Authority and Cochin Shipyard Limited. Equipped with floating dry docks, workshops, and advanced marine infrastructure, the facility will enable India to repair large vessels domestically, reducing dependence on foreign shipyards, saving foreign exchange, and generating employment opportunities in the maritime sector.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the **Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane for the 2026-27 sugar season at ₹365 per quintal for a basic recovery rate of 10.25%**. Farmers will receive additional incentives for higher recovery rates, while those supplying cane to mills with recovery below 9.5% will still receive ₹338.3 per quintal without deductions. The approved FRP is over 100% higher than the cost of production and is aimed at safeguarding the interests of nearly five crore sugarcane farmers and their families.
- To strengthen India's aviation sector, the **Cabinet approved ECLGS 5.0 support** specifically for airlines facing financial stress due to rising aviation fuel costs and global operational disruptions. Airlines will be eligible for loans of up to ₹1,500 crore per borrower under specified conditions, with repayment periods extending up to seven years. The measure is expected to improve liquidity, protect jobs, maintain connectivity, and ensure operational stability across the aviation ecosystem.
- The Cabinet also approved the extension of the lease period of **Airports Authority of India land leased to MIHAN India Limited beyond August 2039**. This decision enables the transfer of Nagpur Airport operations to GMR Nagpur International Airport Limited for a 30-year concession period. The move is expected to transform Nagpur's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport into a world-class aviation hub capable of handling up to 30 million passengers annually, significantly enhancing regional connectivity and cargo operations.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the **Ahmedabad (Sarkhej)–Dholera Semi High-Speed Double Line railway project at an estimated cost of ₹20,667 crore**. This will be India's first semi high-speed rail project based on indigenous technology. The line will provide faster connectivity between Ahmedabad, Dholera Special Investment Region, Dholera Airport, and the Lothal National Maritime Heritage Complex, improving passenger mobility and serving as a model for future semi high-speed rail projects across the country.

- The CCEA approved higher **Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for 14 Kharif crops for the Marketing Season 2026-27**. The highest increase was announced for sunflower seed, followed by cotton, nigerseed, and sesamum. The revised MSPs ensure farmers receive at least 1.5 times the cost of production, reinforcing the government's commitment to providing remunerative prices and encouraging diversification toward pulses, oilseeds, and millets.

State-wise October Month Important Events

Andhra Pradesh

- Justice Lisa Gill was sworn in as the first woman Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court in Vijayawada, marking a major milestone for women's representation in India's judiciary. The oath was administered by Governor S Abdul Nazeer. Her appointment reflects progress toward gender equality, inclusivity, and diversity in the legal system. Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu extended congratulations. This historic step encourages greater participation of women in legal professions and strengthens the credibility of India's judicial institutions.
- The Andhra Pradesh government, led by N Chandrababu Naidu, launched a ₹13,000 crore Mushroom Mission to make the state India's largest producer. Targeting 67,500 tonnes output and 1.62 lakh units, it focuses on small farmers, self-help groups (SHGs), and rural employment. With 40% subsidy support, the initiative promotes varieties like milky, paddy straw, and button mushrooms. It aims to build a strong agri value chain, boost exports, and generate sustainable income, positioning the state as a hub for agri-based entrepreneurship and rural development.
- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu announced a new population incentive policy offering ₹30,000 for a third child and ₹40,000 for a fourth child to address declining fertility rates. The announcement reflects a shift from earlier population-control thinking toward encouraging larger families amid demographic concerns. Many countries including Japan, South Korea, China, and Italy face similar low-birth challenges. Since replacement fertility level is around 2.1 children per woman, the policy aims to prevent future workforce shortages, ageing population pressures, and long-term economic slowdown.

Assam

- Himanta Biswa Sarma has submitted his resignation as the Chief Minister of Assam to Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya at Lok Bhawan, Guwahati, following the Assembly election results. The Governor requested Sarma and his Council of Ministers to continue in a caretaker capacity until the new government is officially formed. The BJP-led NDA secured a landslide victory in the state, and sources indicate that Sarma is likely to continue as Chief Minister, with the

oath-taking ceremony expected on May 12, 2026. As per constitutional convention, Chief Ministers resign after elections to allow the Governor to invite the newly elected legislative party leader to form the government. The BJP has appointed J.P. Nadda and Nayab Singh Saini as observers for selecting the legislature party leader, while ally AGP has extended support to Sarma's candidature.

- Himanta Biswa Sarma took oath as Chief Minister of Assam for a second consecutive term, marking the NDA government's third straight victory since 2016. The grand ceremony in Guwahati was attended by PM Narendra Modi, Union Ministers and several BJP-NDA Chief Ministers and leaders. Along with him, Rameswar Teli, Atul Bora, Charan Boro, and Ajanta Neog took oath as ministers in the new cabinet. The NDA alliance secured a two-thirds majority in Assam Assembly elections, while Ranjeet Kumar Dass was nominated as the new Assembly Speaker.
- The Assam Cabinet led by Himanta Biswa Sarma has approved the draft Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, which is expected to be introduced in the State Assembly on May 26. The proposed law aims to create a common civil framework covering matters such as marriage, divorce, property succession, live-in relationships, compulsory marriage registration, and divorce registration. A Uniform Civil Code refers to a common set of civil laws applicable to all citizens regardless of religion, replacing religion-based personal laws in certain civil matters. The Assam government said the move promotes legal uniformity, equality before law, and transparency. The state has clarified that tribal communities, religious rituals, traditional customs, and cultural practices will remain exempt from the proposed law. Assam now joins states like Goa and Uttarakhand in advancing discussions around state-level UCC implementation.

Gujarat

- Gujarat Forest Department intensified the Jal-Parab Campaign** in Little Rann of Kutch to provide water support for wildlife during extreme summer conditions.

Haryana

- The Haryana government launched the ShramMitra app, a digital labour market platform designed to directly connect workers and employers while replacing the traditional labour chowk system. Introduced by Labour Minister Anil Vij, the app enables skill-based worker registration, online job matching, direct wage negotiations, multilingual access, and mobile hiring. Developed by the Haryana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, it already includes data for nearly 75,000 registered workers. The platform improves transparency, accessibility, and employment opportunities for both daily wage and skilled workers through digital labour market reforms.

Jharkhand

- Jharkhand achieved a major education milestone by recording a 0% primary dropout rate in 2024-25, according to NITI Aayog and Unified District Information System for Education Plus data. The state reduced primary dropout from 6.41% in 2014-15 to zero, while upper primary dropout declined from 7.42% to 1.7% and secondary dropout from 23.2% to 3.5%. Jharkhand ranked fourth nationally in secondary dropout reduction, reflecting strong progress in student retention, school participation, and educational access, despite challenges like teacher vacancies and out-of-school children.
- Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu inaugurated new passenger facilities at Birsa Munda Airport, Ranchi, including a Bhagwan Birsa Munda statue, UDAN Yatri Café, Kids Zone, Flybrary, and AVSAR Counter. The installations honour Birsa Munda, the iconic tribal freedom fighter and symbol of indigenous resistance against British colonial rule. The UDAN Yatri Café aims to provide affordable food, supporting the Ease of Flying initiative. The minister also announced expansion plans under the Modified UDAN Scheme, targeting development of 100 new airports and 200 heliports to strengthen regional air connectivity.

Karnataka

- The Bengaluru Police has introduced an AI-powered multilingual feature in the Namma 112 helpline, enabling communication in 10+ Indian and foreign languages like Bengali, Malayalam, French, Spanish, and Arabic. Built on Voice AI technology, it ensures real-time translation, reducing delays during emergencies. With around 8,000 daily calls, including 100–200 language-barrier cases, this system improves emergency response efficiency and accessibility. It strengthens public safety, supports international visitors, and reflects India's push toward digital governance, smart policing, and inclusive emergency services in a globally diverse city like Bengaluru.
- The Karnataka government has launched India's first digital grievance redressal system for gig workers, developed by the Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers Board with the e-Governance Department. Through the Integrated Public Grievance Redressal System (IPGRS), workers can report issues related to wages, incentives, and working conditions, with real-time tracking and time-bound resolution. This initiative creates a formal link between workers, platforms, and authorities, enhancing transparency, accountability, and worker protection. It marks a major step toward regulating the gig economy and ensuring rights for app-based workers like delivery partners and ride-hailing drivers.
- According to National Crime Records Bureau data, Bengaluru recorded the highest suicide rate among major Indian cities, with nearly 20 suicides per lakh population during 2022–

2024. The Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India report showed Bengaluru recorded 2,403 suicides in 2024, while Delhi had higher total cases but a lower suicide rate due to its larger population. Major causes included family problems, illness, mental health issues, economic stress, work pressure, migration stress, and social isolation, highlighting growing urban mental health concerns and the need for better counselling and support systems.

- Karnataka has introduced the Kartavya-KAAMS App (Karnataka Advanced Attendance Management System) to modernize attendance tracking in government institutions from the 2026–27 academic year. The system replaces traditional biometric attendance with AI-based facial recognition, geo-fencing, and HRMS integration to ensure accurate and transparent workforce monitoring for teachers, headmasters, and staff. Developed by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, the app requires employees to mark "In Time" and "Out Time" attendance daily and links with systems like HRMS and student performance tracking platforms. The rollout aims to cover over 20 lakh government employees, improving efficiency, accountability, and digital governance across Karnataka's public sector.
- Karnataka has become India's first state to introduce an Alcohol-in-Beverage (AIB)-based excise taxation system, replacing the traditional bulk-litre model with a more scientific alcohol-content-based structure. Tax slabs have been reduced from 16 to 8, changing liquor pricing significantly. Premium scotch whiskies and mild beers may become 20–25% cheaper, while several budget liquor brands could become 20–30% costlier. The reform aims for transparency and rational taxation, but industry groups warn that higher taxation on mass-market brands may affect consumer demand, retail sales, and excise revenue collections.
- **Siddaramaiah resigned as Karnataka Chief Minister**, marking a major political transition with D. K. Shivakumar expected to take charge.

Kerala

- The V. D. Satheesan has been chosen by the Indian National Congress to lead the new government in Kerala after the United Democratic Front secured a massive victory in the 2026 Assembly elections. The announcement ends days of leadership speculation involving senior leaders like K. C. Venugopal and Ramesh Chennithala. The UDF reportedly won 102 seats in the 140-member Assembly, defeating the Left Democratic Front led by Pinarayi Vijayan and ending a decade of Left rule in the state. A practicing lawyer and six-time MLA from Paravur, Satheesan previously served as the Leader of Opposition and is now set to become Kerala's next Chief Minister for the first time.

- V. D. Satheesan took oath as Kerala Chief Minister on 18 May 2026, leading the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) back to power after ten years of Left rule. The ceremony at Central Stadium was historically notable because the entire 21-member Cabinet took oath simultaneously, a rare event in Kerala's political history. Senior leaders including Rahul Gandhi attended. The cabinet includes leaders from Congress, Indian Union Muslim League, RSP, and Kerala Congress factions, reflecting a broad coalition government aimed at stable governance.
- Kerala has become India's first state to create a dedicated cabinet-level Artificial Intelligence (AI) portfolio, formally recognising AI as an independent governance domain. The portfolio has been assigned to senior leader P. K. Kunhalikutty under the Industries and Commerce Department, alongside IT, startups, and industrial development. The move reflects Kerala's ambition to leverage AI in governance, healthcare, education, manufacturing, economic growth, and startup innovation. By institutionalising AI at the cabinet level, the state aims to accelerate technology-driven public service reforms, industrial modernisation, and innovation-led economic transformation.
- **Kerala inaugurated India's first private medical museum** in Thiruvananthapuram to promote scientific learning and medical awareness.
- **Kerala announced India's first dedicated Department for Senior Citizens' Welfare** and approved the Kerala State Policy for Senior Citizens 2026.

Maharashtra

- Maharashtra approved the Compressed Biogas (CBG) Policy 2026 to promote renewable energy, waste-to-energy systems, and sustainable waste management, allocating ₹500 crore for FY 2026-27. The policy aims to establish CBG projects in every district using municipal solid waste and agricultural residue to produce clean fuel through anaerobic digestion. It includes PPP and hybrid annuity models, viability gap funding up to ₹15 crore per project, mandatory waste segregation, and priority utility support. Linked with schemes like SATAT and Swachh Bharat Mission, the initiative supports India's Net-Zero 2070 goals and circular economy efforts.
- Pune is set to introduce India's first Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in the Shivajinagar area, marking a significant step toward urban air quality control and sustainable mobility. The project is being developed by the Pune Municipal Corporation with support from ITDP India and aligns with the Maharashtra Electric Vehicle Policy 2021 to promote cleaner transport systems. The LEZ will restrict or regulate high-emission vehicles, especially older vehicles below Bharat Stage-III norms and pre-2011 registrations, within about 7–10% of Pune's central business district, using pollution charges and penalties for compliance. Enforcement will rely on Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems.

- India is developing its first underwater museum near Sindhudurg, Maharashtra, centred around the decommissioned naval warship INS Guldar. The vessel will be submerged around 22 metres underwater near Nivati Rocks, serving as both a marine tourism attraction and an artificial reef supporting biodiversity conservation. The project will offer activities including scuba diving, wreck diving, submarine sightseeing, and speedboat access, boosting experiential tourism along the Konkan coast. Developed with environmental studies by the Maharashtra Maritime Board and CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography, the initiative promotes sustainable coastal development and employment generation.

Madhya Pradesh

- The Madhya Pradesh government has partnered with Google Cloud India to deploy AI-driven solutions for Simhastha Kumbh 2028 in Ujjain, one of India's largest religious gatherings. Artificial intelligence will support crowd management, traffic prediction, emergency response, congestion control, and pilgrim assistance, improving safety and efficiency. A proposed Centre of Excellence in Indore will focus on AI research, innovation, and digital governance skill development. The initiative reflects Madhya Pradesh's push toward technology-enabled governance, ensuring smoother management of millions of devotees during the mega spiritual event.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the Central Zonal Council Meeting in Jagdalpur, bringing together Chief Ministers and senior officials from Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand to strengthen cooperative federalism. Discussions focused on internal security, infrastructure development, border coordination, inter-state cooperation, governance, and economic planning. The Central Zonal Council is one of five statutory councils created under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, aimed at resolving regional issues through consultation. The Home Minister serves as chairman, while Chief Ministers act as rotating vice-chairpersons.

Odisha

- Odisha has emerged as the top-performing state under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0 in house completion rankings from March 2025 to March 2026. Under the scheme launched in September 2024, Odisha sanctioned 24,625 houses, geo-tagged 23,464 sites, started foundation work on 3,134 houses, and completed 2,008 houses by May 2026. The achievement highlights the state's strong implementation of affordable urban housing, digital monitoring, geo-tagging technology, and coordinated efforts by urban local bodies to provide pucca houses for economically weaker and middle-income families.

- Deputy CM Pravati Parida inaugurated Nimapara Patha Utsav 2026 in Puri district, Odisha, under the Utkarsha Nimapara 2.0 initiative. The festival promotes Odia folk traditions including tribal dance, Sankirtan, Pala, Dasakathia, street theatre, and storytelling, blending culture with public awareness campaigns. Youth-focused activities such as sports events, marathons, debates, music, and dance competitions encourage civic participation and talent development. Symbolic launches including the official jersey, mascot "Utkarsha Ghoda," and medals reflect efforts to combine heritage preservation with community development.
- Odisha signed a \$3.3 billion semiconductor manufacturing MoU** with Intel and 3D Glass Solutions to establish an advanced substrate facility.

Rajasthan

- Rajasthan has expanded its newborn nutrition and breast milk donation initiative through the Yashoda Mothers programme and state-run human milk banks to support infants who lack access to maternal breast milk. The initiative includes key facilities such as the Mother Milk Bank at Barmer District Hospital, Jeevan Dhara Milk Bank, and the Aanchal Mother Milk Bank, which collect, screen, and safely store donated breast milk for neonatal care. These human milk banks follow strict medical protocols including infection screening (HIV testing) and storage at controlled temperatures (around -19°C), ensuring safe distribution to newborns in NICUs and reducing infant mortality risks. The programme, supported under the Norway-India Partnership Initiative, promotes lactating mothers as "Yashoda Mothers" and has significantly strengthened neonatal healthcare and nutrition support across the state.
- Rajasthan launched its first semiconductor cluster in Bhiwadi, marking the state's entry into India's rapidly growing electronics and semiconductor manufacturing sector. The project was inaugurated by Bhajan Lal Sharma, while Ashwini Vaishnav stated that the cluster has already attracted nearly ₹1,200 crore in investments and is expected to generate around 2,500 jobs. Semiconductors are critical for technologies like AI, smartphones, EVs, telecom, and defence systems, making the project strategically important. The initiative supports Rajasthan's broader "Developed Rajasthan 2047" vision and strengthens its advanced manufacturing ecosystem.
- Kumbhalgarh Fort (Rajsamand)** gained global recognition as the world's second-longest continuous wall (36 km) and remains a UNESCO-listed Rajput heritage site.
- Oil India Limited discovered a new natural gas-bearing zone in Rajasthan's Dandewala Field**, strengthening domestic energy production and reducing import dependence.

Sikkim

- Sikkim became India's fifth fully literate state** under the ULLAS Initiative through community-led literacy and lifelong learning efforts.
- Sikkim Police received the President's Police Colour Award** for distinguished service and contribution to public safety.

Telangana

- Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first operational PM MITRA Park in Warangal, developed at a cost of over ₹1,695 crore to strengthen India's textile manufacturing and export ecosystem. Spread across 1,327 acres, the park is expected to attract investments of over ₹6,000 crore and create around 24,400 jobs, especially boosting employment opportunities for women. Built under the PM MITRA Scheme, the project follows the government's 5F vision — Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign — integrating the complete textile value chain in one location. With strong connectivity, modern infrastructure, and investor support, Warangal is emerging as a major textile hub, enhancing India's global competitiveness in textile exports, manufacturing, and industrial growth.
- Telangana launched India's first women-operated solar power plant** in Khammam under the Indira Mahila Shakti Scheme to promote renewable energy and women empowerment.

Tamil Nadu

- C. Joseph Vijay was sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 10 May 2026 at Chennai's Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, marking a historic shift in the state's political landscape. His party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, emerged as the largest party in the 2026 Assembly elections and formed a coalition government with support from parties like Congress, CPI, CPI(M), VCK, and IUML. Vijay's victory ended nearly six decades of dominance by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu politics. His rise from cinema superstar to Chief Minister reflects Tamil Nadu's long tradition of film personalities entering politics, similar to leaders like M. G. Ramachandran and J. Jayalalithaa.
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Joseph Vijay expanded the state cabinet by inducting 23 new ministers, increasing total cabinet strength to 32 members. Vijay retained major portfolios including Home, Police, Youth Welfare, Urban Development, and General Administration, reflecting his emphasis on governance and law enforcement. A key reshuffle saw K. A. Sengottaiyan moved from Finance to Revenue and Disaster Management, while N. Marie Wilson took charge of Finance, Planning, and Development. Political observers note that further inclusion of alliance partners like Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) and Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) may reshape cabinet dynamics.

Tripura

1. **Mission Queen Pineapple worth ₹236 crore was launched in Tripura to develop the GI-tagged fruit into a premium global brand.**

Uttarakhand

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the Central Zonal Council Meeting in Jagdalpur, bringing together Chief Ministers and senior officials from Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand to strengthen cooperative federalism. Discussions focused on internal security, infrastructure development, border coordination, inter-state cooperation, governance, and economic planning. The Central Zonal Council is one of five statutory councils created under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, aimed at resolving regional issues through consultation. The Home Minister serves as chairman, while Chief Ministers act as rotating vice-chairpersons.
- The Uttarakhand government has approved a ₹450 crore ropeway project connecting Rishikesh to Neelkanth Mahadev Temple, dramatically reducing travel time from three hours to just 15 minutes. Starting from Tapovan, the ropeway will boost religious tourism, improve accessibility for senior citizens and families, and ease traffic congestion. Since the route passes near the Rajaji Tiger Reserve and Ganga ecosystem, environmental safeguards and wildlife protection measures have been included. The temple, located at 1,330 metres altitude, attracts thousands of pilgrims during Shravan and Mahashivratri, supporting Uttarakhand's tourism economy.

Uttar Pradesh

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the Central Zonal Council Meeting in Jagdalpur, bringing together Chief Ministers and senior officials from Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand to strengthen cooperative federalism. Discussions focused on internal security, infrastructure development, border coordination, inter-state cooperation, governance, and economic planning. The Central Zonal Council is one of five statutory councils created under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, aimed at resolving regional issues through consultation. The Home Minister serves as chairman, while Chief Ministers act as rotating vice-chairpersons.

West Bengal

- Highest-ever voter turnout (92.47%) in Assembly elections.
- Suvendu Adhikari elected as new Chief Minister.
- Suvendu Adhikari took oath as first BJP CM of West Bengal.
- BJP formed first-ever BJP-led government in West Bengal.
- Rathindra Bose elected Speaker of 18th West Bengal Assembly.
- West Bengal approved implementation of the 7th Pay Commission.

- West Bengal Chief Minister **Suvendu Adhikari** announced the **Annapurna Bhandaar Scheme**, under which eligible women will receive **₹3,000 per month** through **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**. The scheme is expected to start from **1 June 2026** and will replace the earlier **Lakshmi Bhandar Scheme**. The government also announced **free bus travel for women** and implementation of central welfare schemes in the state.

Ladakh

- Five new districts announced: Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass.
- Mahey Tokpo-Raldho irrigation canal inaugurated in Changthang region.

Mizoram

- Aizawl hosted first Regional Cooperative Reform Conference under "Sahkar se Samridhi".

Puducherry

- N. Rangasamy sworn in as Chief Minister for a record fifth term.
- **Department of Commerce approved two new Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Puducherry** to promote exports, investments, and industrial growth.

Sikkim

- Implementation of Anand Marriage Act, 1909 from June 1, 2026.

Chhattisgarh

- AI-powered Dial 112 emergency response system launched across all 33 districts.
- Hosted Central Zonal Council Meeting in Jagdalpur.

Delhi

- ₹4,000 crore Air Train Project at IGI Airport.
- Income eligibility for ration cards proposed to increase from ₹1.2 lakh to ₹2.5 lakh.
- "Vaman Van" biodiversity and environmental education project launched.

May Month Launches & Inaugurations:

- **NITI Aayog** launched the **DPI@2047 roadmap** to transform India into a **\$30 trillion economy** with **\$18,000 per capita income**. The plan includes **DPI 2.0 (2025–2035)** focusing on digital empowerment and inclusive access, and **DPI 3.0 (2035–2047)** driving innovation-led growth. Building on platforms like **Aadhaar** and **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**, it targets MSMEs, agriculture, education, and healthcare. The initiative supports financial inclusion, job creation, and aligns with **Viksit Bharat 2047**, aiming for sustainable and technology-driven economic development.

- **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** launched a **14-day Bharat–Bhutan Mystic Mountain Tour** from **New Delhi**, offering a premium rail-cum-road journey via the **Bharat Gaurav Deluxe AC Tourist Train**. Covering Northeast India and Bhutan, key destinations include **Guwahati, Shillong, Thimphu, and Paro**. The package features luxury cabins, meals, 3-star stays, and guided sightseeing. Priced from **₹1.16 lakh**, it ensures a hassle-free travel experience. This initiative boosts tourism, strengthens India–Bhutan connectivity, and promotes cultural exchange through curated travel.
- **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)** will establish a **₹15 crore Basmati and Organic Training Centre** in **Pilibhit** to boost agricultural exports. The centre will train farmers in basmati cultivation, organic farming, and export practices, supported by AI-based crop mapping and a **NABL-accredited lab** for quality testing. Targeting over **50,000 farmers**, it will enhance productivity, traceability, and global competitiveness.
- **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **594 km Ganga Expressway** in **Uttar Pradesh**, built at **₹36,230 crore**, to boost connectivity and economic growth. Linking **Meerut to Prayagraj** across **12 districts**, the six-lane (expandable to eight) corridor reduces travel time from **10–12 hours to about 6 hours**. A key feature is a **3.5 km emergency airstrip** for defence use.
- India conducted a nationwide trial of the **Cell Broadcast Alert System** on **May 2, 2026**, led by the **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)**. Powered by the **SACHET Integrated Alert System** developed by **C-DOT**, it supports **19+ languages** and works even during network congestion.
- India has launched its first **Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) Tolling System** in **Gujarat** on the **Surat–Bharuch stretch of NH-48** at the **Chorayasi Toll Plaza**. Introduced by the **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**, the system enables vehicles to pass toll points without stopping.
- The **Union Health Ministry** has launched a comprehensive **National Framework for Managing Childhood Diabetes**, covering children from birth to 18 years. The government has promoted the **4Ts awareness model — Toilet, Thirsty, Tired, and Thinner**.
- The **Union Cabinet** approved **two new semiconductor projects** under the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** with a combined investment of over **₹3,936 crore** in **Gujarat**.
- The **Union Cabinet** approved a **state-of-the-art ship repair facility** at **Vadinar, Gujarat**, with an investment of around **₹1,570 crore**.
- The **Union Cabinet** approved the **₹5,659.22 crore Mission for Cotton Productivity** for the period **2026–27 to 2030–31**.
- The **South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone** with headquarters at **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**, will become operational from **June 1, 2026**.
- **PRASHAST 2.0** has been launched by **NCERT** to promote inclusive education and support early identification of disabilities among school children.
- The **MoHFW** launched the **JANANI (Journey of Antenatal, Natal and Neonatal Integrated Care) Platform** to strengthen maternal and child healthcare through digital monitoring and integrated health records.
- **Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya** launched a nationwide **free annual health check-up programme** for workers aged **40 years and above** under the new Labour Codes through the **ESIC network**.
- **Sanjay Seth** inaugurated **India's first international ophthalmology research conference (AIOS-AFOU 2026)** in **New Delhi**.
- India launched the **Sehat Mission** in **New Delhi** under the leadership of **Narendra Modi**, aiming to link agriculture, nutrition, and healthcare into a unified national strategy.
- The **Supreme Court of India** launched the **'One Case One Data'** initiative and AI-powered chatbot **'Su-Sahayak'**.
- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** approved the **Ahmedabad (Sarkhej)-Dholera Semi High-Speed Double Line Rail Project** worth **₹20,667 crore**.
- The **Union Cabinet** approved a **₹37,500 crore Coal Gasification Scheme** to gasify nearly **75 million tonnes** of coal and lignite.
- **Bhupender Yadav** launched the **Lion Species Spotlight Programme** at **Sasan Gir** ahead of the **International Big Cat Alliance Summit 2026**.
- The **Centre** launched the **₹189.79 crore Mizoram Ginger Mission** to transform **Mizoram ginger** into a globally recognized premium product. Backed by the **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region**, the mission focuses on farmer income growth, processing infrastructure, export readiness, and international branding. The initiative was launched by **Jyotiraditya Scindia** and **Lalduhoma**.
- **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** launched **Project Saksham** in partnership with **Vertis Foundation** to promote skill development and employment opportunities for rural women. Under the program, **12 training centres** have been established across India, training over **6,000 youth** and enabling more than **4,000 job placements**.
- **Narendra Modi** visited the **United Arab Emirates** on **15 May 2026**, where both nations signed major agreements to strengthen India's energy security. A key outcome was the strategic petroleum reserve partnership between **Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL)** and **Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)**.
- **Tata Electronics** partnered with **ASML** for India's first commercial **300 mm semiconductor fabrication plant** in **Dholera, Gujarat**. The **US\$11 billion** project will manufacture chips for smartphones, automobiles, AI systems, industrial electronics, and consumer devices.

- **Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia** launched the ₹175 crore **"Coffees of Nagaland" Mission** to develop Nagaland into a premium specialty coffee hub for domestic and international markets.
- India unveiled the first proposed design for the **Mumbai–Ahmedabad Bullet Train**, the country's first **high-speed rail corridor**. The train is expected to operate at **320 kmph** and reduce travel time between Mumbai and Ahmedabad to nearly **two hours**.
- The **Government of India** launched the **Ayush Anudan Portal** under the broader **Ayush Grid Initiative**, modernising grant management in the traditional healthcare sector.
- The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** notified standards for higher ethanol-petrol blends including **E22, E25, E27, and E30**, signalling India's next phase of biofuel adoption.
- The **Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya** launched its third **AI-powered HoloBox**, featuring a life-like **3D virtual Mahatma Gandhi avatar**.
- The **Government of India** launched the **'Arunachal Kiwi: The USP of Arunachal Pradesh' Mission** with a ₹167 crore outlay to transform the state into a premium organic kiwi production hub.
- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** launched the **JEEVAN App** and **SHATAYU Geriatric Caregiver Dashboard** to strengthen India's elder care ecosystem through digital technology.
- **Indian Railways** launched the **CHIRAG Centre in Hyderabad** to modernize workforce management through AI-based analytics, HRMS strengthening, predictive planning, and digital governance support.
- **Mission Karmayogi 2.0** was launched under NPCSCB to promote AI-driven governance, competency-based training, and citizen-centric public administration through the iGOT platform.
- **ICMR organized the Medical Innovations Patent Mitra (I2I Connect) event** and transferred 41 indigenous healthcare technologies including vaccines, diagnostics, and medical devices to industry partners.
- **Government of India** launched the **PM-AJAY Portal** and **AJAY Mobile App** to enable real-time monitoring, geo-tagging, and transparent implementation of Scheduled Caste welfare schemes.
- **India Semiconductor Mission** launched the **Investors Support Portal** to provide single-window assistance, policy support, and faster approvals for semiconductor ecosystem growth.
- **Yoga Mahotsav 2026** was inaugurated at **Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh** as part of the 25-day countdown campaign for the 12th International Day of Yoga.
- **Ministry of Ayush** launched the **Yoga Sangam Portal** and **Yoga Park Portal** to improve accessibility, participation, and nationwide promotion of yoga activities.
- **South Coast Railway** became operational as India's **18th railway zone** with headquarters at Visakhapatnam to enhance railway administration and regional connectivity.
- **Indian Railways** unveiled a **new 18-star logo** to symbolize the country's newly expanded railway zone structure following the creation of South Coast Railway.
- **Delhi's IGI Airport** launched the **SkyCast System** under **Mission Mausam** using advanced weather-monitoring technologies to reduce delays and improve aviation safety.
- **Department of Financial Services** launched the **Common Landing Portal** to allow citizens to search and recover unclaimed deposits, insurance claims, shares, and financial assets through a unified platform.

Miscellaneous National News

- The **Supreme Court of India** ruled that **safe travel on highways** is a **fundamental right under Article 21 (Right to Life)**, expanding its scope beyond survival to safe mobility. The Court also directed formation of **District Highway Safety Task Forces**.
- The **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** released the **Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0 Report** on **National Panchayati Raj Day**. A total of **3,635 Gram Panchayats** emerged as **Front Runners (A Grade)**, with **97.3% participation** from over **2.59 lakh Panchayats**.
- The **Government of India** announced the **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2026**, to be held from **June to August** under the **Ministry of External Affairs**. Devotees will travel via **Lipulekh Pass** and **Nathu La Pass**.
- **Om Birla**, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, reconstituted four key **Parliamentary Committees for 2026–27: Committee of Estimates, Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Committee on Public Undertakings, and Committee on Welfare of SC/ST**.
- The **Government of India** notified the **Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026** through the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**. Key changes include full digitalisation of **OCI** and citizenship applications and introduction of **e-OCI**.
- The **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** created a **Guinness World Record** by unfurling the world's largest underwater national flag at **Radhanagar Beach, Swaraj Dweep**. The Indian Tricolour measured **60 × 40 metres**.
- **Sikkim** became **India's first fully paperless judiciary**, as announced by **Chief Justice of India Surya Kant** during the **National Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education** in Gangtok.
- The **Assembly Election Results 2026** brought major political changes across several states. In **West Bengal**, the **BJP won 206 seats**. In **Tamil Nadu**, **TVK** emerged as the largest party with **108 seats**. In **Kerala**, the **UDF** defeated the **LDF**.
- **Hazaribag district (Jharkhand)** is set to become **India's first and only pearl farming cluster**, promoting scientific aquaculture, women empowerment, and rural employment.

- The **Union Cabinet** approved the **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026**, proposing to increase the strength of the **Supreme Court** from **34 to 38 judges**, including the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)**.
- **Vande Mataram** completed **150 years** since it was written by **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** in **1875**. The Union Cabinet proposed granting the song legal protection equivalent to the **National Anthem, Jana Gana Mana**.
- **CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CRRI)** and **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)** received recognition from the **India Book of Records** and **Asia Book of Records** for developing India's first roadblock section using technical textile geocells made from **end-of-life plastic waste**.
- **Apaar Saxena** from **Karnataka** earned the prestigious **International Master (IM) Title** awarded by **FIDE**, after securing all three required IM norms in European chess tournaments.
- India introduced **QR-code-enabled identity cards** for **Census 2027 enumerators** to improve transparency, security, and digital verification.
- The **Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA)** may introduce a permanent **women-only Vice-President post** from the **2027–28 election cycle** following a proposal by the **Supreme Court of India** to improve women's representation in legal leadership. The proposal aims to strengthen **gender inclusivity**, leadership opportunities, and participation of women lawyers in Bar body governance.
- The **Somnath Temple** marks **75 years of its reopening** and **1000 years since the first recorded invasion in 1026**, celebrated nationwide through **Somnath Swabhiman Parv**. Revered as the **first of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva**, the temple symbolizes India's spiritual heritage, resilience, and cultural continuity.
- On **11 May 2026**, two female cheetahs from **Botswana** were released into the open forest of **Kuno National Park** under **Project Cheetah**. Launched in **2022**, the programme aims to rebuild a self-sustaining wild cheetah population and strengthen biodiversity conservation.
- **Narendra Modi** urged citizens to save fuel and avoid unnecessary foreign travel because India imports nearly **85% of its crude oil**. The appeal highlighted the importance of energy conservation, reducing import dependence, and strengthening India's long-term **energy security**.
- A recent ruling by the **Supreme Court of India** on **Section 498A** highlighted the need to balance protection for women with preventing false implication of entire families in dowry harassment cases. The court stressed the importance of **evidence-based investigations** and individual accountability.
- The **Government of India** announced the rollout of the **Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 (VB-G RAM G Act)**, which will replace **MGNREGA** from **1 July 2026**. Eligible rural households will receive a legal guarantee of **125 days of wage employment annually**.
- The **Ministry of Labour and Employment** notified a **1% Construction Welfare Cess** to support welfare schemes for construction workers across India from **May 1, 2026**. The cess will fund healthcare, education assistance, insurance, and social security benefits.
- **Justice Surya Kant** announced the formation of a **Judicial Infrastructure Advisory Committee** headed by **Justice Aravind Kumar** to modernize court infrastructure and improve India's justice delivery system.
- **Piyush Goyal** announced India's ambitious goal of achieving **\$1 trillion in exports** during the current financial year while releasing the **LEADS 2025 Report** and presenting the **LEAPS 2025 Awards** in New Delhi. India recorded a historic **\$863 billion in exports in FY 2025–26**.
- India imposed an immediate **ban on sugar exports until 30 September 2026**, shifting policy from "restricted" to "prohibited," according to the **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)**.
- India's **ethanol programme** entered a major transition phase as **maize** emerged as the country's largest ethanol feedstock for the first time during the first half of **Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025–26**.
- The **"Algae Tree"** installed in **Bhopal** is a solar-powered bio-engineering device using **microalgae** to absorb **CO₂** and release oxygen. It is designed to improve urban air quality in areas with limited space for traditional tree plantation.
- India is planning a **₹40,000 crore subsea gas pipeline** connecting **Oman to Gujarat** to strengthen long-term energy security after the **2026 Strait of Hormuz crisis**.
- India will host the first **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit** in **New Delhi** on **June 1–2, 2026**. The alliance focuses on conserving seven major big cat species, including lions, tigers, leopards, snow leopards, cheetahs, jaguars, and pumas.
- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** launched **Phase III of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** across **16 states and 3 Union Territories**, covering around **36.73 crore electors**.
- India's **jaggery (gur)** is emerging as a global substitute for refined sugar due to its nutritional benefits and strong export growth. India produces over **70% of global jaggery** and supports nearly **2.5 million rural livelihoods**.
- The return of the historic **Anaimangalam (Leiden) Copper Plates** from the **Netherlands** marks a major cultural achievement for India. The collection dates back to the **11th-century Chola Empire** and contains important Tamil and Sanskrit inscriptions.
- **President Droupadi Murmu** approved an ordinance increasing the **Supreme Court's judge strength from 34 to 38**, including the **Chief Justice of India**, to improve judicial efficiency and reduce case backlog.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's** visit to the **Afsluitdijk Dam** in the **Netherlands** highlighted India's interest in advanced climate-resilient water infrastructure. India is studying the model for **Gujarat's proposed Kalpasar Project**.

- The **Central Information Commission (CIC)** ruled that the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** is not a “public authority” under the **RTI Act, 2005**, keeping it outside the scope of Right to Information obligations.
- **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla** constituted the **Committee on Empowerment of Women**, chaired by **Daggubati Purandeswari**, to oversee women’s welfare policies and empowerment programmes.
- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** proposed significant amendments under the **draft Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026**, introducing **e-OCI cards**, digital citizenship systems, and stricter passport disclosure requirements.
- **Indian Railways** approved a **₹238 crore safety and rehabilitation project** for the **Jammu–Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra rail section** under **Northern Railway** to improve passenger safety and infrastructure resilience.
- **Project Cheetah** achieved a major conservation breakthrough as India’s cheetah population rose to **53**, including **33 cubs born in India**, marking significant progress in species revival.
- India faced an **extreme heatwave crisis in 2026**, with reports showing **97 of the world’s 100 hottest cities** located in the country on a single day, with temperatures crossing **48°C** in several states.
- India accelerated **Chenab River infrastructure projects** worth nearly **₹2,600 crore**, including the **Chenab-Beas Link Tunnel** and **Dulhasti Stage-II Hydropower Project**, to improve water utilisation and hydropower generation.
- **India strengthened cybersecurity assessments of advanced AI systems** to identify threats across banking, digital infrastructure, enterprise software, and cloud ecosystems.
- **Supreme Court upheld the Election Commission’s Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** and declared electoral roll verification legally valid under Article 324 and the Representation of the People Act, 1950.
- **National Health Accounts Estimates 2022–23** showed **improvement in healthcare financing** with increased government expenditure and reduced out-of-pocket medical spending.
- **Kolkata was announced as the host city for International Day of Yoga 2026** with the theme “Yoga for Healthy Ageing” promoting preventive healthcare and wellness.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 51st PRAGATI Meeting** to review infrastructure projects worth nearly **₹30,000 crore** across multiple sectors and states.
- **Supreme Court recognized access to trauma care as a Fundamental Right under Article 21** and directed reforms in emergency healthcare and accident response systems.
- **India’s Total Fertility Rate declined to 1.9** according to the Sample Registration System Report 2024, marking the first drop below replacement level.
- **Shrey Parikh, a 14-year-old Indian-origin student from California, won the Scripps National Spelling Bee 2026** after securing victory in the final spell-off round.
- **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru became India’s second-busiest domestic airport** in April 2026 by surpassing Mumbai in passenger traffic.
- **India’s Cold Water Fisheries sector emerged as a key pillar of the Blue Economy** through expanding trout farming, aquaculture development, and employment generation in hill regions.

GOVT SCHEMES

Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0

The **Union Cabinet** approved **ECLGS 5.0** to support businesses affected by the **West Asia Crisis**. The scheme will provide **₹2.55 lakh crore** credit support, including **₹5,000 crore** for the airline sector. MSMEs will get **100% credit guarantee coverage**, while non-MSMEs and airlines will receive **90% coverage** through **NCGTC**. Eligible firms can avail additional loans up to **20% of peak working capital**.

PMJJBY, PMSBY & APY Complete 11 Years

India’s flagship social security schemes — **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)**, **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)** and **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** — completed **11 years on 9 May 2026**. PMJJBY recorded **27.43 crore enrolments**, PMSBY crossed **58 crore enrolments**, while APY surpassed **9 crore subscribers**. These schemes have strengthened **financial inclusion, insurance coverage and pension security**.

Made in India Brand Scheme

The Government of India plans to launch the **Made in India Brand Scheme** to strengthen domestic manufacturing and reduce import dependence. Around **100 products** may be identified under the scheme. It will introduce a **Made in India certification**, quality benchmarks, and a dedicated logo to improve trust in Indian-made products. The initiative supports **Make in India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, and PLI Schemes**.

Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal and Lignite Gasification Projects

The Cabinet approved a **₹37,500 crore scheme** to promote **Coal and Lignite Gasification Projects**. The initiative aims to gasify **100 million tonnes of coal by 2030**, reduce import dependence, attract **₹2.5–3 lakh crore investment**, and create around **50,000 jobs**.

SARTHAK PDS Scheme

The Cabinet approved the continuation of the **SARTHAK PDS Scheme** with a central outlay of **₹25,530 crore**. The scheme aims to modernize the **Public Distribution System (PDS)** using **Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Blockchain**, and integrated databases. It will benefit over **81 crore NFSA beneficiaries**.

Ayushman Bharat Diwas

Ayushman Bharat Diwas is observed on **30 April** every year. It celebrates **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)**, which provides **₹5 lakh cashless health insurance** per family and benefits more than **10.74 crore families** across India.

Weather & Climate Startup Incubation Centre

The **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM)** launched a dedicated **Weather and Climate Startup Incubation Centre** during **WISE 2026** in Pune. Developed under **Mission Mausam**, the centre will support startups working in **weather forecasting, climate analytics, resilience tools, and climate technology**.

First Satellite-Tagged Ganges Softshell Turtle

India released its first **satellite-tagged Ganges Softshell Turtle** in **Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve** on **Endangered Species Day**. The project aims to track movement, breeding sites, and habitat use to improve conservation efforts in the **Brahmaputra Basin**.

BHAVYA Scheme:

The Government of India has launched the **BHAVYA Scheme** with a financial outlay of **₹33,660 crore** to establish **100 world-class industrial parks across India** between **2026–27 and 2031–32**. Introduced by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and**

Internal Trade (DPIIT), the scheme aims to create integrated and investment-ready industrial ecosystems to attract domestic and global manufacturers. The parks will provide **plug-and-play infrastructure** including multimodal logistics, uninterrupted utilities, renewable energy, worker housing, skill development centres, testing facilities, and waste management systems. Supporting both **greenfield and brownfield projects**, the scheme aligns with national initiatives such as **Make in India** and **PM Gati Shakti**. Development will be executed through **Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs)** under the supervision of the **National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC)** using GIS-based monitoring and transparent implementation mechanisms.

SARTHAK-PDS Scheme:

The **SARTHAK-PDS Scheme** has been approved by the Union Cabinet with a total outlay of **₹25,530 crore for five years till 2031** to modernize and strengthen India's **Public Distribution System (PDS)**. The scheme, named **Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling–Income with Automation in PDS**, combines support for foodgrain transportation with advanced technology-based reforms. It focuses on improving **food security delivery, last-mile distribution, reducing leakages, and supporting Fair Price Shops (FPS)** under the **National Food Security Act (NFSA)**. The scheme integrates technologies such as **Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Natural Language Processing (NLP), Blockchain, predictive analytics, real-time monitoring, and unified digital databases** to build a transparent and efficient ration distribution network. Covering nearly **81.35 crore beneficiaries**, SARTHAK-PDS aims to strengthen India's food security ecosystem through better governance and digital transformation.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- The **World Health Organization** approved the **first infant-specific malaria drug** on **World Malaria Day 2026**, targeting babies under **5 kg**. The **artemether-lumefantrine** formulation ensures **safe dosing**, reducing **toxicity risks** and improving **pediatric care**. This milestone enables faster **global distribution**, especially in **malaria-endemic regions** like **Sub-Saharan Africa**, which accounts for **90% of cases**. With **children under five** contributing nearly **70% of malaria deaths**, the drug offers critical protection. Supporting **maternal and child health**, this innovation strengthens global efforts to combat **malaria**, improve **survival rates**, and advance **equitable healthcare access**.
- **Emmanuel Macron** announced he will exit **politics after 2027**, completing his second term as **France's President**. Speaking in **Nicosia**, he ruled out any **political comeback**, ending speculation. First elected in **2017** as the youngest president and re-elected in **2022**, his tenure saw key **reforms**, including raising the **retirement age** from 62 to 64, alongside **public protests** and political challenges. With France's **two-term limit**, his decision signals a **leadership transition**, marking the close of a significant political era and shaping the country's future political landscape.
- **Annalena Baerbock**, President of the **United Nations General Assembly**, will visit **India** on **April 28, 2026**, marking her first trip in the role. The visit focuses on **global cooperation, multilateralism**, and addressing challenges like **climate change, economic instability, and conflict resolution**. She will hold talks with **S. Jaishankar** and other officials on **digital governance** and **UN collaboration**. The visit highlights India's growing role in **global diplomacy**, followed by her next engagement in **China**, strengthening international partnerships.
- **Symbiosis Skills and Professional University** launched Asia's first **UNESCO Chair on Gender Inclusion and Skill Development** in collaboration with **UNESCO**. The initiative aims to empower women by promoting participation in **AI, robotics, and advanced manufacturing**. Inaugurated by **Jayant Chaudhary**, it focuses on **future skills, gender equality, and employment opportunities**. With over **10,000 girls trained**, it highlights strong **industry-academia collaboration** involving global firms. This milestone strengthens India's role in bridging the **gender gap** and advancing **inclusive skill development** for emerging industries.

- The **United Arab Emirates** announced its exit from **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries** effective **May 1, 2026**, ending nearly **60 years of membership**. The move aims to gain **greater production flexibility** and expand output beyond **OPEC quotas**. Analysts note dissatisfaction with production limits and a push for **strategic autonomy**. The decision may **weaken OPEC's influence** and increase **global oil supply**, potentially lowering prices but raising **market volatility**. Amid geopolitical tensions, including disruptions in the **Strait of Hormuz**, this shift signals a major change in **global energy dynamics**.
- **Finland** launched Europe's first **fully integrated lithium project** near **Kokkola**, covering **mining to refining**. Known as the **Keliber project**, it aims to produce **15,000 tonnes of lithium hydroxide annually**, supporting **electric vehicle (EV) batteries** and **clean energy storage**. Backed by firms like **Sibanye-Stillwater**, the initiative strengthens Europe's **energy independence** and reduces reliance on imports. Lithium, a key resource for modern technology, positions Europe as a stronger player in the **global green transition** and sustainable industrial development.
- The **Federal Reserve** kept **interest rates unchanged at 3.50%–3.75%** on April 29, 2026, signaling **policy uncertainty** amid mixed economic conditions. The decision saw a rare **8–4 split vote**, reflecting divisions over **inflation control vs economic growth**. Rising **global oil prices** and **geopolitical tensions** continue to fuel **inflation pressures**, while the **labour market remains stable**. Some policymakers favored rate cuts, highlighting uncertainty in future direction. With **Jerome Powell** nearing the end of his term and **Kevin Warsh** likely to succeed, the **US monetary policy outlook** remains uncertain.
- Health experts worldwide are raising concerns over recent **hantavirus** cases linked to **cruise ship travel**. Hantavirus is a rare but potentially deadly disease mainly spread through contact with **rodent urine, saliva, droppings, or contaminated airborne particles**. Experts warn that the enclosed environment of cruise ships may increase exposure risks and make tracing infections difficult. Early symptoms include **fever, muscle aches, fatigue, headache, nausea, and vomiting**, which can rapidly progress into **Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS)**, causing severe lung complications. There is currently **no specific antiviral cure**, making early diagnosis and supportive care critical.
- Air pollution has become a major global concern in **2026**, with several unexpected cities recording dangerously high **Air Quality Index (AQI)** levels. According to recent rankings, **Cobh (Ireland)** topped the list with an AQI of **208**, followed by **Dungarvan** and **Clonmel** in Ireland, while cities like **Kashgar (China)**, **Bikaner**, **Patna**, **Aurangabad**, and **Muzaffarpur (India)** also reported unhealthy pollution levels. Experts attribute the rise to factors such as **weather stagnation, reduced wind flow, construction dust, vehicular emissions, industrial activity, and desert dust particles**. In India, rapid urbanization and traffic congestion are worsening air quality in several cities.
- **Jeremiah Manele** lost a **no-confidence vote** in the Parliament of Solomon Islands on **May 7, 2026**, by **26–22 votes**, ending his coalition government amid political instability. The crisis began after cabinet resignations and coalition partners withdrew support. Opposition leader **Peter Shanel Agovaka** accused the government of poor governance, lack of transparency, and weak financial accountability. Parliament was adjourned for the Governor-General to begin selecting a new Prime Minister. The development is geopolitically significant due to the country's growing ties with China in the strategically important Pacific region.
- International Olympic Committee has lifted restrictions on Belarus ahead of the Los Angeles 2028 Summer Olympics, allowing Belarusian athletes and teams to participate officially in international competitions, opening ceremonies, and medal events. However, Russia remains suspended, with Russian athletes permitted only as **neutral competitors** without national symbols and under strict eligibility conditions. The suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee continues due to concerns over the Ukraine conflict and anti-doping issues raised by World Anti-Doping Agency. Meanwhile, World Athletics has decided to continue restrictions on both Russian and Belarusian athletes.
- Saudi Arabia is set to join the International Big Cat Alliance as its **26th member country**, strengthening India-led global efforts for **big cat conservation** and biodiversity protection. Launched by India, the alliance focuses on protecting seven major big cat species including **tigers, lions, leopards, cheetahs, jaguars, pumas, and snow leopards** through international cooperation and habitat conservation. The IBCA currently includes **25 member nations** and **5 observer countries**, promoting collaboration in **research, ecosystem management, climate resilience, and wildlife protection** across regions. Saudi Arabia's inclusion is expected to enhance **financial support, regional partnerships, and conservation diplomacy**, while reinforcing India's growing leadership in global environmental and wildlife initiatives.
- **Shehbaz Sharif** announced that **May 10** will be observed annually as "**Marka-e-Haq Day**", meaning "**Battle for Truth**" or "**Battle for Justice**," highlighting themes of national pride, unity, and political identity in Pakistan. Such symbolic national observances are often used to strengthen **collective memory, patriotism, and political narratives**, especially during periods of regional tension and geopolitical sensitivity. The announcement comes amid continuing **India-Pakistan tensions**, where symbolism and historical narratives frequently influence **public opinion, media debates, and diplomatic messaging** across South Asia. The development shows how **symbolic politics** can shape national identity, emotional public discourse, and international perceptions, even without directly changing government policies or regional relations.

- Kevin Warsh has been confirmed by the U.S. Senate to a **14-year term on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors**, positioning him as the likely next Chair of the Federal Reserve. The Senate approved his nomination in a **51–45 vote**, while a separate confirmation vote is still required for him to officially replace Jerome Powell as Fed Chair. Warsh previously served at the Federal Reserve during the **2008 global financial crisis** and is regarded as an influential voice on monetary policy, inflation control and financial market reforms. His appointment comes at a crucial time as the U.S. economy faces **inflation pressures, political scrutiny over interest rates, and global market uncertainty**, making the Fed leadership transition closely watched worldwide.
- Yoweri Museveni has been sworn in for a **seventh term** as President of Uganda, extending one of the longest political tenures in modern African history. The 81-year-old leader, who first came to power in **1986**, took the oath in the capital city of Kampala after securing victory in the **January 2026 presidential election with 71.65% of the vote**, according to Uganda's Electoral Commission. His main challenger, Bobi Wine, received **24.72%** of the votes. Supporters credit Museveni with stabilizing Uganda, improving infrastructure and strengthening regional security, while critics argue that his prolonged rule has weakened democratic institutions. Museveni's continued presidency was enabled by constitutional amendments that removed both **presidential term limits** and **age restrictions**, allowing him to remain eligible for office after nearly four decades in power.
- The Taliban administration in Afghanistan has signed a **\$46 million agreement** with Indian company **TCRC** to develop customs laboratory infrastructure across the country. The five-year project will establish laboratory centres in Kabul and nine customs facilities, along with installing advanced testing equipment and upgrading existing systems. The project aims to improve Afghanistan's **trade quality control**, product testing, and certification capabilities. It will also strengthen the Afghanistan Standards and Quality Authority, helping exports meet international standards and improving the country's trade credibility. The agreement includes training programs for Afghan technical staff, collaboration with foreign experts, and efforts to obtain International Organization for Standardization certification standards. For India, the deal reflects continued economic engagement with Afghanistan through private-sector participation, while for Afghanistan it supports long-term trade infrastructure and economic development.
- The **European Union (European Union)** has included **India** in its updated list of countries eligible to export **marine products**, ensuring that Indian seafood exports will continue beyond **September 2026**. This decision prevents a potential trade disruption and strengthens India's access to a high-value global market, as the EU accounts for about **19% of India's seafood exports**. Earlier, India risked exclusion due to stricter EU norms on **antimicrobial residues** and compliance standards, but it was retained after demonstrating improved monitoring systems and food safety compliance. The approval reflects growing global trust in India's export quality framework. India's marine exports reached around **\$8.43 billion in FY26**, growing by about **14% year-on-year**, making seafood a key contributor to the country's export economy and coastal livelihoods.
- Donald Trump visited China and held high-level talks with Xi Jinping in Beijing, with both leaders describing the discussions as "historic" and "successful." The summit focused on **trade, tariffs, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and market access**, although no major formal agreements were officially confirmed. Trump claimed China could purchase **200 Boeing aircraft** and billions of dollars in U.S. agricultural products, but Beijing did not publicly verify these announcements. Technology cooperation and AI safety were key discussion areas, with participation from business leaders like Elon Musk and Jensen Huang, highlighting the strategic importance of U.S.-China relations for global trade and technology.
- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** declared the latest **Ebola outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)** after over **300 suspected cases** and **88 deaths** in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda** raised fears of wider spread. The outbreak involves the rare **Bundibugyo strain**, for which vaccine protection remains limited. Ebola spreads through **direct contact with infected blood or body fluids**, causing **haemorrhagic fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, organ failure, and high fatality rates**. WHO chief **Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus** called for urgent coordinated international response.
- Legendary climber **Kami Rita Sherpa**, known as the "**Everest Man**," created history by summiting **Mount Everest for the 32nd time**, extending his own world record for the most Everest ascents. The **56-year-old Nepali climber**, who began his mountaineering journey in **1994**, achieved the feat while guiding climbers during the spring expedition season. On the same day, **Lhakpa Sherpa** climbed Everest for the **11th time**, extending her own record as the woman with the most Everest ascents. Their achievements highlight Nepal's extraordinary mountaineering legacy surrounding the **8,849-metre world's highest peak**.
- The **Kremlin** has confirmed that Russian President **Vladimir Putin** will visit India for the **BRICS Summit 2026**, scheduled in **New Delhi in September**. The summit will bring together **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa** to discuss **trade, energy security, geopolitics, and global governance reforms**. Putin's visit underscores the strength of the **India–Russia strategic partnership**, especially in **defence, nuclear energy, technology, and economic cooperation**. As BRICS expands its influence in shaping the global political and economic order, the summit is expected to attract major international diplomatic attention.

- **Kevin Warsh** has officially become the new **Chair of the US Federal Reserve**, replacing **Jerome Powell** after a politically contested Senate confirmation. He takes office during a challenging economic period marked by **inflation concerns, interest rate uncertainty, and scrutiny over central bank independence**. The **Federal Reserve** plays a crucial role in shaping global financial conditions through **monetary policy, inflation control, banking regulation, and financial stability**, influencing worldwide markets. A former Fed governor during the **2008 global financial crisis**, Warsh brings strong academic and policy experience from institutions like **Stanford, Harvard Law School, and the Hoover Institution**.
- **Saudi Arabia** has officially joined the **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**, the India-led global initiative for big cat conservation, taking total membership to **26 countries** with **five observer nations**. Launched by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2023**, the alliance works to protect seven major big cat species—**tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma**—through **knowledge sharing, habitat conservation, capacity building, and joint wildlife programmes**. Saudi Arabia's entry strengthens global biodiversity partnerships and reflects growing international recognition of India's leadership in environmental diplomacy and wildlife conservation.
- A devastating explosion at the **Liushenyu Coal Mine in Shanxi, China**, reportedly killed at least **90 people** and injured over **100 workers**, making it one of China's deadliest recent mining disasters. Around **247 workers** were inside when the blast occurred, prompting a massive rescue operation involving **345 emergency personnel, medical teams, ambulances, and evacuation units**. Preliminary reports suggest dangerous gas conditions, possibly involving **carbon monoxide accumulation**, as the likely cause, though investigations continue. President **Xi Jinping** ordered intensive rescue efforts, medical care for survivors, and strict accountability for those responsible.
- Ahead of the **Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting**, External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** held important discussions with **Marco Rubio**, strengthening the **India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership**. The talks focused on cooperation in **Artificial Intelligence (AI), defence, trade, energy security, critical minerals, and counter-terrorism**. India also expressed concerns regarding recent **US visa and immigration policy changes** impacting students and professionals. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to **Indo-Pacific security, maritime stability, and supply chain resilience**, reflecting the growing strategic significance of the **Quad grouping** comprising **India, the United States, Japan, and Australia**.
- India has emerged as the global leader in issuing **Internationally Recognised Certificates of Compliance (IRCCs)** under the **Nagoya Protocol**, accounting for nearly **60% of worldwide certificates**. According to the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**, India has issued **3,556 IRCCs**, ensuring fair **Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)** for genetic resources and traditional knowledge under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**. The initiative has generated around **₹263 crore** through ABS approvals, with substantial funds distributed to local communities, farmers, and Biodiversity Management Committees for conservation and livelihood support.
- Under its **BRICS Chairship 2026**, India launched the **BRICS Tourism Cooperation Agenda** during the first virtual meeting of the **BRICS Tourism Working Group (TWG)**. The agenda focuses on **resilience, innovation, sustainability, and people-to-people connectivity** among member nations. India highlighted priorities such as the use of **Artificial Intelligence in tourism**, sustainable tourism development, and tourism skill enhancement. The next **BRICS Tourism Working Group Meeting** and **BRICS Tourism Ministers Meeting** will be hosted in **Jaipur in August 2026**, further advancing cooperation in the tourism sector.
- India has overtaken the **United Kingdom** to become **Sri Lanka's second-largest export destination** during the **January–April 2026** period. According to the **Sri Lanka Export Development Board**, exports to India reached **USD 364.15 million**, recording an annual growth of **8.9%**. The development reflects strengthening **India–Sri Lanka economic relations** and growing regional trade integration. Sri Lanka's export performance was driven by sectors such as **coconut-based products, activated carbon, and ICT services**, despite challenges faced by traditional export sectors like apparel and tea.
- The **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)** unveiled **five major Indo-Pacific initiatives** during its Foreign Ministers Meeting in **New Delhi**, signaling a transition from strategic discussions to practical cooperation. Key announcements focused on **maritime surveillance, energy security, critical minerals, and port infrastructure development**. A major highlight was the expansion of the **Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)** initiative to improve vessel tracking and maritime security. The Quad also launched the **Ports of the Future Partnership**, with **Fiji** selected for the pilot project, reinforcing a free and rules-based Indo-Pacific.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** showcased India's **cultural diplomacy** by presenting world leaders with gifts reflecting the country's rich tribal and indigenous heritage. **Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden** received a traditional **Gond painting** from Madhya Pradesh, while Italian Prime Minister **Giorgia Meloni** was gifted Assam's **GI-tagged Muga Silk stole** and a **Shirui Lily-inspired stole** crafted by Manipur's **Tangkhu Naga community**. The **Queen Mother of the UAE** received **Chak-Hao (black rice)** from Manipur. These gifts highlighted India's soft power, regional diversity, and commitment to promoting indigenous craftsmanship globally.

- The **3rd India-Nordic Summit 2026** held in **Oslo** marked a significant advancement in relations between India and the Nordic nations—**Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden**. Both sides agreed to establish a **Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership** focusing on **green hydrogen**, clean energy, climate action, digital innovation, Arctic research, and the blue economy. Discussions also emphasized cooperation in **Artificial Intelligence, 6G technology, cybersecurity**, sustainable development, and trade, reflecting rapidly growing economic and technological collaboration between India and the Nordic region.
- India and **Canada** are accelerating negotiations for the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** with the objective of finalizing the deal by **2026**. The proposed agreement aims to strengthen cooperation in energy, technology, pharmaceuticals, education, agriculture, manufacturing, and services. Both countries have set a target of increasing bilateral trade from **\$17 billion to \$50 billion by 2030**. The Free Trade Agreement is expected to reduce trade barriers, improve investment flows, and deepen economic integration, strengthening long-term strategic and commercial ties between the two nations.
- At the **Canada-India Trade and Investment Forum 2026**, India and Canada reaffirmed their commitment to conclude negotiations for the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** by the end of **2026**. Led by **Piyush Goyal** and **Maninder Sidhu**, the discussions focused on expanding trade, investment, and market access across sectors such as **technology, energy, pharmaceuticals, and agri-food products**. The agreement is expected to deepen economic cooperation, strengthen supply chains, and improve business opportunities, further enhancing the long-term strategic and commercial partnership between the two countries.
- **Janez Janša** has returned as **Prime Minister of Slovenia** for a **fourth term** after securing majority support in the country's **National Assembly** through a coalition led by the **Slovenian Democratic Party**. He received backing from **51 of 87 lawmakers** following extensive post-election negotiations. His return signals the growing influence of **right-wing and nationalist politics** in Europe. The **European Union**, including Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen**, welcomed the outcome and expressed support for continued cooperation on economic stability, security, climate policy, and regional development.
- **Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing** will undertake an official visit to India from **30 May to 3 June 2026** at the invitation of Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**. The visit aims to strengthen **India-Myanmar relations** through discussions on trade, connectivity, regional security, and cultural cooperation. Meetings in **New Delhi** will focus on economic partnerships and strategic collaboration, while visits to **Bodh Gaya** and **Mumbai** highlight cultural and economic engagement. Myanmar remains strategically important for India under its **Neighbourhood First Policy, Act East Policy, and MAHASAGAR Initiative**.
- The **United Nations** has added **Israel** to its annual list of parties linked to **Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)**, citing allegations involving abuse of Palestinian detainees and gender-based violence during the ongoing conflict. The watchlist aims to strengthen accountability, monitor violations of international humanitarian law, and enhance civilian protection. Israel strongly rejected the allegations, with Ambassador **Danny Danon** accusing the UN of bias and announcing the suspension of engagement with the office of **UN Secretary-General António Guterres**. The UN maintained that its conclusions were based on documented evidence and established verification procedures.

BANKING & FINANCE

- **Sun Pharmaceutical Industries** has proposed a **\$11.75 billion acquisition of Organon & Co.**, marking one of India's **largest overseas deals**. The all-cash transaction, expected by **2027**, will expand Sun Pharma's presence across **150 countries**. Organon's portfolio of **70+ products** and focus on **women's health** and **biosimilars** will strengthen future growth. The combined entity may achieve **\$12.4 billion revenue**, placing it among the **top global pharma companies**. This strategic move boosts India's position in **global healthcare markets** and promotes **affordable medicines** through biosimilars.
- **One MobiKwik Systems** received **NBFC approval** from the **Reserve Bank of India**, enabling entry into the **regulated digital lending space**. The company will launch **MobiKwik Financial Services Pvt. Ltd.** to offer **loans** and expand its **credit portfolio**. With over **18.6 crore users** and strong **technology infrastructure**, this move marks a shift from payments to full-scale **financial services**. The approval boosts **credibility**, supports **financial inclusion**, and strengthens India's **fintech ecosystem**, especially in extending credit access to underserved segments.
- **Visa Inc.** appointed **Suresh Sethi** as **Group Country Manager for India & South Asia**, aiming to boost **digital payments** and **financial innovation**. Based in **Mumbai**, he will oversee operations across **India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, and Bhutan**. Sethi succeeds **Sandeep Ghosh** and brings experience from **Protean e-Gov Technologies Ltd.**, where he advanced **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**. His leadership aligns with Visa's vision of expanding **fintech innovation, financial inclusion**, and strengthening the **digital economy** in South Asia.

- The **Reserve Bank of India** launched **Mission SAKSHAM (Sahkari Bank Kshamta Nirman)** to strengthen **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** through large-scale **capacity building**. The initiative will train around **1.4 lakh participants**, including **board members**, **senior management**, and **technical staff**, via **e-learning and offline programs**. It focuses on improving **governance**, **risk management**, **compliance**, and **operational efficiency**. Addressing issues like weak governance and skill gaps, the mission aims to enhance **financial stability** and transparency. This step reinforces RBI's commitment to modernising the UCB sector and improving banking services for **local communities** and **small businesses**.
- **Piyush Goyal** announced a **3-year waiver on Intellectual Property (IP) fees** during **World Intellectual Property Day** in **New Delhi**, aiming to promote **sports innovation**. The waiver covers **patents**, **trademarks**, **copyrights**, and **GI tags**, encouraging **startups**, **athletes**, and **students** to protect their ideas. The initiative supports **"Innovate, Patent, Produce, Prosper"** and highlights products like **Kashmir willow bats**. Plans include **sports manufacturing clusters** and a **wearables hackathon** with **IIT Delhi**, boosting **global competitiveness** and strengthening India's **sports economy**.
- India's **industrial output (IIP)** growth slowed to **4.1% in March 2026**, the lowest in five months, as per the **National Statistical Office**. The decline was driven by weak **manufacturing (4.3%)** and **power sector (0.8%)** performance, while **mining** showed resilience with **5.5% growth**. The **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** reflects overall **economic activity**, and the slowdown signals **weaker demand** and sectoral challenges. Despite this, annual growth remained stable at **4.1%**, indicating **moderate but uneven industrial recovery** and highlighting the need for stronger momentum in key sectors.
- The **Reserve Bank of India** introduced new **loan restructuring guidelines** for **disaster-hit areas**, effective **July 1, 2026**. Banks and NBFCs can now **proactively restructure loans** without borrower requests, ensuring **faster financial relief**. A **5% provisioning norm** is mandated to balance **risk and stability**. Only **standard accounts (≤30 days overdue)** are eligible, with a **135-day opt-out option** for borrowers. The framework requires action within **45 days** and completion in **90 days**. This move strengthens **financial resilience**, supports affected borrowers, and enhances the banking system's **crisis response capability**.
- The **Employees Provident Fund Organisation** will launch the **E-PRAAPTI portal** to help users trace and reactivate **dormant PF accounts** without a **UAN**. Announced by **Mansukh Mandaviya**, the platform uses **Aadhaar-based authentication** for secure access and allows users to manage accounts independently. It enhances **transparency**, **digital governance**, and **user empowerment**, especially for individuals with multiple job changes. With rising **digital claim settlements** and faster processing, this initiative strengthens EPFO's modernization efforts, ensuring **efficient, accessible, and paperless services** for millions of subscribers.
- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India** has operationalised the **PaRRVA (Past Risk and Return Verification Agency)** system from **May 4, 2026**, enhancing **market transparency** and **investor protection**. Managed by **CARE Ratings Limited** with support from **National Stock Exchange of India**, it verifies performance claims of **investment advisers**, **research analysts**, and others. The platform ensures **accurate, standardized data**, reducing misleading claims and enabling **informed investment decisions**. This initiative strengthens **accountability**, boosts investor confidence, and improves the credibility of India's **financial ecosystem**.
- India's **Unified Payments Interface**, launched in 2016 by the **National Payments Corporation of India** under the **Reserve Bank of India**, has completed a decade, becoming the **world's largest real-time payment system**. Transactions surged from **2 crore to 24,000+ crore**, with value reaching **₹314 lakh crore**, contributing **85% of India's digital payments** and **49% globally**. Its success lies in **instant transfers**, **interoperability**, **low cost**, and **ease of use**. Widely used for **P2P and P2M payments**, UPI also expanded globally, strengthening India's leadership in **digital public infrastructure and financial inclusion**.
- The **India Post Payments Bank** has launched **zero-balance SHG Savings Accounts** to empower **women-led Self Help Groups (SHGs)** in rural areas. Announced under the **Ministry of Communications**, the initiative offers **no minimum balance**, **zero initial deposit**, and **₹2 lakh limit**, making banking accessible. It aims to boost **financial inclusion**, **savings habits**, and **digital banking access**, while reducing dependence on informal credit. By integrating SHGs into the **formal banking system**, this move strengthens **women empowerment**, **grassroots economic development**, and **inclusive growth** across India.
- The **National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited** reported strong recovery performance in FY 2025–26, recovering **₹4,364 crore**, taking total recoveries to **₹6,345 crore**. It has acquired **33 stressed borrower accounts** with exposure nearing **₹1.65 lakh crore**, moving toward its **₹2 lakh crore target**. Working alongside **India Debt Resolution Company Ltd (IDRCL)** and under the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)**, NARCL plays a key role in resolving **NPAs**, improving **bank balance sheets**, and boosting **credit flow and economic growth** by enabling faster and more efficient asset recovery.

- India's **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** collections hit a **record ₹2.42 lakh crore in April 2026**, registering an **8.7% year-on-year growth**—the highest ever monthly collection. The surge was largely driven by **strong import growth**, contributing over **₹57,000 crore** (up 25.8%), and **year-end stock clearance** by businesses, which increased tax payments. Domestic GST remained steady at **₹1.85 lakh crore** (4.3% growth). After refunds, net collections stood at **₹2.11 lakh crore**. However, **rising refunds (up 19.3%)**, especially due to the **inverted duty structure**, remain a key concern for policymakers despite strong revenue performance.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** reported that **98.47% of ₹2,000 notes** withdrawn in **May 2023** have returned to the banking system, marking a major **currency management milestone**. The total circulation dropped from **₹3.56 lakh crore to ₹5,451 crore (April 2026)**. The withdrawal was not demonetisation—notes remain **legal tender** but are no longer actively circulated. Smooth exchange through **RBI offices and banks** ensured minimal disruption. The move aimed to promote **cleaner currency circulation, reduce high-value cash usage, and encourage digital payments**, reflecting India's shift towards a more **transparent and efficient financial system**.
- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** has warned that advanced AI models like **Anthropic's Mythos** could create serious cybersecurity threats for financial institutions. These AI systems can rapidly identify and exploit vulnerabilities in banking infrastructure, reducing the response time available to banks. Modern banking systems, including **core banking software, mobile apps, APIs, cloud services, and payment systems**, are highly interconnected, making them vulnerable to AI-driven attacks. The government has advised banks to strengthen **IT security, improve data protection**, and coordinate with **CERT-In** and the **Indian Banks Association**. Globally, institutions like **JPMorgan Chase, Microsoft, and Google** are developing AI-based defenses. Despite risks, AI tools also offer benefits such as **faster threat detection** and automated security testing.
- India has allowed **100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** in the **insurance sector** under the **automatic route** through amendments to the **Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) Rules, 2019**, notified on **May 2, 2026**. The reform permits foreign investors to fully own insurance companies and intermediaries without prior government approval. Eligible entities include **insurance brokers, TPAs, consultants, surveyors, and insurance repositories**. The move aims to attract **global capital, technology, and expertise** while strengthening India's insurance ecosystem. Investments will remain regulated by the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** and companies must comply with the **Insurance Act, 1938**. However, the **LIC** will continue to have a separate **20% FDI cap** under the automatic route.
- India's **net direct tax collections** increased by **5.12%** to over **₹23.40 trillion in FY26**, according to data released by the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)**. The growth reflects a resilient tax base supported by both **corporate tax** and **personal income tax** collections, despite falling short of the government's revised estimate of **₹24.21 trillion**. Corporate tax collections stood at around **₹10.99 lakh crore**, while **personal income tax**, including **Securities Transaction Tax (STT)**, contributed **₹12.41 trillion**, remaining the largest revenue source. Meanwhile, **gross direct tax collections** rose to **₹28.12 lakh crore**, and refunds declined to **₹4.71 trillion**.
- Rohit Jain** has assumed charge as the new **Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** for a **three-year term**, following approval by the **Government of India** and the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** on **May 2, 2026**. He succeeds **T. Rabi Sankar** and brings over **34 years of central banking experience**, having joined RBI in **1991**. Jain previously served as **Executive Director, Chief General Manager of the Department of Supervision**, and held senior positions at RBI's New Delhi office. He has also represented India in global institutions like the **Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS)** and the **Financial Stability Board (FSB)**.
- Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw** has reportedly identified her niece **Claire Mazumdar** as the future successor of **Biocon**, signaling a planned leadership transition at one of India's leading **biopharmaceutical companies**. Claire, currently the founder and CEO of **Bicara Therapeutics**, has extensive experience in global biotechnology and has previously worked with **Third Rock Ventures** and **Rheos Medicines**. The move reflects Biocon's focus on future-ready leadership amid rapid advancements in **biosimilars, biotechnology, and artificial intelligence**. Biocon has also announced leadership restructuring, with **Shreehas Tambe** becoming CEO of **Biocon Biologics** and **Siddharth Mittal** set to lead **Syngene International** from July 2026.
- The **National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)** has launched **Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs)**, offering investors a regulated and digital way to invest in gold. EGRs are electronic securities issued against physical gold stored in **SEBI-accredited vaults**, combining the security of physical gold with the convenience of electronic trading. Recently, NSE announced the successful **dematerialization of a 1,000-gram gold bar** into an EGR. These receipts can be traded on stock exchanges like shares and are backed by actual gold meeting standards set by the **London Bullion Market Association (LBMA)** and the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**. Key benefits include **safe storage, easy liquidity, lower risk of theft, and accessibility for retail investors**. Unlike **Gold ETFs**, EGR holders can also choose to take **physical delivery of gold** by surrendering their receipts.

- **Kumar Mangalam Birla** has been appointed as the new **Non-Executive Chairman** of **Vodafone Idea Limited (Vi)**, effective from **May 5, 2026**. The appointment marks a major leadership transition as the telecom company focuses on strengthening its business operations and long-term revival strategy. Former Chairman **Ravinder Takkar** has stepped down from the role and will continue as the **Non-Executive Vice Chairman** of the company. Birla, Chairman of the **Aditya Birla Group**, has been closely associated with Vodafone Idea since its formation and is expected to boost investor confidence through his leadership.
- S&P Global has reduced India's **FY27 GDP growth forecast** from **7.1% to 6.6%** in the joint **"India Forward"** report with CRISIL, citing **global economic uncertainty, rising crude oil prices, rupee volatility, inflationary pressure, and the West Asia conflict**. The report warned that Brent crude surged to nearly **\$126 per barrel**, increasing risks to India's import bill and inflation outlook. Dharmakirti Joshi described rising oil prices and a weakening rupee as a "double whammy" for the economy, while the Reserve Bank of India projected FY27 inflation at **4.6%**.
- Securities and Exchange Board of India has proposed a major reform called the **GARUDA mechanism (Green-Channel: AIF Rollout Upon Document Acknowledgement)** to speed up the launch process of Alternative Investment Funds and improve ease of doing business in India's fast-growing investment ecosystem. Currently, AIF schemes take around **30 days** after filing a placement memorandum, but under GARUDA, eligible schemes may launch in as little as **10 working days**, significantly improving **capital deployment speed and efficiency**. The reform also simplifies processes for **accredited investor-only funds and angel funds**, allowing direct filings and reduced compliance requirements while still maintaining regulatory oversight through post-review checks. With AIF commitments reaching **₹15.74 lakh crore**, SEBI's proposal aims to boost **startups, private equity, infrastructure funding, and investor confidence**, while strengthening India's alternative investment market.
- **BSE** has launched **F&O contracts** on the **Focused IT Index**, becoming India's first exchange to offer **IT sector-specific derivatives** for trading and hedging. The index tracks **14 major IT companies** and aims to improve **risk management** amid global factors like **currency fluctuations** and **AI-driven trends**. On launch day, it recorded **172 participants** and about **₹148 crore turnover**, showing strong investor interest. The product enables **sectoral trading**, enhances **price discovery**, and supports **institutional portfolio hedging** in the volatile **IT sector**.
- **Rolls-Royce plc** has announced a major expansion in India across **defence, civil aviation, and energy**, including fighter jet engines and nuclear power solutions, aligning with India's industrial and defence modernisation goals. In defence, the company plans to co-develop a **120 kN-class next-generation fighter engine** to support India's indigenous fifth-generation programme, the **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA)**, along with deep localisation and potential technology transfer. The expansion also focuses on strengthening Indian supply chains, boosting local manufacturing, and expanding support for the Army, Navy and Coast Guard with advanced propulsion systems, while exploring nuclear and industrial energy solutions.
- **Moody's Ratings** has lowered India's **GDP growth forecast for 2026 to 6%**, citing weak consumption, slower investments, declining industrial activity and rising energy costs. According to the **Moody's Global Macro Outlook May 2026 Update**, growth projections for both **2026 and 2027** were revised downward, indicating moderation after India's strong post-pandemic recovery. A major concern highlighted is India's heavy dependence on imported energy, with rising crude oil prices and global supply disruptions increasing risks related to inflation, government spending and industrial production. Moody's also warned that **geopolitical tensions**, global shipping risks and energy supply uncertainties could impact India's investment climate, corporate profits and overall economic growth momentum.
- India's **CPI-based retail inflation** rose slightly to **3.48% in April 2026**, up from **3.4% in March**, mainly driven by higher **food prices**, according to recent data trends. Despite the increase, inflation remains **below the Reserve Bank of India's 4% target**, though new risks are emerging from **global crude oil price rises, geopolitical tensions in West Asia, and a weaker Indian rupee**. Food inflation climbed to **4.20%**, with sharp volatility in vegetables—**tomato prices surged 35.28%**, while **potato and onion prices fell significantly**, showing uneven price pressures across essential goods. Economists warn that rising import costs and energy prices could keep inflationary pressure elevated in the coming months, even though current levels remain within the RBI's tolerance band of **2%–6%**.
- India has launched the **\$1.5 billion Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMI Pool)** to strengthen the country's shipping and trade ecosystem and reduce dependence on foreign insurers. The initiative, backed by a **\$1.4 billion sovereign guarantee**, aims to provide stable and continuous insurance coverage for vessels operating to and from India, including global maritime routes and high-risk regions. The pool offers comprehensive coverage such as **Hull & Machinery, cargo insurance, protection & indemnity (P&I)**, and **war risk insurance**, ensuring protection across all stages of international shipping. Approved by the **Union Cabinet in April 2026**, the BMI Pool is designed to lower insurance costs, improve risk management, and safeguard India's maritime trade during global disruptions and geopolitical uncertainties.

- India's **public sector banks (PSBs)** have reported their strongest-ever performance, posting a record **₹1.98 lakh crore net profit in FY 2025–26**, marking the **fourth consecutive year of profitability**. According to the Ministry of Finance, the combined **operating profit rose to ₹3.21 lakh crore**, supported by strong credit growth, improved asset quality and higher income levels across banks. PSBs also showed robust expansion, with total business reaching **₹283.3 lakh crore**, deposits at **₹156.3 lakh crore**, and gross advances growing **15.7% year-on-year**, reflecting strong demand for credit. Asset quality improved significantly, with gross NPAs falling to **1.93%** and net NPAs to **0.39%**, while strong recoveries and provisioning strength highlight a major turnaround in India's public banking sector and its role in supporting economic growth.
- India has raised the **import duty on gold and silver to 15%**, a move aimed at strengthening **foreign exchange reserves** and reducing pressure on the **Indian rupee** amid global economic uncertainty. The revised structure under the Ministry of Finance includes **10% Basic Customs Duty (BCD)** and **5% Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC)**, pushing the effective duty from 6% to 15% for gold and silver, and 15.4% for platinum. The decision comes as India faces rising import pressures from **crude oil costs, geopolitical tensions in West Asia, and global market volatility**, which are widening the current account deficit. Economists expect the higher duty to reduce gold demand by 10–15%, making jewellery and investment purchases more expensive while helping curb non-essential foreign exchange outflows.
- The Reserve Bank of India has cancelled the banking licence of Sarvodaya Cooperative Bank with immediate effect, citing weak financial health, poor earnings potential and risks to depositors' interests. Following the order, the bank can no longer accept deposits, allow withdrawals, issue loans or conduct regular banking operations, effectively freezing customer accounts after May 12, 2026. The RBI clarified that around **98.36% of depositors** are protected under the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) insurance framework, which covers deposits up to **₹5 lakh per depositor per bank**, including savings accounts, fixed deposits and accrued interest. However, depositors with balances above ₹5 lakh may face delays and uncertainty, as recovery beyond the insured limit will depend on the liquidation process, sale of bank assets and claims settlement overseen by the appointed liquidator.
- Uber has partnered with the **Adani Group** to build its **first data centre in India**, marking a major expansion of its **digital infrastructure** in one of its key global markets. The announcement followed a meeting between **Dara Khosrowshahi** and **Gautam Adani** in **Ahmedabad**. The facility will strengthen Uber's ability to **test, scale, and deploy technology** for global operations, leveraging India's strong **engineering talent, digital economy**, and growing **AI and cloud ecosystem**. Data centres support **real-time app services, AI systems**, and **payment infrastructure**. The move also aligns with Adani's push into **AI-ready, green-powered digital infrastructure** development.
- FinBox has launched **Atlas**, an AI-native lending platform to speed up loan processing and reduce borrower drop-offs in India's digital lending ecosystem. The platform automates onboarding and document handling through two modules—**Atlas Flow** and **Atlas Origin**, using conversational and AI-driven verification tools.
- It reduces loan approval time from nearly **21 days to 24 hours**, with reported improvements like **85% application completion** and fewer manual errors. Powered by **agentic AI**, Atlas helps banks and NBFCs streamline underwriting and fraud detection, supporting faster, more efficient, and scalable credit delivery.
- India's **Wholesale Price Index (Wholesale Price Index)** surged to **8.3% in April 2026**, its highest level in nearly **3.5 years**, mainly driven by a sharp rise in **fuel and energy prices** due to West Asia tensions and global crude oil disruptions. The **fuel & power segment** saw inflation jump to **24.71%**, with major spikes in **petrol (32.40%)**, **diesel (25.19%)**, and **LPG (10.92%)**, reflecting rising global crude costs and supply uncertainty. **Primary articles inflation** also rose to **9.17%**, while **manufactured products inflation** increased to **4.62%**, showing broad-based price pressures across the economy. Since WPI tracks producer-level costs, sustained high inflation may eventually pass through to consumers, raising retail prices and increasing pressure on India's overall inflation outlook.
- HDB Financial Services has appointed Natarajan Srinivasan as its **Independent Director and Non-Executive Chairman**. The appointment comes as the company expands operations and focuses on its long-term growth strategy. Srinivasan brings extensive leadership experience from the Murugappa Group, where he held several senior management roles. Meanwhile, Capri Global Capital announced that its lending arm, **Capri Loans**, has crossed **1,000 gold loan branches** across India. The expansion strengthens access to quick and transparent gold-backed credit in urban, semi-urban, and rural markets. Since launching its gold loan business in 2022, Capri Loans has grown rapidly, with assets under management (AUM) exceeding **₹16,960 crore**, supporting the company's broader financial inclusion goals.

- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority has relaxed the annuity exit rules under the National Pension System, allowing limited surrender of annuity plans in specific hardship situations. The revised framework mainly benefits retirees facing **critical medical emergencies** or those holding older annuity policies that already included surrender provisions. Earlier, once retirees used their NPS corpus to purchase an annuity, exiting the plan was almost impossible except during the short “free look” cancellation period. Under the updated rules, Annuity Service Providers (ASPs) may now permit surrender if the annuitant or a family member suffers from a critical illness. Certain pre-October 24, 2024 annuity plans with existing surrender clauses may also qualify.
- India's **gems and jewellery exports** fell by **9.07%** in **April 2026**, dropping to **\$2.23 billion (₹20,825 crore)**, mainly due to the **West Asia conflict**, which disrupted shipping routes, increased insurance costs, and weakened buyer confidence. **Gold jewellery exports** declined by **21.77%**, while **plain gold jewellery exports** plunged **47.06%**, reflecting weak global demand. **Cut and polished diamond exports** also dropped **19.65%**. However, **silver jewellery exports** surged by an impressive **444%** to **\$268.38 million**, emerging as the sector's strongest performer amid the broader slowdown.
- **Google** and **Blackstone** have launched a **\$5 billion AI cloud venture** focused on **Tensor Processing Units (TPUs)** and large-scale artificial intelligence infrastructure, aiming to challenge **Nvidia's dominance** in AI computing. The project will provide **Compute-as-a-Service (CaaS)**, enabling businesses to rent powerful AI computing resources without building expensive infrastructure. The first phase includes nearly **500 megawatts of data centre capacity**, reflecting booming demand for AI chips and cloud systems. Google strengthens its AI hardware ecosystem, while Blackstone expands aggressively into future-focused digital infrastructure investments.
- **Jio Platforms** has appointed **Akash Ambani** as its **Managing Director** for a five-year term beginning **9 April 2026**, marking a major leadership transition ahead of the company's anticipated **IPO**. Associated with Jio since **2014**, Akash has played a central role in its telecom expansion and digital ecosystem growth, previously serving as **Chairman of Reliance Jio Infocomm**. The appointment signals strategic continuity and may strengthen investor confidence ahead of public listing. Jio remains one of India's largest digital businesses spanning **telecom, enterprise services, cloud computing, and technology platforms**.
- Domestic rating agency **ICRA** has reduced India's **FY27 GDP growth forecast** from **6.5% to 6.2%**, citing rising **crude oil prices** and global uncertainty. Oil prices nearing **\$95 per barrel** could increase **inflation, transport costs, and India's import bill**, affecting economic momentum. Despite the downgrade, India is still expected to grow around **7.5%** in **FY26**, though quarterly expansion may slow. Key downside risks include **West Asia tensions, rupee depreciation, weakening exports, and higher commodity prices**, which could pressure fiscal management and broader macroeconomic stability.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** announced a **\$5 billion USD-INR buy/sell swap auction** to inject long-term liquidity into the banking system amid **global market volatility and rupee pressure**. Under the **three-year forex swap arrangement**, banks will temporarily sell US dollars to the RBI in exchange for rupee liquidity, improving banking system funding conditions. The move addresses risks from **capital flow volatility, inflation pressures, stronger US dollar trends, and financial uncertainty**. Scheduled for **26 May**, the measure reflects RBI's broader strategy of maintaining **stable credit flow, liquidity management, and financial market stability**.
- The **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)** has slightly lowered India's **2026 GDP growth forecast** from **6.6% to 6.4%**, citing **global economic uncertainty, geopolitical tensions, crude oil price risks, inflation, and tighter financial conditions**. Despite the revision, India remains among the **world's fastest-growing major economies**, supported by strong **domestic demand, infrastructure spending, and services exports**. The UN projects growth to recover to **6.6% in 2027**, suggesting the slowdown may be temporary rather than structural. External shocks, especially from **West Asia**, remain important downside risks.
- **Bharti Airtel** briefly became India's **second most valuable listed company**, surpassing **HDFC Bank** during intra-day trading with a market capitalisation of nearly **₹11.91 trillion**. Investor optimism was driven by **strong earnings visibility, telecom sector recovery, healthy cash flows, and solid performance from Airtel's Africa business**. Meanwhile, **HDFC Bank** faced pressure from **foreign investor selling, weaker sentiment, and sector rotation**, despite stable fundamentals. The development reflects changing investor preferences toward **growth-driven digital infrastructure businesses** over traditionally dominant financial sector stocks in the evolving Indian equity market.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** announced a record **₹2.87 lakh crore surplus transfer** to the Government of India for **FY26**, marking the highest-ever dividend payout by the central bank. The transfer strengthens **government non-tax revenue**, reduces borrowing pressure, and supports fiscal management amid global uncertainty. Higher **foreign exchange gains, rising gold prices, investment income, and expansion of RBI's balance sheet** contributed to the record surplus. RBI also allocated **₹1.09 lakh crore to its Contingent Risk Buffer** for financial stability, balancing fiscal support with prudent risk management and broader macroeconomic resilience.

- The **Reserve Bank of India** approved the reappointment of **Sandeep Bakhshi** as **Managing Director and CEO** of **ICICI Bank** for another **two-year term**, from **4 October 2026 to 3 October 2028**. The extension ensures leadership continuity at one of India's largest private banks. Since taking charge in **2018**, Bakhshi has been credited with improving **profitability, digital transformation, operational efficiency, investor confidence, and overall business performance**. **ICICI Bank** remains a leading institution in **retail banking, corporate finance, loans, deposits, wealth management, and digital financial services**, reinforcing its strong market position.
- A **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** report shows a major consumer shift toward **credit cards, UPI, and digital wallets**, reflecting India's accelerating cashless economy transformation. Credit card transactions surged from **216 crore in 2021 to 570 crore in 2025**, while transaction value rose from **₹8.9 lakh crore to ₹23.2 lakh crore**. In contrast, debit card usage sharply declined from **408.7 crore to 133.6 crore transactions**. Growth is driven by **e-commerce expansion, cashback offers, EMI schemes, rewards, and UPI integration**, while private banks increasingly dominate India's rapidly expanding digital payments ecosystem.
- **Karnataka Grameena Bank** has received an award from the **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** for exceptional performance under the **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)**. The bank achieved **2,49,185 enrolments** against a target of **1,75,500**, registering an impressive **142% achievement rate**, the highest among banks in Karnataka. The award was presented in **New Delhi** by **M. Nagaraju** and **S. Ramann** to **Shreekant M. Bhandiwad**. The recognition highlights the bank's contribution toward **financial inclusion, pension awareness, and social security coverage** in rural India.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has introduced stricter governance norms for **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** through the **Urban Co-operative Banks Governance Amendment Directions, 2026**. Under the new framework, directors can serve a maximum of **10 consecutive years**, followed by a mandatory **three-year cooling-off period** before rejoining the same board. The amendment aims to improve **corporate governance**, ensure leadership rotation, and prevent misuse of loopholes through temporary resignations and reappointments. Effective immediately, the reform aligns with the **Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025** and strengthens accountability within the co-operative banking sector.
- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** has proposed a major overhaul of the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** to improve measurement of industrial growth. The reforms include changing the **base year from 2011–12 to 2022–23**, introducing a **chain-linked methodology**, and expanding the industrial basket from **407 to 463 item groups**. New sectors such as **gas supply, water supply, waste management, and renewable energy** will also be incorporated. The proposed changes aim to better reflect India's evolving industrial structure and provide more accurate economic data.
- India's **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)** has completed **10 years** since its introduction in **2016**, marking a decade of significant reforms in debt resolution and financial discipline. The legislation replaced lengthy insolvency procedures with a **time-bound, creditor-driven framework** aimed at reviving stressed companies and maximizing asset value. By **March 2026**, over **8,987 cases** had been admitted, with more than **7,100 closures** and numerous successful corporate resolutions. The IBC has contributed to reducing **Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)**, improving recovery rates, strengthening creditor rights, and enhancing India's overall credit culture and financial stability.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** is considering the introduction of **polymer-based currency notes** through a pilot project aimed at improving the durability and efficiency of Indian banknotes. Compared with traditional paper currency, polymer notes offer greater resistance to moisture, tearing, and wear, resulting in lower replacement and printing costs. The initiative comes amid rising cash circulation despite the rapid expansion of digital payment systems such as **UPI**. The proposed move is also expected to improve security features, reduce disposal of soiled notes, and strengthen overall currency management.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has projected India's **real GDP growth at 6.9% for FY27**, reaffirming confidence in the country's strong macroeconomic fundamentals despite global uncertainties. According to the RBI, factors such as robust domestic demand, increasing private investment, and sustained government infrastructure expenditure will continue to drive economic growth. However, the central bank cautioned that geopolitical tensions, particularly in **West Asia**, could lead to higher crude oil prices, inflationary pressures, and supply-chain disruptions. The RBI also projected **CPI inflation at 4.6%**, maintaining India's position among the fastest-growing major economies.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and the **State Bank of Vietnam** have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to strengthen cooperation in **digital payments, fintech innovation, and cross-border payment systems**. The agreement focuses on promoting **QR code-based payment connectivity**, enabling seamless transactions for tourists, businesses, and consumers in both countries. It also covers regulatory cooperation, information sharing, and payment infrastructure development. The partnership is expected to improve payment efficiency, lower transaction costs, and deepen economic and financial relations between **India and Vietnam**.

MoU's & AGREEMENTS

- IndiaAI has signed an MoU with Indian Council of Medical Research to promote **AI-driven healthcare innovation** in India. The partnership will integrate IndiaAI's digital infrastructure with ICMR's biomedical research expertise to develop **ethical, scalable, and research-based healthcare AI solutions**. Under the agreement, anonymised healthcare datasets and AI tools developed through the **MIDAS framework** will be hosted on the **AIKosh platform**, improving access for researchers and startups. IndiaAI will also provide **high-performance computing infrastructure** to support AI applications in **disease prediction, medical imaging, healthcare analytics, and drug research**, strengthening India's push for responsible AI governance in healthcare.
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre signed an MoU with the Reserve Bank of India to strengthen cyber fraud prevention and tackle the growing threat of **mule accounts** in India's banking system. The partnership aims to improve **fraud-risk intelligence sharing**, enhance coordination between agencies and use **AI-driven systems** to detect suspicious financial transactions in real time. Mule accounts, often used in **online scams, phishing attacks and money laundering**, have become a major challenge in controlling cybercrime and digital payment fraud. The initiative will integrate data from the **I4C Suspect Registry** and deploy advanced analytics to quickly identify and block fraudulent accounts, improving security in India's digital payments ecosystem.
- India and **Ethiopia** signed a bilateral **WTO accession protocol in Geneva**, supporting Ethiopia's long-running effort to join the **World Trade Organization**. The agreement reflects India's support for integrating **developing and least-developed countries** into the global trading system through fair market access and stronger economic cooperation. Ethiopia's accession requires reforms in **trade regulation, tariffs, customs administration, and market access commitments**. India already remains one of Ethiopia's major trading partners and investors, with economic engagement across **manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, infrastructure, and education**, strengthening broader India–Africa strategic and economic relations.
- India and Norway elevated bilateral relations to a **Green Strategic Partnership** during PM **Narendra Modi's historic visit to Oslo**, marking a major expansion in cooperation. The partnership focuses on **clean energy, climate action, digital innovation, artificial intelligence, green shipping, blue economy, and maritime collaboration**. A key development is enhanced **ISRO–Norway space cooperation** and Norway's stronger Indo-Pacific engagement. Both nations also signed a **Triangular Cooperation Agreement** to support development initiatives in the **Global South** using India's **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** model, strengthening sustainable diplomacy and international development cooperation.
- India and **Cyprus** upgraded bilateral ties to a **Strategic Partnership** during the visit of President **Nikos Christodoulides** to New Delhi. The two countries signed **six agreements** covering **defence, cybersecurity, innovation, education, maritime cooperation, culture, and counter-terrorism**, including a **Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism**. A **Defence Cooperation Roadmap (2026–2031)** and maritime rescue collaboration were also announced, while Cyprus joined India's **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative**. Additional plans include the **first India-Cyprus Space Day** and a **Cyprus Trade Center in Mumbai**, aimed at boosting investment, connectivity, and strategic engagement.
- India and Italy elevated bilateral relations to a **Special Strategic Partnership** during Prime Minister **Narendra Modi's visit** and talks with Italian PM **Giorgia Meloni**, marking a major diplomatic upgrade. Both countries set a target of **€20 billion bilateral trade by 2029**, focusing on **semiconductors, artificial intelligence, defence, infrastructure, clean energy, and critical minerals**. Cooperation will expand in **IMEC connectivity, maritime transport, counterterrorism, defence manufacturing, and space research**, alongside innovation platforms like **INNOVIT India**. Both nations also announced a **Year of Culture and Tourism in 2027**, strengthening cultural diplomacy and people-to-people ties.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

- Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)** appointed **Sanjay Jamuar** as the first CEO of **Delhi Metro International Limited (DMIL)**, marking a step toward **global expansion**. DMIL aims to take India's **metro expertise** to international markets through **consultancy** and project execution. Jamuar, a former **IRTS officer**, brings extensive global experience across **Europe and West Asia**. DMRC, already involved in projects like **Dhaka Metro**, strengthens its position in **urban transport solutions**. This move highlights India's growing role in **global metro infrastructure** and sustainable urban development.
- Dilip Kumar** assumed charge as **Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO)** of **Steel Authority of India Limited** on **April 27, 2026**, aiming to enhance **transparency, accountability, and vigilance** in the PSU. A senior officer of the **Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers**, he brings over **two decades of experience** in operations, maintenance, and management. Known for innovations like **ISO-certified trains** and **wheel replacement techniques**, he holds a degree from **IIT BHU**. His appointment strengthens governance and operational integrity in India's **steel sector**.

- Indian cricketer **Shreyas Iyer** has been named brand ambassador for the F1 programme in India by **Mumbai Falcons Racing Limited**. Alongside, the **F1 Sim Racing India Open 2026** has been launched to identify and nurture **esports racing talent**. The initiative aims to bridge **gaming and professional motorsport**, offering a national platform for young players. Iyer's involvement is expected to boost youth engagement and promote a **multi-sport ecosystem**, highlighting the growing convergence of **traditional sports, esports, and digital innovation** in India.
- Infosys** has appointed **Nitin Paranjpe** as **Non-Executive Vice Chairman**, strengthening its **governance and strategic leadership**. Approved by the Board, he will work alongside Chairman **Nandan Nilekani** to guide long-term strategy. Paranjpe, also Chairman of **Hindustan Unilever Limited**, brings vast global experience in **corporate governance and business strategy**. The role focuses on advisory and board-level decisions, ensuring stability as Infosys navigates **digital transformation and global competition** in the evolving IT sector.
- Vishvajit Sahay** has been appointed **Secretary (Defence Finance)** in the Ministry of Defence, bringing over **30 years of experience in defence finance and public administration**. A **1990-batch IDAS officer**, he earlier served as **Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA)** and held key roles across multiple ministries. An alumnus of **St. Stephen's College** with a **law degree**, he also has international exposure from the **University of Cambridge** and the **George C. Marshall Centre**. His appointment is expected to strengthen **financial governance, transparency, and strategic decision-making** in India's defence sector.
- Anugraha Narayana Das**, a **1991-batch IDAS officer**, has assumed charge as **Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA)**, bringing over **30 years of experience in defence finance and public administration**. An alumnus of **Utkal University**, with international exposure at the **University of Ljubljana** and training from **IIM Bangalore** and **Duke University**, he has held key roles including **Additional Financial Adviser (MoD)** and **Principal IFA, Army HQ**.
- Ashutosh Gowariker** has been appointed **Festival Director** for the **57th International Film Festival of India 2026**, scheduled in **Goa (November 2026)**. A renowned filmmaker with a long association with IFFI since 1984 and former Jury President (2024), he brings strong **creative vision and global experience**. Established in 1952, IFFI is among **Asia's oldest film festivals**, organized by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, NFDC, and Entertainment Society of Goa. The 2026 edition will feature **international competitions, masterclasses, and retrospectives**, aiming to boost **global cinematic collaboration and cultural exchange**.
- Bharat Khera**, a **1995-batch IAS officer**, has been appointed **Secretary of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)**. With over **30 years of administrative experience**, he is expected to strengthen the **MSME sector**, contributing **30% to India's GDP**. He previously served as **Additional Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs**, and held key roles in the **Ministry of Defence** and **Cabinet Secretariat**. He also served in senior positions in **Himachal Pradesh**. An alumnus of **BITS Pilani**, **Syracuse University**, and **ISB**, he brings strong **policy, governance, and leadership expertise** to drive **MSME growth and economic development**.
- Prasoon Joshi** has been appointed as the new Chairman of **Prasar Bharati** by the Government of India, with the announcement made on **May 2, 2026**. Known for his contributions to **literature, advertising, and cinema**, Joshi is expected to bring **innovation and creativity** to India's public broadcasting system. The **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting** highlighted his cultural understanding and leadership qualities. Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw** praised him as a "rare creative spirit." Joshi previously served as **CBFC Chairperson**, CEO of **McCann World Group India**, and trustee of **IGNCA**. **Prasar Bharati**, established under the **Prasar Bharati Act, 1990**, oversees **All India Radio, Doordarshan**, and the digital **Waves OTT platform**.
- The Government of India has appointed **R Balasubramaniam** and **Joram Aniya** as full-time members of **NITI Aayog**, expanding its core team to seven members. Approved by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, the appointments aim to strengthen policymaking with expertise in **governance, grassroots development, education, and cultural studies**. **Joram Aniya**, an academician from **Arunachal Pradesh**, is the first woman from the **Nyishi community** to earn a PhD and is known for her work on tribal culture and indigenous knowledge. **R Balasubramaniam**, founder of **SVYM** and **GRAAM**, is a noted policy expert and author. **NITI Aayog**, established in **2015**, serves as India's premier public policy think tank promoting **cooperative federalism** and policy innovation.
- Shashi Shekhar Vempati** has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)** for a **three-year term**, as announced by the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** on **May 6, 2026**. He succeeds **Prasoon Joshi**, who recently became Chairman of **Prasar Bharati**. Vempati is known for his strong background in **media, technology, broadcasting, and public communication** and previously served as the **CEO of Prasar Bharati**, where he led the modernization of **Doordarshan** and **All India Radio**. An alumnus of **IIT Bombay**, he has also contributed to initiatives in **AI, education, and science communication**, including co-founding **AI4India Org**.

- Ramachandra Dattatray Huddar has been appointed as the **Chairperson of the Admission Overseeing Committee (AOC)** in Karnataka on **May 8, 2026**. The AOC supervises admissions to **engineering, medical, dental, and other professional courses** to ensure transparency and regulatory oversight. Justice Huddar previously served as an **Additional and Permanent Judge of the Karnataka High Court**, besides holding key posts such as **Principal District and Sessions Judge** and **Director of the Karnataka Judicial Academy**. His appointment follows the completion of Justice B. Manohar's tenure and is expected to strengthen monitoring of professional education admissions in the state.
- Dr. Ashok Kumar Panda has taken charge as the **Chairman & Managing Director** of Steel Authority of India Limited, marking a key leadership transition in one of India's largest public sector steel companies. With over **three decades of experience** in SAIL, he began as a **Management Trainee in 1992** and later held senior roles including **Director (Finance)** and **Director (Commercial)**, showcasing strong internal leadership growth. During his tenure, he focused on improving **operational efficiency, product mix, sales volumes, net sales realisation, inventory management, and strategic market alignment** across the organization. His vision for SAIL includes expanding capacity to **35 MTPA**, strengthening **safety, raw material security, branding, and market growth**, supporting India's broader goal of becoming a global leader in **steel production and infrastructure development**.
- Prashant Pise has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to the Oman by the Ministry of External Affairs.
- A 1995-batch **Indian Foreign Service (IFS)** officer, he currently serves as **Additional Secretary (Emigration Policy and Welfare)** and will replace Godavarthi Venkata Srinivas in Muscat. Prashant Pise has extensive diplomatic experience, including postings in **Cairo, Tripoli**, and roles related to **Russia, Central Asia, CIS affairs, and UN economic matters**, along with leadership in international migration and labour diplomacy. His appointment is strategically significant as Oman remains a key Indian partner in the Gulf region for **energy security, maritime cooperation, trade, and welfare of the large Indian diaspora**.
- R Mukundan has assumed office as President of the Confederation of Indian Industry for the **2026–27 term**, succeeding Rajiv Memani. A senior Tata Group executive with over **three decades of leadership experience**, Mukundan has worked across sectors including **chemicals, automotive, hospitality, and corporate strategy**, and currently leads Tata Chemicals. The CII also announced Suchitra K Ella as President-Designate and Shashwat Goenka as Vice-President for 2026–27. As one of India's most influential industry bodies, CII plays a key role in **economic reforms, policy advocacy, investment promotion, manufacturing competitiveness, and public-private dialogue**.
- Susan Elias has been appointed as the **first female Principal** of St Stephen's College, marking a historic milestone in the institution's **145-year history**. She will assume office as the **14th principal from 1 June 2026**, succeeding John Varghese. A seasoned academic with over **three decades of experience**, Elias has worked in teaching, research and university administration, and previously served as **Pro Vice Chancellor (Research)** at Chandigarh University Uttar Pradesh. Her vision includes preserving the college's legacy while introducing **modern, future-ready courses** in areas such as **artificial intelligence and quantum computing**, aligning the institution with emerging global education trends.
- IAS officer **Saurabh Vijay**, a **1998-batch Maharashtra cadre officer**, assumed charge as the new **CEO of UIDAI** on **18 May 2026**. The **Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)** manages **Aadhaar**, the world's largest biometric identity system, under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**, functioning under the **Aadhaar Act, 2016**. An **IIT Delhi alumnus**, he has served in senior roles across finance, planning, tourism, education, and medical administration in Maharashtra. He also held positions at the **President's Secretariat** and the **World Bank**, bringing broad governance experience.
- **Raghav Chadha** has been appointed Chairman of the **Rajya Sabha Committee on Petitions** following its reconstitution by **C. P. Radhakrishnan**. The committee plays an important role in examining **citizen petitions**, addressing **public grievances**, and reviewing legislative concerns brought before Parliament. Effective from **20 May 2026**, the panel includes ten members from different political backgrounds. As chairman, Chadha will oversee recommendations aimed at improving governance, strengthening **democratic accountability**, and encouraging public participation in parliamentary affairs, thereby enhancing transparency and responsiveness within India's legislative and policy-making framework.
- The **Supreme Court Collegium**, headed by **Chief Justice Surya Kant**, has recommended the appointment of **five new judges** to the Supreme Court following the expansion of its sanctioned strength from **34 to 38 judges**. The recommendations include **Justice Sheel Nagu, Justice Shree Chandrashekhar, Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, Justice Arun Palli**, and senior advocate **V. Mohana**. If approved, the appointments will significantly reduce vacancies and help address case pendency. Notably, **V. Mohana** is set to become only the **second woman directly elevated from the Bar** to the Supreme Court after **Justice Indu Malhotra**.

AWARDS

- Botanist **N. Alim Yusuf** was honoured by the **World Wide Fund for Nature** for developing an **AI-powered app** to detect **invasive plant species** in Kerala. The app identifies nearly **100 species**, aiding **biodiversity conservation** and enabling **early detection** of ecological threats. Developed at the **Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute for Plant Sciences**, it empowers **researchers, forest officials**, and the public. This innovation highlights the role of **artificial intelligence** in **environmental monitoring**, bridging **technology and ecology**. The recognition underscores efforts toward **sustainable development, climate action**, and strengthening **ecosystem protection** globally.
- The **Sur Jyotsna National Music Awards 2026**, held in **New Delhi**, honoured eminent artists **Sumitra Guha** and **Laxman Krishnarao Pandit** for their lifelong contribution to **Indian classical music**. The awards celebrate excellence and aim to preserve **cultural heritage** while encouraging young talent. Hosted at the **Dr Ambedkar International Centre**, the event featured dignitaries and performances by artists like **Kailash Kher**. Expanding to multiple cities, the initiative promotes wider appreciation of **traditional music** across India.
- The Indian scientist **Parveen Shaikh** has won the **Whitley Award 2026** for protecting the endangered **Indian Skimmer** in the Ganga Basin. Her **community-led conservation model**, involving local “nest guardians,” improved survival rates and increased bird population significantly. Supported by the **Bombay Natural History Society**, the project will now expand to **Prayagraj**, addressing challenges like pollution and human disturbance. This recognition highlights the importance of **community participation, biodiversity conservation, and grassroots environmental efforts** in protecting endangered species.
- Two Indian journalists, **R.K. Anand** and **Suparna Sharma**, won the **Pulitzer Prize 2026** in the category of **Illustrated Reporting and Commentary** for their investigative work on **cyber fraud and digital surveillance**. They shared the award with **Natalie Obiko Pearson** for the Bloomberg project titled “**trAPPed**.” The report exposed the story of an Indian neurologist trapped in a “**digital arrest**” scam, highlighting how cybercriminals misuse technology to manipulate victims remotely. The project combined **visual storytelling, data analysis, and investigative journalism** to reveal the growing dangers of **online scams, digital exploitation, and surveillance abuse**. The award, announced on **May 4, 2026**, recognizes excellence in journalism and is administered by **Columbia University** through the prestigious **Pulitzer Prize** program.
- Soma Mandal has won the **South Asia regional title** at the **Cambridge Dedicated Teacher Awards 2026**, organized by Cambridge University Press & Assessment. She was recognized for her outstanding work in **environmental education, climate change awareness**, and promoting sustainability among students. The awards received over **12,000 nominations from 126 countries**, with only **nine regional winners** selected globally. Mandal’s teaching approach focuses on practical climate solutions, student leadership, and environmental responsibility. As a winner, she will receive **£500 worth of books**, a trophy, global recognition, and inclusion in future Cambridge textbooks.
- Droupadi Murmu presented the **National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026** at Rashtrapati Bhavan on **International Nurses Day**. The awards, instituted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, honor outstanding nursing professionals for their dedication, compassion and healthcare service. Awardees included **Kulwinder Parhi, Ujwala Mahadev Soyam, Lalenthangi Hnamte, Gita Karmakar** and **Maj Gen Lissamma PV** from various states and institutions across India. The 2026 theme, “**Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives,**” highlights better working conditions, leadership opportunities and quality training for nurses nationwide.
- India’s **Chandrayaan-3 mission** received the prestigious **2026 AIAA Goddard Astronautics Award** in **Washington, D.C.**, recognising India’s historic achievement in lunar exploration. The mission made global history when India became the **first country to successfully soft-land near the Moon’s south pole**, a region of major scientific interest due to possible **water ice and resource potential**. The award was accepted on behalf of **ISRO** by India’s Ambassador to the United States, **Vinay Kwatra**. The honour strengthens India’s global standing in **space technology, lunar exploration, and advanced scientific capability**.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** received Sweden’s prestigious **Royal Order of the Polar Star – Commander Grand Cross**, one of the country’s highest civilian honours. Established in **1748 by King Frederick I**, the award recognises distinguished contributions to **international cooperation, diplomacy, and leadership**. The honour reflects strengthening **India–Sweden relations** across **green transition, AI, innovation, defence, climate action, trade, and space cooperation**. This adds to PM Modi’s growing list of international recognitions and symbolises India’s expanding diplomatic footprint and strategic global partnerships in emerging sectors.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** received Norway’s highest civilian honour, the **Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit**, during his official visit to **Oslo**, marking his **32nd international honour** from a foreign country. Established in **1985 by King Olav V**, the award recognises exceptional contributions to **international relations and services connected to Norway**, and is conferred under **King Harald V**. The visit is historically significant as the **first by an Indian Prime Minister to Norway in 43 years**, highlighting stronger **India–Nordic cooperation** in diplomacy, trade, technology, and strategic engagement.

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** received the prestigious **FAO Agricola Medal** during his visit to **Rome**, recognising contributions to **sustainable agriculture, food security, and rural development**. The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** acknowledged India's efforts in **climate-resilient farming, farmer welfare, agricultural innovation, and sustainable food systems** under his leadership. PM Modi dedicated the honour to India's **farmers, livestock rearers, fishers, scientists, and agricultural workers**, describing them as the backbone of national food security. He emphasised that agriculture in India is deeply linked to **culture, nature, and human welfare**, not merely economic production.
- Renowned **Kantha embroidery artist Tripti Mukherjee** will receive the **Padma Shri** on **25 May 2026** from President **Droupadi Murmu** for preserving West Bengal's traditional textile heritage and empowering rural women through handicrafts. With over **37 years of experience**, she trained numerous women through her centre in **Suri**, helping them achieve financial independence through embroidery work. She also promoted Indian handicrafts internationally at exhibitions in **Birmingham and Tokyo**. Her earlier honours include the **Shilp Guru Award, Bangashree Award, and National Award Certificate**, recognising her exceptional contribution to traditional Indian craftsmanship.
- Indian public health scientist **Dr. Soumya Swaminathan** has been elected a **Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS)**, one of the world's most prestigious scientific honours. The recognition celebrates her decades of contributions to **infectious disease research, public health leadership, and global health policy**, including roles as **former WHO Chief Scientist** and **former Director General of ICMR**. She becomes only the **second Indian woman after Gagandeep Kang** to receive the honour. The achievement also marks a notable father-daughter milestone, as her father, agricultural scientist **M. S. Swaminathan**, was also an **FRS Fellow**.
- **Taiwan Travelogue** by **Yang Shuang-zi**, translated by **Lin King**, won the **International Booker Prize 2026**, becoming the first **Mandarin Chinese-translated novel** to receive the prestigious literary honour. Set in **1930s colonial Taiwan**, the novel explores themes of **identity, friendship, colonial tensions, food culture, and metafictional storytelling** through the journey of a Japanese writer and her interpreter. The win highlights the rising global recognition of **Taiwanese literature** and the importance of literary translation in cultural exchange. The shortlist broadly reflected themes of **resilience, exile, struggle, and human connection**.
- **Major Abhilasha Barak** has been honoured with the **2025 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award** for her exceptional contribution to **women empowerment, gender sensitization**, and community outreach during her service with the **United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)**. As Commander of the **Female Engagement Team**, she worked closely with women and girls in conflict-affected communities while promoting inclusive peacebuilding efforts. A pioneering **combat helicopter pilot** in the Indian Army, she became **India's third recipient** of this prestigious award, highlighting India's growing contribution to **gender-inclusive peacekeeping operations** worldwide.
- The **Sansad Ratna Awards 2026** recognized outstanding contributions by Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees in legislative work and public service. This year, **10 Lok Sabha MPs, 2 Rajya Sabha MPs, and 4 Parliamentary Standing Committees** received the honour. Notable awardees included **Medha Kulkarni** and **Smita Uday Wagh**. Established in **2010** by the **Prime Point Foundation** and inspired by **Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam**, the awards are based on measurable parliamentary indicators such as **attendance, debates, questions raised, and committee participation**, encouraging greater accountability and effectiveness in parliamentary functioning.
- President **Droupadi Murmu** conferred the **Padma Awards 2026** on **66 distinguished personalities** during the first Civil Investiture Ceremony at **Rashtrapati Bhavan**. The awards included **2 Padma Vibhushan, 6 Padma Bhushan, and 58 Padma Shri** honours across fields such as arts, sports, medicine, public affairs, and industry. Legendary actor **Dharmendra** received the **Padma Vibhushan** posthumously, while celebrated violinist **N. Rajam** was honoured for her contribution to Indian classical music. Other notable recipients included **Harmanpreet Kaur, Uday Kotak, and Bhagat Singh Koshyari**.
- The **United Nations** will posthumously honour Indian peacekeepers **Harbhajan Singh** and **Sujit Kumar Pradhan** with the prestigious **Dag Hammarskjöld Medal** for sacrificing their lives during peacekeeping missions in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and **South Sudan**. Additionally, **Major Abhilasha Barak** will receive the **2025 Military Gender Advocate Award** for promoting gender inclusion and women's participation in peacekeeping operations in **Lebanon**. India remains one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping efforts, with more than **4,200 personnel** currently serving in missions across the world.

SUMMITS, EVENTS & CONFERENCE

Category	Event	Venue	Key Points
Summits	International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit 2026	New Delhi	India will host the first-ever IBCA Summit on 1–2 June 2026 . The summit focuses on conservation of tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma . Theme: " Save Big Cats, Save Humanity, Save Ecosystem ". Expected outcome: Delhi Declaration on Big Cat Conservation .
Summits	Santa Marta Climate Conference 2026	Santa Marta, Colombia	Jointly hosted by Colombia and the Netherlands , the conference focused on reducing fossil fuel dependence, accelerating clean energy transition, renewable energy cooperation, and climate action.
Summits	BRICS Foreign Ministers Meeting 2026	New Delhi	Chaired by S. Jaishankar , discussions covered global geopolitics, regional security, economic cooperation, multilateral reforms , and the BRICS@20 agenda .
Summits	BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting 2026	Indore, Madhya Pradesh	Focus areas include food security, climate-resilient agriculture, AI in farming, digital agriculture, sustainable irrigation, and farmer welfare .
Summits	4th India–Africa Forum Summit 2026	New Delhi	Focus on trade, defence, technology, energy, healthcare, climate action, maritime security, and digital cooperation . India–Africa trade currently stands at nearly \$85 billion .
Conference	68th Session of APO Governing Body	Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi	Hosted by India from 20–22 May 2026 . Discussions focused on APO Vision 2030, productivity-led growth, governance reforms, budget planning, and leadership elections .
Events	Postponement of IBCA Summit	New Delhi	The inaugural IBCA Summit was postponed following the rescheduling of the India–Africa Forum Summit to ensure stronger participation from African nations involved in big cat conservation.
Events	Postponement of 4th India–Africa Forum Summit	New Delhi	India postponed the summit due to the worsening Ebola outbreak in Africa after WHO declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) .

INDEX

RANKING REPORT

- India became the **fifth-largest military spender** in 2025, with expenditure rising to **\$92.1 billion**, according to the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute**. Defence spending grew **8.9%**, driven by **modernisation, border security**, and regional tensions, including the **India–Pakistan conflict**. India now ranks behind the **US, China, Russia, and Germany**, contributing to rising **global military expenditure**. Increased investments in **aircraft, missiles, and advanced technologies** highlight its focus on **defence readiness**. This trend reflects India's strategic push toward strengthening **national security** and maintaining a robust **military capability** amid global uncertainties.
- India's passport slipped to **78th position** in the latest Henley & Partners Passport Index 2026, falling three places from its earlier rank of 75. According to the index, Indian passport

holders currently have access to **56 destinations** through visa-free, visa-on-arrival, or e-visa facilities. The International Air Transport Association data-based ranking evaluates global passports by travel freedom. Despite the recent decline, India's long-term position has improved from **90th rank in 2021** and **85th in 2025**, indicating gradual progress in global mobility.

- India has surpassed the **United States** to become **Bangladesh's second-largest trading partner**, accounting for **8.47% of Bangladesh's total trade**, according to recent **Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)** data. **China** remains the largest partner with over **21% trade share**, driven by machinery and industrial exports. India's rise reflects stronger **regional economic integration, geographic trade advantages, and cross-border commercial connectivity**. Bangladesh depends heavily on India for **food commodities, cotton, yarn, industrial goods, and essential imports**, strengthening bilateral economic interdependence between the neighbouring countries.

- The **National Family Health Survey-6 (NFHS-6)** released by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** highlights significant improvements in healthcare and social indicators across India. Conducted across **6.79 lakh households** in **715 districts**, the survey recorded increases in **institutional deliveries, antenatal care coverage, and child immunization rates**. It also reported declines in **child stunting and severe wasting**, while health insurance coverage expanded substantially. The report further noted growing **digital inclusion**, with more women owning bank accounts, using mobile phones, and accessing the internet, reflecting progress in financial and social empowerment.
- The **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** has launched the **Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI)**, a national framework designed to measure and improve the efficiency of Indian ports. Announced by **Sarbananda Sonowal** during the **37th Foundation Day of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority**, the initiative aligns with **PM Gati Shakti, Maritime India Vision 2030, and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**. Alongside LPPI, four digital maritime platforms were launched to improve governance, ship registration, seafarer welfare, and ship recycling, strengthening India's maritime competitiveness and logistics performance.

DEFENCE

- India and Cambodia will begin the **2nd edition of the joint military exercise CINBAX-II** on **May 4, 2026**, in **Kampong Speu Province, Cambodia**, to strengthen bilateral defense cooperation. The two-week exercise will involve **120 personnel from the Indian Army**, mainly from the **Maratha Light Infantry Regiment**, and **160 troops from the Royal Cambodian Army**. The exercise focuses on enhancing **counter-terrorism capabilities, modern warfare skills, and joint operational readiness** under conditions similar to **UN peacekeeping missions**. Key training areas include **tactical combat drills, drone operations, sniper training, and mortar handling**.
- The **Indian Army** released a commemorative video on **May 7, 2026**, marking the first anniversary of **Operation Sindoor**, one of India's major cross-border counter-terror operations. Conducted on **May 7, 2025**, the operation targeted **nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)** linked to groups such as **Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, and Hizbul Mujahideen**. The strikes were launched in response to the **Pahalgam terror attack of April 22, 2025**, in which **26 Indian nationals** were killed. According to official reports, over **100 terrorists** were neutralized within about **25 minutes**. The anniversary video highlighted India's **zero-tolerance policy against terrorism**, showcasing coordinated military planning, precision strikes, and the evolving counter-terror doctrine involving the **Army, Navy, and Air Force**.
- Defence Research and Development Organisation and Indian Air Force successfully conducted the maiden flight trial of the **Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA)** weapon system off the Odisha coast using a SEPECAT Jaguar aircraft. Developed by Research Centre Imarat, TARA is India's first indigenous **glide weapon system** that converts conventional bombs into **precision-guided stand-off weapons**. The trial validated its **guidance, navigation, aerodynamic performance, and control systems**, enhancing India's precision strike capability, reducing dependence on imported weapons, and supporting the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** defence initiative.
- NS Raja Subramani has been appointed as India's next Chief of Defence Staff and will assume office on **May 30**, succeeding Anil Chauhan. A former Vice Chief of Army Staff and current Military Adviser in the National Security Advisory Board, he served nearly **39 years in the Indian Army** after being commissioned into the Garhwal Rifles in 1985. His appointment is significant for ongoing **military reforms, theatreisation, defence modernisation, and stronger coordination among the Army, Navy, and Air Force**.
- Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan has been appointed as the next **Chief of the Naval Staff** and will assume office on **May 31, 2026**, succeeding Dinesh K Tripathi. Currently heading the **Western Naval Command**, he was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1987 and is a specialist in **communication and electronic warfare**. He previously served as **Vice Chief of Naval Staff** and commanded major warships including **INS Vikramaditya** and **INS Mysore**. His appointment comes as India strengthens **maritime security, Indo-Pacific strategy, naval modernisation, and indigenous defence capabilities**.
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation successfully tested a **scramjet combustor** in **Hyderabad**, achieving a runtime of over **1,200 seconds**, boosting India's **hypersonic cruise missile** program and aerospace capabilities. Developed by Defence Research and Development Laboratory, the system uses **indigenous technology**, including Indian-made fuel, advanced coatings, and modern manufacturing methods for high-temperature operations. The **scramjet engine** enables missiles to travel above **Mach 5**, using atmospheric oxygen for lighter and more efficient **hypersonic propulsion** compared to conventional rocket systems.
- This achievement strengthens India's position in **next-generation defense technology**, reducing foreign dependence while advancing capabilities in **missile defense evasion, high-speed warfare, and strategic security**.

- India's first **privately manufactured military aircraft**, the Airbus C-295, is nearing final rollout from the Tata-Airbus facility in Vadodara. Built through a partnership between Airbus and Tata Advanced Systems, the project marks a major milestone for India's **Make in India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat** defence goals. Under the 2021 defence deal, India will receive **56 C-295 aircraft**, with **16 imported from Spain** and **40 manufactured in India**. The final assembly line in Gujarat was inaugurated in 2024 by Narendra Modi and Pedro Sánchez.
- The C-295 is a medium tactical transport aircraft used for **troop transport, cargo movement, medical evacuation, and special operations**. It can operate from short and rugged airstrips and carry over **9,000 kg payload** or around **71 personnel**. The project is expected to strengthen India's aerospace ecosystem, expand private-sector defence manufacturing, reduce import dependence, and build advanced domestic supply chains.
- India achieved a major defence innovation milestone with the AI-powered combat aircraft '**Kaal Bhairava**', developed by Flying Wedge Defence & Aerospace, set to be manufactured in Portugal. It is India's first overseas production of an autonomous combat aircraft and part of the broader **Operation 777** initiative. The **MALE (Medium Altitude Long Endurance)** aircraft features a **3,000 km range, 30+ hours endurance**, AI-based target recognition, swarm coordination, and secure encrypted communication systems. It is designed for surveillance, intelligence gathering, and precision combat missions in modern warfare. Production in Portugal will take place through a partnership with SKETCHPIXEL LDA, while FWDA will handle design and autonomous systems. Operation 777 aims to expand Indian defence manufacturing across **77 countries and 7 continents**, strengthening India's global defence technology presence.
- Rajnath Singh and N. Chandrababu Naidu launched the **₹15,803 crore Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) project** in the Sri Sathya Sai district. The project is a major step toward India's goal of developing an indigenous **fifth-generation stealth fighter aircraft**. The AMCA programme is being led by the Aeronautical Development Agency under the Defence Research and Development Organisation. The aircraft will feature advanced stealth technology, next-generation avionics, high survivability, and modern combat capabilities, placing India among a select group of nations with advanced fighter aircraft development expertise. The facility, spread across nearly **650 acres in Puttaparthi**, will include an **Aircraft Integration and Advanced Flight Testing Centre** for assembly, systems testing, flight validation, and prototype evaluation. The project is also expected to generate around **7,500 jobs** and strengthen India's aerospace manufacturing ecosystem.
- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** achieved a historic milestone as **Squadron Leader Saanya** became the first woman officer to earn the prestigious **Cat-A Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI)** certification, one of the highest instructional qualifications in military aviation. The certification recognises exceptional flying skill, operational excellence, and advanced instructor capability, enabling officers to train future **fighter and transport pilots**. The achievement was officially acknowledged on **18 May 2026**, and she was felicitated by **Air Chief Marshal A. P. Singh**. The milestone reflects growing gender inclusion and merit-based advancement in India's armed forces.
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully tested the indigenous **ULPGM-V3 (UAV-Launched Precision Guided Missile)**, strengthening India's drone warfare capabilities. Tested near **Kurnool**, the missile can operate in both **air-to-ground and air-to-air combat roles**, targeting **tanks, drones, helicopters, and aerial threats**. The project involved DRDO labs including **RCI, DRDL, TBRL, and HEMRL**, with UAV integration support from **NewSpace Research and Technologies**. Production backing from **Bharat Dynamics Limited** and **Adani Defence & Aerospace** reflects India's push for **self-reliant advanced defence manufacturing**.
- Bharat Forge** has signed an agreement with the **Andhra Pradesh government** to establish India's first **private-sector marine gas turbine facility** in **Visakhapatnam**. The facility will offer **repair, overhaul, rotor balancing, blade restoration, and advanced testing services** for naval propulsion systems. Located near the **Eastern Naval Command and Naval Dockyard**, the project will enhance the **Indian Navy's operational readiness** while reducing dependence on foreign servicing ecosystems. The initiative strongly supports the **Atmanirbhar Bharat mission**, boosting indigenous defence manufacturing, strategic propulsion capability, and marine technology research.
- India launched the multinational military exercise **PRAGATI 2026** at **Umroi Military Station, Meghalaya**, with participation from armed forces of **12 friendly nations**. The two-week exercise focuses on **counter-terrorism operations, jungle warfare, interoperability, tactical coordination, and joint operational readiness** in difficult terrain conditions. Participating countries include **Bhutan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam**. **PRAGATI** stands for **Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region**, highlighting India's expanding role in **regional defence cooperation, Indo-Pacific security engagement, and multinational military collaboration**.

- India successfully test-fired the **Agni-I ballistic missile** from the **Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, Odisha**, on **22 May 2026** under the supervision of the **Strategic Forces Command**. The successful test confirmed achievement of all mission objectives, reinforcing India's strategic deterrence and defence preparedness. **Agni-I** is a **short-range ballistic missile** designed for quick deployment via **road and rail mobile launch platforms**, making it an important component of India's nuclear-capable deterrence architecture. The test highlights continued progress in India's **indigenous missile programme, defence modernisation, and strategic security capabilities**.
- India achieved a major defence milestone with the launch of **Suryastra**, the country's first indigenous **300-km Universal Rocket Launching System**, by Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh**. The launch coincided with the inauguration of a major defence manufacturing complex by **NIBE Limited** in **Shirdi, Maharashtra**. Designed to enhance **long-range precision strike capability**, **Suryastra** strengthens India's military preparedness and strategic autonomy. Supported by initiatives such as **Make in India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat**, and **IDEX**, the project promotes self-reliance in defence production while advancing innovation in **missile systems, artillery platforms, and autonomous defence technologies**.
- The **Indian Army** has launched two advanced digital platforms, **Kautilya** and **Q-FORCE**, to enhance **AI-driven warfare capabilities**, battlefield intelligence, and logistics management. **Kautilya** is an AI-enabled decision support system utilizing **data analytics** and **Natural Language Processing (NLP)** to improve situational awareness and military decision-making. **Q-FORCE** focuses on inventory management, operational logistics, and supply-chain optimization. These initiatives align with the Army's vision of **2026 as the "Year of Networking and Data Centricity"** and **2027 as the year of full AI-integrated military operations**, supporting modern network-centric warfare.
- Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar** assumed charge as the **48th Vice Chief of the Naval Staff (VCNS)** of the **Indian Navy** on **29 May 2026**. With more than **37 years of distinguished service**, he has extensive experience in naval warfare, strategic planning, and fleet operations. Previously serving as **Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command**, he is a specialist in **Gunnery and Missile Systems** and has commanded major naval platforms, including **INS Vikramaditya**. He has been honoured with the **PVSM, AVSM, and Nau Sena Medal** for his exceptional service.
- Following the retirement of **Dr. Samir V. Kamat**, the Government of India has appointed **Rajesh Kumar Singh** as the additional **Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development**, and **Chairman of DRDO** with effect from **31 May 2026**. Approved by the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)**, Singh will continue to serve as **Defence Secretary** while overseeing India's premier defence research organization. During Kamat's tenure, **DRDO** made significant advancements in **quantum technologies, stealth UCAVs, EMALS, electric propulsion systems, and space-based intelligence and surveillance capabilities**.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- Skyroot Aerospace** marked a major breakthrough with **Vikram-1**, India's **first privately built orbital rocket**, transported from **Hyderabad** to **Satish Dhawan Space Centre**. Flagged off by **A. Revanth Reddy**, the mission signals a shift toward a **private-driven space sector**. Designed for **low-cost satellite launches**, **Vikram-1** can carry **350 kg to Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** and uses **3D-printed engines**. Supported by **IN-SPACe** and **ISRO**, this initiative boosts India's **commercial space capabilities** and innovation ecosystem.
- The **Maharashtra** Cabinet, led by **Devendra Fadnavis**, approved the **AI Policy 2026** to attract **₹10,000 crore investment** and create **1.5 lakh jobs by 2031**. The policy focuses on **AI innovation, infrastructure, and skilling**, including **AI Innovation Cities, GPU-based computing, and training 2 lakh professionals**. It supports **startups and MSMEs** through funding, subsidies, and incubators. With initiatives like **Maha AI Tools Hub**, the state aims to become a leading **AI hub**, boosting **economic growth, employment, and India's global competitiveness in artificial intelligence**.
- The **Indian Space Research Organisation** plans to expand the **Gaganyaan programme** by including **civilian astronauts** in the next selection batch. Moving beyond only **Indian Air Force test pilots**, the initiative will involve **STEM experts**, enhancing India's **human spaceflight capabilities**. The new batch may include around **10 candidates**, combining **military and civilian expertise** for advanced **space research and missions**. This step aligns with India's long-term vision of **space station development** and a **manned Moon mission by 2040**, strengthening its position in **global space exploration**.
- India achieved a major milestone in its private space sector with the launch of **Mission Drishti**, the country's largest privately developed **Earth observation satellite**, built by Bengaluru-based startup **GalaxEye**. The **190 kg satellite** was launched aboard **SpaceX's Falcon 9** rocket from **Vandenberg, California**. **Mission Drishti** features advanced **OptoSAR technology**, combining **Electro-Optical (EO)** and **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** systems for high-quality imaging in all weather and lighting conditions. The satellite supports applications in **defense, agriculture, disaster management, maritime security, and urban planning**. Backed by India's growing private space ecosystem and support from **IN-SPACe**, the mission strengthens India's position in the global **satellite data and geospatial services market**.

- NASA successfully tested a **120-kilowatt magnetoplasmodynamic (MPD) plasma engine** at Jet Propulsion Laboratory, marking the **highest-power electric propulsion test in the United States**. The advanced engine uses **electromagnetic forces and lithium plasma** instead of chemical fuel, making it highly efficient for **deep-space missions**. NASA believes this technology could reduce **Mars travel time from nine months to 30–60 days**, improving astronaut safety and mission feasibility. The test also supports future **Nuclear Electric Propulsion (NEP)** systems for long-duration human exploration of Mars and other distant space missions.
- India hosted the International Organization for Standardization TC 20/SC 14 meetings on **“Space Systems and Operations”** for the first time in **New Delhi**, organised by Bureau of Indian Standards. The event at **Bharat Mandapam** saw participation from **131 delegates across 13 countries**, including experts from Indian Space Research Organisation, academia, and global space agencies. Discussions focused on **space safety, sustainability, interoperability, mission operations, and international standards**. Officials highlighted India’s growing role in the **global space economy**, supported by reforms, private participation through IN-SPaCE, and expanding commercial space activities.
- Kuljeet Kaur Marhas from Physical Research Laboratory became the **first Indian woman** elected Fellow of the prestigious Meteoritical Society for her groundbreaking work in **meteorites, isotopes, and planetary science**.
- Her research explores the origins of the **Solar System** through studies on **pre-solar grains, CAIs, chondrules, and short-lived radionuclides**, helping scientists understand planetary formation over four billion years ago.
- Using advanced technologies like **SIMS** and **nanoSIMS**, she has analyzed samples from major missions including **Stardust, Hayabusa, and the Apollo Program**.
- This recognition highlights India’s growing strength in **space research, cosmochemistry, and planetary material analysis**, while inspiring greater participation of women in advanced scientific research.
- China successfully launched the **Shenzhou 23 Mission** on **25 May 2026** from the **Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center**, sending three astronauts to the **Tiangong Space Station**. The crew includes **Zhu Yangzhu, Zhang Zhiyuan, and Lai Ka-ying**, who became the **first astronaut from Hong Kong** to travel to space. A major objective of the mission is a planned **one-year stay in orbit** by one astronaut to study long-duration human survival in space. The mission will also conduct research in **space biology, medicine, and materials science**, supporting China’s future ambitions in **Moon exploration** and deep-space missions.
- Researchers at the **Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR)** have developed **CLEAR (Cleavable Light-Erased Antibody Reporter)**, an advanced imaging technology capable of mapping multiple proteins within the same biological sample using a single fluorescent marker. The platform employs an innovative **“erase and reuse”** technique in which fluorescent signals are removed using a **365 nm LED light pulse** without damaging tissue samples. Led by **Sarit S. Agasti** in collaboration with the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)**, the breakthrough could significantly advance **precision medicine, cancer research, immunology, diagnostics, and drug discovery**.
- Indian astrophysicist **Dr. Ronaldo Laishram** has led the discovery of the ancient **Loktak Protocluster**, a massive galaxy structure that existed approximately **12.6 billion years ago**, when the universe was only **1.2 billion years old**. Described as a **“city of galaxies” under construction**, the structure provides crucial insights into the formation and evolution of galaxies in the early universe. Discovered using the **Subaru Telescope** and the **James Webb Space Telescope**, the protocluster was named after **Loktak Lake** in Manipur and published in **The Astrophysical Journal Letters**.
- **Blue Origin**, the aerospace company founded by **Jeff Bezos**, suffered a setback after its **New Glenn rocket** exploded during a routine engine firing test at the **Cape Canaveral Space Force Station**. The incident occurred shortly before a planned mission carrying **Amazon internet satellites**. Although no injuries were reported, the explosion has raised concerns regarding the future timeline of the **New Glenn programme**, potential impacts on **NASA’s Artemis Moon missions**, and Amazon’s ambitions to compete with **SpaceX’s Starlink** satellite internet network.
- India’s **Bellatrix Aerospace** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with South Korea’s **TelePIX** to develop a **Very Low Earth Orbit (VLEO) satellite mission**, strengthening India–South Korea cooperation in the space sector. The partnership will integrate TelePIX’s high-resolution optical payload **“Chouette”** with Bellatrix’s advanced satellite platform to enhance Earth observation capabilities. Operating at altitudes between **180 and 450 km**, VLEO satellites provide sharper imagery and faster data collection but require advanced propulsion systems to overcome atmospheric drag, highlighting the growing role of private space companies in next-generation satellite technology.

SPORTS

- **Punjab Kings** created history by chasing **265 runs** against **Delhi Capitals** at **Arun Jaitley Stadium**, marking the **highest successful chase in IPL history**. **KL Rahul** scored a stunning **152 runs**, supported by **Nitish Rana** (91), taking DC to 264. In reply, **Prabhsimran Singh** (76) and **Priyansh Arya** (73) powered PBKS with a rapid start. Captain **Shreyas Iyer** guided the team to victory. PBKS also surpassed their previous **262-run record (2024)**, dominating IPL's top chase records.
- **Sabastian Sawe** created history at the **London Marathon 2026** by finishing in **1:59:30**, becoming the first to run an **official sub-2-hour marathon**. He broke the previous record of **2:00:35** set by **Kelvin Kiptum**, redefining **human endurance**. Competitors like **Yomif Kejelcha** and **Jacob Kiplimo** also delivered record-level performances. Sawe's achievement is compared to legends like **Roger Bannister** and **Usain Bolt**, marking a historic milestone in **athletics history**.
- India emerged as the top nation at the **ISSF Junior World Cup 2026** in **Cairo**, winning **16 medals** (5 gold, 6 silver, 5 bronze), highlighting its rising strength in **shooting sports**. **Hemant Burman** secured silver in the **50m Rifle 3 Positions** event, while **Zuhair Khan** and **Addya Katyal** won bronze in the **Trap Mixed Team**. Despite mixed results in women's events, India dominated overall. Focus now shifts to the **ISSF Junior World Championship** in Germany, boosting Olympic preparation.
- **Virat Kohli** became the first player to score **9000 runs** in the **Indian Premier League**, achieving the milestone during a match between **Royal Challengers Bengaluru** and **Delhi Capitals**. Reaching the mark in his **275th match**, Kohli reinforced his status as the most **consistent T20 batter**. He leads the IPL run charts ahead of players like **Rohit Sharma** and **David Warner**. This record sets a new **benchmark** in franchise cricket, highlighting his dominance, longevity, and unmatched contribution to the league.
- **P. V. Sindhu** became **Chair of the Athletes' Commission** and secured a **voting role** in the **Badminton World Federation Council**, marking a historic step in **global badminton governance**. As an **active athlete**, she will represent players' interests and influence **policy decisions** at the highest level. Her participation bridges the gap between **athletes and administrators**, strengthening **inclusive decision-making**. Supported by BWF leadership, this move highlights the importance of **athlete representation** and sets a precedent for greater involvement of sportspersons in shaping the future of international sports governance.
- **Rithika Sri** from **Tamil Nadu** became India's **first transgender cricket umpire**, marking a milestone in **sports inclusivity**. Enabled by the **Tamil Nadu Cricket Association** introducing an **'Other' category** in umpire exams, her achievement highlights growing **gender representation**. Starting her journey in 2021, she overcame **social stigma** and barriers to succeed. Her recognition aligns with India's **2014 Supreme Court ruling** on transgender rights, promoting **equality and opportunity**. This landmark moment inspires wider acceptance and encourages greater participation of transgender individuals in **professional sports and governance**.
- **Punjab FC** retained the **AIFF Elite Youth League 2025–26** title with a dominant **3-0 win** over **Zinc Football Academy**. After a goalless first half, goals by **Karish Soram**, **Vishal Yadav**, and **Thongram Rishikanta Singh** in quick succession sealed victory. The performance highlights Punjab FC's **youth dominance**, strong **grassroots development**, and consistent excellence in national competitions, establishing them as a leading talent pipeline in **Indian football**.
- India delivered an impressive performance at the **Commonwealth Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships** in **Apia**, winning **four gold medals**. Athletes like **Sunil Singh**, **Aisangfa Gogoi**, **Abhinob Gogoi**, and **Charu Pesi** excelled in **snatch** and **clean & jerk** events. The achievement highlights India's rising strength in **international weightlifting**, backed by strong **grassroots training**, improved **coaching**, and growing participation. Success across youth and senior categories signals a promising future and strengthens India's presence in global sporting competitions.
- India's men's badminton team created history by defeating **Chinese Taipei 3–0** at the **Thomas Cup 2026** in **Horsens, Denmark**, entering the **semifinals** and securing a medal—only their **second last-four finish after 2022**. **Lakshya Sen** led with a comeback win over **Chou Tien-chen**. The doubles pair **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy–Chirag Shetty** dominated their match, while debutant **Ayush Shetty** sealed victory with an upset win. This performance highlights India's **growing dominance**, **strong bench strength**, and **rising global stature in badminton**.
- India's campaign in the **Thomas Cup 2026** ended with a **0-3 semifinal defeat** against **France**, forcing the team to settle for the **bronze medal**. The absence of **Lakshya Sen** due to a swollen elbow proved costly as India failed to win a single match. **Ayush Shetty** lost to **Christo Popov** 11-21, 9-21, while **Kidambi Srikanth** was defeated by **Alex Lanier** 16-21, 18-21. In the deciding match, **HS Prannoy** went down to **Toma Junior Popov** 19-21, 16-21. France created history by reaching their **first-ever Thomas Cup final**. Despite the loss, India maintained its strong global badminton presence with another Thomas Cup bronze medal.

- On **10 May 2026**, Urvil Patel of Chennai Super Kings smashed a record-equalling **13-ball fifty** against **Lucknow Super Giants**, joining the fastest IPL half-century list. He now shares the top spot with Yashasvi Jaiswal, who first achieved the feat in **IPL 2023** for **Rajasthan Royals** against Kolkata Knight Riders. The IPL fastest fifty chart has evolved rapidly, with players like KL Rahul, Yusuf Pathan, Nicholas Pooran, and others contributing explosive innings over the years. In **IPL 2026**, young talents like **Vaibhav Suryavanshi** also made headlines, highlighting the league's growing trend of ultra-fast scoring and power hitting in modern T20 cricket.
- On **Sardinia World Chess Festival 2026** in Italy, Faustino Oro became the **second youngest Grandmaster in history** at just **12 years, 6 months, 26 days**, completing his final GM norm and cementing his rise in elite chess.
- Nicknamed the **"Messi of Chess"**, he follows only Abhimanyu Mishra, who holds the youngest-ever record, and joins an exclusive group of prodigies including players like **D Gukesh** and **R Praggnanandhaa**.
- Born in **Buenos Aires**, Oro gained global attention after defeating top-level opponents and showing exceptional **positional skill, maturity, and fearless attacking style** at a very young age.
- His achievement highlights the growing dominance of **teen chess prodigies worldwide** and marks a major milestone in modern **competitive chess history** governed by FIDE.
- At the **Archery World Cup Stage 2 in Shanghai**, the Indian women's recurve team of Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat, and Kumkum Mohod won a dramatic **gold medal**, defeating host nation **China** in a tense shoot-off final. The match was closely fought, ending level after four sets before India edged out China **28–26**, with Deepika Kumari sealing victory with a crucial **nine-point arrow**. The win also included a major semifinal upset over **South Korea**, a dominant force in Olympic archery, highlighting India's growing strength in **recurve archery**. This is India's **first Archery World Cup gold since 2021**, marking a major boost in confidence, consistency, and international competitiveness for the women's team.
- Rahul Dravid has become the owner of the **Dublin Guardians** franchise in the upcoming European T20 Premier League, Europe's first ICC-sanctioned multi-country T20 competition. The ETPL is being launched in partnership with Cricket Ireland, Cricket Scotland and the Royal Dutch Cricket Association to promote cricket growth across Europe. Dravid's involvement is considered significant due to his reputation as a former India captain, World Cup-winning coach and mentor in youth cricket development, giving the league strong global credibility. The league also features star-studded franchise ownership involving Chris Gayle, Glenn Maxwell, Steve Waugh and Faf du Plessis, with major international players expected to participate in ETPL 2026.
- India delivered an outstanding performance at the Asian Boxing U15 Championships 2026, finishing with a total of **27 medals**, including **9 gold medals**. The achievement highlights the rise of India's young boxing talent on the international stage. The **U-15 girls team** emerged as the biggest contributor, winning **7 gold, 2 silver, and 5 bronze medals**. Gold medal winners included Anzee (37kg), Soniya (40kg), Tanvi (43kg), Hanshika Attri (46kg), Sunaina (58kg), Bhumika (61kg), and Angel (70kg). The **U-15 boys team** added **2 gold, 4 silver, and 7 bronze medals**, with Yash Kumar (33kg) and Mohd Yasser (58kg) securing gold medals. India ended the championship with **9 gold, 6 silver, and 12 bronze medals overall**.
- Fifteen-year-old **Vaibhav Sooryavanshi** created IPL history by becoming the Indian batter with the **most sixes in a single IPL season**, smashing his **43rd six** for **Rajasthan Royals** against **Delhi Capitals** on **17 May 2026**. He broke **Abhishek Sharma's** previous record of **42 sixes** set in 2024, achieving the feat in only **12 matches**. Vaibhav now joins elite hitters like **Chris Gayle, Andre Russell, and Jos Buttler**. He recently also became the **fastest batter in T20 history to hit 100 sixes**, reaching the milestone in just **515 deliveries**.
- Ukraine's **Elina Svitolina** won the **Italian Open 2026** after defeating **Coco Gauff** in a thrilling **6-4, 6-7, 6-2** final in Rome lasting nearly **2 hours 49 minutes**. The victory marked her **third Rome title**, after wins in **2017 and 2018**, showcasing a remarkable comeback at age **31**. After recovering from an early setback, she dominated the final set with superior consistency and endurance. Her title run was especially impressive as she defeated top players including **Elena Rybakina, Iga Swiatek, and Coco Gauff**, extending her winning streak over Gauff this season.
- Italy's **Jannik Sinner** won the **Italian Open 2026** by defeating **Casper Ruud 6-4, 6-4**, becoming only the **second male player after Novak Djokovic** to complete the prestigious **Career Golden Masters**—winning all **nine ATP Masters 1000 tournaments** at least once. At just **24 years old**, Sinner achieved the milestone far younger than Djokovic, underlining his rapid rise. The win marked his **sixth consecutive ATP Masters 1000 title**. Already holding **4 Grand Slam titles, 10 Masters titles, and the World No. 1 ranking**, he enters the French Open as a dominant favourite.
- Former India all-rounder **Vijay Shankar** announced retirement from **domestic cricket and the Indian Premier League**, ending a notable multi-format career. He represented India in **21 white-ball matches between 2018 and 2019**, including the **2019 ICC Cricket World Cup**, where he became widely known as the **"3D cricketer."** Shankar enjoyed a successful domestic career with **Tamil Nadu**, leading the team to titles in the **Vijay Hazare Trophy, Deodhar Trophy, and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy**. In the IPL, he played **78 matches** for franchises including **CSK, SRH, Delhi Capitals, and Gujarat Titans**.

- **East Bengal FC** won their first **Indian Super League title** in **2026**, defeating **Inter Kashi FC** at **Kishore Bharati Krirangan, Kolkata**, ending a **22-year wait** for a major top-tier domestic title. After trailing through **Alfred's 15th-minute goal**, East Bengal fought back with **Youssef Ezzejari's equaliser** and **Mohammed Rashid's winning goal** in the 73rd minute. Entering the final tied with **Mohun Bagan** on points, East Bengal clinched the title on superior **goal difference**. Ezzejari, who scored **11 goals in 13 matches**, also won the **Golden Boot**.
- **Cristiano Ronaldo** won his first **Saudi Pro League title** as **Al Nassr** defeated **Damac FC 4-1** in the season finale, securing the club's **11th league championship**. Ronaldo scored **two decisive second-half goals**, helping Al Nassr finish **two points ahead of Al Hilal**. The Portuguese superstar ended the campaign with **28 league goals**, proving his continued elite performance even at **41 years old**. The emotional triumph marks a major milestone in his Saudi football journey and builds strong momentum ahead of the **2026 FIFA World Cup**, where he is expected to represent **Portugal**.
- Football icon **Lionel Messi** has officially entered the billionaire club, becoming only the second footballer after **Cristiano Ronaldo** to surpass **\$1 billion net worth**, according to the **Bloomberg Billionaires Index**. His wealth has been built through football contracts, endorsements, investments, and business ventures during his time with **FC Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain, and Inter Miami CF**. Messi's move to the United States has significantly boosted the popularity of **Major League Soccer (MLS)**. His illustrious career includes **8 Ballon d'Or awards** and leading Argentina to victory in the **2022 FIFA World Cup**.
- The **IPL 2026 Playoffs** lineup has been finalized with **Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Gujarat Titans, Sunrisers Hyderabad, and Rajasthan Royals** securing qualification. Rajasthan Royals confirmed their playoff berth after defeating **Mumbai Indians**, resulting in the elimination of **Punjab Kings** and **Kolkata Knight Riders**. RCB finished at the top of the standings based on superior **Net Run Rate (NRR)** and will face Gujarat Titans in **Qualifier 1**. Sunrisers Hyderabad will meet Rajasthan Royals in the Eliminator, while the final is scheduled at **Narendra Modi Stadium** on **31 May 2026**.
- Indian sprinter **Gurindervir Singh** created history at the **Federation Cup 2026** in **Ranchi** by clocking **10.09 seconds** in the men's 100m final, becoming the **fastest Indian sprinter** ever. The achievement broke the national record and brought India closer to the prestigious **sub-10-second barrier** in sprinting. His performance also intensified competition with fellow athlete **Animesh Kujur**, who had previously set a record of **10.15 seconds**. The milestone reflects the growing impact of advanced coaching methods, sports science, and high-performance training systems in Indian athletics.
- **Kimi Antonelli** continued his outstanding Formula One season by winning the **Canadian Grand Prix 2026** for **Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team**. The victory came after teammate **George Russell** retired from the lead due to a power unit failure. Antonelli capitalized on a key **Virtual Safety Car** phase to secure his **fourth consecutive Formula One victory**, extending his championship lead to **43 points**. **Lewis Hamilton** finished second for **Scuderia Ferrari**, while **Max Verstappen** claimed third position in a race marked by several retirements and strategic twists.
- The **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** has notified operational rules for the **National Sports Board (NSB)** and **National Sports Tribunal (NST)** under the **National Sports Governance Act**. The NSB will oversee governance compliance, financial monitoring, recognition of sports bodies, and ethical standards, ensuring greater accountability within sports federations. The NST will introduce a fully digital dispute-resolution mechanism featuring online filing, virtual hearings, digital notices, and online publication of decisions. These reforms aim to modernize sports administration through transparency, independent oversight, and faster resolution of sports-related disputes.
- India delivered a strong performance at the **Asian Under-23 Wrestling Championships 2026** held in **Da Nang**, securing **two gold medals** in men's freestyle wrestling. **Mohit Kumar** won the **65 kg category** by defeating Kyrgyzstan's **Oskonbai A. Abdisamatov**, while **Chandermohan** captured the **79 kg title** with a narrow victory over Kazakhstan's **Yerkhan Abil**. India also secured two silver medals through **Punit Kumar** and **Lucky**, along with a bronze medal by **Sachin Mor**. The results highlight India's expanding talent pool and growing prominence in international wrestling.
- India has launched the global promotional campaign for the **1st World Yogasana Championship 2026**, with **Mansukh Mandaviya** unveiling the championship's official film, mascot, and jersey in **New Delhi**. The event will be hosted in **Ahmedabad** and aims to establish **Yogasana** as a globally recognized competitive sport that combines physical fitness, flexibility, discipline, concentration, and mental wellness. With registrations from nearly **75 countries** and over **500 international participants** expected, the championship represents a significant step in promoting India's yoga heritage through sports diplomacy and cultural outreach.
- Fifteen-year-old cricket prodigy **Vaibhav Sooryavanshi** created history during the **IPL 2026 Eliminator** by breaking **Chris Gayle's** long-standing record for the most sixes in a single IPL season. Representing **Rajasthan Royals**, Vaibhav smashed **65 sixes**, surpassing Gayle's previous record of **59 sixes** set in 2012. He also became the **youngest player to score 600 runs in an IPL season**, breaking **Rishabh Pant's** record. Earlier in the season, he achieved another milestone by becoming the **fastest batter to hit 100 T20 sixes**, reaching the mark in just **515 deliveries**.

- Indian shooter **Esha Singh** created history at the **ISSF World Cup Munich** by winning the **women's 25m pistol gold medal** with a **world-record score of 43 points**. The **21-year-old** surpassed the previous record of **42 points**, set by **Kim Yeji** in 2024. During the competition, Esha outperformed several elite shooters, including **Olympic champion Yang Jinn** and

former world champion **Doreen Vennekamp**. Her remarkable consistency, composure under pressure, and technical excellence underline India's growing strength in international shooting and add another significant achievement to the country's sporting success.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan** launched his new book, **"Apnapan: Narendra Modi Sang Mere Anubhav"**, in **New Delhi**. The book reflects Chouhan's personal experiences and interactions with **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** during his political journey. It was formally released by former Vice President **M. Venkaiah Naidu** and former Prime Minister **H. D. Deve Gowda**, highlighting Modi's leadership style, governance approach, and influence on Indian politics.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah** released two books authored by **Solicitor General Tushar Mehta** at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**. The books, titled **"The Bench, the Bar, and the Bizarre"** and **"The Lawful and the Awful,"** provide insights into India's legal system, courtroom experiences, and notable judicial developments. The event was attended by prominent members of the legal fraternity and emphasized the importance of law, justice, and constitutional values in India's democratic framework.
- The book **"Apnapan: Narendra Modi Sang Mere Anubhav"**, authored by **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**, was launched in **New**

Delhi by **M. Venkaiah Naidu** and **H. D. Deve Gowda**. The book recounts Chouhan's long association with **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, highlighting his leadership style, governance philosophy, organizational skills, and human-centric approach. It also reflects on significant political events, including the **1991 Ekta Yatra**, which Chouhan describes as an important movement promoting national unity, patriotism, and public engagement beyond conventional political campaigns.

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** has unveiled a commemorative book on **Operation Sindoor**, documenting the experiences of **100 military personnel** involved in the mission. Compiled under the guidance of **Chief of Defence Staff Anil Chauhan**, the publication highlights India's **joint military capabilities**, operational preparedness, and coordination among the **Army, Navy, and Air Force**. Unlike traditional military histories, the book presents first-hand accounts from soldiers, sailors, airmen, and support staff, serving both as a historical record and a tribute to the professionalism and sacrifices of India's armed forces.

OBITUARY

- Legendary Indian photojournalist **Raghu Rai** passed away at **83**, marking the end of an era in **Indian photography**. Known for documenting India's **social, political, and cultural journey**, he battled **cancer** before his demise. Starting his career in **1965**, he gained global recognition after being mentored by **Henri Cartier-Bresson** and joining **Magnum Photos**. His iconic work covered the **1971 India-Pakistan War**, refugees, and everyday life. A recipient of the **Padma Shri**, he also worked with **India Today**, shaping modern **photojournalism** in India.
- Veteran actor-director **Bharat Kapoor** passed away at **80** in **Mumbai**, leaving a rich legacy in **Indian cinema**. Beginning his career in **1972**, he acted in over **150 films**, known for versatile roles in movies like *Noorie* and *Khuda Gawah*. He also gained popularity through **television serials** such as *Tara* and *Amanat*. As a director, he helmed films like *Raeeszada*. Renowned for **strong supporting roles** and **character depth**, Kapoor significantly contributed to both films and TV, inspiring generations and enriching India's cinematic heritage.
- Legendary media entrepreneur **Ted Turner** has died at the

age of **87**, according to Turner Enterprises. Widely regarded as the pioneer of modern television journalism, Turner revolutionized global media by launching CNN on **June 1, 1980**, the world's first **24-hour news channel**. His innovation transformed television news from scheduled bulletins into continuous live coverage of global events. Turner also reshaped cable television through channels such as Turner Broadcasting System, Cartoon Network, and Turner Classic Movies.

- Swapan Sadhan Bose, popularly known as **"Tutu Bose,"** passed away at the age of 79 in Kolkata after suffering a cardiac arrest. A highly respected football administrator, Tutu Bose remained associated with Mohun Bagan Super Giant for over three decades and served the club in major roles including **secretary and president**. He played a crucial role in modernizing the club's administration and became an influential figure in Kolkata's football culture and Indian football management. His mortal remains will be kept at the Mohun Bagan club tent for fans to pay tribute before the cremation, while family members and sports personalities remembered him as a pillar of support and leadership in Indian football.

- Former England cricket captain **M. J. K. Smith** passed away at the age of **92**, marking the end of a distinguished era in English cricket. Known for elegant strokeplay and positive captaincy, he scored over **39,000 first-class runs**, including **69 centuries**, and more than **30,000 runs for Warwickshire**. Smith represented England in **50 Test matches** and captained the side in **25 Tests between 1963 and 1966**, admired for his attacking leadership. After retirement, he served as **Warwickshire chairman** and later worked as an **ICC match referee**, continuing his contribution to cricket.
- Former Indian basketball captain and Olympian **Jennifer Paes** passed away after a battle with cancer, marking a major loss for Indian sports. She represented India at the **1972 Munich Olympics** and later captained the **Indian women's basketball team**, becoming one of the pioneering women athletes in the country. Jennifer belonged to one of India's most celebrated sporting families and was the mother of tennis legend **Leander Paes**. Her leadership, discipline, and pioneering role helped strengthen women's basketball during its formative years, leaving behind a lasting and inspirational sporting legacy.
- Indian-origin technology leader **S. Soma Somasegar** passed away at the age of **59**, leaving a major legacy in global technology innovation. Born in **Puducherry** and educated at **Anna University**, he joined **Microsoft in 1989** and played a major role in developing **Windows, Visual Studio, and the .NET ecosystem** over a **27-year career**. He also established **Microsoft's India Development Center in Hyderabad in 1998**, significantly strengthening India's software innovation ecosystem. After retirement, he became Managing Director at **Madrona Venture Group**, investing in **AI, cloud, and enterprise technology startups**.
- Legendary **NASCAR driver Kyle Busch** reportedly passed away at the age of **41**, shocking the motorsports world. Known as "**Rowdy**" for his aggressive racing style, Busch won **two NASCAR Cup Series championships** and **63 Cup Series races** during an iconic **22-season career**. Tributes poured in from racing stars including **Denny Hamlin, Brad Keselowski, and Dale Earnhardt Jr.**, praising his talent and impact on the sport. Beyond competition, Busch mentored young drivers and remained a major figure in motorsport, leaving behind a lasting legacy, family, and devoted global fanbase.
- Renowned **Urdu poet Bashir Badr** passed away in **Bhopal** at the age of **91** after a prolonged battle with dementia. Celebrated for his simple yet deeply emotional **ghazals**, Bashir Badr played a crucial role in making Urdu poetry accessible to a wider audience. Born in **Ayodhya**, he authored acclaimed works such as **Aahat** and **Kulliyate Bashir Badr** and was honoured with several prestigious awards, including the **Padma Shri**. His passing marks the end of an era in Urdu literature, prompting tributes from literary figures, including **Javed Akhtar**.
- **Dhanendra Kumar**, the first Chairman of the **Competition Commission of India (CCI)**, passed away at the age of **80** following a fire accident at his residence in **Hauz Khas, New Delhi**. A retired **IAS officer** from the **1968 Haryana cadre**, he played a pivotal role in shaping India's modern competition law framework and strengthening fair market practices. Appointed as the founding Chairman of the CCI in **2009**, Kumar helped establish mechanisms to protect consumer interests and promote healthy competition. His contributions left a lasting impact on India's regulatory and economic landscape.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day / Observance	Theme / Description
1 May	International Labour Day 2026	Observed to honour workers and promote labour rights, fair wages, and safe working conditions . The 2026 focus is on psychosocial workplace health and work-life balance.
1 May	Gujarat Foundation Day	Marks the formation of Gujarat in 1960 after separation from Bombay State. Celebrates Gujarat's cultural heritage, unity, and economic progress.
1 May	Maharashtra Day	Celebrates the formation of Maharashtra in 1960 . The day honours the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement and the cultural identity of Marathi-speaking people.
4 May	International Firefighters Day 2026	Observed to honour the courage and sacrifice of firefighters worldwide. Established in 1999 following the 1998 Victoria wildfire tragedy in Australia.
4–10 May	Fire Safety Week 2026	Theme: " Safe Schools, Safe Hospitals, and a Fire-Safety Aware Society ". Focuses on improving fire preparedness in hospitals and public institutions.
5 May	World Asthma Day 2026	Theme: " Access to anti-inflammatory inhalers for everyone with asthma – still an urgent need ". Highlights the importance of inhaled corticosteroids and asthma management.
7 May	World Athletics Day 2026	Promotes fitness, sportsmanship, youth participation, and healthy living through athletics activities such as running, jumping, and throwing.
7 May	Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti (165th Birth Anniversary)	Celebrates the legacy of Rabindranath Tagore , Nobel Laureate, poet, philosopher, educationist, and author of Jana Gana Mana .

Date	Day / Observance	Theme / Description
8 May	World Red Cross Day 2026	Theme: "Keeping Humanity Alive" . Commemorates the birth anniversary of Henry Dunant and honours humanitarian service worldwide.
8 May	World Thalassemia Day 2026	Theme: "Hidden No More: Finding the Undiagnosed. Supporting the Unseen." Focuses on awareness, early diagnosis, and support for people affected by thalassemia.
8 May	World Ovarian Cancer Day 2026	Theme: "No Woman Left Behind" . Highlights equal access to early diagnosis, treatment, and cancer care worldwide.
11 May	National Technology Day 2026	Commemorates the 1998 Pokhran Nuclear Tests and highlights India's advances in AI, digital services, semiconductors, defence technology, and innovation.
11–17 May	Mental Health Awareness Week 2026	Theme: "Action" . Promotes practical steps for mental wellbeing, emotional support, mindfulness, and community engagement.
12 May	International Nurses Day 2026	Theme: "Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives." Celebrates the contribution of nurses and marks the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale .
12 May	International Day of Plant Health 2026	Theme: "Plant Biosecurity for Food Security" . Highlights the importance of plant protection, sustainable agriculture, and biodiversity conservation.
15 May	International Day of Families 2026	Theme: "Families, Inequalities and Child Wellbeing" . Focuses on family support systems, child development, and social protection.
16 May	Sikkim Statehood Day 2026	Marks 51 years of Sikkim's statehood and commemorates its integration into India in 1975 .
18 May	International Museum Day 2026	Observed to highlight the role of museums in preserving cultural heritage, education, and social understanding. Organized by ICOM .
18 May	World AIDS Vaccine Day 2026	Raises awareness about the urgent need for an effective HIV vaccine and ongoing research efforts.
20 May	World Bee Day 2026	Theme: "Bee together for people and the planet – A partnership that sustains us all" . Highlights the role of pollinators in food security and biodiversity.
20 May	World Metrology Day 2026	Theme: "Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making" . Marks the anniversary of the Metre Convention and promotes accurate measurements.
21 May	International Tea Day	Celebrates tea's cultural and economic significance while promoting sustainable tea cultivation and fair labour practices.
21 May	Anti-Terrorism Day	Observed in memory of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi , who was assassinated on 21 May 1991 . Promotes peace and national unity.
22 May	International Day for Biological Diversity 2026	Theme: "Acting locally for global impact" . Promotes biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable development.
23 May	World Turtle Day 2026	Raises awareness about the conservation of turtles and tortoises and the threats they face from pollution, habitat loss, and climate change.
25 May	World Thyroid Day 2026	Observed to raise awareness about thyroid health, early diagnosis, and treatment of thyroid disorders. Highlights prevention through iodine intake, regular screening, and healthy lifestyle habits.
25 May	Birth Anniversary of Rash Behari Bose	Commemorates the contribution of revolutionary leader Rash Behari Bose, who played a major role in the Ghadar Movement, founded the Indian Independence League in Japan, and laid the foundation of the Indian National Army (INA).
25 May	World Football Day 2026	Celebrates football's role in promoting peace, unity, inclusion, gender equality, youth empowerment, and sustainable development. Established by the United Nations in 2024 to mark 100 years of the first international football tournament at the 1924 Olympics.
28 May	Eid-ul-Adha (Bakrid) 2026	One of Islam's most important festivals commemorating Prophet Ibrahim's devotion and sacrifice. Celebrated through Qurbani, prayers, charity, and sharing with the underprivileged during the Hajj season.
29 May	International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers 2026	Observed to honour the courage, sacrifice, and service of UN peacekeepers. Commemorates the first UN peacekeeping mission (UNTSO) launched in 1948 and recognizes contributions toward global peace and security.
30 May	Goa Statehood Day 2026	Marks 39 years of Goa becoming India's 25th state in 1987. Celebrates Goa's cultural identity, heritage, freedom movement, and contributions to tourism and development.

Miscellaneous

- India, through **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** and **National Biodiversity Authority**, launched a **five-year biodiversity project (2025–2030)** with support from **United Nations Development Programme** and **Global Environment Facility**. Focused on **Tamil Nadu** and **Meghalaya**, it strengthens **grassroots governance** by integrating biodiversity into **Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs)**. The initiative promotes **community participation**, **sustainable livelihoods**, and **eco-friendly enterprises**. It supports institutions like **PRIs** and **BMCs**, ensures **Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)**, and empowers **women** and **tribal communities**, enhancing **biodiversity conservation** and **local development**.
- India submitted revised **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** for **2031–2035**, targeting **47% emission reduction**, **60% non-fossil energy capacity**, and a **3.5–4 billion tonne carbon sink**. Aligning with the **Paris Agreement**, the plan emphasizes **clean energy**, **forest expansion**, and **green growth**. Supported by initiatives like **Green Hydrogen Mission** and **International Solar Alliance**, India strengthens its role in **global climate action**, progressing toward its **2070 net-zero goal** while balancing development and sustainability.
- India has deployed the **Aarogya Maitri portable healthcare system** in **Jamaica** under its **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** framework, marking a major step in global humanitarian outreach. Coordinated by the **Ministry of External Affairs** and **National Security Council Secretariat**, the initiative delivers **rapid, technology-driven medical support** in disaster situations. It strengthens ties with **CARICOM nations** and showcases India's role as a **reliable global healthcare partner**, focusing on **disaster response**, **healthcare collaboration**, and **capacity building** in vulnerable regions.
- India and the **European Union (EU)** have launched a **₹169 crore joint initiative** to strengthen **EV battery recycling capacity** under the **India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC)**. The project focuses on addressing key challenges in the rapidly growing **electric vehicle ecosystem**, including resource security and environmental sustainability. Supported by leaders such as **Ajay Kumar Sood** and **Hervé Delphin**, the initiative aims to develop advanced recycling technologies for recovering critical minerals like **lithium**, **cobalt**, and **nickel** from used lithium-ion batteries. Key features include **high-efficiency material recovery processes**, **digital battery collection systems**, **pilot demonstration projects**, and a **joint pilot recycling line in India**. Funded through the EU's **Horizon Europe** program and India's **Ministry of Heavy Industries**, the initiative supports the development of a **circular economy** and strengthens long-term clean energy and EV sustainability goals.
- India inaugurated its Pavilion at the 61st La Biennale di Venezia in Venice, Italy, showcasing the exhibition **"Geographies of Distance: remembering home"** under the leadership of Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. Curated by Amin Jaffer and supported by Ministry of Culture, Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre and Serendipity Arts, the pavilion explores **memory**, **migration**, **identity**, **ecology**, and **belonging** through works of five Indian artists. The exhibition strengthens India's **cultural diplomacy**, promotes **contemporary Indian art globally**, and highlights the country's growing presence on international cultural platforms.
- India has advanced a renewed **MSME cooperation agenda** under its **BRICS Chairship 2026** by organising the first SME Working Group Meeting on **April 24, 2026**. Led by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, the virtual meeting focused on **MSME access to finance**, **fintech-driven credit ecosystems**, **digital lending**, **financial inclusion**, and **cross-border trade payments**. Discussions under the BRICS Partnership on the New Industrial Revolution highlighted the role of MSMEs in **employment**, **innovation**, **exports**, and **inclusive growth**. India will also host the inaugural **BRICS MSME Forum** to strengthen policy coordination and institutional cooperation among BRICS nations.
- India has assumed the **Chair of the Common Criteria Development Board (CCDB)** for the **2026–28 term**, following a decision at the Common Criteria Recognition Arrangement (CCRA) Meeting held in Tokyo. The move highlights India's growing influence in shaping global **cybersecurity and IT security standards**. The Common Criteria Development Board is the technical body that develops and updates international standards for evaluating the security of IT products. It supports the Common Criteria Recognition Arrangement, a global agreement that allows member countries to mutually recognize cybersecurity certifications, reducing the need for repeated testing across nations. India has been part of the CCRA since 2013 through the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and its certification body STQC Directorate. This leadership role strengthens India's position in global digital trust, secure technology certification, and international cybersecurity cooperation.
- Indian travellers continue to enjoy easier access to countries such as Bhutan, Nepal, Malaysia, Maldives, and Sri Lanka. Meanwhile, Singapore retained the world's strongest passport ranking with access to 192 destinations.

- India successfully hosted the Kimberley Process Intersessional Meeting 2026 in Mumbai under the leadership of Piyush Goyal, focusing on **transparency, governance, and ethical diamond trade**. The meeting brought together governments, industry leaders, and civil society to strengthen the **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)** and prevent **conflict diamonds** from entering global markets. India promoted its **3C Vision — Credibility, Compliance, and Consumer Confidence** — while emphasizing responsible sourcing and monitoring reforms. As the world's largest **diamond cutting and polishing hub**, India reinforced its leadership role in the global diamond industry and laid the foundation for further discussions at the upcoming KP Plenary in New Delhi.
- India has assumed the **chairmanship of the Regional Cooperative Agreement (RCA) for 2026** under the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**, reinforcing its leadership in peaceful nuclear cooperation. The announcement came during the **48th Meeting of National Representatives in Navi Mumbai**, attended by delegates from Asia-Pacific and African countries. The RCA promotes collaboration in **healthcare, cancer treatment, agriculture, water management, environmental sustainability, and radiation technology** using nuclear science. India has been closely associated with the RCA since early discussions at **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in 1964**, highlighting its longstanding regional scientific role.
- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** inaugurated the **Indian War Memorial at Imjingak Peace Park, South Korea**, alongside minister **Kwon Oh-eul**, strengthening bilateral defence and diplomatic relations. The memorial honours Indian military contributions during the **Korean War**, including the **60 Parachute Field Ambulance unit** and the **Custodian Force of India**, which treated over **222,000 patients** and supervised prisoner-of-war repatriation. The visit also saw signing of an **MoU on veterans welfare, cultural exchanges, memorial projects, and historical preservation**, adding a humanitarian and historical dimension to the growing India–South Korea strategic partnership.

Static Takeaways

Aspect	Details
Andhra Pradesh	Governor: Abdul Nazeer • CM: Chandrababu Naidu • Capital: Amravati
Gujarat	Governor: Acharya Devvrat • CM: Bhupendra Patel • Capital: Gandhinagar
Maharashtra	Governor: Jishnu Dev Varma • CM: Devendra Fadnavis • Capital: Mumbai
West Bengal	Governor: R. N. Ravi • CM: Suwendu Adhikari • Capital: Kolkata
Uttar Pradesh	Governor: Anandiben Patel • CM: Yogi Adityanath • Capital: Lucknow
Karnataka	Governor: Thawar Chand Gehlot • CM: Siddaramaiah • Capital: Bengaluru
Rajasthan	Governor: Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde • CM: Bhajan Lal Sharma • Capital: Jaipur
Assam	Governor: Laxman Prasad Acharya • CM: Himanta Biswa Sarma • Capital: Dispur
Kerala	Governor: Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar • CM: V. D. Satheesan • Capital: Thiruvananthapuram

Aspect	Details
Tamil Nadu	Governor: R. N. Ravi • CM: Vijay Joseph • Capital: Chennai
Telangana	Governor: Shiv Pratap Shukla • CM: Revanth Reddy • Capital: Hyderabad
Odisha	Governor: Hari Babu Kambhampati • CM: Mohan Charan Majhi • Capital: Bhubaneswar
Chhattisgarh	Governor: Ramen Deka • CM: Vishnu Deo Sai • Capital: Raipur
Uttarakhand	Governor: Gurmit Singh • CM: Pushkar Singh Dhami • Capital: Dehradun
Haryana	Governor: Ashim Kumar Ghosh • CM: Nayab Singh Saini • Capital: Chandigarh
Madhya Pradesh	Governor: Mangubhai Patel • CM: Mohan Yadav • Capital: Bhopal
Sikkim	Governor: Om Prakash Mathur • CM: Prem Singh Tamang • Capital: Gangtok
Puducherry	Lieutenant Governor: K. Kailashnathan • CM: N. Rangasamy • Capital: Puducherry
Ladakh	Lieutenant Governor: Vinai Kumar Saxena
UAE	President: Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan • Capital: Abu Dhabi
USA	President: Donald Trump • Capital: Washington, D.C.
China	President: Xi Jinping • Capital: Beijing
Russia	President: Vladimir Putin • Capital: Moscow
Finland	President: Alexander Stubb • Capital: Helsinki
Denmark	PM: Mette Frederiksen • Capital: Copenhagen
Netherlands	PM: Rob Jetten • Capital: Amsterdam
Portugal	President: Antonio José Seguro • Capital: Lisbon
Vietnam	President: To Lam • Capital: Hanoi
Switzerland	President: Guy Parmelin • Capital: Bern
Ethiopia	President: Taye Atske Selassie • Capital: Addis Ababa

Aspect	Details
Bangladesh	Prime Minister: Tarique Rahman • Capital: Dhaka
Norway	PM: Jonas Gahr Støre • Capital: Oslo
Sweden	PM: Ulf Kristersson • Capital: Stockholm
Italy	Prime Minister: Giorgia Meloni • Capital: Rome
Cyprus	President: Nikos Christodoulides • Capital: Nicosia
Saudi Arabia	Crown Prince & PM: Mohammed bin Salman • Capital: Riyadh
Canada	PM: Mark Carney • Capital: Ottawa
Myanmar	President: Min Aung Hlaing • Capital: Naypyidaw
NITI Aayog	Chairperson: Narendra Modi
Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Minister: Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh)
Ministry of Defence	Minister: Rajnath Singh
Ministry of Finance	Minister: Nirmala Sitharaman
Ministry of Home Affairs	Minister: Amit Shah
Ministry of MSME	Minister: Jitan Ram Manjhi
Ministry of Communications	Minister: Ashwini Vaishnaw
Chief Election Commissioner	Gyanesh Kumar
Union Environment Minister	Bhupender Yadav
Union Agriculture Minister	Shivraj Singh Chouhan
RBI	Governor: Sanjay Malhotra
SEBI	Chairman: Tuhin Kanta Pandey
ISRO	Chairman: V. Narayanan
Supreme Court of India	CJI: Justice Surya Kant
WHO	Director-General: Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
UNGA	President: Annalena Baerbock
European Union	President, European Commission: Ursula von der Leyen
NSE	Chairperson: Srinivas Injeti
CBFC	Chairperson: Shekhar Vempati
Prasar Bharati	Chairperson: Prasoon Joshi
Bharti Airtel	Chairman: Sunil Bharti Mittal
ICICI Bank	MD & CEO: Sandeep Bakhshi