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## National

### **PM Narendra Modi Inaugurated the Centenary Celebrations of Acharya 108 Vidyanand Ji Maharaj in New Delhi**

Prime Minister(PM) **Narendra Modi** inaugurated and addressed the **Centenary Celebrations** of the revered Jain spiritual leader, Acharya **Vidyanand Ji Maharaj** at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, Delhi. The event was organized by the Ministry of Culture(MoC) in collaboration New Delhi based Bhagwan Mahaveer Ahimsa Bharti Trust, headquartered in New Delhi.

- The occasion also marked the 38th anniversary of Acharya Vidyanand Ji being bestowed the title “Acharya.”
- The centenary year will be observed from **June 28, 2025, to April 22, 2026**, featuring a diverse range of cultural, literary, educational, and spiritual initiatives across the country. These events aim to honor and celebrate the life, teachings, and enduring legacy of Acharya Vidyanand Ji Maharaj.

#### **Highlights of the Event:**

- i. During the event, PM Narendra Modi was honoured with the title of “**Dharma Chakravarti**”, by the Jain community in recognition of his commitment to Indian culture, spiritual values, and service to humanity.
- ii. As part of the celebration, PM Narendra Modi also launched a **biographical volume**, detailing Acharya Vidyanand’s renunciatory path, literary works, institutional efforts, and role as a reformer.
- iii. PM Narendra Modi along with Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Ministry of Culture(MoC) and Ministry of Tourism(MoT) , released a commemorative **postage stamp and Rs.100 commemorative coin** on the birth anniversary of Acharya Vidyanand Maharaj.

### **Union Minister Amit Shah Inaugurates National Turmeric Board HQ in Nizamabad, Telangana**

Union Minister **Amit Shah**, Ministry of Home Affairs(MHA) and Ministry of Cooperation inaugurated the headquarters of the **National Turmeric Board (NTB)** in **Nizamabad, Telangana**, fulfilling a decades-long demand of turmeric farmers in the region.

- The event was organised as part of the **Kisan Maha Sammelan** and was attended by Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy, Ministry of Coal and Mines(MoM), Union Minister of State(MoS) Bandi Sanjay Kumar, MHA and Telangana Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwar Rao.
- i. The board aims to increase turmeric exports to **USD 1 billion by 2030**, promote the medicinal benefits of turmeric, expand its presence in international markets, and empower Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to strengthen the turmeric value chain.
- ii. The branches of New Delhi(Delhi) based National Export Cooperative Limited(NECL) and National Cooperative Organics Limited(NCOL) will be established in Nizamabad, Telangana, to strengthen turmeric trade and support farmers.
- iii. A comprehensive system for packaging, marketing, and exporting turmeric is also under development to boost global reach and ensure better prices for farmers.

### **Teghbir Singh Becomes World's Youngest to Climb Summit of Mount Elbrus**

Teghbir Singh, at the age of 6 years and 9 months, has become the youngest ever in the world to climb the Mount (Mt) **Elbrus**, highest peak of European Continent, located in Russia at a height of more than **18, 510 feet (ft)** (5,642 metres, m).

- He received the Mountain Climbing Certificate issued by the Mountaineering, Rock Climbing and Sports Tourism Federation of Kabardino-Balkarian Republic (Russia).

#### **Key Points:**

- i. It is a low-Oxygen trek, and the trekker needs preparation to tackle problems associated with Altitude Sickness.
- ii. Teghbir Singh started the trek to the Mt. Elbrus on June 20, 2025, and walked all along to reach the Elbrus peak, the highest point of the mountain, where normal temperature is **-10 degree (°)** Celsius on June 28, 2025.
- iii. He set a new world record by **surpassing** the previous mark held by **Wagah Kushagra** from Maharashtra, who achieved it in 2024 at the age of 7 years and 3 months.

### **NSE Data: Gujarat becomes 3rd Indian State to Cross 1 Crore Stock Market Investors, after Maharashtra and UP**

As per the latest data released by Mumbai (Maharashtra) based National Stock Exchange Limited (NSE) in July 2025, Gujarat has become the **3rd** Indian state to record **over 1 crore** registered stock market investors, after Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh (UP).

- The data further revealed that cumulatively, these 3 states now account for **36%** of the total investor base in India.

#### **Key Points:**

- i. The data showed that the total number of registered investors in India reached at approximately **11.5 crore** (as of May 2025). The month of May alone saw the inclusion of over 11 lakh new investors, marking a **9% Month-on-Month (M-o-M)** growth.
- ii. The NSE data showed the region-wise distribution of number of registered investors such as **North India** leads with **4.2 crore investors**, followed by West India (3.5 crore), South India (2.4 crore) and East India (1.4 crore).
- iii. As per the data, North and East India registered the highest growth compared to last year, with investor numbers increasing by 24% and 23% respectively.

- South India recorded a growth of 22%, followed by West India (17%) during the same period.

### **Karnataka Cabinet Approves Renaming Bengaluru City University after Former PM Manmohan Singh**

The Karnataka Cabinet headed by Chief Minister (CM) **Siddaramaiah**, approved the renaming of Bengaluru (Karnataka) based Bengaluru City University (BCU) to '**Dr. Manmohan Singh City University**' after former Prime Minister (PM) Manmohan Singh.

- It is the first university to be named after former PM Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26, 2024.
- The state government has given approval to rename Bengaluru Rural district as **Bengaluru North** and to rename Bagepalli taluk as **Baghyanagera**.

- i. Dr. Manmohan Singh served as the 13th PM of India for 10 years (2 terms) from 2004 to 2014. He is widely regarded as the architect of India's modern economic liberalization.
- ii. As the Finance Minister (FM) of India from 1991 to 1996, under the former PM Narasimha Rao, he led India's 1991 economic liberalization, removing license Raj, opening up to Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), and initiating structural reforms.
- iii. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1987 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2001, both for his work in Public Affairs.

### **Indore Launches India's First QR-Based Digital House Address System**

The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) of **Indore**, Madhya Pradesh (MP), launched **India's first Quick Response (QR)-based digital house address project** to modernise civic services and improve urban governance under India's Smart Cities Mission.

- The project was implemented on a pilot basis in Ward Number 82, located in the Sudama Nagar area of Indore city.
- i. The project features unique QR-coded digital plates installed on every house. By scanning the code with a smartphone, citizens and authorities can instantly retrieve the property's precise digital address, mapped accurately with Global Positioning System (GPS).
- ii. Scanning the QR code allows residents to pay property tax and water tax, and lodge civic complaints without the need to visit government offices physically.
- iii. The project has been integrated with the Digital Postal Index Number (**Digipin**), a 10-character alphanumeric code, developed by the Department of Posts (**DoP**), under the Ministry of Communications (MoC), in collaboration with Telangana based Indian Institute of Technology (**IIT**) **Hyderabad**, and the National Remote Sensing Centre (**NRSC**) of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), ensuring precise and standardized property identification.

### **Kerala's Arthunkal Police Station Receives ISO Certification from BIS**

The Arthunkal Police Station in Alappuzha, Kerala, was awarded the International Organization for Standardization (**ISO**) **9001:2015** Quality Management System (**QMS**) **certification** by the Bureau of Indian Standards (**BIS**).

- With this, it became the **first** police station in India to receive the ISO 9001:2015 certification from BIS, recognizing its commitment to quality service and efficient policing standards.
- i. The certification process included a two-stage audit which assessed risk management, quality processes, modern complaint-handling protocols, basic infrastructure, and professional conduct.
- ii. The certificate acknowledges the station's performance in the areas of crime prevention, investigation, maintenance of law and order, traffic management, emergency response, judicial coordination, and public grievance redressal.
- iii. These functions have been carried out in accordance with the Indian legal framework, government policies, and directives, with reliance on efficiency, transparency, and public satisfaction within the jurisdiction of the Arthunkal police station.
- iv. This achievement is part of the Modernised Cherthala Police Programme, driven by ASP Harish Jain, focusing on structural reforms to modernize policing standards.

### **Sikkim's Yakten Village Declared India's First Digital Nomad Village**

Yakten village in Pakyong district, Sikkim, was officially declared India's first digital nomad village under the 'Nomad Sikkim' initiative. The project called 'Nomad Sikkim' is a collaboration between the Pakyong District Administration and the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Sarvahitey, with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

- This initiative aims to transform Himalayan locations into **year-round hubs for remote workers** (digital nomads) from across India and abroad by addressing seasonal income challenges faced by homestay operators, particularly during the six-month off-season from April to October.
- i. Yakten has been equipped with two independent internet lines, village-wide Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi), and inverters for uninterrupted power supply.
- ii. Additionally, a long-term solution for water scarcity is being implemented under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). The village has also adopted zero-waste management systems and promotes eco-friendly homestays to ensure sustainable tourism.
- iii. It is located 32 kilometers (km) from Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim, and 10 km from Pakyong Airport (Sikkim), with local transport linkages established to support visitor movement.

### **Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Inaugurates India Campus of University of Southampton in Gurugram**

Union Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan**, Ministry of Education (MoE), and Chief Minister (CM) of Haryana, **Nayab Singh Saini**, Inaugurated the India campus of the United Kingdom (UK)-based University of Southampton (UoS) in Gurugram, Haryana.

- UoS becomes the **first** fully foreign university campus to open in India under the University Grants Commission (UGC's) (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations 2023.
- i. The Gurugram campus, situated within the International Tech Park, is scheduled to commence classes in August 2025.
- ii. The campus will offer six degree programmes, including four Undergraduate (UG) courses, Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Business Management, Accounting and Finance, Computer Science, Economics, and two Postgraduate (PG) courses, Master of Science (MSc) in Finance and International Management.
- iii. The courses offered are aligned with the academic standards of the UK.

### **BIS Mandates Hallmarking for 9-Karat Gold Jewellery from July 2025**

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), operating under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (MoCAF&PD), announced the inclusion of **9-karat gold under mandatory hallmarking**. This regulation has been introduced through BIS Amendment No. 2 and will take effect from **July 2025**.

- The amendment is under the provisions of the BIS Act, 2016, which governs standards related to the purity and certification of gold jewellery and artefacts in India.
- The hallmarking process ensures consumer trust by certifying the purity and fineness of gold products, and includes the official BIS logo, the purity marking in karat and

fineness (parts per thousand, ppt), and a **6-digit** alphanumeric Hallmark Unique Identification (**HUID**)

#### **Key Changes:**

**i.Expanded Purity Grades:** The list of hallmarking grades has now included **8 hallmarking grades**, 24 Karat Fine (KF) (999 ppt), 24 Karat Solid (KS) (995 ppt), 23K (958 ppt), 22K (916 ppt), 20K (833 ppt), 18K (750 ppt), 14K (585 ppt), and 9K (375 ppt).

**ii.Exclusions:** Gold watches, pens, and legal-tender coins are excluded from the definition of artefacts. Gold coins must be 24KF(Karat Gold – Flat) or 24KS(Karat Gold – Struck) purity and produced only by mints/refineries.

#### **Implementation Framework:**

**i.Nationwide Coverage:** Mandatory BIS hallmarking now covers 361 districts across India, following four phases of rollout since June 2021.

**ii.Compliance Requirements:** All jewellers and Assaying & Hallmarking Centres (AHCs) must adhere to the new guidelines.

#### **Maharashtra becomes 1st State in India to Grant Agricultural Status to Livestock & Poultry Farming**

The Maharashtra cabinet headed by Chief Minister(CM) Devendra Fadnavis has granted agricultural status to livestock farming, aimed to support small farmers engaged in dairy, poultry, goat, and pig rearing, in rural areas of the state.

- With this recognition, Maharashtra becomes the **1st state** in India to accord agricultural status to livestock and poultry farming.

**i.**This decision is expected to benefit **76.41 lakh** families engaged in livestock farming, with an estimated increase of Rs 7,700 crore in income of these families through livestock production.

**ii.**The livestock farmers will now receive a **maximum 4%** interest subsidy on project loans taken through Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs), in accordance with the provisions similar to the Panjabrao Deshmukh Interest Subsidy.

**iii.**Also, Gram Panchayats (GPs) will now have the power/authority to levy agricultural tax rates on livestock and poultry farms, which will further reduce the local tax burdens on farmers.

#### **L&T Unveiled India's Largest Green Hydrogen Plant at IOCL's Refinery in Panipat**

Larsen & Toubro Limited(L&T) announced that its wholly-owned subsidiary, **L&T Energy Green Tech Limited** will establish **India's largest green hydrogen plant** at Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)'s **Panipat** Refinery in Haryana. The project is scheduled for commissioning by December 2027.

- This project is in alignment with the Government of India (GoI)'s National Green Hydrogen Mission (**NGHM**), which aims to position India as a global hub for green hydrogen production and technology.

**i.**The newly announced green hydrogen plant is expected to supply **10,000 tonnes(t)** of green hydrogen annually to IOCL for a period of 25 years.

**ii.**The plant is being developed under a Build-Own-Operate (**BOO**) **model**. It will operate 24

hours using Renewable Energy (RE) and will support IOCL's wider strategy to decarbonise its refining operations.

iii. This new plant will produce green hydrogen using high-pressure alkaline electrolyzers manufactured at L&T Electrolysers Ltd's facility based in Hazira, Gujarat.

### **NCLT Approves Merger of Adani Cementation with Ambuja Cements**

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Ahmedabad Bench in Gujarat, approved the **merger** of Adani Cementation Limited (ACL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL) into **Ambuja Cements** as a significant step to combine the cement and infrastructure businesses of the Adani Group as one unit.

• NCLT announced **April 1, 2024**, as the effective date of the merger.

i. The merger will be executed through a share swap arrangement, where AEL will receive **8.7 million** shares of Ambuja Cements, at a ratio of 174 shares of Ambuja Cements for each 1 share of ACL.

ii. The merger aims to enhance operational efficiencies, resource utilization, and project execution. With this merger, all assets, liabilities, and property rights of Adani Cementation will be merged into Ambuja Cements.

iii. Ambuja Cements is required to adhere to regulatory directives issued by SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India), BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange), NSE (National Stock Exchange), and the Luxembourg Stock Exchange, where its Global Depository Receipts (GDRs) are listed.

### **India Emerges as Malaysia's Largest Palm Oil Seeds Importer**

The Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) announced that **India** has become the largest importer of germinated palm oil seeds from Malaysia in **2024**, driven by an increase in demand to expand the domestic palm oil cultivation in India.

• India emerged as the top destination for Malaysian Palm oil export, with the import of **3.03 Million Tonnes (MT)** of palm oil from Malaysia in 2024, accounting for 17.9% of total palm oil exports of Malaysia.

i. Under the National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), India aims to expand palm oil cultivation to 1 million hectares by 2025-26 and target 2.8 MT of crude oil production by 2029-30.

ii. Currently, India has around 370,000 hectares of land under palm oil cultivation, with the primary focus on Northeast states and island regions.

iii. The purchase of the palm oil seeds boost domestic palm oil production and reduce the reliance on the import of edible oils.

#### **Note:**

The NMEO-OP, launched in 2021, is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW). It aims to enhance the area and productivity of oil palm cultivation in India and promote self-reliance in edible oil production.

## **SBI Research Report: 5 States Account for Nearly 50% Active GST Taxpayers; UP Tops**

SBI Research, the economic research division of the State Bank of India (SBI), released its latest research report on Octennial Anniversary of Goods and Services Tax (GST). As per the report, 5 states namely, Uttar Pradesh (UP), Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu (TN) and Karnataka, account for nearly **50%** of the total active GST taxpayers in India.

- **UP** leads the top five states, contributing **13.2%** of all active GST taxpayers in India, followed by Maharashtra (12.1%), Gujarat (8.4%), Tamil Nadu, TN (7.7%), and Karnataka (6.9%).
- The report showed that top 5 states account for **41%** of gross revenue while, 6 states surpasses the mark of Rs 1 lakh crore.

### **Key Findings:**

i. The data further revealed that there are **over 1.52 crore** active GST registrations (as of May 31, 2025).

## **India Successfully Tests First Hydrogen-Powered Train Coach at ICF Chennai**

Indian Railways (IR) successfully conducted the test of India's first hydrogen-powered train coach, known as the Driving Power Car (DPC), at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN). ICF is a premier coach manufacturing unit under IR.

- This marks a major step towards achieving **clean, green, and sustainable rail mobility**, supporting **India's climate targets** and a shift toward **future-ready transport systems**.

### **Technical Specifications:**

**Hydrogen Train Project:** The tested DPC is part of India's ambitious project to develop a **1,200-horsepower (HP)** hydrogen-powered train.

**Coach Composition:** The train will consist of 10 coaches with two hydrogen-powered cars at both ends and eight passenger coaches in the middle section

**Technology:** The train will be powered using hydrogen fuel cell technology, in which hydrogen and oxygen chemically combine to produce electricity.

- The only emissions from this process are water vapor and heat, making it an environment-friendly alternative to conventional diesel engines.

### **Hydrogen for Heritage:**

The test is part of IR's "**Hydrogen for Heritage**" initiative, which aims to deploy 35 hydrogen-powered trains on heritage and hilly routes across India.

### **Pilot Project:**

A pilot project valued at **Rs. 111.83 crore** is currently underway to retrofit a Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) with hydrogen fuel cell technology. This retrofitted unit will operate on the Jind–Sonipat section under the Northern Railway zone.

### **Background:**

**Announcement:** In 2023, IR announced its plan to introduce 35 hydrogen trains across its network.

## International

### IEP Releases Global Peace Index 2025: India Climbs to 115th Place, Iceland Tops the list

Sydney (Australia) based Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), a global think tank, released the 19th Global Peace Index (GPI) 2025. India is ranked at 115th with the score of 2.229 in the 2025 index, improving by one position from 116th rank in 2024.

- **Iceland** (1) remains the most peaceful country with GPI score of 1.095 for 17th time in a row, while **Russia** (163) ranked as the least peaceful country in 2025 with the score of 3.441 for the first time.

#### Global Peace Index (GPI) 2025:

- The 2025 GPI report assessed **163 countries**, ranking them according to their level of peacefulness, covering 99.7% of the world's population.
- The report used 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure the state of peace across three domains, including the level of Societal Safety and Security; the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict, and the degree of Militarization.
- Scores on the GPI range from 1, indicating the most peaceful, to 5, indicating the least peaceful.

### Global Unicorn Index 2025 : USA Topped; India Ranked 3rd with 64 Unicorns

Shanghai(China) based Hurun Research Institute released the 7th edition of “Global Unicorn Index ” report, in which India secured the 3rd rank globally with a total of 64 unicorns.

- The United States of America (**USA**) continued to be in the top position with 758 unicorns, accounting for **49.8%** of the world total number of unicorns. It was followed by China in the index with 343 unicorns.

#### Key Highlights:

- The index listed a total of **1523 unicorns** (up by 5% compared to 2024) in the world, based in 52 countries. The total value of the world's unicorns reached **USD 5.6 trillion** (tn), up by 22%.
- As per the index, a total of 203 unicorns were minted newly last year, averaging **one every two days**.

- The USA led the count with 108 new unicorns, followed by China with 36, and the rest of the world contributing 59.

**iii.SpaceX(USA)**, with a valuation of USD 350bn has become the most valuable company in the world, overtaking ByteDance(China).

- It is for the 1st time a space exploration company has led the index.

**iv.The Tiger global(USA) management** retains the crown of ‘**world's most successful unicorn investor**’ followed by Softbank(Japan), and Sequoia capital(USA) ranking third.

#### Unicorn Capital:

**i.San Francisco** retained the title of “**World's Unicorn Capital**” with 199 unicorns (Up 9), followed by New York (USA) with 142 (up 9), and Beijing(China) with 75 (down 3).

**ii.**With respect to India, **Bengaluru** (Karnataka) at 7th rank leads the index among the Indian

cities, followed by **Mumbai** (Maharashtra) at 22nd and **Gurugram** (Haryana) entered the list for the first time at 27th position.

### **Colombia and Uzbekistan Join BRICS-Backed NDB as New Member**

Colombia and Uzbekistan have joined the New Development Bank (NDB), a multilateral development bank, also known as the **BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) bank, as borrowing members of the NDB, expanding its membership to **11** nations.

- The announcement was made by NDB President **Dilma Rousseff** following the 10th Annual Meeting of the NDB Board of Governors (BoG), held ahead of the 17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- The current members of the NDB include Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Algeria, Colombia, and Uzbekistan. Uruguay holds the status of a prospective member.

#### **Key Points:**

**i.** Colombia and Uzbekistan were admitted to the NDB after meeting key criteria: they are United Nations (UN) member states, completed the accession process, including Board approval, depositing accession instruments, and fulfilling capital contributions, and their inclusion ensured the BRICS nations retained over 55% of the total voting power.

**ii.** During the meeting, Roman Serov (Russia) was appointed as Vice-President of NDB from September 7, 2025, to September 6, 2030.

**iii.** The Board elected **Anton Siluanov**, Minister of Finance, Russia and the NDB Governor for Russia as the next **Chairperson** of the BoG.

**iv.** **Nirmala Sitharaman**, Minister of Finance (MoF), the Government of India (GoI) and the NDB Governor for India was elected as the next **Vice-Chairperson** of the BoG.

### **17th BRICS Summit Held from July 6–7, 2025 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

17th BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) Summit held under the Chairmanship of Brazil from 6th–7th July 2025 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The summit was hosted by Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

- The theme for the 2025 BRICS summit was “**Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance**”, focusing on global governance reform, sustainable development, and economic resilience among the Global South countries.
- Prime Minister (PM) of India Narendra Modi visited Brazil as part of his five-nation tour to attend the BRICS Summit 2025.

#### **Highlights:**

**i.** The summit welcomed Indonesia as a full member, making it the first Southeast Asian country to join BRICS.

**ii.** The BRICS leaders fully supported India’s bid to host the 33rd Conference of the Parties (COP 33) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in **2028**.

**iii.** The Women Empowerment (WE) vertical of the New Delhi (Delhi)-based BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry (**BRICS CCI**) launched **WE WISE** (Women in Innovation, Science and Entrepreneurship) at the BRICS Women Business Alliance (WBA) Annual Plenary Meeting held in Rio de Janeiro.

iv. The summit ended with the adoption of the **Rio de Janeiro Declaration**, a 31-point document with 126 commitments. It focused on strengthening Global South cooperation, promoting fair global governance, ensuring peace and security, and supporting economic and environmental stability.

### **UNESCO Removes Three African Sites from World Heritage in Danger List**

The World Heritage Committee (WHC) **removed** three African heritage sites located in **Madagascar, Egypt, and Libya** from the List of **World Heritage in Danger**. The decision was announced during the 47th session of the WHC, held from July 6 to 16, 2025, at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) headquarters in Paris, France.

- Removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger means the threats to the site are resolved and its global value is restored, and they are now eligible for enhanced technical and financial support from UNESCO.

#### **Sites Removed from the Danger List**

##### **1. Rainforests of the Atsinanana (Madagascar)**

i. Inscribed: 2007 (World Heritage List), 2010 (Danger List).

ii. **Reason for Danger Listing:** Illegal logging, trafficking of rosewood and ebony, and deforestation, which endangers native species such as lemurs.

iii. **Action Taken:** Introduced conservation measures including Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tools (SMART), local patrolling, and improved forest management. These efforts led to the restoration of over 60% of the lost forest cover and significantly reduced poaching and logging activities.

##### **2. Abu Mena (Egypt)**

i. Inscribed: 1979 (World Heritage List), 2001 (Danger List).

ii. **Reason for Danger Listing:** Rising groundwater from agricultural irrigation causes structural collapses.

iii. **Action Taken:** Installed solar-powered drainage systems to lower groundwater levels. A comprehensive conservation plan was introduced in 2024 to stabilize and preserve the remaining structures.

##### **3. Old Town of Ghadamès (Libya)**

i. Inscribed: 1986 (World Heritage List), 2016 (Danger List).

ii. **Reason for Danger Listing:** Threatened by armed conflict, wildfires, and flooding.

iii. **Action Taken:** Carried out restoration works including rebuilding of traditional structures, repair of water pipelines, and introduced risk management planning and skills development to protect local heritage.

### **Alyssa Carson: Youngest Astronaut-in-Training Aiming for NASA's First Human Mission to Mars**

Alyssa Carson, a 24-year-old astrobiologist from Hammond, Louisiana, United States of America (USA), is widely recognised as one of the strongest aspirants for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s **first human mission to Mars** in the early 2030s. She is popularly known by her NASA call sign "**NASABlueberry**."

i. Alyssa Carson became the youngest Astronaut-in-Training Aiming for NASA's first human mission to Mars and on track to be one of the first people to set foot on Mars.

ii. She is the only person to attend all NASA space camps worldwide, including in the USA, Canada, and Turkey, and the first to complete the NASA Passport Program, visiting 14 NASA Visitor Centers across 9 states in the USA.

iii. She became the youngest graduate of the Advanced PoSSUM (Project Polar Suborbital Science in the Upper Mesosphere) Space Academy in 2016 at the age of 15, earning certification for suborbital research missions.

### **WTTC Releases Top 10 Global Tourism Economies for 2024-25: India Ranks 8, USA Tops the list**

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), in collaboration with Oxford Economics, released the 2024 Economic Impact Trends (EIT) Report, highlighting the Top 10 Global Tourism Economies for 2024-25. According to the report, India climbed to the 8th position with a Travel & Tourism sector contribution of USD 231.6 billion, up from 10th place in 2023.

- United States of America (USA) has secured the first place with USD 2,360 billion, followed by **China** (USD 1,300 billion) in the second place and **Germany** (USD 487.6 billion) in the third place.

#### **Key Points:**

- WTTC produces the report on the economic and employment impact of Travel & Tourism for 184 countries/ economies and 28 geographic and economic regions in the world.
- In 2024, the global Travel and Tourism sector contributed **USD 10.9 trillion** to the world's GDP. This includes the direct, indirect, and induced impacts of the sector, accounting for 10% of the global economy.
- France stood at 6th position with USD 264.7 billion from Travel & Tourism, followed by Mexico (7th) with USD 261.6 billion, Italy (9th) with USD 231.3 billion, and Spain (10th) with USD 227.9 billion.

### **Nvidia Becomes World's First Company to Hit USD 4 Trillion Market Value**

United States of America (USA)-based **Nvidia Corporation**, a global leader in accelerated computing and artificial intelligence (AI), became the **world's first publicly traded company** to achieve a **market capitalisation** of **USD 4 trillion**. This milestone solidified Nvidia's dominance in the ongoing AI hardware revolution.

- With this achievement, Nvidia has surpassed **Microsoft Corporation**, which holds the second position with a market value of USD 3.75 trillion, while **Apple Inc.** ranks third with a valuation of USD 3.17 trillion.
- Nvidia's rapid valuation growth, driven by rising global demand for AI technologies, saw it cross USD 1 trillion in June 2023, USD 2 trillion in February 2024, and USD 3 trillion in June 2024.
  - Nvidia supplies nearly 90% of the advanced AI chips used in data centers that run large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT.
  - Its Graphics Processing Units (GPUs) are key components used by major cloud platforms such as Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and Google Cloud (by Alphabet Inc.).
  - In March 2025, Nvidia launched its Blackwell Ultra AI chips, which greatly improve AI reasoning and boost real-time, high-performance computing.

### **India leads the world in fast payments with UPI Surge, transactions Cross 18 Billion monthly : IMF Report**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) released a Fintech note titled “Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability”, authored by Alexander Copestake, Divya Kirti, and Maria Soledad Martinez Peria.

- The note highlights India’s digital transformation, noting that Unified Payment Interface (**UPI**) has become the **largest** retail fast payment system globally by volume.

#### **Key Highlights:**

- i. India has emerged as a **global leader in fast digital payments**, driven by the rapid adoption of UPI, even as the use of debit and credit cards sees a gradual decline.
- ii. UPI launched in 2016 is an instant real-time payment system developed by the National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) to facilitate inter-bank transactions through mobile phones.
- iii. Developed on the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) framework, UPI now facilitates over **18 billion transactions monthly**, emerging as the leading mode of electronic retail payments in India.

### **Switzerland Completes Ratification of India-EFTA Agreement**

Switzerland has completed its ratification process of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (**TEPA**) between **India** and Europe Free Trade Association (**EFTA**), which includes member countries such as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.

- With this development, the agreement stands fully ratified, as the remaining three EFTA member countries had already completed their ratification.
- The agreement, expected to come into force in **October 2025**, aims to significantly reduce trade barriers and enhance investment flows between India and the four EFTA member states.

#### **India-EFTA Agreement:**

i. The TEPA is a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed between India and EFTA. It was signed on March 10, 2024, in New Delhi, Delhi, after 16 years of negotiations, which started in 2008.

- This is India’s inaugural trade agreement with a European bloc, highlighting a strategic shift in its international trade policy.
- ii. The objective of TEPA is to boost bilateral trade in goods and services, attract investment, enhance market access, promote sustainable development, and strengthen cooperation.
  - iii. Under the TEPA, EFTA will invest **USD 100 billion in India** over the next 15 years.
  - iv. The agreement comprises 14 chapters with main focus on market access related to goods, rules of origin, trade facilitation, trade remedies, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, investment promotion, market access on services, intellectual property rights, trade and sustainable development and other legal and horizontal provisions.

#### **Points to Note:**

i. Switzerland is the 12th largest investor in India. Its investment has increased from Swiss Franc (CHF) 551 million (approximately Rs.5,935 crore) in 2000 to CHF 10 billion (Rs. 1,07,736 crore) in 2024.

### **Henley Passport Index July 2025: India Climbs to 77th Rank; Singapore Topped**

Henley & Partners, a British consultancy specializing in investment migration, released the July edition of Henley Passport Index 2025 Global Ranking. As per the index, India has recorded the largest jump, by climbing **8** places to **77th** from 85 in January 2025 edition. With visa-free access to 59 destinations, India now shares its rank with countries, including Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Cote d'Ivoire.

- **Singapore** has topped the index as the most powerful passport, offering visa-free access to **193** out of 227 global destinations, followed by Japan and South Korea, which share the second position.

#### **Global Ranking:**

**Top 3:** Singapore (first) and Japan (second) have retained their positions as on the January 2025 edition, while South Korea has climbed one spot from third to second place, indicating the strong progress of Asian countries globally.

- Seven European Union (EU) nations, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and Spain, jointly hold the 3rd position in the index.

**Other top 10:** The passports of seven countries of the EU share 4th place, including Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Sweden, with visa-free access to 188 destinations.

- Greece, New Zealand, Switzerland with 187 countries at 5th place;
- United Kingdom (UK) (185 countries) at 6th; Australia, Czechia, Hungary, Malta, and Poland (185 countries) are ranked 7th;
- Canada, Estonia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) (184) at 8th place ; Croatia, Latvia, Slovakia, and Slovenia (183) at 9th;

### **India & UK Sign CETA to Boost Bilateral Trade and Investment**

India and the United Kingdom (UK) signed a landmark Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (**CETA**) to strengthen bilateral trade, investment, and economic cooperation. The pact was signed during Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi's official visit to the UK at Chequers, Buckinghamshire, UK.

#### **Key Signatories:**

The agreement was signed by Union Minister **Piyush Goyal**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), Government of India (GoI), and **Jonathan Reynolds**, UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade, in the presence of Narendra Modi, Prime Minister (PM) of India, and Keir Starmer, PM of the UK.

#### **Economic Context:**

- The deal aims to double bilateral trade from USD 56 billion (2025) to **USD 112 billion by 2030**.
- CETA contains 26 chapters, covering areas such as goods, services, digital trade, Intellectual Property (IP), and sustainability.

## **Tariff Reductions:**

### **•India's Commitments:**

- Elimination of duties on 99% of tariff lines, covering almost 100% of the bilateral trade value.
- 99% of UK exports (e.g., whisky, automobiles, medical devices) to gain zero-duty access.
- Whisky tariffs to be reduced from 150% to 75% immediately, and further down to 40% over 10 years.

### **•UK's Commitments:**

- Reduction in 90% of tariff lines, with 85% reaching zero-duty status within 10 years.
- Benefits key Indian sectors: textiles, gems, pharmaceuticals, and engineering goods.

## **USA Announces Withdrawal from UNESCO**

The President of the United States of America (USA), **Donald Trump**, announced that the **USA** will **withdraw** from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**) effective December 31, 2026. This decision marks the third time the USA has exited the organization, following previous withdrawals in 1984 and 2017.

- The USA cited ideological differences over divisive social and cultural issues that it believes do not align with the country's national interests.

## **About USA Withdrawal from UNESCO:**

**Reasons:** The USA has highlighted the reasons such as non-compliance of ideologies such as promoting divisive and cultural causes which includes Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) toolkits, Anti-racism education, gender-based programs of UNESCO like "Transforming MEN'talities.

- It also opposes the alignment of UNESCO with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially the goals such as Climate change; Gender equality; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Plus (LGBTQ+) inclusion; Cultural diversity.

**History of withdrawal and rejoining:** In **1984**, the USA withdrew from UNESCO under former President Ronald Reagan. After 19 years, the USA rejoined under President George W. Bush in **2003**.

- In **2017**, President Donald Trump announced the withdrawal, effect from December 31, 2018, claiming anti-Israel bias and the appointment of Palestine as a full member of UNESCO in 2011. USA rejoined in July **2023** under the former President Joe Biden.

**Impact:** The USA contributed over 8% of the total budget of UNESCO, which would face financial gaps for a shorter period.

- The other impacts include the loss of voting rights, reduced influence in setting international cultural, educational, and technical standards.

**Note:** In January 2025, the USA withdrew from the World Health Organization (WHO).

### **Overview of PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Maldives from July 25 to 26, 2025**

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** was on a two-day official visit to **Maldives** from July 25 to 26, 2025, to attend the **60th** Independence Day celebrations of Maldives, and strengthen bilateral ties, marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties between India and Maldives.

- This marked PM Modi's **third visit** to Maldives since assuming office in 2014.
- PM Modi arrived at Velana International Airport in Male, Maldives, where he was received by President of Maldives **Mohammed Muizzu**.

**Independence Day Celebrations:** During his visit, PM Modi attended the Independence Day celebrations of Maldives on July 26, first time by an Indian PM, held at Republic Square in Male as a "Guest of Honour".

#### **Commemorative Postage Stamp:**

On July 25, 2025, PM Modi and President Muizzu jointly released the Commemorative Postage Stamp, marking the 60 years of diplomatic relations between Maldives and India, which was established in 1965.

**Features:** The stamp features two traditional boats, comprising Indian boat Uru, a large wooden boat handcrafted in boatyards of Beypore, Kerala, and Maldives' VadhuDhoni, a traditional coral or reef fishing boat, reflecting the maritime heritage of Maldives.

- The stamp symbolizes the historical ties between India and Maldives, following its independence.

**Inauguration of Dhoshimeyna Building:** During the visit, PM Modi and President Muizzu jointly inaugurated the Dhoshimeyna Building of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in Male. It was built with financial support from India and stands as a symbol of deepening defence and security cooperation between India and Maldives.

**Other Inaugurations:** They also inaugurated several India-funded projects, including roads and drainage in Addu city and six High Impact Community Development Projects. India also handed over 72 vehicles for the Maldives National Defence Force, 2 BHISHM Health Cube sets, and 3,300 housing flats.

**Gesture of Hospitality:** Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) presented PM Narendra Modi with "Haiykolhu", a symbol of hospitality and respect in Maldives tradition.

#### **About Maldives:**

**President** – Mohammed Muizzu

**Capital** – Male

**Currency** – Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR)

## Defence

### INS Tamal Commissioned into Indian Navy in Kaliningrad, Russia

Indian Naval Ship (INS) **Tamal** (F71), a multi-role stealth guided missile frigate, was commissioned into the Indian Navy (IN) at Yantar Shipyard in **Kaliningrad, Russia** in the presence of senior Indian and Russian naval officials, including Vice Admiral **Sanjay Jasjit Singh**, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Western Naval Command (WNC).

- INS Tamal is the last foreign-built major warship to be inducted into the IN, in line with the Government of India (GoI)'s emphasis on indigenization under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives.
- The ship is the **eighth** in the series of Project 1135.6 (Talwar class) and the second vessel in the follow-on Tushil-class of ships.

#### About INS Tamal:

i. INS Tamal is designed for blue water operations across the spectrum of naval warfare in all four dimensions such as air, surface, underwater and electromagnetic.

- The name 'Tamal' comes from the mythical sword of **Lord Indra**.

ii. The warship is commanded by **Captain Sridhar Tata**, a specialist in gunnery and missile warfare. The ship is headed to its homeport in **Karwar, Karnataka**.

- The ship is manned by 26 officers and around 250 sailors. It will operate under the **Western Fleet**, the IN's primary strike formation in the Arabian Sea.

iii. With a top speed exceeding 30 knot, the 125 metre (m) long, 3,900-tonne(t) frigate boasts a high tonnage-to-firepower ratio, featuring cutting-edge Indian and Russian technologies.

### India Joins Bilateral Military Exercise 'Talisman Sabre 2025' in Australia

India joined the 11th edition of Exercise Talisman Sabre, Australia's largest bilateral military exercise, for the **first time**, marking a key step in strengthening India–Australia defence ties in the Indo-Pacific region.

- The joint exercise, held from **July 13 to August 4, 2025**, is being conducted across multiple locations in Australia, with extended operations also hosted in Papua New Guinea, reflecting growing regional collaboration.

#### Background:

i. The Exercise Talisman Sabre began in 2005 as a biennial joint exercise between the United States of America (USA) and Australia.

ii. The objective of the exercise is to enhance military interoperability between allies and partners, strengthen command and control structures and contingency response, to demonstrate commitment to regional security in the Indo-Pacific.

#### Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025:

i. In Ex Talisman Sabre 2025, more than 35,000 military personnel from 19 nations, including Australia, the USA, Canada, Fiji, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Tonga, and the United Kingdom (UK) will join as partners.

- Malaysia and Vietnam attend as observers.

ii. The 2025 edition of the military exercise would consist of live-fire exercises and field training activities, incorporating force participation activities, amphibious landings, ground force manoeuvres, and air combat and maritime operations.

**About Australia:**

Prime Minister(PM) – Anthony Albanese

**Capital** – Canberra

**Currency** – Australian Dollar(AUD)

**Indian Army Receives Three ‘AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopters’ from USA**

Indian Army (IA) received the three AH-64E Apache attack helicopters, the first batch of six AH-64E Apache Helicopters, from the United States of America (USA), at Hindon Air Force Station in **Ghaziabad**, Uttar Pradesh (UP), marking a boost to its combat capabilities.

- The helicopters will be deployed at the 451 Army Aviation squadron at Nagtalao near Jodhpur in Rajasthan. This is the first instance of the Army Aviation Corps acquiring Apache helicopters, whereas the Indian Air Force (IAF) already operates a fleet of 22 AH-64E Apaches.
- The remaining three helicopters are scheduled to be delivered by November 2025.

**Background:**

i. In 2020, Government of India (GoI) signed a contract worth **USD 600 million** (approximately Rs. 5, 691 crores) to procure six AH-64E Apache Guardian Helicopters for IA.

ii. The delivery of the three AH-64E Apache helicopters, initially planned for June 2024, was postponed to July 2025 due to supply chain disruptions and technical challenges.

**About AH-64E Apache Helicopters:**

i. The AH-64E is the most advanced version of the Apache attack helicopter series, developed by Boeing. The helicopters were transported from the USA aboard a Soviet-origin AN-124 cargo aircraft.

It is known for its lethality, survivability, and advanced battlefield capabilities. It is also known as “flying tanks” or “tanks in the air”.

ii. AH-64E is designed for high-intensity warfare, equipped with cutting-edge avionics, weapons systems, and battlefield networking capabilities.

- The helicopter is built to target and eliminate armored threats such as enemy tanks and mobile air defense systems.

**India-Singapore Joint Military Exercise “Ex Bold Kurukshetra 2025” Began in Jodhpur, Rajasthan**

The 14th edition of the India-Singapore joint military exercise, “Exercise Bold Kurukshetra 2025”, began at Jodhpur Military Station of the Indian Army (IA) in Jodhpur, Rajasthan. It will continue till August 4, 2025.

- Indian Contingent is led by Colonel **Arjun Ganapathi** and Lieutenant Colonel Khiew Zhi Yoong leads the Singapore contingent.

### **Background:**

**Origins:** It is part of a long-term defence cooperation agreement, signed between India and Singapore in 2003. The first edition of the joint military exercise “Exercise Bold Kurukshetra” was held in **2005**.

**Aim:** The exercise aims to strengthen military cooperation, enhance interoperability in armoured and mechanized operations, develop skills in joint planning, command and control, and combat simulation under various circumstances.

**Previous Edition:** The 13th edition of Exercise Bold Kurukshetra was held at the Jodhpur Military Station in March 2023, marking the first time the exercise was conducted under a United Nations (UN) mandate.

### **About Ex Bold Kurukshetra 2025:**

**Objective:** The exercise aims to enhance interoperability and joint training capabilities of both armies under UN mandate, to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation.

**Participation:** The exercise will witness the participation of the 42 Singapore Armoured Regiment of the 4 Singapore Armoured Brigade, and the Mechanised Infantry Regiment of IA are the participants of the exercise. .

### **NALSA Launched Veer Parivaar Sahayta Yojana to Aid Defence Personnel and their Families**

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), in collaboration with the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh, and the J&K Legal Services Authority (LSA), launched the **Veer Parivaar Sahayata 2025**, a scheme that aims to **bolster legal aid for defence personnel and their families**.

- The scheme was formally launched by **Justice Surya Kant**, Executive Chairman of NALSA, during the North Zone Regional Conference titled ‘Reaffirming the Constitutional Vision of Justice for Defence Personnel and Tribals’ held at Shere-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar, J&K.

### **About Veer Parivaar Sahayata 2025:**

**Free Legal Aid:** NALSA will provide legal aid for issues like family property, disputes, land matters, or domestic cases, which are often left unresolved due to soldiers’ absence in cases, where they are employed in isolated areas or regions like J&K or the North East Region (NER).

**Defence Personnel Covered:** The scheme will extend legal aid to paramilitary personnel such as: Border Security Force (BSF), the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

### **3 Key Pillars of Scheme:**

- Setting up a dedicated network of legal services clinics at the Zilla, Rajya, and Kendriya Sainik Boards;
- Deployment of specially trained nodal officers, legal aid counsels, and paralegal volunteers (including ex-servicemen) for timely support.

## Appointments or Resign/Retired

### ACC Appointed Parag Jain as New Chief of R&AW

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment of **Parag Jain**, a 1989 batch senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer from the Punjab cadre, as the new **Secretary** of the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), the external intelligence agency of India.

- He will succeed the current R&AW Chief, **Ravi Sinha**, who is set to retire on 30th June 2025.

- Jain will assume charge on 1st July 2025 for a fixed tenure of **two years**.

### ACC Extends CBDT Chairman Ravi Agrawal's Tenure till June 2026:

In June 2025, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the re-appointment of **Ravi Agrawal**, a 1988-batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service (IRS) (Income Tax cadre), as the **Chairman** of the New Delhi (Delhi) based Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Department of Revenue (DOR), under the Ministry of Finance (MoF), effective from **1st July 2025 to 30th June 2026**.

- In June 2024, Agrawal took charge as CBDT Chairman, succeeding **Nitin Gupta**, a 1986-batch IRS officer.

### Sub Lieutenant Aastha Poonia Becomes IN's 1st Woman Fighter Pilot; Receives 'Wings of Gold'

The Indian Navy (IN) inducted Sub-Lieutenant (SLt) Aastha Poonia from Uttar Pradesh (UP) as the first woman pilot in the fighter stream of Naval Aviation. This milestone was marked during the graduation ceremony of the Second Basic Hawk Conversion Course at Indian Naval Station (INS) Dega, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP).

- During the ceremony, the prestigious '**Wings of Gold**' were presented to **SLt Aastha Poonia** along with Lieutenant (**Lt Atul Kumar Dhull**) by Rear Admiral Janak Bevli, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Air) (ACNS Air).
- This achievement follows the Indian Air Force (IAF) decision in 2016 to induct women into fighter streams, where 25 women fighter pilots currently serve.

#### Key Points:

**i.** She is the first woman cleared to train for carrier-based fighter operations in the IN.

- Earlier, women officers were inducted as pilots in Maritime Reconnaissance (MR) aircraft and helicopters.

**ii.** This step reflects the IN's commitment to promoting Nari Shakti (women's empowerment), equality, and opportunity in combat roles.

#### About Aastha Poonia:

**i.** Sub Lieutenant Aastha Poonia, from Meerut, Uttar Pradesh (UP), joined the IN through the Short Service Commission (SSC) route.

**ii.** She started her training at the Indian Naval Academy (INA) in Ezhimala, Kerala, followed by basic flying training on the Pilatus PC-7 Mk II aircraft at the Air Force Academy in Dundigal, Telangana.

### **Sanjog Gupta Appointed as CEO of ICC**

Indian media executive **Sanjog Gupta**, currently the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) sports and live experiences at JioStar, was named the **CEO** of the International Cricket Council (ICC), the global governing body for cricket, with immediate effect. He succeeds **Geoff Allardice** (Australia), who stepped down as ICC CEO earlier in 2025.

- He becomes the **seventh** CEO in the history of ICC. This marks the second top leadership position at ICC held by an Indian, following Jay Shah's election as ICC Chairman in 2024.
- i. Sanjog Gupta began his career as a journalist and joined Star India Private Limited in 2010. Over the years, he held multiple leadership roles in content, programming, and strategy, before becoming Head of Sports at Disney Star India Private Limited in 2020.
- ii. After the merger of Viacom18 Media Private Limited and Disney Star India Private Limited in November 2024, he was appointed as CEO (Sports & Live Experiences) at JioStar.
- iii. He was also featured in Fortune's '40 Under 40' list and recognized as one of the 'Leaders Under 40' by Leaders in Sport.

### **President Droupadi Murmu Appointed Governors for Haryana & Goa; Lt Governor for Ladakh**

The President of India **Droupadi Murmu**, announced the appointment of new Governors for the states of **Haryana** and **Goa**, and a new Lieutenant Governor (LG) for the Union Territory (UT) of **Ladakh**. These appointments will come into effect upon their assumption of the respective office.

- Droupadi Murmu has accepted the resignation of Brigadier Dr. Bhairon Dutt (**B. D. Mishra** (Retired) from the post of Lt Gov of the UT of **Ladakh**.

#### **Key Appointments:**

**1. Professor Ashim Kumar Ghosh** has been appointed as the new Governor of **Haryana**, succeeding Bandaru Dattatreya, who served in the role since July 2021.

- Prof. Ghosh is an academic and political thinker from West Bengal (WB) and has held senior roles in higher education.

**2. Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju** has been appointed as the new **Governor of Goa**, replacing P S Sreedharan Pillai.

- He is a veteran politician and former Union Minister for the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) (2014 – 2018) from Andhra Pradesh (AP).

**3. Kavinder Gupta**, senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader from Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), has been appointed as the new **LG** of the UT of **Ladakh**.

- Gupta has previously served as Deputy Chief Minister (DCM) of J&K and Speaker of the J&K Legislative Assembly.
- Gupta replaced B.D. Mishra (Retired), an Indian Army veteran and former Commander of the Counter Hijack Force of the National Security Guard (NSG). B.D. Mishra was appointed as the second LG of Ladakh in February 2023.

### **President Droupadi Murmu Nominates Four Personalities to Rajya Sabha**

President Droupadi Murmu nominated four distinguished individuals to the Rajya Sabha under Article 80(1)(a) of the Constitution of India.

#### **Nominated Members:**

**i. Ujjwal Deorao Nikam** – A renowned Public Prosecutor notable for high-profile criminal trials such as the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack and 1993 Bombay blasts.

**ii. Harsh Vardhan Shringla** – Former Indian Foreign Secretary (January 2020 – April 2022) and ex-Ambassador to the United States of America (USA) and Bangladesh.

**iii. C. Sadanandan Master** – A senior social worker and educationist from Kerala with decades of grassroots-level service.

**iv. Dr. Meenakshi Jain** – A noted historian and academician recognised for her contributions to Indian civilisation studies.

### **Senior IPS Officer Sonali Mishra to Become the First Woman to lead RPF**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of **Sonali Mishra**, senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, as the **first female** Director General (DG) of the Railway Protection Force (RPF).

- She will succeed **Manoj Yadava**, who will superannuate on July 31, 2025, and serve in the position until her superannuation on **October 31, 2026**.

- She is currently serving as the Additional Director General (ADG) (Selection) in the MP Police.

#### **About Sonali Mishra:**

**i.** Sonali Mishra is a 1993 batch IPS officer from the Madhya Pradesh (MP) cadre.

**ii.** In July 2021, she became the first woman commander to lead a Border Security Force (BSF) formation along the India-Pakistan border in Punjab.

- She has also headed the BSF Intelligence Wing in the Kashmir Valley as Inspector General (IG).

**iii.** In 2023, she took charge as ADG of Eastern Command, BSF, in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB).

#### **About Railway Protection Force (RPF):**

The RPF, based in New Delhi (Delhi), is a central armed police organization functioning under the Ministry of Railways (MoR). Established by the RPF Act of 1957, the force was granted authority in 1966 to investigate, arrest, and prosecute individuals involved in the unlawful possession of railway property.

- In 1985, the RPF was officially designated as an “Armed Force of the Union.”

### **GoI Approved the Transfers and Appointments of 9 Chief Justices and 19 Judges**

Union Minister **Arjun Ram Meghwal**, Ministry of Law and Justice (MoL&J), announced the transfers of **four Chief Justices** and appointments of **five new Chief Justices** across various High Courts (HCs) in India. Additionally, the transfer of 19 HC judges was announced.

- The appointments and transfers were approved by the President of India under constitutional authority and made in consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and the Supreme Court Collegium (SCC) headed by **CJI Bhushan Ramkrishna (B.R.) Gavai**.

#### **Transfer of Chief Justices:**

Name of Chief Justice	Transferred from	Transferred to
K. R. Shriram	Madras HC(Tamil Nadu, TN)	Rajasthan High Court (HC)
Manindra Mohan Shrivastava	Rajasthan HC	Madras HC
M. S. Ramachandra Rao	Jharkhand HC	Tripura HC
Aparesh Kumar Singh	Tripura HC	Telangana HC

#### Appointments of New Chief Justices:

Name of Justice	Served at	Appointed as Chief Justice at
Sanjeev Sachdeva	Madhya Pradesh(MP) HC	MP HC
Vibhu Bakhru	Delhi HC	Karnataka HC
Ashutosh Kumar	Patna HC, Bihar	Gauhati HC, Assam
Vipul Manubhai Panchol	Patna HC	Patna HC
Tarlok Singh Chauhan	Himachal Pradesh(HP) HC	Jharkhand HC

#### Transfer of HC judges:

i. The MoL&J also approved the transfer of **19 HC judges** following SCC recommendations issued on May 26, 2025.

ii. Justices Anil Kshetarpal, Om Prakash Shukla, V. Kameswar Rao, Nitin Wasudeo Sambre, Arun Kumar Monga and Vivek Chaudhary have been transferred to the Delhi HC.

iii. Justices Suman Shyam and Shri Chandrashekhar are transferred to Bombay HC.

iv. Justices Dinesh Kumar Singh, Justice Jayant Banerji are transferred to Karnataka HC.

Justice Sujoy Paul and Justice Lanusungkum Jamir are transferred to Calcutta HC(West Bengal, WB).

### **Jagdeep Dhankar Resigned as Vice President of India**

Jagdeep Dhankar who is also the Chairman of Rajya Sabha (Upper House of the Parliament) has **resigned** from the post of **Vice President of India**, India's 2nd highest constitutional post, with immediate effect citing health grounds. He submitted his resignation letter to the President of India, **Droupadi Murmu**, in accordance with **Article 67 (a)** of the Constitution.

- Following his resignation, JagdeepDhankar became only the **3rd** Vice President in India's history to step down before completing a full term, after **VV Giri** and **R.Venkataraman**.

### **Key Points:**

i. In August 2022, Jagdeep Dhankar, officially took oath as **14th** Vice President of India, with his term set to run until 2027.

ii. According to **Article 91** of the Constitution, when the Vice-President's post falls vacant, the Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha discharge the duties of Chairman until a new Vice President is elected.

- Thereby, **Harivansh Narayan Singh** who is currently serving as the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha will be in charge of the House for the ongoing Monsoon session unless the President asks **Jagdeep Dhankar** to continue or a new Vice President is elected.

iii. **Election Time Period:** As per the Articles 63 to 71 of the Constitution and the Vice-President (Election) Rules, 1974, which govern the election process for the post of Vice President of India. As per these rules, the new Vice President must be elected **within 60 days** of the resignation i.e. by September 2025.

### **GoI Appoints Ajay Seth as the IRDAI's New Chairman for 3 Years**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, approved the appointment of **Ajay Seth** as the new **Chairman** of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). His term will be **3 years** or until he attains 65 years of age, or until further orders, whichever is earlier

#### **Appointment details:**

**Vacancy:** The appointment follows the vacancy created in March 2025 after the tenure completion of **Debasish Panda**, the former Chairman of the IRDAI.

**Role of FSRASC:** The Financial Sector Regulatory Appointments Search Committee (FSRASC), headed by the Cabinet Secretary, is responsible for shortlisting eligible candidates for the post.

**Final Approval Authority:** As per FSRASC's recommendation to the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, final approval is made.

### **About Ajay Seth:**

**Service Background:** Ajay Seth is a 1987-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the Karnataka cadre.

**Tenure as DEA Secretary:** He recently retired in June 2025 after completing a four-year tenure (2021-June 2025) as Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (**DEA**) under the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Government of India (GoI).

- In March 2025, he was given an additional charge as Revenue Secretary after TuhinKantaPandey assumed the role of Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

### **Sanjay Singhal Appointed as New DG of SSB**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (**ACC**) chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, has approved the appointment of **Sanjay Singhal**, who is currently serving as Special Director General (DG) of Border Security Force (BSF), as the new **DG of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**, one of India's Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

- Sanjay Singhal will officially assume charge of the SSB from **September 01, 2025** and will continue to serve at this post till his superannuation on December 31, 2028, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- He will succeed **Amrit Mohan Prasad**, who retires on August 31, 2025.

### **About Sanjay Singhal:**

**Cadre & Batch:** Sanjay Singhal is a 1993-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer from Uttar Pradesh (UP) cadre.

**Experience:** With more than 30 years in policing and security, he offers deep expertise in internal security, border management, and counter-insurgency operations.

**Past Roles:** He has held senior roles across state and central agencies.

- He served as Director Inspector General (DIG) of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and later served as Inspector General (IG) from 2008 to 2015.
- Between 2015 and 2024, he held several key positions in UP, including IG, General Staff Officer (GSO) to the Director General of Police (DGP), Additional Director General (ADG) Crime, ADG Railways, and ADG Establishment.

### **About Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB):**

It was initially established as a Special Service Bureau in May 1963 in the aftermath of the Chinese aggression in 1962. It is primarily responsible for protecting Indian borders with Nepal and Bhutan.

**Headquarters-** New Delhi, Delhi

## Honours/ Awards

### Deepika Padukone Becomes First Indian Actress Honoured with Star on Hollywood Walk of Fame Class of 2026

California (United States of America, USA) based Hollywood Chamber of Commerce (HCC) announced that Indian actress **Deepika Padukone** will be honoured with a star on the **Hollywood Walk of Fame Class of 2026** in the **Motion Pictures category**, making her the first Indian actress to receive this global recognition.

- The announcement was made during the HCC's selection committee meeting held at Ovation Hollywood in Los Angeles (USA).

#### Hollywood Walk of Fame:

i. The Hollywood Walk of Fame is a globally recognised sidewalk landmark, featuring over 2,800 brass-and-terrazzo stars embedded since its establishment in 1960.

- It honours personalities across five categories: Motion Pictures, Television, Live Theatre/Performance, Recording, and Radio.

ii. The selection for the Walk of Fame is conducted annually by the Walk of Fame Selection Panel under the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce. Only around 20–30 names are selected each year from hundreds of nominations based on merit, global influence, and philanthropic contribution.

#### Global Recognition:

i. She is the first Indian ambassador for luxury brands Louis Vuitton and Cartier.

ii. Recognised in TIME's 100 Most Influential People in 2018 and recipient of the TIME 100 Impact Award.

iii. Featured at international events such as the **Cannes Film Festival** and **Met Gala**.

**Note:** Before Deepika Padukone, the only Indian-origin personality to be honoured on the Hollywood Walk of Fame was actor **Sabu Dastagir**, who received a star in 1960 for his contributions to early Hollywood cinema.

### TIME 100 Creator List: Prajakta Koli Becomes the Only Indian to Feature in the list

TIME Magazine released its inaugural TIME 100 Creators List 2025, highlighting the most influential digital voices globally. **Prajakta Koli** has become the only Indian to feature in the list.

- **Kai Cenat** of the United States of America (USA), **Jimmy Donaldson** (Mr Beast) (USA), **Khabane Lamé** (Italy) has featured on the list.

#### Highlights of the List:

i. Prajakta Koli has featured in the Entertainment category, has 7 million Youtube Subscribers and 8 million Instagram followers.

- Prajakta launched her YouTube channel in 2015, gaining fame and recognition over the years. She ventured into acting with the 2020 short film *Khayali Pulao* and the Netflix Show, *Mismatched*.

- She has acted in films like *Jugg Jugg Jeeyo* and *Neeyat*.

ii. Kai Cenat with 18 million Twitch followers, Mr Beast, Khaby Lamé, Charli D'Amelio, Olivia Dunne is featured under the Titans category. The **Titans** category indicates the massive global influencers.

iii. The **Leaders** category features thoughtful educators and experts. Marques Brownlee

(technology), Vivian Tu (science/politics), Alex Cooper (Call her Daddy), an American podcaster are featured.

iv. Under the **Entertainers** category, the comedians or the performers, including Prajakta Koli, Taylor Frankie Paul, Heidi Wong, and Taylor Frankie Paul are featured.

#### **About the TIME Magazine:**

**Editor-in-Chief** – Sam Jacobs

**Headquarters** – New York, United States of America (USA)

**Established** – 28 November 1922

#### **Sudanese-Scottish Author Leila Aboulela Won PEN Pinter Prize 2025**

Sudanese-Scottish author **Leila Aboulela** has been named the winner of **PEN (Poet, Playwright, Editors Essayist, Novelist) Pinter Prize 2025**, recognizing her literary contributions that explore themes of faith migration and the lives of Muslim women in displacement.

- The award was announced by English PEN, one of the world's first non-governmental organisation, at the English PEN Summer Party held at the October Gallery in London, the United Kingdom (UK).

#### **Award Ceremony & Selection Process:**

i. **Leila Aboulela** will officially receive the award at a ceremony scheduled to be held at the British Library (BL) on October 10, 2025, where she will also announce her choice of winner for the **PEN Pinter Writer of Courage**, with whom she will share the award.

ii. She was selected the PEN Pinter Prize winner for year 2025 by this year's judges namely, Ruth Borthwick, Chair of English PEN, Mona Arshi, renowned poet and author; and Nadifa Mohamed, novelist.

#### **About PEN Pinter Prize:**

i. The award was constituted in **2009** by the English PEN. It aims to recognise the 'Writers of Courage'.

ii. The award was established in the memory of playwright **Harold Pinter**, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2005.

iii. The award is given annually to a writer resident in the UK, Ireland, and the Commonwealth.

- The award is given to writers whose literary work is published only in the English language.

iv. In 2024, renowned Indian Author **Arundhati Roy** won the PEN Pinter Prize 2024. Some of the other notable winners: Michael Rosen (2023), Margaret Atwood (2016), Salman Rushdie (2014), Tony Harrison (2009), among others.

#### **About Leila Aboulela:**

i. Sudan-born Leila Aboulela is the author of 6 novels and two short story collections, including *The Translator* (1999), *Minaret* (2005), and her latest novel, *River Spirit* (2023).

ii. She won the 1st Caine Prize for African Writing in 2000 for her short story 'The Museum' included in short stories *Coloured Lights*.

iii. She won the Scottish Book Award for her book 'Lyrics Alley' in the 'fiction' category in 2011.

iv. Her short story collection received the Saltire Fiction Book of the Year Award in 2018.

## **Indian Women's Rights Activist Varsha Deshpande Honoured with 2025 UN Population Award**

Varsha Deshpande, an Indian women's rights activist from Maharashtra and founder of Dalit Mahila Vikas Mandal (DMVM), received the 2025 United Nations (UN) Population Award in the 'individual category' for her committed work in advancing gender equality and combating gender-biased sex selection in India.

- With this, she became the **third Indian** individual to receive the award, following former Prime Minister(PM) Indira Gandhi in 1983 and renowned industrialist-philanthropist Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoy (JRD) Tata in 1992.

### **Key Highlights of the 2025 UN Population Award:**

i.The International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (**IUSSP**) won the 2025 United Nations (UN) Population Award in the '**institutional category**'.

- The IUSSP formed in 1927, has played a pivotal role in advancing population science and policy.

ii.The 2025 UN Population Award ceremony was held on World Population Day (July 11) at the United Nations(UN) headquarters in New York, the United States of America(USA), marking the 40th edition of this international honour.

### **Key Contributions of Varsha Deshpande:**

i.Varsha Deshpande founded DMVM in1990 to advance gender justice and empower marginalized women through legal reform, education, and ground-level mobilization.

ii.The UN applauded her leadership in community driven advocacy and reform under India's Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (**PCPNDT Act**), **1994**, aimed to curb the declining child sex ratio.

### **About UN Population Award:**

i.The award was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in **1981**, in resolution 36/201, and was 1st presented in **1983**.

ii.Each year, the Committee for the UN Population Award honours individuals and institutions for their exceptional contributions to population and reproductive health.

iii.The committee for the UN Population Award comprises a quorum of 8 UN member states, with UN Secretary-General and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Executive Director serving as ex-officio members.

## **Deepika Sehrawat became 1st Indian to Win Poligras Magic Skill Award 2024-25**

Indian Women's Hockey team forward player, **Deepika Sehrawat** became the **1st – ever** Indian player to win **Poligras Magic Skill Award** for Year 2024-25.

- The Poligras Magic Skill Award, given by the International Hockey Federation (FIH), honors the most skillful and creative moments of the FIH Hockey Pro League season, with winners decided through a global fan vote.

i.Deepika Sehrawat received this award for her spectacular solo strike against World No.1 Hockey Team the Netherlands during the International Hockey Federation (**FIH**) Hockey Pro League 2024-25 season held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

ii.She was one of the three shortlisted finalists in the women's category, alongside Spain's Patricia Alvarez and the Australian women's team.

iii.While, **Victor Wegnez (Belgium)** won the award in 'men's category', for his excellent midfield play that led to a stunning team goal against Spain.

### Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 Awards: Indore Retains Top Cleanest City Title for 8th Time

Droupadi Murmu, President of India, conferred Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 Awards at the ceremony hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) at Vigyan Bhagwan in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The event was attended by Union Minister Manohar Lal, MoHUA and Union Minister of State (MoS) Tokhan Sahu, MoHUA.
- **Indore** (Madhya Pradesh) retained the title of cleanest city for the **eighth consecutive year**, followed by Surat (Gujarat) in second place and Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra) in third place. Also, the inclusion of smaller cities ensures inclusive development and enhances urban governance for India, progressing towards Viksit Bharat by 2047.

#### About Swachh Survekshan 2024–25:

i. Swachh Survekshan(SS) is the world's largest urban cleanliness survey, evaluating cities based on waste management, sanitation infrastructure, and public participation.

ii. SS 2024–25, established in 2016 under the **SBM-U**, marks the **9th edition**, focusing on **Reduce–Reuse–Recycle (3R)**, underscores the national push for sustainable urban development by evaluating over 4500 cities.

iii. A total of **78 awards** were presented across 4 categories, recognizing excellence in urban cleanliness under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (**SBM-U**).

- The 4 different categories of awards presented are based on the newly introduced Super Swachh League Cities, Swachh Shahr in 5 Population Categories, Special Category Awards, and the State-Level Awards (Promising Swachh Shehars).

### Forbes' 50 Richest Self-Made Women on Earth in 2025: Indian Women Falguni Nayar & Kiran Mazumdar Shaw Ranked 31st and 32nd

Forbes, an American global media company has released the latest edition of Forbes' 50 Richest Self-Made Women on Earth in 2025 in June 2025. According to the list, only two Indian women: **Falguni Nayar**, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nykaa, with an estimated net worth of USD 3.4 billion, and **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw**, founder of biopharmaceutical company Biocon India Private Limited, with an estimated net worth of USD 3.3 billion, secured the 31st and 32nd positions respectively.

- **Rafaela Aponte-Diamant** (Switzerland), co-founder of the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), with a total worth of **USD 38.8 billion**, topped the list globally.
- She is followed by **Diane Hendricks** (from the United States of America, USA), who is the co-founder of ABC Supply, with an estimated net worth of USD 22.3 billion; and **Zhong Huijian** (from China), founder of Hanosh Pharmaceuticals, with an estimated net worth of USD 15.6 billion, ranked at **2nd** and **3rd** position, respectively.

#### About Forbes' Richest Self-Made Women in 2025:

i. The list featured world's 50 richest self-made women from 13 countries and 4 continents. It has covered their fortunes across 14 different industries including technology, retail, real estate, and manufacturing, among others.

ii. The combined net worth of 50 self-made women featured on the list stands at approximately **USD 276 billion**, with an average net worth of USD 5.5 billion per individual,

an increase of USD 158 billion since 2017.

iii. Australia's **Melanie Perkins** (38 years old) who co-founded Canva, a popular design software company in 2013, has become the **youngest women** entrepreneur to be featured on the list.

### **SBI Adjudged World's Best Consumer Bank 2025 by Global Finance Magazine**

The State Bank of India (SBI) has been adjudged as the World's Best Consumer Bank for 2025 by Global Finance magazine, a leading international financial publication, following a detailed editorial review supported by insights from finance executives, analysts, and global banking professionals.

- The award will be formally presented to SBI Chairman, **Challa Sreenivasulu (CS) Setty** on **18th October 2025**, during the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank (WB) Annual Meetings in Washington D.C., United States of America (USA).

#### **About World's Best Consumer Bank award 2025:**

i. The World's Best Consumer Bank award, part of Global Finance magazine's annual World's Best Bank awards, recognises top-performing banks across over 150 countries based on their innovation and customer service in consumer banking.

ii. The following banks were named global award winners for the first time:

- **World's Best Bank** – Societe Generale, France
- **World's Best Corporate Bank** – BBVA, Spain
- **World's Best Emerging Market Bank** – J.P. Morgan, United States of America(USA)
- **World's Best Frontier Market Bank** – Societe Generale, France
- **World's Best Sub-Custodian Bank** – CIBC Mellon, Canada

#### **SBI's Digital Innovation:**

According to **Global Finance magazine**, SBI has demonstrated leadership in the consumer banking segment through:

#### **About State Bank of India (SBI):**

Chairman – Challa Sreenivasulu (CS) Setty

Established – 1st July 1955

Headquarters – Mumbai, Maharashtra

Tagline – “Pure Banking, Nothing Else”/ “The Banker to every Indian”

### **'Meri Panchayat' App Won WSIS Champion Award 2025 for Digital Governance Excellence in Geneva, Switzerland**

'Meri Panchayat' mobile application (app), a transformative digital governance initiative led by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) and the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology(MeitY), has been awarded the World Summit on the Information Society (**WSIS Prizes 2025 Champion Award** under the Action Line Category: Cultural Diversity and Identity, Linguistic Diversity and Local Content.

- **Sunita Jain**, Senior Director, NIC/NIC-MoPR, received the award on behalf of the Government of India (GoI) during the **WSIS+20 High-level Event 2025** also known as WSIS Forum 2025, held from July 07 to July 11, 2025 at Palexpo in Geneva, Switzerland.

- Union Minister **Rajiv Ranjan Singh** alias Lalan Singh, MoPR formally received the WSIS Champion Certificate, during a ceremonial event held in New Delhi, Delhi.

#### **About Meri Panchayat App:**

- The app, launched in 2023, empowers more than 25 lakh elected representatives and nearly 950 million rural residents across India's 2.65 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs).
- It enables the customers to get real-time access to panchayat budgets, receipts, payments, and development plans, along with details of elected representatives, public infrastructure, and civic services.
- The app ensures inclusivity through its multilingual interface by supporting over 12 Indian languages.

#### **World's Top 10 Favourite International Airports: Chhatrapati Shivaji Airport Ranks 9th, Istanbul Airport Topped**

Travel+Leisure, a travel and lifestyle magazine, released the Travel + Leisure Readers' 10 Favourite International Airports of 2025 List. As per the list, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai (Maharashtra) has been ranked ninth on the list with the reader score of **84.23**.

- **Istanbul Airport** (Turkey) has been ranked first for the second consecutive year with a score of **98.57**.

#### **Key Highlights:**

- Hong Kong International Airport, China ranked 6th with a score of 86.22, followed closely by Helsinki-Vantaa Airport, Finland ranked 7th with a score of 86.18.

- **Helsinki-Vantaa Airport**, known for its minimalist design and operational efficiency, is the only **new airport** featured in the 2025 list.
- ii. Haneda Airport in Tokyo secured the 8th position with a score of 84.47, while Incheon International Airport in South Korea ranked 10th with 83.67.
- iii. 3 airports across the Middle East region such as Doha (Qatar), Abu Dhabi (UAE), Dubai (UAE) have featured among top 5.

#### **ISRO Chairman Dr. V. Narayanan Honoured with GP Birla Memorial Award 2025**

Dr. V. Narayanan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary, Department of Space (DoS), received the **GP Birla Memorial Award 2025** for his outstanding contributions to India's space programme and advancement of cutting-edge space technologies.

- The award was presented by Nirmala Birla, Chairperson of the GP Birla Archaeological, Astronomical and Scientific Institute, during the felicitation ceremony held in Hyderabad, Telangana.

### About Dr. V. Narayanan:

Dr. Narayanan previously served as Director of Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC). He played a major role in developing cryogenic propulsion technology and led several key missions, including Gaganyaan, Chandrayaan-3, and Aditya-L1.

### About the GP Birla Memorial Award:

**Background:** The GP Birla Memorial Award, recognises individuals for outstanding contributions in science, education, culture, and public service.

**Instituting Body:** The award is instituted by the Kolkata (West Bengal, WB) based GP Birla Archaeological Astronomical and Scientific Institute.

**Tribute:** It commemorates the legacy of Ghanshyamdas (GP) Birla, a renowned industrialist and philanthropist.

**Past Recipients:** The award has been conferred upon **32 Nobel Laureates**, including Dr. Venkataraman Ramakrishnan (Nobel Prize in Chemistry), Prof. Jogesh Pati (Physicist), Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (Former President of India), and Dr. K. Kasturirangan (Former Chairman of ISRO).

### Indian Hindi Novelist Geetanjali Shree Wins PEN Translates Award 2025 for ‘Once Elephants Lived Here’

Indian Hindi novelist and short story writer **Geetanjali Shree** was named one of the 14 winners of the **PEN Translates Award 2025** by English PEN, a United Kingdom (UK)-based literary and human rights organisation, for her short story collection ‘**Once Elephants Lived Here**’, translated into English by American Hindi and Urdu translator **Daisy Rockwell**.

- The book explores themes such as remembrance, uprooting, and the erosion of both cultural and ecological legacies.

### About Geetanjali Shree:

**About:** Geetanjali Shree is a prominent Hindi novelist and short story writer from Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh (UP).

**Literary Beginnings:** Her literary journey began with the short story “Bel Patra” in 1987, followed by her first short story collection, Anugoonj (1991).

**Notable Works:** She has authored five novels and several short story collections, with notable works including Mai, Hamara Shahar Us Baras, Khālī Jagah, Ret Samadhi, and Tomb of Sand.

**Recognition:** In **2022**, her novel ‘Ret Samadhi’, translated into English as ‘Tomb of Sand’ by Daisy Rockwell, won the **International Booker Prize**, becoming the first Hindi-language novel to receive this honor.

### About the PEN Translates Award 2025:

**Cultural Exchange:** The PEN Translates Award is an initiative by English PEN to support the translation of global literary works into English, aiming to enhance bibliodiversity and promote underrepresented voices.

## Sports

### McLaren's Lando Norris Wins Austrian Grand Prix 2025, Secures 3rd 2025 F1 Win

Lando Norris, British Formula 1 (F1) driver representing the United Kingdom (UK)-based McLaren Racing Limited, clinched his **3rd** Formula One (F1) Grand Prix (GP) victory of the 2025 season by winning the **2025 Austrian Grand Prix (GP)** (officially known as F1 MSC Cruises Austrian Grand Prix 2025) held at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg, Styria.

- This victory marked Lando Norris's **seventh GP win** of his F1 career.
- Following this victory, Norris retained his 2nd spot with 201 points, behind Oscar Piastri (1st spot) and Max Verstappen (3rd spot) in the Drivers' Championship standings.

#### Top 3 Winners of Austrian GP 2025:

Rank	Name of the Driver	Team	Country	Points
1	Lando Norris	McLaren	The United Kingdom (UK)	25
2	Oscar Piastri	McLaren	Australia	18
3	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	Monaco	15

#### About Austrian Grand Prix:

- The 1st edition of Austrian GP counted for the 1964 F1 World Championship was held at Zeltweg Airfield (Austria). Later, Österreichring (which translates to Austria Circuit) hosted the event from 1970 to 1987.
- The race was contested over 71 laps of the 4.326-kilometer (km) circuit, totaling a race distance of 307.236 kilometers (kms).

### US Open 2025: Ayush Shetty wins Men's Single title; Tanvi Sharma Finishes as Runner-up

Indian badminton player **Ayush Shetty** (World No. 34) clinched his maiden Badminton World Federation (BWF) **World Tour title** by defeating **Canada's Brian Yang** (World No. 33) in the Men's Singles final of the **2025 US Open Badminton Tournament**, a BWF Super 300 event, held at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa, United States of America (USA).

- Ayush Shetty, a bronze medallist at the 2023 junior world championships, won the title by defeating Brian Yang in straight games with a scoreline of 21-18, 21-13.
  - Yonex US Open 2025 held from from 24 to 29 June 2025.
- With this win, he became the first Indian shuttler to win a BWF title in the 2025 season, ending India's wait for an overseas men's singles title since Lakshya Sen's victory at the 2023 Canada Open.

**ii.**In the **women's singles final** of the US Open 2025, 16-year-old **Tanvi Sharma** created history by becoming the **youngest Indian** to reach a BWF World Tour final.

**iii.** Although she finished as runner-up, losing to USA's Beiwen Zhang with a score of 11-21, 21-16, 10-21, her notable wins against Nguyễn Thùy Linh of Vietnam(World No. 12) and Thailand's Pitchamon Opatniputh highlighted her emerging talent.

**iv.**The total prize money for this tournament was USD 240,000. Each singles title winner received USD 18,000, while the runner-up received USD 9,120.

### **McLaren's Lando Norris Wins F1 British GP 2025**

Lando Norris (United Kingdom), Formula One (F1) driver representing McLaren, won the F1 British Grand Prix (GP) 2025, officially called the Formula 1 Qatar Airways British GP 2025. The race took place at the Silverstone Circuit in Northamptonshire, England.

- This was McLaren's first win at Silverstone since 2008, when Lewis Hamilton won. Norris also became the 13th British driver to claim a win at Silverstone.
- It was Norris's **8th career win** and his 4th victory of the 2025 season.

#### **Key Highlights:**

**i.**The race was heavily impacted by rain and featured two Safety Car deployments and two Virtual Safety Car periods.

**ii.**Oscar Piastri (McLaren) finished 2nd after received a 10-second penalty for slowing excessively during a Safety Car restart, costing him the lead. Norris inherited first place after Piastri served the penalty.

**iii.**Nico Hulkenberg (Germany) claimed his first F1 podium in his 239th career start, a record for most races before a top-three finish. He climbed from 19th to 3rd, successfully defending his position against Lewis Hamilton.

#### **Top 3 Positions in F1 British GP 2025:**

Rank	Driver	Brand	Country
1	Lando Norris	McLaren	United Kingdom (UK)
2	Oscar Piastri	McLaren	UK
3	Nico Hulkenberg	Kick Sauber	Germany

#### **About F1 British Grand Prix (GP) 2025:**

It was the twelfth round of the 2025 Formula One World Championship and marked the **76th edition** of the British Grand Prix as part of the Formula One World Championship calendar.

### **Magnus Carlsen Wins SuperUnited Rapid & Blitz Croatia 2025; D Gukesh Secures Third Place**

Magnus Carlsen of Norway, the World No.1 chess player, won the SuperUnited Rapid & Blitz Croatia 2025 tournament held in Zagreb, Croatia, with a total score of 22.5 out of 36 points.

- This marked his **10th victory** in 12 Grand Chess Tour (GCT) rapid and blitz events and his sixth consecutive tournament win in 2025.

#### **About the SuperUnited Rapid and Blitz Croatia 2025:**

**i.** The tournament was held from 30 June to 6 July 2025 and was the third event of the GCT 2025.

**ii.** It followed the same format as the Superbet Rapid and Blitz Poland, featuring seven full-tour players along with three wildcards: Magnus Carlsen, Anish Giri, and Croatian Grandmaster Ivan Šarić.

**iii.** The competition included Rapid and Blitz segments, with a maximum of 36 points available.

**iv.** The tournament had a total prize fund of **USD 175,000**.

#### **Top three winners of SuperUnited Rapid and Blitz Croatia 2025:**

Rank	Name of Player	Country	Prize Money (USD)
1	Magnus Carlsen	Norway	40,000
2	Wesley So	United States of America (USA)	30,000
3	D Gukesh	India	25,000

#### **Neeraj Chopra Won Gold in the Inaugural Edition of Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025 in Bengaluru**

Neeraj Chopra won gold with the best of 86.18 metre (m) in Javelin throw in the inaugural edition of Neeraj Chopra (NC) Classic 2025, a World Athletics Gold-level event, held at Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

- Neeraj Chopra achieved his best 86.16m on his third attempt, after an initial foul and a throw of 82.99m in the second throw.

**i.** **Julius Yego** of Kenya won silver (84.51m) and **Rumesh Pathirage** of Sri Lanka won Bronze (84.34m).

**ii.** Despite battling an injury, Indian athlete Sachin Yadav secured fourth place with a throw of 82.33 meters.

**iii.** The event marks the first World Athletics Gold-level javelin meet held in India.

#### **India Wins 11 Medals, Finishes 3rd at 2nd Leg of World Boxing Cup 2025 in Kazakhstan**

The 2nd leg of the 2025 World Boxing Cup was held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from 30 June to 7 July 2025. India won 11 medals (3 Gold, 5 Silver, and 3 Bronze), achieving its best-ever performance at the event and finishing third in the medal tally.

- **Kazakhstan topped** the medal tally with 16 medals in that 8 Gold Medals, followed by Brazil in second place with 7 medals including 4 Gold.
- The tournament featured participation from over 400 boxers representing 31 countries, competing across 20 weight categories. India was represented by a 20-member team.

**i.Sakshi**, a two-time World Youth Champion (2022 and 2023), won the Gold medal in the Women's 54 kilogram (kg) category by defeating Yoseline Perez of the United States of America (USA) in the final.

**ii.Jaismine Lamboria**, who represented India at the Paris 2024 Olympics, secured the Gold medal in the Women's 57 kg category with a 4–1 victory over Jucielen Romeu, a two-time Olympian from Brazil.

**iii.Nupur Sheoran** clinched the Gold medal in the Women's 80+ kg category after a dominant 5–0 win against Yeldana Talipova of Kazakhstan in the final.

### **138th Wimbledon Championships: Jannik Sinner Wins Men's Singles, Iga Świątek Wins Women's Singles**

The 138th edition of the Wimbledon Championships, the world's oldest tennis Grand Slam, was held from 30th June to 13th July 2025 on the grass courts of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC) in Wimbledon, London, United Kingdom (UK).

- **Jannik Sinner** of Italy won his **maiden Wimbledon title** by defeating Spain's **Carlos Alcaraz**, the two-time defending champion, becoming the first Italian man to win the Wimbledon Gentlemen's Singles title.
- **Iga Świątek** of Poland won her **maiden Wimbledon title**, defeating **Amanda Anisimova** of the United States of America (USA), and became the first Polish player to win the Wimbledon Ladies' Singles title.

**i.** The 2025 edition introduced automated electronic line-calling, replacing traditional human line judges for the first time in tournament history.

**ii.** AELTC announced a total prize money of **53.5 million pounds** for Wimbledon 2025.

#### **About International Tennis Federation (ITF):**

ITF is the world governing body for tennis, wheelchair tennis, and beach tennis.

**President** – David Haggerty

**Headquarters** – London, the United Kingdom (UK)

**Founded** – 1913

### **Andre Russell Retired from all forms of International Cricket**

West Indies All-Rounder, **Andre Russell** retired from international cricket, during the 2nd and final of the Twenty20 International (**T20I**) series against Australia in Jamaica and Saint (St). Kitts, West Indies. He was given a guard of honour by players from both West Indies and Australia.

- His international career, spanning over 15 years, includes being part of the T20 World Cup Champions team in **2012** and **2016**.

- i. He debuted in Test Cricket format in **2010** against Sri Lanka, which was the only test match in his international career.
- ii. In One Day Internationals (ODIs), he scored 1,034 runs and took 70 wickets in 56 matches.
- iii. In T20Is, he scored 1,078 runs and took 61 wickets in 84 matches and in franchise T20 leagues worldwide, he has scored over 9,300 runs and taken 485 wickets.
- iv. In Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025, he played for the franchise, Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR).

### **IOA Ratifies Appointment of Raghuram Iyer as its CEO, Sets Up Anti-Doping Panel**

The Executive Council (EC) of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has ratified the appointment of **Raghuram Iyer** as the full time Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and established Athletes Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (AADDP) to tackle doping.

- This move is the result of the criticism from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) following its delegation visit, about the lack of governance and compliance with national and international anti-doping standards.

### **Raghuram Iyer Appointed as CEO of IOA:**

**About Raghuram Iyer:** He began his career with executive roles at Sony Pictures Entertainment and Discovery Channel. He was appointed as CEO of Rajasthan Royals, a Franchise of Indian Premier League (IPL) in 2007.

- From 2016 to 2022, he worked across multiple franchises, including Rising Pune Super Giant (RPSG) (IPL), Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) (IPL), ATK MohunBagan (Indian Super League football), RPSG Mavericks (Ultimate Table Tennis).
- In 2024, he was unanimously selected as CEO of IOA by a nomination committee comprising P.T. Usha, President, IOA; M.C. Mary Kom, Athletes' Commission Chair; and Nita Ambani, IOC member from India.

### **Athletes Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel:**

**Members:** The panel, comprising **seven** members, will be headed by **Rohit Rajpal**, former tennis player; Dr. PSM Chandran, renowned sports medicine expert; Aparna Popat, former Badminton player.

- It also includes Dr. Anindya Chowdhury, legal expert in sports law, Major General (Maj Gen) Dilawar Singh, Sports governance specialist, Dr. B. Srinivas, Sports medicine and policy advisor, and Dr. Sudhir K. Jain, Academic and researcher in health science and doping ethics.

**Role of AADDP:** It will ensure transparent, and fair adjudication of doping cases, promote awareness among athletes, trainers, and officials.

- It operates in accordance with the global anti-doping code of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and follows the national rules established by India's National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).

**Note:** India recorded a **3.8%** doping positivity rate in 2023.

### **About Indian Olympic Association (IOA):**

**President – P.T. Usha**

**Headquarters – New Delhi, Delhi**

**Established -1927**

### **Hockey India Announces Nationwide Festival and Financial Grants to Commemorate 100 Years of Indian Hockey**

Hockey India successfully conducted its 15th Hockey India Congress in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu (TN), marking **100 years** of Indian hockey's glorious journey.

- The session featured key announcements, including a **Nationwide Festival of Hockey** and enhanced **financial support** for state and national-level hockey development.

#### **Key Highlights:**

**Background:** The Indian Hockey Federation(IHF), a national body for hockey, was officially formed on November 7, **1925**, in **Gwalior**, Madhya Pradesh (MP).

- The Indian Hockey Federation (IHF) was India's governing body for hockey until its suspension in 2008 over governance issues.
- To retain international recognition, the Indian Olympic Association formed **Hockey India** on May 20, **2009**, bringing both men's and women's hockey under one body.

**Celebration event:** To celebrate this century milestone, Hockey India announced an unprecedented, nationwide celebration on **November 7, 2025**.

- The event will feature 1,000 simultaneous matches, one men's and one women's match in every district of India, engaging over 36,000 players (18,000 men and 18,000 women).

### **DivyaDeshmukh Became 1st Indian to Win FIDE Women's World Cup 2025, Runner-up Koneru**

Divya Deshmukh from Nagpur, Maharashtra, India, won the 2025 FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs) Women's World Cup, by defeating India's Koneru Humpy in the finals held in **Batumi, Georgia**.

- Divya becomes the **First Indian** woman to win this tournament, and joins Alexandra Kosteniuk (2021) and Aleksandra Goryachkina (2023) as the third Women's World Cup champion
- India performed remarkably, with **four Indian players** reaching the quarterfinals.

#### **Event Specific:**

**Participation:** The 2025 FIDE Women's World Cup witnessed participation from 107 players representing 46 countries, including 17 of the top 20 ranked women chess players.

**Victory:** The classical format games between DivyaDeshmukh and Koneru Humpy ended in draws. The final was decided in two 15+10 rapid tiebreak games, where Divya won with a score of **1.5–0.5**. She received a prize of **USD 50,000**.

### About DivyaDeshmukh:

**Achievement:** With this win, Divya becomes India's **4th** woman and **88th** overall to earn the Grandmaster (**GM**) title, becoming one of the few players globally to earn the GM title directly by winning a major **FIDE** event, without securing the usual three GM norms and 2500 rating.

Player	Prize	Position
DivyaDeshmukh – India	USD 50,000	1
Koneru Humpy – India	USD 35,000	2
Tan Zhongyi – China	USD 25,000	3

## Obituary

### **Former MP and MLA Kunwar Anand Singh Passed Away**

Kunwar Anand Singh, former Member of Parliament (MP) from Gonda and former Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) of Uttar Pradesh(UP), passed away in Lucknow(UP) at the age of 87.

- He was Born on January 4, 1939, into the 344-year-old Mankapur royal family, which ruled since 1681.
- i. He ascended as king in 1964 after his father Raja Raghvendra Pratap Singh's (Swatantra Party MLA) death, he entered politics and was elected as Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) in 1964, 1967, and 1969.
- iii. On the advice of former Prime Minister(PM) Lal Bahadur Shastri, he joined the Indian National Congress (INC) and won the Lok Sabha seat from Gonda in 1971, 1980, 1984, and 1989
- iv. In 2012, he contested and won from the Gaura constituency in UP Assembly elections and served as the State's Agriculture Minister in the Samajwadi Party -led government under the former Chief Minister (CM) Akhilesh Yadav.
- v. He was Widely known as "UP Tiger", he was a dominant political figure in eastern Uttar Pradesh, with considerable influence in Gonda district.

### **World's Oldest Marathon Runner Fauja Singh Passed Away**

Fauja Singh, world's oldest marathon runner has passed away at the age of 114 at Beas Pind village in Jalandhar, Punjab. He was born on April 1, 1911, in Beas Pind, Punjab (British India).

- In 2013, he retired after completing a 10-kilometre (km) race in Hong Kong, China.
- i. Fauja Singh, also known as the "Turbaned Tornado", began his marathon career at the age of 89 in 2000. His first marathon was in London(United Kingdom, UK), where he completed in 6 hours 54 minutes, setting a record.
- ii. In 2003, he achieved his personal best of **5 hours 40 minutes** and 4 seconds at Toronto Waterfront in Canada.
- iii. In 2011, he became the **first Centenarian** (100 years old) to complete a marathon, finishing around 8 hours and 11 minutes in Toronto, Canada.
- iv. Throughout his running career, spanning over 14 years, he completed **9 full marathons** between 2002 and 2012.
- v. As a torchbearer for the London 2012 Olympics, held in London, he utilized his platform to raise funds for charity and promote good values.
- vi. His biography, 'Turbaned Tornado', was released in 2011.

### **Oscar-Winning Lyricist Alan Bergman Passed Away**

Alan Jay Bergman, an Oscar-, Grammy-, and Emmy-winning American lyricist, passed away at the age of 99 in Los Angeles, California, United States of America (USA). He was born on 11th September 1925 in New York, USA.

#### **Awards & Honours:**

##### **i. Academy Awards (Oscars):**

- **1969** – Best Original Song for "**The Windmills of Your Mind**" (from The Thomas Crown Affair), shared with Marilyn Bergman and composer Michel Legrand.
- **1974** – Best Original Song for "**The Way We Were**", shared with Marilyn Bergman and composer Marvin Hamlisch.

- **1984** – Best Original Song Score or Adaptation Score for “Yentl”, shared with Marilyn Bergman and Michel Legrand.

**ii. Grammy Awards:** Honoured with the **Grammy Trustees Award** in **1997** (with Marilyn Bergman) for lifetime achievement in music.

**iii. Emmy Awards:** Four Emmy Awards for outstanding music and lyrics in television specials and films, including Sybil (1977) and A Ticket to Dream (1981).

**Note\*** – Alan Bergman, along with his wife Marilyn, created iconic songs that won awards.

### **Veteran Communist Leader & Former Kerala CM V.S. Achuthanandan Passed Away**

Velikkakathu Sankaran (V.S) Achuthanandan, former Chief Minister (CM) of Kerala and a veteran Communist leader, passed away at the age of 101 in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala). He was born on 20th October 1923 in Alappuzha, Kerala.

- He served as the CM of Kerala from 2006 to 2011 and became the **oldest person** to hold the post in the state, taking office at the age of 82.

#### **About V.S. Achuthanandan:**

**i.** V.S. Achuthanandan championed various causes including land reforms, anti-corruption movements, social justice, and workers’ rights.

**ii.** His political journey began in 1939 through trade union activism, and in 1940, he joined the Communist Party of India (CPI).

**iii.** He was elected to the Kerala Legislative Assembly seven times: in 1967, 1970, 1991, 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016.

**iv.** He held the position of Leader of the Opposition for three terms: 1991-1996, 2001-2006, and 2011-2016, making him the longest-serving Leader of the Opposition in Kerala.

**v.** He was also the convener of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) from 1996 to 2000.

**vi.** In January 2021, he resigned from his role as Chairman of the Administrative Reforms Commission, citing health concerns, which marked the conclusion of his public career.

### **Padma Bhushan Awardee and Renowned Economist Meghnad Desai Passed Away**

Renowned Indian-born British economist and member of the United Kingdom(UK) House of Lords, **Meghnad Jagdishchandra Desai**, passed away at the age of 85 years. He was born on July 10, 1940, in Baroda State (presently Vadodara), Gujarat.

- In **2008**, he was conferred **Padma Bhushan**, India’s third-highest civilian honour, for his distinguished contributions in the field of Public Affairs.

#### **About Meghnad Jagdishchandra Desai:**

**Academic Career:** He began his teaching career at the London School of Economics (LSE) in 1965. In 2003, he retired and was honoured as Professor Emeritus.

- He founded the Development Studies Institute (DESTIN) at LSE and served as Director from 1990 to 1995.

- He founded the Centre for the Study of Global Governance at LSE in 1992.

- He conducted extensive research for more than five decades, focusing on the developments, influenced by private enterprises and government policies. It comprises Marxian economics, globalization, and market liberalization.

**Political Career:** He became a member of the Labour Party in 1971 and was appointed to the House of Lords in 1991, making him the **first Indian-origin peer** from the party. Upon his appointment, he received the title ‘Lord Desai of Saint (St) Clement Danes’.

- He represented the Labour Party until 2020, after which he resigned and continued serving as an Independent Peer.

**Legacy:** In 2021, he founded the Meghnad Desai Academy of Economics(MDAE) in Mumbai(Maharashtra), dedicated to mentoring and nurturing future economists and intellectuals.

**Author:** He has authored several books with the themes, Marxism, Indian Politics, Cinema, and Global Governance.

- His notable works include Marxian Economic Theory (1973), Testing Monetarism (1981), Rethinking Islamism: The Ideology of the New Terror (2006), Nehru’s Hero: Dilip Kumar in the Life of India (2004), and The Rediscovery of India (2009).

## Important Days with theme

### National Statistics Day 2025 – June 29

National Statistics Day is annually observed across India on June 29 to honour the contributions of statisticians and highlight the importance of statistics in socio-economic development and policy formulation.

- The day commemorates the birth anniversary of Professor **Prasanta Chandra (P.C.) Mahalanobis**, who is known as the Father of Modern Statistics in India.
- June 29, 2025, marked the **19th observance** of National Statistics Day and the 132nd birth anniversary of P.C. Mahalanobis.

#### 2025 Theme:

The 2025 theme for National Statistics Day is “**75 Years of National Sample Survey(NSS)**”, celebrating the survey’s major role in supporting data-driven policies over decades.

#### Background:

- i. On 5 June **2007**, the Government of India (GoI) officially declared 29 June every year as Statistics Day, to be observed as one of the Special Days celebrated at the National Level.
- ii. The first National Statistics Day was observed on **29 June 2007**.

### International Day of Parliamentarism 2025 – June 30

The United Nations (UN’s) International Day of Parliamentarism (also known as World Parliament Day) is annually observed across the globe on 30 June to raise awareness about the vital role of parliaments in upholding democracy, accountability, human rights, and gender representation.

- The theme of the International Day of Parliamentarism 2025 is “**Achieving Gender Equality, Action by Action**“, highlights efforts to increase women’s participation in legislatures globally.
- The day marks the anniversary of the founding of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the world’s first political multilateral organisation, established on 30th June 1889 in Paris, France.

#### Background:

- i. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution A/RES/72/278 on 22nd May 2018 and proclaimed 30th June as the International Day of Parliamentarism.
- ii. The first-ever International Day of Parliamentarism was observed on 30 June **2018**.

### National Doctor’s Day 2025 – July 1

National Doctors’ Day is annually observed across India on 1 July to acknowledge and celebrate the invaluable services of doctors and healthcare professionals in safeguarding public health and serving society.

- The day commemorates the **birth and death** anniversary of Bharat Ratna awardee Dr. Bidhan Chandran Roy (**BC Roy**), a distinguished physician and the second Chief Minister (CM) of West Bengal (WB).

- The theme of National Doctors' Day 2025 is **"Behind the Mask: Who Heals the Healers?"**, highlighting the psychological and emotional challenges faced by doctors.

#### **Background:**

- i. National Doctors' Day in India was officially introduced and celebrated for the first time on **1st July 1991**, based on the recommendation of the IMA.
- ii. Since 1991, National Doctors' Day has been observed to acknowledge the vital role of doctors in society, with a special tribute to Dr. B.C. Roy's legacy, medical excellence, and commitment to public service and healthcare.

#### **Goods and Services Tax Day 2025 – July 1**

Goods and Services Tax (GST) Day is observed every year on **July 1** across India to mark the implementation of the GST regime, a unified indirect tax system on the supply of goods and services, which was introduced on **1 July 2017**.

- July 1, 2025 marks the **8th** observance of the GST Day.
- The theme for 2025 GST Day is **"GST-Simplifying Taxes: Empowering Citizens,"** reflecting efforts to streamline tax processes and strengthen compliance.

#### **Background:**

- i. GST was launched in India on **1 July 2017**. On 30 June 2018, the Government of India (GoI) decided to celebrate 1 July every year as 'GST Day'.
- ii. The first GST Day was observed on **1 July 2018** to mark one year of this major tax reform.

#### **World Population Day 2025 – July 11**

The United Nations (UN's) **World Population Day** is annually observed across the globe on **July 11** to highlight the urgency of population issues and the connection between population dynamics, the environment, and development.

- 2025 marks the **31st** anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) **Programme of Action**.
- The 2025 theme for World Population Day is **"Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world."**

#### **Background:**

- i. World Population Day was established in **1989** by the then Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- The idea for World Population Day was inspired by the world population reaching five billion on July 11, 1987, prompting **Dr. K.C. Zachariah**, a senior demographer at the World Bank, to propose commemorating the milestone annually.
- ii. In December **1990**, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/45/216, officially deciding to observe World Population Day annually.
- iii. The first observance of World Population Day took place on **July 11, 1990**, in more than 90 countries.

### **Day of International Criminal Justice 2025 – 17 July**

Day of International Criminal Justice, (also known as International Justice Day or World Day for International Justice), is observed annually on **17 July** to commemorate the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in **1998**.

- The day promotes accountability for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and aggression.
- July 17, 2025 marked the **27th** anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute.

#### **Background:**

**i.** The Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the ICC, was adopted on 17 July 1998 during the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries (**UNDCP**) held in Rome, Italy.

**ii.** The treaty, adopted by **120 countries**, laid the legal foundation for the ICC and came into effect on **1 July 2002**, officially making the Court operational.

- The ICC does not have the authority to investigate incidents that occurred prior to 1 July 2002.

**iii.** In **2010**, during the first Review Conference of the Rome Statute held in Kampala, Uganda, 17 July was declared as the Day of International Criminal Justice to commemorate the adoption of the statute.

### **Nelson Mandela International Day 2025 – July 18**

The United Nations (UN's) **Nelson Mandela International Day** (Mandela Day) is annually observed across the globe on **July 18** to recognize Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela's lifelong dedication to conflict resolution, human rights, race relations, gender equality, and reconciliation.

- The day commemorates the **birth anniversary** of the Nobel Peace Prize winner (1993), **Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela**, the first Black President of South Africa.
- The 2025 theme for Nelson Mandela International Day is "**It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequity**", emphasizing collective action against inequality, aligning with Mandela's vision.

#### **Background:**

**i.** On 10 November **2009**, the United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) adopted the resolution A/RES/64/13, proclaiming 18 July of every year as Nelson Mandela International Day.

**ii.** The resolution recognises Nelson Mandela's significant contribution to the global struggle for democracy, the promotion of social justice, poverty eradication, and the advancement of a culture of peace.

**iii.** The first observance of UN Nelson Mandela International Day was held on **18 July 2010**.

### **World Chess Day 2025 – July 20**

The United Nations (UN's) **World Chess Day**, also known as International Chess Day, is annually observed across the globe on **20 July** to celebrate chess as one of the oldest and most intellectual games, recognizing its role in promoting education, peace, inclusion, and global cooperation across cultures.

- The day commemorates the founding of **FIDE** (Fédération Internationale des Échecs / International Chess Federation) on 20th July **1924** in Paris, France.
- The theme for World Chess Day 2025 is “**Every Move Counts**”, emphasizes the importance of thoughtful decision-making both on the chessboard and in life.

#### **Background:**

- The idea of celebrating International Chess Day was first proposed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**).
  - Since 1966, under the initiative of FIDE, 20th July has been observed globally by chess players as International Chess Day.
  - On 12th December **2019**, the United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) adopted Resolution A/RES/74/22, officially proclaiming 20th July of every year as World Chess Day.
- The resolution was introduced by **Armenia** and co-sponsored by 52 other countries.
- The first UN-recognised World Chess Day was officially observed on 20th July **2020**.

#### **International Moon Day – July 20**

The United Nations(UN’s) International Moon Day (**IMD**) is observed annually on **20 July** to commemorate the **Apollo 11 mission** (1969), when astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to walk on the lunar surface.

- The day aims to celebrate global achievement in lunar exploration, inspire youth in space science, and encourage sustainable, peaceful, and responsible use of lunar resources.
- The theme for International Moon Day 2025, endorsed by UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (**UNOOSA**) and the Moon Village Association(**MVA**), is “**One Moon, One Vision, One Future.**”

#### **Background:**

- During the 65th session of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (**COPUOS**), the **MVA** formally submitted a proposal via the **UNOOSA** to designate 20 July as IMD.
- On 9 December 2021, the United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) adopted Resolution **A/RES/76/76**, officially proclaiming 20 July each year as International Moon Day, under “International cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space”
- The inaugural International Moon Day was observed on **July 20, 2022**.

#### **World Brain Day 2025 – July 22**

World Brain Day (**WBD**) is observed annually across the globe on July 22 to raise awareness about the importance of brain health and neurological disorders.

- World Federation of Neurology (**WFN**) based in London (United Kingdom, UK) , leads the initiative in collaboration with the World Health Organization (**WHO**) and United Nations Economic and Social Council (**UN ECOSOC**).
- The theme for WBD 2025 is “**Brain Health for All Ages**”, highlights the importance of brain health from pre-conception to old age.

### Background:

- i. The idea of observing “WBD” was first proposed by the Public Awareness and Advocacy Committee (PAAC) of the WFN during the Council of Delegates meeting at the World Congress of Neurology (WCN) in September 2013, held in Vienna, Austria.
- ii. The proposal received formal approval from the WFN Board of Trustees in February 2014, establishing it as an annual event.
- iii. Following this, WBD was officially initiated by the WFN in 2014 to be observed every year on July 22.

### National Flag Adoption Day 2025 – July 22

National Flag Adoption Day is annually observed across India on July 22 to commemorate the adoption of **Trianga**, the tricolour flag (the national flag of India) by the Constituent Assembly of India on **July 22, 1947**.

- The day honours the tricolour, which represents India’s struggle for freedom and its devotion to justice, liberty, and equality.
- July 22, 2025, marks the 78th anniversary of National Flag Adoption Day.

### Features of India’s Tricolour Flag:

i. The Tricolour Flag, symbolizes the sovereignty, unity, and rich cultural heritage of India. The tricolour flag include:

- The **saffron** in the Top Band represents courage, sacrifice and spirit of renunciation.
- **White** in the Middle Band symbolizes peace, truth, and honesty, which provide balance and clarity.
- **Green** in the Bottom Band symbolizes faith, fertility, and the land’s prosperity.
- In the centre of the white Band is the Ashoka Chakra, a **24-spoke navy blue wheel** derived from the Lion Capital of Ashoka, symbolizing eternal motion, progress, and righteousness.

ii. The ratio of length to width of the flag is **3:2**.

iii. On July 22, 1947, the Constituent Assembly of India chaired by **Dr. Rajendra Prasad** adopted the National flag, featuring the tricolour of saffron white, and green with Ashoka Chakra in navy blue at its centre, which came prior to India’s Independence on August 15, 1947.

### Income Tax Day 2025 – July 24

Income Tax Day, also known as Aaykar Diwas, is annually observed across India on 24 July to commemorate the introduction of Income Tax (**IT**) in India in **1860** by Sir James Wilson.

- The day highlights the evolution of India’s tax system, its role in national development, and the contributions of Income Tax Department (ITD) employees.
- 24 July 2025 marks the **166th** anniversary of IT Day.

### **Evolution of the Income Tax (IT) System in India:**

**Origin:** The IT system was first introduced in **1860** by Sir James Wilson, the first Finance Member of the British India Council, to address the financial crisis following the First War of Independence (**1857**).

**First Structured Law:** This initial measure laid the groundwork for the Income-tax Act of 1922, which established a structured and centralised tax administration in India by formalising various IT authorities.

**Framework :**The **Central Board of Revenue Act, 1924**, institutionalised the framework further by appointing Commissioners of IT across provinces.

- The **Income Tax Act, 1961**, enacted by the Parliament of India, replaced the 1922 Act and continues to serve as the comprehensive legal framework for direct taxation in India.
- Technological reforms in tax administration began with computerisation in 1981, followed by the launch of the Centralised Processing Centre (**CPC**) in Bengaluru(Karnataka) in 2009 to streamline return processing and improve efficiency.

### **International Day for Judicial Well-being 2025 – July 25**

The first ever United Nations (UN's) **International Day for Judicial Well-being** was observed on **25th July 2025**, to ensure the importance of psychological well-being of judges and magistrates, who uphold the rule of law in the world.

- The day commemorates the adoption of the **Nauru Declaration** on Judicial Well-being at the Regional Judicial Conference in Nauru on July 25, 2024.

### **About International Day for Judicial Well-being:**

**Background:** In **4 March 2025**, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/79/266 during its 58th plenary meeting and proclaimed 25th July of every year to be International Day for Judicial Well-being.

- The Resolution was initiated by **Justice Rangajeeva Wimalasena**, President of the Court of Appeal of Nauru and First Secretary **Ms. Josie Anne Jacob** in coordination with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- The resolution was voted unanimously by over 160 countries, 1 not in favor (United States) and 3 abstentions (Haiti, Madagascar, Syria). It includes 70 co-sponsoring Countries including **India**, United Kingdom(UK), Australia, France, Japan, Nigeria, and Sri Lanka.

### **Kargil Vijay Diwas 2025 – July 26**

Kargil Vijay Diwas, also known as Kargil Victory Day, is observed every year on 26th **July** across India to commemorate the Indian Army's victory over Pakistan in the Kargil War of **1999**.

•**26th July 2025**, India observes the **26th** anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas.

### **Background:**

**Infiltration:** The Kargil War began in May 1999, when around 1,500 Pakistani soldiers and militants crossed the Line of Control (LoC) and occupied Indian territory in the Kargil sector of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) (now in the Union Territory, UT of Ladakh), aiming to sever connectivity between Srinagar and Leh.

**Ground Offensive:** The IA's **Operation Vijay** was launched to recapture infiltrated posts in the Kargil sector, and after over 60 days of high-altitude combat, all intrusions were successfully cleared by 26th July 1999.

**Gallantry and Sacrifice:** During Operation Vijay, 545 Indian soldiers sacrificed their lives, and their valour was honoured with 4 Param Vir Chakra (PVC), 9 Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), and 55 Vir Chakra (VC) awards.

### **2025 Events:**

**Commemorative Event:** On 26th July 2025, the Kargil Vijay Diwas ceremony was held at the Kargil War Memorial in Dras, Kargil (Ladakh).

- Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi and President Droupadi Murmu paid tributes to the fallen heroes, stating that their devotion and sacrifice for the motherland will continue to inspire future generations.

**Kargil Vijay Diwas Padyatra:** On 26th July 2025, MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat), under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), organised the 'Kargil Vijay Diwas Padyatra' in Drass to honour the valour of India's soldiers.

### **CRPF Foundation Day 2025 – 27 July**

The Central Reserve Police Force (**CRPF**) **Foundation Day**, also known as **CRPF Raising Day**, is observed annually across India on **27th July** to commemorate the establishment of the CRPF in 1939, the largest Central Armed Police Force (CAPF), under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India (GoI).

- 27th July 2025 marks the **87th** observance of the CRPF Foundation Day.

### **History of CRPF:**

**Origin :** The CRPF was formed as the Crown Representative's Police (**CRP**) on **27th July 1939** in Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh (MP), to help princely states maintain law and order during British rule.

**Influence :** The formation of the force was influenced by the Madras Resolution passed by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in 1936, which called for a strong internal security system in India.

**Reorganisation:** After India gained independence, the force was renamed the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on 28th December 1949 through an Act of Parliament, officially placing it under the jurisdiction of the Union Government.

**Vision of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel:** Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Home Minister of independent India, envisioned the CRPF as a multi-role force.

### **International Tiger Day 2025 – July 29**

International Tiger Day, also known as Global Tiger Day, is observed annually on July 29 to raise awareness about the critical need for tiger conservation worldwide.

- The day highlights the urgent need to protect tigers and their habitats, while also raising awareness about ongoing conservation efforts.
- July 29, 2025, marks the **15th** observance of International Tiger Day.

#### **Background:**

**Origin :** International Tiger Day was established in **2010** during the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit held in Russia.

**St. Petersburg Declaration** At the 2010 Tiger Summit, 13 Tiger Range Countries (TRCs) adopted the St. Petersburg Declaration on Tiger Conservation.

- This declaration officially recognized July 29 as Global Tiger Day.
- Tx2 Initiative:** The 13 TRCs also pledged to achieve the Tx2 goal, aiming to double the wild tiger population by 2022.
- The 13 TRCs are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, **India**, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

**First Observance:** The first Global Tiger Day was observed on July 29, 2011.

### **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2025 – July 30**

The United Nations(UN's) **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons** is annually observed across the globe on **July 30** to raise awareness about the situation of human trafficking victims and to promote and protect their rights.

- July 30, 2025 marks the **11th** anniversary of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, and it is crucial to address the shortcomings and accelerate action to #EndHumanTrafficking.
- 2025 Theme:** The 2025 theme of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons is “**Human trafficking is organised crime – End the exploitation.**”

#### **Background:**

**Adoption:** In December 2013, the United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) adopted the resolution **A/RES/68/192** and proclaimed 30th July every year as the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.

**Inaugural Observance:** The first-ever World Day Against Trafficking in Persons was observed on 30th July 2014.