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## National

### Overview of PM Narendra Modi's visit to UP from April 28-29, 2026

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** visited Uttar Pradesh (UP) on **28–29 April 2026**, April, where he participated in the MahilaSammelan in Varanasi (Kashi) and inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for various development projects worth around **Rs. 6,350 crore**.

- The visit included major programmes in **Varanasi and Hardoi**, focusing on women empowerment, infrastructure development, healthcare, tourism, railways, and expressway connectivity.

#### Highlights:

**Event:** PM Narendra Modi attended a MahilaSammelan in Varanasi with large participation of women and performed darshan at Kashi Vishwanath Temple while announcing and launching major development initiatives.

**Outlay:** Projects worth about Rs.6,350 crore were inaugurated and had foundation stones laid, including over 48 completed projects worth Rs.1,050+ crore and 112 projects worth Rs.5,300+ crore.

**Inauguration:** PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the Ganga Expressway in Hardoi as a major step in advancing world-class infrastructure.

**Project:** The 594 kilometer (km)-long, 6-lane (expandable to 8 lanes) greenfield access-controlled expressway, built at Rs.36,230 crore, connects 12 districts from Meerut to Prayagraj across western, central, and eastern UP.

### Bengaluru Police Introduces India's First AI-powered multilingual 'Namma 112'

Bengaluru City Police launched a multilingual Artificial intelligence (AI) integration in the 'Namma 112' Emergency Response Support System to make emergency services more accessible and inclusive, marking **first-of-its-kind** initiative in India.

#### About AI-Powered Namma 112:

**Namma 112:** It is an advanced emergency response platform integrated with AI that enables faster and more efficient handling of distress calls through real-time analysis and automated dispatch mechanisms.

**AI System:** It uses Multilingual Voice AI for Nationwide Key Interventions (**VANKI**) system, developed in collaboration with tech partners Monday Ventures and Aeos.

**Multilingual Support:** It supports **Bengaluru City Police** courts **10+ additional languages**, including Indian languages like Bengali, Malayalam, Gujarati, Odia, Manipuri, Assamese, Kashmiri, and Nepali, as well as **international languages** such as Spanish, French, and Arabic, with plans for further expansion based on usage data and demographics.

**Features:** The system automatically converts voice calls into text with key alerts, and uses past data to help position police in high-risk areas in advance.

### MoC&I: EU Emerges as India's Third Largest Seafood Export Market in FY26

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (**MoC&I**) announced that the European Union (**EU**) became **India's third-largest seafood export market** during the Financial Year 2025-26 (**FY26**) after the United States of America (**USA**) and China.

- India's seafood exports to the EU reached USD 1.593 billion in FY26, contributing 18.94% of total seafood export value with strong growth in value and quantity.

#### **EU Compliance & Regulatory Measures:**

**Export Status:** The EU retained India in its revised draft list for continued aquaculture exports beyond September 2026.

**Regulation:** India was included in the revised draft list under Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2598 after demonstrating compliance with European Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/905 on antimicrobial use in food-producing animals exported to the EU.

**Measures:** To meet EU regulatory standards, India strengthened the National Residue Control Programme (NRCP), post-harvest testing systems, surveillance mechanisms for banned antibiotics and veterinary drug residues, traceability systems, and quality assurance frameworks

#### **MHA Notifies Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026; Introduces e-OCI & New Compliance Norms**

The Ministry of Home Affairs(MHA) notified the **Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026**, introducing key changes to the existing Citizenship Rules, 2009. The new rules came into force on **April 30, 2026**, following publication in the official gazette.

#### **About Citizenship (Amendment) Rules 2026:**

**Dual Passport:** Minor children cannot hold both Indian and foreign passports simultaneously, ensuring compliance with India's single citizenship policy.

**Digital OCI:** The rules introduce e-OCI along with digital records, allowing issuance of physical or electronic OCI cards and maintaining a central database.

**Online Process:** The entire OCI application process, including registration, renunciation, and acknowledgements, will be conducted online through the official portal.

**Renunciation:** OCI card surrender must be filed electronically, after which acknowledgement is issued and the applicant's name is removed from the records.

#### **TN Overtakes Gujarat as Top Marine Fish Producer in 2025: CMFRI Data**

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)- Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) released a report titled 'ICAR-CMFRI Annual Report 2025', which stated that Tamil Nadu(TN) became **India's top marine fish producer** in 2025 with **6.85 lakh tonnes**, surpassing Gujarat, whose output declined by 15% to 6.43 lakh tonnes from 2024.

- India's total marine fish production increased by 3% to **35.7 lakh tonnes** in 2025.

#### **State-wise Production:**

**Top States:** TN recorded a 1% rise in marine fish landings over 2024 despite cyclones, while Gujarat experienced a decline due to adverse weather, extended fishing bans, and cyclonic disruptions.

- Karnataka ranked fourth with 5.78 lakh tonnes, followed by Maharashtra in fifth place with 3.66 lakh tonnes of marine fish production.

**Resources Performance:** The Indian oil sardine emerged as the top resource at 0.16 million tonnes, rising 13% to a decade high, while threadfin breams and cephalopods recorded increases of 27% and 16%, respectively.

**Species:** **Indian mackerel** remained the most landed marine resource in the country at 0.27

million tonnes, followed by cephalopods at 0.25 million tonnes and oil sardine at 0.25 million tonnes.

**Market Value :** Marine fish landings generated an estimated Rs. **69,254 crore** at landing centres and Rs. 97,702 crore at the retail level, reflecting strong market demand.

### **Union Minister Nitin Gadkari Launches India's First Barrier-less Tolling System in Gujarat**

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways(MoRTH), launched **India's first** Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) **barrier-less tolling system** at the Chorayasi Toll Plaza on the Surat–Bharuch section of National Highways(NH)-48 in Gujarat, marking a major shift in highway tolling.

#### **About First Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF):**

**Technology:** The system enables barrier-free tolling using integrated technologies such as ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) with Artificial intelligence (AI) analytics and RFID (Radio Frequency Identification)-based Electronic Toll Collection (FASTag).

**Benefits:** Under the barrier-less model, toll charges are automatically deducted from linked accounts, enabling contactless, seamless transactions while reducing fuel use, emissions, and travel time.

**Impact:** The initiative supports India's push for digital infrastructure and smart mobility, aiming to build a more efficient, user-friendly road transport system nationwide.

### **Sikkim Becomes India's First Paperless Judiciary State**

Sikkim became the first state in India to have a fully paperless judiciary. The announcement was made by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India(CJI), during the “Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education” held at ChintanBhawan in Gangtok(Sikkim), marking the state's **50 years of statehood**.

#### **Key Details:**

**e-Courts System:** A paperless judiciary refers to the transition from physical records to a fully digital court system, including e-filing (electronic filing), digital case management (DCM), virtual hearings via video conferencing (VC), and e-SevaKendras (eSK) to assist users with limited digital literacy.

**Digital Processes:** Court processes are digitised with electronic summons via SMS (Short Message Service) and email (Electronic Mail) through National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes(NSTEP), while hybrid virtual hearings (VH) enable remote participation and improved accessibility.

**Impact:** The initiative improves access to justice in remote and hilly areas, while reducing administrative costs and environmental impact through paperless operations.

### **MoPR launched PAI 2.0 GP Assessment for FY24; Tripura tops the Index**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (**MoPR**) launched the ‘Panchayat Advancement Index (**PAI**) 2.0’ for the Financial Year 2023-24 (**FY24**) to assess the overall holistic development, performance and progress of Gram Panchayats (**GPs**).

- **Tripura** achieved a historic milestone by becoming the top-performing state in the index.

### Highlights

**Participation:** PAI 2.0 recorded wide national participation, with **33** out of 36 States and Union Territories (UTs) taking part in the exercise.

- This included **27** out of 28 States (except West Bengal (WB)) and **6** out of 8 UTs (excluding Delhi and Chandigarh, which do not have GPs).

**GPs:** A total of **2,59,867** GPs/Equivalent GPs, representing 97.30% of the total 2,66,999 Panchayats across participating States/UTs, submitted validated data on the PAI portal.

**Top States:** Among the 'Front Runner' panchayats, 943 were in Tripura, which constituted **80%** of the state's total 1,176 rural local bodies.

- The state was followed by Kerala, where **10%** of its 941 GPs have been assessed as 'Front Runner'.

- Then Odisha at 3rd place, with **8%** of its 6,794 GPs in the 'Front Runner' category.

**Top GP:** The **Jugal Kishore Nagar Village Committee** in Tripura's Sepahijala district was ranked as the top-performing Gram Panchayat nationwide, achieving a score of **88.44**.

### UNGA President Annalena Baerbock Visits India for Official Engagement

Annalena Baerbock, the 80th President of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), **visited India** on April 28, 2026, at the invitation of S. Jaishankar, to reinforce India's commitment to engagement with the United Nations (UN).

#### Key Engagements:

**Paid Homage:** As part of her visit, Baerbock paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in New Delhi, Delhi.

**High-level Meeting:** During her visit, she held a bilateral meeting with External Affairs Minister (EAM) Dr. S. Jaishankar, at Hyderabad House in New Delhi

- Both leaders discussed a wide range of global issues such as: UN reforms, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the West-Asia conflict.

**Other Key Meetings:** She also held an interactive session with representatives from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) focused on the governance and regulation of AI.

- She also met the UN team in India, headed by Resident Coordinator Stefan Priesnar.

### Karnataka Launches India's first State-led CoE for Space Tech in Bengaluru

The government of **Karnataka** launched India's first state-led Centre of Excellence for Space Technology (**CoE SpaceTech Foundation**) in **Bengaluru**, Karnataka, to bridge the gap between research and commercialisation of space technologies.

#### Key details of Launch:

**Collaboration:** The center was established by the Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (**KITS**) in collaboration with the SatCom Industry Association of India (**SIA-India**) .

**Focus:** The initiative promotes advanced space research, industry-aligned training, talent development, startup incubation, and supporting satellite constellations across agriculture, climate, disaster management, connectivity, life sciences, and national security.

**Strategic MoUs:** The centre signed MoUs with Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Helogen Corporation, DassaultSystèmes, Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE) to strengthen research, space biotechnology, startup incubation, and workforce development.

**Impact:** The CoE will drive public-private collaboration, support startups and provide infrastructure and support to help commercialise innovations and reduce development costs.

### **MoF Amends FEMA Rules, Allows 100% FDI in Insurance sector via Automatic route**

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) notified amendments to the Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) (Second Amendment) Rules, 2026, allowing 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Indian insurance companies and insurance intermediaries via the automatic route, subject to regulatory approval and compliance with the Insurance Act, 1938.

**Retain LIC Cap:** However, MoF has clarified that foreign investment in Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) continues to be capped at 20% under the automatic route.

**Eligible Entities:** As per MoF official notification, 100% FDI now applicable to a wide range of insurance-related entities, including insurance brokers, reinsurance brokers, insurance consultants, corporate agents, third-party administrators, Surveyors and Loss Assessors, among others.

### **Govt Notifies South Coast Railway Zone with Visakhapatnam as Headquarters**

Union Minister **AshwiniVaishnaw**, Ministry for Railways(MoR), officially notified the creation of the **South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone**, with its headquarters at **Visakhapatnam**, Andhra Pradesh(AP), marking a significant step in strengthening railway administration and infrastructure in the region.

- The zone will become India's **18th** railway zone and is set to be operational from **1 June 2026**.

### **About South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone:**

**Background:** The SCoR Zone, announced in February 2019 as part of railway reorganisation, fulfils a long-pending demand of AP following its 2014 bifurcation.

**Divisions:** The new zone comprises the Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, and Guntur divisions in AP, reorganised primarily from the South Central Railway (SCR) with minor adjustments from the East Coast Railway (ECoR).

**Connectivity:** Cargo and container train services are being strengthened to connect ports, tourism centers, and major cities along the East Coast Corridor, thereby boosting logistics and economic growth.

**Significance:** The new zone is expected to enhance connectivity across coastal AP, boost port-led freight and logistics, support industrial growth and tourism, generate employment, and improve passenger services and infrastructure.

**Expansion of SC Judge Strength :** The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved the introduction of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026, to increase the sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court of India from **33 to 37**, excluding the Chief Justice of India (CJI).

### **India's First Green Methanol Plant to Convert Invasive Weed into Marine Fuel**

India's first **green methanol production plant** is being set up at Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) in Kutch(Gujarat), where invasive **Prosopisjuliflora shrub**, locally known as Gando Baval, will be converted into **green marine fuel** for ocean-going ships using advanced biomass gasification technology.

#### **Key Details of Plant:**

**Partnerships:** The project is being executed by **Thermax Limited** for Synthesis, in collaboration with **Ankur Scientific**, which is providing advanced gasification technology.

**Process:** Biomass is gasified into syngas in an oxygen-limited environment, after which the syngas is converted into green methanol through catalytic synthesis with a production capacity of around five tonnes of methanol per day.

**Capacity:** The plant will initially produce 5 tonnes of green methanol per day, with plans to scale up production capacity to 100–500 tonnes per day in future phases.

### **IIT Madras Launches First Centre in USA to Boost Deep-Tech Startups**

The Indian Institute of Technology(IIT) **Madras Global Research Foundation** announced its first international centre in **Menlo Park**, California, the United States of America (USA), to expand India's deep-tech innovation presence into global ecosystems.

- The announcement took place during the SelectUSA Investment Summit held in National Harbour in Maryland, the USA.

#### **About IIT Madras Centre:**

**Objective:** The IITM Centre will serve as a launchpad for Indian deep-tech startups to access global capital, markets, mentorship, and partnerships.

**Investment:** The centre will be established with a planned investment of **USD 7.5 million**, including a USD 4.5 million greenfield investment by IITM Global Research Foundation.

**Focus Areas:** The centre will advance deep-tech research, technology commercialisation, startup incubation, global market access, and stronger industry–academia collaboration to scale high-potential innovations.

**Expansion Plan:** IITM Global announced plans to establish a second centre on the US East Coast to expand its presence across major innovation hubs.

### **Overview of Vietnam President To Lam's Visit to India from May 5 to 7, 2026**

To Lam, President of Vietnam undertook a 3-day official visit to India from May 5 to 7, **2026**, at the invitation of Prime Minister (**PM**) **Narendra Modi** to strengthen bilateral cooperation in defence, trade, and critical technologies between the two countries.

#### **Highlights of the Visit:**

**In New Delhi:** PM Narendra Modi held a bilateral meeting with Vietnamese President To Lam at Hyderabad House in New Delhi, Delhi, where both leaders reviewed bilateral cooperation in

defence, security, trade, science and technology, maritime affairs, renewable energy, atomic energy, space, and people-to-people ties.

- Vietnamese President To Lam also met President Droupadi Murmu and Union Minister (Independent Charge, IC) Dr. Jitendra Singh, Ministry of Science & Technology (MoS&T).

**In Mumbai:** During his one-day tour to Mumbai(Maharashtra), he visited the National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE) and participated in the India -Vietnam Business Forum.

- During the event, both Vietnamese and Indian firms exchanged a total of **27 cooperation agreements** covering various sectors.

**Key MoUs:** As part of the visit, India and Vietnam strengthened their bilateral relations by signing **13 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** across sectors including digital technologies, culture, health regulation, education, tourism, and public sector cooperation.

**Major Announcements:** These include Elevation of bilateral ties to Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP); expand bilateral trade to **USD 25 billion by 2030** and others.

### **NCRB's Crime in India 2024: Crime Rate Declined by 6%; Delhi Recorded Highest Cognisable Offences**

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), released its annual report titled “**Crime in India 2024**”. As per the data, India recorded **58.86 lakh** cognisable crimes in 2024, marking a **6% decline** compared to 62.41 lakh cases reported in 2023.

- The total cognisable offences reported in 2024 included: 35.44 lakh cases were registered under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)/Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), while 23.41 lakh cases were registered under Special and Local Laws (SLL).

#### **Key Findings:**

**Crime Rate:** It is calculated based on the number of cases registered per lakh population. As per NCRB's latest data, the overall crime rate in India declined from 448.3 (in 2023) to **418.9 (in 2024)**.

**Maximum Cognisable Offences:** Among all 19 metropolitan cities, **Delhi** topped in terms of number of cognisable offences, recording more than 2.7 lakh cases(**2,75,402**), with charge-sheeting rate being the lowest.

**Suicides Rate:** NCRB also released the ‘Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India (ADSI) **2024**’ report. The report showed that a total of **1,70,746 suicide cases** were registered in 2024.

- The report revealed that **Bengaluru (Karnataka)** which is commonly referred as ‘Silicon Valley of India’ registered over 2,313 suicides (in 2022), 2,370 (in 2023) and 2,403 (in 2024), with the city’s suicide rate stands close to 20 per lakh population through the 3-year period.

### **MoS & PI Updates State GDP Calculation with 2022-23 as New Base Year**

The National Statistics Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoS&PI) notified uniform guidelines for compiling Gross State Value Added (GSVA), with 2022-23 as the new base year to ensure a standardised framework and comparability of performance across all states.

#### **Key Highlights**

**Background:** The MoS&PI has updated the base year of the National Accounts to 2022-23.

- This revision aims to more accurately capture the current structure of the economy by incorporating modern data sources and improved estimation practices with evolving international standards.

**GSDP Revision:** In line with this change, states and Union Territories (UTs) are required to adopt the new base year for compilation of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).

**Current Base:** At present, 34 states and UTs compile GSDP estimates using 2011-12 as the base year, except Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (DNH&DD).

### **Union Minister Amit Shah Releases Tushar Mehta's books 'The Bench, the Bar, and the Bizarre' and 'The Lawful and The Awful'**

Union Minister Amit Shah, Ministry of Home Affairs(MHA), released the 2 books titled "The Bench, the Bar, and the Bizarre" and "The Lawful and the Awful", authored by Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, Delhi.

- The books were published by Rupa Publications India.

#### **About the Book:**

**Objective:** The publications aims to provide readers with insights into legal practice, advocacy, and judicial proceedings through real-life experiences and anecdotes.

**Content:** The Bench, the Bar, and the Bizarre and the Lawful and the Awful presents courtroom experiences, legal observations, and reflections from the professional journey of Tushar Mehta in India's judicial system.

**Focus Areas:** The books highlights key aspects of the Indian legal ecosystem, including Bench-Bar interactions, constitutional values, legal ethics, and notable courtroom incidents.

### **Overview of PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Gujarat on May 10-11, 2026**

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi visited Gujarat on 10-11 May 2026, to participate in the Somnath Amrut Mahotsav at Somnath Temple, Prabhas Patan, Gir Somnath district, Gujarat.

#### **Highlights of the Visit:**

**Somnath Amrut Mahotsav:** PM Narendra Modi participated in the Somnath Amrut Mahotsav at Somnath Temple, performing Vishesh Maha Puja, Kumbhabhishek consecration rituals, and Dhvajarohan (ceremonial flag hoisting).

- During the event, PM Narendra Modi released a **commemorative stamp and a Rs.75 coin** to commemorate 1,000 years of Somnath's enduring faith and 75 years of the temple's post-Independence reconstruction.

**Inauguration:** PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Sardardham Hostel** in Vadodara, Gujarat, developed at a cost of **Rs.150 crore**.

- He also inaugurated the Dr. Dushyant and Daksha Patel Complex and launched the Sardar Dham Education Support Yojana with an outlay of Rs.500 crore to provide financial assistance, mentorship, and academic guidance to economically weaker students.
- He virtually laid the foundation stone for the Dharamshi Harji Mordiya Girls Chhatralaya Phase-2 project.

### **CJI Surya Kant Announces ‘One Case One Data’ Initiative, Launches AI Chatbot ‘Su Sahay’**

Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India (CJI), announced the launch of the ‘One Case One Data’ initiative along with an Artificial intelligence (AI) -powered judicial assistance chatbot named ‘Su Sahay’ to strengthen data integration, transparency, and efficiency in court case management across all levels of the judiciary.

#### **About Launched Initiative:**

**One Case One Data:** It will integrate multi-level information from all the high courts, district and taluka courts details embedded into **a unified system**.

- Under the new initiative, each case will be assigned a single unique digital identity(ID). All related documents, including orders, arguments, and judgments, will be consolidated into one continuous digital case file.

**Chatbot Su Sahay:** An AI-powered assistance chatbot integrated with the Supreme Court (SC) website to facilitate easier access to justice and court-related services for litigants.

- It was developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) in collaboration with the Supreme Court Registry, this initiative focuses on strengthening the judiciary’s digital infrastructure.

### **India Hosted 10th Edition of Indian Ocean Dialogue in New Delhi**

**India**, which currently holds the chairship of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for 2025-27, hosted the 10th edition of the Indian Ocean Dialogue (**IOD-10**) in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The dialogue was held from May 7 to 8, 2026 under the theme “**Indian Ocean Region in a Transforming World**”.

#### **About IOD-10:**

**Organisers:** The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and IORA Secretariat organised the latest edition of IOD.

**Key Dignitaries:** The inaugural session was addressed by eminent dignitaries: Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPS&W); Dhananjay Ramful, Minister of Regional Integration and International Trade of Republic of Mauritius, and Waleed Mohammed Al Qadimi, Minister of State of Republic of Yemen.

- While addressing the IOD-10, Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal highlighted that women's participation in India's maritime sector has surged by 340% since 2020.

**India's Commitment:** At IOD-10, India reaffirmed its commitment to a peaceful, stable and prosperous IOR, aligned by its MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) vision and Neighbourhood First policy.

### **Union Minister Piyush Goyal Releases LEADS 2025 Report; TN & UP Emerge as Top Logistics Performers**

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Ministry of Commerce & Industry (MoC&I), released the 7th edition of Logistics Ease Across Different States (**LEADS**) 2025 report at the Logistics Excellence, Advancement and Performance Shield (**LEAPS**) Awards 2025 ceremony, organised by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), MoC&I, in New Delhi, Delhi.

- As per the report, Tamil Nadu (TN), Uttar Pradesh (UP), Mizoram and Delhi have been categorized as 'Exemplars' for their exceptional logistics performance.

#### **About LEADS 2025 Report:**

**New Performance Categories:** The latest LEADS framework has transitioned from its previous three-tier classification (Achievers, Fast Movers, and Aspirers) to four-tier performance framework (Exemplars, High Performers, Accelerators and Growth-Seekers).

- The latest edition of the LEADS report has categorised **11 states and UTs** such as Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, Puducherry, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), among others, as high performers.
- **18 states and UTs** such as: Punjab, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh (AP), Ladakh, Lakshadweep, among others, have been categorised as **Accelerators**.
- This year, **3 states** namely, West Bengal (WB), Rajasthan, and Sikkim and **One UT** (Andaman & Nicobar Islands) have been categorised as **Growth-Seekers**.

**LEAPS 2025 Awards:** During the event, Union Minister of Piyush Goyal felicitated the winners of LEAPS Awards 2025 across 13 categories.

### **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla constitutes Committee on Empowerment of Women**

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla constituted the parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women for the year 2026–27 with effect from April 21, 2026.

- **Dr. Daggubati Purandeswari**, Member of Parliament (MP) and Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, has been appointed as the Chairperson of the committee.

#### **About Committee on Empowerment of Women Committee:**

**Background:** The Committee on Empowerment of Women is a **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)**, was constituted for the first time on April 29, 1997, during the 11th Lok Sabha in pursuance of two identical resolutions moved in both the Houses of Parliament on March 8, 1996, for improving the status of women.

**Tenure:** The term of the Committee does not exceed one year, and it is reconstituted year after

year.

**Composition:** The Committee comprises 30 members, including 20 nominated by the Speaker from the Lok Sabha and 10 nominated by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha from among its members.

- **Lok Sabha:** Hema Malini, Harsimrat Kaur Badal and Iqra Choudhary among others.
- **Rajya Sabha:** Sudha Murty, PT Usha and Swati Maliwal among others.

**Significance:** The committee reviews National Commission for Women (NCW) reports and advises the government on women's welfare, equality, education, and representation.

- It also monitors women-related schemes and examines issues referred by Parliament, cutting across party affiliations.

### **BIS Notified E22-E30 Fuel Norms, Approved Up to 30% of Ethanol Blending**

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), which works under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (MoCAF&PD), notified specifications for **E22, E25, E27, and E30 fuel blends**, setting specifications for petrol mixed with up to 30% ethanol, beyond the current E20 blend target.

#### **About New Standards :**

**Norms Issued under:** As per BIS latest notification, new specifications have been established under **IS 19850:2026** for "E22, E25, E27 and E30 Fuel, Admixture of Anhydrous Ethanol and Motor Gasoline for Usage in Positive Ignition Engine Powered Vehicles.

- E22, E25, E27 and E30 refer to petrol blending with ethanol of 22%, 25%, 27% and 30%, respectively.

**Significance:** The new standards for higher ethanol-blended petrol variants, are expected to reduce India's reliance on imported crude oil (which currently accounts for over 85% of the country's total requirement) amid continuing volatility in global energy markets.

**No Immediate Nationwide Rollout:** However, BIS notification has outlined only the technical specifications required for latest ethanol blends, but did not mandate immediate nationwide roll out of E30 fuel.

### **NCDEX Launches India's First Weather Derivatives Contract "RAINMUMBAI"**

The National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX) launched India's first exchange-traded weather derivatives contract, 'RAINMUMBAI', marking the country's entry into a regulated weather-risk trading market.

#### **About 'RAINMUMBAI':**

**Purpose:** The new contract derivative, scheduled to be implemented on June **01, 2026**, is designed to hedge the financial exposure of rainfall extremes and variability in the city of Mumbai (Maharashtra) and its surrounding area.

**Developed by:** The new weather derivative contract was developed in collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (**IIT-B**) and is anchored in official rainfall data from the India Meteorological Department (**IMD**).

**Ticket Size:** The contract will use a tick size of 1 millimeter (mm) with a lot multiplier of **Rs 50**

**per mm** and a maximum order size of **Rs 50 lots**.

**Settlement Process:** The contract will be cash-settled, with data sourced from IMD surface rainfall observations and Automatic Weather Stations (AWSs) located in Santa Cruz and Colaba.

**Model:** The contracts are structured on a scientifically structured Cumulative Deviation Rainfall (CDR) model, measuring the deviation of actual rainfall from the Long Period Average (LPA) during the monsoon season (June-September).

**Data Period:** The benchmark for new contract derivative has been built using a 30 year rainfall dataset i.e. from 1991 to 2020.

**Diversified Users:** The new product will be used by a wide range of users such as: farmers, construction firms, power utilities, logistics operators, and banks who specifically deal with agricultural loan portfolios.

### **ITBP's First All-Women Expedition Successfully Summits Mt Everest**

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP) completed its **first-ever all-women international mountaineering expedition** to the world's highest peak **Mount (Mt) Everest**, with a 14-member team summiting the 8,848 meter (m) peak via the South Col Route from Nepal.

- The Border Security Force (BSF), a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), also successfully scaled Mt Everest through its first all-women expedition, '**Mission Vande Mataram**', as part of its Diamond Jubilee celebrations (60 years of service).

#### **About the Expeditions:**

**ITBP Team:** Composed of 11 women climbers and three technical and support members who faced extreme weather, low oxygen levels, and difficult ice-wall sections in the "Death Zone" above 8,000 m.

**BSF Team:** The expedition team comprised four women constables: Kouser Fatima from Ladakh, Munmun Ghosh from West Bengal (WB), Rabeka Singh from Uttarakhand, and TseringChorol from Kargil (Ladakh), who reached the summit despite extreme weather and low oxygen conditions.

**Objective:** Supporting the 'Clean Himalaya – Save Glacier' campaign through the collection of non-biodegradable waste from the Everest region.

### **Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan Releases Book "The Library Man of India" on P.N. Panicker**

Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan released the book 'The Library Man of India: The Story of P.N. Panicker', authored by P. P. Sathyan, at UprashtrapatiBhavan in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The book was published by Rupa Publications India Private Limited.

#### **Key Details:**

**Legacy:** The book highlights the legacy of P.N. Panicker, a visionary reformer who led Kerala's public library movement and mass literacy drive under the slogan "Vayichu Valaruka" (Read and Grow).

**P.N. Panicker:** Regarded as the Father of the Library Movement in Kerala, P.N. Panicker led the expansion of the **GranthashalaSangham** (Library Association) from a few small rooms into a vast network of over 6,000 public libraries across Kerala.

- P.N. Panicker's death anniversary on June 19 is observed by the Government of India (GoI) as National Reading Day.

### **11th QUAD Foreign Ministers' Meeting Held in New Delhi, Delhi**

The 11th edition of Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) Foreign Ministers' Meeting (QFMM 2026), chaired by the Union Minister S. Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India (GoI), was held in New Delhi, Delhi.

#### **About 11th QFMM:**

**Key Participants:** At the invitation of External Affairs Minister (EAM) Union Minister S. Jaishankar, Foreign Minister of Quad Group: Penny Wong, Foreign Minister of Australia; Toshimitsu Motegi, Foreign Minister of Japan; Marco Rubio, Secretary of State of the United States of America (USA), participated at 11th QFMM.

**Key Initiatives Launched:** One of the key highlights of the QFMM was the launch of the 1st ever Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Collaboration (IPMSC) initiative; Quad Initiative on Indo-Pacific Energy Security to strengthen regional energy resilience; and others.

**Key Announcements:** Some of the key announcements made following the 11th QFMM are: India to host the 2nd edition of the Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission;

- Over USD 6 million funding in awards for 06 international research projects under the Advancing Innovations for Empowering Next Gen Agriculture (AI-ENGAGE) initiative;
- Under the newly released Quad Critical Minerals Initiative Framework, Quad partners pledged to mobilize **up to USD 20 billion** investment in government and private sector to bolster critical minerals supply chains, including in mining processing, and recycling through various actions.

### **Former VP M. Venkaiah Naidu & Former PM H. D. Deve Gowda Launch Book 'Apnapan' by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan**

Former Vice President (VP) of India **M. Venkaiah Naidu** and former Prime Minister (PM) of India **H. D. Deve Gowda** launched the book titled '**Apnapan: Narendra Modi Sang Mere Anubhav**', authored by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) and Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), at the Bharat Ratna C. Subramaniam Auditorium, New Delhi, Delhi.

- The book was published by Prabhat Prakashan Private Limited

#### **About the Book:**

**Content :** It is a personal and reflective book that chronicles Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's over 35-year association with Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, tracing their journey from Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers to Chief Ministers (CMS) and later colleagues in the Union Government.

- The book also highlights experiences from the 1991 Ekta Yatra and describes how Modi's 'Kanya Kelavani' initiative inspired women empowerment and girl child education programmes in Madhya Pradesh (MP).

**Theme:** The book focuses on themes such as leadership, governance, public service, nation-building, discipline and public welfare.

- It also highlights principles like Seva, Antyodaya, Jan Bhagidari, Nation First and ‘Sabka Saath, SabkaVikas, Sabka Vishwas’.

### **GoI constitutes High-Level Committee on Demographic Change Headed by former Justice Naolekar**

The Government of India (GoI) constituted a **High Level Committee** under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) to study the demographic changes arising from illegal immigration and other abnormal reasons.

- **Chaired by:** The committee will be chaired by retired Supreme Court Judge Justice **Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar**.

#### **Committee Composition**

**Committee Members:** It will also comprise:

- the Census Commissioner currently Mritunjay Kumar Narayan
- retired IAS officer Durga Shanker Mishra
- retired IPS officer Balaji Srivastava (Retired IPS)
- Dr. Shamika Ravi, who is part of the PM’s Economic Advisory Council.

**Secretary:** The Joint Secretary (Foreigners-I) in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) currently Mahatme Sandeep Namdeo, will act as Member Secretary.

**Assessment:** The committee will examine demographic changes arising from illegal immigration and other unusual factors, identify their causes and recommend suitable policy, legislative and administrative measures.

**Factor Identification:** The committee will also identify factors, including illegal immigration, abnormal settlement patterns, and orchestrated migration, and analyse structural population changes at the level of religious or social communities.

### **Indian scientist discovers ‘LoktakProtocluster’, 12.6-billion-year-old City of Galaxies**

An International team led by Indian scientist **Dr. Ronaldo Laishram** from the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ) discovered a 12.6-billion-year-old cosmic structure, known as the “**LoktakProtocluster**,” an ancient “**city of galaxies**” named after Loktak Lake in Manipur, India.

- The findings were formally published in **The Astrophysical Journal Letters**.

**About Dr. Ronaldo Laishram:** At the age of 18, he discovered a **Main Belt asteroid** through the All India Asteroid Search Campaign, was later honoured by former Indian President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and serves as the founding coordinator of the Manipur Astronomical Society (MAS).

- Currently serving as a postdoctoral researcher at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ) in Tokyo.

**About Loktak Protocluster:**

**Loktak Lake:** The largest freshwater lake in Northeast India, famous for its floating “phumdis” masses of vegetation, soil, and organic matter drifting on water.

**Timeline:** It is located about 12.6 billion light-years away in the direction of the constellation Sextans, allowing us to observe it as it existed when the Universe was only about 1.2 billion years old (around 9% of its current age).

**Collaboration:** The discovery was made by combining data from Japan’s Subaru Telescope, Hawaii, United States of America (USA), and NASA’s James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), USA using wide-field and high-resolution infrared observations.

**PT Usha, Dilip Tirkey Release Book on India’s First Olympic Hockey Gold**

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president (Pilavullakandi Thekkeparambil) P.T. Usha, alongside Hockey India President Dr. Dilip Tirkey, released a book titled “**India’s Olympic Gold: Hockey Triumph at Amsterdam,**” authored by renowned hockey historian **K. Arumugam** in Connaught Hotel, New Delhi, Delhi.

- This book was published by Stick2Hockey, marking the 98th anniversary of India’s first Olympic Gold in hockey by the Indian Men’s Team obtained at Amsterdam, Netherlands in 1928.

**Key Details of the Book:**

**Dignitaries:** The event was attended by hockey legends, including Harbinder Singh (triple Olympian, former captain), Jagbir Singh (double Olympian), Zafar Iqbal (Olympic gold medalist), and Ashok Kumar (Olympic medalist and son of Major Dhyan Chand).

**Publications:** It marks the 16th book by K. Arumugam, reflecting his lifelong contribution to documenting Indian hockey history.

**Historical context:** India won its first Olympic gold in hockey at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, defeating the Netherlands men’s team in the final during British rule.

## International

### USTR Special 301 Report 2026: Retains India On Priority Watch List; Vietnam Named Priority Foreign Country

The United States Trade Representative (USTR) released its 38th annual **2026 Special 301 Report**, classifying countries into Priority Foreign Country (PFC), Priority Watch List, and Watch List.

- **India** was placed on the Priority Watch List alongside 5 countries, while **Vietnam** was designated as a Priority Foreign Country (PFC), the highest scrutiny category and first in 13 years, potentially triggering a Section 301 investigation.

#### About USTR Special 301 Report:

**Ranking:** Countries classified into Priority Watch List are India, China, Russia, Chile, Indonesia, Venezuela and the Watch List are 19 countries including Pakistan, Türkiye, European Union (EU), Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Canada and others.

**Changes:** Argentina and Mexico were moved to the Watch List due to improvements, Bulgaria was removed, the EU was added over concerns related to Geographical Indications (GI) and pharmaceutical legislation, and Ukraine's review was suspended due to the ongoing war.

**Section 301:** Under Section 301 of Trade Act of 1974, USTR may initiate an investigation within 30 days against Vietnam, leading to consultations to resolve trade issues.

### USA Launches 'Project Freedom' to Escort Ships Through Strait of Hormuz

The United States of America (USA), under President Donald Trump, launched '**Project Freedom**,' a naval escort operation to guide stranded commercial vessels through the **Strait of Hormuz** amid escalating Iran–USA tensions.

#### About Project Freedom:

**Objective:** It aims to ensure safe maritime passage and protect global shipping routes from disruptions caused by regional conflict and oil supply instability.

**Operation:** The operation involved the deployment of the USA Navy under USA Central Command (CENTCOM), including warships, over 100 air- and sea-based aircraft, multi-domain unmanned platforms, and around 15,000 personnel, while continuing an economic blockade restricting transit to and from Iranian ports.

**Strait of Hormuz:** It is a narrow maritime passage between Oman and Iran that connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, and serves as one of the world's most critical energy transit routes.

### THE Asia University Rankings 2026: Tsinghua University Tops the List; IISc Bengaluru Emerges as India's Top University

The United Kingdom (UK)-based Times Higher Education (THE) released the **14th Asia University Rankings 2026**, in which Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru, Karnataka, emerged as **India's top university**, and the only Indian institute in the top 50, securing **43rd** rank in Asia with an overall score of 65.1, down from 38th in 2025.

- **Tsinghua University** in China secured first place for the 8th consecutive year with a score of 93.6, followed by **Peking University** (China) in second place with 93.1, and the **National University of Singapore** in third place with a score of 91.1.

#### **Highlights:**

**Top 10 Universities :** Nanyang Technological University, Singapore and the University of Tokyo, Japan jointly ranked 4th with scores of 85.1 each, followed by the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong in 6th place (84.3), Fudan University, China in 7th (82.9), Zhejiang University, China in 8th (82.6), Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China in 9th (82.1), and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong in 10th with a score of 81.1.

**Top Performers: China** dominates with the top two positions and five of the top 10 spots, while Singapore and Hong Kong each have two universities in the top 10 rankings.

**Top Representation:** India led with 128 universities, followed by Japan (115) and Turkey(109).

#### **IOM's World Migration Report 2026: India Remains Top Remittance Recipient with Over USD 137 billion in 2024**

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the leading United Nation(UN)-related agency for migration, released its latest report titled “World Migration Report 2026”, 13th edition of the World Migration Report series, during the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) week in New York, the United States of America (USA).

- As per the report, **India** received **over USD 137 billion** in remittance in 2024, thereby retaining its position as the **world's top remittance recipient** country since 2010, and the only country to surpass the USD 100 billion mark.

#### **Key Findings:**

**Top 5 Remittance Recipients:** After India, **Mexico** is the **2nd highest** recipient of remittance in the world and received USD 67.6 billion as remittance in 2024.

- The Philippines (USD 40.3 billion ), France (USD 38.8 billion), and Pakistan (USD 34.9 billion) were among the world's top 5 remittance recipient countries.

**Remittance Sources:** The report revealed that high-income countries (HICs) like: the United States of America (**USA**) continued to be the top remittance-sending country in the world, with a total outflow breaching the USD 100 billion mark in 2024.

- The USA was followed by Saudi Arabia (over USD 46 billion), Switzerland (around USD 40 billion), and Germany (around USD 24 billion).

#### **UN's GFG Report 2026: Fuelwood Demand Emerges as Major Driver of Global Forest Loss**

United Nations (UN) latest assessment on the state of the world's forests, titled “the Global Forest Goals(GFG) Report 2026” was launched during the **21st session** of the United Nations Forum on Forests (**UNFF**) at UN headquarters i.e. in New York, the United States of America. The report highlighted that **rising demand for fuelwood** (including woodfuel and charcoal) emerged as the key driver of global forest loss, particularly across sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, even as countries expand restoration and afforestation programmes.

- Apart from rising fuelwood demand, the report identified **agricultural expansion** as the biggest cause of deforestation globally.

#### **About the GFG Report 2026:**

**Prepared by:** The report was jointly prepared by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the UNFF Secretariat.

**Decrease in Global Forest Cover:** The report revealed that Global Forest Cover declined from 4.18 billion hectares (ha) (in 2015) to **4.14 billion ha (in 2025)**, which represents an annual net loss of 4.12 million ha.

- The report highlighted that regions like: **South America** and **Africa**, recorded the steepest decline, losing 4.1 million ha and nearly 3 million ha every year, respectively.

**Loss in Primary Forests:** Globally, **16 million ha** of primary forests, crucial for biodiversity conservation and carbon storage, were lost during the decade (between 2015 and 2025) with **South America** accounting for the largest share of losses.

#### **Overview of PM Narendra Modi's Visit to UAE on May 15, 2026**

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** undertook an official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as part of the first leg of his **5-nation tour** which included the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Italy.

#### **Highlights of the Visit:**

**Bilateral Meeting:** During his visit to the UAE, PM Narendra Modi held a high-level meeting with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi, the UAE.

**MoUs in Energy Sector:** A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on strategic collaboration between Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (**ISPRL**), the Government of India (GoI) and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (**ADNOC**), the UAE, aimed to strengthen India's energy security.

- Also, a separate strategic collaboration agreement was signed between India's Indian Oil Corporation Limited (**IOCL**) Company and **ADNOC** for long-term supply of LPG.

**MoUs in Maritime Sector:** Cochin Shipyard Limited (**CSL**) of India has signed a MoU with Drydocks World (**DDW**) of the UAE, aimed to establish a ship repair cluster, including offshore fabrication, at Vadinar, in Gujarat.

- Also, a tripartite agreement was signed between **CSL**, **DDW** and Centre of Excellence in Maritime & Shipbuilding (**CEMS**), focused on skill development in Ship Repair, supporting the Skill India Mission(SIM).

**Investment Commitment:** During PM Modi's visit, the UAE announced investment worth USD 5 billion in India by various entities of the UAE.

#### **Overview of PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Netherlands on May 16 -17, 2026**

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** was on a two-day official visit to the **Netherlands** from May 16 to 17, 2026, at the invitation of Rob Jetten, PM of the Netherlands.

- The visit was part of the **2nd leg** of PM Modi's 5-nation tour that included the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sweden, Norway and Italy.

#### **Highlights of the Visit:**

**Key Engagements:** During his visit to the Netherlands, PM Modi met Dutch King Willem Alexander and Queen Maxima at Palace Huis ten Bosch in The Hague, the Netherlands.

- He also held a high-level meeting with his Dutch counterpart Rob Jetten, at the official residence of Dutch PM (Catshuis) in The Hague.

**Restitution of 11th Century Chola Copper Plates:** The **Leiden University Library of the Netherlands** restituted the 11th century Chola Copper Plates to the Government of India (GoI), in the presence of PM Modi and his Dutch counterpart Rob Jetten.

**Roadmap of India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership:** Following the bilateral meeting held between PM Modi and Dutch PM Rob Jetten, both countries have agreed to elevate their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership.

- For its implementation, both countries have also adopted the Roadmap of India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership for the next 5 years (2026-2030).

**Key MoUs:** Following the bilateral meeting held between the leaders of two countries, 17 agreements were formalised in the fields of technology, green energy, trade and mobility among other sectors.

- India's TATA Electronics Limited signed a MoU with Dutch company ASML to support semiconductor Fab in Dholera, Gujarat.
- A Letter of Intent (LoI) was signed between the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) of the Government of India (GoI) and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands for technical cooperation with regards to the Kalpasar Project in Gujarat.

#### **Overview of PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Sweden on May 17 to May 18, 2026**

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi was on a two-day official visit to Sweden from May 17 to 18, 2026, at the invitation of **Ulf Kristersson**, PM of Sweden. Previously, he visited the Nordic country in 2018 to attend the inaugural India-Nordic Summit .

#### **Key Highlights of the Visit:**

**Key Engagements:** During his visit to Sweden, PM Narendra Modi held bilateral talks with Swedish PM Ulf Kristersson in Gothenburg and participated in the European Round Table for Industry co-hosted by Kristersson and Ursula von der Leyen.

**Sweden's Royal Order:** PM Modi honoured with the "**Royal Order of Polar Star**", Degree Commander Grand Cross, one of the highest civilian honours of the Swedish Government. This marked the **31st** international honour.

#### **Key Outcomes:**

- Elevation of India-Sweden Bilateral Relations and Adoption of Joint Action for next year (2026-2030)
- Launch of India-Sweden Joint Innovation Partnership 2.0

- Joint Development of SITAC
- Joint Development of India-Sweden SME and Startup Platform
- Doubling of bilateral trade and Investment (next 5 years)
- Announcement of Tagore-Sweden” Lecture under the theme VikasBhiVirasatBhi.
- Indian Space agency, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Swedish National Space Agency(SNSA) to collaborate on India’s interplanetary mission i.e. Shukrayaan Mission to planet Venus.

### Overview of PM Narendra Modi’s Visit to Norway on May 18 to 19, 2026

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** was on a two-day official visit to Norway from May 18 to 19, 2026, at the invitation of **Jonas Gahr Støre**, PM of Norway.

- This marked the 1st ever official visit by an Indian PM to Norway in over 40 years since former PM of India Indira Gandhi visited the Nordic country in 1983.

#### Highlights of the Visit:

**Key Engagements:** During his visit to Norway, PM Narendra Modi held bilateral talks with Norwegian PM Jonas Gahr Støre and participated in the 3rd India-Nordic Summit held in Oslo, the capital city of Norway and also attended the India-Norway Business and Research Summit.

**Felicitated with Norway’s Highest Civilian Honour:** During his visit to Norway, PM was honoured with the **Royal Norwegian Order of Merit Grand Cross**, one of the highest civilian awards of Norway, by **King Harald V** in Oslo, Norway. This marked **32nd global honor** conferred upon PM Modi and the 2nd (after being awarded with Sweden’s highest civilian honour) during his ongoing 5-nation tour.

**Key Outcomes:** Some of the key outcomes of PM Modi’s visit to Norway are:

- Elevation of India-Norway Bilateral Relations to Green Strategic Partnership;
- Norway to Join Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI);
- India to Participate at Nor Shipping 2027;
- Launch of India-Norway Digital Development Partnership; among others.

**MoUs signed:** During PM Narendra Modi’s visit to Norway in May 2026, India and Norway signed 12 agreements to strengthen their green strategic partnership across sustainability, healthcare, research, infrastructure, and innovation sectors.

### Overview of PM Narendra Modi’s Visit to Italy on May 19-20, 2026

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** was on a two-day official visit to Italy from May 19 to 20, 2026, at the invitation of **Giorgia Meloni**, the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic.

- This visit marked the culmination of PM Modi’s 5-nation tour which included: the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway from May 15 to May 20, 2026.

### **Highlights of PM Narendra Modi’s visit to Italy:**

**Bilateral Meeting:** During his visit to Italy, PM Modi held bilateral talks with his Italian counterpart Meloni in Rome, Italy. During the meeting, leaders of both countries reviewed the progress made in bilateral cooperation across all segments of the **Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025-2029**.

**FAO’s highest honour:** During his visit to Italy, PM Narendra Modi was honoured with the Agricola Medal, the highest honour of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), by its Director-General(DG) Qu Dongyu at the organisation’s headquarters in Rome.

**Key Outcomes:** Elevation of India–Italy ties to a Special Strategic Partnership (SSP), establishment of a Foreign Ministerial-level mechanism to review the Joint Strategic Action Plan (2025–29), a target to expand bilateral trade to EUR 20 billion by 2029, creation of INNOVIT India innovation hub, adoption of a Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) and Defence Industrial Roadmap, and declaration of 2027 as the “Year of Culture and Tourism”.

**Key MoUs:** India and Italy signed **10** Key Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) covering sectors such as: critical minerals, agriculture, maritime transport, marine products, higher education, Ayurveda, climate research and science cooperation.

### **India Among Largest New Carbon Markets; Global Carbon Pricing Covers 29% of Emissions : World Bank Report**

The World Bank Group (WBG) released the 13th edition of the report titled “State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2026”, which identified **India** among the **world’s largest new carbon markets** following the launch of its Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS) in 2026, while noting that global carbon pricing systems currently cover **29%** of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

#### **Key Findings:**

**Revenues:** The report showed that annual revenues from emissions trading systems and carbon taxes have tripled over the last decade i.e. increasing from less than USD 30 billion (in 2016) **to over USD107 billion (in 2025)**.

**Average Global Prices:** The report highlighted that globally, the direct carbon prices have increased 7% compared to last year’s report and have nearly doubled over the last 10 years i.e. from USD10 per tCO<sub>2</sub>e (in 2016) to nearly USD21/tCO<sub>2</sub>e (in 2026)

**Policies Status:** The report also showed that at present, **87** carbon policies are being implemented globally, increasing by 7 since 2025.

- The report further highlighted that if all carbon pricing policies under development are implemented by 2030, then, nearly 1/3rd (33.33%) of global GHG emissions could come under carbon pricing systems.

### **WHO’s 79th World Health Assembly Concludes in Geneva, Switzerland**

The World Health Organization (WHO) organised the six-day 79th World Health Assembly(WHA79) in Geneva, Switzerland from 18–23 May 2026 under the theme “**Reshaping Global Health: A Shared Responsibility**”.

- During the session, member states adopted over 20 decisions and 13 resolutions on issues including stroke, tuberculosis, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), emergency care, haemophilia, precision medicine, and radiation.

#### **About 79th World Health Assembly (WHA79):**

**Leadership:** The WHA79 was chaired by Victor Atallah Lajam, Minister of Health of the Dominican Republic, who served as the President of WHA79.

**India's Address :** Union Minister J. P. Nadda, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), addressed the plenary session of the WHA79, reaffirming India's commitment to equitable and people-centric healthcare under the vision of "Health for All".

**Key Resolutions:** The resolutions and decisions adopted during the session primarily focused on advancing global action in stroke, tuberculosis (TB), antimicrobial resistance (AMR), emergency care, haemophilia, precision medicine, radiation, pharmacovigilance, diagnostic imaging, transplantation, liver disease, and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).

**Stroke:** WHA passed its **first-ever resolution on stroke**, led by Egypt and co-sponsored by Chile, Georgia, Palestine, Paraguay, and Tunisia, formally recognising stroke as a global public health priority.

#### **China Launches 'Shenzhou-23 Mission' Carrying 3 Astronauts to Space Station**

China launched the Shenzhou-23 spacecraft carrying three astronauts to the Tiangong Space Station for scientific research and orbital operations, marking the country's first mission expected to support a year-long human stay in orbit.

- The mission was launched aboard a **Long March – 2F Y23 carrier rocket** from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China, China.

#### **About Shenzhou-23 Mission:**

**Crew:** The three-member crew of Shenzhou-23 includes **Zhu Yangzhu**(China), the mission commander and space engineer; **Zhang Zhiyuan**(China), a pilot and former Air Force officer; and **Li Jiaying** (Lai Ka-ying, Hong Kong), the payload specialist and the first astronaut from Hong Kong.

**Objective:** The Shenzhou-23 mission will conduct over **100 experiments** related to space life science, aerospace medicine, materials science, and micro gravity physics.

- The mission will study the effects of long-duration spaceflight on humans, with one astronaut expected to remain aboard the Tiangong Space Station for nearly one year.

#### **NASA Unveils USD 20 billion 3-Phased Plan for Permanent Moon Base**

Jared Rook Isaacman, Administrator of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) unveiled a **USD 20 billion** 3-phased plan to establish a permanent base on the moon, equipped with lunar rovers and drones.

- NASA has set the target to set up a lunar base in March 2027 and further aims to land astronauts on the moon in **2028**.

#### **About 3-Phased Moon Base Missions:**

**Moon Base-I (2026-2028):** For the Moon Base-I mission, the space agency has selected Blue Origin's Blue Moon Mark-1 Endurance lander, planned no earlier than September 2026.

- As per NASA, the mission will land on the **Shackleton Connecting Ridge**.

**Moon Base-II (2029-2032):** Under this mission, NASA aims to start construction of permanent lunar infrastructure like: habitats, power systems and facilities required to support longer human missions on the moon.

**Moon Base-III (2032 onwards):** The Moon Base III mission, will carry NASA's Lunar Vertex science mission to study mysterious lunar swirls and bright formations on the Moon considered to be linked to magnetic fields beneath the lunar surface, and will carry payloads from the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Korean Space Agency (KSA).

### **Taiwan Overtakes India To Become World's 5th Largest Stock Market**

Taiwan Stock Exchange surpassed India to become world's fifth largest stock market, with market capitalisation reaching **USD 4.95 trillion** compared to India's USD 4.92 trillion amid Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) outflows.

- The rise was driven by the artificial intelligence (AI)-led semiconductor boom led by Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), despite India having a higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

### **About Global Stock Market Rankings 2026:**

**Rankings:** The top global equity markets are the United States of America (USA), **China**, **Japan**, Hong Kong, Taiwan, India and South Korea.

**Taiwan:** Taiwan's rally was led by TSMC, whose shares surged around 45–50% in 2026, accounted for nearly 42% of the Taiex index and benefited from relaxed domestic fund investment limits raised from 10% to 25%.

**India:** Faced FPI outflows, benchmark declines and reduced Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) Emerging Markets Index weight due to slower growth, high valuations, limited AI-linked firms, rising costs and global capital shifts towards Taiwan and South Korea.

**Significance:** The rankings reflect the dominance of the AI-driven investment cycle, the growing importance of semiconductor supply chains and changing global capital allocation trends across emerging markets.

## Defence

### **DRDO & IN Successfully Conduct Maiden Salvo Launch of NASM-SR Missile in Odisha**

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), in collaboration with the Indian Navy (IN), successfully carried out the **maiden salvo launch** of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile–Short Range (NASM-SR) from a naval helicopter off the coast of Bay of Bengal in **Odisha**.

#### **About NASM-SR Test:**

**Trial Achievement:** During the trial, two missiles were launched in quick succession from the same helicopter, marking the first-ever salvo launch of an advanced air-launched anti-ship missile system.

**Test Outcome:** All objectives were successfully achieved with tracking carried out using radar, electro-optical systems, and telemetry at the Integrated Test Range(ITR), Chandipur.

**Development:** The missile has been developed by the Research Centre Imarat(RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories.

### **MDL Delivers Sixth Project-17A Stealth Frigate ‘Mahendragiri’ to Indian Navy**

Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), a Navratna Defence Public Sector Undertaking(PSU) under the Ministry of Defence(MoD), delivered the advanced stealth frigate ‘**Mahendragiri (Y-12654)**’ under the Project 17A (Nilgiri-class) to the Indian Navy (IN).

- The Acceptance Document was signed at MDL, Mumbai(Maharashtra), by Capt Jagmohan (Retd.), Chairman & Managing Director(CMD) of MDL, and Rear Admiral Gautam Marwaha, Chief Staff Officer (Technical), Eastern Naval Command, in the presence of MDL Directors and senior officers of the IN.

#### **About Stealth Frigate ‘Mahendragiri’:**

**Induction:** It is the **sixth ship** delivered under Project 17A to the Indian Navy and the **fourth** frigate built by MDL, marking the completion of all Project 17A warships constructed at MDL.

- The other ships already delivered to the IN include Indian Naval Ship (INS) Nilgiri, INS Himgiri, INS Udaygiri, INS Taragiri, and INS Vindhya giri.

**Naming:** The ship is named after the Mahendragiri mountain peak located in the Eastern Ghats of Odisha.

**Design:** It was designed by the Warship Design Bureau (WDB) and overseen by the Warship Overseeing Team Mumbai, the project reflects the Indian Navy’s in-house expertise in advanced warship development.

### **India & Cambodia Begin Joint Military Exercise ‘CINBAX-II’ in Cambodia**

The Indian Army(IA) and the Royal Cambodian Army(RCA) commenced the second edition of the bilateral military exercise, **CINBAX-II**, at the Techo Sen Phnom Thom Mreas Prov Royal Cambodian Air Force Training Centre (Camp Basil) in Kampong Speu Province, Cambodia.

- The 13-day exercise is being conducted from May 4 to 17, 2026.

### **About CINBAX II:**

**Framework:** CINBAX-II, conducted under Chapter VII of the United Nation(UN) mandate, focuses on sub-conventional operations in jungle and semi-urban settings, aligned with current counter-terrorism challenges faced in UN peacekeeping missions.

### **Participants:**

- **IA:** The Indian contingent includes 120 personnel from Battalion of the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment.
- **RCA:** 160 personnel from Royal Cambodian Army.

**Focus:** The drill provides hands-on training in drone operations, mortar and sniper tactics, and joint tactical planning to simulate real-world security scenarios.

### **Galax Eye Launches World's First OptoSAR Satellite 'Drishti' Aboard SpaceX Falcon-9 from California, USA**

India's space start-up **GalaxEye Space Solutions** Private Limited launched 'Mission **Drishti**', the world's first OptoSAR Earth observation satellite, aboard a **SpaceX Falcon 9** rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base, California, the United States America (USA).

- OptoSAR is an Earth observation satellite that integrates Electro-Optical (EO)/Multispectral Imager (MSI) and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) sensors on a single operational platform.

### **About Mission Drishti OptoSAR Satellite:**

**Mass:** Weighs **190 kilograms** (kg), making it India's largest privately built Earth observation satellite with a compact, refrigerator-sized design and deployable antenna.

**Orbit:** Operates in a Sun-synchronous Low Earth Orbit (LEO) at  $\sim 500 \pm 10$  kilometer(km) altitude with a revisit frequency of about 4 days.

**Resolution:** Delivers  $\sim 1.5$  metre (m) resolution imagery (range: 1.2–3.6 m) with a global revisit cycle of 7–10 days, across X-band, Panchromatic (PAN), Red-Green-Blue (RGB), Near-Infrared (NIR), Coastal Blue (CB), and Red Edge (RE) spectral bands.

### **India Successfully Conducts 2nd Test of LR-AShM with 1500km range off Odisha Coast**

India successfully conducted the 2nd flight-test of Long-Range Hypersonic Anti-ship Missile (**LR-AShM**), developed specifically for the Indian Navy (IN), from Launch Complex-IV of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off **Odisha Coast**, marking a major milestone in India's push for defence self-reliance.

- The second flight test of the two-stage hypersonic glide vehicle successfully validated advanced terminal guidance, including mid-course manoeuvres and sustained high-speed flight, with all mission objectives achieved.

### **About Long-Range Hypersonic Anti-ship Missile (LR-AShM):**

**Speed and Strike Range:** During the test trial, the missile accurately struck its designated target at a distance of **1,500 kilometer** (km), with maximum speed of **Mach 10** (maintaining an average speed of around Mach 5 through multiple skips).

**Development:** The missile has been developed by Defence Research and Development

Organisation (**DRDO**) laboratories under the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex in Hyderabad(Telangana), in collaboration with industry partners.

### **DRDO Successfully Conducts 1,200-Second Scramjet Combustor Test in Hyderabad, Telangana**

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), through its laboratory Defence Research and Development Laboratory (**DRDL**), successfully conducted a long-duration test of an **Actively Cooled Full-Scale Scramjet Combustor** at the Scramjet Connect Pipe Test (SCPT) Facility in **Hyderabad**, Telangana, achieving a run-time of over **1,200 seconds**.

- The test was conducted to validate the combustor design and strengthen India's Hypersonic Cruise Missile Development Programme.
- Ground tests successfully validated the design of the advanced active cooled scramjet combustor and the capabilities of the state-of-the-art SCPT Facility.

### **Agni MIRV Missile Test:**

**Test:** India successfully conducted the flight trial of an advanced variant of the **Agni missile equipped** with Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicle (**MIRV**) technology from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, **Odisha**, targeting multiple locations across the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), using a single missile system and thereby enhancing defence preparedness. **Capabilities:** The missile was equipped with advanced navigation, precision guidance and re-entry technologies capable of withstanding extreme atmospheric temperatures, with reported re-entry speeds nearing Mach 24 under the advanced Agni-5 programme.

### **Indian Army Inducts Indigenous ULPGM and AGNIKAA VTOL-1 Kamikaze Drone from Adani**

The Indian Army (**IA**) inducted two indigenous combat systems, the UAV(Unmanned Aerial Vehicle)-Launched Precision Guided Munition (**ULPGM**) and **AGNIKAA VTOL-1** (Vertical Take-Off and Landing) First-Person View (**FPV**) **Kamikaze Drone**, under Emergency Procurement-6 (EP-6) from **Adani Defence & Aerospace Limited**, in Hyderabad, Telangana.

- The induction followed successful high-altitude and Electronic Warfare (EW) trials attended by Western Command of IA officials.

### **About ULPGM Loitering Munition:**

**Development:** ULPGM was co-developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**), Ministry of Defence (MoD) and **Adani Defence & Aerospace Limited**. **Capability:** It is India's first indigenous loitering munition in its category, equipped with an Imaging Infrared (IIR) seeker and capable of being launched from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to strike both stationary and moving targets.

### **About AGNIKAA VTOL-1:**

**Distinction:** AGNIKAA VTOL-1 is **India's first** FPV kamikaze drone in its category, designed as an anti-personnel precision-strike platform for urban warfare, confined spaces, and open battlefields.

**Performance:** It has an operational range of up to 5 km, endurance of 30 minutes, maximum

speed of 60 kilometer per hour (kmph), and a lethality radius of 5 m against personnel and soft-skinned vehicles.

### **USA Approves USD 428 Million Defence Packages for India's AH-64E Apache Helicopters and M777 Howitzers**

The **United States Department of State**, an executive department of the United States of America (USA), approved **two Foreign Military Sales (FMS)** sustainment packages worth **USD 428.2 million** for India.

- The approved packages include USD 198.2 million in support services for **AH-64E Apache attack helicopters** and USD 230 million for long-term sustainment support of **M777A2 ultra-light howitzers**.

#### **About the Packages:**

**Package 1:** The package includes sustainment services, contractor logistics support (CLS), engineering and technical assistance, logistics support, technical publications, personnel training, and programme support elements for the Indian Air Force (IAF) and Indian Army (IA)'s Army Aviation Corps (ACC) Apache fleet.

**Contractors:** Principal contractors for the package are Boeing Company, Arlington, Virginia, and Lockheed Martin Corporation, Bethesda, Maryland, USA.

**Package 2:** The package includes spare parts, repair-and-return services, depot capability, field service representatives (FSR), technical assistance, training, ancillary items, and programme support elements for long-term artillery maintenance.

**Contractor:** The principal contractor for the package is BAE Systems Inc.,(USA).

### **India's First AI-Powered Combat Aircraft 'Kaal Bhairava' to be Manufactured in Portugal**

Flying Wedge Defence & Aerospace (**FWDA**), a deep tech defence company, announced that its flagship Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV) '**Kaal Bhairava**' will be manufactured at its first international production facility in **Portugal**.

#### **Key Details:**

**Operation 777:** The initiative is part of "Operation 777," which aims to establish seven global headquarters across 77 countries.

**Collaboration:** The project is being developed in collaboration with **SKETCHPIXEL**, a European company known for advanced fighter jet simulation systems, including those for the F-16 aircraft.

**Key Roles:** Under the agreement, **SKETCHPIXEL** will provide simulation, AI integration, communication, and interoperability technologies, while **FWDA** will retain intellectual property rights over the core autonomous systems and airframe design.

**Capabilities:** **Kaal Bhairava** is an indigenous, designed, developed, and manufactured platform, engineered as a Medium-Altitude Long-Endurance (MALE) autonomous combat aircraft with a range of **3,000 kilometer(km)** and over 30 hours of endurance.

### **Russia Successfully Tests RS-28 Sarmat Intercontinental Ballistic Missile**

Russia successfully conducted the test of the RS-28 Sarmat Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (**ICBM**) from the Plesetsk cosmodrome in the north of Russia.

- Vladimir Putin, President of Russia described the newly launched Sarmat as the ‘world’s most powerful missile system’.

#### **About RS-28 Sarmat:**

**Predecessor:** RS-28 Sarmat, designated ‘Satan II’ by North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), is intended to replace 40 Soviet-built R-36M2 Voyevoda missiles.

**Payload Capacity:** 35 meters (m)-long RS-28 Sarmat, which weighs over 208 tonnes, is capable of carrying nearly 16 independently targeted smaller nuclear warheads and 10 large nuclear warheads.

- It is also capable of carrying Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle, designed to escape missile shields by changing course mid-flight at extreme speeds.

**Key Equipment:** It is equipped with Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs). It enables one missile to hit multiple targets simultaneously.

**Strike Range:** It has an estimated strike range of over 10,000 kilometres(km), while Russia claims its range can exceed 35,000 km.

#### **India Test-Fires Agni-1 Short-Range Ballistic Missile at Chandipur, Odisha**

India successfully test-fired the Agni-1 Short-Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at **Chandipur, Odisha**, under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), validating all operational and technical parameters of the missile system.

- The Agni-1 missile is part of India’s Agni series of ballistic missiles developed for strategic deterrence and capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads.

#### **About Agni-1 Missile Test 2026:**

**Missile:** Agni-1 is a single-stage, solid-fuelled, road-mobile SRBM with Transporter Erector Launcher (TEL) and rail-launch capability, designed for rapid deployment with a strike range of 700–900 kilometer (km), extendable up to 1,200 km in some configurations .

**Payload:** The missile can carry up to 1,000 kilogram (kg) of conventional or nuclear warheads and provides India with quick-reaction, high-precision strike capability under its credible minimum deterrence strategy.

**Development:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) developed Agni-1 under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP), and the missile was inducted into the Indian Armed Forces in 2004.

#### **Multinational Military Exercise PRAGATI 2026 Begins in Meghalaya**

The **first edition** of Multilateral Military Exercise Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region(**PRAGATI 2026**) at the Foreign Training Node (FTN), Umroi Military Station in Meghalaya.

- The two-week exercise, organised by the Indian Army (**IA**) is being conducted from May 18 to 31, 2026 with participation from 12 friendly nations across the Indian Ocean Region and Southeast Asia.

#### **About PRAGATI 2026:**

**Strategic Framework:** The exercise was conducted under India’s SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) Doctrine and the Neighbourhood First & Act East Policies, aimed at strengthening regional security cooperation and enhancing Indo-Pacific collaboration among

South Asian and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) nations.

**Focus:** The exercise focuses on counter-terrorism operations in jungle and semi-mountainous terrain.

**Participating Nations:** Along with India, military contingents from **12 countries** namely Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Vietnam are participating in the exercise, representing South Asia, Southeast Asia and the broader Indian Ocean Region.

### **Chandrayaan-2 Radar Detects Subsurface Ice in Lunar South Polar Craters**

India's **Chandrayaan-2 spacecraft** orbiting the Moon since **2019**, has revealed evidence of subsurface water ice deposits in permanently shadowed regions of lunar south polar craters.

- The study was conducted by scientists at the Physical Research Laboratory (**PRL**), **Ahmedabad**, Gujarat, and published in the Nature Portfolio Journal (NPJ) Space Exploration.

#### **Key Details of Findings:**

**Evidence:** A 1.1 kilo meter(km) crater in the Faustini Basin showed strong evidence of lunar ice, with radar signals and lobate-rim features indicating impact into an ice-rich subsurface that briefly flowed and refroze.

- The study examined '**doubly shadowed craters**' within the Moon's Permanently Shadowed Regions (PSRs).

**Detection Method:** The discovery was made using the Dual-Frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar (**DFSAR**), operates at L- and S-band frequencies, onboard Chandrayaan-2, which is capable of penetrating the Moon's surface and mapping subsurface structures.

**Significance:** The findings are highly important for future lunar exploration missions, as water ice can serve as a vital resource for sustaining human presence on the Moon, including oxygen generation, drinking water supply, and rocket fuel production.

**Chandrayaan-2:** Launched in July 2019, Chandrayaan-2 is India's second lunar exploration mission developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), aimed at enhancing scientific understanding of the Moon and generating important lunar data.

## Appointments or Resign/Retired

### Justice Anupinder Grewal Appointed as President of NCLT

Justice (Retd.) Anupinder Singh Grewal, former judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court(HC), was appointed **President** of the National Company Law Tribunal(NCLT) for a five-year term or until the age of 67, whichever is earlier, with approval from the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet(ACC).

- He succeeds **Bachu Venkat Balaram Das** who served as acting president of NCLT.
- The NCLT President is a former Chief Justice(CJ) of a HC, but this is the first time a former senior judge has been appointed to the post.

### About Justice Anupinder Singh Grewal:

**Profile:** He has over 30 years of legal and judicial experience and began his practice at the Punjab and Haryana High Court in 1992.

**Judicial Career:** He was appointed as an Additional Judge of the Punjab and Haryana HC on 25 September 2014, later transferred to the Rajasthan HC on 19 December 2014, where he became a Permanent Judge on 20 May 2016, and subsequently returned to the Punjab and Haryana HC, resuming charge on 5 October 2016.

**Legacy:** He handled civil, constitutional, criminal, service, and land acquisition cases, along with public interest litigations, for over 19 years on behalf of the Punjab and Haryana, key cases including writ petitions, arbitration matters, and service disputes.

**NCLT:** It was under Supreme Court scrutiny due to vacancies and delays in insolvency cases under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code(IBC), 2016.

### Government Appoints R Balasubramaniam, Joram Aniya as Full-Time Members of NITI Aayog

Prime Minister(PM) Narendra Modi, approved the appointment of **Dr. R. Balasubramaniam** and **Dr. Joram Aniya** as full-time members of National Institution for Transforming India(NITI Aayog).

- With these appointments, the total number of full-time members of NITI Aayog has increased from five to **seven**.
- Dr. Joram Aniya became the first individual from Arunachal Pradesh(AR) and the Northeast region to hold this position in India's policy think tank.

### About Dr. R. Balasubramaniam :

**Profile:** He was the founder of Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM) and the Grassroots Research and Advocacy Movement (GRAAM).

**Background:** Served as Member at the Capacity Building Commission under Mission Karmayogi and played a key role in developing the '**Karmayogi Competency Framework**'.

**Book:** 'Power Within: The Leadership Legacy Of Narendra Modi'.

### About Dr. Joram Aniya :

**Profile:** She was the first Nyishi woman to earn a Doctor of Philosophy(PhD) and the first in Arunachal Pradesh (AR) to do a doctorate in Hindi, authored and edited several books, contributing to literature and Nyishi culture.

**Background:** An academican with over 18 years of experience in teaching, research, and public policy engagement. She served as head of the Hindi department at DeraNatung Government College (DNGC), Itanagar, AR.

### **Writer-Lyricist Prasoon Joshi Appointed as Chairman of PrasarBharati**

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) has appointed National Award-winning lyricist **Prasoon Joshi**, as **Chairman of PrasarBharati(PB)**, India's public service broadcaster.

- He succeeded **Navneet Kumar Sehgal** who resigned in December 2025.

#### **About Prasoon Joshi:**

**Profile:** He is a renowned creative professional known for his contributions to literature, advertising, cinema, and public communication, with impactful writing and storytelling and administrative roles.

**Key Roles:** He previously served as CEO of McCann World Group India and Chairman of McCann World Group Asia Pacific, a subsidiary of McCann Erickson, and has also been a Trustee of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts since 2016.

**Previous Role:** Prior to this appointment, he served as Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), since August 2017.

**Awards:** He was awarded **Padma Shri**, India's fourth-highest civilian award in **2015**, in the field of Arts.

- He was recognised as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2006, and has received several honours, including Indian Film Personality of the Year (2021), along with multiple National Awards (2008, 2012) and Filmfare Awards (2007, 2014).

### **Govt Appoints Shashi ShekharVempati as CBFC Chairperson**

The Government of India (GoI) appointed **Shashi ShekharVempati**, former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PrasarBharati(PB), as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), for **three years** from the date of joining.

- He succeeds **Prasoon Joshi**, who has been appointed chairman of PB.

#### **About Shashi ShekharVempati :**

**Experience:** He spent 15 years at Infosys before transitioning into the fields of digital media and public policy.

**Key Roles:** He served as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PB from 2017 to 2022, leading digital initiatives across Doordarshan and All India Radio(AIR), and concurrently headed Rajya Sabha Television(TV) from 2017 to 2019.

- Earlier, he resigned as Director of the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC), a position he had held since 2024.

**Award:** He received the **Padma Shri**, fourth-highest civilian award , in 2026 in the field of Literature and Education.

### **FICCI Nominates Priyanka Mittal as Co-Chair of Saudi-India Business Council**

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (**FICCI**) nominated **Priyanka Mittal**, Director, KRBL(Khushi Ram &Behari Lal) Limited, as **Co-Chair** of the Saudi-India Business Council (**SIBC**).

- **Dr. Siddeek Ahmed**, Chairman of Eram Holdings, has been nominated as the Chair of the Indian side of the Council.

### **About Priyanka Mittal :**

**Profile:** She co-founded **Koosia**, a premium handbag brand, and transitioned from international finance to the family business.

**Institutional Roles:** Serves as President of the All-India Rice Exporters Association(AIREA), Chairperson of the Foreign Trade and Policy Committee at the Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) and Board Member of the University of Southern California's (USC) Viterbi School of Engineering Board of Councilors.

**Current Role:** She joined KRBL Limited, the company behind India Gate Basmati Rice, in 2001 and has been serving as its Whole-Time Director since 2008.

**Recognition:** Priyanka Mittal received the 'Business Woman of the Decade' award from the Women Economic Forum in 2018.

**About SIBC:** It was jointly formed by FICCI and the Federation of Saudi Chambers (FSC), is a key bilateral platform that promotes trade, investment, and economic cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia.

### **GoI Appoints Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani as Next CDS; Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan as CNS**

The Government of India (**GoI**) appointed Lieutenant General (Lt Gen) (Retired) **NS Raja Subramani** as the **3rd** Chief of Defence Staff (**CDS**) and Secretary of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), under the Ministry of Defence (MoD), with effect from May 30, 2026, succeeding Anil Chauhan, whose tenure concludes on the same date.

- **Vice Admiral KrishnaSwaminathan** was appointed as the **27th** Chief of the Naval Staff (**CNS**) of Indian Navy (**IN**) and will assume charge on May 31, 2026, succeeding **Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi**, who retires on the same date.

### **About the Appointments:**

#### **Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani:**

- **Current role:** Appointed as CDS after serving as Military Adviser at the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) under National Security Advisor (NSA) AjitDoval since September 1, 2025.

#### **Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan:**

- **Current Role:** Serving as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C), Western Naval Command, Mumbai (Maharashtra) since July 31, 2025 as the 34th commander of the formation after serving as the 46th Vice Chief of Naval Staff (VCNS).

### **Bulgaria parliament approves Rumen Radev as new Prime Minister**

National Assembly of Bulgaria formally elected and swore in former President **Rumen Radev** from Progressive Bulgaria party as **Prime Minister** of Bulgaria, with a majority of 124 out of 240 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

- It marks the country's **eighth parliamentary** election in five years followed the collapse of former Prime Minister Rosen Zhelyazkov's government in December 2025.

### **About Rumen Radev:**

**Career:** He holds the rank of Major General and served as a professional fighter pilot and commander of the Bulgarian Air Force (2014 to 2016) and became President of Bulgaria from 2017, re-elected in 2021.

- Resignation in January 2026 becoming the first head of state to resign in Bulgaria's post-Communist history to participate in the parliamentary elections held on April 2026.

**International Awards:** Order of Merit, Italy (2024), Order of Prince Henry Portugal (2022), Order of the Redeemer, Greece (2017)

### **SuwenduAdhikari Sworn-in as 9th CM of WB, 1st BJP CM in State**

SuwenduAdhikari, leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), officially sworn-in as the **9th** Chief Minister (CM) of West Bengal (WB), becoming the first leader from the BJP to hold the post in the state.

- He succeeded **Mamata Banerjee**, who served as WB's CM since 2011.

### **Key Highlights:**

**Administered by:** **Ravindra Narayana Ravi**, Governor of West Bengal, administered the oath of office and secrecy to SuwenduAdhikari and five ministers at a ceremony held at Brigade Parade Grounds in Kolkata, West Bengal.

**Election Result:** In the 2026 WB Legislative Assembly elections, the BJP won 207 of 294 seats, ending the 15-year rule of the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC), which secured 80 seats.

**Cabinet Induction:** Along with CM SuwenduAdhikari, senior BJP leaders including Dilip Ghosh, Agnimitra Paul, NisithPramanik, Ashok Kirtania, and KshudiramTuduwere inducted into the initial council of ministers.

### **TVK founder C. Joseph Vijay takes oath as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister**

C. Joseph Vijay (Perambur constituency), the founder of TamilagaVettriKazhagam (TVK), was sworn in as the **13th Chief Minister (CM) of Tamil Nadu** and officially succeeded **Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin**.

- The ceremony took place at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN), where Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath.
- **Udhayanidhi Stalin** of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) represents the Chepauk-Thiruvallikeni constituency officially took office as the 19th Leader of the Opposition in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

### **SAIL Appoints Ashok Kumar Panda as New Chairman and MD**

Ashok Kumar Panda has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), under the Ministry of Steel (MoS), effective from 9 May 2026.

- He succeeded **Krishna Kumar Singh**, who was holding additional charge as interim MD & CEO after Amarendu Prakash stepped down on 1 April 2026.

### **About Ashok Kumar Panda:**

**Profile:** He joined SAIL in 1992 as a Management Trainee (Technical) and has over three decades of experience across multiple plants and units in operational, financial, and commercial domains.

**Previous Roles:** Before becoming CMD, he served as Director (Finance) and Director (Commercial) in SAIL, Nominee Director on the board of International Coal Ventures Limited (ICVL), a joint venture (JV) of SAIL and represented the company on the boards of other Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).

**SAIL Target:** SAIL is on track to reach a massive production capacity of **35 MTPA** (Million Tonnes Per Annum), up from its current 20 MTPA.

### **Himanta Biswa Sarma Takes Oath As Chief Minister Of Assam For Second Consecutive Term**

**Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma**, leader of the BJP, Assam from Jalukbari constituency, was sworn in as the **Chief Minister (CM) of Assam** for a second consecutive term, becoming the **first non-Congress leader** in Assam to serve two successive terms as CM.

- The ceremony took place at Veterinary College Ground in Khanapara, Guwahati, where Lakshman Prasad Acharya, Governor of Assam, administered the oath of office and secrecy as per the **Third Schedule** of the Constitution. Based on **Article 164** the Governor appoints the Chief Minister.

**Profile:** Himanta Biswa Sarma was born in 1969 in Jorhat, Assam.

**Other Key Roles:** President of the Badminton Association of India (BAI) since 2017 and was re-elected for 2022–2026.

**Global Recognition:** Member of the Badminton World Federation (BWF) Council (2021-2025), Vice President of Badminton Asia (BA) since 2019.

### **CII Elects R Mukundan as President, Suchitra Ella as President-Designate**

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) elected **R Mukundan** as its **President** for 2026–27 after the newly constituted National Council announced the new office-bearers. He succeeded **Rajiv Memani** in the role.

- The CII also elected **Suchitra Ella** as President-Designate and **Shashwat Goenka** as Vice President for the 2026–27 term.

#### **About R Mukundan:**

**Academic Recognition:** He is a Fellow of the Indian Chemical Society and has received an honorary doctorate in Business Administration from XIM University, Odisha.

**Career:** He joined the Tata Administrative Service (TAS) in 1990 and has over 30 years of experience.

**CII Roles:** He served as Chairman of the Western Region of the CII during 2013–14. He also served as CII Vice President during 2024–25 and President-Designate for 2025–26.

### **AINRC Leader N. Rangasamy Takes Oath as CM of Puducherry**

N. Rangasamy, the leader of the All India N.R. Congress (AINRC) from Thattanchavady and Mangalam constituencies, was sworn in as the Chief Minister(**CM**) of **Puducherry** for a fifth term, after the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) secured a majority in 2026 Assembly polls. With this, he became the first leader in the history of the Union Territory of Puducherry to serve as CM for a fifth term.

- The oath of office and secrecy was administered by the Lieutenant Governor (**LG**), **Kuniyil Kailashnathan**, at Lok Nivas, Puducherry.
- Along with CM N. Rangasamy, two cabinet members: **Malladi Krishna Rao** from the regional party and **A. Namassivayam** of the Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP), also took oath as ministers in the AINRC-led NDA government.

#### **Background:**

**Election Results:** In the 33-member Puducherry Legislative Assembly, the NDA secured **18 seats**, crossing the majority mark of 17 seats. Among the alliance partners, the AINRC won 12 seats, the BJP secured 4 seats, while the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam(AIADMK) and Latchiya Jananayaga Katchi(LJK) won one seat each.

**Opposition Performance:** Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA) secured 6 seats. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) emerged as the main opposition, winning 5 seats, while the INC was reduced to 1 seat.

### **Jio Platforms Appoints Akash Ambani as MD for Five-Year Term**

Jio Platforms Limited (**JPL**), the digital services arm of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), appointed **Akash Ambani** as its first Managing Director (**MD**) for a **five-year term** effective from April 9, 2026.

#### **About Akash Ambani:**

**Background:** Akash Ambani, the eldest son of Mukesh Ambani, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Reliance Industries, joined the Board of Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited (RJIL) in October 2014, currently serves as its Chairman since June 2022.

**Retail:** He also serves as Director on the board of Reliance Retail Ventures Limited (RRVL) and

contributed to India's data and digital connectivity revolution.

**Sports:** He is the co-owner of Mumbai Indians, a five-time Indian Premier League (IPL) champion franchise, and promotes football through the Indian Super League (ISL).

**Recognition:** He was included in the TIME100 Next 2022 list by TIME as one of the world's rising leaders for shaping the future through extraordinary contributions.

### **Ali Falih Kadhim al-Zaidi Sworn in as Iraq's Youngest Prime Minister**

Ali Falih Kadhim al-Zaidi, who was nominated by the Coordination Framework sworn in as the new Prime Minister (PM) of Iraq and Commander-in-Chief of the country's Armed Forces. At 40 years old, al-Zaidi makes history as the **youngest Prime Minister** in Iraq's modern history.

- The official ceremony was held in Baghdad, Iraq, where outgoing PM **Mohammed Shia al-Sudani** formally transferred power to the new administration.

**Cabinet Approval:** During a session chaired by Speaker Haibet al-Halbousi, the Parliament and the government program approved 14 out of 23 ministerial positions in a session attended by 266 lawmakers. Approval of the remaining portfolios was delayed due to ongoing negotiations.

- Cabinet formation in Iraq often involves coalition bargaining among political blocs.

### **Vadasseri Damodara Menon Satheesan Takes Oath as CM of Kerala**

Vadasseri Damodara Menon Satheesan (V. D. Satheesan), represents the Paravur Assembly constituency in Kerala, was sworn in as the **13th Chief Minister (CM) of Kerala** at Central Stadium, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala), along with a 20-member cabinet, following the victory of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the Kerala Assembly Elections 2026.

- The oath of office and secrecy was administered by **Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar**, Governor of Kerala.
- He succeeded **Pinarayi Vijayan**, who served as CM from May 2016 to May 2026.

### **About Vadasseri Damodara Menon Satheesan:**

**Profile:** He is an Indian politician and lawyer who began his political career through the Kerala Students Union (KSU).

**Political Entry:** He entered legislative politics in 1996 from the Paravur constituency while practising as a lawyer and won the seat in 2001 before retaining it consecutively in 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021, and 2026.

### **Saurabh Vijay Assumes Charge as CEO of UIDAI**

Saurabh Vijay officially assumed charge as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), the nodal agency responsible for Aadhaar operations under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

- He succeeded **Vivek Chandra Verma**, Deputy Director General of UIDAI, who was holding additional charge as CEO since April 2026, following the elevation of former

CEO Bhuvnesh Kumar as Secretary of the Department of Tourism(DoT) under the Ministry of Tourism(MoT).

### **ACC Extends Tenure of NCB Director General Anurag Garg Till July 2027**

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, extended the deputation tenure of **Anurag Garg**, Director General (DG) of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), till 31 July 2027.

- He was appointed DG of the NCB in September 2024 following the retirement of **Satya Narayan (S.N) Pradhan**, who served as DG from July 2021 to August 2024.

#### **About Anurag Garg:**

**Profile:** He is a 1993 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Himachal Pradesh (HP) cadre.

**Postings:** In the HP Police, he served as Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) in Shimla, HP, Aide-de-Camp (ADC) to the Governor of HP, and Superintendent of Police (SP) in Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) and Kullu districts HP.

**Leadership:** He later served as Deputy Inspector General (DIG) in Mandi district, HP, where he introduced systematic security infrastructure reforms, and as Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) for Law and Order and the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) between November 2018 and early 2021.

**About NCB:** It was established in 1986 under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as India's apex anti-drug law enforcement and intelligence agency functioning under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985.

### **RBI Approves Reappointment of Sandeep Bakhshi as ICICI Bank MD & CEO till 2028**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the reappointment of **Sandeep Bakhshi** as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **ICICI Bank** for a further term of two years.

#### **Key Highlights:**

**New Tenure Period:** Sandeep Bakhshi's new tenure as MD & CEO of ICICI Bank will begin on October 4, 2026, and continue till October 3, 2028.

**Approval Requirement:** The reappointment of Sandeep Bakhshi is subject to shareholders' approval and other applicable statutory clearances.

**Leadership:** Sandeep Bakhshi has been leading ICICI Bank since 2018 and has overseen a major transformation phase for the bank, including strengthening its retail loan portfolio, improving asset quality, and expanding digital banking operations.

**ICICI Bank:** It is an Indian multinational banking and financial services company established in 1994, headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, with its registered office located in Vadodra, Gujarat.

### **Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar Assumes Charge as 48th Vice Chief of Naval Staff**

Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar, Commander-in-Chief(CoC), Andaman and Nicobar(A&N) Command, assumed charge as the **48th** Vice Chief of the Naval Staff (VCNS) of the Indian Navy (IN).

- He succeeded **Vice Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan**, who has taken over as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Western Naval Command.

**About Ajay Kochhar:**

**Profile:** Commissioned into the IN's Executive Branch in July 1988, he is a Gunnery and Missile Systems specialist with over 37 years of distinguished service across command, operational, and staff appointments.

**Leadership:** He has commanded Indian Navy Ships (**INS**) Nashak, Vibhuti, and Kirpan, served as the Commissioning Commanding Officer of INS Trikand, and also led the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, where he oversaw the successful integration and operationalisation of its air wing.

**Awards:** He is a recipient of the NauSena Medal (NM) and was honoured with the AtiVishishtSeva Medal (AVSM) in 2022 and the ParamVishishtSeva Medal (PVSM) in 2026 for his distinguished leadership and meritorious service.

## Honours/ Awards

### **Pulitzer Prize 2026: Anand RK, Suparna Sharma honoured for India's digital arrest expose**

The Pulitzer Board announced the winners of 110th Pulitzer Prize (2026) under the categories such as: Journalism, Books, Drama and Music, and Special Citations.

- This year, The **New York Times (NYT)** won **3** awards in different categories of Pulitzer Prize (including for investigative reporting). With this, NYT increased its total Pulitzer prizes to 142, a record high since the awards started in 1917.
- It is followed by **Reuters** which secured 2 Pulitzer prizes in prominent categories like: national reporting and beat reporting, bringing the total number of Pulitzer prizes won by Reuters to **15**, including 8 for reporting and 7 for photography, all since 2008.

#### **Key Winners:**

**Public Service:** Washington Post won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for its reporting on the American President Donald Trump administration's sweeping cut to federal agencies.

**Indian Winners:** This year, two Indian journalists namely, **Anand RK** and **Suparna Sharma**, along with their Bloomberg colleague Natalie Obiko Pearson, won the Pulitzer Prize in the 'Illustrated Reporting and Commentary' category for their report '**trAPPed**', exposing cybercrime like 'digital arrest'.

**Special Citation:** Miami Herald reporter Julie K. Brown was honoured with a special citation for her groundbreaking reporting in 2017 and 2018 that exposed Jeffrey Epstein's abuse of young women and the powerful network that protected him.

### **Skyroot Aerospace Becomes India's 1st Space-tech Unicorn, Raises USD 60 million**

A private Indian space launch startup Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited became India's first space-tech unicorn after raising USD 60 million (around Rs 570 crore), taking its valuation to **USD 1.1 billion**, nearly double its 2023 valuation of about USD 550 million.

- With this latest funding round, the company's total funding crossed USD 160 million (around Rs 1,500 crore).

#### **Key Details:**

**Unicorn Milestone:** With the latest funding round, Skyroot Aerospace became the **fourth startup** to enter India's unicorn club in 2026, following KreditBee, Neysa, and Juspay.

**Funding:** The funding round was co-led by American billionaire investor **Ram Shriram's** (existing board member of Google's parent company Alphabet) **Sherpalo Ventures** and Singapore's sovereign wealth fund **GIC**.

**Funds Utilization:** The capital will be utilized to accelerate the development of launch vehicles such as **Vikram-1**, built on the success of Vikram-S rocket, India's first private launch (launched in 2022).

### **JGU Becomes India's 1st IoE to Receive Data Science Council of America Accreditation**

O.P. Jindal Global University (**JGU**), in Sonipat, Haryana, becomes India's first Institute of Eminence (**IoE**) to be accredited by the Data Science Council of America (**DASCA**), an

international standards body that provides accreditation for academic institutions and certification for professionals in data science and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

- This recognition consolidates JGU's position at the forefront of higher education's most consequential segment i.e. the integration of AI and data science into the academic ecosystem.

#### **About DASCAs Accreditation :**

**Awarded under:** JGU received this accreditation under the World Data Sciences & AI Initiative (WDSAI), an international platform led by DASCAs, supporting universities in adopting internationally benchmarked standards.

**Accreditation Programs:** Seven of JGU's flagship AI and Data Science-related programmes such as: Master of Science(M.Sc) in AI & Data Science; Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in AI & Law; Bachelor of Business Administration Honours (BBA Hons.) in Business Analytics among others, have been successfully aligned with DASCAs standards prescribed under the WDSAI framework.

**Key Areas:** The accreditation, valid through 2031, covers residential, non-residential, and online delivery formats.

overs residential, non-residential, and online delivery formats.

#### **National Panchayat Awards 2025: 42 Panchayats Recognised; Karnataka Tops with 6 Awards**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) announced the winners of the National Panchayat Awards 2025 (NPA-2025), recognising **42 Panchayats** from across the country for their excellence in rural governance, sustainable development, sanitation, infrastructure, and grassroots level leadership.

- Karnataka topped the NPA 2025 with 6 awards, followed by Odisha and Andhra Pradesh(AP) with 5 awards each.

#### **About NPA 2025:**

**DDUPSVP: 34 Gram Panchayats (GP)** span across 17 States and Union Territories (UTs) have been selected under Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP) that also includes joint winners.

- These awards have been linked to the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0 scores.

**NDSPSVP:** This year, **8 Panchayats** have been selected as winners under Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (NDSPSVP-2025), comprising 3 under the Best District Panchayat category, 2 under Best Block Panchayat and 3 under Best Gram Panchayat (GP) category.

**Prominent Winners: New Napam Gaon Panchayat (Assam)** bagged India's Best GP award under NDSPSVP 2025, earning a monetary prize of Rs 1.5 crore.

- It is followed by Telcup (Bihar), Biraharu (Uttar Pradesh, UP) ranked at 2nd and 3rd positions, with monetary prize of Rs 1.25 crore and Rs 1 crore, respectively.

### 3 Jan Suraksha Schemes: PMSBY, PMJJBY and APY Completes 11 years

Three 'Jan Suraksha' schemes, comprising : Pradhan Mantri Suraksha BimaYojana (**PMSBY**), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (**PMJJBY**), and Atal Pension Yojana (**APY**). These 3 flagship schemes of the Government of India (GoI) were designed to provide affordable financial protection to all, particularly the underserved and vulnerable sections of society.

- These social security schemes were officially launched by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi on **May 09 2015** in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB).
- So far, **27.43 crore**, **58.09 crore** and **9.04 crore** enrolments have been done under PMJJBY, PMSBY & APY respectively till April 2026.

**About PMJJBY:** It is a one-year cover, renewable year-to-year scheme, is designed to provide Life Insurance cover for death due to any reason at a premium of **less than Rs 2 per day**.

- It is administered by Life Insurance Corporation of India (**LIC**), though participating banks or post offices may partner with any life insurance company for its implementation.
- As on April 29 2026, the combined enrolments under PMJJBY have been over 27.43 crore and an amount of Rs. 21,512.50 crore has been paid for 10,75,625 claims.

**About PMSBY:** It aims to provide accidental death and disability cover for death or disability on account of an accident, up to Rs 2 Lakhs, at an affordable premium of less than Rs.2 per month.

- It is administered by the Ministry of Finance (**MoF**), and is implemented through Public Sector General Insurance Companies (PSGICs) and other General Insurance companies in collaboration with banks and post offices for enrollment and premium collection.
- As on April 29 2026, the cumulative enrolments under PMSBY have been over 58.09 crore and an amount of Rs. 3,667.52 crore has been disbursed for 1,84,662 claims.

### ISRO Scientist Kuljeet Kaur Marhas Becomes First Indian Woman Fellow of Meteoritical Society

Indian Space and Research Organisation (ISRO) scientist **Kuljeet Kaur Marhas**, became the **first Indian woman** to be elected as a **Fellow of the Meteoritical Society** for 2026, one of the world's most prestigious honours in meteoritics and planetary science.

- She has become the **3rd Indian** scientist honoured with this fellowship, only after **Devendra Lal** and **JN Goswami**.

#### About Kuljeet Kaur Marhas:

**Recognition:** With this honour, Kuljeet Kaur Marhas joined an elite group of international scientists recognised for their outstanding contributions to planetary materials research and studies on the origins of the Solar System.

**Current Role :** Currently, she is working as a professor in the Planetary Science Division at Physical Research Laboratory(PRL), autonomous unit of Department of Space (DOS) and premier research institute of ISRO, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

### **Nepal's Kami Rita Sherpa and Lhakpa Sherpa Break Own Mount Everest Climbing Records**

Nepali mountaineers **Kami Rita Sherpa**, known as the 'Everest Man,' and **Lhakpa Sherpa**, known as the 'Mountain Queen,' created history by scaling the 8,849-metre (m) (29,032 feet) Mount Everest for the 32nd and 11th times respectively, breaking their own world records for the highest number of Everest ascents in the male and female categories.

#### **About Nepali mountaineers:**

**Kami Rita:** He first climbed Mount Everest in 1994 after starting his career as a porter and later guided climbers for 14 Peaks Expedition in 2026. He became the first person to achieve 22 Everest ascents in 2018 after jointly holding the 21-ascent record with Apa Sherpa and Phurba Tashi Sherpa in 2017.

- He also climbed K2 (in the border of Pakistan & China), Mount Lhotse (Nepal & China border), Manaslu (Nepal), and Cho Oyu (Nepal and China border).

**Lhakpa Sherpa:** She first summited Everest in 2000, later emerging as a professional guide, and featured in the 2023 documentary *Mountain Queen*.

**About Mt Everest:** Mount Everest, known as Sagarmatha in Nepali and Chomolungma in Tibetan, stands on the Nepal–China border and was first climbed in 1953 by Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay.

### **Actor Ishaan Khatter Receives Honorary Membership of 45 Cavalry Regiment**

Actor Ishaan Khatter was conferred with an honorary membership of the 45 Cavalry Regiment of the **Indian Armoured Corps** for his portrayal of a 45 Cavalry officer in the film 'Pippa' and for showing respect towards the regiment's ethos and legacy.

#### **About Ishaan Khatter Honour:**

**Recognition:** Ishaan Khatter was honoured for portraying 'Captain Balram Mehta' in 'Pippa' and representing the values of the 45 Cavalry Regiment.

**About Film:** *Pippa*, directed by Raja Krishna Menon and produced by RSVP Movies and Roy Kapur Films, is based on the book "*The Burning Chaffees*" by Balram Singh Mehta.

**Recent Achievements:** He was recognised for projects like *Homebound* and *The Royals*, and became the only Indian male actor featured in the **2026 Gold House Gold 100 list**.

### **UNESCO-L'Oréal Recognises Five Women Scientists with 2026 International Awards for Women in Science**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Fondation L'Oréal honoured five outstanding women scientists with the UNESCO–L'Oréal International Awards for Women in Science 2026 .

- The 2026 awardees includes Professor Liesl Zühlke from South Africa; Professor Felice Jacka from Australia; Professor Sarah A. Teichmann from United

Kingdom(UK); Professor Raquel Lia Chan from Argentina; and Professor Gordana Vunjak-Novakovic from the United States(USA).

### **2026 Awards Highlights:**

**Award Ceremony:** The UNESCO–L’Oréal For Women in Science International Awards 2026 will be presented at UNESCO headquarters in Paris(France) on 11 June, 2026.

**Jury:** The selection was made by an independent international jury chaired by Professor **Brigitte L Kieffer**, Research Director Emeritus at France’s National Institute for Health and Medical Research and a former laureate of the programme.

**Areas of Recognition:** This year’s laureates were honoured for their contribution to life and environmental sciences, including cardiovascular care, nutritional psychiatry, single-cell biology, agricultural biotechnology and tissue engineering.

### **Taiwanese YángShuāng-zǐ and Lin King Wins International Booker Prize 2026 for ‘Taiwan Travelogue’**

Taiwanese author **YángShuāng-zǐ** and Taiwanese-American translator **Lin King** won the **2026 International Booker Prize** for ‘**Taiwan Travelogue**’, the first Mandarin Chinese novel to receive the award, at a ceremony held at Tate Modern in London, United Kingdom (UK).

- YángShuāng-zǐ became the first Taiwanese author, while Lin King became the first Taiwanese-American translator to receive the award.

### **About Taiwan Travelogue:**

**Overview:** Taiwan Travelogue is a historical fiction novel originally published in Mandarin Chinese in 2020 by Springhill Publishing, later translated into Japanese by Chuokoron-Shinsha and translated into English by Taiwanese-American translator Lin King in 2024, with the English edition published by Graywolf Press.

**Awards:** The novel also won the 2024 National Book Award for Translated Literature (United States of America, USA), Japan’s Best Translation Award in 2024 translated by Yūko Miura, and Taiwan’s Golden Tripod Award in 2021, Taiwan’s highest literary honor.

**Cash Prize:** The award carried a cash prize of 50,000 British Pound Sterling (GBP), shared equally between the author YángShuāng-zǐ and the translator Lin King, while each shortlisted author-translator pair received 5,000 GBP.

### **HAL’s K.K. Venugopal Becomes First Indian Test Pilot Elected Fellow of SETP, USA**

Group Captain Kolal Krishnamurthy (**K.K.**) **Venugopal (Retd)**, Executive Group of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), became the **first Indian test pilot** to be elected as a **Fellow** of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots (**SETP**), United States of America (USA).

- The recognition honours his outstanding contributions to experimental flight testing, aerospace innovation, and India’s indigenous defence aviation programmes

### **About K.K. Venugopal:**

**Career:** Commissioned into the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force (IAF) in December 1989, K.K. Venugopal flew multiple variants of the MiG-21 and later commanded the elite No. 15 Squadron “Flying Lances”, operating the MiG-21 Bis FR (Fighter Reconnaissance) aircraft.

**Transition to HAL:** He took voluntary retirement from the IAF in 2016 before joining the design and development ecosystem of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

**Current Role:** He currently serves as Executive Director(ED) and Chief Test Pilot (Fixed Wing)

at HAL.

**Awards & Recognition:** He received the Vayu Sena Medal (VSM) in 2004 for exceptional skill in safely handling post-takeoff technical failures and successfully landing the Saras prototype aircraft.

**SETP:** It is an international organisation that aims to promote air safety and contribute to aeronautical advancements.

### **ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 Receives 2026 AIAA Goddard Astronautics Award**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s Chandrayaan-3 mission received the 2026 Goddard Astronautics Award from the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) at the (Accelerating Space Commerce, Exploration, and New Discovery) **ASCEND 2026 Conference** in Washington D.C., United States of America (USA).

- The award was presented for achieving the **world's first soft landing near the Moon's south pole on 23 August 2023**, with India's Ambassador to the USA, **Vinay Kwatra** accepting the award on behalf of ISRO.

#### **About 2026 AIAA Goddard Astronautics Award:**

**Achievement:** Chandrayaan-3 was recognised for its successful Moon landing, contribution to lunar exploration research, and confirmation of key chemical elements in the lunar south polar soil, generating scientific data useful for future human missions and lunar resource utilisation.

**Milestone:** The successful soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 near the Moon's south pole made India the fourth country after the Soviet space programme (Russia), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) (USA), and China National Space Administration (CNSA) (China), to successfully land on the Moon.

**Significance:** The lunar south pole is scientifically important because of possible water ice reserves, while the mission strengthened India's position among leading spacefaring nations and showcased capabilities in autonomous landing and deep-space exploration technologies.

### **IIT Kanpur Director Manindra Agrawal & DrSoumyaSwaminathan Elected as Fellows of Royal Society**

Professor Manindra Agrawal, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh (UP), and DrSoumyaSwaminathan, former Chief Scientist of the World Health Organization (WHO), were elected as Fellows of the Royal Society (FRS), one of the world's oldest and most prestigious scientific academies.

- With this, they joined an elite group of the world's most distinguished scientists as Fellows of the Royal Society (FRS), including Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, and Charles Darwin.

#### **About 2026 Fellow of Royal Society:**

**Manindra Agrawal:** He received the honour for his pioneering contributions to theoretical computer science, especially the **AKS(Agrawal–Kayal–Saxena) primality test**, a breakthrough algorithm that transformed the way mathematicians understand and identify prime numbers.

- He was conferred with the **Padma Shri**, India's fourth-highest civilian award, in the field of Science and Engineering in 2013.

**Dr Soumya Swaminathan:** She is a globally recognized public health and clinical scientist, has made significant contributions to tuberculosis research, child health, and global health policy. As the former Chief Scientist at WHO, she played a key role in shaping international health responses and research coordination.

- **Dr Soumya Swaminathan** became the 2nd Indian woman, after Dr. Gagandeep Kang in 2019, to be elected as a FRS.

### **Two Indian-Origin Scientists Conferred South Africa's Highest Civilian Honour**

South African President **Cyril Ramaphosa** conferred the country's highest civilian honour, the **Order of Mapungubwe**, on Indian-origin Professor **Salim Abdool Karim** (Gold) and Professor **KeertanDheda** (Silver) for their exceptional contributions to medical science, epidemiology, and health policy during a National Orders ceremony in Pretoria, South Africa.

#### **About Professor Salim Abdool Karim:**

**Citation:** Honoured for his key contributions to medical science and public health, especially his research on Human Immunodeficiency Virus (**HIV**), Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (**AIDS**), and Tuberculosis (**TB**).

**Leadership:** Honoured for his “tireless leadership and swift response during the **COVID-19 pandemic**,” which supported South Africa's early, data-driven response. His work bridges laboratory research with community healthcare services.

#### **About Professor KeertanDheda:**

**Citation:** Honoured for his pioneering research in **pulmonology**, which has improved the clinical and public health management of **tuberculosis (TB)** and drug-resistant respiratory infections.

**Leadership:** An internationally acclaimed expert whose clinical expertise and research have led to significant scientific breakthroughs and influenced public health policies across multiple countries.

### **Major Abhilasha Barak honoured with UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award 2025**

Major Abhilasha Barak, Indian Army(IA) was announced as the recipient of 2025 United Nations(UN) **Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award**, as confirmed by the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations.

- Barak is recognised for her community outreach for women and adolescent girls and for conducting gender sensitisation training for UN peacekeepers in Lebanon, becoming the third recipient of the award from India.

**Career:** She completed her training at the Combat Army Aviation Training School (**CAATS**), Nashik, Maharashtra, earning her “wings” as the **first woman combat helicopter pilot** of Indian Army after joining the Army Aviation Corps in 2022.

- She was formally qualified to co-pilot the indigenous Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopter (**ALH**) weaponised platforms in the Army Aviation Corps.

**Current Role:** Major Barak served with distinction as Commander of the Female Engagement Team (FET) in the Indian Battalion (INDBATT-XXVI) deployed with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

### **Cannes Film Festival 2026: Cristian Mungiu's Fjord Wins Palme d'Or; Andrey Zvyagintsev's 'Minotaur' Secures Grand Prix**

The 79th annual Cannes International Film Festival 2026 was held from 12-23 May 2026 at the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès in **Cannes, France**, where Romanian director **Cristian Mungiu** won the **Palme d'Or** for his drama 'Fjord', while Russian director **Andrey Zvyagintsev** received the Grand Prix for his political thriller drama 'Minotaur'.

- Cristian Mungiu became a two-time Palme d'Or winner, with strong thematic focus on war, displacement, and political cinema.

### **About Cannes International Film Festival 2026:**

**Jury Prize:** The Jury Prize awarded to "The Dreamed Adventure" by Valeska Grisebach (Germany) while the Best Director award was shared between Javier Calvo & Javier Ambrossi (Spain) for "La Bola Negra" and Paweł Pawlikowski (Poland) for "Fatherland".

**Acting:** The Best Actor award was shared by Emmanuel Macchia and Valentin Campagne (Belgium) for "Coward", while the Best Actress award was shared by Virginie Efira (Belgium-France) and Tao Okamoto (Japan) for "All Of A Sudden".

**Screenplay:** The Best Screenplay award was given to Emmanuel Marre (France) for "A Man of His Time".

**Debut:** The Caméra d'Or (Best First Film) was awarded to "Ben'Imana" by Marie-Clémentine Dusabejambo (Rwanda).

## Sports

### Jharkhand's Swimmer Ishank Singh Sets World Record for Youngest and Fastest Palk Strait Crossing

Seven-year-old **Ishank Singh** from Ranchi, Jharkhand, set a **world record** by swimming about **29 kilometer** (km) across the Palk Strait from Talaimannar (Sri Lanka) to Dhanushkodi (Tamil Nadu, TN) in 9 hours 50 minutes, becoming the youngest and fastest swimmer on this route

#### About Achievement:

**Features:** The swim involved a highly challenging route between TN (India) and Jaffna (Sri Lanka), known for strong currents, high waves, and unpredictable weather, connecting the Bay of Bengal and Gulf of Mannar.

**Record:** He was recognised by the Universal Records Forum (**URF**) as the Youngest and Fastest Palk Strait Swimmer, surpassing the previous record set by **Jay Jashwanth** (10 hours 30 minutes) in 2019.

**Significance:** Demonstrates exceptional youth endurance, highlights emerging sports talent, and underscores the role of structured training in achieving high-level physical feats.

### BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2026: Chinese Men, South Korean Women Team Won Titles in Denmark

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2026, marking the **34th** edition of the **Thomas Cup** (men's world team championship) and the **31st** edition of the **Uber Cup** (women's world team championship), were held at Horsens, **Denmark** from April 24 to May 3, 2026.

- The **People's Republic of China men's team** won the Thomas Cup 2026 title by defeating France 3–1, marking their 13th overall title, while the **Republic of Korea women's team** won the Uber Cup 2026 title by defeating China 3–1, securing their third title.

#### About BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2026:

**Format:** Sixteen teams per event are divided into four groups of four, with the top two teams advancing to the quarter-finals, followed by a knockout stage played in a best-of-five format where ties end at three wins.

**2026 Thomas Cup:** China won Gold, with France taking silver, while Denmark and India secured bronze medals as losing semi-finalists.

**2026 Uber Cup:** Gold was won by South Korea, with China taking silver, while Japan and Indonesia secured bronze medals as losing semi-finalists.

### Shanghai Hyundai Archery World Cup Stage 2: India Women's Recurve Team Wins Gold

The 20th edition of the Shanghai Hyundai Archery World Cup Stage 2, was held in **Shanghai, People's Republic of China**, from **5th May to 11th May 2026**, where India won two medals, including a **gold** by the **women's recurve team** and a **bronze** medal by **SahilJadhav** in the men's individual compound event.

- **Türkiye** topped the medal tally with 6 medals (2 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze), followed by **China** with 5 medals (2 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze) and **South Korea** with 5 medals (2 gold, 1 silver and 2 Bronze).

#### **About Archery World Cup Stage 2:**

**Overview:** The 2026 Hyundai Archery World Cup is the annual international archery circuit organised by World Archery and is being held from 7 April to 13 September 2026 in 5 stages.

#### **India's Gold Medal:**

- **Gold:** India's women's recurve team comprising Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Kumkum Mohod won the gold medal after defeating China 5-4 (28-26) in the shoot-off final following a comeback from 2-4 behind, marking India's first women's recurve team gold at the Archery World Cup since 2021.

**Bronze:** Sahil Jadhav won the bronze medal in the Men's Individual Compound event after defeating Denmark's Martin Damsbo 147-144, securing his first career Archery World Cup medal.

#### **Asian Weightlifting Championships 2026: India Clinches 10 Medals, China Leads with 41**

The Asian Weightlifting Championships (AWC) 2026 was held at Mahatma Mandir Convention & Exhibition Centre, Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 11-17 May 2026, where **India** won **10 medals** including **1 silver and 9 bronze**, while **China** topped the medal tally with **41 medals** (21 gold, 12 silver, 8 bronze).

- **North Korea** finished second with 30 medals (18 gold, 11 silver, 1 bronze), while **Chinese Taipei** secured third place with 13 medals (3 gold, 7 silver, 3 bronze).

#### **About Asian Weightlifting Championships (AWC) 2026:**

**Organizer:** The 2026 AWC is organised by the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWLF) under the regulations of the Asian Weightlifting Federation (AWF) and the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF).

**Edition:** The 2026 event marked the 54th edition of the men's tournament and the 35th edition of the women's tournament.

**Indian Medalist:** Gyaneshwari Yadav secured a **silver medal** in the women's 53 kilogram (kg) snatch event along with a bronze medal in the overall category.

**Other Bronze:** Komal Kohar, Ajith Narayana, Harjinder Kaur, and Sanjana won bronze medals in different categories.

#### **Italian Open Tennis 2026: Jannik Sinner & Elina Svitolina won Men's & Women's Singles Title**

The 83rd edition of the **Italian Open 2026**, officially known as the **Internazionali BNL d'Italia 2026**, was an annual professional tennis tournament held from 5-17 May 2026 at Foro Italico in **Rome, Italy**.

- In Men's singles, Italy's **Jannik Sinner** defeated Norway's Casper Ruud with a scoreline of 6-4, 6-4 to win the Italian Open 2026 title.

- In Women's singles, Ukraine's **Elina Svitolina** overcame the United States America (USA)'s Coco Gauff 6–4, 6–7(3), 6–2 to clinch the title.

#### **About Italian Open Tennis 2026:**

**Classification:** The Italian Open 2026 was held as an Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) 1000 event on the 2026 ATP Tour and a Women's Tennis Association (WTA) 1000 event on the 2026 WTA Tour, featuring clay-court ATP Masters 1000 and WTA 1000 competitions.

**Men's Doubles:** Italian pair Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori defeated Marcel Granollers (Spain) and Horacio Zeballos (Argentina) 7-6(8), 6-7(3), 10-3 to become the first Italian duo since 1960 to win the Rome men's doubles title.

**Women's Doubles:** Russia's Diana Shnaider and Mirra Andreeva won the women's doubles title against Cristina Bucşa (Spain) and Nicole Melichar-Martinez (USA).

#### **Italian Mercedes driver KimiAntonelli Wins Canadian Grand Prix 2026**

19-year-old Italian Mercedes driver **KimiAntonelli** won the **64th** edition of the **Canadian Grand Prix (GP)**, officially known as Formula One (F1) **Lenovo Grand Prix du Canada 2026** at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal, Quebec, **Canada**, securing his **fourth** consecutive F1 GP victory after earlier wins in China GP, Japan GP, and Miami GP.

- The podium at Canadian GP was completed by **Lewis Hamilton** of the United Kingdom (UK), driving for Ferrari, in second place, and **Max Verstappen** of the Netherlands, representing Red Bull Racing, in third place.

#### **About Canadian Grand Prix 2026:**

**Event:** The 2026 Canadian GP was Round 5 of the 22-race International Automobile Federation or Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile( FIA) F1 World Championship organised by FIA over 68 laps and featured the sprint format for the first time as the third of six sprint-format events in 2026.

**Results:** Charles Leclerc finished fourth for Ferrari with 12 points, while IsackHadjari placed fifth for Red Bull Racing one lap behind and earned 10 points.

**Standings:** Antonelli extended his **Drivers' Championship** lead to 43 points over Mercedes teammate George Russell, whose race ended with an engine failure and retirement amid an intense intra-team Mercedes battle.

#### **Davis Cup Skipper RohitRajpal Named India's Chef de Mission for 2026 CWG in Glasgow**

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) officially announced the appointment of former India's Davis Cup captain **RohitRajpal** as the country's **Chef de Mission** for the **23rd edition** of Commonwealth Games (**2026 CWG**) which is scheduled to be held from July 23 to August 2, 2026 in Glasgow, Scotland.

- **RohitRajpal** is currently serving as the member of the Executive Committee of the IOA and Vice-President of the All India Tennis Association (AITA).

#### **Other Key Appointment:**

**Deputy Chef de Mission:**IOA has also appointed **Ravi Bengani** as the Deputy Chef de Mission, while Vandana Rao and Rahul Swami will travel with the Indian contingent as general team managers for CWG.

**Senior Leadership:** Veteran athlete Pilavullakandi Thekkeparambil (PT) **Usha**, President of

IOA, alongside RaghuramIyer, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IOA and Vignes VengalilUjjwal, will be part of the senior leadership delegation.

**Special Guests:** IOA has also appointed former boxer and CWG gold medallist Mangte Chungneijang (M.C.) Mary Kom, former hockey captain Kamalpreet Kaur, former athlete SunainaKumari and former weightlifter Rajlaxmi Singh Deo as special guests attached to the Indian delegation.

### **Swara Lakshmi Nair Becomes Karnataka's Second WIM in Chess**

A 19-year-old chess player from Bengaluru, Karnataka, **Swara Lakshmi Nair**, achieved the Woman International Master (**WIM**) title after a draw against IM KrumpacnikDomen (Slovenia) in the 9th round of the Ptuj International Masters tournament in **Slovenia**, becoming Karnataka's second WIM (after Isha Sharma in 2019) and the first from Bengaluru (Karnataka).

- With a current live rating of **2219 Elo** points, she aims to achieve the Grandmaster (GM) title by crossing 2400 Elo rating mark, building on four WIM norms earned across tournaments in Sardinia, Poland, and Slovenia.

### **About the Achievements of Swara Lakshmi Nair:**

**First Norms:** The 1st WIM norm came at the Sardinia World Chess Festival Open A in May 2025 after crossing the 2200 Elo rating mark, while the 2nd was secured at the Grand Hotel Kielce Open A in Poland with performances against International Chess Federation (FIDE) Master (FM) Daevik Wadhwan (India) and International Master (IM) Marcin Sieciechowicz (Poland).

**Final Norms:** The 3rd and 4th WIM norms were achieved in later events including the Sardinia Festival, with the final norm confirmed at the Ptuj International Masters in Slovenia in May 2026 through a ninth-round draw.

**Achievements:** She became Karnataka state champion across various age categories, won the 7th Innovators Chess Academy (ICA) Below 1700 Rating Chess Tournament in 2022 with an unbeaten 8.5/9 score and Rs.50,000 prize

## Obituary

### **Veteran Indian Golfer Vijay Kumar Passed Away**

Former Indian golfer **Vijay Kumar** passed away at the age of 57 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh(UP). He was born in 1968 in Martinpurwa, Lucknow, UP.

#### **About Vijay Kumar:**

**Early Career:** He started his journey as a caddie, initially playing with makeshift clubs made from tree branches, and turned professional in 1988.

**Domestic Dominance:** He was a four-time Order of Merit champion (1995–96, 1997–2000) and dominated Indian golf from the mid-1990s to early 2000s, winning nearly 100 titles.

**International Representation:** He represented India at the Alfred Dunhill Cup in 1999 held at St. Andrews, Scotland.

**Major Achievement:** His biggest success was winning the Indian Open in 2002 at the Delhi Golf Club, later finishing runner-up in 2006.

### **Italia's Former F1 Racing Driver and Paralympic Champion Alex Zanardi Passed Away**

Italian former Formula 1 (F1) driver and four-time Paralympic gold medallist **Alessandro Leone Zanardi** (Alex Zanardi) passed away at the age of 59 in Veneto, Italy. He was born on October 23, 1966 in Bologna, Italy.

#### **About Alessandro Leone Zanardi:**

**Racing Career:** He began his sporting career as a professional racing driver in Formula 1 (F1), where he competed in 41 Grands Prix (GPs) from 1991 to 1999, achieving a best result of 6th place at the 1993 Brazilian GP.

**Motorsport:** In Championship Auto Racing Teams (CART), he won back-to-back titles in 1997 and 1998 with Chip Ganassi Racing (15 wins), and later returned to motorsport in the World Touring Car Championship (WTCC) from 2005–2009, securing four victories using adapted hand controls.

**Paralympic Career:** Later, he became a decorated para-cyclist with 4 Paralympic golds, 2 silvers, 12 Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) World titles, and wins at the New York Marathon and Ironman events.

### **CNN Founder Robert Edward Turner III Passed Away**

Media mogul, philanthropist and founder of Cable News Network (CNN), **Robert Edward Turner III** also known as **Ted Turner**, passed away at the age of 87 in Atlanta, Georgia, United States of America (USA). He was born on 19 November 1938 in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA.

#### **About Robert Edward Turner III:**

**Legacy:** Ted Turner transformed a struggling local television station into Turner Broadcasting System (TBS) and revolutionized global broadcast journalism by launching CNN in 1980 as the world's first 24-hour continuous news channel, pioneering real-time global news delivery and the "superstation" satellite broadcasting model.

**Expansion:** He built a major media empire by acquiring Atlanta independent station WJRJ channel in 1970, expanding into Turner Network Television (TNT), Cartoon Network, and Turner Classic Movies (TCM), and later selling the empire to Time Warner in 1996.

**Awards:** He received major honours including Time Magazine Man of the Year (1991), Television Academy Hall of Fame induction (1992), a Hollywood Walk of Fame star (2004), and

Lifetime Achievement Emmy Awards for Sports (2014) and News & Documentary (2015).

**Philanthropy:** He donated approximately USD 1 billion to United Nations (UN) initiatives, founded the United Nations Foundation (UN Foundation), and actively supported environmental conservation and nuclear disarmament efforts.

### **Former India Midfielder Mohan Singh Passed Away**

Former India midfielder **Mohan Singh** passed away at the age of 78 in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB). He was born in 1948.

#### **About Mohan Singh:**

**Profile:** He was known for his skilful play and contributions to Indian football during the 1970s.

**International Career:** He made his India debut against Burma on 22 March 1972 during the Pre-Olympic Tournament in Rangoon (now Yangon, Myanmar) and earned three international caps during the 1972 Pre-Olympic campaign.

**Clubs:** He represented East Bengal, Mohun Bagan, and Mohammedan Sporting Club during the 1970s, scoring 11 goals for East Bengal and three for Mohun Bagan.

**Achievements:** He won major titles including the Calcutta Football League (1972, 1975), Indian Football Association (IFA) Shield (1972, 1975), Durand Cup (1972), Rovers Cup (1972, 1975), and Bordoloi Trophy (1972).

### **Veteran CPI(M) Leader And Former MP Sudhanshu Sil Passes Away**

Veteran Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] leader and former Member of Parliament (MP) **Sudhanshu Sil**(Seal) passed away at the age of 81 in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB). He was born on March 27, 1945 in Calcutta, Bengal Province, British India (now Kolkata).

#### **About Sudhanshu Sil:**

**Local Governance:** He had a long political career spanning several decades, serving as a councillor of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation for five terms from 1990 to 2015 and as a Member of the Mayor-in-Council in charge of the Roads Department from 1990 to 2005.

**Legislative Role:** He was elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from the **Jorabagan constituency**, WB from 2001 to 2004

**Parliamentary Role:** He served as an MP in the 14th Lok Sabha (2004–2009), representing the Calcutta North West constituency, WB.

### **Former Uttarakhand CM Major General Bhuvan Chandra Khanduri (Retd) passes away in Dehradun**

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Chief Minister (CM) of Uttarakhand, **Major General Bhuvan Chandra Khanduri (Retd)**, passed away at the age of 91 in Dehradun. The Government of Uttarakhand announced three days of state mourning.

- Government of India (GoI) conferred upon him the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) in 1982 for his distinguished service.

### **Five-time Olympian shooter and Arjuna Awardee Raja Randhir Singh Passed Away**

Renowned Indian shooter, five-time Olympian and veteran sports administrator **Raja Randhir Singh** passed away at the age of 79 in New Delhi, Delhi. He was born on 18 October 1946 in Patiala, Punjab.

- He was honoured with the **Arjuna Award** in 1979 by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (**MYAS**) for his outstanding contribution to shooting sports.

#### **About Raja Randhir Singh:**

**Profile:** He was a five-time Olympian, Asian Games gold medallist, former Secretary General of the Indian Olympic Association (**IOA**), and the first Indian to serve as President of the Olympic Council of Asia (**OCA**).

**Shooting Career:** Raja Randhir Singh specialised in trap and skeet shooting events and represented India in five Olympic Games: Mexico City, Mexico (1968); Munich, Germany (1972); Montreal, Canada (1976); Moscow, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (1980); and Los Angeles, United States of America (USA) (1984). He was also the reserve shooter for the Tokyo, Japan Olympics (1964).

**Major Achievements:** He won the Gold Medal in Men's Trap Shooting at the 1978 Asian Games in Bangkok, Thailand, becoming the first Indian shooter to win an Asian Games gold medal.

### **Urdu Poet and Padma Shri Awardee Bashir Badr Passed Away**

Renowned Urdu poet and **Padma Shri** awardee **Dr. Bashir Badr** passed away at the age of 91 in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh (**MP**). He was born in 1935 in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh (**UP**).

- The Government of India (**GoI**) awarded the **Padma Shri in 1999** to Bashir Badr in the field of **Literature and Education** for his contribution towards literature.

**Awards:** As collection of 69 ghazals, is considered a Masterpiece of Bashir Badr's poetry and earned him the **SahityaAkademi Award** (Urdu) in **1999**.

### **Former Bureaucrat and CCI's 1st Chairman Dhanendra Kumar Passed Away**

Dhanendra Kumar, former bureaucrat and 1st chairman of Competition Commission of India (CCI), passed away at the age of 80 in New Delhi, Delhi. He was born in 1946.

- He served as Chairman of CCI from February 2009 to June 2011, where he played pivotal role in strengthening India's competition law framework and ensuring fair market practices.

#### **About Dhanendra Kumar:**

**Civil Service:** He was a **1968**-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Haryana Cadre.

**Key Roles:** During his administrative career, he held several key positions in the Haryana government, including Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the HSIDC and Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister (CM) of Haryana.

## Important Days with theme

### International Workers' Day 2026 – May 1

International Workers' Day, also known as International Labour Day, is observed annually across the world on **May 1**, to honor workers' contributions, recognize their struggles, and promote fair wages, better working conditions, and workers' rights.

- In India, International Workers' Day is also known as '**May Day**', '**AntarRashtriya Shramik Divas**', and '**Kamgar Din**'.

#### Background:

**Origin :** The day traces back to the Haymarket Affair on May 4, 1886, when a peaceful rally demanding an **eight-hour workday** turned violent after a bomb explosion, marking a defining moment in the global struggle for workers' rights.

**Global Recognition:** In **1889**, the Second International declared May 1 as International Workers' Day to commemorate the Haymarket Affair and to advance labor rights worldwide.

**Observance in India:** In India, the day was first observed on **May 1, 1923**, in Chennai (then Madras) by the LabourKisan Party of Hindustan under the leadership of Malayapuram Singaravelu Chettiar, marking the beginning of the organized labor movement in the country.

### World Press Freedom Day 2026 – May 3

The United Nation (UN's) **World Press Freedom Day** or World Press Day is observed annually across the globe on **May 3** to promote freedom of expression, assess global press freedom conditions, and honour journalists.

- 2026 Theme: "Shaping a Future at Peace"

#### Background:

**Proclamation:** In 1991, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s 26th General Conference recommended May 3 for observance, which was formally proclaimed in 1993 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

**First:** The first World Press Freedom Day was observed on May 3, 1994.

#### Highlights of 2026:

**2026 Recipient:** The Sudanese Journalists Syndicate, (Sudan), an independent body, was awarded the 2026 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize at UNESCO Headquarters (Paris, France) on 4 May 2026.

**2026 Report:** Reporters Without Borders (RSF) released RSF World Press Freedom Index (WPI) 2026 on April 30, 2026. The top 3 countries in the 2026 index are Norway (1st), Netherlands (2nd), Estonia (3rd) and India ranks 157th with a score of 31.96.

### International Leopard Day 2026 – May 3

International Leopard Day is observed across the globe on 3 May to raise awareness about **protecting leopards**, (*Pantherapardus*), one of the most adaptable big cats and to encourage peaceful coexistence between humans and leopards.

- The day was officially recognised after the Global Leopard Conference in 2023, the first international gathering on leopard conservation.

#### **About Leopards:**

**Taxonomy:** Leopards (*Pantherapardus*) belong to the genus *Panthera*, which also includes lions, tigers, jaguars, and snow leopards, and are distributed across sub-Saharan Africa, northeast Africa, Central Asia, India, and China.

**Traits:** They have unique rosette-patterned coats and are predominantly nocturnal hunters.

**Status:** Listed as “Vulnerable” on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List under criteria A2cd due to population decline.

#### **World Laughter Day 2026 – May 3**

World Laughter Day (WLD) is observed on the first Sunday of May to promote health, peace, and well-being through laughter.

- In 2026, WLD was observed on **3 May 2026**.
- **2026 Theme:** “World Peace through Laughter”

#### **Background:**

**Origin:** In 1998, World Laughter Day (WLD) was initiated by **Dr. Madan Kataria**, a Mumbai((Maharashtra)-based physician and founder of the Laughter Yoga Movement, promoting laughter as a form of exercise.

**First Celebration:** The first World Laughter Day was celebrated in Mumbai on **11 January 1998**, with over 12,000 participants, and has since expanded to more than 100 countries.

**First Global Event:** The first WLD event outside India, titled “HAPPY-DEMIC,” was held on 9 January 2000 in Copenhagen, Denmark, where over 10,000 people gathered, setting a Guinness World Record for the largest laughter session.

#### **World Athletics Day 2026 – May 7**

World Athletics Day is observed annually on **May 7** across the globe to promote fitness and encourage children and youth to participate in sports, especially athletics.

#### **Background:**

**Launch:** The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) introduced World Athletics Day under the social responsibility theme “Athletics for a Better World”.

- The IAAF was established on July 17, 1912, in Stockholm, Sweden.

**First Celebration:** The first World Athletics Day was celebrated on **May 15, 1996**, with participation from 50 nations.

- The initiative was launched by Primo Nebiolo, the then President of IAAF.

**Organising Body:** The annual observance is led by World Athletics, formerly known as the International Association of Athletics Federations (2001–2019) and the International Amateur Athletic Federation (1912–2001).

### World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day 2026 – May 8

World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day is annually observed across the globe on May 8 to honour the principles and humanitarian efforts of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, while remembering those who lost their lives in humanitarian service.

- The day commemorates the birth anniversary of **Henry Dunant** (8 May 1828 – 30 October 1910), founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the first laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1901.
- **2026 Theme:** ‘United in Humanity’

#### Background:

**Origin:** The observance traces its origins to 1859 when Henry Dunant witnessed the suffering of soldiers during the Battle of Solferino in Italy, which later inspired the establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 1863 in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Recognition:** During the 14th International Conference of the Red Cross held in 1938 in London, United Kingdom (UK), delegates proposed observing 8 May as International Red Cross Day, while the League of Red Cross Societies (LORCS) advocated a uniform global observance in 1946.

**Observance:** The first International Red Cross Day was celebrated on **8 May 1948** and was later renamed World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day in 1984 to recognise the inclusion of Red Crescent Societies.

### National Technology Day 2026 – May 11

National Technology Day is celebrated annually across India on May 11 to promote India’s innovation ecosystem through deep-tech, precision engineering, and advanced Research & Development (R&D).

- 11 May 2026 marks the **28th** National Technology Day, commemorating India’s successful **Pokhran nuclear tests** conducted in 1998.
- **2026 Theme:** “Responsible Innovation for Inclusive Growth.”

#### Background:

**Historic Achievement:** Marks the historic achievements of May 11, 1998, including India’s Operation Shakti (**Pokhran-II nuclear tests**) and the maiden flight of the indigenous **Hansa-3 aircraft**.

**National Declaration:** Former Prime Minister (PM) Atal Bihari Vajpayee declared May 11 as National Technology Day in **1999** to recognise these milestones.

**First Celebration:** The Council for Technology organised the first-ever National Technology Day on May 11, 1999.

**Organiser:** The day is organised by the Technology Development Board (**TDB**) under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Ministry of Science & Technology (MoS&T),

### International Nurses Day 2026 – May 12

The **International Nurses Day (IND)** is observed globally every year on **May 12** to recognise the invaluable contribution of nurses to healthcare systems and society, commemorating the birth

anniversary of **Florence Nightingale** (1820–1910), who is renowned as the founder of modern nursing.

- **2026 Theme:** “Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives”

**Background:**

**Proposal:** In 1953, Dorothy Sutherland from the United States of America (USA) Department of Health, Education and Welfare proposed a “Nurses Day” to then President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

**Observation:** Since **1965**, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) has led the annual observance of IND.

**Adoption:** In **1974**, ICN officially adopted 12 May as the observance date to honor Florence Nightingale.

**International Day of Families 2026 – May 15**

The United Nations (UN’s) International Day of Families (**IDF**) is observed annually on **15 May** to highlight the role of families in societal development and address global social, economic, and demographic challenges.

- **2026 Theme:** “Families, Inequalities and Child Wellbeing”

**Background:**

**Declaration:** In **1989**, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family through Resolution 44/82.

**IDF Designation:** In **1993**, the UNGA adopted Resolution A/RES/47/237, declaring 15 May as the annual International Day of Families. The observance is coordinated by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) through its Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD).

**First Observance:** The first IDF was observed on **15 May 1994**.

**Symbol:** The International Day of Families is represented by a green circle enclosing a red heart beneath a roof, symbolising home and family.

**World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2026 – May 17**

The United Nations (UN’s) **World Telecommunication and Information Society Day** (WTISD) is observed annually on **17 May** to highlight the role of the Internet and Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) in improving lives and bridging the digital divide.

- The day commemorates the founding of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in **1865**.
- **2026 Theme:** “Digital Lifelines: Strengthening Resilience in a Connected World”

**Background:**

**Origin:** In **1969**, 17 May was designated as World Telecommunication Day to mark the founding of the ITU on 17 May 1865, when the First International Telegraph Convention was signed in Paris, France.

**Declaration of WISD:** In November 2005, the World Summit on the Information Society

(WSIS) urged the United Nations General Assembly(UNGA) to declare 17 May as World Information Society Day (WISD), which was officially adopted in **March 2006**.

**Formation of WTISD:** In November 2006, the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference held in Antalya (Turkey) decided to merge both observances into World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD), celebrated annually on 17 May.

### **International Museum Day 2026 – May 18**

International Museum Day (IMD) is observed globally on 18 May by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) to raise awareness about the role of museums as spaces for cultural exchange, mutual understanding, cooperation, and peace among nations.

- **2026 Theme:** “Museums Uniting a Divided World.”

#### **Background:**

**Foundation:** Before the launch of IMD, ICOM organized the ‘**Crusade for Museums’ meeting** in 1951, highlighting museum education, accessibility, and public engagement.

**Establishment:** IMD was established in **1977** through a resolution adopted at the ICOM General Assembly in Moscow, Russia, to unite museums worldwide and highlight their role in societal development.

**2026 Updates:** The **2026 IMD poster** is designed by **G rard Barbet**, French designer.

- On IMD 2026, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the ICOM signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen joint cooperation.

### **World Metrology Day 2026 – May 20**

World Metrology Day(WMD) is observed annually on **20 May** to highlight the importance of metrology, the science of measurement, in everyday life, science, trade, innovation, and environmental sustainability.

- **2026 Theme:** “Metrology: Building Trust in Policy Making”.

#### **Background:**

**Establishment:** WMD was established in **1999** by the International Committee for Weights and Measures (CIPM) during the 21st General Conference on Weights and Measures (CGPM) to commemorate the Metre Convention.

**Organised By:** WMD is jointly organised by the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) and the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM).

**First Observance:** The first WMD was observed on **20 May 2000**.

**UNESCO Recognition:** In November **2023**, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) officially proclaimed 20 May as WMD through Resolution 42 C/Resolution 21, with observance beginning in 2024, following a proposal initiated and supported by Kazakhstan.

### **International Tea Day 2026 – May 21**

The United Nations (UN)’s **International Tea Day (ITD)** is celebrated on **21 May** to recognise

the cultural, economic, and social importance of tea and to promote sustainable tea production, fair trade, and the welfare of tea workers and small growers worldwide.

- **2026 Theme:** Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s 2026 theme is "Sustaining Tea, Supporting Communities".

**Background:**

**Origin:** ITD was first observed on 15 December 2005 in New Delhi, Delhi, through an initiative of tea workers and was later celebrated annually on 15 December across several tea-producing countries including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Uganda, India, and Tanzania.

**Recognition:** Acknowledging tea's cultural significance and socio-economic value, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) officially declared 21 May as ITD in December 2019.

**1st Observance:** The first UN-recognised ITD was celebrated on 21 May 2020, replacing the earlier December observance with a globally unified celebration.

**Organiser:** The day is organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN.

**National Anti-Terrorism Day 2026 – May 21**

**National Anti-Terrorism Day** is annually observed across India on **21 May** to mark the **death anniversary** of former Prime Minister (PM) **Rajiv Gandhi**, who was assassinated in 1991 in a terrorist attack carried out by a suicide bomber associated with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu (TN).

- 21 May 2026 marks the **35th** death anniversary of the 6th PM of India, Rajiv Gandhi (1984 – 1989)

**Background:**

**Designation:** In 1992, the Government of India (GoI) designated 21 May as National Anti-Terrorism Day in memory of former PM Rajiv Gandhi.

**Coordination:** The annual observance is coordinated by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to honour his legacy and promote awareness against terrorism.

**Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2026:** The 13th edition of the Global Terrorism Index (GTI)2026, published by the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), where Pakistan ranked 1st as the country most impacted by terrorism in 2026 with a score of 8.574, while **India** ranked **13th** with a score of 6.428.

**Commonwealth Day in India 2026 – May 24**

Commonwealth Day is observed annually in India on 24 May to commemorate the birth anniversary of Queen Victoria in 1819 and to promote fitness, global cooperation, Commonwealth unity, shared values, historical ties, cultural exchange, and international cooperation among member states of the Commonwealth of Nations.

- The day was also observed annually across the globe on the **second Monday of March** (9 March 2026) by the member countries of the Commonwealth of Nations.

**Background:**

**Origin:** The idea of the day was championed by Clementina Trenholme, with the first observance held in Ontario, Canada, in 1898 alongside Queen Victoria's birthday on May 24, and later celebrated across parts of the British Empire, including the Cape Colony and Union of

South Africa.

**Empire:** In 1904, Reginald Brabazon, 12th Earl of Meath, formally introduced **Empire Day** in the United Kingdom (UK) to promote imperial identity among youth, while the event honored the British Empire and Queen Victoria's legacy and became an official annual observance in 1916.

**2026 Event:** The Commonwealth Day 2026 celebrations were held at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, in New Delhi, Delhi, led by the Education Minister of Delhi, Ashish Sood during the Fit India Sundays on Cycle programme.

### **World Football Day 2026 – May 25**

The United Nations (UN)'s **World Football Day** (WFD) is annually observed on **25 May** to recognise football's global influence in promoting peace, diplomacy, health, unity, development, and the empowerment of women and girls.

#### **Background:**

**UN Resolution:** On 7 May **2024**, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/78/281, proclaiming 25 May as the annual observance of World Football Day.

**Recognition of FIFA:** The resolution acknowledged the important role of FIFA and regional as well as national football federations in promoting the sport globally.

**First Observance:** The first edition of World Football Day was observed on **25 May 2024**.

### **World Hunger Day 2026 – May 28**

World Hunger Day is observed annually across the globe on May 28 to raise awareness about food insecurity and encourage collective action towards achieving zero hunger.

- **2026 Theme:** "The End of Hunger is in our Hands"

#### **Background:**

**Establishment:** World Hunger Day was established in **2011** by the New York, United States of America (USA)-based non-profit organization (NPO) The Hunger Project (THP) to highlight the global food crisis.

**1st Observance:** The first World Hunger Day was observed on **May 28, 2011**.

### **International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers 2026 – May 29**

International Day of United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers, observed annually across the globe on 29 May to honour the dedication, service, and sacrifice of UN peacekeepers worldwide, while remembering those who lost their lives in the cause of peace.

- 29 May 2026 marks the **78th** anniversary of UN Peacekeeping, which began in 1948 with the deployment of military observers to the Middle East under the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO).

- **2026 Theme:** "Invest in Peace"

#### **Background:**

**Origin:** The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) through Resolution 57/129 in **2002**.

**1st Observance:** It was first observed on **29 May 2003**.

**Organiser:** The observance is coordinated by the UN and its Department of Peace Operations (DPO), with participation from UN Member States.

**Symbol:** The UN **Blue Helmet/Beret** symbolizes UN peacekeeping efforts worldwide.  
**1st Mission:** The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (**UNTSO**) became the first UN peacekeeping mission, launched on 29 May 1948.

### **International Everest Day 2026– May 29**

International Everest Day is observed annually on 29 May across the globe to commemorate the first successful ascent of Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay on 29 May 1953.

- The day celebrates human endurance, courage, resilience, and the spirit of exploration.

### **Background:**

**Origin:** Initiated by the Government of **Nepal** to commemorate the first successful ascent of Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay.

**1st Observance:** International Everest Day was first observed in Nepal on 29 May **2008**.

**2026 Summit:** The second edition of the **Everest Summiters Summit 2026**, organised by Everest Alliance Nepal in collaboration with Nepal's Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, was held in Kathmandu(Nepal), where 176 Mount Everest climbers from 26 countries were honoured with special medals and certificates.