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CONTENTS

➤ National News	3
➤ Government Schemes	9
➤ International News	14
➤ India and the World	16
➤ Finance, Economy and Banking	19
➤ Defence News	22
➤ Appointments	25
➤ Books and Authors	27
➤ Obituaries (National)	27
➤ Obituaries (International)	27
➤ Days and Themes	28
➤ Reports, Rankings and Index	29
➤ Events	31
➤ Awards	32
➤ Sports News	33



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NATIONAL NEWS

India's Maratha Forts Added to the UNESCO World Heritage List

- In a remarkable decision taken at the 47th Session of the World Heritage Committee, India's official nomination for the 2024-25 cycle, 'Maratha Military Landscapes of India' got inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.
- These were India's 44th property to receive this recognition.
- The Maratha Military Landscapes of India include 12 major forts, mostly in Maharashtra and one in Tamil Nadu. The sites in Maharashtra include Salher, Shivneri, Lohgad, Khanderi, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala, Vijaydurg and Sindhudurg. Gingee Fort is in Tamil Nadu.
- Shivneri fort, Lohgad, Raigad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala fort, Vijaydurg, Sindhudurg and Gingee fort are protected under the Archaeological Survey of India.
- Salher fort, Rajgad, Khanderi fort and Pratapgad are protected by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Maharashtra.
- Salher, Shivneri, Lohgad, Raigad, Rajgad and Gingee are situated in hilly terrains and are therefore known as hill forts.
- Pratapgad, nestled within dense woods, is classified as a hill-forest fort. Panhala, located on a plateaued hill, is a hill-plateau fort.
- Vijaydurg, positioned along the shoreline, is a notable coastal fort, while Khanderi, Suvarnadurg and Sindhudurg, surrounded by the sea, are recognised as island forts.
- India ranks sixth globally and second in the Asia Pacific Region for the most number of World Heritage Sites. 196 nations have ratified the World Heritage Convention convention of 1972.
- On behalf of the Government of India, the Archaeological Survey of India is the nodal agency of all the World Heritage related matters in the country.

6 Crore Sickle Cell Anaemia Screenings Done under the National Sickle Cell Mission

- A total of six crore individuals have been screened for Sickle Cell Disease under the National Sickle Cell Mission. Among those screened, two lakh 15 thousand individuals diagnosed with the disease and over 16 lakh carriers have been identified.

- States including Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, Karnataka and Uttarakhand have demonstrated significant progress by achieving a high percentage of screening relative to their targets.
- The highest incidence of diagnosed cases has been reported in the states of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat.
- The National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission was inaugurated in 2023 by the Prime Minister to eliminate sickle cell anaemia from the country by 2047, with the universal screening of seven crore individuals aged 0 to 40 years in affected tribal areas.

India Secures Global Recognition for its First Equine Disease-Free Compartment (EDFC).

- India has achieved a significant milestone with the establishment of the country's first Equine Disease-Free Compartment (EDFC) at the Remount Veterinary Corps (RVC) Centre & College in Meerut Cantonment, Uttar Pradesh.
- This facility has received official recognition from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).
- This is a crucial step towards integrating Indian sport horses into global equestrian events.
- An EDFC is like a highly protected, super-clean bubble or special zone specifically for horses that allows them to move around for sports, breeding or trade without the usual worries about spreading or catching serious diseases.
- Additionally, India has maintained a disease-free status for African Horse Sickness since 2014.
- The certification will enable Indian sport horses and riders to compete internationally, a milestone that was previously limited due to disease-related restrictions.

Kerala Leads India's New Faunal Discoveries in 2024

- In a landmark year for biological documentation, India has witnessed its highest number of faunal discoveries ever recorded in a single calendar year.
- This was published in the Animal Discoveries: New Species and New Records 2024 report, published by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).
- ZSI chronicles an extraordinary 683 new additions to the nation's fauna, comprising 459 species new to science and 224 newly recorded in the country.

- Kerala has emerged as India's foremost state in biodiversity documentation, underscoring the rich ecological fabric of southern India.

Gujarat Becomes the First Indian State to Start a Genome Sequencing Project

- Gujarat has launched India's first Tribal Genome Sequencing Project, aiming to improve healthcare for tribal communities.
- The initiative aims to enhance understanding of genetic health risks within tribal populations and improve access to personalised healthcare solutions.
- The project will be implemented by the Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC).
- The aim is to build a genetic database that could lead to the early detection and better treatment of inherited diseases such as thalassemia, sickle cell anaemia and certain forms of cancer.

PM Modi Releases Commemorative Coin Honouring Rajendra Chola I

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Aadi Thiruvathirai Festival at Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple in Tamil Nadu. Rajendra Chola I built the temple as a replica of his father Rajaraja Chola I's temple in Thanjavur.
- The temple, maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India, is considered a masterpiece of Chola architecture and Saivite tradition.
- It marked the birth anniversary of the illustrious Chola emperor Rajendra Chola I.
- As part of the ceremony, the Prime Minister released a commemorative coin in honour of the Chola king, celebrating his contributions to Indian history, architecture and maritime legacy.
- The event also marked the millennial celebration of Rajendra Chola's legendary maritime expedition to Southeast Asia, which showcased the Chola empire's naval prowess and far-reaching influence.
- He also visited a thematic photo exhibition on 'Saiva Siddhanta and Chola Temple Arts' organised by the ASI and interacted with scholars about the legacy of Rajendra Chola I, expressing deep appreciation for the dynasty's contributions to Indian history and architecture.

Haryana to Build Asia's Biggest Jungle Safari

- Haryana will develop Asia's largest jungle safari in the Aravalli Hills. This landmark project is poised

to become a major attraction for both domestic and international tourists.

- The ambitious initiative aims to promote green tourism while playing a vital role in wildlife conservation.
- It will be spread across approximately 10,000 acres, and the safari will preserve a wide variety of animals, birds and natural biodiversity.
- The safari is expected to generate new employment opportunities for local youth in areas such as tourism, hospitality, guiding and conservation services. Moreover, it will contribute positively to the regional climate and ecological balance.

The Supreme Court Lays Down Nationwide Norms on DNA Evidence Handling

- The Supreme Court issued binding nationwide guidelines to regulate the collection, preservation and processing of DNA and other biological materials, declaring that the lack of standardised procedures has grave implications for fair trials and justice delivery.
- The decision by a bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath, Sanjay Karol and Sandeep Mehta came while acquitting a man, who was on death row for the rape and murder of a couple in Tamil Nadu in 2011.
- The court set aside the conviction of Kattavellai, finding that the prosecution's case, which was anchored almost entirely on DNA evidence, was marred by serious procedural deficiencies that rendered the scientific evidence unreliable.
- Every DNA sample collected must be properly packaged and labelled with the FIR number, the applicable legal provisions, details of the investigating officer, the name of the police station and a serial number.
- This documentation must carry the signatures of the medical professional who assisted in the collection, the investigating officer (IO), and, if possible, an independent witness. Even if no independent witness is available, the officer must record the efforts made to secure one and the reasons for their absence.
- Further, it held that IO would bear responsibility for promptly transporting the DNA samples to the concerned forensic laboratory. The court directed that this must be done within 48 hours of collection to preserve the evidentiary value of the sample. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, this timeline cannot be met, the reasons for the delay must be recorded in the case diary, and the samples must be preserved according to the standards required for the particular type of biological material.

- To guard against tampering, the court held that once DNA evidence is sealed, it must not be opened or resealed without the trial court's express permission.
- This permission should be based on a medical expert's assurance that such action will not compromise the integrity of the sample and that re-examination is essential for the proper conduct of the trial or investigation.
- The bench made it mandatory to maintain a chain of custody register for every piece of biological evidence, from the moment it is collected until the trial concludes. This register must document every transfer of the sample, along with the reasons for the movement, and must be countersigned at every stage. The register will form part of the trial court record, and any failure to maintain it will require a written explanation from the investigating officer.

India is Developing a Multi-Stage Malaria Vaccine Candidate Named AdFalcivax

- India is developing a Multi-Stage Malaria Vaccine Candidate named AdFalcivax.
- The vaccine aims to protect against human infection while also reducing vector-borne community transmission of the parasite.
- AdFalcivax is the first indigenous recombinant chimeric malaria vaccine specifically designed to target two critical stages of *Plasmodium falciparum*, the parasite responsible for the most lethal form of malaria.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research – ICMR, in partnership with the Department of Biotechnology-National Institute of Immunology (DBT-NII), is currently developing this malaria vaccine candidate.

India Recorded over 7,000 Suspected Heatstroke Cases

- According to the data shared by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), India reported 7,192 suspected heatstroke cases and only 14 confirmed deaths due to extreme heat between 1 March and 24 June this year.
- India had reported nearly 48,000 cases of heatstroke and 159 deaths due to extreme heat in 2024, the warmest year on record in India since 1901.
- The majority of cases were reported in May, the peak of the summer season, with 2,962 suspected cases and three confirmed deaths.
- Andhra Pradesh accounted for more than half of the total suspected heatstroke cases, reporting 4,055 during

the period. Rajasthan reported 373 cases, followed by Odisha (350), Telangana (348) and Madhya Pradesh (297).

- The NCDC data is collected under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) and relies on hospitals to report cases. This means deaths that occur outside medical facilities or are not correctly diagnosed as heat-related often remain uncounted.

Long-billed Bush Warbler sighted in India after 46 years

- A team of five birders has recorded the first confirmed Indian sighting of the elusive Long-billed Bush Warbler in 46 years, spotting the Near Threatened species in Ladakh's Suru Valley as part of a mission to find the country's 'long-lost birds'.
- The Long-billed Bush Warbler (*Locustella major*) was sighted in dense willow thickets at over 3,200 metres altitude. The team first detected the bird's distinctive insect-like call before making visual confirmation.
- The last confirmed Indian sighting was in 1979 when Southampton University researchers spotted the warbler near Sankoo in Kargil.
- The species, historically common in the Dras and Suru valleys until the 1920s, likely declined due to habitat loss as agricultural fields replaced the bushes it depends upon.

Supreme Court Allows Secret Spousal Recordings in Divorce Cases

- The Supreme Court ruled that secretly recorded conversations between spouses are admissible evidence in matrimonial disputes, including divorce proceedings.
- It set aside a 2021 Punjab and Haryana High Court judgment which had barred a husband, who sought a divorce, from using secretly recorded phone conversations with his wife as evidence in court.
- Spousal privilege means that a person cannot be compelled to testify against their spouse in a criminal case. It is rooted in the idea that a degree of protection has to be provided to private conversations between a husband and a wife during their marriage.
- The Supreme Court's ruling changes the contours of spousal or marital privilege in Indian law, which protects private conversations between a husband and a wife during their marriage, and even after the marriage has ended.
- The court has said that if evidence is relevant, independently verifiable, and falls within statutory

exceptions, it can be admitted even if collected in secret.

Indian Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla completes seven experiments on the International Space Station (ISS)

- ISRO astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla completed all seven planned microgravity experiments aboard the ISS as part of the Axiom-4 mission.
- The experiments on the Indian strain of Tardigrades, Myogenesis, Sprouting of methi and moong seeds, Cyanobacteria, Microalgae, Crop seeds and Voyager Display have been completed as planned.
- After an 18-day stay, Shukla and the crew have begun their return to Earth. The mission marks a key step in India's space-biotech journey through public-private collaboration.
- Launched on 25 June 2025, aboard the SpaceX Dragon spacecraft, the mission was conducted in collaboration with NASA, Axiom Space, ESA, and other international partners.

Key Points

ISRO headquarters	—	Bengaluru, Karnataka
ISRO chief	—	Dr. V. Narayanan

ISRO Moves Closer to Gaganyaan Launch, Completes Key Engine Development

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) completed the development of the Service Module Propulsion System (SMPS) for its ambitious Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission, following the conclusion of its qualification test program.
- The milestone moves India closer to its first crewed space mission, slated for the first quarter of 2027.
- The test was designed to validate the integrated performance of the system for a flight off-nominal mission profile, specifically an SM-based abort scenario during the ascent phase.
- The Service Module (SM) of the Gaganyaan mission is a regulated bi-propellant propulsion system vital for various orbital manoeuvres. It is responsible for orbit circularisation, on-orbit control, deboost manoeuvring and crucial Service Module-based abort operations during the ascent phase.
- The system comprises five Liquid Apogee Motor (LAM) engines, each providing 440 Newtons of thrust for main propulsion, and 16 Reaction Control System

(RCS) thrusters, each delivering 100 Newtons for precise attitude control.

Miniature Plasma Loops in the Sun's Atmosphere

- Astronomers at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), an autonomous institution of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and their collaborators used high-resolution imaging and spectroscopy to catch these elusive structures in action.
- These miniature loops are about 3,000–4,000 kilometers long (roughly the distance from Kashmir to Kanyakumari). However, they have a width of less than 100 kilometers.
- This makes them challenging to study, as they stay hidden in the lower layers of the Sun's atmosphere and are mostly unresolved by earlier telescopes.
- While these large loops in the solar corona, or outer atmosphere, have long been studied, scientists are now also paying attention to miniature counterparts of these loops.
- Among the most intriguing features of the Sun's outer layer are coronal loops, arc-like, beautiful structures of hot plasma that glow at a temperature over a million degrees.

Indore Launches India's First Digital House Address Project With QR Codes

- The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) in Madhya Pradesh has launched a digital house address project, which involves the installation of special digital plates with unique QR codes outside every house in the city.
- The project aims to empower 'smart' administration by connecting citizen services with digital technology.

Starlink Gets Final Clearance from IN-SPACe for India Launch

- Starlink, the satellite communication firm owned by Elon Musk, has received regulatory clearance from the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) to launch its satellite-based internet services in India.
- The approval comes weeks after the government granted the company a licence in early June to offer Global Mobile Personal Communication by Satellite (GMPCS) services, Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) services, and Internet Service Provider (ISP) Category-A services under the unified licence framework.

- Starlink becomes the third company to receive approval for satellite communication (satcom) services from the Department of Telecommunications, after OneWeb and Reliance Jio.
- Recently, Airtel and Jio partnered with Starlink to introduce their high-speed satellite internet services in India. The company will utilise the extensive dealer networks of both telecom operators to market and distribute its offerings across the country.

India's First Digital Nomad Village Launch

- Yakten, a village in Pakyong district, Sikkim, was officially declared India's first digital nomad village. The project under the 'Nomad Sikkim' initiative aims to transform strategic locations in the Himalayan State into year-round hubs for digital professionals.
- Nomad Sikkim is a joint initiative of the Pakyong district administration and Sarvahitey NGO to develop a digital nomad hub for working professionals.
- It is designed for professionals seeking a balance between remote work and a peaceful lifestyle.

India's First Wooden Gurdwara in Fazilka

- India's first wooden Gurdwara was inaugurated in Fazilka, Punjab. The structure was made from Deodhar wood imported from Finland.
- The special wood is known for its durability and resistance to moths, sunlight and rain. Carpenter Iqbal Singh, a craftsman from Ludhiana, was brought to do the work. He is one of those carpenters who build wooden homes abroad. The Gurdwara measures 40 feet by 40 feet.

Kerala High Court issues policy for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Judicial Work

- The Kerala High Court issued a policy document titled 'Policy Regarding the Use of AI Tools in District Judiciary' for "responsible use" of artificial intelligence (AI) in judicial work.
- The policy aims to reduce dependence on AI in the judiciary by limiting its use to administrative tasks.
- This is the first time that a High Court in India has tried to frame principles and guidelines for using AI in the judiciary.
- The document focuses on four key principles: transparency, fairness, accountability and the protection of confidential data.

- These guidelines apply to all members of the district judiciary, including judges, clerks, interns, court staff and other employees who are involved in judicial work.
- The document provides a separate definition for Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek, saying they produce human-like responses to prompts that have been entered by the user. Only an AI tool approved by the Kerala High Court or the Supreme Court can be used for court-related work.

IIT Bombay, Pune Institute Irrigation Plan to Cut 30% Water Use in Drought-hit Areas

- Researchers at IIT Bombay and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, have developed a smart irrigation plan that can cut water use in these areas and help farmers save 30% of the water without loss in crop yield.
- The irrigation plan integrates extended-range weather forecasts, satellite soil moisture data, and a computer simulation model to predict irrigation needs up to three weeks in advance.
- Earlier pilots in Nashik, Maharashtra, combined local soil moisture sensor readings with weather forecasts. The system advises farmers whether to irrigate immediately or wait for predicted rainfall, preventing unnecessary watering.

India's Ayush Innovations Featured in WHO's Landmark Brief on AI in Traditional Medicine

- In a significant milestone for global healthcare innovation, the World Health Organization (WHO) has released a technical brief titled "Mapping the Application of Artificial Intelligence in Traditional Medicine", acknowledging India's pioneering efforts in integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) with traditional medicine systems, particularly Ayush systems.
- The release follows India's proposal on the subject, leading to the development of WHO's first-ever roadmap for applying AI in traditional medicine.

Key Points

WHO's headquarters	— Geneva, Switzerland
Director General	— Tedros Adhanom
AYUSH Minister of State (Independent Charge)	— Prataprao Ganpatrao Jadhav

Indian Scientists Engineer Supercharged Green Energy Material

- A team of Indian researchers led by Dr. Kavita Pandey at the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS), Bengaluru—an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, focused on silver niobate (AgNbO_3), a lead-free and environmentally friendly material with excellent electrical characteristics.
- They injected lanthanum, a rare-earth element known for its beneficial electronic properties, into silver niobate nanoparticles. This shrank the silver niobate nanoparticles particles allowing more surface area for energy storage.
- The lanthanum improved the material's ability to conduct electricity, thus speeding up the energy charge-discharge cycles.
- As a result of the lanthanum doping strategy, energy retention skyrocketed—the material retained 118% of its initial capacity after extensive use and efficiency hit perfection, with virtually no energy lost in use, giving 100% coulombic efficiency.

News in Short

- India became the first country to launch the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), a platform powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Vatsala, considered to be Asia's oldest elephant, died at the age of more than 100 years at the Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh.
- The Tamil Nadu Rice Research Institute (TRRI), located in Aduthurai, has recently introduced two innovative short-duration paddy varieties, ADT 59 and ADT 53 that are proving to be game-changers for rice cultivation in the Cauvery delta. These improved strains are tailored to deliver better yields, withstand saline conditions, and offer enhanced nutritional and pest-resistant traits, making them well-suited for modern agricultural challenges.
- The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development was renamed as the Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development. This change reflects its stronger focus on region-specific and mission-driven support for women and child development across India.
- In a remarkable wildlife discovery, a caracal, a rarely seen wild cat, has been photographed within the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh. This is the first confirmed sighting of the species in the state in almost 20 years.
- India has successfully achieved 20% ethanol blending in petrol in 2025, five years ahead of its original target set for 2030.
- Remona Evette Pereira, the BA student from St. Aloysius (Deemed to be University), Mangaluru, entered the Golden Book of World Records with her 170-hour-long Bharatanatyam performance. Her dance performance began by offering prayers to Lord Ganesha on the morning of July 21, in an auditorium of the institute.
- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated the Agricultural Technology Innovation Centre at Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Agricultural University, Meerut, emphasising the government's push to transform farmers into entrepreneurs.
- The Union Government has released a commemorative postage stamp to celebrate the 125th birth anniversary of Syama Prasad Mookerjee to honour his contributions to India.
- The Centre has told the Supreme Court that children of single mothers from other backwards classes should be entitled to OBC certificates irrespective of the parents' marital status.
- The President of India, Droupadi Murmu, inaugurated the Mahayogi Guru Gorakhnath AYUSH University at Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh.
- The Tamil Nadu government will launch India's first Centre of Excellence for Hornbill Conservation at the Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR) in Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu.
- India has achieved a landmark in its energy transition journey by reaching 50% of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources, five years ahead of the target set under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement.
- The Maharashtra government designated 'Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav' as the State Festival of Maharashtra or 'Rajya Utsav' on July 10, highlighting the festival's pivotal role in the state's social legacy and cultural identity.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

NESTS And UNICEF Start Talash for Tribal Youth Development

- The National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS) and UNICEF India have launched the TALASH initiative, a national digital program to support tribal students in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs).
- It aims to enhance the aptitude, life skills and self-esteem of tribal students through psychometric assessments, career counselling and digital teacher training.
- TALASH aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, focusing on holistic and inclusive education for tribal youth.

Key Points

UNICEF Headquarters	—	New York City, U.S.
Executive Director	—	Catherine M. Russell
Union Tribal Minister	—	Jual Oram

PM Modi Launches 'Gyan Bharatam Mission' to Digitise Ancient Manuscripts

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the historic 'Gyan Bharatam Mission' initiative for the digitisation of ancient manuscripts.
- Under the Gyan Bharatam Mission, a National Digital Repository will be created after the digitisation of ancient manuscripts, where students and teachers around the world will be able to connect with the country's knowledge and traditions.
- The mission aims to digitise, conserve and make accessible over one crore manuscripts scattered across the country.

Coal Ministry to Launch RECLAIM Framework for Sustainable Mine Closure

- The Ministry of Coal will launch RECLAIM (Responsible, Equitable, Community-led, Landscape-level Approach for Indian Mine Closure).
- It is a Community Engagement and Development Framework for Mine Closure and Repurposing.
- The framework serves as a structured guide for inclusive community engagement and development throughout the mine closure and post-closure phases. It offers a practical, step-by-step approach to institutionalising community participation in the transition process.

- It is supported by a suite of actionable tools, templates and field-tested methodologies tailored to the Indian context.
- Under it, special emphasis is placed on gender inclusivity, the representation of vulnerable groups, and alignment with Panchayati Raj Institutions, ensuring that the transition is equitable and locally relevant.

Key Points

Union Minister of Coal — G. Kishan Reddy

Skill India Assistant Chatbot

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) launched the Skill India Assistant (SIA)- an AI-powered chatbot to enhance access to skilling and employment-related services for citizens across the country.
- The chatbot has been developed by META and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the aegis of META.
- SIA leverages conversational AI to deliver personalised support via WhatsApp, thereby promoting digital inclusion and ensuring service delivery in the skilling ecosystem.

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) Launched the Veer Parivar Sahayata Yojana.

- In a significant move to deepen institutional outreach and bolster access to justice for the nation's armed forces, the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), led by senior Supreme Court judge Justice Surya Kant, launched the Veer Parivar Sahayata Yojana 2025 — a first-of-its-kind nationwide scheme aimed at providing free legal assistance to soldiers, veterans and their families.
- The initiative marks the judiciary's solemn commitment to those who defend the country's borders under the harshest of conditions.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Inaugurates Agritech Innovation Hub in Meerut

- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated the Agricultural Technology Innovation Centre at Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Agricultural University, Meerut.

- The establishment of a Skill Development Centre at the university will boost farmer-focused research and startups.
- With this, the innovation would now directly reach farms, making a tangible impact on farmers' lives.

Union Minister C.R. Patil Launches C-Flood, India's First Unified Flood Forecasting Platform

- Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil inaugurated a Unified Inundation Forecasting System, C-FLOOD, which is a web-based platform that provides two-day advance inundation forecasts up to the village level.
- The platform will act as a unified system integrating flood modelling outputs from national and regional agencies, offering a comprehensive decision-support tool for disaster management authorities.
- The C-FLOOD portal will enhance public awareness and preparedness, and prepare a comprehensive plan for inundation studies covering all river basins.
- The initiative is being executed under the National Supercomputing Mission. It is jointly steered by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Department of Science and Technology.
- This is a transformative step towards strengthening India's flood management and disaster response framework.

IISc Launches a Large Research Project called BHARAT

- The Indian Institute of Science, under the Longevity India Programme, has launched the BHARAT (Biomarkers of Healthy Ageing, Resilience, Adversity and Transitions) study to map ageing biomarkers and build a baseline for healthy ageing specific to the Indian population.
- Current biomarkers and diagnostic standards are often based on Western biomarkers and cut-offs (like cholesterol, vitamin D and CRP levels), which may not be accurate or applicable to Indians, risking misdiagnosis and ineffective treatment.
- Ageing varies across individuals and populations, driven by molecular, cellular, environmental, lifestyle and socioeconomic factors, meaning chronological age may not reflect true biological age.

Railone App Launched

- Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw launched a new app, RailOne, at India Habitat Centre in New

Delhi on the 40th Foundation Day of Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS).

- RailOne is focused on improving the passenger interface with railways.
- The application integrates all the passenger services such as Unreserved UTS Tickets via R-Wallet to get 3% Discount, Live train tracking, Grievance redressal and e-catering, porter booking and last-mile taxi.
- RailOne features a single sign-on with login via mPIN or biometric. It also supports existing RailConnect & UTS credentials. The app is space-saving, as there is no need to install multiple apps.

Tamil Nadu Government Develops 1000-year-old Chola Gangam Lake

- The Tamil Nadu government has launched a ₹19.25 crore project to develop and restore the Chola Gangam lake.
- It is locally known as Ponneri and was dug by Rajendra Chola to celebrate his northern campaign.
- It is a 1000-year-old lake and was once spread over 16 miles. However, it has shrunk to 17 kms and remains dry for most of the year as the canals that brought water from the Kollidam have long been abandoned.

India's First Mining Tourism Project to Be Launched in Jharkhand

- In a unique move to diversify tourism opportunities and spotlight its local industrial heritage, Jharkhand plans to become the first Indian state to introduce mining tourism.
- This initiative was announced by Chief Minister Hemant Soren. It was reportedly inspired by his recent visit to the Gava Museum of Mines in Barcelona, where he came across ancient mining techniques and relics from the Neolithic era.
- This mining tourism project marks a pioneering step in opening up the once-exclusive mining sector to curious travellers, students and the general public.
- Jharkhand is home to approximately 40% of India's total mineral wealth.
- The Jharkhand government signed an MoU with Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), a subsidiary of Coal India, to kick-start the project formally. The Jharkhand Tourism Development Corporation (JTDC) will oversee operations, with support from CCL and other stakeholders.

Assistance in Deploying Energy Efficient Technologies in Industries & Establishments (ADEETIE) Scheme Launched

- Union Minister of Power and Housing & Urban Affairs, Manohar Lal, launched the ADEETIE scheme.
- The scheme is an initiative by the Ministry of Power, Government of India, and is being implemented by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).
- It has a budgetary outlay of ₹1000 crores.
- The Scheme is structured to provide end-to-end handholding through subvention on loans, Investment Grade Energy Audits (IGEA), Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), and post-implementation Monitoring and Verification (M&V).
- The ADEETIE scheme envisages to provide interest subvention of 5% for Micro and Small Enterprises, and 3% for Medium Enterprises on loans, ensuring accessibility and affordability for MSMEs seeking financial aid for energy efficiency (EE) projects.

India Launches Electric Truck Incentive Scheme

- Heavy Industries Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy launched a scheme to incentivise electric trucks (e-trucks) under the PM e-DRIVE (PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement) Scheme.
- This is the first time that the government has launched support for electric trucks to help the country's transition to clean and sustainable freight mobility.
- The scheme aims to support the deployment of around 5 thousand 6 hundred e-trucks, promoting indigenous manufacturing and reducing logistics costs and carbon footprint.
- To ensure the reliability of electric trucks, the manufacturers will provide a comprehensive manufacturer-backed warranty.
- This will include a five-year or five-hundred-thousand-kilometre warranty for the battery.

Google Unveils Open-source AI Innovations to Strengthen Indian agriculture

- Google has unveiled new open-source AI innovations and initiatives aimed at strengthening India's agriculture sector and making AI models more sensitive to the country's linguistic and cultural diversity.
- The Agricultural Monitoring and Event Detection (AMED) provides information on crops and field

activity across India, empowering the ecosystem to build targeted solutions that support agricultural productivity and resilience.

- Researchers at Google DeepMind have also collaborated with IIT-Kharagpur to build localised datasets on India's rich cultural tapestry as part of Google's Amplify Initiative, aiming to help equip global Large Language Models with better linguistic and cultural context.

PARAKH Survey Reveals Gaps in Students' Core Subject Understanding

- Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH), an autonomous institution under the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducted a survey named- PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan (RS) to improve the overall quality of education across India through student assessment.
- PARAKH survey was conducted across 74,299 schools of India and involved 21,15,022 students of Grades 3, 6 and 9. It helps understand how much (in per cent) students are good at core subjects like Mathematics, Social Science and Science. 2,70,424 teachers and faculty members also participated in the survey.
- Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala are the top performing states for Grade 3, Kerala, Punjab, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu for Grade 6 and Punjab, Kerala, Chandigarh for Grade 9.
- The PARAKH RS survey aims to enhance education quality by focusing on core subjects such as Language, Science, Mathematics and Social Science. It helps teachers and schools gain insights into areas where classroom teaching can be improved.

Tamil Nadu Becomes the First State to Adopt the Tuberculosis Death Prediction Model

- Tamil Nadu has become the first state in the country to implement a model which predicts the probability of deaths among adults with Tuberculosis and has integrated it with the existing state-wide application TB SeWA, which triages them at diagnosis.
- The predictive model, developed by ICMR's National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE), aims to reduce the average time from diagnosis to hospital admission for severely ill TB patients, thereby bringing down the mortality rate further.

- The new feature has been added to Tamil Nadu's existing TB SeWA (Severe TB Web Application), which has been in use since 2022 under the state's differentiated care model initiative, Tamil Nadu - Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET).

Start-Up Accelerator WaveX Launches "Kalaa Setu"

- In a strategic push to harness the power of AI for inclusive communication, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, through its WaveX Startup Accelerator Platform, has launched the "Kalaa Setu – Real-Time Language Tech for Bharat" Challenge.
- Kalaa Setu aims to bridge the digital language divide by enabling public communication bodies to dynamically transform official information into regionally resonant formats such as infographic visuals, contextualised video explainers and audio news capsules, in real time.

India Launches National Biobank for Personalised Healthcare

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the state-of-the-art Phenome India "National Biobank" at the CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) in New Delhi.
- The newly launched facility marks a significant stride towards building India's own longitudinal health database and enabling personalised treatment regimens in future.
- The Biobank will serve as the backbone of a nationwide cohort study, collecting comprehensive genomic, lifestyle and clinical data from 10,000 individuals across India.
- The Indian version is tailored to capture the country's unique diversity across geography, ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds.
- The initiative will aid early diagnosis, improve therapeutic targeting and bolster the fight against complex diseases such as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular ailments and rare genetic disorders.

Cabinet Approves Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme

- In a transformative step to bolster India's research and innovation ecosystem, the Union Cabinet has today approved the Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme with a corpus of ₹One lakh Crore.

- The scheme has been designed to overcome the constraints and challenges in funding of the private sector and seeks to provide growth & risk capital to sunrise and strategic sectors to facilitate innovation, promote adoption of technology and enhance competitiveness.

Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) launched SPREE 2025

- ESIC has launched SPREE 2025 (Scheme for Promotion of Registration of Employers and Employees). SPREE 2025 is a special initiative aimed at expanding social security coverage under the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) Act.
- The scheme offers a one-time opportunity for unregistered employers and employees, including contractual and temporary workers, to enrol in the ESI system without facing inspections or demands for past dues.
- The scheme eliminates the fear of retrospective penalties and simplifies the registration process to promote voluntary compliance. Previously, non-registration could attract legal action and backdated dues.

Key Points

Director General, ESIC — Ashok Kumar Singh

Startup Policy Forum (SPF) launches #100DesiDeepTechs

- SPF has launched #100DesiDeepTechs, a first-of-its-kind national initiative to identify and support the country's most promising deeptech startups.
- The initiative is being launched in collaboration with Startup India - Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Startup Hub, and IIT Madras.
- It is designed to foster structured policy dialogue and drive India's deeptech agenda across strategic sectors like semiconductors, defence tech, quantum computing, green hydrogen, drones, electric vehicles, biotech, robotics, space tech, advanced manufacturing and communications infrastructure.

News in Short

- Andhra Pradesh is launching a pilot project to curb the mosquito menace during monsoons using artificial intelligence. The government is set to launch

the pilot, called the Smart Mosquito Surveillance System (SMoSS), in 66 locations across six municipal corporations—Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Kakinada, Rajamahendravaram, Nellore and Kurnool.

- Dr. Jitendra Singh launched the National Standards for Civil Service Training Institutes 2.0 (NSCSTI 2.0) at the Civil Services Officers Institute (CSOI). Developed by the Capacity Building Commission (CBC), the revamped framework marks a major leap in India's mission to build a future-ready civil service. The upgraded NSCSTI 2.0 framework presents a more refined, inclusive and future-ready approach to civil services training.
- The government has announced a significant reduction in toll rates, up to 50%, on sections of National Highways featuring major structures such as tunnels, bridges, flyovers and elevated corridors.
- India has rejoined the Unicode Consortium as a Supporting Member through MeitY. The move strengthens India's role in global digital text standardisation. The Unicode Consortium maintains the Unicode Standard for consistent text encoding. The Unicode Standard, launched in 1991, includes over 150 global scripts.
- In a first-of-its-kind initiative towards institutionalising workplace wellness within the corridors of government, the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, inaugurated the Mahila Aarogyan Kaksh — a thoughtfully designed health, fitness and wellness space exclusively for women employees of the Department. The facility is envisioned as a space to encourage physical fitness, mental well-being and work-life balance for women employees.
- The National Medical Commission has issued new guidelines regulating live broadcasts of surgeries to prioritise patient safety and ethical conduct. The move aims to curb commercial exploitation and ensure surgeries are broadcast only for educational purposes.
- Andhra Pradesh has launched the "Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Student Kits" scheme to provide free educational kits to over 35 lakh students in government and aided schools.
- The Union Health Ministry had separately issued an advisory, which is an initiative towards making healthier choices at workplaces. It advises about the display of Boards in various workplaces such as lobbies, canteens, cafeterias, meeting rooms, etc., to raise awareness on harmful consumption of hidden fats and excess sugar in various food items. These Boards are meant to serve as daily reminders on fighting obesity, the burden of which is sharply rising in the country.
- The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has issued the 'Model Rules for Felling of Trees in Agricultural Lands', to support States and Union Territories in simplifying regulatory frameworks and promoting agroforestry. Agroforestry offers multiple benefits including, enhancing rural livelihoods, improving soil health, conserving biodiversity, increasing tree cover, water conservation, contributing to climate resilience and reducing pressure on natural forests.
- The International Court of Justice issued a landmark ruling that government actions driving climate change are illegal and states should be held legally responsible for their emissions.
- Uttarakhand has launched a unique program to revive 14 critically endangered "Red Category" plant species. It is the first in India.
- Himachal Pradesh has launched a digital land registration system called "My Deed" under the National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS). This initiative aims to simplify the land registration process for citizens by allowing online document submission and reducing the number of required visits to government offices.
- Madhya Pradesh Cabinet, led by Chief Minister (CM) Dr. Mohan Yadav, approved Mukhyamantri Vrindavan Gram Yojana to develop model rural villages. Villages with at least 2,000 people and 500 bovines will be developed as Vrindavan Grams. The scheme promotes cow rearing, organic farming, solar energy, water conservation and rural entrepreneurship. Rashtriya Raksha University campus to be set up in Bhopal with ₹1.05 crore yearly support for three years.
- Rajasthan's Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma launched the 'Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Poverty-Free Village Scheme' for the economic empowerment of BPL rural families and to lift them above poverty line, 5,000 villages have been selected in the first phase.
- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar launched CM-PRATIGYA (Chief Minister - Promotion of Readiness, Awareness and Technical Insights for Guiding Youth Advancement). The scheme is aimed at empowering the state's youth through skill development, internships

and career advancement opportunities.

- The Land Pooling Policy, 2025 is a flagship initiative of the Punjab government with the stated aim of promoting “planned urban development”. Unlike in traditional land acquisition, where the state simply acquires land for compensation, the pooling initiative is meant to be voluntary. The policy seeks to check the

proliferation of illegal colonies and arrest haphazard urban growth, while ensuring landowners remain stakeholders in development.

- The government has mandated compulsory facial recognition technology across India’s vast Anganwadi network to expand biometric verification for the country’s flagship nutrition and childcare programme.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Researchers Built the World’s First Computer without Silicon Using 2D Materials at Penn State

- In a groundbreaking achievement, the US researchers have created a computer using two-dimensional materials, potentially replacing silicon in future electronics.
- This pioneering CMOS computer, built at Penn State, utilises materials like molybdenum disulphide and tungsten diselenide.
- ‘Complementary Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor’, or CMOS, is widely used in designing electronic circuits. It consumes low power and accommodates more components.
- While silicon’s limitations hinder further miniaturisation, these 2D materials offer scalability and new functionalities.
- The development is acknowledged as pioneering and a starting point in creating not just alternatives to silicon, but a roadmap for a new generation of still smaller, more flexible electronics.

NASA launches Solar Eruption Integral Field Spectrograph (SNIFS)

- NASA launched the Orbiting Carbon Observatory (OCO-2), a carbon-sniffing satellite to study and track the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.
- The satellite is part of NASA’s first mission dedicated to studying carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.
- The project can help pinpoint the major sources of human-caused carbon dioxide and measure its impact on the Earth’s climate.
- OCO-2’s “nose” is a sensor that measures the intensity of the sunlight reflected by the gas in a column of air. Each measurement is unique and can be used both for identification and to determine patterns of carbon emission.

Key Points

Headquarters, NASA	— Washington DC, US
Acting administrator, NASA	— Sean Duffy

NASA discovers rare comet 3I/ATLAS

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has discovered a rare interstellar comet. It has been officially named 3I/ATLAS.
- Comet 3I/ATLAS was discovered on July 1 and spotted by a Chile-based survey telescope named ATLAS (Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System).
- The comet originated from interstellar space (space between the stars) and is arriving from the direction of the constellation Sagittarius.
- The comet is currently located about 420 million miles (670 million kilometers) away. It is journeying at a speed of around 37 miles (60 km) per second from the direction of the centre of the Milky Way galaxy.

NASA Launches TRACERS Mission to Study How Earth Fights Space Storms

- NASA has officially launched the TRACERS (Tandem Reconnection and Cusp Electrodynamics Reconnaissance Satellites) mission, which will be studying the magnetic reconnection- an energy burst that occurs when the Sun’s magnetic field interacts with Earth’s magnetic shield.
- The TRACERS satellites lifted off aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.
- The mission includes two satellites flying just 10 seconds apart to take over 3,000 measurements in one year.
- Their job is to closely study magnetic activity in a region near Earth’s North Pole called the polar cusp, where the Sun’s magnetic field hits Earth’s.

- These satellites will provide real-time data about how solar energy and particles enter Earth's upper atmosphere and affect communication systems, satellites and even electricity grids.
- This mission helps scientists understand how solar storms affect Earth's magnetic field, which is important for countries like India, where satellites play a major role in communication, navigation and weather forecasting. It also helps safeguard space-bound missions and astronauts.

WHO Launches Integrated Guidelines on Arboviral Diseases

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has released its first-ever integrated guidelines on the clinical management of arboviral diseases, including dengue, chikungunya, Zika and yellow fever, in a major step towards strengthening the global response to mosquito-borne viral diseases.
- The new guidelines aim to help frontline healthcare providers and hospitals manage both mild and severe cases of these diseases using standardised, evidence-based protocols. With arboviral infections posing a growing threat across tropical and subtropical regions, the WHO said the guidelines would also support policymakers and health administrators in boosting epidemic and pandemic preparedness.
- Arboviral diseases are most commonly transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes. These include dengue, chikungunya, Zika and yellow fever. The Aedes aegypti mosquito is capable of spreading multiple viruses in the same region, often at the same time.
- The diseases often begin with flu-like symptoms such as fever, joint pain and rash, making clinical diagnosis difficult in the absence of laboratory tests. In some cases, complications can be severe or life-threatening.

Israel Launches Dror-1

- Israel has launched its first fully government-funded and domestically built communications satellite, Dror-1, from Cape Canaveral, Florida.
- Dror-1 is the most advanced satellite ever developed by Israel.
- It is a geostationary satellite, meaning it orbits at a fixed position approximately 36,000 km above the Earth's equator, maintaining constant coverage over a specific geographic area.

- It weighs around 4,500 kg and measures 17.8 metres across and is expected to serve Israel's communication needs for the next 15 years, extending its utility into the late 2030s. The project has cost Israel an estimated ₹1,670 crore since work began in 2018.

US Designates the Resistance Front as a Terrorist Group

- The US State Department has designated The Resistance Front (TRF), the group behind the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, as a terrorist organisation.
- The Trump Administration has declared the TRF as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT).
- TRF, a Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) front and proxy, claimed responsibility for the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which killed 26 civilians. TRF has also claimed responsibility for several attacks against Indian security forces, including most recently in 2024. The State Department has also reviewed and maintained the FTO designation of LeT.

Tayfun Block-4- Turkey's first Hypersonic Ballistic Missile

- The Tayfun Block-4 missile was launched at the International Defence Industry Fair (IDEF) 2025 in Istanbul.
- The missile was developed by Turkish defence giant Roketsan and is the hypersonic version of the Tayfun missile, Turkey's indigenously produced longest-range ballistic missile.
- It measures 6.5 meters in length, weighs 2,300 kilograms, and boasts a range of 800 kilometres.
- It has a multi-purpose warhead which will make it capable of destroying numerous strategic targets, such as air defence systems, command and control centres, military hangars and critical military facilities, from kilometers away.

The Institution of the Dalai Lama to Continue

- The 14th Dalai Lama made the significant announcement of his successor at the 15th Tibetan religious conference that began at McLeodganj near Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh ahead of his 90th birthday on 6 July 2025.
- He reiterated that the responsibility for recognising the 15th Dalai Lama would rest exclusively with the Gaden Phodrang Trust, the office of the Dalai Lama, sole authority to recognise future reincarnation.

- He was recognised as the reincarnation of his predecessor at the age of two and has been living in exile in Dharamshala for 66 years.
- The process of recognising the reincarnations of lamas in Tibetan Buddhism is solely and uniquely a Tibetan religious tradition. In contrast, China maintains that the process of selecting his successor must adhere to Chinese law, asserting its control over Tibetan Buddhism and rejecting any succession beyond its authority.
- Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), a mega-dam on the Blue Nile, launched in 2011 with a \$4-billion budget, has been completed. It is considered Africa's largest hydroelectric project, stretching 1.8 kilometres (just over one mile) wide and 145 metres (475 feet) high.
- Denmark is introducing a new bill that aims to protect citizens from deep fakes by giving them copyright over their own likeness.
- In the declaration at the NATO summit in the Hague, the leaders said the defence pledge will consist of investments of at least 3.5% of GDP per year in core defence requirements. They also vowed to spend up to 1.5% of GDP on security-related expenditures, including the protection of critical infrastructure and strengthening the alliance's defence industrial base.

News in Short

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) officially recommends lenacapavir, a twice-yearly injectable HIV prevention drug, as part of a combination HIV prevention approach. This endorsement is particularly targeted towards high-risk groups and regions with a high burden of HIV.
- After a century, Paris has reopened the River Seine for public swimming, a legacy of the Paris 2024 Olympics. Seine underwent an extensive clean-up to host open-water swimming and triathlon events. Roughly €1.4 billion was spent to improve water quality and prepare the river for both the public and athletes.
- Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It has an estimated budget of €26.2 billion.
- Bulgaria officially approved to adopt the euro on 1 January 2026, becoming the 21st member of the single currency area.
- French President Emmanuel Macron says France will formally recognise the State of Palestine at the UN General Assembly.
- The US will quit the United Nations' cultural and education agency UNESCO. The decision is part of the president's second-term drive to pull the US out of a series of global bodies, including leaving the World Health Organization (WHO), halting funding to the Palestinian relief agency UNRWA and withdrawing from the UN human rights council, as part of a review of US participation in UN agencies.
- Brazil is finalising its submission to join South Africa's genocide case against Israel's actions in Gaza at the International Court of Justice.
- The UK Government has said the voting age will be reduced to 16 for all elections.
- Alphabet's Google has been hit by an EU antitrust complaint over its AI Overviews from a group of independent publishers, which has also asked for an interim measure to prevent allegedly irreparable harm to them.

INDIA AND THE WORLD

PM Modi's 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' Gift To King Charles III – Strengthening Green Diplomacy

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi met King Charles III at Sandringham House as part of his official visit to the United Kingdom.
- During the meeting, Modi presented the King with a sapling of *Davidia involucrata* 'Sonoma', commonly known as the Sonoma dove tree or handkerchief tree.
- The gesture was made under the Prime Minister's 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative, which encourages people to plant a tree in tribute to their mothers.

- The Sonoma dove tree is an ornamental species known for its large white bracts that resemble handkerchiefs or doves.
- Unlike the standard *Davidia involucrata*, which can take up to 20 years to bloom, the 'Sonoma' cultivar flowers within two to three years of planting.

India and the UK Sign Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

- The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is designed to open new avenues

for trade and investment, while protecting India's core economic interests.

- It combines tariff reduction, simpler rules for trade, strong provisions for services and measures that make professional mobility easier.
- CETA ensures tariff elimination on about 99 per cent of tariff lines, covering India's nearly entire trade basket.
- This means nearly 100% of Indian goods such as textiles, leather, marine products, gems and jewellery, toys, chemicals, engineering products, chemicals, agri-products will enter the UK market at zero duty.
- At the same time, India has opened 89.5 % of its tariff lines covering 91% of UK's exports. Only 24.5 % of the UK's exports will enjoy immediate duty free market access.

PM Modi visited the Maldives as the Guest of Honour for its Independence Day Celebrations

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi met H. E. Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, President of the Republic of Maldives, at the President's Office in Male. PM Modi was invited as the Guest of Honour for the 60th Independence Day celebrations of the Maldives.
- The two leaders witnessed the exchange of six MOUs in the fields of fisheries and aquaculture, meteorology, digital public infrastructure, UPI, Indian pharmacopoeia and concessional Line of Credit.
- The Prime Minister also handed over two units of Aarogya Maitri Health Cube sets to the Government of Maldives. With state-of-the-art medical equipment as part of the cube, it can provide medical aid to 200 casualties with in-built support to sustain a crew of six medical personnel for up to 72 hours.
- India offered a new Line of Credit offers approx USD 550 million in support of infrastructure development and other activities in the Maldives
- Both the leaders planted mango saplings as part of India's 'Ek Pedh Maa Ke Naam' (Plant for Mother) and Maldives's 'Pledge of 5 million Tree Plantation' campaigns.
- PM Modi remotely inaugurated an expansion of the international airport on the island of Hanimaadhoo, which India is helping to finance.
- Both the leaders released commemorative stamps celebrating the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Maldives. The stamps feature the Indian boat Uru— a large wooden dhow handcrafted in the historic boatyards of

Beyppore, Kerala and the traditional Maldivian fishing boat Vadhu Dhoni. These traditional vessels have been part of Indian Ocean maritime trade for centuries. The Vadhu Dhoni, in particular, is still used for reef and coastal fishing in the Maldives and highlights the country's rich maritime heritage and its deep connection with ocean life.

India-Pakistan Prisoner Exchange

- India and Pakistan exchanged lists of prisoners in each other's custody, with New Delhi asking Islamabad to expedite the release of 159 Indian nationals who have completed their prison terms and to provide consular access to 26 more prisoners.
- The two countries exchange lists of prisoners and fishermen twice a year, on January 1 and July 1, under provisions of the 2008 Agreement on Consular Access. This is among a limited number of bilateral mechanisms and arrangements that remain operational between the two sides, another being the exchange on January 1 of lists of nuclear installations that cannot be attacked during hostilities.

Official Visit of Prime Minister to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid an Official Visit to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the invitation of the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.
- It was the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister in 26 years.
- It coincided with the 180th anniversary of the arrival of Indian immigrants to Trinidad and Tobago in 1845.
- In recognition of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's exceptional leadership both within India and on the global stage, he was conferred the Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago — the country's highest national honour.
- Addressing a large gathering of the Indian diaspora in Port of Spain, Trinidad, Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned several eminent personalities with Indian roots, including the mathematician and politician Dr Rudranath Capildeo (1920-70), the Trinidadian musician, 'King of Chutney' Sundar Popo, and the former West Indies batsman Daren Ganga.
- He also mentioned Sewdass Sadhu, an indentured labourer who is credited with single-handedly building the famous "Temple in the Sea" in the Gulf of Paria. The

temple was first constructed in 1955. It is surrounded by the scenic waters of the Gulf of Paria and is connected to land by a walkway. The 85-foot Hanuman statue at the Dattatreya temple in Carapichaima stands nearby. It has classic Hindu architectural features like domed mandaps, colourful gopurams (entrance towers that are a distinctive feature of Dravidian temple architecture), and ornate ceiling designs.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Historic Ghana Visit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Ghana's Accra, marking the first visit by an Indian PM to the African country in over 30 years. He was personally received by President John Mahama.
- As he stepped onto Ghanaian soil, PM Modi was greeted with chants of 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna.'
- India and Ghana inked four agreements on Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP), MoU between Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), MoU between the Institute of Traditional & Alternative Medicine (ITAM), Ghana and the Institute of Teaching & Research in Ayurveda (ITRA), India, and MoU on Joint Commission Meeting.
- PM Modi was conferred with Ghana's highest civilian award — the Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets with President Javier Milei of Argentina

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi met the President of Argentina, H.E. Javier Milei, as it happens to be the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Argentina after a gap of 57 years.
- This is a seminal year for India-Argentina ties as the two countries celebrate 75 years of the establishment of diplomatic ties.
- He began his visit by paying respects at the statue of General José de San Martín, Argentina's revered freedom fighter and national hero.
- The two sides had extensive discussions on trade and investment, health and pharmaceuticals, defence and security, infrastructure, mining and mineral resources, agriculture and food security, green energy, ICT and digital innovation, disaster management, science and technology, education and people-to-people linkages.
- Prime Minister, before concluding his visit, paid floral tribute at the busts of Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore in Buenos Aires.

- PM Modi was conferred with the Key to the City of Buenos Aires for strengthening India-Argentina relations.

PM Narendra Modi participates in the 17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the 17th BRICS Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 6-7 July 2025.
- The leaders held productive discussions on various issues on the BRICS agenda, including reform of global governance, enhancing the voice of the global south, peace and security, strengthening multilateralism, development issues and Artificial Intelligence.
- He addressed the inaugural session on "Reform of Global Governance and Peace and Security". The second session was on "Multilateral, Economic-Financial Affairs and Artificial Intelligence (AI)".
- The member countries adopted the 'Rio de Janeiro Declaration'.

PM Narendra Modi becomes the first Indian PM in 57 Years to Visit Brazil

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Brasilia for his State Visit to Brazil. Brazil's Minister of Defence, Jose Mucio Monteiro Filho, received him at the airport.
- He is the first Indian PM in 57 years to undertake a State Visit to Brazil, strengthening the ties between the two nations. PM Modi travelled to Brazil at the invitation of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.
- He had bilateral discussions with Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on broadening the Strategic Partnership between the two nations in areas of mutual interest, including trade, defence, energy, space, technology, agriculture, health and people-to-people linkages.
- PM Modi set a \$20 billion trade target with Brazil by 2030.
- The President of Brazil, H.E. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, conferred upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Brazil's highest national honour – "The Grand Collar of the National Order of the Southern Cross". The award was given in recognition of PM Modi's notable contributions to strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing India-Brazil cooperation across key global platforms.

PM Modi First Ever Visit to Namibia

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Namibia at the invitation of Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah. This will be the first visit of Prime Minister Modi to Namibia, and the third ever Prime Ministerial visit from India to Namibia and is coming after a gap of 27 years.
- India and Namibia signed four MoUs in the field of Health and Medicine, and on the setting up of the Entrepreneurship Development Centre in Namibia and on Cooperation.
- The MoUs were signed after the delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah at the State House in the Namibian capital, Windhoek.
- Prime Minister Modi also paid tribute to Sam Nujoma, the founding father of the Namibian nation, at the National Memorial Heroes' Acre in Windhoek.
- President of Namibia, H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah conferred the highest civilian award of Namibia — Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He is the first Indian leader to be given this award.

FINANCE, ECONOMY AND BANKING

NCDEX, IMD Ink Pact to launch India's First Weather Derivatives

- The National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Ltd (NCDEX) inked an agreement with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) that will lay critical groundwork for launching India's first weather derivatives.
- The weather derivatives are a long-anticipated market instrument designed to help farmers and allied sectors hedge against climate-related risks such as erratic rainfall, heatwaves and unseasonal weather events.
- With this partnership, NCDEX will develop a rainfall-based derivative product, among others, using historical and real-time datasets sourced from IMD.

Key Points

Headquarters, NCDEX	— Mumbai, Maharashtra
MD & CEO	— Arun Raste
Headquarters, IMD	— New Delhi
Director General of Meteorology	— Mrutyunjay Mohapatra

India Logs 65K crore Digital Payments worth ₹12K trillion in Six Years

- India logged over 65,000 crore digital payment transactions worth ₹12,000 trillion in the last six fiscal years—FY19 to FY25—marking a surge in the technology's adoption across the country, including small towns and rural areas.
- This has helped reduce cash dependency in the economy and increase formal economic participation.
- The RBI had set up a Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) in 2021 to encourage

the deployment of digital payments acceptance infrastructure in small towns and cities and remote parts, including the northeastern states and Jammu & Kashmir.

- The RBI has developed the Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) to measure the extent of digitisation of payments across the country. The index, published semi-annually, pegs March 2018 as the base period (index = 100). As per the latest release, the RBI-DPI was at 465.33 for September 2024, reflecting continued growth in digital payment adoption, infrastructure, and performance across the country.

RBI Advises Banks to Integrate DoT's Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued an advisory directing all Scheduled Commercial Banks, Small Finance Banks, Payments Banks and Co-operative Banks to integrate the Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI) developed by DoT into their systems.
- This is a watershed moment in the fight against cyber-enabled financial frauds and a testament to the power of inter-agency collaboration in safeguarding citizens in India's growing digital economy.
- FRI was launched by the Department of Telecom (DoT's) Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU). It is a risk-based metric that classifies a mobile number as having been associated with Medium, High or Very High risk of financial fraud. This classification is an outcome of inputs obtained from various stakeholders, including reporting on the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4Cs) National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP), DoT's Chakshu platform and Intelligence shared by banks and financial institutions.

- DoT regularly shares the Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL) with stakeholders, detailing numbers disconnected due to cybercrime links, failed re-verification or misuse, many of which are tied to financial frauds.
- The bank must not be under any directions from the RBI, or subject to the Supervisory Action Framework or Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) in the previous or current financial year. It should also have at least two professional directors on its board.
- This follows a similar clearance granted by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) for the proposed investment. The Currant Sea had approached the CCI in April seeking approval for the stake acquisition.
- Earlier, Warburg Pincus and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) had announced a joint investment commitment of ₹7,500 crore in IDFC First Bank via compulsorily convertible preference shares.

Key Points

RBI's headquarters	—	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Governor	—	Sanjay Malhotra

Key Points

IDFC Bank MD & CEO	—	V. Vaidyanathan
Headquarters	—	Mumbai, Maharashtra
CCI headquarters	—	New Delhi
CCI Chairperson	—	Ravneet Kaur

RBI Introduces ECBA Framework for Urban Co-operative Banks

- As part of regulatory reforms, RBI has proposed a new regime — the Eligibility Criteria for Business Authorisation (ECBA) — for granting permissions and approvals to urban co-operative banks (UCBs) to open new branches, set up ATMs, processing centres and other infrastructure.
- This will replace the current Financially Sound and Well Managed (FSWM) framework.
- A bank will be considered fully compliant with ECBA if it meets specified conditions related to capital adequacy, asset quality, profitability, reserve ratios and more, based on the audited financial statements as of 31 March of the immediately preceding financial year.
- Banks must maintain the regulatory minimum applicable capital adequacy ratio (CAR). Their net non-performing assets (NPAs) should not exceed 3%. Additionally, the bank must have reported net profit for the preceding two financial years without any accumulated losses on the balance sheet.
- There should be no default in the maintenance of the cash reserve ratio (CRR) or statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) during the current or preceding financial year. Banks must have fully implemented Core Banking Solutions (CBS).

RBI Clears Warburg Pincus arm Currant Sea to Acquire 9.99% Stake in IDFC First Bank

- RBI has approved Currant Sea Investments B.V., an affiliate of global private equity major Warburg Pincus, to acquire up to 9.99% stake in IDFC First Bank.

EximPe Secures In-principle Nod for Cross-border Payment Aggregator Licence

- Cross-border payments startup EximPe has secured RBI in-principle approval for a Payment Aggregator Cross-Border (PA-CB) licence (Export and Import).
- The company plans to offer cross-border pay-ins and pay-outs for digital services, e-commerce, and business-to-business (B2B) goods trade for entities across emerging Asian markets.
- Currently, companies such as Skydo, BriskPe, PayPal and Wise have been granted in-principle approval by the banking regulator. Seven other companies have their PA-CB applications under review by the RBI.
- As of now, only six companies—Adyen India, Amazon Pay India, Cashfree Payments, BillDesk, Pay10 and Worldline ePayments India—have received full licences from the RBI to operate as PA-CBs.

Public Sector Banks flag 1,629 Wilful Defaulters with Dues over ₹1.62 lakh crore

- India's public sector banks have classified 1,629 unique corporate borrowers as wilful defaulters, with outstanding loans totalling ₹1.62 lakh crore as of 31 March 2025.
- The list of defaulters—excluding overseas borrowers—is updated monthly and made publicly accessible through the websites of registered credit information companies such as CIBIL, Experian, Equifax and CRIF High Mark.
- To deter wilful default and aid in non-performing asset (NPA) recovery, the government outlined a series of stringent measures. These include:

- I. A bar on additional credit facilities for wilful defaulters or entities associated with them for one year even after their name is removed from the defaulter list.
 - II. Debarment from launching new ventures or accessing capital markets for five years.
 - III. Ineligibility for restructuring of loans unless certain conditions are met.
 - IV. Potential criminal proceedings in eligible cases under RBI guidelines.
- Furthermore, wilful defaulters are subject to restrictions under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018, which enables attachment and confiscation of their properties and bars them from contesting civil claims in Indian courts.
 - While disclosure of defaulters at overseas branches is subject to host country laws, such cases must still be reported to Indian credit bureaus where possible.

FINO Payment Banks Launch GATI Savings Account

- Fino Payments Bank has launched a new digital savings account to boost UPI transactions in rural and semi-urban West Bengal.
- The name 'GATI' means 'speed' in several Indian languages. It is a zero-balance account that enables instant digital transactions and is tailored for digitally-savvy individuals, often overlooked by traditional banking services.

NPCI Adds 13 Banks to UPI-PayNow Linkage to Boost India-Singapore Remittances

- NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL), the overseas arm of the National Payments Corporation of India has expanded the UPI-PayNow real-time payment corridor between India and Singapore by adding 13 Indian banks to the platform.
- The move takes the total number of participating Indian banks to 19, significantly broadening the reach of the service aimed at easing cross-border remittances for individuals, including migrant workers and students in Singapore.
- The UPI-PayNow linkage was launched as a joint initiative by the Reserve Bank of India and the Monetary Authority of Singapore. It enables real-time cross-border transfers using mobile numbers or Virtual Payment Addresses (VPAs), with funds typically credited within seconds.
- Funds can be received via UPI-enabled apps like BHIM, Google Pay and PhonePe, or through bank apps.

- Outward remittances from India to Singapore will continue to be supported by seven banks, including Canara Bank, HDFC Bank, SBI and Indian Bank. In Singapore, the service is currently available through DBS Bank and Liquid Group.

Key Points

Headquarters, NPCI	—	Mumbai, Maharashtra
MD & CEO	—	Dilip Asbe

NVIDIA Becomes the First Public Company to Cross \$4 Trillion Market Cap

- NVIDIA Corporation has become the first publicly traded company to reach a \$4 trillion market capitalisation, a milestone driven by soaring demand for artificial intelligence hardware.
- NVIDIA's GPUs power major AI models-including ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and Meta LLaMA-and are essential across data centres and supercomputing platforms.

Reliance Defence inks ₹20,000 crore Joint Venture with Coastal Mechanics Inc. (CMI)

- Reliance Defence announced a strategic partnership with US-based Coastal Mechanics to tap into India's expanding defence Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (MRO) and upgrade market, valued at around ₹20,000 crore.
- The collaboration will focus on delivering end-to-end MRO, upgrade and lifecycle support services for a range of Indian defence platforms.
- These will include more than 100 Jaguar and 100 MiG-29 fighter aircraft, Apache attack helicopters, L-70 air defence guns and other ageing systems that require extensive modernisation.
- Reliance Defence and Coastal Mechanics will also establish a joint venture at the Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur (MIHAN) in Maharashtra.
- The facility will cater to both domestic and international markets and provide integrated MRO and upgrade services across air and land-based defence systems.

Adani Green Becomes the First Indian Firm to Cross 15 GW of Renewable Capacity

- Adani Green Energy (AGEL) has achieved a significant milestone, reaching 15.5 GW of operational renewable energy capacity (including 11 GW solar, 1.97 GW wind,

and 2.56 GW wind-solar hybrid), marking it the fastest and largest addition in India.

- This is the fastest and largest renewable energy capacity addition in the country to date.
- In comparison, ReNew Power has an operational capacity of 11.2 GW of renewable energy, while Tata Power has a renewable energy capacity of over 6 GW.
- AGEL's 15,53 GW operational portfolio can power nearly 7.9 million households.

Liberty General Insurance, ACKO Become Tesla's Insurance Partners in India

- Liberty General Insurance and ACKO have become insurance partners for Tesla, the American electric carmaker in India.
- Liberty General Insurance has developed a suite of finely tuned protection plans that complement Tesla's engineering and performance excellence while anticipating the distinct needs of EV users.
- Tesla has officially marked its entry into India with the launch of its first showroom in Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC).

News in Short

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has revised its forecast for India's economic growth to 6.4% for both 2025 and 2026. Earlier in its April 2025 World Economic Outlook, IMF had projected India's GDP growth at 6.2% for 2025 and 6.3% for 2026.

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and exchanges have revised the Enhanced Surveillance Mechanism (ESM) framework for companies with a market capitalisation lower than ₹1,000 crore.
- The government is committed to raising the contribution of tourism in the country's economy to 10% by 2047, in line with global levels.
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has taken unprecedented action against Jane Street, one of the world's largest quantitative trading firms. The regulator has banned the US-based company and its affiliated entities from the Indian securities market and ordered them to return ₹4,843 crore in alleged unlawful profits. Jane Street has denied the accusations.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has officially included NSDL Payments Bank Limited in the Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, thereby conferring upon it the status of a Scheduled Bank.
- Global technology giant Microsoft has officially shut down its operations in Pakistan after 25 years, as part of its global restructuring plan.
- Zurich Kotak General Insurance has launched 'EV Protect', a comprehensive add-on cover within its car insurance product, Car Secure, for Indian electric vehicles (EVs), which covers Tesla among other EVs.
- Reliance Jio has launched JioPC, a cloud-based virtual desktop service that turns TVs into personal computers without a separate CPU. It operates via a Jio Set-Top Box and offers various monthly plans, enabling basic tasks like web browsing and document editing.

DEFENCE NEWS

The Indian Army conducts Operation Mahadev

- The Indian Army, along with J&K Police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), launched an anti-terror operation under the codename Operation Mahadev and successfully eliminated three terrorists, including the mastermind behind the Pahalgam attack.
- The operation was launched by the Chinar Corps in the general area of Lidwas in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Hashim Musa, a top Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander who was named the top conspirator and executor of the Pahalgam attack, was gunned down by the armed forces during the operation. The other two are suspected to be Yasir and Hamza, also known as Harris.
- The operation was launched after a lone Chinese satellite phone was detected as active in the Baisaran

area on July 11. This triggered a coordinated search involving the Army, J&K Police and CRPF. Subsequent intelligence inputs, including information from local nomads, further confirmed terrorist movement in the region.

Key Points

Chief of the Army Staff — General Upendra Dwivedi (CAS)

Chief of Defence Staff — General Anil Chauhan (CDS)

Indian Army launches Operation Shiva 2025 for Amarnath Yatra Security

- The Indian Army launched "Operation Shiva" and has deployed over 8,500 soldiers armed with

sophisticated weapons and supported by a wide array of technological and operational resources to ensure a smooth and hassle-free Amarnath pilgrimage.

- The army has been working in close coordination with the civil administration and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) to ensure the smooth and secure conduct of the Amarnath Yatra.
- This annual high-tempo operation aims to provide a robust security architecture along both the northern and southern yatra routes, particularly in light of the heightened threat from Pakistan-backed proxies in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor.
- The army has deployed a counter-UAS (unmanned aerial surveillance) grid with more than 50 C-UAS and EW (early warning) systems each to neutralise drone threats.

Quad Nations Launch First-Ever 'At Sea Observer Mission' To Boost Maritime Cooperation

- In a landmark initiative to bolster maritime cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, the Coast Guards of India, Japan, the United States and Australia have launched the first-ever 'QUAD at Sea Ship Observer Mission.'
- The cross-embarkation mission, conducted under the Wilmington Declaration, sees two officers-including women officers-from each nation aboard the US Coast Guard Cutter Stratton, currently en route to Guam.
- This pioneering mission marks a significant step in operational coordination among QUAD members, aimed at boosting joint readiness, domain awareness and interoperability in the region.
- It aligns with the vision articulated at the QUAD Leaders' Summit in September 2024 and reinforces the commitment to a Free, Open, Inclusive and Rules-Based Indo-Pacific.
- India's involvement underscores its strategic SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine and supports its broader Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), which focuses on capacity-building, humanitarian efforts, and upholding maritime law.
- The 'QUAD at Sea' initiative lays the groundwork for a future 'QUAD Coast Guard Handshake,' reflecting growing trust and shared resolve to address evolving maritime challenges collaboratively.

India Successfully Tests Prithvi-II and AGNI-I Ballistic Missiles in Odisha

- India successfully test-fired two key strategic ballistic

missiles – the short-range Prithvi-II and Agni-I – from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, Odisha.

- The launches were conducted by the Strategic Forces Command as part of routine training and validation exercises.
- Both missiles met all mission objectives and technical parameters, reaffirming their accuracy and operational readiness.
- The Prithvi-II and Agni-I are part of India's domestically developed strategic missile systems and play a crucial role in maintaining the country's defence preparedness.

INS Ajay Finds New Life After 64 years with More Lethal Anti-submarine Warfare Capabilities

- Yard 3034 Ajay, the eighth and last ship of Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), which was indigenously designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), was launched.
- The warship will augment the Indian Navy's underwater domain awareness, Anti-Submarine Warfare and mine-laying capabilities.
- The ship is equipped with role-defining sensors such as a hull-mounted sonar and low-frequency variable depth sonar (LFVDS), and firepower provided by state-of-the-art torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets, NSG-30 Gun and 12.7 mm SRCG.

Indigenous Pollution Control Vessel Launched for Indian Coast Guard

- In a significant move towards enhancing India's maritime environmental security, Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) launched the second indigenous Pollution Control Vessel (PCV) 'Samudra Prachet' for the Indian Coast Guard.
- The vessel was launched at GSL's Vasco-da-Gama shipyard in Goa, marking another key milestone in the country's drive for self-reliant shipbuilding under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.
- Samudra Prachet, designated Yard 1268, is the second of a two-ship series of Pollution Control Vessels. Its sister ship, Samudra Pratap, was launched in August 2024. Designed entirely in-house by GSL, the vessel features advanced technology tailored for pollution control duties along India's coastline and in offshore zones.
- With a displacement of 4,170 tonnes, the ship measures 114.5 metres in length and 16.5 metres in breadth,

and is capable of deploying two side-sweeping arms to recover oil spills while in motion. The vessel also includes onboard systems for viscosity-range oil recovery, contaminated water intake, pollutant separation, and storage of recovered oil in dedicated tanks. Additionally, it boasts a sophisticated radar suite designed to detect and track oil slicks on the sea surface.

Key Points

Director General, — Paramesh Sivamani
Indian Coast Guard

Indian Navy Received INS Udaygiri, the Second Ship of Project 17A Stealth Frigates.

- Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDSL) delivered Yard 12652 (Udaygiri), the second ship of Project 17A stealth frigate.
- The Project is a follow-on of the Shivalik class (Project 17) frigates active in service. Udaygiri is the second among the seven P17A frigates under construction at MDL, Mumbai and GRSE, Kolkata.
- These multi-mission frigates are capable of operating in a 'Blue Water' environment dealing with both conventional and non-conventional threats in the area of India's Maritime Interests.
- Udaygiri is a modern Avatar of its predecessor, the erstwhile INS Udaygiri, which was a Steam Ship, decommissioned on 24 August 2007 after rendering 31 years of glorious service to the nation.
- Udaygiri has been delivered to the Indian Navy in a record time of 37 months from the date of launching.
- These ships are fitted with an advanced weapon and sensor suite with enhanced 'sleek and stealthy' features compared to the P17 class. The ships are configured with Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG) main propulsion plants, comprising a Diesel Engine and Gas turbine, driving a Controllable Pitch Propeller (CPP) on each shaft and a state-of-the-art Integrated Platform Management System (IPMS).
- The weapon suite comprises supersonic Surface-to-Surface missile system, Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile system, 76 mm Gun, and a combination of 30 mm and 12.7 mm rapid-fire close-in Weapon Systems.
- The Akash Prime system was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The Akash air defence system has previously demonstrated its operational value, notably during Operation Sindoor, where it successfully intercepted aerial threats involving Chinese fighter aircraft and Turkish drones used by Pakistani forces.

Key Points

DRDO headquarters — New Delhi
Chairman — Samir V. Kamat

DRDO Tests Indigenous Communication Systems

- The Defence Electronics Application Laboratory (DEAL), Dehradun in Joshimath area of Uttarakhand, has "successfully" carried out field trials of a compact Software-Defined Radio (SDR) and a key communication system, reinforcing the commitment of the organisation in developing indigenous and mission-critical communication solutions for national security.
- The trials were conducted in close coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other agencies.
- They were conducted in varied terrain and operational environments, aiming to rigorously validate the performance of both systems in real-world conditions, including verification of key parameters.

DRDO Successfully Test-Fires Drone-Launched Precision Guided Missile in Andhra Pradesh

- India's defence capabilities have received a significant boost as DRDO successfully test-fired the ULPGM-V3, a drone-launched precision-guided missile, at a test range in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh.
- The missile system was developed in collaboration with industry partners, including Defence Capital Procurement Partners (DcPPs), micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and start-ups.
- The ULPGM-V3, also referred to as ULM-ER (extended-range variant), is an advanced version of DRDO's UAV-launched precision munition and features passive homing using an imaging infrared (IR) seeker, allowing for accurate engagement in both day and night conditions.
- It is a 12.5-kg fire-and-forget air-to-surface missile powered by a compact dual-thrust solid propulsion unit, enabling it to reach a maximum range of 4 km during daytime operations and 2.5 km at night.

India Successfully Tests Akash Prime Air Defence System

- Indian army successfully conducted a high-altitude test of the indigenous Akash Prime air defence system in Ladakh, at an altitude of approximately 15,000 feet.

- It also incorporates a two-way datalink for communication and offers multiple warhead options to engage a variety of static and moving targets.

Indian Navy Commissions Indigenous DSV Nistar

- The Indian Navy has commissioned the indigenously designed and built first of its two Diving Support Vessels, 'Nistar'.
- Nistar, designed and built by Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam, marks a significant milestone in India's march towards Aatmanirbharta.
- With the participation of 120 MSMEs and incorporating more than 80% indigenous content, Nistar is a statement to India's ability to build complex ships, at par with international standards.
- The main roles of the vessel include undertaking deep-sea diving and conducting rescue operations from distressed submarines. The specialised diving complex onboard extends over multiple decks, and she is fitted with state-of-the-art systems required for saturation diving missions.

Key Points

Chief of Naval Staff — Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi

DRDO, IAF Successfully Test Indigenous Astra Missile with Radio Frequency Seeker from Su-30 MKI

- DRDO and the Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted the flight-test of indigenous Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air missile (BVRAAM) 'Astra' equipped with indigenous Radio Frequency (RF) Seeker from Su-30 Mk-I platform off the coast of Odisha.
- During the tests, two launches were carried out against high-speed unmanned aerial targets at different ranges, target aspects and launch platform conditions.

- The flawless performance of the Astra weapon system was validated through flight data captured by range tracking instruments deployed by the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur.
- Astra BVRAAM has a range exceeding 100 km and is equipped with a guidance and navigation system.
- In addition to various laboratories of DRDO, more than 50 public and private industries, including Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, have contributed towards a successful realisation of the weapon system.

Key Points

Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) — Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh

News in Short

- Sub Lieutenant Astha Poonia has become the first woman to be trained as a fighter pilot of the Indian Navy. She may eventually fly the MiG-29K or the naval version of the Rafale fighter jet off India's aircraft carriers.
- The delivery of 6.01 lakh AK-203 assault rifles to the armed forces will be completed by the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) nearly 22 months ahead of schedule.
- The Indian Army recently conducted Exercise Drone Prahar at Rayang military station in East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- India joined 18 nations for the Australia-led Talisman Sabre 2025 military exercise. The exercise includes live-fire drills, amphibious landings, air combat and maritime operations.
- India received the second GE-F404 engine from the United States for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mark-1A fighter.

APPOINTMENTS

Name	Designation
Amitabh Kant	Non-Executive Director, IndiGo
Sunil Kadam	Executive Director (ED), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
Kesavan Ramachandran	Executive Director, Reserve Bank of India
Air Marshal S. Sivakumar	Air Officer-in-Charge Administration
Sukanya Sonowal	Commonwealth Youth Peace Ambassador
Dr Abhijat Sheth	Chairperson of the National Medical Commission

Name	Designation
Sahil Kini	CEO of the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH)
Nitu Chandra and Kranti Prakash Jha	SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) icons for Bihar.
Shailesh Jejurikar	Global CEO of Procter & Gamble (P&G)
Abhijit Kishore	Chairperson, Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI)
Utpal Kumar Singh	CEO of Sansad TV
Hardeep Singh Brar	CEO of BMW India
Priya Nair	CEO and MD of Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)
Sanjog Gupta	Chief Executive Officer (CEO), International Cricket Council (ICC)
Babitha B P	Deputy Chief Information Security Officer at the State Bank of India
Ajay Seth	Chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India
Kumar Mangalam Birla	Member of the Executive Committee of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF)
Deepak Bagla	Mission Director of the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)
Manish Chopra	CEO, Sabyasachi Couture
Prof Uma Kanjilal	First woman Vice-Chancellor of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)
Ajay Kumar Shrivastava	Director (Engineering and R&D) at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
Anuradha Thakur	Director of the RBI Central Board
Sanjay Kaul	CEO of GIFT City, Gandhinagar
Hemant Rupani	CEO of Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages
R Doraiswamy	MD and CEO of LIC (Life Insurance Corporation of India)
Vaishali Nigam Sinha	President of the UN Global Compact Network India
Sonali Mishra	First woman Director General of the Railway Protection Force.
Prof. Ashim Kumar Ghosh	Governor of Haryana
Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju	Governor of Goa
Kavinder Gupta	Lt. Governor of Ladakh
Nikhil Ravishankar	CEO, Air New Zealand
Dr J Ravishankar	Managing Director (MD) of Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRL)
Nitin Gupta	Chairperson of the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)
Sabih Khan	COO, Apple
Rajeev Jain	Vice-chairman and managing director of Bajaj Finance Limited
Sudhanshu Mittal	President of Kho Kho Federation of India
Sandiip Bharadwaj	MD & CEO of Paytm Money
Parag Jain	R&AW (Research and Analysis Wing) chief
Yuliia Svyrydenko	Prime Minister of Ukraine

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Name of the Book	Author
The One: Cricket, My Life and More	Shikhar Dhawan
Confessions of a Shakespeare Addict	V.S. Ravi
A different kind of Power	Jacinda Ardern
History That India Ignored	Prem Prakash
Das Paise ka Postcard	S.N. Ahmed

OBITUARIES (NATIONAL)

Name	Occupation
VS Achuthanandan	Politician and former Chief Minister of Kerala
Fauja Singh- Turbaned Tornado	World's Oldest Marathon Runner
Charupara Ravi	Trade union leader and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) State vice-president
B. Saroja Devi	Actress
Dr. BV Pattabhiram	Hypnotist
N. Tippanna	Veteran statesman and legal luminary
Kota Srinivasa Rao	Actor

OBITUARIES (INTERNATIONAL)

Name	Occupation
Tom Lehrer	American musician, singer-songwriter, satirist and mathematician
Felix Baumgartner	Austrian skydiver, extreme sportsman, and BASE jumper
Peter Rufai	Footballer
Julian McMahon	Actor
Bismillah Jan Shinwari	Cricket Umpire
Alan Bergman	American songwriter
Muhammadu Buhari	President of Nigeria
Hulk Hogan	American professional wrestler and media personality
Andrea Faye Gibson	American poet

DAYS AND THEMES

Date	Day	Theme
July 1	Goods and Services Tax (GST) Day	
July 1	National Postal Workers Day	
July 1	National Doctor's Day	Behind the Mask: Who Heals the Healers?
July 1	National Chartered Accountants Day	
July 2	World Sports Journalists Day	Championing Fair Play: Reporting with Integrity and Impact
July 2	World Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) Day	
July 3	International Plastic Bag Free Day	
July 4	World Kiswahili Language Day	Kiswahili: A Bridge for Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue
July 6	International Day of Cooperatives	Cooperatives: Driving Inclusive and Sustainable Solutions for a Better World
July 6	World Zoonoses Day	One World, One Health: Prevent Zoonoses
July 6	World Rural Development Day	
July 8	World Bioproduct Day	
July 10	National Fish Farmer's Day	
July 10	Global Energy Independence Day	
July 11	World Population Day	Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world
July 11	World Horse Day	
July 11	International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica	
July 12	International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms	
July 13	Bastille Day	
July 15	World Youth Skills Day	Youth empowerment through AI and digital skills
July 16	World Snake Day	
July 17	World Day for International Justice	
July 18	Nelson Mandela International Day	It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequity
July 20	International Moon Day	
July 20	World Chess Day	

July 22	National Mango Day	
July 22	World Brain Day	Brain Health for All Ages
July 23	National Broadcasting Day	
July 24	National Income Tax Day	
July 24	National Thermal Engineer Day	
July 25	World Drowning Prevention Day	
July 25	International Day for Women and Girls of African Descent	Rising Together: Women and Girls of African Descent Leading with Strength
July 26	Kargil Vijay Diwas	
July 26	International Day for Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystem	Protecting Wetlands for our future.
July 27	CRPF Raising Day	
July 28	World Hepatitis Day	Hepatitis: Let's Break It Down
July 28	World Nature Conservation Day	Restore Nature, Rebuild Our Future
July 29	International Tiger Day	Securing the future of Tigers with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities at the heart
July 30	World Day against Trafficking in Persons	
July 31	World Ranger Day	

REPORTS, RANKINGS AND INDEX

Henley Passport Index 2025—India Ranks 77

- According to the Henley Passport Index 2025, the Indian passport is now 77th in the world in terms of travel access, climbing from 85 in 2024.
- The countries on the Henley Passport Index list are sorted by the number of destinations their holders can enter without a prior visa.
- As of July 2025, India has visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 59 destinations worldwide.
- Malaysia, Indonesia, the Maldives and Thailand are some countries that offer visa-free access to Indian passport holders.
- Singapore has topped the Henley Passport Index 2025, providing visa-free entry to 193 destinations. Japan and Korea remain a close second, providing visa-free travel for 190 countries. Seven European passports share third place: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Spain, all with access to 189 destinations.

- Afghanistan remains at the bottom, with its citizens only capable of accessing 25 destinations without a prior visa.

World Bank's Spring 2025 Poverty and Equity Brief

- According to the World Bank's Spring 2025 Poverty and Equity Brief, in the last decade, India has lifted 171 million people out of extreme poverty.
- The proportion of people living on less than \$ 2.15 a day, which is the international benchmark for extreme poverty, fell sharply from 16.2% in 2011-12 to just 2.3% in 2022-23.
- The report highlights trends in poverty, shared prosperity and inequality for over 100 developing countries.
- In Rural areas, extreme poverty fell from 18.4% in 2011-12 to 2.8% in 2022-23.
- In Urban centres, extreme poverty reduced from 10.7% to 1.1% over the same period.

- India's poverty rate at the 3.65 dollars per day line fell from 61.8% in 2011-12 to 28.1% in 2022-23, lifting 378 million people out of poverty.
- Rural poverty declined from 69% to 32.5%, while urban poverty dropped from 43.5% to 17.2%.
- The rural-urban poverty gap narrowed from 25 to 15 percentage points, with a 7% annual decline between 2011-12 and 2022-23.
- The five most populous states, i.e., Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, represented 65% of India's extreme poor in 2011-12.
- India's consumption-based Gini index improved from 28.8 in 2011-12 to 25.5 in 2022-23, indicating a reduction in income inequality.

North Eastern Region District SDG Index 2023-24

- Niti Aayog released the second edition of the North Eastern Region (NER) District Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Index Report (2023-24).
- The Index is developed by NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MoDoNER), with technical support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).
- It measures the performance of districts across eight North Eastern States on the SDGs. It serves as a key tool for monitoring development-related progress at the district level in the region to inform decision-making.
- Districts are categorised into four categories: Achiever: Score equals 100 (achieved the targets set for identified indicators); Front Runner: Score between 65 and 99 (excluding 100); Performer: Score between 50 and 65 (excluding 65); and Aspirant: Score less than 50.
- The composite scores for the 121 districts range from 58.71 in Longding, Arunachal Pradesh to 81.43 in Hnahthial, Mizoram.
- All districts in Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura have achieved Front Runner status, with no districts falling in the Aspirant or Achiever categories. Mizoram has the highest-scoring district in the entire Northeast region (Hnahthial at 81.43) and Arunachal Pradesh has the lowest-scoring district in the entire region (Longding at 58.71).
- Sikkim has the narrowest range (5.5 points) in terms of the score of the highest and lowest district, showing the most consistent performance across its districts. Tripura has the distinction of having some of the highest-scoring districts with minimum intra-state variation (6.5 points). Mizoram and Nagaland have some of the highest-scoring districts but also exhibit variation (ranges of 13.72 and 15.07, respectively).

SDG India Index 2023-24

- NITI Aayog released SDG India Index 2023-24, the fourth edition of the country's principal tool for measuring national and subnational progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- SDG India Index 2023-24 measures and tracks national progress of all States and UTs on 113 indicators aligned to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's (MoSPI) National Indicator Framework (NIF).
- The Index computes goal-wise scores on the 16 SDGs for each State and UT. Overall State and UT scores, or Composite Scores are generated from goal-wise scores to measure the aggregate performance of the sub-national unit based on its performance across the 16 SDGs. These scores range between 0–100, and if a State/UT achieves a score of 100, it signifies it has achieved the targets. The higher the score of a State/UT, the greater the distance covered to the target.
- Overall SDG score for the country is 71 for 2023-24, a significant improvement from 66 in 2020-21 and 57 in 2018 (Baseline report).
- Scores for States range from 57 to 79 in 2023-24, marking a substantial improvement from the 2018 range of 42 to 69.
- Between 2018 and 2023-24, the fastest moving States are Uttar Pradesh (increase in score by 25), followed by J&K (21), Uttarakhand (19), Sikkim (18), Haryana (17), Assam, Tripura and Punjab (16 each), Madhya Pradesh and Odisha (15 each).

QS Best Student Cities 2026

- According to QS Quacquarelli Symonds, Mumbai emerged as the highest-ranked Indian city at 98th place globally, marking a significant leap of 15 spots from last year.
- Delhi climbed seven places to 104th and secured the top spot in the affordability category, making it the cheapest student city globally in 2026.
- Bengaluru, known for its technology and research ecosystem, jumped 22 places to 108th rank. Chennai also improved, rising 12 spots to settle at the 128th position.

- Globally, Seoul, South Korea, has claimed the top spot, followed by Tokyo and London.

Global Unicorn Index 2025

- The United States of America continues to dominate, with 758 unicorns (nearly half the global total), adding 55 new unicorns in the past year. China remains in second place with 343 unicorns. India is at the third position with 64 startups.
- According to the Hurun Global Unicorn Index 2025, there are now a record 1,523 privately held startups valued at over \$1 billion each, an increase of 70 from last year. Together, these unicorns are worth a staggering \$5.6 trillion.
- These startups are now spread across 52 countries, a 120% rise since 2019, and operate in 307 cities, reflecting a 160 per cent year-on-year jump in geographic spread.
- A “unicorn” is referred to as a privately held startup company with a valuation of over \$1 billion, and this term was coined by American venture capitalist Aileen Lee in 2013.

UN Sustainable Development Goals Index 2025

- According to the 2025 Sustainable Development Report (SDR), none of the 17 Global Goals are on track to be fully achieved by 2030, and only 17% of the SDG targets are progressing as planned.
- While notable improvements have been seen in access to basic services and infrastructure, backsliding has occurred in several areas, including rising obesity rates, declining press freedom, worsening corruption perception, and setbacks in sustainable nitrogen management (SDG 2).
- The top three countries are Finland, Sweden and Denmark with a score of 87.0, 85.7 and 85.3, respectively.

- India has achieved a significant milestone by entering the top 100 for the first time in the history of the index. It ranked 99th in 2025 with a score of 67 and it has improved steadily over the past four years, rising from 109th in 2024, 112th in 2023, 121st in 2022 and 120th in 2021.
- China ranks 49th with a score of 74.4, and the United States stands at 44th with 75.2.

News in Short

- Research commissioned by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and conducted by Earth Action (EA) suggests that banning items like straws, cotton buds and packaging made from polystyrene could save the global economy trillions of dollars by 2040.
- NITI Aayog released its report “Chemical Industry: Powering India’s Participation in Global Value Chains”. This report offers an extensive analysis of India’s chemical sector, highlighting both opportunities and challenges, and outlining a pathway for positioning India as a key player in global chemical markets.
- YouTuber-turned-actor Prajakta Koli, popularly known as MostlySane, has recently been named the 100 most influential digital voices in the inaugural 2025 TIME100 Creators List. She is the first and only Indian-born creator to be featured on this esteemed list.
- According to a mid-year assessment by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), Byrnihat – a town on the Assam-Meghalaya border – recorded the highest levels of air pollution in the country, with an average PM2.5 concentration of 133 µg/m³. Delhi remained the second most polluted city in India between January and June 2025, recording 29 days with ‘very poor’ air quality and only three days in the ‘good’ category.

EVENTS

ASEAN-India Cruise Dialogue

- The first-ever ASEAN-India Cruise Dialogue was held aboard the MV Empress (Cordelia Cruise ship) at Chennai Port, Tamil Nadu.
- It was attended by all the member nations of ASEAN; i.e., Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, along with Timor Leste.

- The Dialogue aims to strengthen maritime cooperation, enhance cruise connectivity, and promote sustainable tourism across the Indo-Pacific region.

BRICS Summit 2025

- The XVII BRICS Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, under the theme: “Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance”.

- The leaders held productive discussions on various issues on the BRICS agenda, including reform of global governance, enhancing the voice of the global south, peace and security, strengthening multilateralism, development issues and Artificial Intelligence.
- The Rio de Janeiro Declaration strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack.
- India will chair BRICS in 2026.

India's First-Ever Shape 2025 Conference

- The Department of Hospital Administration at Army Hospital Research & Referral (AHRR), New Delhi, successfully organised the first-ever Armed Forces National Conference, SHAPE 2025: Sustainable Hospital Architecture, Planning, Infrastructure and Equipment.
- SHAPE 2025 outlined a framework for integrating green technologies, such as solar energy, rainwater harvesting, disaster-resilient design and zero-emission infrastructure.

- AHRR, marks a turning point in reimagining hospitals not just as buildings but as climate-conscious, people-centric ecosystems and is a vital step towards building a resilient and health-secure India in line with the national aspirations of Vision 2047.

India Hosts First National Conference of Urban Local Body Chairpersons in Gurugram

- The first National Level Conference of Chairpersons of Urban Local Bodies in the States and Union Territories was organised at the International Centre for Automotive Technology, Manesar in Haryana.
- The conference serves as an important platform for outlining the important role of Urban Local Bodies in a rapidly urbanising country. It also aims to strengthen democratic institutions, share best practices and explore and highlight innovative approaches to urban governance in the contemporary era.

AWARDS

Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 Awards

- President of India, Droupadi Murmu, conferred Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 Awards at Vigyan Bhagwan, New Delhi.
 - These were hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
 - Following the 'One City, One Award' principle, the top-performing cities from each State were recognised as Promising Swachh Shehars. A total of 34 cities across various States and Union Territories earned this distinction, showcasing their notable progress in urban cleanliness and sanitation excellence.
- This year a new category of Super Swachh League (SSL) Cities was introduced to ensure a level playing field and acknowledge consistent top performers. Indore secured first place, followed by Surat and Navi Mumbai.
 - Ahmedabad, Bhopal and Lucknow emerged as the leading Swachh Shehars in the new generation category.
 - Best Ganga Town— Prayagraj
 - Best Saifai Mitra Surakshit Shehar— GVMC Visakhapatnam, Jabalpur, and Gorakhpur
 - Best Cantonment Board— Secunderabad Cantonment

VI. Uttar Pradesh is the cleanest state

More details can be read on this link.

<https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2025/jul/doc2025717588801.pdf>

Varsha Deshpande Wins 2025 UN Population Award

- Indian women's rights activist Varsha Deshpande, founder of the Dalit Mahila Vikas Mandal, has won the 2025 United Nations Population Award for gender equality and reproductive rights advocacy.
- Each year, the Committee for the United Nations Population Award honours an individual and/or institution in recognition of outstanding contributions to population and reproductive health issues and solutions.
- The award was established by the General Assembly in 1981 and was first presented in 1983. It consists of a gold medal, a diploma and a monetary prize.

Suhani Shah Became the First Indian to Win the 'Oscar for Magicians'

- Mentalist Suhani Shah from Rajasthan has become the first Indian to win the 'Best Magic Creator 2025' award at the Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques (FISM). It is popularly known as the Oscars for magicians.

- FISM hosts the World Championship of Magic, inviting the finest magicians across various categories, including online, stage and close-up magic.

WSIS Prizes 2025 Champion Award

- The 'Meri Panchayat' mobile application, developed through a collaboration between the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) and the National Informatics Centre (NIC), has earned international acclaim by winning the WSIS Prizes 2025 Champion Award.
- The award was conferred under the Action Line Category for Cultural Diversity and Identity, Linguistic Diversity and Local Content.
- The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 High-Level Event 2025 was held in Geneva, Switzerland.

News in Short

- Vedachalam, a well-known epigraphist and archaeologist, was honoured with the Tamil Wikki Suran Award.
- India won three gold medals and secured the seventh position amongst 110 participating countries at the 66th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) 2025, held in Sunshine Coast, Australia.

- Hindi author Geetanjali Shree won the PEN Translates Award 2025 for *Once Elephants Lived Here*. This book was translated by Daisy Rockwell.
- The G P Birla Archaeological, Astronomical and Scientific Institute has conferred G P Birla Memorial Award on the Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and Secretary of the Department of Space, V. Narayanan.
- Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) won the National Geospatial Practitioner Award 2025 for excellence in open-source spatial technologies at IIT Bombay.
- Marathi writer and critic Sarankumar Limbale has been selected for the Chintha Raveendran Award for the year 2025. The award carries ₹50,000 in cash, memento and a citation.
- State Bank of India has been recognised as the 'World's Best Consumer Bank' for 2025 by Global Finance Magazine.
- Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) has secured the ninth spot among the top-10 international airports in the prestigious Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards 2025. With an impressive reader score of 84.23, CSMIA is the only Indian airport to make the list for the third consecutive year.

SPORTS NEWS

India Creates History with First Test Win at Edgbaston

- India created history with its first-ever win at Edgbaston with a 336-run win and the biggest overseas victory in terms of runs.
- It surpassed the previous record set in 2019, when India defeated the West Indies by 318 runs at North Sound.
- India has now registered Test wins at 60 different venues — the most by a team.
- Australia trails with wins at 58 venues, England at 55 venues, the West Indies on 50 and South Africa on 49.
- Shubman Gill, at 25, became India's youngest Test captain to secure an overseas victory, leading the team to a historic 336-run win against England in the second test at Edgbaston.
- At 25 years and 301 days, Shubman Gill surpassed Sunil Gavaskar's long-standing record set in 1976 in Auckland. Gavaskar was 26 years and 202 days old when his side beat New Zealand almost half a century ago.

World Champion D Gukesh Won the Rapid Title at the Grand Chess Tour 2025 in Zagreb, Croatia

- Reigning World Champion Gukesh Dommaraju has won the rapid title at the Rapid and Blitz tournament part of the 2025 Grand Chess Tour at Zagreb in Croatia.
- He defeated America's Wesley in the final round to seal the rapid section.
- Jan-Krzysztof Duda of Poland is placed second with 11 points, with former World Champion and World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen of Norway third with 10 points.

World Boxing Cup 2025

- The World Boxing Cup was held in Astana, Kazakhstan and Indian women boxers won 11 medals, including three golds, five silvers and three bronzes. This is India's best-ever performance at the World Boxing Cup.
- Jaismine Lamboria (57kg), Sakshi (54kg) and Nupur (80+kg) won gold in their respective weight classes.

Praggnanandhaa Becomes India's Top-ranked Player with UzChess Cup Masters Win

- R Praggnanandhaa reached a historic milestone when he became the No. 1-ranked Indian chess player in the live rankings.
- He achieved the feat by beating Uzbekistan's Nodirbek Abdusattorov with Black pieces in the final round of the UzChess Cup Masters.

RCB Becomes IPL's Most Valuable Team in 2025

- A report released by investment bank Houlihan Lokey said the IPL's business value rose by 13% in 2025 to \$18.5 billion, which is nearly ₹1.6 lakh crore.
- At the same time, the brand value of the league increased by 14% to nearly \$4 billion, or about ₹33,000 crore.
- For the first time in its 18-year history, RCB lifted the IPL trophy this season. That win, along with a strong off-field performance, helped the team become the most valued franchise in terms of brand value.
- RCB is now worth \$269 million. Mumbai Indians (MI) are now ranked second with a brand value of \$242 million. CSK is in third place with a value of \$235 million.

Cabinet Approves National Sports Policy 2025

- The Union Cabinet approved the National Sports Policy (NSP) 2025, a landmark initiative aimed at reshaping the country's sporting landscape and empowering citizens through sports.
- The new policy supersedes the existing National Sports Policy, 2001. It lays out a visionary and strategic roadmap to establish India as a global sporting powerhouse and a strong contender for excellence at international sporting events, including the 2036 Olympic Games.
- The policy is anchored on five key pillars— Excellence on the Global Stage, Sports for Economic Development, Sports for Social Development, Sports as a People's Movement, and Integration with Education (NEP 2020).

Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025

- Neeraj Chopra won the first-ever Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025 at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru. He threw 86.18 metres to take the gold medal.
- This is India's first international javelin event with Gold-level status, and top javelin throwers from around the world participated in the event.

Divyanshi Bhowmick Creates History at Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships

- Divyanshi Bhowmick, a 14-year-old Indian table tennis player, created history at the Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships 2025 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. She defeated China's Zhu Qihi 4-2 in the final.
- She became the first Indian in 36 years after Subramanian Bhuvaneshwari to win the U-15 girls' singles crown at the Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships.

World University Games 2025

- India finished 20th at the FISU World University Games 2025 in Germany and won a total of 12 medals.
- In all, India won two gold, five silver and five bronze medals. Parneet Kaur and Kushal Dalal won the first gold medal for India in mixed team compound archery. Kushal Dalal, Sahil Jadhav and Hritik Sharma bagged a silver in the men's team compound. Sahil Jadhav, in men's compound archery, accounted for the only individual gold.
- Japan topped the league with 34 medals, followed by China and the US.

Iga Swiatek Makes Wimbledon History

- Iga Swiatek has been crowned the women's singles champion at Wimbledon for the first time with an unprecedented 6-0, 6-0 victory over American Amanda Anisimova.
- This historic win marks a rare "double bagel".
- This means winning a match without losing a single game.
- It is a feat never before seen in a Wimbledon women's final during the Open Era, and the first time overall since 1911.
- The term in tennis means that one player wins 6-0, while the opposite player loses all games. There is no hard logic behind why the term bagel is used. The simple logic behind it is that it looks similar to the digit zero, as reported by Metro.
- Double bagel is not the only bread-related term used in tennis. When a set is won or lost with a score of 6-1, it is referred to as a breadstick.

Harikrishnan A Becomes India's 87Th Grandmaster

- A Ra Harikrishnan earned his third GM-norm at the La Plagne International Chess Festival in France and became the country's 87th Grandmaster. Harikrishnan

gained his second one at Andujar Open in Spain last month.

- He earned his first GM norm in July 2023 at the Biel International Chess Festival in Switzerland.
- In chess, a Grandmaster (GM) norm is a performance in a tournament that meets specific criteria, indicating a strong level of play. To achieve the GM title, a player typically needs to earn three GM norms and reach a FIDE rating of 2500.

FIFA Club World Cup 2025

- Chelsea Football Club made history by securing the FIFA Club World Cup 2025 title with a dominant 3-0 victory over Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey.
- This victory marks Chelsea as the first English team to win the prestigious tournament twice, following their 2021 victory.

Japan Open 2025

- China's former world number one Shi Yuqi clinched the Japan Open title, beating the French defending champion Alex Lanier 21-17, 21-15 in the final.
- South Korea's An Se-young overcame China's Wang Zhiyi 21-12, 21-10 in the women's final, bagging a brilliant sixth title in seven tournaments in 2025.

Bihar Wins U18 Boys' Title at Junior National Rugby 7S Championship 2025

- In Rugby, Bihar claimed the U18 Boys' title at the 10th Junior National Rugby 7S Championship 2025, defeating defending champions Odisha 17-15.
- Bihar remained unbeaten throughout the tournament, with dominant wins over Chandigarh, Haryana, Punjab, West Bengal and Maharashtra.

Tanvi and Vennala Create Records

- Tanvi Sharma and Vennala Kalagotla won bronze medals in the women's singles event as India's run at the Badminton Asia Junior Individual Championships 2025.
- This was the first time that two women's singles players finished on the podium in the same edition of the junior badminton tournament.
- Badminton Asia organised the Badminton Asia Junior Individual Championships, and it crowns the best junior players (Under-19) on the continent.

News in Short

- Italy and the Netherlands have qualified for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, taking place in India and Sri Lanka. This is the first time that Italy has qualified for a cricket ICC World Cup.
- India will host the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup in 2027 and the Junior World Shooting Championships in 2028 in New Delhi.
- Indian men's football team drops six places to 133rd in FIFA rankings, worst in nine years. India's best-ever ranking was 94 in February 1996.
- Magnus Carlsen emerged as the winner of the SuperUnited Rapid & Blitz Croatia, adding another title to his already impressive Grand Chess Tour.
- Mexico defeated the United States 2-1 at NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas, to successfully defend their CONCACAF Gold Cup.
- West Indies's star all-rounder Andre Russel retired from International Cricket. He made his final appearance in the West Indies jersey during the upcoming T20I series against Australia at home.
- India will host the Chess World Cup 2025, scheduled for October 30 to November 27.
- England will stage the next three editions of the World Test Championship finals in 2027, 2029 and 2031.
- A portrait of the legendary Sachin Tendulkar was unveiled in the MCC Museum at Lord's before the start of the third Test between India and England. The painting was created by the well-known British artist Stuart Pearson Wright.
- Hockey India has announced a substantial increase in its financial grants to support the organisation of national and grassroots-level events during its 15th Congress. From now on, ₹70 lakh each will be allocated for hosting the Senior Men's and Senior Women's National Championships, ₹30 lakh each for organising Junior Men, Junior Women, Sub-Junior Men and Sub-Junior Women National Championships.
- Jannik Sinner defeated two-time defending champion Carlos Alcaraz to win his first Wimbledon championship and reverse the result of their epic French Open final.
- Benediction Rohit became the first Indian man to swim 50 m butterfly under 24 seconds during the FISU World University Games 2025 in Rhine-Ruhr, Germany. Nataraj clocked 1:48.22, going past his previous best of 1:48.66 he set last month.