

Monthly CURRENT AFFAIRS *By- Super notes*



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NATIONAL HEADLINES

- RBI Deputy Governor Gets Extension
- Justice Meenakshi Rai Becomes Patna HC Chief Justice
- D.K. Shivakumar Becomes Karnataka CM
- Indian Shooting Legend Jaspal Rana Passes Away
- PoK Protests Explained

GLOBAL HEADLINES

- BRICS Adopts Indore Declaration
- France Hosts 52nd G7 Summit
- Ethiopia Joins the WTO
- UK PM Keir Starmer Resigns
- Kharg Island in Focus

AWARDS & RANKS

- Neeraj & Parul Named Athletes of the Year
- Jainendra K. Jain Wins Wolf Prize
- Gallantry Awards Conferred
- Praggnanandhaa Creates Chess History
- RCB Retain IPL 2026 Title

US-IRAN SIGN

14-Point Peace Deal

HISTORIC MILESTONE
ELON MUSK
BECOMES FIRST
TRILLIONAIRE

Modi Becomes
Longest-Serving Elected PM

New Base Year
for IIP, CPI & GDP

SUPER NOTES BY CIVILIANZ

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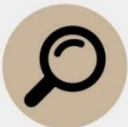


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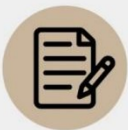
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DEAR ASPIRANTS



“Success does not come from occasional effort; it comes from consistent preparation, disciplined reading, and the courage to keep moving forward.”



Current affairs form the backbone of preparation for almost every general competitive examination, including Banking, SSC, State Level Exams, Railways, Defence, and other government recruitment tests. A regular habit of reading current affairs not only strengthens general awareness but also improves analytical ability, decision-making skills, and confidence in the examination hall. For every serious aspirant, staying updated is not an option—it is a necessity.

This monthly current affairs magazine has been prepared to help aspirants revise important national and international developments in a clear, exam-oriented, and concise manner. In this edition, we cover key appointments and leadership changes such as Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth becoming Army Chief, Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit being named Vice Air Chief, Admiral Krishna Swaminathan taking charge as Navy Chief, the RBI Deputy Governor's extension, Justice Meenakshi Rai becoming Patna High Court Chief Justice, and D.K. Shivakumar becoming Karnataka Chief Minister.

The edition also highlights major national and global developments including Modi becoming the longest-serving elected Prime Minister, BRICS adopting the Indore Declaration, France hosting the 52nd G7 Summit, the US–Iran 14-Point Peace Deal, Ethiopia joining the WTO, the new base year for IIP, CPI & GDP, Ukraine–Sweden defence ties, Kharg Island in focus, and PoK protests explained. Important defence updates such as India's expanding nuclear arsenal as per SIPRI, the successful testing of RudraM-II missile, and the first indigenous Coast Guard hovercraft have also been included.

Aspirants will also find significant awards, sports, and personality-based updates, including Neeraj and Parul being named Athletes of the Year, Jainendra K. Jain winning the Wolf Prize, gallantry awards being conferred, Praggnanandhaa creating chess history, RCB retaining the IPL 2026 title, and the passing of Indian shooting legend Jaspal Rana. Global personalities and major events such as UK PM Keir Starmer's resignation and Elon Musk becoming the first trillionaire are also covered for broader awareness.

This magazine is more than a collection of news—it is a preparation tool designed for future nation builders. Read consistently, revise smartly, and connect every event with its exam relevance. With dedication, discipline, and the right study resources, every aspirant can move closer to success.



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NEWS CREDIT

BBC, Reuters, Aljazeera, PIB, PTI, Business Standard, The Hindu, Indian Express, Times of India, Economic Times, Business Line, India Today, Money control And all other leading Newspapers.....

NEWS COVERED

Business News, Financial News, Economy News, Politics News, India News, Breaking News, Indian Economy, International News, Sports News, and many more topics covered.....



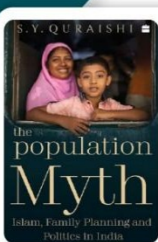
Books & Authors



Book: Apnapan: Narendra Modi Sang Mere Anubhav

Author: Shivraj Singh Chouhan

About: Memoir recounting Shivraj Singh Chouhan's political journey, leadership experiences, and association with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



Book: The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India

Author: S. Y. Quraishi

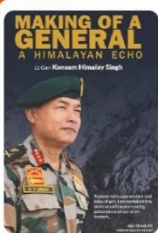
About: Examines population growth debates, misconceptions about religion and family planning, and demographic trends in India.



Book: Unscripted: Conversations on Life and Cinema

Authors: Vidhu Vinod Chopra & Abhijat Joshi

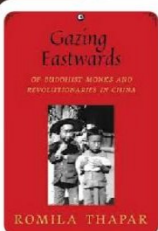
About: Explores filmmaking, creativity, personal experiences, and behind-the-scenes stories from Indian cinema.



Book: Making of a General – A Himalayan Echo

Author: Konsam Himalay Singh

About: Chronicles the author's military career, leadership lessons, and experiences serving in the Indian Armed Forces.

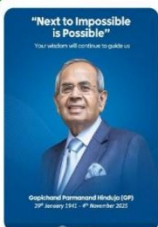


Book: Gazing Eastwards: Of Buddhist Monks and Revolutionaries in China, 1957

Author: Romila Thapar

About: Reflects on a historic journey through China, highlighting cultural exchanges, politics, and Buddhist heritage.

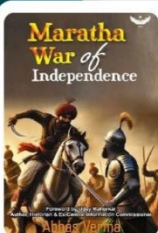
Books & Authors



Book: I AM

Author: Gopichand P. Hinduja

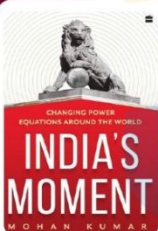
About: Shares personal reflections on business, spirituality, leadership, values, and life lessons from a global entrepreneur.



Book: Maratha War of Independence

Author: Abhas Verma

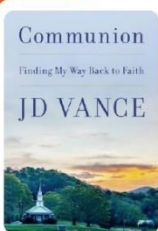
About: Narrates the Maratha resistance against Mughal rule and highlights lesser-known heroes of Indian history.



Book: India's Moment: Changing Power Equations around the World

Author: Mohan Kumar

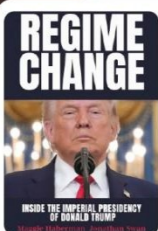
About: Analyzes India's rising global influence, diplomatic strategies, and shifting geopolitical dynamics in the 21st century.



Book: Communion: Finding My Way Back to Faith

Author: J. D. Vance

About: Personal memoir describing the author's spiritual journey, religious beliefs, and return to faith.



Book: Regime Change: Inside the Imperial Presidency of Donald Trump

Authors: Maggie Haberman & Jonathan Swan

About: Investigates Donald Trump's presidency, decision-making processes, political influence, and the workings of his administration.

Quick Bytes

- Vice Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan Assumes Charge as Chief of Western Naval Command
- Admiral Krishna Swaminathan Takes Charge as India's 27th Chief of Naval Staff
- General N.S. Raja Subramani Assumes Office as India's New Chief of Defence Staff
- Royal Challengers Bengaluru Defend IPL Title with Victory Over Gujarat Titans in Final
- IPL 2026 Awards: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Wins MVP and Orange Cap Honours
- Satwik-Chirag Become First Indian Pair to Win Singapore Open Men's Doubles Title
- Veteran Playback Singer Suman Kalyanpur Passes Away at the Age of 89
- Shivraj Singh Chouhan Launches Khet Bachao Abhiyan for Soil Conservation and Sustainable Farming Across India
- Bhavitha Mandava Becomes First Indian Chanel Ambassador in Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2026
- Meesho and BSE Launch Project Shikhar to Help MSMEs Access Capital Markets
- Indian Teacher Soma Mandal Wins Global Cambridge Dedicated Teacher Award 2026
- Tamil Nadu Farmer Valluvan Recognised as UN FAO Soil Farmer Hero
- Air Marshal Tarun Chaudhry Assumes Charge as Chief of Central Air Command
- Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty Takes Charge as Chief of Andaman and Nicobar Command
- ICC Suspends Cricket Canada Membership Over Governance and Compliance Violations
- RBI Extends Ketan Merchant's Tenure as Interim CEO of Fino Payments Bank
- Indian Astrophysicist Discovers 12.6-Billion-Year-Old Loktak Galaxy Protocluster Using Advanced Space Telescopes
- Five-Time Olympian and Former IOC Member Raja Randhir Singh Passes Away
- P.T. Usha Launches Book 'India's First Olympic Gold' by Historian K. Arumugam
- IIT Madras Develops Low-Cost Injectable Hydrogel for Treatment of Fibrosis and Degenerative Diseases
- Indian-Origin Teen Shrey Parikh Wins 2026 Scripps National Spelling Bee Title
- First Competition Commission of India Chairman Dhanendra Kumar Passes Away
- Odisha Signs Semiconductor Manufacturing Pact with Intel and 3D Glass Solutions
- Russia to Build Kazakhstan's First Nuclear Power Plant Under \$16.5 Billion Agreement
- India Reaches 100 Ramsar Sites with Inclusion of Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary
- J&K Bank Wins Gold at Finacle Innovation Awards for AI Analytics Platform
- Neelkanth Mishra Appointed India's Executive Director at the World Bank
- Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit Appointed Next Vice Chief of Air Staff
- Former Lok Sabha Secretary General Subhash C. Kashyap Passes Away at 97
- Arjuna Awardee Balwinder Singh Dhaliwal Passes Away at 67
- Eminent Odia Writer and Former IAS Officer Jagannath Prasad Das Dies at 90
- Persepolis Creator Marjane Satrapi Passes Away at 56
- RBI Deputy Governor Swaminathan Janakiraman Gets Two-Year Extension
- Tarun Kapoor Receives One-Year Extension as PM Modi's Advisor
- UIDAI Chief Saurabh Vijay Takes Charge as CEO of IndiaAI Mission
- Panchayat Advancement Index Wins Gold at National e-Governance Awards 2026
- Praggnanandhaa Becomes First Indian to Win Norway Chess Title
- Malayalam Poet A.C. Sreehari Passes Away at 56
- Kerala Launches HAWK, India's First Judiciary-Integrated Wildlife Crime Management System
- West Bengal Joins Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY, Becomes 36th Implementing State/UT
- SIPRI Report Says India Expands Nuclear Arsenal to 190 Warheads
- India Crowned Men's U18 Asia Cup 2026 Champions After Defeating Japan
- India Win SAFF Women's Championship 2026, Clinch Record Sixth Title
- Kimi Antonelli Wins Monaco Grand Prix 2026 to Extend Championship Lead
- Zverev and Andreeva Capture Historic French Open 2026 Singles Titles
- National Award-Winning Actor Salim Kumar Passes Away at 56

- APEDA Facilitates First Export of Fresh Amrapali Mangoes from Jharkhand to the UK
- Kumar Shanker Appointed Managing Director of Indraprastha Gas Limited
- Banwarilal Purohit Elected President of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
- Lt Commander Suraj Prashar Awarded Shaurya Chakra for Operation Chuntawadi Bravery
- Indore Hosts BRICS Agriculture Meeting 2026 on Food Security and Smart Farming
- PM Modi Becomes India's Longest Continuously Serving Elected Prime Minister
- APEDA Facilitates First Export of GI-Tagged Tezpur Litchi from Assam to Dubai
- Amit Shah Launches LPMS 'VINIMAY' to Strengthen Smart Border Management
- Uttar Pradesh Launches Project Ganga to Expand Rural High-Speed Internet Access
- APSEZ Wins 10-Year Marine Services Contract for Argentina's LNG Export Project
- Government Announces ₹95,692 Crore Allocation for VB-G RAM G Rural Employment Scheme
- Rapido Partners with MoRTH to Promote Road Safety Through Rahveer Scheme
- Savitha Shri Baskar Wins Asian Women's Chess Championship 2026 Title
- National Award-Winning Director Bharathiraja Passes Away at 84
- Operation Milap Helps Gujarat Police Trace 1,470 Missing Persons in One Month
- President Approves REC-PFC Merger to Strengthen Power Sector Financing
- MoD Signs ₹449 Crore Deal for Indigenous GNSS Jammers for Indian Navy
- AIIMS and ICMR Validate Indigenous HPV Screening Test for Cervical Cancer Detection
- ICAR Launches Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra, India's First WhatsApp AI Advisory for Oilseed Farmers
- Donald Trump Nominates Jay Clayton as Next US Intelligence Chief
- India and Nepal Launch UPI-NPI Cross-Border Remittance Service
- Rudra Gaurav Shresth Appointed India's New Ambassador to Türkiye
- Iceland Retains Top Spot in Global Peace Index 2026 Rankings
- US Activates SOLAR-1 Satellite for Continuous Space Weather Monitoring
- IIT Bhubaneswar Develops ArsenSafe Device for Rapid Arsenic Detection in Water
- Japan Launches Low-Cost H3-30 Rocket to Strengthen Commercial Space Missions
- Indian Shooting Legend Jaspal Rana Passes Away at the Age of 49
- Elon Musk Becomes World's First Trillionaire Following SpaceX Surge
- Sanjay Lohiya Appointed Director on RBI and SBI Central Boards
- President Approves Merger of REC Limited with Power Finance Corporation
- Made-in-India C295 Military Aircraft Completes Maiden Test Flight Successfully
- Global Peace Index 2026: Iceland Retains Top Spot, India Ranked 127th
- Indian Railways Introduces GPS-Enabled Body Cameras for RPF Personnel
- Sudarsan Pattnaik Wins Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026 Title
- India Leads Global Digital Wallet Downloads; PhonePe Tops Worldwide
- BRICS Adopts Indore Declaration for Agricultural Cooperation and Food Security
- Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth Appointed Next Chief of Army Staff
- Dr P. L. Gautam Appointed Chairperson of NBA Agrobiodiversity Committee
- India Post Launches Drone-Based Mail Delivery Service in Himachal Pradesh
- Veteran American Critic Gene Shalit Passes Away at Age 100
- Jharkhand's Bhagaiya Silk, Kuchai Silk and Munda Jewellery Receive GI Tags
- Odisha Launches Free KG-to-PG Education and CM Annapurna Yojana
- CBRE Wins Leading IPC of the Year Award at ETNow Realty Awards
- Novartis Launches India's First Radioligand Therapy for Prostate Cancer
- Pankaj Tripathi Appointed Brand Ambassador of MBG Card
- Kerala Launches Priyadarshini Free Bus Travel Scheme for Women
- UP Launches ₹5 Lakh Mukhyamantri Shikshak Cashless Chikitsa Yojana
- Indian Army Introduces Bandi Jacket Under New Uniform Code
- Indian Army Selects MEPRO X6 Sights for Negev Light Machine Guns
- Swiss Voters Reject Proposal to Cap Population at 10 Million

- PM Modi Receives Slovakia's Highest Civilian Award, Order of the White Double Cross
- India and Japan Adopt Joint Crediting Mechanism Rules Under Paris Agreement
- Smriti Mandhana Named Only Indian in TIME's 100 Most Influential Sportspersons
- Sarpreet Singh Becomes First Indian-Origin Player to Start FIFA World Cup Match
- African-Origin Usutu Virus Detected in Scotland for the First Time
- Indian Navy Retires Sea King 42B Helicopter Squadron INAS 330
- Arunava Das Appointed CEO of InCred Capital North America
- ASI and Denmark Sign MoU for Underwater Survey of Oresund Shipwreck
- Indian Army Receives 106 Peacekeeper Agniveg Kamikaze Drones from SMPP
- Deepti Sharma Equals Jhulan Goswami's Record of 355 International Wickets
- IIT Delhi Emerges as India's Highest-Ranked University in QS Rankings 2027
- INST Mohali Develops Electrolyte Additive for Advanced Zinc-Ion Batteries
- Saibal Chattopadhyay Appointed Chairperson of National Statistical Commission
- BRICS Agriculture Ministers Adopt Indore Declaration at 16th Meeting in Indore
- India Ranks 70th in WEF Energy Transition Index 2026
- RBI Extends Keki Mistry's Tenure as Interim Chairman of HDFC Bank
- RBI Cancels Licence of Shree Mahalaxmi Urban Co-operative Credit Bank
- Indian Jurist Bimal N. Patel Elected ITLOS Judge for 2026-2035 Term
- Scientists Discover New Lynx Spider Species Hamataliwa mawlyngot in Meghalaya
- Dev Kumar Meena sets national pole vault record at 5.45m in Ranchi, surpassing previous 5.41m mark.
- China launches Shenzhou-23 mission; astronaut to spend 365 days in orbit, longest Chinese human spaceflight attempt.
- Major Abhilasha Barak wins 2025 UN Military Gender Advocate Award for peacekeeping service in Lebanon mission.
- Odisha launches Bomkai weave revival project in Ganjam to preserve GI-tagged traditional cotton handloom heritage.
- Fintech app jUMPP receives IRDAI licences to distribute health, life, motor and home insurance products.
- NCB chief Anurag Garg gets tenure extension till July 2027, continuing leadership of anti-drug enforcement.
- Vice President releases "The Library Man of India" book on PN Panicker, Kerala's library movement pioneer.
- RBI approves ICICI Bank CEO Sandeep Bakhshi's reappointment for two years till October 2028.
- India and Canada Accelerate CEPA Talks Targeting \$50 Billion Bilateral Trade and Stronger Economic Cooperation by 2030
- Indian Scientists Develop CLEAR Technology Enabling Advanced Multi-Protein Imaging for Precision Medicine and Disease Research
- Shivraj Singh Chouhan Launches 'Apnapan' Book Highlighting Personal Experiences and Political Journey with PM Modi
- Indian Army Launches Kautilya and Q-FORCE Platforms to Enhance AI-Based Decision Making and Military Logistics
- India Wins Two Gold Medals at Asian U23 Wrestling Championships in Men's Freestyle Events at Da Nang
- India Chairs First BRICS Tourism Working Group Meeting Focusing on AI, Sustainability and Seamless Travel Facilitation
- Ministry of Social Justice Launches PM-AJAY Portal and App for Digital Monitoring of Welfare Schemes
- CSIR-NIScPR and NIAS Sign MoU to Promote Science Communication, Research Collaboration and Capacity Building
- ONGC Begins Development of India's First Commercial Geothermal Power Project at Ladakh's Puga Valley
- Department of Posts Partners with Flipkart to Expand Last-Mile Delivery Services Through India Post Network
- RBI Introduces New Governance Norms Limiting Urban Co-operative Bank Directors' Continuous Tenure to Ten Years
- Gujarat Launches Jal-Parab Campaign to Provide Water Support for Wildlife in Little Rann of Kutch
- P. Jawahar Assumes Charge as Chairman of Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA)
- South Korea Launches Jangbogo-N Project to Develop First Indigenous Nuclear-Powered Submarine by Late 2030s

- Kerala launched Project Zero, a zero-tolerance anti-corruption initiative aimed at ensuring bribery-free public services.
- Swara Lakshmi Nair became Bengaluru's first woman to achieve the Woman International Master (WIM) title in chess.
- The Indian Olympic Association appointed Rohit Rajpal as India's Chef de Mission for the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow.
- Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli won the 2026 Canadian Grand Prix, securing his fourth consecutive Formula One victory.
- Elias George was appointed Part-time Chairman of Federal Bank for a three-year term with RBI approval.
- Justice Prakash Navlekar will chair a high-level committee to study demographic changes and issues related to illegal immigration.
- IAS officer Piyush Singla was appointed Director of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission under the National Health Authority.
- Sikkim became India's fifth fully literate state under the ULLAS initiative, advancing adult education and lifelong learning.
- Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia launched the ₹236 crore Mission Queen Pineapple in Tripura to boost exports, processing, and farmer incomes.
- Vaibhav Sooryavanshi set a new IPL record with 65 sixes in a season, surpassing Chris Gayle's long-standing achievement.
- Veteran Urdu poet Bashir Badr passed away at the age of 91, leaving behind a rich legacy of accessible and popular ghazals.
- Sikkim Police Honour: President Murmu awards prestigious Police Colour recognizing 125 years of service, reforms, and citizen-centric policing.
- Slovenia Politics: Janez JanÅja elected Prime Minister for fourth term, securing majority coalition, strengthening nationalist politics in Europe.
- CDSL Leadership: SEBI approves Amit Mahajan and Nayana Ovalekar as Executive Directors overseeing operations, compliance, and investor grievances.
- GAIL Extension: Deepak Gupta's additional charge as Director (Projects) extended six months while continuing CMD responsibilities.
- Bellatrix-TelePIX Collaboration: India-Korea partnership develops advanced VLEO satellite mission combining optical payload and propulsion for sharper Earth observation.
- Esha Singh Triumph: Indian shooter wins ISSF World Cup gold in Munich with world record 43 points in women's 25m pistol.
- UN Peacekeepers Honoured: Dag Hammarskjold Medal awarded posthumously to Harbhajan Singh, Sujit Pradhan; Abhilasha Barak receives Gender Advocate Award.
- Shyam Lal Meena: Veteran Olympian archer passes away at 61, remembered for 1988 Seoul Olympics and pioneering archery achievements.
- Delhi Airport Launches India's First SkyCast System for Advanced Weather Forecasting
- Odisha, Intel and 3DGS Sign \$3.3 Billion Semiconductor Manufacturing Agreement
- RBI and Vietnam Central Bank Sign MoU on Digital Payments Cooperation
- Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar Assumes Charge as 48th Vice Chief of Naval Staff
- Rajesh Kumar Singh Takes Additional Charge as DRDO Chairman

JUNE 26
INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING
TOGETHER FOR A HEALTHY, SAFE AND DRUG-FREE WORLD

1ST OBSERVED
1989

EDITION
37th

MOTTO
To raise awareness to fight against substance abuse as well as the unlawful trade of drugs.

ORGANISATION INVOLVED
UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

NOTE
• The term "illicit trafficking" can be defined as illegal "trading, selling or dealing" in specified goods.
• This day also known as "World Drug Day".

IMPORTANCE
✓ To mark the proclamation by General Assembly on 7 December 1987 for this day to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.
✓ This date was chosen to commemorate Lin Zexu's dismantling of the opium trade in Humen, Guangdong, ending in June 25, 1839, just before the First Opium War in China.

JUNE 25, 1839
LIN ZEXU
Destroyed opium at Humen, Guangdong

WHY THIS DAY MATTERS
✓ Drugs destroy health.
✓ Families suffer.
✓ Communities weaken.
✓ Together, we can end drug abuse and build a better future.

AWARENESS TODAY, A BETTER TOMORROW
LET'S STAND TOGETHER AGAINST DRUGS

AWARENESS | **PREVENTION** | **REHABILITATION** | **COOPERATION** | **HOPE**

A HEALTHY SOCIETY IS A DRUG-FREE SOCIETY.

Recent Appointments

Kunal Shah to Lead WhatsApp



Meta Platforms has announced a major strategic move by investing in Indian fintech firm CRED and appointing its founder Kunal Shah as the new global head of WhatsApp.

Key Considerations:

- Company in News: CRED
- Investor: Meta Platforms
- Investment Amount: \$900 million (~₹8,550 crore)
- Stake: ~20%
- Valuation: \$4.5 billion
- Sector: Fintech / Digital payments

Leadership Change:

- Kunal Shah appointed Head of WhatsApp
- Succeeds Will Cathcart
- Interim CEO of CRED: Miten Sampat

Background:

- CRED founded in 2018 by Kunal Shah
- Focus: Credit card bill payments and rewards ecosystem
- Expanded into lending, rent payments, and financial services
- WhatsApp is Meta's largest platform in India (>500 million users)
- India is key market for Meta's payments and commerce strategy

Additional Key Facts:

- Meta owns WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Threads
- Aim: Expand WhatsApp into payments + business commerce ecosystem
- India fintech growth driven by UPI, JAM trinity, digital lending
- CRED seen as premium credit-focused fintech platform
- Kunal Shah: founder of FreeCharge (earlier fintech success)

- Concerns: data privacy, Big Tech dominance, regulatory oversight
- Opportunities: global investment, fintech innovation, digital ecosystem growth

Tushar Mehta Reappointed as Solicitor General of India for Three More Years



The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the reappointment of Tushar Mehta as Solicitor General of India for a further term of three years from 1 July 2026. The order was issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

Key Considerations:

- Person: Tushar Mehta
- Post: Solicitor General of India
- Reappointed For: 3 years (from 1 July 2026)
- Approved by: Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)
- Issued by: DoPT
- Position: Second-highest law officer of India
- Nature of Post: Not constitutional (executive appointment)

Background:

- Appointed Solicitor General in October 2018
- Earlier served as Additional Solicitor General (2014)
- Represents Union Government in Supreme Court & High Courts
- Assists Attorney General in legal matters
- SGI is governed under Law Officers (Conditions of Service) Rules, 1987

Additional Key Facts:

- Attorney General of India: R. Venkataramani
- Article 76: Attorney General is a constitutional post
- SGI is second-highest law officer after Attorney General

- ACC composition: Prime Minister + Union Home Minister

Functions of SGI:

- Legal advice to Government of India
- Representation in Supreme Court and High Courts
- Assistance in constitutional matters and Article 143 references

Rajendra Kumar Saboo has been assigned additional charge as MD & CEO of UCO Bank



Rajendra Kumar Saboo has been assigned additional charge as Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of UCO Bank by the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance.

Key Considerations:

- Appointment: Additional charge of MD & CEO
- Bank: UCO Bank
- Appointee: Rajendra Kumar Saboo
- Current Position: Executive Director, UCO Bank
- Assigned by: Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance
- Reason: Vacancy after completion of Ashwani Kumar's tenure
- Tenure: Until 31 August 2026 or until regular appointment (whichever is earlier)

Background:

- Saboo joined UCO Bank as Executive Director in November 2022
- Began banking career as Probationary Officer in Oriental Bank of Commerce (1994)
- Served across various leadership roles in banking sector
- Previously worked as Chief General Manager in Punjab National Bank

RBI Approves Extension of Keki Mistry as Interim Chairman of HDFC Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended Keki Mistry's tenure as interim Part-time Chairman of

HDFC Bank for three months, up to 18 September 2026 or until a regular Chairman is appointed.



Key Considerations:

- Person: Keki Mistry
- Position: Interim Part-time Chairman, HDFC Bank
- Extension Period: Up to 18 September 2026
- Authority: Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- Reason: Leadership continuity during transition
- Previous Chairman: Atanu Chakraborty
- Bank Type: Largest private sector bank (India)

Background:

- Keki Mistry took charge in March 2026
- RBI approves top management appointments in banks
- HDFC Bank leadership transition after HDFC-HDFC Ltd merger (2023)
- Ensures stability in governance of systemically important bank
- HDFC Bank plays key role in India's financial system

Additional Key Facts:

- HDFC Bank Established: 1994
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- MD & CEO: Sashidhar Jagdishan
- RBI Established: 1935 (Nationalised 1949)
- RBI Acts: RBI Act 1934, Banking Regulation Act 1949
- D-SIB Banks: SBI, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank
- HDFC Merger Effective: 1 July 2023
- Concept: "Too Big to Fail" banks under RBI monitoring

Vivek Aggarwal Appointed Vice-President of FATF



Vivek Aggarwal, senior Indian bureaucrat, has been elected as Vice-President of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for 2026–27. This is the first time India has secured this position.

Key Considerations:

- Person: Vivek Aggarwal
- Appointment: Vice-President, FATF
- Term: 2026–27 (July 2026–June 2027)
- Organisation: Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- First for India: Yes (Vice-Presidency)
- Current Post: Secretary, Ministry of Culture
- Previous Role: Director, FIU-IND
- Successor: Giles Thomson (UK)
- Decision: FATF Plenary (17–19 June 2026)

Background:

- FATF sets global standards for AML, CFT & PF
- India became FATF member in 2010
- Vivek Aggarwal represented India in FATF meetings
- Strengthens India's role in global financial governance

Additional Key Facts:

- FATF Founded: 1989 (G7 initiative)
- Headquarters: Paris, France
- Members: 40 countries + regional bodies
- Grey List: Under monitoring countries
- Black List: High-risk jurisdictions
- FIU-IND: 2004, under Finance Ministry
- PMLA Act: 2002 (effective 2005)
- Egmont Group: 1995 (global FIU network)

Dr. Saibal Chattopadhyay Appointed Chairperson of NSC



Dr. Saibal Chattopadhyay, former Director of IIM Calcutta, has been appointed as the Chairperson of the National Statistical Commission (NSC) by the Government of India. The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). He succeeds Prof. Rajeeva Laxman Karandikar.

Key Considerations:

- Appointee: Dr. Saibal Chattopadhyay

- Post: Chairperson, National Statistical Commission (NSC)
- Appointing Authority: ACC (headed by PM)
- Previous Chairperson: Prof. R. L. Karandikar
- Members Appointed: Shubhabrata Das, Satyendra Bahadur Singh, Madhavan Mukund
- Sector: Official Statistics / Governance

Background:

- NSC constituted in 2005, operational from 2006
- Set up based on Rangarajan Commission recommendations
- Ensures quality, reliability, and integrity of official statistics
- Works with MoSPI and other government bodies
- Chairperson is part-time, along with 4 members

Additional Key Facts:

- NSC functions: policy, standards, coordination, statistical audits
- Ex-officio member: CEO, NITI Aayog
- Ministry: MoSPI (Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation)
- NSO formed in 2019 by merging CSO + NSSO
- NSC strengthens credibility of India's statistical system
- ACC handles top-level government appointments

Hitesh Joshi Appointed CMD of GIC Re



The Government of India has appointed Hitesh Rameshchandra Joshi as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re).

Key Considerations:

- Appointee: Hitesh Rameshchandra Joshi
- Post: Chairman & Managing Director (CMD)
- Organisation: GIC Re (General Insurance Corporation of India)
- Previous Role: Executive Director & Acting CMD
- Approval Authority: ACC (headed by PM of India)
- Sector: Insurance / Reinsurance
- Predecessor: N. Ramaswamy

Background:

- GIC Re established in 1972
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- India's national reinsurer (PSU under Ministry of Finance)
- Provides reinsurance support to insurance companies
- Helps manage risk and financial stability of insurers
- Joshi has 30+ years experience in reinsurance, risk management and finance

Additional Key Facts:

- Reinsurance = insurance for insurance companies
- Regulator: IRDAI (est. 1999, HQ Hyderabad)
- Appointment system: FSIB recommends PSU financial appointments
- FSIB replaced Banks Board Bureau (BBB) in 2022
- GIC Re is the largest reinsurer in India
- Supports domestic insurance sector stability and global reinsurance operations

Bata India Appoints Sanjay Rao as MD & CEO



Bata India has appointed Sanjay Rao as its new Managing Director and CEO, succeeding Gunjan Shah after completion of his five-year tenure.

Key Considerations:

- Company: Bata India
- New MD & CEO: Sanjay Rao
- Outgoing CEO: Gunjan Shah
- Sector: Footwear & Retail
- Focus: Premium products, digital commerce, retail expansion
- Experience: Nike, Zara (Inditex), Guess Europe

Background:

- Bata India established in 1931
- Parent: Bata Group (founded 1894)
- Key brands: Bata, Hush Puppies, Power, North Star
- India retail sector growing via e-commerce and omnichannel models
- FDI supports expansion of organised retail in India

Additional Key Facts:

- Headquarters (India): Gurugram

- Global HQ: Lausanne, Switzerland
- Founder (Bata Group): Tomáš Baťa
- Retail contributes ~10% of India's GDP
- Shift towards digital + premium footwear segment in India

Cipla Appoints Shivam Puri as CEO of One India Business



Cipla has appointed Shivam Puri as CEO of its One India Business from 1 July 2026. He will also join the company's Management Council as part of senior leadership.

Key Considerations:

- Company: Cipla Ltd.
- New CEO: Shivam Puri
- Position: CEO, One India Business
- Effective Date: 1 July 2026
- Previous Role: MD & CEO, Cipla Health
- Sector: Pharmaceuticals
- Objective: Strengthen India business operations

Background:

- Cipla founded in 1935 by Dr. Khwaja Abdul Hamied
- Headquartered in Mumbai
- Strong presence in respiratory and HIV/AIDS medicines
- Shivam Puri has 23+ years experience in FMCG & healthcare
- Worked with HUL, ITC, Jubilant FoodWorks

Additional Key Facts:

- India is 3rd largest pharma industry (volume)
- India supplies ~20% global generic medicines
- Cipla is major exporter of affordable medicines
- Pharma sector supports "Pharmacy of the World" image
- Related scheme: PM Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana

BigBasket CEO Hari Menon Steps Down; Amazon Veteran Amit Nanda Takes Charge



BigBasket Co-founder and CEO Hari Menon has stepped down after nearly 15 years of leadership, and Amit Nanda, a former Amazon executive, has been appointed as the new CEO of the Tata Digital-backed company.

Key Considerations:

- Company: BigBasket
- Outgoing CEO: Hari Menon
- New CEO: Amit Nanda
- Parent Company: Tata Digital (Tata Group)
- Sector: Online grocery & quick commerce
- Objective: Strengthen position in India's e-grocery market
- Transition: Leadership change with continued board role for Hari Menon

Background:

- BigBasket founded in 2011
- Co-founders include Hari Menon and others
- Operates in fast-growing quick commerce sector
- Focus on ultra-fast delivery (10–30 minutes) via dark stores
- Competes with Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart
- Transition reflects shift toward professional management in startups

Additional Key Facts:

- Tata Digital drives Tata Group's digital ecosystem (Tata Neu app)
- Quick commerce refers to ultra-fast delivery using localized warehouses
- Amazon (Amit Nanda's previous company) is global e-commerce leader
- India is the world's 3rd largest startup ecosystem
- India has 100+ unicorn startups
- Sector includes e-commerce, fintech, SaaS, and logistics innovation

Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth Appointed as Chief of Army Staff (COAS)

The Government of India has appointed Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth as the next Chief of the Army Staff (COAS). He is currently serving as Vice Chief of the

Army Staff and will succeed General Upendra Dwivedi.



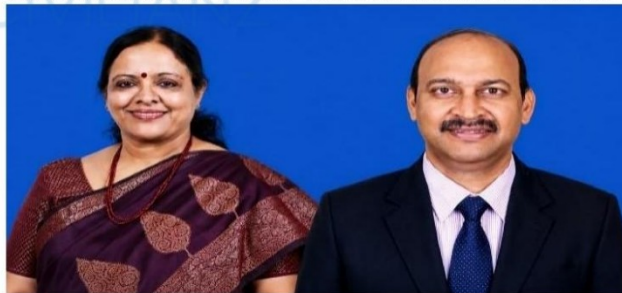
Key Considerations:

- Appointed As: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS)
- Officer: Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth
- Present Post: Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS)
- Successor of: General Upendra Dwivedi
- Appointment Authority: Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)
- Rank: Four-star General (upon assuming charge)

Background:

- Commissioned into Indian Army in December 1986
- NDA alumnus (Khadakwasla)
- Over 38 years of military experience
- Served in operational, command, and strategic roles
- Extensive experience in counter-insurgency and armoured warfare

Government Appoints Dinesh Pant and Girija Subramanian as Whole-Time Members of IRDAI



The Central Government has appointed Dinesh Pant and Girija Subramanian as Whole-Time Members (WTMs) of IRDAI for a period of five years or until the age of 62, strengthening regulatory leadership in India's insurance sector.

Key Considerations:

- Organisation: IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India)
- Appointments: Dinesh Pant, Girija Subramanian
- Post: Whole-Time Members (WTMs)
- Tenure: 5 years or till 62 years of age (whichever earlier)

- Objective: Strengthen insurance sector regulation and reforms
- Vision: "Insurance for All by 2047"

Background:

- Appointments made by the Central Government
- IRDAI regulates and develops the insurance sector in India
- Sector undergoing reforms to increase insurance penetration
- Focus on improving policy framework and consumer protection

Additional Key Facts:

- IRDAI Established: 1999 (under IRDA Act, 1999)
- Headquarters: Hyderabad, Telangana
- Composition: 1 Chairperson, up to 5 WTMs, up to 4 Part-Time Members
- Dinesh Pant: MD, LIC of India (Actuarial expert)
- Girija Subramanian: Former CMD, New India Assurance
- Insurance types: Life insurance and general insurance sectors

Kumar Shanker Appointed Managing Director of Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL)



Kumar Shanker has been appointed as the new Managing Director of Indraprastha Gas Limited, succeeding Kamal Kishore Chatiwal, who returned to GAIL (India) Limited.

Key Considerations:

- New MD: Kumar Shanker
- Succeeded: Kamal Kishore Chatiwal
- Previous Role: MD, Maharashtra Natural Gas Limited (MNGL)
- Experience: More than 32 years in the oil and gas sector
- Qualification: Chemical Engineering graduate from BITS Pilani

About IGL:

- Established in 1998.
- India's largest City Gas Distribution (CGD) company.

- Supplies CNG and PNG.
- Operates in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan.
- Joint venture of GAIL and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited.

UIDAI CEO Saurabh Vijay Takes Charge as CEO of IndiaAI Mission



Saurabh Vijay, CEO of UIDAI, has assumed additional charge as the CEO of the IndiaAI Mission. The appointment was made by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

Key Considerations:

- Person in News: Saurabh Vijay
- Current Position: CEO, UIDAI
- Additional Charge: CEO, IndiaAI Mission
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
- IndiaAI Mission Outlay: ₹10,372 crore

Background:

- Saurabh Vijay is a senior IAS officer and currently serves as CEO of UIDAI.
- He has been given additional charge as CEO of the IndiaAI Mission following the reassignment of the previous CEO.
- IndiaAI Mission is the Government of India's flagship programme to strengthen the country's AI ecosystem.

About IndiaAI Mission:

- Approved by the Union Cabinet in March 2024.
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- Total Outlay: ₹10,372 crore.
- Aims to strengthen AI research, innovation, startups, skilling, and computing infrastructure.
- Focuses on developing indigenous, ethical, and responsible AI capabilities.

About UIDAI:

- Established: January 2009.
- Statutory Status: Under the Aadhaar Act, 2016.
- Ministry: MeitY.

- Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Responsible for issuance and management of Aadhaar numbers.

RBI Deputy Governor Swaminathan Janakiraman Gets Two-Year Extension



The Central Government has extended the tenure of Swaminathan Janakiraman as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for another two years. The extension will be effective from 26 June 2026.

Key Considerations:

- Person: Swaminathan Janakiraman
- Position: RBI Deputy Governor
- Extension Period: 2 Years
- Effective From: 26 June 2026

Background:

- Reappointed as RBI Deputy Governor for two years.
- Originally appointed in June 2023.
- Succeeded M K Jain in the position.
- Previously served as Managing Director of IDBI Bank.
- Represents the commercial banking category among RBI Deputy Governors.

About RBI:

- Established: 1 April 1935
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Governor: Sanjay Malhotra
- Regulated by: RBI Act, 1934
- Total Deputy Governors: 4

Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit Appointed as Next Vice Chief of the Air Staff



Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit has been appointed as the next Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS) of the Indian Air Force. He will assume office on 1 July 2026.

Key Considerations:

- Appointment: Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS)
- Current Post: Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CISC)
- Assumption of Charge: 1 July 2026
- Service: Indian Air Force

Background:

- Experienced fighter pilot with expertise in flight testing and modernization.
- Played key role in indigenous aircraft development programs.
- Involved in Jaguar and MiG-27 avionics upgrades.
- Participated in MMRCA trials as Director Air Staff Requirements.
- Commissioned into IAF fighter stream on 6 December 1986.

About VCAS:

- Second-highest rank in Indian Air Force
- Assists Chief of Air Staff
- Responsible for operations, planning and modernization

ACC Clears Neelkanth Mishra as World Bank Executive Director



The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved Neelkanth Mishra as India's Executive Director at the World Bank (Washington D.C.) for 3 years.

Key Considerations:

- Approved by ACC
- Post: Executive Director, World Bank (India)
- Tenure: 3 years
- Location: Washington D.C., USA

Background:

- Current Role: Chief Economist, Axis Bank
- Member: Economic Advisory Council to PM (EAC-PM)
- Expertise: Macroeconomics and financial research

- Represents India in global development decisions

About World Bank:

- HQ: Washington D.C.
- Established: 1944 (Bretton Woods Conference)
- President: Ajay Banga
- Aim: Poverty reduction and development finance
- Functions: Loans, grants, infrastructure funding

World Bank Group:

- IBRD – Loans for middle-income countries
- IDA – Soft loans for poorest countries
- IFC – Private sector investment arm
- MIGA – Investment guarantees
- ICSID – Dispute settlement body

ACC Extends Tenure of Tarun Kapoor as PM Advisor



The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved a one-year extension for Tarun Kapoor in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Key Considerations:

- Appointee: Tarun Kapoor (1987-batch IAS officer, HP cadre)
- Role: Advisor to PM in Prime Minister's Office
- Extension Period: 10 June 2026 for one year
- Approval Body: Appointments Committee of the Cabinet

Background:

- Former Petroleum Secretary of India.
- Former Chairman of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB).
- Works at Secretary-level rank in PMO.

Additional Key Facts:

- PMO coordinates policy formulation and inter-ministerial work.
- ACC is chaired by the Prime Minister of India.
- PNGRB regulates petroleum and natural gas sector (established 2006).

Vipul Appointed India's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia



Vipul has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, succeeding Dr. Suhel Ajaz Khan.

Key Considerations:

- Appointee: Vipul (IFS 1998 batch)
- Current Posting: Ambassador to Qatar
- New Posting: Saudi Arabia
- Succeeds: Dr. Suhel Ajaz Khan

Background:

- Earlier served in Cairo, Colombo, Geneva, and Dubai.
- Saudi Arabia is a key partner in energy, trade, defence, and investment.
- Strengthens India-Saudi Strategic Partnership Council (SPC) cooperation.

Additional Key Facts:

- Capital: Riyadh
- Currency: Saudi Riyal (SAR)
- SPC established in 2019 during PM Narendra Modi's visit.
- Focus areas: Energy security, trade, defence, investment, and technology.

Anshul Gupta to Lead Bank of America's India Investment Banking Business



Anshul Gupta has been appointed to lead the India investment banking business of Bank of America.

Key Considerations:

- Person in News: Anshul Gupta
- New Role: Head of India Investment Banking, Bank of America
- Previous Organization: Avendus Capital

Background:

- Has nearly two decades of investment banking experience.

Bank of America:

- Headquarters: Charlotte, North Carolina, USA
- CEO: Brian Moynihan

Avendus Capital:

- Founded: 1999
- Headquarters: Mumbai

Ajay Rajan Appointed MD & CEO of Protean eGov Technologies



Protean eGov Technologies Ltd. has appointed Ajay Rajan as its new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, succeeding Suresh Sethi.

Key Considerations:

- New MD & CEO: Ajay Rajan
- Company: Protean eGov Technologies
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Former Name: NSDL e-Governance Infrastructure Ltd.

Background:

- Ajay Rajan has over 30 years of experience in banking, fintech, and digital transformation.
- Protean supports major Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) projects in India.

Associated with:

- PAN Services
- Tax Information Network (TIN)
- National Pension System (NPS)
- Account Aggregator Framework
- ONDC

Justice Meenakshi M. Rai Appointed as Chief Justice of Patna High Court

Justice Meenakshi M. Rai, currently a Judge of the Sikkim High Court, has been appointed as the 48th Chief Justice of the Patna High Court.

Key Considerations:

- Appointee: Justice Meenakshi M. Rai

- Court: Patna High Court
- Succeeds: Justice Sangam Kumar Sahoo
- Constitutional Provision: Article 217



Background:

- Currently serving as Judge of the Sikkim High Court.
- First woman from Sikkim to become a High Court Judge.
- Elevated as Judge of Sikkim High Court in 2015.
- Appointment recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium.

D.K. Shivakumar Sworn in as Karnataka Chief Minister



Senior Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Karnataka, succeeding Siddaramaiah.

Key Considerations:

- New CM: D.K. Shivakumar
- State: Karnataka
- Succeeded: Siddaramaiah
- Party: Indian National Congress
- Oath Administered By: Thaawarchand Gehlot

Background:

- Elected leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP).
- Former Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka.
- President of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee.
- Represents Kanakapura Assembly Constituency.
- Eight-time MLA.

Karnataka:

- Capital: Bengaluru
- Governor: Thaawarchand Gehlot
- High Court: High Court of Karnataka

Constitutional Provisions:

- Article 163: Council of Ministers aids and advises the Governor.
- Article 164: Governor appoints the Chief Minister.

Lokhande Prashant Sitaram Appointed as CBSE Chairperson



The Central Government has appointed Lokhande Prashant Sitaram as the new Chairperson of CBSE, replacing Rahul Singh after an administrative reshuffle.

Key Considerations:

- Appointee: Lokhande Prashant Sitaram
- Service: 2001-batch IAS (AGMUT Cadre)
- Previous Post: Additional Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs
- Replaces: Rahul Singh
- Approval: Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)

Background:

- Varun Bhardwaj appointed as the new CBSE Secretary.
- Rahul Singh has been appointed Additional Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE):

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Under: Ministry of Education
- Conducts Class 10, Class 12 Board Exams and CTET

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan Assumes Charge as 27th Chief of the Naval Staff

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan has taken charge as the 27th Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) of the Indian Navy, succeeding Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi.

Key Considerations:

- Position: 27th Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS)

- Successor To: Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi
- Commissioned: 1 July 1987
- Specialisation: Communication & Electronic Warfare
- Previous Position: Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C), Western Naval Command



Background:

Commanded major naval platforms including INS Vikramaditya and INS Mysore.

Additional Key Facts:

- CNS is the professional head of the Indian Navy.
- Responsible for naval operations, modernization, maritime security, and strategic planning.

Indian Navy Commands:

- Western Naval Command – Mumbai
- Eastern Naval Command – Visakhapatnam
- Southern Naval Command – Kochi

President Appoints Five Judges to the Supreme Court



The President appointed Supreme Court judges under Article 124 of the Constitution. These appointments help strengthen the judiciary and improve disposal of pending cases.

Key Considerations:

- Total Appointments: 5 Judges
- Appointed By: President of India
- Recommendation: Supreme Court Collegium headed by CJI Justice Surya Kant
- Working Strength of SC: 37 Judges
- Sanctioned Strength: 38 Judges

Newly Appointed Judges:

1. Justice Sheel Nagu
 2. Justice Shree Chandrashekhar
 3. Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva
 4. Justice Arun Palli
 5. V. Mohana
- Four appointees are Chief Justices of High Courts, while V. Mohana was elevated directly from the Bar.
 - Direct elevation of advocates to the Supreme Court is a rare occurrence.

Additional Key Fact:

The Supreme Court's sanctioned strength was recently increased from 34 to 38 judges through the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026.

Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar Takes Charge as 48th Vice Chief of Naval Staff



Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar assumed charge as the 48th Vice Chief of the Naval Staff (VCNS), becoming the second-highest-ranking officer in the Indian Navy. He brings over 37 years of distinguished naval service.

Key Considerations:

- Officer: Vice Admiral Ajay Kochhar
- Appointment: 48th Vice Chief of Naval Staff (VCNS)
- Service: 37+ years
- Commissioned: 1 July 1988 (NDA, Pune)
- Predecessor: Vice Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan

Background:

- He is a specialist in Gunnery and Missile Warfare.
- Served in multiple operational, command, and staff roles across the Indian Navy.
- Took charge after a long and distinguished naval career.

About VCNS:

Second-highest rank in the Indian Navy after CNS.

Assists in:

- Operations
- Modernisation
- Force planning

- Logistics
- Administration and policy

About Indian Navy:

- Maritime branch of Indian Armed Forces
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chief of Naval Staff: Dinesh K. Tripathi
- Motto: "Sham No Varunah"
- Modern establishment: 26 January 1950

About Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC):

- Established in 2001
- India's only integrated tri-services command
- Based in Port Blair
- Ensures strategic security in Indian Ocean Region

Slovenia Parliament Approves Janez Janša as Prime Minister



Slovenia's Parliament has approved Janez Janša as Prime Minister, marking a shift from the previous government led by Robert Golob.

Key Considerations:

- Country: Slovenia
- Prime Minister: Janez Janša
- Parliamentary Vote: 51–36
- Term: 4th Term as Prime Minister
- Parliament: National Assembly (90 Members)

Background:

- Janez Janša is a veteran politician and leader of the Slovenian Democratic Party.
- His party formed a coalition with four centre-right parties to secure a majority in Parliament.

Previous Terms:

- 2004–2008
- 2012–2013
- 2020–2022
- 2026–Present

About Slovenia:

- Capital: Ljubljana
- Currency: Euro (€)
- President: Nataša Pirc Musar
- Independence: 1991 (from Yugoslavia)

National News

Haryana Launches Jal Sanrakshit Haryana

The World Bank has approved a ₹4,000 crore loan for Haryana's "Jal Sanrakshit Haryana" project. Along with this, the state has also launched Clean Air and AI Development programmes aimed at improving sustainability, governance, and environmental outcomes.

Key Considerations:

- Project: Jal Sanrakshit Haryana
- State: Haryana
- Total Project Cost: ₹5,714 crore
- World Bank Loan: ₹4,000 crore
- Implementation Period: 2026–2032
- Coverage: 15 clusters (48.94 lakh acres)

Objectives:

- Water self-reliance in Haryana
- Efficient and equitable water distribution
- Groundwater conservation and sustainable water use

Background:

- Haryana faces groundwater depletion and irrigation stress
- Focus on sustainable agriculture and water management
- World Bank support strengthens long-term infrastructure planning
- Integrated approach combining irrigation, agriculture, and water conservation

Government Removes Domicile Certificate Requirement for SC & OBC Scholarships

The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE) has removed the requirement of a domicile certificate for students applying under SC and OBC Pre-Matric and Post-Matric scholarship schemes.

Key Considerations:

- Reform: Removal of domicile certificate requirement
- Ministry/Dept: Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DoSJE)
- Schemes: Pre-Matric & Post-Matric Scholarships (SC & OBC)
- Beneficiaries: ~1.2 crore students annually

- Objective: Ease of access, reduced documentation, faster approval
- Mode: Digital governance & ease of living initiative
- Coverage: Students studying outside home state also eligible

Background:

- Earlier, domicile certificate was mandatory for applying
- Pre-Matric: Classes IX–X (reduces dropouts)
- Post-Matric: Above Class X (higher education support)
- Aims to promote educational equity for SC & OBC students
- Implemented via National Scholarship Portal (NSP)

Additional Key Facts:

- DoSJE works under Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
- NSP: One-stop digital platform for scholarships
- Constitutional support: Article 15(4), 16(4), 46
- Digital India initiative supports paperless governance
- Focus: Inclusion, mobility, and reduced administrative burden

Government Approves Legal Use of 100% Ethanol Fuel (E100)

The Government of India has approved the legal use of 100% ethanol fuel (E100) in vehicles to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels and promote cleaner, renewable energy sources.

Key Considerations:

- Announcement: Legal approval for 100% ethanol fuel (E100)
- Minister: Nitin Gadkari
- Objective: Reduce fossil fuel imports and enhance energy security
- Fuel Type: E100 (100% ethanol, no petrol blending)
- Supports: Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) and flex-fuel ecosystem
- Significance: Promotes green mobility and indigenous fuel use

Background:

- India imports ~85% of its crude oil requirement
- Ethanol is produced from sugarcane, maize, and food grains
- Ethanol blending reduces carbon emissions and oil dependency
- India has already achieved 20% ethanol blending target ahead of schedule
- Biofuel push is part of India's clean energy transition

Additional Key Facts:

- E10 = 10% ethanol + petrol
- E20 = 20% ethanol + petrol
- E85 = 85% ethanol + petrol
- E100 = 100% ethanol
- Ethanol Blending Programme launched in 2003
- National Policy on Biofuels: 2018
- Global Biofuels Alliance launched during G20 Presidency (2023)
- Flex-fuel vehicles can run on multiple ethanol blends
- Goal: Expansion of ethanol dispensing infrastructure across India

Zoji La Tunnel Achieves Breakthrough, Bringing All-Weather Kashmir-Ladakh Connectivity Closer

India achieved a major milestone in the construction of the Zoji La Tunnel as the final breakthrough connected both ends of the tunnel beneath the Himalayas, paving the way for year-round connectivity between Kashmir and Ladakh.

Key Considerations:

- Project: Zoji La Tunnel
- Location: Between Sonamarg and Dras
- Connects: Kashmir and Ladakh
- Breakthrough Achieved: June 2026
- Executing Agency: National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited

Background:

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari triggered the final breakthrough blast.
- Approximately 13.15 km long tunnel beneath the Zoji La Pass.
- Will provide all-weather road connectivity between Kashmir and Ladakh.
- Considered the world's longest single-tube bi-directional road tunnel at such a high altitude.
- Expected to reduce travel time and improve connectivity in the region.

- Will strengthen defence logistics and border infrastructure in Ladakh.
- Expected to boost tourism, trade and economic activities.

About Zoji La Tunnel:

- Located on National Highway-1 (NH-1).
- Construction started on 15 October 2020.
- Single-tube, bi-directional road tunnel.
- Situated at an altitude of around 11,500–12,000 feet.

UP Launches 'Project GANGA' for Rural Digital Connectivity

Yogi Adityanath launched Project GANGA (Government Assisted Network for Growth and Advancement) to provide high-speed fibre-based broadband connectivity to rural households and promote digital inclusion across Uttar Pradesh.

Key Considerations:

- Launched By: Yogi Adityanath
- State: Uttar Pradesh
- Objective: Last-mile broadband connectivity in rural areas
- Target Beneficiaries: 20 lakh rural households
- First Phase Coverage: 21 districts

About Project GANGA:

- Stands for Government Assisted Network for Growth and Advancement.
- Aims to bridge the rural digital divide.
- Will support digital education, telemedicine, e-governance, skill development and smart agriculture.
- Implemented with support from OneOTT Entertainment Limited.
- Expected to generate over 1 lakh employment opportunities.

About Digital India:

- Launched on 1 July 2015.
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- Objective: Transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

Final Takeaway:

Project GANGA aims to connect 20 lakh rural families with high-speed broadband, strengthening digital inclusion and rural development in Uttar Pradesh.

PM Narendra Modi Becomes India's Longest-Serving Elected Prime Minister

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister in uninterrupted tenure, surpassing the record of Jawaharlal Nehru.

Key Considerations:

- Achievement: Longest-serving elected PM in uninterrupted tenure
- Previous Record Holder: Jawaharlal Nehru
- Nehru's Record: 4,077 consecutive days
- First Oath as PM: 26 May 2014
- Current Status: Third consecutive term in office

Background:

- Narendra Modi has served continuously as Prime Minister since 2014.
- He is the first non-Congress Prime Minister to complete three consecutive terms.
- He is also the longest-serving Prime Minister from a non-Congress party.
- Several world leaders congratulated him on achieving the milestone.
- Before becoming Prime Minister, he served as Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014.

Amit Shah Inaugurates 'VINIMAY' Land Port Management System

Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Land Port Management System (LPMS) 'VINIMAY' in New Delhi to modernize border management and facilitate seamless cargo and passenger movement across India's land ports.

Key Considerations:

- Platform: VINIMAY (LPMS)
- Launched By: Amit Shah
- Nodal Agency: Land Ports Authority of India
- Objective: Digital Border Management
- Ministry: Ministry of Home Affairs

Key Features:

- Enables end-to-end digital processing of cargo and passengers.
- Provides slot booking, payments, tracking and single-window clearances.
- Integrates customs, immigration and border security agencies.
- Connected with ICEGATE and ULIP platforms.

About VINIMAY:

- Digital Land Port Management System (LPMS).
- Supports paperless and integrated border operations.
- Brings land ports on par with digital systems at airports and seaports.

- Enhances transparency, security and ease of cross-border trade.

Project Shikhar

Project Shikhar has been launched through an MoU between Meesho and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) to help MSMEs and digital sellers become IPO-ready and access capital markets.

Key Considerations:

- Partners: Meesho & BSE
- Target Group: MSMEs and digital-first businesses
- Objective: Improve access to equity financing and IPO readiness

Background:

Provides guidance on:

- Corporate governance
- Financial reporting
- Regulatory compliance
- Business restructuring
- IPO preparation
- Helps businesses raise funds through the stock market.
- Promotes transparency, formalization, and sustainable growth.
- BSE SME Platform enables SMEs to raise capital with simplified listing norms.

BSE:

- Established: 1875
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Benchmark Index: SENSEX
- Capital markets in India are regulated by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Final Takeaway:

Project Shikhar aims to connect MSMEs with capital market opportunities, helping them scale up through public funding and stronger governance practices.

Prime Minister Research Chair (PMRC) Scheme 2026

The Ministry of Education has launched the PMRC Scheme 2026 to attract Indian-origin researchers working abroad and strengthen India's research ecosystem.

Key Considerations:

- Scheme: Prime Minister Research Chair (PMRC) Scheme 2026
- Ministry: Ministry of Education

- Objective: Promote Brain Gain and strengthen India's R&D ecosystem
- Target Group: Indian-origin researchers, scientists, technologists, and professionals abroad

PMRC Fellows will receive:

- Fellowship support
- Research grants
- Access to advanced laboratories
- Academic leadership opportunities

Categories:

1. Young Research Fellows (YRF): < 5 years post-PhD
2. Senior Fellows (SF): 5–10 years post-PhD
3. Research Chairs (RC): ≥ 10 years post-PhD

Priority Areas:

- AI & Quantum Computing
- Semiconductors
- Cybersecurity
- Biotechnology
- Healthcare & MedTech
- Space & Defence
- Energy & Climate Change
- Blue Economy

Centre Withdraws Draft Amendments to Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966

The Central Government has withdrawn the Draft Sugarcane (Control) Order, 2026 after strong opposition from farmers, small-scale gur and khandsari units, and other stakeholders over concerns of increased regulation and compliance burden.

Key Considerations:

- Policy: Draft Sugarcane (Control) Order, 2026 (Withdrawn)
- Governing Act: Essential Commodities Act, 1955
- Ministry: Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
- Sector: Sugarcane & sugar industry

Key Issues:

- Licensing for gur & khandsari units
- FRP compliance
- Distance norms for sugar mills

Background:

- Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 regulates pricing, procurement, and supply of sugarcane.
- Draft was aimed at reforming and modernising the sugar sector.
- Withdrawn due to concerns over impact on small producers and competition.

Key Highlights:

- Mandatory licensing proposed for gur and khandsari units.
- Requirement to pay Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) introduced.
- Minimum distance between sugar mills proposed to increase from 15 km to 25 km.
- Strong opposition from farmers and industry stakeholders led to withdrawal.

About FRP:

- Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP): Minimum price paid to sugarcane farmers.
- Fixed by Government on recommendation of CACP and approval of CCEA.
- Replaced Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) in 2009.
- 2026–27 FRP: ₹365 per quintal (10.25% recovery).

About Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966:

- Issued under Essential Commodities Act, 1955.
- Regulates sugarcane pricing, procurement, supply, and mill setup.

Sikkim Declared India's 5th Fully Literate State

Sikkim has been officially declared a Fully Literate State under the ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, becoming the 5th state in India to achieve this milestone.

Key Considerations:

- State: Sikkim
- Literacy Rate: 99.82%
- Programme: ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram
- Recognition Benchmark: 95% Literacy
- Achievement Year: 2026

Background:

- ULLAS aims to promote adult education, foundational literacy, numeracy, and lifelong learning.
- The programme supports the vision of the National Education Policy 2020.

About ULLAS:

Full Form: Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS)

- Launched By: Ministry of Education
- Launch Year: 2022
- Duration: 2022–2027
- Target Group: Non-literate persons aged 15 years and above

Five Components of ULLAS:

1. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

2. Critical Life Skills
3. Basic Education
4. Vocational Skills Development
5. Continuing Education

Fully Literate States Under ULLAS:

- Mizoram (2025) – First State
- Goa (2025)
- Tripura (2025)
- Himachal Pradesh (2025)
- Sikkim (2026)

About Sikkim:

- Capital: Gangtok
- Chief Minister: Prem Singh Tamang
- Governor: Om Prakash Mathur
- Statehood Day: 16 May 1975
- Highest Peak: Kangchenjunga

Cabinet Approves SARTHAK-PDS Scheme

The Union Cabinet has approved SARTHAK-PDS with an outlay of ₹25,530 crore for 2026-27 to 2030-31 to modernise the Public Distribution System (PDS) and improve foodgrain delivery.

Key Considerations:

- Scheme: SARTHAK-PDS
- Full Form: Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling-Income with Automation in PDS
- Outlay: ₹25,530 crore
- Period: 2026-27 to 2030-31
- Objective: Modernisation of PDS

Background:

- PDS is India's food security system for distributing subsidised foodgrains.
- Operates under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).
- Around 81 crore beneficiaries are covered under NFSA.

Key Highlights:

- Integrates transportation, handling assistance, FPS margins, and SMART-PDS reforms into one umbrella scheme.
- Promotes technology-driven foodgrain distribution.
- Focuses on transparency, efficiency, and reducing leakages.

One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC):

- Allows beneficiaries to access ration from any Fair Price Shop in India.
- Uses Aadhaar-based authentication.

- Beneficial for migrant workers and mobile populations.

Final Takeaway:

SARTHAK-PDS aims to transform India's Public Distribution System through AI-driven governance, better logistics, and enhanced transparency, ensuring efficient food security delivery to millions of beneficiaries.

GI Tags Strengthen India's Cultural Heritage & Rural Economy

New GI Tags Awarded: Khurasani Imli (Madhya Pradesh), Tripura Sarinda, and four traditional products from Assam received GI recognition, strengthening India's cultural and geographical heritage.

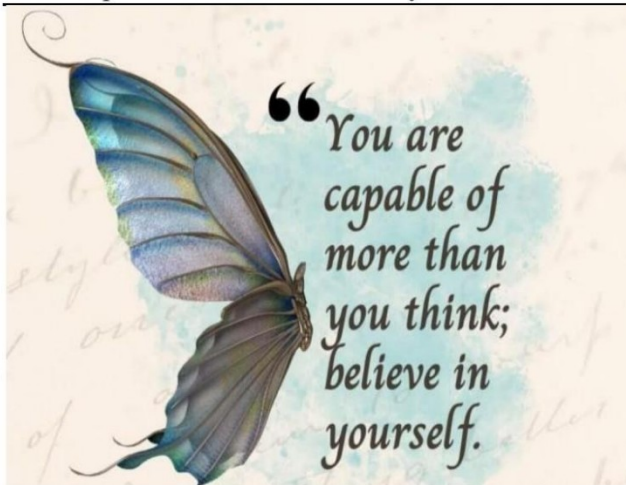
Mission Queen Pineapple: The Centre launched the ₹236-crore Mission Queen Pineapple to transform Tripura's GI-tagged Queen Pineapple into a global export brand through value addition and agro-processing.

Khurasani Imli (Madhya Pradesh): The Baobab fruit from Mandu, Dhar district, received a GI tag for its unique identity, medicinal value, and association with tribal communities.

Assam's Four New GI Products: Karbi Anglong Handloom, Bihu Pepa, Bamboo Craft, and Deuri Handloom received GI tags, promoting indigenous crafts, tribal livelihoods, and cultural preservation.

Tripura Sarinda: The traditional bowed string instrument of Tripura's tribal communities received a GI tag, taking the state's total GI products to four.

Why GI Tags Matter: GI tags protect products linked to a specific region, preserve traditional knowledge, prevent imitation, support artisans and farmers, and boost exports and the rural economy.



International Events

IAEA to Resume Inspections in Iran Under Preliminary US–Iran Peace Understanding

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is expected to resume inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities under a preliminary US–Iran peace understanding. The move aims to verify the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

Key Considerations:

- Organisation in News: International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- Issue: Proposed resumption of IAEA inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities
- IAEA Director General: Rafael Mariano Grossi
- Reason: Preliminary US–Iran peace understanding and interim memorandum
- Negotiation Window: 60 days for a broader peace and nuclear agreement
- Current Status: Iran has not yet granted final access to sensitive nuclear sites; approval is linked to sanctions relief and a final agreement.
- Focus of Inspections: Verify Iran's uranium enrichment activities and ensure compliance with nuclear safeguards.
- Key Nuclear Sites: Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan.

Background:

- IAEA is the world's nuclear watchdog responsible for promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and verifying that nuclear material is not diverted for weapons purposes.
- Established: 1957
- Headquarters: Vienna, Austria

Additional Key Facts:

- JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) was signed in 2015 between Iran and the P5+1 (US, UK, France, Russia, China and Germany).
- Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief, while the IAEA monitored compliance.
- The agreement weakened after the US withdrew in 2018, leading to renewed tensions.
- Iran is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), whose three pillars are Non-Proliferation, Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy, and Disarmament.

- Low-enriched uranium is used for civilian nuclear power, whereas highly enriched uranium raises concerns over possible weapons development.

US Announces \$230 Million Sustainment Package for India's M777A2 Ultra-Light Howitzers

The United States has proposed a \$230 million sustainment package to support India's M777A2 Ultra-Light Howitzers, aimed at enhancing long-term maintenance and operational readiness of the Indian Army's artillery systems.

Key Considerations:

- Country: United States
- Beneficiary: Indian Army
- Equipment: M777A2 Ultra-Light Howitzers
- Package Value: \$230 million
- Programme: Foreign Military Sales (FMS)
- Purpose: Maintenance, spare parts, training & logistics support
- Contractor: BAE Systems

Background:

- M777 deal signed in 2016 between India and US
- Total 145 howitzers procured by India
- Used extensively in high-altitude regions (Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh)
- Part of growing India–US defence cooperation

India–Thailand Defence Dialogue Strengthens Strategic Cooperation

India and Thailand agreed to deepen defence cooperation during the 10th Defence Dialogue held in Bangkok. Both sides focused on defence manufacturing, R&D, capability development and Indo-Pacific security.

Key Considerations:

- Event: 10th Thailand–India Defence Dialogue
- Venue: Bangkok, Thailand
- Focus areas: Defence manufacturing, R&D, innovation, capability development
- Strategic focus: Indo-Pacific security and stability
- Co-chaired by:
 - India: Satyajit Mohanty (MoD Joint Secretary)
 - Thailand: Admiral Nuttapol Diewvanich

- Aim: Strengthen defence industry and military cooperation

Background:

- India-Thailand relations elevated to Strategic Partnership in 2025
- Defence cooperation MoU signed in 2012
- Thailand is a key ASEAN partner under India's Act East Policy
- Regular engagement through defence dialogues, exercises, and training exchanges
- Cooperation extends to maritime security and regional stability

BRICS Adopts Indore Declaration on Agriculture Cooperation

BRICS Agriculture Ministers adopted the Indore Declaration in a meeting held in Indore under India's BRICS Presidency 2026. The declaration focuses on farmers' welfare, food security, climate resilience, and digital agriculture cooperation.

Key Considerations:

- Declaration: BRICS Indore Declaration
- Venue: Indore, Madhya Pradesh
- Adopted by: BRICS Agriculture Ministers
- Theme focus: Farmers, food security, climate resilience, technology
- India's role: BRICS Presidency 2026 coordinator
- Major focus: Farmer-centric global agriculture system
- Emphasis on digital agriculture and innovation

Background:

- BRICS is a group of major emerging economies
- Expanded BRICS (2026) includes countries like Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, UAE, Iran, Ethiopia, Indonesia
- Collectively represent ~50% world population
- Contribute ~42% global food grain production
- Agriculture is a key cooperation area under BRICS framework
- India promotes Global South priorities during its presidency

Additional Key Facts:

- New initiative: Global Forum on Farmers' Seed Rights
- India BRICS Presidency theme: "Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability"

UK Announces Social Media Ban for Children Under 16

The United Kingdom has announced a nationwide ban on social media access for children under 16 to enhance online safety and protect minors from harmful digital exposure. The law is expected to be implemented from spring 2027.

Key Considerations:

- Country: United Kingdom
- Announcement: Ban on social media access for under-16 users
- Prime Minister: Keir Starmer
- Objective: Child online safety and mental health protection
- Expected Implementation: Spring 2027
- Regulator: Ofcom
- Inspired by: Australia's similar policy

Additional Key Facts:

- Major platforms covered: Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook, X, YouTube, Reddit
- Messaging apps like WhatsApp and Signal expected to be exempt
- Additional rules: livestreaming restrictions and AI chatbot limits for minors
- UK capital: London
- Currency: Pound Sterling (£)

EU Agrees to Launch Accession Process for Ukraine and Moldova

The European Union (EU) has approved the opening of the first negotiation cluster with Ukraine and Moldova, marking a significant step in their path toward EU membership.

Key Considerations:

- Organisation: European Union (EU)
- Countries: Ukraine and Moldova
- Development: Opening of first accession negotiation cluster
- Cluster Name: "Fundamentals"
- Covers: Rule of law, democracy, judiciary reforms, fundamental rights, public administration
- Objective: Progress toward EU membership

Background:

- Ukraine applied for EU membership in February 2022
- Moldova applied in March 2022
- Both granted candidate status in June 2022

- EU accession process is based on Copenhagen Criteria (1993)
- Candidate countries must meet political, economic, and legal standards

Additional Key Facts:

- EU established under Maastricht Treaty (1993)
- EU has 27 member states
- Currency: Euro (used by 20 members)
- Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium
- President of European Commission: Ursula von der Leyen
- President of European Council: António Costa
- First cluster ("Fundamentals") is usually the most critical in accession talks

Five Countries Elected as Non-Permanent Members of the UN Security Council

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has elected Bahrain, Colombia, DR Congo, Latvia and Liberia as non-permanent members of the UNSC for the term 2027–2028. The term will begin on 1 January 2027.

Key Considerations:

- Body: UN General Assembly (UNGA)
- Council: United Nations Security Council (UNSC)
- Term: 2027–2028
- New Members: Bahrain, Colombia, DR Congo, Latvia, Liberia

Background:

- Election held at UNGA in New York.
- Latvia elected to UNSC for the first time.
- Other four countries have served earlier.
- UNSC maintains international peace and security.
- **New Members:** Bahrain, Colombia, DR Congo, Latvia, Liberia

UNSC:

- 15 members (5 permanent + 10 non-permanent)
- HQ: New York
- Established: 1945
- P5: China, France, Russia, UK, USA

Ethiopia Joins WTO: Understanding WTO Membership Process

Ethiopia is set to become a member of the WTO after nearly 22 years of negotiations, drawing attention to the WTO accession process.

Key Considerations:

- Country: Ethiopia

- Organization: World Trade Organization (WTO)
- Application Year: 2003
- Membership Process: Accession
- Current WTO Members: 166 (before Ethiopia's accession)

Background:

- WTO accession requires countries to align trade laws with WTO rules.
- Members negotiate market access commitments and tariff reductions.
- Ethiopia's accession was delayed due to economic reforms, trade negotiations, and political instability.
- Membership improves market access, investment opportunities, and participation in global trade governance.

Additional Key Facts:

- World Trade Organization established: 1995
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- Director-General: Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
- WTO replaced GATT (1947).
- India is a founding member of WTO.

Japan Establishes National Intelligence Council to Counter Overseas Threats

Japan has established a National Intelligence Council (NIC) to strengthen intelligence coordination and address growing security threats such as espionage, terrorism, cyberattacks, and regional tensions.

Key Considerations:

- Country: Japan
- Institution: National Intelligence Council (NIC)
- Objective: Centralised Intelligence Coordination
- Prime Minister: Sanae Takaichi
- Focus: National Security & Counter-Intelligence

Background:

- Intelligence functions were previously spread across multiple agencies.
- Coordination challenges prompted comprehensive intelligence reforms.
- The move is part of Japan's broader security modernisation strategy.

Key Highlights:

- NIC will be chaired by the Prime Minister.
- A new National Intelligence Bureau will serve as its secretariat.
- The Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office (CIRO) will be upgraded into a National Intelligence Agency.

Banking & Economy

India to Launch Index of Services Production (ISP) from July 2026

MoSPI will launch India's first monthly Index of Services Production (ISP) on 14 July 2026. It will measure short-term services sector output and serve as the services counterpart of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

Key Considerations:

- Launched by: MoSPI / NSO
- First Release: 14 July 2026
- Base Year: 2024–25
- Release: Monthly (29th of every month, 60-day lag)
- Purpose: Track monthly services sector output
- Counterpart of: IIP
- Method: Fixed-weight Laspeyres volume index
- Main Data Source: GST data
- Services Share: Over 50% of India's GVA

Background:

- ISP is India's first official monthly index for the services sector.
- It will improve GDP estimation, economic forecasting, and policymaking.
- Initially covers sectors like trade, transport, banking, insurance, telecom, hospitality, real estate, and professional services.

Additional Key Facts:

- NSO compiles GDP, CPI, IIP, and ISP.
- IIP Base Year: 2022–23 | ISP Base Year: 2024–25.
- Technical Advisory Committee Chairperson: Debjani Ghosh (constituted in May 2025).

Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited (CPCL) Granted Navratna Status

The Government of India has granted Navratna status to Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited (CPCL), upgrading it to the 28th Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprise.

Key Considerations:

- Company: Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited (CPCL)
- Status Granted: Navratna CPSE
- Total Navratna CPSEs: 28th in India

- Approved by: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
- Notified by: Department of Public Enterprises (DPE)
- Parent Company: Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)
- Ministry: Petroleum and Natural Gas
- Headquarters: Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Benefits of Navratna status:

- Greater autonomy in investment decisions
- Freedom for joint ventures and expansions
- Faster approval for large projects

IOCL:

- India's largest government oil company
- Maharatna CPSE
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- DPE under Ministry of Finance manages CPSE categorisation

Government Extends Credit Guarantee Scheme for MFIs; Industry Expects Higher Uptake

The Government has extended the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Microfinance Institutions 2.0 (CGSMFI-2.0) to strengthen liquidity and improve credit flow to small borrowers.

Key Considerations:

- Scheme: Credit Guarantee Scheme for Microfinance Institutions 2.0 (CGSMFI-2.0)
- Implementing Agency: National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited
- Industry Body: Microfinance Institutions Network
- Validity Extended Till: 31 August 2026
- Guarantee Corpus: ₹20,000 crore
- Loans Sanctioned: ~₹770 crore

About CGSMFI-2.0:

- Launched on 20 March 2026
- Operated through NCGTC under Government of India
- Provides guarantee coverage for loans given to MFIs
- Coverage levels: 80% (small MFIs), 75% (medium), 70% (large)
- Maximum loan limit for large MFIs increased to ₹1,000 crore (subject to 20% AUM cap)

About Microfinance Sector Framework:

- MFIs provide small-ticket loans to low-income and underserved borrowers
- Regulated and supervised by RBI guidelines
- MFIN acts as self-regulatory organization for NBFC-MFIs
- Focus on responsible lending and financial inclusion

Final Takeaway:

The extension of CGSMFI-2.0 strengthens India's microfinance ecosystem by improving liquidity, expanding credit flow, and supporting financial inclusion for small borrowers across the country.

India and Nepal Link UPI and NPI for Seamless Real-Time Money Transfers

India and Nepal have enabled interoperability between UPI and Nepal's NPI to facilitate real-time cross-border money transfers.

This system allows instant P2P payments using mobile numbers, UPI IDs, and VPAs without sharing bank details.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India and Nepal
- Systems Linked: UPI and Nepal's NPI
- Implemented By: NPCI International Payments Limited and Nepal Clearing House Limited
- Purpose: Real-time cross-border P2P remittances
- Mode: Mobile numbers, UPI IDs, Virtual Payment Addresses

Background:

- UPI-NPI linkage has been operationalized for seamless fund transfers between India and Nepal
- Eliminates need to share bank account details
- Initially launched through select banks, with planned expansion
- Supports G20 goal of faster, cheaper, and more accessible cross-border payments
- Strengthens digital financial connectivity between neighbouring countries

About UPI & NPI:

- UPI launched in 2016 by NPCI and regulated by RBI
- Enables 24x7 instant digital payments in India
- Nepal's NPI is the national digital payment infrastructure managed by NCHL
- Both systems allow interoperable and secure electronic fund transfers

Viyona Fintech Gets NPCI Bharat BillPay Certification as a BOU

Viyona Fintech has been certified by NPCI to operate as a Bharat BillPay Operating Unit (BOU) under the Bharat BillPay ecosystem.

This allows the company to directly provide and manage digital bill payment services across India.

Key Considerations:

- Certified By: National Payments Corporation of India
- Entity: Viyona Fintech
- Status: Bharat BillPay Operating Unit (BOU)
- System: Bharat BillPay
- Purpose: Expansion of digital bill payment infrastructure

About Bharat BillPay & BOU:

- Bharat BillPay is an integrated platform for recurring bill payments in India
- Operated under NPCI for secure and standardized transactions
- A BOU (Bharat BillPay Operating Unit) is authorized to operate within this system
- BOUs handle biller onboarding, transaction processing, and service expansion
- Ensures interoperability across banks, apps, and payment platforms

Final Takeaway:

The certification of Viyona Fintech as a BOU strengthens India's digital payment ecosystem by expanding Bharat BillPay's reach and improving access to secure, unified, and seamless bill payment services.

FCNR(B) Deposits and RBI Swap Scheme in Focus

FCNR(B) deposits have come into focus amid discussions on whether the Reserve Bank of India may reintroduce a special swap scheme to attract NRI foreign currency deposits and strengthen India's forex reserves.

Key Considerations:

- FCNR(B) Full Form: Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) Deposit
- Eligible Depositors: NRIs and OCIs
- Purpose: Attract foreign currency inflows
- Special RBI Swap Scheme: Introduced in 2013
- Objective: Support rupee stability and forex reserves

About FCNR(B) Deposits:

- Fixed deposits maintained in foreign currencies.
- Principal and interest are fully repatriable.
- Depositors are protected from exchange rate fluctuations.
- Tenure ranges from 1 to 5 years.
- Permitted currencies: USD, GBP, EUR, JPY, AUD and CAD.

About RBI Swap Scheme:

- Introduced in 2013 during rupee depreciation and external sector stress.
- Banks accepted FCNR(B) deposits and swapped foreign currency with RBI at concessional rates.
- Helped attract substantial forex inflows and stabilize the rupee.
- No new FCNR(B) swap scheme has been announced so far.

New Base Year Approved for IIP, CPI and GDP

The Government of India has approved the revision of the base year for major macroeconomic indicators such as IIP, CPI and GDP to better reflect the current structure of the economy and improve statistical accuracy.

Key Considerations:

- IIP Base Year Revised To: 2022–23
- Indicators Covered: IIP, CPI and GDP
- Compiling Agency: National Statistics Office
- Ministry: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
- Objective: Improve relevance and accuracy of economic indicators

Key Highlights:

- Revised IIP series will capture emerging industries and new products.
- Base year revision reflects changing consumption patterns and economic activities.
- Helps improve economic planning, policymaking and international comparability.
- Follows global statistical best practices.

About IIP:

- Measures short-term changes in industrial production.
- Released monthly by NSO.
- Covers Manufacturing, Mining and Electricity sectors.
- Eight Core Industries account for 40.27% of IIP weight.

About CPI & GDP:

- CPI measures retail inflation and is used by the Reserve Bank of India for monetary policy.
- GDP represents the total value of goods and services produced within a country.
- Both indicators are compiled by NSO.

Final Takeaway:

The revision of base years for IIP, CPI and GDP aims to provide a more accurate picture of India's economy by aligning key indicators with current production and consumption patterns.

India Launches UPI Payments in Cambodia

India has enabled UPI-based QR payments in Cambodia through a partnership between NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) and ACLEDA Bank, allowing Indian travellers to make payments via Cambodia's KHQR system.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India & Cambodia
- Partners: NIPL & ACLEDA Bank Plc.
- Payment System: UPI linked with KHQR
- Significance: Cross-border digital payments

Background:

- Indian users can make QR-based payments using UPI apps in Cambodia.
- KHQR (Khmer QR) is Cambodia's national interoperable QR payment system.
- Strengthens digital economic and tourism ties between the two countries.
- Marks the first phase of the India–Cambodia QR payment linkage initiative.

UPI:

- Launched: 2016
- Developed by: National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)
- Regulated by: Reserve Bank of India

Cambodia:

- Capital: Phnom Penh
- Currency: Cambodian Riel
- Prime Minister: Hun Manet

Other countries with UPI linkage:

1. Singapore
2. UAE
3. France
4. Sri Lanka
5. Mauritius
6. Nepal
7. Bhutan
8. Cambodia (Latest)

Final Takeaway:

The Cambodia rollout further expands UPI's global footprint and strengthens India's leadership in Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).

Government to Replace WPI with Producer Price Index (PPI)

India will gradually replace the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) with a Producer Price Index (PPI) framework to improve inflation measurement and align with global standards.

Key Considerations:

- Current WPI Base Year: 2011–12
- New WPI Base Year: 2022–23
- Transition Period: 5 Years
- New Indices: OPPI, IPPI, SPPI

Background:

- PPI will cover both goods and services, unlike WPI which covers only goods.
- Tracks price changes at multiple stages of production.

Initial SPPI coverage:

- Banking
- Insurance
- Railways
- Telecommunications
- Air Passenger Transport
- Securities Transactions
- Pension Fund Management
- WPI basket expanded from 697 to 957 items.

WPI vs PPI:

- WPI: Goods only, wholesale prices.
- PPI: Goods + Services, producer/factory-gate prices.
- PPI is a more comprehensive measure of producer inflation.

Additional Key Facts:

- WPI released by the Office of Economic Adviser (DPIIT).
- CPI is compiled by the National Statistical Office (NSO).
- RBI uses CPI inflation for monetary policy.

Final Takeaway:

The shift from WPI to PPI will provide a broader and more accurate measure of producer-level inflation by including both goods and services.

RBI Strengthens Co-operative Banking Oversight with Regulatory & Governance Reforms

Tough Regulatory Action: RBI cancelled the licence of Shree Mahalaxmi Urban Co-operative Credit Bank (Karnataka) and imposed six-month restrictions on Mogaveera Co-operative Bank (Mumbai) due to weak financial health, inadequate capital, and poor earning prospects.

Depositor Protection: Despite the regulatory action, eligible depositors are protected under DICGC insurance, which provides coverage of up to ₹5 lakh per depositor per bank.

Major Governance Reform: RBI has tightened governance norms for Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) by limiting directors' continuous tenure to 10 years and making them eligible for reappointment only after a mandatory three-year cooling-off period.

Why the Reform? The new rules aim to prevent directors from extending their tenure through repeated resignations and reappointments, thereby improving governance, transparency, accountability, and board independence.

Legal Basis: The measures have been taken under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, and the RBI (Urban Co-operative Banks – Governance) Amendment Directions, 2026, to safeguard depositor interests and strengthen the stability of India's co-operative banking sector.



MOU's Signed

RBI and State Bank of Vietnam Sign MoU to Boost Cross-Border Digital Payments and Fintech Cooperation

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the State Bank of Vietnam (SBV) signed an MoU to strengthen cooperation in digital payments, fintech development, and cross-border payment connectivity, including QR code-based transactions.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India, Vietnam
- Institutions: Reserve Bank of India (RBI), State Bank of Vietnam (SBV)
- Agreement: MoU on digital payments & fintech cooperation

Focus Areas:

- Cross-border digital payments
- Fintech innovation
- QR code-based merchant payments
- Regulatory coordination

Background:

- Signed to enhance financial and technological cooperation between India and Vietnam.
- Approved by the Union Cabinet of India.
- Aims to support seamless international transactions and strengthen digital financial infrastructure.

Key Highlights:

- Promotes cross-border QR code-based merchant payments.
- Enhances cooperation in digital payment systems and fintech innovation.
- Enables faster, cheaper, and transparent international transactions.
- Strengthens bilateral trade, tourism, and investment.
- Supports India's broader digital public infrastructure expansion strategy.

About RBI:

- Established: 1 April 1935
- Nationalised: 1 January 1949
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Governor: Sanjay Malhotra
- Apex monetary authority of India

About State Bank of Vietnam (SBV):

- Central bank of Vietnam
- Headquarters: Hanoi

Defence Ministry Signs ₹425 Crore Contract with Bharat Forge

The Ministry of Defence has signed a ₹425 crore contract with Bharat Forge Limited, Pune, for the procurement of 12 sets of 1.25 MW Marine Gas Turbine Generators (GTGs) for the Indian Navy.

Key Considerations:

- Contract Value: ₹425 crore
- Ministry: Ministry of Defence
- Company: Bharat Forge Ltd., Pune
- Equipment: 12 sets of 1.25 MW Marine Gas Turbine Generators
- User: Indian Navy
- Platform: Kolkata-class destroyers
- Procurement Category: Buy (Indian) under DAP 2020
- Indigenous Content: Minimum 60%
- Objective: Strengthen naval power generation & indigenisation

Background:

- GTGs provide onboard electrical power for naval systems
- Used for radar, weapons, navigation & ship operations
- Gas turbines offer high efficiency, compact size & quick start
- Kolkata-class destroyers (Project 15A) include INS Kolkata, Kochi, Chennai
- Part of India's push for Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence

US-Iran 14-Point Peace Deal Signed to End West Asia Conflict

US and Iran have signed a 14-point Memorandum of Understanding aimed at ending the ongoing conflict in West Asia. The agreement focuses on immediate cessation of hostilities, reopening of strategic maritime routes like the Strait of Hormuz, and initiating a structured diplomatic process for regional stability.

Key Considerations:

- Event: US-Iran 14-Point Peace Deal (MoU)
- Leaders: Donald Trump (US President) and Masoud Pezeshkian (Iran President)

- Objective: End West Asia conflict and restore regional stability
- Major Provision: Reopening of Strait of Hormuz
- Nuclear Commitment: Iran to refrain from pursuing nuclear weapons (framework basis)
- Negotiation Timeline: 60-day peace negotiation process
- Sanctions Issue: Phased sanctions relief and economic normalization
- Mediator: Pakistan facilitated negotiations between US and Iran
- Focus: Energy security and global oil market stability

Background:

- West Asia is a conflict-prone region affecting global geopolitical stability
- Strait of Hormuz is a critical global oil shipping chokepoint (~20% oil trade)
- US-Iran tensions largely driven by nuclear programme and sanctions
- Sanctions have impacted global energy prices and supply chains
- IAEA monitors nuclear compliance under international framework

Additional Key Facts:

- Strait of Hormuz: Connects Persian Gulf with Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea
- IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency headquartered in Vienna (1957)
- Iran Capital: Tehran | Currency: Iranian Rial
- US President: Donald Trump
- Iran President: Masoud Pezeshkian
- Mediator Country: Pakistan
- India Impact: Lower crude oil prices, improved CAD, inflation control, energy security
- Significance: Global energy stability, trade security, nuclear non-proliferation

India and Japan Adopt Rules of Implementation for Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

India and Japan have adopted the Rules of Implementation (RoI) for the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement, strengthening bilateral cooperation in carbon markets and climate change mitigation.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India and Japan
- Mechanism: Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)
- Framework: Article 6.2 of Paris Agreement

- Adoption Date: 8 June 2026
- Objective: Carbon credit generation and emission reduction
- Focus: Climate mitigation, technology transfer, sustainable development

Background:

- Based on MoC signed between India and Japan in 2025
- JCM enables sharing of carbon credits from emission reduction projects
- Supports implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
- Promotes low-carbon technologies and green investments
- Operates through a Joint Committee for governance

Additional Key Facts:

- Article 6.2 allows international transfer of emission reductions (ITMOs)
- Article 6.4 establishes a UN-supervised global carbon market
- JCM launched by Japan in 2011, now with 30+ partner countries
- Focus on climate finance, renewable energy, and clean technologies
- India aims for Net Zero by 2070 under Paris Agreement
- Paris Agreement adopted in 2015 under UNFCCC framework

Six States Agree to Sign MoU for Kishau Multi-Purpose Dam Project

Six northern states have agreed to sign an MoU for the Kishau Multi-Purpose Dam Project on the Tons River, a major tributary of the Yamuna, aimed at improving water management, irrigation, and hydropower generation.

Key Considerations:

- Project: Kishau Multi-Purpose Dam Project
- River: Tons River (tributary of Yamuna)
- States: Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh
- Ministry: Ministry of Jal Shakti
- Objective: Water sharing, hydropower, irrigation, flood control
- Installed Capacity: 660 MW

Background:

- Tons River is the largest tributary of the Yamuna

- Project has long been delayed due to inter-state water-sharing issues
- Aims to strengthen Yamuna river basin management
- Promotes cooperative federalism among northern states
- Supports drinking water supply and agricultural needs

India and Slovakia Elevate Ties to Comprehensive Partnership

India and Slovakia have upgraded their bilateral relations to a Comprehensive Partnership during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bratislava, along with the signing of multiple agreements and establishment of a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India and Slovakia
- Development: Upgraded to Comprehensive Partnership
- Visit: Prime Minister Narendra Modi (Bratislava)
- New Mechanism: Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter-Terrorism
- Objective: Strengthen cooperation in security, trade, and technology
- Focus: Counter-terrorism, digital tech, education, AI, and infrastructure

Background:

- Commitment to action against UN-designated terrorist entities (UNSC 1267)
- Aim to deepen bilateral and multilateral cooperation
- Strengthen people-to-people and institutional linkages
- Focus on expanding strategic and technological collaboration

Additional Key Facts:

- MoU areas: Digital technology, labour migration, higher education, quantum communication, critical infrastructure
- AI initiative: First ICCR Chair in Artificial Intelligence at Technical University of Kosice
- Education tie-ups: IIT Delhi and Slovak Technical University
- Science cooperation: Indian National Science Academy (INSA) & Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS)
- Slovak capital: Bratislava

Defence Ministry Signs ₹449 Crore Deal for Indigenous Navy GNSS Jammers

The Ministry of Defence has signed a ₹449 crore contract with an Indian company for procurement of advanced GNSS jammers for the Indian Navy. The systems are designed to enhance electronic warfare capability by disrupting and spoofing enemy navigation signals.

Key Considerations:

- Contract Value: ₹449 crore
- Buyer: Ministry of Defence
- User: Indian Navy
- Supplier: Accord Software and Systems Private Limited
- Equipment: 20 ECGNSS (Enhanced Capability GNSS) Jammers
- Category: Buy (Indian-IDDM)
- Indigenous Content: Minimum 75%

About GNSS & Electronic Warfare:

- GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) provides satellite-based positioning, navigation and timing services
- Major systems include GPS, GLONASS, Galileo and BeiDou
- ECGNSS jammers can disrupt, degrade and spoof enemy navigation signals
- Electronic Warfare (EW) uses electromagnetic spectrum to detect, protect or attack enemy systems
- Jamming is a key electronic attack technique in modern warfare

About Indian Navy:

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chief of Naval Staff: Dinesh K. Tripathi
- Motto: "Sham No Varunah"
- Responsible for maritime security and naval operations

Final Takeaway:

The ₹449 crore GNSS jammer deal strengthens India's indigenous electronic warfare capability and aligns with the Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision by boosting self-reliant defence technology for modern naval warfare.

Adani Ports Secures 10-Year Contract for Argentina's First LNG Export Project

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) has secured a 10-year marine services contract for Argentina's first LNG export project. The contract

marks APSEZ's entry into the South American market and expands its global marine services presence.

Key Considerations:

- Company in News: Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ)
- Contract Duration: 10 Years
- Project: Argentina's First LNG Export Project
- Region of Expansion: South America
- Investment Commitment: USD 70 Million

Background:

- The contract was awarded through APSEZ's subsidiary in partnership with Argentina-based Meridian Group.
- It will support the Southern Energy FLNG (Floating Liquefied Natural Gas) project.
- The project marks APSEZ's entry into the South American market.
- Argentina's first operational LNG export project is expected to produce around 2.45 million tonnes of LNG annually in its first phase.

About APSEZ:

- Established: 1998.
- Headquarters: Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- Parent Group: Adani Group.
- Chairman: Gautam Adani.
- India's largest integrated transport utility and private port operator.

India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) Comes into Force

The India–Oman CEPA has come into force, providing greater market access, boosting bilateral trade, investment, and strengthening economic ties between the two countries.

Key Considerations:

- Agreement: India–Oman CEPA
- Signed: 18 December 2025, Muscat
- Effective From: 1 June 2026
- Bilateral Trade (FY 2024–25): US\$ 10.6 Billion
- Oman became the 2nd GCC country after UAE to sign a CEPA with India.

Background:

- India secured duty-free access on 98.08% of Oman's tariff lines, covering over 99% of Indian exports.
- Covers trade in goods, services, investments, customs cooperation, and regulatory facilitation.
- Beneficiary sectors: Textiles, Leather, Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Automobiles,

Marine Products, Gems & Jewellery, Agriculture, and Sports Goods.

- First consignments under CEPA were exported from Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai.

Oman:

- Capital: Muscat
- Currency: Omani Rial
- Sultan: Haitham bin Tarik

GCC Members:

Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE

Significance:

- Enhances India's presence in the Gulf region.
- Benefits MSMEs, manufacturers, farmers, and service providers.
- Supports trade diversification and employment generation.

Final Takeaway:

The India–Oman CEPA is a major trade agreement that will boost exports, investment, and strategic economic cooperation while strengthening India's engagement with the Gulf region.

India and South Africa Deepen Cooperation in AI and Future Technologies

India and South Africa have agreed to strengthen cooperation in Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital technologies, innovation, and advanced scientific research to promote sustainable development and technological growth.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India & South Africa
- Focus Areas: AI, Digital Technologies, Innovation, Research & Development
- Objective: Technology cooperation, skill development, and innovation

Additional Key Facts:

Diplomatic Relations: Established in 1993.

Both countries are members of:

- BRICS
- G20
- IBSA

IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum):

- Established: 2003
- Promotes South-South Cooperation

South Africa:

- Capitals: Pretoria, Cape Town, Bloemfontein
- Currency: South African Rand (ZAR)
- Largest City: Johannesburg

Final Takeaway:

The India–South Africa technology partnership will boost innovation, research collaboration, and South-South cooperation in emerging technologies.

India–Germany Scientific Collaboration: Strongest Pillar of Bilateral Engagement

India and Germany continue to deepen cooperation in science, technology, and innovation through joint research, academic exchanges, and partnerships in emerging technologies.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India & Germany
- Focus Areas: AI, Clean Energy, Biotechnology, Sustainable Development
- Strategic Partnership: Since 2000
- Diplomatic Relations: Established in 1951

Germany:

- Capital: Berlin
- Currency: Euro (€)
- Chancellor: Friedrich Merz
- Member of EU, NATO, and G7

Indo-German Science & Technology Centre (IGSTC):

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Promotes industrial research and technology commercialization

India–Myanmar Strengthen Cooperation in Trade, Security, Connectivity and Border Management

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing held talks in New Delhi to enhance cooperation in trade, security, connectivity, border management, and regional development.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India & Myanmar
- Focus Areas: Trade, Security, Connectivity, Border Management
- Myanmar President: Min Aung Hlaing
- India's Policy: Neighbourhood First & Act East Policy

Background:

- Myanmar assured that its territory will not be used against India's security interests.
- Both countries agreed to strengthen cooperation in trade, investment, defence, health, education, energy, AI, and critical technologies.
- Both sides committed to accelerating connectivity and infrastructure projects.

Importance for India:

- Myanmar is India's gateway to Southeast Asia and ASEAN.
- Improved border management helps tackle insurgency, illegal migration, smuggling, and trafficking.
- Myanmar is the only ASEAN country sharing a land border with India.

Additional Key Facts:

- India–Myanmar Border: 1,643 km
- Border States: Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram
- Capital of Myanmar: Naypyidaw
- Currency: Kyat

Key Projects:

Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project
India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway

Final Takeaway:

Myanmar remains a key strategic partner for India's Act East Policy, regional connectivity, and border security objectives.

Ukraine and Sweden Sign Declaration to Deepen Defence Cooperation

Ukraine and Sweden have signed a Joint Declaration on Enhanced Security and Defence Cooperation to strengthen military ties, boost defence production, and expand support amid the ongoing Russia–Ukraine conflict.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: Ukraine, Sweden
- Agreement: Joint Declaration on Defence Cooperation

Focus Areas:

- Defence-industrial cooperation
- Air defence systems
- Drone warfare collaboration
- Military assistance
- Sweden Military Aid: ~\$2.7 billion package

Key Highlights:

- Expansion of defence-industrial cooperation and arms supply.
- Collaboration under “Drone Deal” framework for UAV development.
- Strengthening multi-layered air-defence systems.
- Focus on countering ballistic missile threats.
- Sweden announced military aid package worth \$2.7 billion.

Includes:

- Drone production support
- Air-defence systems
- Fighter aircraft cooperation

Gripen Fighter Jet Cooperation:

- Sweden to donate 16 Saab JAS 39 Gripen C/D jets to Ukraine.
- Ukraine plans to acquire up to 20 Gripen E models in future.
- Ukrainian pilots and technicians undergoing training.
- Expected to significantly enhance Ukraine's air combat capability.

What is Drone Deal?

Framework for cooperation in drone technology and production.

Focus areas:

- Defence innovation
- Drone manufacturing
- Modern battlefield systems
- Surveillance and combat capability enhancement

India and Canada Reaffirm Target of Expanding Bilateral Trade to USD 50 Billion by 2030

India and Canada have reaffirmed their goal of increasing bilateral trade to USD 50 billion by 2030 during the visit of Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India & Canada
- Trade Target: USD 50 Billion by 2030
- Focus: CEPA Negotiations
- Current Trade: Around USD 17 Billion
- Target for CEPA: End of 2026

Background:

- India and Canada are negotiating a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to strengthen trade, investment, and economic cooperation.
- CEPA is broader than a traditional FTA as it also covers investment and economic collaboration.

About CEPA:

Covers:

- Trade in Goods & Services
- Investment Promotion
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
- Customs Cooperation
- Digital Trade
- Economic Cooperation

Significance:

- Strengthens economic and investment ties.
- Improves market access for businesses.
- Enhances supply-chain resilience.
- Promotes technology partnerships and employment generation.
- Helps restore momentum in India-Canada economic relations.

India-Canada Trade:

Major Indian Exports:

- Pharmaceuticals
- Textiles
- Engineering Goods
- Chemicals

Major Imports from Canada:

- Pulses
- Fertilisers
- Wood Products
- Minerals

India-US Cooperation on Critical Minerals and Rare Earths

India and the United States have strengthened cooperation in critical minerals and rare earths to build secure supply chains for future technologies and clean energy.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India & US
- Sector: Critical Minerals & Rare Earths
- Focus: Mining, Processing, Refining & Supply Chains
- Discussed By: S. Jaishankar and Marco Rubio
- Occasion: Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting

Background:

- Critical minerals are essential for clean energy, semiconductors, electronics, and defence.
- China currently dominates global rare earth processing and refining.

About Rare Earth Elements (REEs):

Group of 17 metallic elements.

Used In:

- Wind Turbines
- Electric Motors
- Smartphones
- Missiles
- Fighter Aircraft

Additional Key Facts:

- India identified critical minerals in 2023.
- India is a member of the Minerals Security Partnership.

- China dominates global rare earth refining.

Final Takeaway:

The India-US partnership will help secure critical mineral supplies, strengthen strategic industries, and reduce dependence on vulnerable global supply chains.

India and Japan Continue Cooperation for a Strong and Prosperous Indo-Pacific

India and Japan reaffirmed their commitment to a free, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific during the visit of Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi to New Delhi.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: India & Japan
- Framework: Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)
- Venue: New Delhi
- Focus: Maritime security, connectivity, technology & supply chains
- Occasion: Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting

Background:

- India and Japan share a Special Strategic and Global Partnership since 2014.
- Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1952.
- Both countries support a stable, rules-based Indo-Pacific region and resilient global supply chains.

Cooperation in emerging sectors:

- Critical minerals
- Clean energy
- Advanced technology
- Semiconductors
- Economic security

About FOIP:

- FOIP stands for Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Japan's strategic vision for:

- Freedom of navigation
- Open trade
- Regional connectivity
- Sustainable development
- Rules-based international order
- Complements India's Act East Policy.

About Quad:

Strategic grouping of:

- India
- Japan
- United States
- Australia

Focuses on:

- Maritime security

- Disaster response
- Critical technologies
- Supply-chain resilience
- Regional stability

Significance:

- Strengthens Indo-Pacific security and stability.
- Enhances economic and technological cooperation.
- Promotes resilient supply chains.
- Supports freedom of navigation and international law.
- Deepens India's engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.



“ Life's puzzle may seem complex and gloomy, Piece by piece, find your purpose and endure. ”

Awards & Recognitions

President Droupadi Murmu Confers Padma Awards 2026 on 65 Personalities

President Droupadi Murmu conferred 65 Padma Awards at the Second Civil Investiture Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The awards recognized distinguished contributions across fields such as art, sports, cinema, literature, and public life.

Key Considerations:

- Event: Padma Awards 2026 (2nd Civil Investiture Ceremony)
- Venue: Rashtrapati Bhavan
- President: Droupadi Murmu
- Total Awardees (2nd Ceremony): 65
- Categories: 2 Padma Vibhushan, 7 Padma Bhushan, 56 Padma Shri
- Total Padma Awardees (2026): 131
- Announced on: Republic Day 2026

Notable Awardees:

- Alka Yagnik – Padma Bhushan
- Vijay Amritraj – Padma Bhushan
- Rohit Sharma – Padma Shri
- Mammooty – Padma Bhushan
- R. Madhavan – Padma Shri
- Savita Punia – Padma Shri

Background:

- Padma Awards are among India's highest civilian honours
- Conferred annually in three categories: Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri
- Recognise excellence in art, sports, literature, science, public affairs, etc.
- Recommendations reviewed by Padma Awards Committee and approved by President

Additional Key Facts:

- Padma Awards instituted in 1954
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Home Affairs
- Announced every year on Republic Day
- Bharat Ratna is India's highest civilian award, followed by Padma awards
- Selection involves scrutiny by a high-level committee chaired by the Prime Minister

19th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) 2026 Concludes

MIFF 2026 concluded in Mumbai with global participation in documentary, short fiction and animation categories. The Polish documentary Silver won the Golden Conch Award for Best International Documentary Film.

Key Considerations:

- Event: 19th MIFF 2026
- Venue: Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Organiser: NFDC | Ministry of I&B
- Top Award: Golden Conch
- Winner: Silver (Poland), Director: Natalia Koniarz
- Prize: ₹10 lakh

Other Winners:

- International Short Fiction: Under The Snow (Iran)
- International Animation: Maya's Song (Germany)
- Indian Documentary: Waai
- Indian Short Fiction: Small Clouds
- Indian Animation: Armstrong from Angaalamman Temple Street

Background:

- Established: 1990
- Focus: Documentary, short fiction, animation
- One of South Asia's oldest non-fiction film festivals

Additional Key Facts:

- Silver Conch awarded in multiple categories
- NFDC (1975) promotes and finances Indian cinema
- CBFC handles film certification in India
- FIAPF (Paris) accredits international film festivals
- Documentary films focus on real-life issues and awareness

Neeraj Chopra and Parul Chaudhary Named Best Athletes of the Year

Olympic medalist Neeraj Chopra and steeplechase runner Parul Chaudhary were named Best Male and Best Female Athletes of the Year at the inaugural Indian Athletics Awards. The awards, organized by the Athletics Federation of India, recognized outstanding performances in the 2025 athletics season.

Key Considerations:

- Event: Indian Athletics Awards (Inaugural Edition)
- Organizer: Athletics Federation of India (AFI)
- Best Male Athlete: Neeraj Chopra

- Best Female Athlete: Parul Chaudhary
- Total Categories: 10
- Season Recognized: 2025 athletics season



Background:

- Indian Athletics Awards launched by AFI
- Aim: Recognize athletes, coaches, officials, mentors, and state associations
- Focus on promoting excellence in Indian athletics
- Inaugural edition marks formal recognition platform for athletics achievements in India

Additional Key Facts:

- Lifetime Achievement Award: P. T. Usha
- P. T. Usha is President of the Indian Olympic Committee (IOA)

Jainendra K. Jain Wins Wolf Prize in Physics

Professor Jainendra K. Jain has become the first Indian-origin physicist to receive the prestigious Wolf Prize in Physics. He was honoured for his groundbreaking work on the concept of Composite Fermions, which transformed the understanding of quantum matter.

Key Considerations:

- Award: Wolf Prize in Physics
- Awarded to: Jainendra K. Jain
- Awarded by: Wolf Foundation, Israel
- Presented by: Israeli President Isaac Herzog
- Achievement: First Indian-origin physicist to win this prize

- Key Contribution: Discovery of Composite Fermions
- Year of breakthrough: 1989 (Yale University, postdoctoral research)

Background:

- Wolf Prize established in 1978
- Recognizes excellence in science and arts
- Considered among the world's most prestigious scientific awards
- Many recipients later win the Nobel Prize
- Award highlights major contributions in physics and other scientific fields
- Co-authored book: Composite Fermions
- Recipient of Oliver E. Buckley Prize
- Composite Fermion theory explains the Fractional Quantum Hall Effect

Sudarsan Pattnaik Becomes First Indian to Win Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026

Renowned Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik has become the first Indian to win the Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026 for his climate-themed sand sculpture at an international festival in Kaliningrad, Russia.

Key Considerations:

- Award: Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026
- Winner: Sudarsan Pattnaik
- Achievement: First Indian to win the title
- Venue: Kaliningrad region, Russia
- Theme: Global warming and environmental protection
- Sculpture: 3-metre sand artwork showing climate contrast

Additional Key Facts:

- Sudarsan Pattnaik born: 15 April 1977, Odisha
- Started sand art at Puri Beach without formal training
- Founded Sudarsan Sand Art Institute (1994)
- Awarded Padma Shri in 2014
- Created world's tallest sand castle in 2017
- Multiple international awards and Guinness World Record holder

President Murmu Confers Gallantry Awards on Armed Forces, CAPFs and Police Personnel

President Droupadi Murmu conferred gallantry awards on personnel of the Armed Forces, CAPFs, and State/UT Police during the Phase-I Defence Investiture

Ceremony 2026 held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. A total of 51 gallantry awards were presented.

Key Considerations:

- Event: Phase-I Defence Investiture Ceremony 2026
- Venue: Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi
- Awards Conferred By: President Droupadi Murmu
- Total Gallantry Awards: 51
- Awardees: Armed Forces, CAPFs and State/UT Police Personnel

Background:

- 7 Kirti Chakras were awarded, including 2 posthumous awards.
- 15 Vir Chakras were awarded, including 3 posthumous awards.
- 29 Shaurya Chakras were awarded, including 1 posthumous award.
- Kirti Chakra awardees included Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Naib Subedar Doleshwar Subba, Major Arshdeep Singh, Assistant Commandant Neha Bhandari and Deputy Commandant Pawan Kumar.

Gallantry Awards Hierarchy:

Peacetime Awards

1. Ashoka Chakra – Highest peacetime gallantry award.
2. Kirti Chakra – Second-highest peacetime gallantry award.
3. Shaurya Chakra – Third-highest peacetime gallantry award.

Wartime Awards

1. Param Vir Chakra – Highest wartime gallantry award.
2. Maha Vir Chakra – Second-highest wartime gallantry award.
3. Vir Chakra – Third-highest wartime gallantry award.

Final Takeaway:

President Droupadi Murmu conferred 51 gallantry awards at the Defence Investiture Ceremony 2026, recognizing exceptional courage and service by personnel of the Armed Forces, CAPFs, and Police forces.

51 Artistes Receive Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards

Around 51 artistes were honoured with the Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards for their

contributions to music, dance, theatre and folk arts. The awards covered the years 2021–2024.

Key Considerations:

- Award: Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards
- Awardees: 51 Artistes
- Years Covered: 2021–2024
- Venue: Lok Bhawan, Lucknow

Background:

- Awards presented by Brajesh Pathak.
- Recognized excellence in music, dance, theatre and folk arts.
- Promotes preservation of cultural heritage and traditional art forms.

Major Awardees (2024):

- Safdar Hashmi Award: Shubhdeep Raha (Lucknow)
- BM Shah Award: Sanjay Mehta (Bhopal)

About Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi:

- Headquarters: Lucknow
- Field: Music, Dance, Drama & Folk Arts
- Objective: Promotion and preservation of performing arts

Indian Teenagers Win The Earth Prize 2026 for Tamarind Seed-Based Microplastic Filter

Three Indian teenagers won The Earth Prize 2026 for developing "Plas-Stick", an innovative low-cost solution that removes microplastics from contaminated water using tamarind seed waste. They became the first Indian team to win the global award.

Key Considerations:

- Winners: Vivaan Chhawchharia, Ariana Agarwal, and Avyana Mehta
- Award: The Earth Prize 2026
- Innovation: Plas-Stick
- Achievement: First Indian team to win the global title

Background:

- Plas-Stick is a biodegradable powder made from discarded tamarind seeds.
- It attracts and binds microplastic particles, forming larger clumps that can be removed using a magnet.
- The technology does not require electricity, expensive filters, or harmful chemicals.
- The idea was inspired by water filtration challenges in rural communities.
- Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati helped test and improve the technology.

Additional Key Facts:

- The Earth Prize is organized by the Earth Foundation.
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Eligibility: Students aged 13–19 years.
- Participants in 2026: 169 countries and territories.

Final Takeaway:

The Plas-Stick innovation showcases how affordable, sustainable solutions developed by young innovators can help address the global challenge of microplastic pollution and support clean water access.

Major Abhilasha Barak to Receive Prestigious UN Award

The United Nations will posthumously honour two Indian peacekeepers with the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal, while Major Abhilasha Barak will receive the 2025 UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award.

Key Considerations:

- Organisation: United Nations
- Posthumous Honour: Dag Hammarskjöld Medal
- Awardee: Major Abhilasha Barak
- UN Mission: UNIFIL, Lebanon
- Occasion: International Day of UN Peacekeepers (29 May)

Background:

- India is one of the largest contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations.
- More than 180 Indian peacekeepers have sacrificed their lives under the UN flag since 1948.

Key Highlights:

Dag Hammarskjöld Medal Recipients (Posthumous):

- Harbhajan Singh – Served with MONUSCO
- Sujit Kumar Pradhan – Served with UNMISS

About Dag Hammarskjöld Medal:

- Instituted: 1997
- Awarded By: United Nations
- Nature: Highest posthumous UN peacekeeping honour
- Named after Dag Hammarskjöld.
- Awarded to personnel who die while serving in UN peacekeeping missions.

About UN Military Gender Advocate Award:

- Established: 2016
- Recognises peacekeepers promoting gender equality.

- Encourages protection and participation of women in conflict zones.

Previous Indian Recipients:

- Major Suman Gawani – 2019
- Major Radhika Sen – 2023
- Major Abhilasha Barak – 2025

India's Contribution to UN Peacekeeping:

- Over 6,000 Indian personnel currently deployed in UN missions.
- Among the largest troop contributors globally.
- More than 180 Indian peacekeepers have laid down their lives in service.

President Murmu Confers President's Police Colour on Sikkim Police

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the prestigious President's Police Colour (Nishaan) on the Sikkim Police at Gangtok. Sikkim became the 15th state police force in India and the third Northeastern state to receive this honour.

Key Considerations:

- Award: President's Police Colour (Nishaan)
- Conferred By: President of India
- Recipient: Sikkim Police
- Venue: Gangtok, Sikkim
- Significance: Highest ceremonial honour for a police force

Background:

- The President's Police Colour is awarded for exceptional service, bravery, professionalism, discipline, and dedication to duty.
- Personnel of the honoured force are authorized to wear a special emblem on the left sleeve of their uniform.

Key Highlights:

- Sikkim became the 15th state police force to receive the honour.
- Recognizes excellence in policing and public service.

About President's Police Colour:

- Popular Name: Nishaan
- Nature: Highest ceremonial honour for a police force
- Symbolizes:
 - Bravery
 - Discipline
 - Dedication
 - Professional Excellence

Sports

Deepti Sharma Becomes Highest Wicket-Taker in Women's International Cricket

Indian all-rounder Deepti Sharma has become the highest wicket-taker across all formats in women's international cricket among active players during India's campaign in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026.

Key Considerations:

- Player: Deepti Sharma
- Achievement: Highest wicket-taker (active players) in women's international cricket
- Record: Leading wicket-taker in WT20Is
- Match Highlight: 5/10 vs Pakistan (ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026)
- Previous Record Holder (WT20Is): Megan Schutt (Australia)
- Role: All-rounder (India)

Additional Key Facts:

- WT20I: International Twenty20 matches between women's teams (ICC recognized)
- ICC granted full WT20I status to all members since 2018
- ICC Headquarters: Dubai, UAE
- ICC Chairperson: Jay Shah
- WPL launched in 2023 by BCCI
- Deepti's 5/10 is among best bowling figures in WT20Is for India

Kane Williamson Retires from International Cricket

Former New Zealand captain Kane Williamson has announced his retirement from international cricket after a career spanning more than 16 years.

Key Considerations:

- Player: Kane Williamson
- Country: New Zealand
- Retirement: International cricket (2026)
- Total Runs: 19,346 international runs
- Test Runs: 9,500+ with 33 centuries and 6 double centuries

Captaincy Achievements:

- 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup Final
- 2021 T20 World Cup Final
- Winner of 2021 ICC World Test Championship

India Dominates Inaugural World Yogasana Championships 2026

India emerged as the overall champion at the inaugural World Yogasana Championships 2026, winning 114 medals, including 102 gold medals, at Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

Key Considerations:

- Event: World Yogasana Championships 2026
- Venue: EKA Arena, Ahmedabad, Gujarat
- Overall Champion: India
- Total Medals: 114
- Medal Tally: 102 Gold, 9 Silver, 3 Bronze

Key Highlights:

- India finished first in the medal standings.
- Japan secured second position.
- Argentina finished third.
- The event marked the first-ever World Yogasana Championships.

About Yogasana:

- Competitive sport based on yoga postures.
- Combines flexibility, balance, strength and endurance.
- Included as a demonstration sport in the Khelo India Youth Games 2022.
- Promoted by India as a global sporting discipline.

Final Takeaway:

India dominated the inaugural World Yogasana Championships 2026 with 114 medals, reaffirming its leadership in promoting Yogasana as a competitive sport globally.

India Defeats Bangladesh to Win SAFF Women's Championship 2026 Title

India defeated Bangladesh in the final to win the SAFF Women's Championship 2026 title.

Key Considerations:

- Tournament: SAFF Women's Championship 2026
- Champion: India
- Runner-up: Bangladesh
- India's Titles: 6 (Record)
- Organizing Body: SAFF

Background:

- India defeated Bangladesh in the final to clinch the SAFF Women's Championship 2026 title.

- The victory marked India's sixth title in the tournament's history, the highest by any team.
- Bangladesh finished as the runner-up.
- The championship featured leading women's football teams from South Asia.

About SAFF:

- Established: 1997
- Headquarters: Dhaka, Bangladesh
- President: Kazi Salahuddin
- General Secretary: Purushottam Kattel
- Governing body for football in South Asia.
- Functions under the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

Mirra Andreeva Wins Maiden Grand Slam Title at French Open 2026

Mirra Andreeva won the Women's Singles title at the French Open 2026, defeating Maja Chwalinska of Poland 6-3, 6-2 in the final. The victory marked her first Grand Slam title and a major milestone in her career.

Key Considerations:

- Tournament: French Open 2026 (Women's Singles)
- Champion: Mirra Andreeva (Russia)
- Runner-up: Maja Chwalinska (Poland)
- Venue: Roland Garros, Paris, France
- Surface: Clay Court

French Open 2026

- Edition: 125th
- Category: Grand Slam
- Prize money: €61,723,000
- Venue: Roland Garros Stadium

Champions:

- Men's singles: Alexander Zverev
- Women's singles: Mirra Andreeva
- Men's doubles: Marcel Granollers / Horacio Zeballos
- Women's doubles: Kateřina Siniaková / Taylor Townsend
- Mixed doubles: Sara Errani / Andrea Vavassori

R Praggnanandhaa Becomes First Indian to Win Norway Chess Tournament

Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa created history by becoming the first Indian to win the prestigious Norway Chess Tournament title. He won the Norway Chess 2026 tournament held in Norway.

Key Considerations:

- Winner: R Praggnanandhaa
- Event: Norway Chess 2026
- Achievement: First Indian to win the tournament
- Venue: Norway

Background:

- Defeated Vincent Keymer (Germany) in the final round.
- Beat top players including Magnus Carlsen, Alireza Firouzja and D Gukesh.
- Became the second Indian after Viswanathan Anand to defeat Magnus Carlsen twice in classical chess in the same tournament.
- Finished with 18 points.

About Norway Chess:

- Started: 2013
- Venue: Oslo/Stavanger, Norway
- One of the most prestigious international chess tournaments.

ICC Suspends Cricket Canada's Membership

The ICC has suspended Cricket Canada's membership due to governance and administrative breaches, but Canadian teams will remain eligible to participate in ICC events.

Key Considerations:

- Organization: International Cricket Council (ICC)
- Affected Body: Cricket Canada
- Reason: Governance and membership obligation violations
- Status: Teams can continue playing ICC tournaments

Background:

- ICC will provide funding to Canadian teams through a controlled mechanism.
- Restoration of membership depends on governance reforms.
- Compliance will be monitored by the ICC Normalisation Committee.
- Similar action was taken against USA Cricket in 2025.

Additional Key Facts:

- ICC Headquarters: Dubai
- ICC Chairman: Jay Shah
- Canada became an ICC Associate Member in 1968.

India Finishes Runner-Up at Asian U-20 Athletics Championships 2026

India recorded its best-ever performance at an Asian U-20 Athletics Championships held outside the country, finishing second with 19 medals.

Key Considerations:

- Event: 22nd Asian U-20 Athletics Championships 2026
- Venue: Hong Kong, China
- India's Rank: 2nd
- Medal Tally: 10 Gold, 5 Silver, 4 Bronze (19 Total)
- Top Country: China
- Third Position: Japan

Additional Key Facts:

- Organizer: Asian Athletics Association
- First Edition: 1986
- AFI President: Bahadur Singh Sagoo
- AFI Headquarters: New Delhi
- TOPS launched: 2014
- Khelo India launched: 2018

Royal Challengers Bengaluru Retain IPL 2026 Title

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) defeated Gujarat Titans by five wickets in the IPL 2026 final to win their second consecutive IPL title.

Key Considerations:

- Champions: Royal Challengers Bengaluru
- Runners-up: Gujarat Titans
- Venue: Narendra Modi Stadium
- Result: RCB won by 5 wickets
- Achievement: Third team in IPL history to win back-to-back titles

Background:

- GT scored 155/8 in 20 overs.
- Virat Kohli starred with the bat for RCB.
- Rasikh Dar took 3 wickets.
- Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Josh Hazlewood picked up 2 wickets each.

Major Awards:

- Orange Cap & MVP: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi (RR)
- Purple Cap: Kagiso Rabada (GT) – 29 wickets
- Emerging Player: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi (RR)

Additional Key Facts:

- IPL was launched in 2008 by the Board of Control for Cricket in India.
- Recent Winners: KKR (2024), RCB (2025, 2026)

Final Takeaway:

RCB's title defence in IPL 2026 marked a historic achievement and strengthened its position among the league's most successful franchises.

Singapore Open 2026: Satwik-Chirag Clinch Men's Doubles Title

India's men's doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty won the Singapore Open 2026 title.

Key Considerations:

- Champions: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty
- Event: Men's Doubles
- Tournament: Singapore Open 2026
- Runners-up: Fajar Alfian & Muhammad Shohibul Fikri (Indonesia)
- Achievement: India's First Singapore Open Men's Doubles Title

Background:

- It was their first BWF World Tour title in nearly two years.
- The title marked their 9th career BWF World Tour crown.

Additional Key Facts:

- BWF Headquarters: Kuala Lumpur
- BWF President: Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul
- BAI President: Himanta Biswa Sarma
- Major BWF World Tour Categories: Super 1000, Super 750, Super 500, Super 300, Super 100

Sumit Antil Breaks World Record in Men's Javelin Throw F64

Indian para-athlete Sumit Antil broke his own world record in the Men's Javelin Throw F64 category at the 8th Indian Open International Para Athletics Championships 2026 in Bengaluru.

Key Considerations:

- Athlete: Sumit Antil
- Event: Men's Javelin Throw F64
- Venue: Bengaluru
- New World Record: 74.82 m
- Previous Record: 73.29 m (Asian Para Games 2022)

Background:

- Sumit Antil is a para-athlete from Sonapat, Haryana.
- Lost his left leg below the knee in a motorcycle accident in 2015.
- Transitioned from wrestling to para-athletics and became a world-class javelin thrower.

Science & Technology

IAF to Receive First Made-in-India Airbus C-295 Aircraft in September 2026

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will receive its first Made-in-India Airbus C-295 transport aircraft in September 2026. Manufactured by Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) and Airbus at Vadodara, it is the first military aircraft produced in India by the private sector for the IAF.

Key Considerations:

- Aircraft in News: Airbus C-295
- Delivery: September 2026
- Manufactured by: TASL + Airbus Defence and Space
- Manufacturing Location: Vadodara, Gujarat
- Contract Signed: September 2021
- Contract Value: ₹21,935 crore
- Total Aircraft: 56 (16 from Spain, 40 Made in India)
- Purpose: Replace Avro HS-748 fleet and strengthen IAF transport capability.

Background:

- The Airbus C-295 is a medium tactical transport aircraft used for troop and cargo transport, medical evacuation, airdrop operations, and disaster relief.
- It can operate from short and semi-prepared airstrips, making it suitable for border and island regions.
- The remaining 39 Made-in-India aircraft will be delivered by August 2031.

India Inducts First Indigenous Hovercraft into Coast Guard

The Indian Coast Guard has inducted its first indigenously manufactured Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV) H-561.

Key Considerations:

- Event: Induction of first indigenous hovercraft
- Hovercraft Name: H-561
- Organisation: Indian Coast Guard
- Manufacturer: Chowgule & Co. Pvt. Ltd., Goa
- Type: Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV) / Hovercraft
- Initiative: Make in India
- ACVs Ordered: 6

Background:

- Part of India's push for indigenous defence manufacturing
- Focus on strengthening coastal security infrastructure
- Indian Coast Guard expanding capability for littoral zone operations
- Supports maritime domain awareness along India's coastline

PM Narendra Modi Commissions Three Indigenous Naval Ships in Kolkata

Prime Minister Narendra Modi commissioned three indigenously designed and built naval ships at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata.

Key Considerations:

- Event: Commissioning of three naval ships
- Commissioned by: PM Narendra Modi
- Location: Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata

Ships Commissioned:

1. INS Dunagiri (Stealth frigate – surveillance & combat capability)
 2. INS Sanshodhak (Hydrographic survey vessel – seabed mapping & navigation)
 3. INS Agray (ASW shallow water craft – anti-submarine warfare)
- Designed by: Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau
 - Built by: Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata
 - Indigenous content: Over 75%
 - MSME participation: 200+ units

Background:

- Part of India's push for indigenous defence manufacturing under Aatmanirbhar Bharat
- Indian Navy focusing on increasing indigenous warship production
- GRSE (Kolkata) is a key defence shipbuilding yard
- India expanding maritime infrastructure and naval modernization

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs): Key to India's Nuclear Energy Expansion

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are emerging as a key part of India's nuclear energy strategy, aimed at expanding clean energy capacity and supporting the

country's long-term decarbonisation goals under the Nuclear Energy Mission.

Key Considerations:

- Technology: Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)
- Capacity: Up to 300 MWe per module
- Feature: Factory-built, modular nuclear reactors
- Regulator: Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) expected to apply same safety standards as large reactors
- Mission: Nuclear Energy Mission (Union Budget 2025–26)
- Target: 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047
- Allocation: ₹20,000 crore for SMR development

Background:

- SMRs are smaller, safer, and faster-to-deploy nuclear reactors
- Designed for remote areas and flexible power generation
- Support India's clean energy transition and energy security
- Align with Net Zero target by 2070

Additional Key Facts:

- SHANTI Act, 2025 aims to modernize nuclear sector and allow regulated private participation
- SMRs offer: lower cost, faster construction, passive safety systems
- Support replacement of coal-based power plants

India's 3-stage nuclear programme (Homi Bhabha):

- PHWR → FBR → Thorium-based reactors
- Key institutions: DAE, NPCIL, BARC
- Helps strengthen baseload power alongside renewables

DRDO Successfully Flight-Tests Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM)

DRDO has successfully conducted the flight test of the Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM) from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha.

Key Considerations:

- Organisation: DRDO
- Missile: Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM)
- Type: Surface-launched cruise missile
- Test Location: Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha
- Objective: Precision strike on long-range land targets
- Achievement: All mission objectives successfully met
- Nodal Lab: ADE, Bengaluru

Additional Key Facts:

- Full Form: Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM)
- Developed by: DRDO
- Nodal laboratory: Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), Bengaluru
- ADE focuses on aerospace systems and UAV development
- Launch site: Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha
- Intended users: Indian Armed Forces (Navy & Air Force)

IN-SPACE Selects Three Space Startups Under Technology Adoption Fund (TAF)

IN-SPACE has selected three Indian startups under its Technology Adoption Fund (TAF) scheme to support commercialization of indigenous space technologies and strengthen India's private space ecosystem.

Key Considerations:

- Organisation: IN-SPACE
- Scheme: Technology Adoption Fund (TAF)
- Selected Startups: Astrobase Space Technologies, SatSure Analytics India, TM2SPACE Technologies
- Objective: Commercialization of indigenous space technologies
- Funding: Up to 60% for startups/MSMEs, up to 40% for large industries
- Maximum Support: ₹25 crore per project

Additional Key Facts:

- IN-SPACE established in 2020 under Department of Space
- Headquarters: Ahmedabad
- Acts as single-window agency for private space companies
- TAF launched in February 2025
- Objective: Reduce import dependence and promote space innovation

Novartis Launches India's First Approved Radioligand Therapy for Advanced Prostate Cancer

Global pharmaceutical company Novartis has launched India's first approved Radioligand Therapy (Pluvicto) for advanced prostate cancer, marking a major step in precision oncology and targeted cancer treatment in India.

Key Considerations:

- Company: Novartis
- Therapy: Pluvicto (Radioligand Therapy)
- Type: Precision oncology / targeted cancer therapy
- Disease: PSMA-positive metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC)
- Target: Prostate-Specific Membrane Antigen (PSMA)
- Radioisotope: Lutetium-177
- Significance: India's first approved Radioligand Therapy

Background:

- mCRPC is an advanced stage prostate cancer resistant to hormone therapy
- PSMA is a protein highly expressed in prostate cancer cells
- Radioligand therapy delivers radiation directly to cancer cells
- Helps reduce damage to healthy tissues compared to conventional therapy

Additional Key Facts:

- Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers in men globally
- Lutetium-177 is widely used in targeted radiopharmaceutical therapies
- India has strong nuclear medicine ecosystem via BARC and DAE

ISRO and DAE Collaborate on Advanced Lunar Lander Technology

ISRO and the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) are jointly developing an advanced lunar lander equipped with an artificial heating system to survive extreme lunar night conditions and extend mission life up to 100–200 days.

Key Considerations:

- Organisations: ISRO and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)
- Technology: Advanced lunar lander with artificial heating system
- Objective: Enable survival during lunar night and extend mission duration
- Current capability: ~14 days (Chandrayaan-3 Vikram lander)
- Proposed capability: 100–200 days
- Purpose: Long-duration lunar exploration and data collection

Background:

- Moon has extreme temperature variation from +121°C to –129°C
- Lunar day and night each last about 14 Earth days

- Solar-powered landers fail during lunar night due to lack of sunlight
- Chandrayaan-3 operated only during one lunar day
- Need for thermal protection systems for deep lunar missions

Additional Key Facts:

- ISRO and DAE earlier worked on Radioisotope Heater Units (RHUs)
- Future mission: LUPEX (ISRO–JAXA) to study lunar water ice
- ISRO Chairman: V. Narayanan

IIT Bhubaneswar Develops Portable Device “ArsenSafe” for Arsenic Detection in Water

Researchers at IIT Bhubaneswar have developed a low-cost, portable device named ArsenSafe for rapid detection of arsenic contamination in drinking water, aiming to address groundwater pollution and related public health risks.

Key Considerations:

- Institution: IIT Bhubaneswar
- Device: ArsenSafe
- Purpose: Detection of arsenic in drinking water
- Nature: Portable, low-cost, field-deployable device
- Technology: Reduced Graphene Oxide (rGO)-based sensor
- Objective: Fast and accurate detection of arsenic contamination

Background:

- Arsenic contamination is a major groundwater issue in India
- Long-term exposure causes serious health condition called arsenicosis
- WHO permissible limit: 10 micrograms per litre (10 ppb)
- Commonly affected states: West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Manipur

DRDO Conducts Three Consecutive Flight Tests of Ballistic Missile Defence System

DRDO successfully conducted three consecutive flight tests of India's Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system, demonstrating the capability to intercept long-range ballistic missile threats through a multi-layered defence architecture.

Key Considerations:

- Organisation: DRDO

- Achievement: Three Consecutive Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) Programme Flight Tests
- Objective: Demonstrate ballistic missile interception capability through multi-layered defence system
- Defence Minister: Rajnath Singh
- Capabilities: Ballistic missile interception, anti-ship missile defence, multi-layered protection
- Significance: Strengthens India's indigenous missile shield and national security

Background:

- India's BMD Programme was launched after the 1999 Kargil War.
- Developed by DRDO.
- Includes exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric interception capabilities.
- India is among the few countries with advanced ballistic missile interception technology.

Additional Key Facts:

- DRDO was established in 1958.
- Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Chairman: Dr. Samir V. Kamat.

Zoho Enters Hardware Sector with India-Designed Server 'Nathu La'

Zoho Corporation has entered the hardware segment with the launch of Nathu La, its first indigenously designed server platform aimed at reducing AI infrastructure and data centre costs while supporting India's technological self-reliance.

Key Considerations:

- Company: Zoho Corporation
- Product: Nathu La Server
- Designed By: Zoho Engineering Team, Nagpur
- Technology Partner: Intel
- Processor: Intel Xeon 6

Background:

- Marks Zoho's first major entry into hardware development.
- Developed for AI, cloud computing, virtualization, HPC and enterprise workloads.
- Reduces power consumption by 12–18%.
- Lowers total cost of ownership (TCO) by 20–30%.
- Project started in 2020 and involved over five years of R&D.
- Multiple patents filed for thermal management and server architecture.
- Supports Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat objectives.

About Nathu La Server:

- Zoho's first indigenously designed server platform.
- Named after the Nathu La Pass in Sikkim.
- Intellectual Property (IP) is owned in India.
- Intended primarily for deployment in Zoho's global data centres.

About Zoho Corporation:

- Headquarters: Chennai.
- Founded in 1996 as AdventNet.
- Founders: Sridhar Vembu and Tony Thomas.
- Serves over 130 million users globally.

Final Takeaway:

With the launch of Nathu La, Zoho has expanded from software into hardware, strengthening India's indigenous technology ecosystem and AI infrastructure capabilities.

NASA Names Artemis III Crew Members for Humanity's Return to the Moon

NASA has announced the four-member crew for the Artemis III mission, which aims to return humans to the Moon for the first time since the Apollo 17 mission in 1972.

Key Considerations:

- Mission: Artemis III
- Objective: Return humans to the Moon
- Planned Landing Site: Moon's South Pole
- First Crewed Lunar Landing Since: Apollo 17 (1972)
- Long-Term Goal: Prepare for human missions to Mars

Artemis III Crew:

1. Reid Wiseman – Commander
2. Victor Glover – Pilot
3. Christina Koch – Mission Specialist
4. Jeremy Hansen – Mission Specialist

Mission Highlights:

- Astronauts will travel aboard the Orion spacecraft.
- Launch vehicle: Space Launch System (SLS).
- Lunar landing will use SpaceX's Starship Human Landing System (HLS).
- Christina Koch is expected to become the first woman assigned to a lunar mission.
- Victor Glover is expected to become the first Black astronaut assigned to a lunar mission.
- Jeremy Hansen will become the first Canadian astronaut on a Moon mission.

SIPRI Report Highlights India's Deployed Nuclear Warheads and Expanded Nuclear Arsenal

The latest yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported that India's estimated nuclear arsenal increased to 190 warheads in 2026 and suggested that India may have deployed nuclear warheads during peacetime for the first time.

Key Considerations:

- Report: SIPRI Yearbook 2026
- India's Estimated Nuclear Arsenal: 190 warheads
- Previous Estimate: 180 warheads
- Reported Deployed Warheads: 12
- Focus Area: Nuclear modernization and sea-based deterrence

Background:

- India may have deployed 12 nuclear warheads during peacetime.
- Traditionally, India stored warheads and delivery systems separately.
- Some deployed warheads may be linked to sea-based deterrence capabilities.
- India continues to modernize longer-range missiles, canisterised systems and SSBN-based deterrence.
- SIPRI warned of growing global dependence on nuclear weapons and rising nuclear competition.

About SIPRI:

- Established: 1966
- Headquarters: Stockholm, Sweden
- Independent institute researching armaments, military expenditure, arms transfers and disarmament.

India Successfully Flight Tests Indigenous RudraM-II Air-to-Surface Missile

DRDO and the Indian Air Force successfully flight-tested the indigenous RudraM-II Air-to-Surface Missile from an airborne platform at Chandipur, Odisha.

Key Considerations:

- Missile: RudraM-II
- Type: Air-to-Surface Precision Strike Missile
- Test Site: Integrated Test Range
- Developed By: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- User: Indian Air Force (IAF)

Background:

- Designed for SEAD/DEAD missions.

Can target:

- Enemy radar stations
- Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) systems
- Command & Control Centres
- Other high-value ground targets
- Strike Range: Approximately 300 km.
- Speed: Around Mach 5.5.
- Successfully hit the predefined target with pinpoint accuracy.

Additional Key Facts:

- Nodal Laboratory: Research Centre Imarat (RCI).
- Other DRDO Labs: DRDL, HEMRL, ARDE, ITR.
- Industry Partner: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

Red Balloon Aerospace Launches India's First Indigenous Super Pressure Balloon Platform

Indian startup Red Balloon Aerospace successfully launched India's first indigenous Super Pressure Balloon (SPB) platform from Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh.

Key Considerations:

- Organization: Red Balloon Aerospace
- Platform: Super Pressure Balloon (SPB)
- Launch Site: Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh
- Altitude: 20–40 km (Near Space)
- Significance: India's first indigenous SPB platform

Background:

- Near space lies between 20 km and 100 km above Earth.
- It is located above commercial aircraft and below satellites.
- SPBs are used globally for communication, surveillance, atmospheric studies, and scientific research.

Applications:

- Telecommunications coverage
- Earth observation
- Disaster management
- Environmental monitoring
- Defence surveillance
- Rural connectivity

About Super Pressure Balloons (SPBs):

- Specialized lighter-than-air platforms.
- Maintain internal pressure higher than surrounding atmosphere.

Features:

- Stable altitude
- Long-duration operation

- Scientific and communication payload support
- Continuous atmospheric observation

Significance:

- Cost-effective alternative to satellites.
- Reusable and recoverable after missions.

China Launches Shenzhou-23 Crewed Space Mission

China successfully launched the Shenzhou-23 carrying three astronauts to the Tiangong Space Station as part of its plan to land humans on the Moon by 2030.

Key Considerations:

- Mission: Shenzhou-23
- Country: China
- Launch Vehicle: Long March-2F Rocket
- Launch Site: Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center
- Destination: Tiangong Space Station
- Crew Members: 3 Astronauts
- Agency: China Manned Space Agency (CMSA)

Background:

- Shenzhou is China's flagship human spaceflight programme.
- The mission supports China's goal of a crewed Moon landing by 2030.
- It is part of China's broader strategy to expand its long-term presence in space and develop advanced human spaceflight capabilities.

Key Highlights:

Astronauts on Board

1. Zhu Yangzhu – Mission Commander
2. Zhang Zhiyuan – Pilot
3. Lai Ka-ying – Payload Specialist

Mission Significance:

- China's first planned year-long human space mission.
- Important step toward a crewed lunar mission by 2030.

Crew will conduct:

- Scientific experiments
- Space medicine studies
- Technology testing for long-duration missions

About Tiangong Space Station:

- "Tiangong" means "Heavenly Palace".

- China's permanently operated modular space station in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- Core Module: Tianhe.
- Construction began in 2021.

Additional Key Facts:

- China plans to establish a permanent lunar research base with Russia by 2035.
- China became the first country to return samples from the far side of the Moon in 2024.
- "Shenzhou" means "Divine Vessel".

Final Takeaway:

Shenzhou-23 represents a major milestone in China's human spaceflight programme and strengthens its ambitions for lunar exploration and long-duration space missions.

JUNE 12
ANTI-CHILD LABOR DAY
• Every Child Deserves A Childhood •

IMPORTANCE
In 2002, the International Labour Organization (ILO) launched this day to bring attention and join efforts to fight against child labour.
And also marks the 20 years since the adoption of the ILO's Worst Forms of child Labour Convention, 1999.
This day mainly focus on the children development and it protects the right of education and dignified life for the children.

INCEPTION
2002

EDITION
25th

MOTTO
To raise awareness and activism to prevent child labour.

ORGANISATION INVOLVED
ILO
UNICEF

NOTE: INDIA
Earlier: Child below 18 years
Now: Child below 14 years

SAY NO TO CHILD LABOUR
YES TO EDUCATION YES TO FUTURE

END CHILD LABOUR. BUILD A BETTER FUTURE.

PROTECT CHILDREN | EDUCATE CHILDREN | EMPOWER CHILDREN | RESPECT THEIR RIGHTS

TOGETHER, WE CAN END CHILD LABOUR AND CREATE A WORLD WHERE EVERY CHILD CAN LEARN, GROW AND DREAM.

Obituary

Former Timor-Leste President Francisco “Lu Olo” Guterres Passes Away



Former Timor-Leste President Francisco “Lu Olo” Guterres passed away at the age of 71. He served as the country's President from 2017 to 2022 and played a leading role in Timor-Leste's independence movement against Indonesian occupation.

Key Considerations:

- Person in News: Francisco “Lu Olo” Guterres
- Country: Timor-Leste (East Timor)
- Served as President: 2017–2022
- Political Party: FRETILIN (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor)
- Significance: Prominent leader of Timor-Leste's independence movement
- Timor-Leste Independence: 20 May 2002
- Capital: Dili
- Current President: José Ramos-Horta

Background:

- Timor-Leste was under Indonesian occupation from 1975 to 1999.
- A UN-backed referendum in 1999 led to the country's path toward independence.
- It officially became an independent nation on 20 May 2002.
- Timor-Leste is located in Southeast Asia and is one of the world's youngest sovereign countries.

Additional Key Facts:

- Official Name: Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.
- Shares the island of Timor with Indonesia.
- Currency: United States Dollar (USD).
- Official Languages: Tetum and Portuguese.
- Member of the United Nations (UN) since 2002.

Renowned Mand Folk Singer Gavri Devi Passes Away at 98



Veteran Mand folk singer Gavri Devi from Rajasthan passed away at the age of 98 in Pali district. She was one of the most prominent exponents of Rajasthan's traditional Mand singing style and played a key role in preserving folk music heritage.

Key Considerations:

- Personality: Gavri Devi
- Field: Mand folk singing
- State: Rajasthan
- District: Pali
- Age at Death: 98 years
- Contribution: Promotion of Mand folk music in India and abroad
- Famous Song: “Kesariya Balam”

Background:

- Dedicated nearly eight decades to folk music
- Popularized Mand singing nationally and internationally
- Associated with Doordarshan and All India Radio
- Known for devotional, folk, and Sufi-inspired music
- Played major role in preserving Rajasthan's cultural identity

Additional Key Facts:

- Mand is a traditional folk music style of Rajasthan
- Origin: Mand region of Jaisalmer
- Known for royal court musical traditions
- Other famous songs: Mor Bole Re Malji, Baga Chalo Kesariya
- Awarded Veer Durgadas Rathore Lifetime Achievement Award by Rajasthan Government

Thailand's Princess Bajrakitiyabha Passes Away at 47

Thailand's Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol, a prominent legal expert and diplomat, has reportedly passed away at the age of 47.



Key Considerations:

- Personality: Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol
- Country: Thailand
- Age: 47 years
- Field: Law, diplomacy, and human rights
- Key focus: Women prisoners' welfare and legal reforms

Background:

- Served as a prosecutor in Thailand's Office of the Attorney General
- Actively involved in strengthening rule of law and justice reforms
- Launched the "Kamlangjai (Inspire)" project for rehabilitation of women prisoners
- Contributed to global justice standards through UN initiatives
- Served as Thailand's Ambassador to Austria and UN representative in Vienna

About Thailand:

- Capital: Bangkok
- Government: Constitutional monarchy
- Current Monarch: Maha Vajiralongkorn

Indian Shooting Legend and Coach Jaspal Rana Reportedly Passes Away at 49



Indian shooting legend and coach Jaspal Rana has reportedly passed away at the age of 49.

Key Considerations:

- Personality: Jaspal Rana
- Field: Shooting (Pistol events)
- Role: Athlete turned national coach
- Notable trainee: Manu Bhaker

- Awards: Arjuna Award, Padma Shri, Dronacharya Award

Background:

- Jaspal Rana was among India's most decorated shooters in international competitions
- Won multiple medals at Asian Games and Commonwealth Games
- Played a key role in India's rise in pistol shooting at the global level
- After retirement, transitioned into coaching and mentored top shooters
- Guided Manu Bhaker during her international career and Olympic success
- Known for his strong technical expertise in 25m pistol events

Major Achievements (Career Highlights):

- 15 Commonwealth Games medals (9 Gold, 4 Silver, 2 Bronze)
- Equalled world record in 25m Centre Fire Pistol (2006 Asian Games)
- One of India's most successful pistol shooters historically

Awards & Recognition:

- Arjuna Award (1994)
- Padma Shri (1997)
- Dronacharya Award (2020) for coaching excellence

Former Exxon Chief Lee Raymond Dies at 87



Lee Raymond was a prominent American business executive who served as CEO of ExxonMobil and played a key role in shaping the modern global oil industry.

He is best known for leading the Exxon-Mobil merger in 1999, which created the world's largest oil company at that time.

Key Considerations:

- Former CEO: Lee Raymond
- Company: ExxonMobil
- Known for: Exxon-Mobil merger (1999)
- Industry: Global oil and energy sector

- Age at death: 87 (Dallas, USA)

Background:

- Joined Exxon in 1963 as a chemical engineer
- Rose through corporate ranks to become CEO
- Led Exxon-Mobil merger, forming one of the largest energy companies globally
- Oversaw response to Exxon Valdez oil spill
- Focused on strengthening core oil and gas operations

National Award-Winning Malayalam Actor Salim Kumar Passes Away at 56



National Award-winning Malayalam actor and director Salim Kumar passed away at the age of 56 in Kochi, Kerala.

Key Considerations:

- Person in News: Salim Kumar
- News Category: Obituary
- Profession: Actor and Director
- State: Kerala
- Major Award: National Film Award for Best Actor

Background:

- Began his career as a mimicry artist.
- Emerged as one of the most acclaimed actors in Malayalam cinema.
- Known for his performances in both comic and serious roles.
- Won the National Film Award for Best Actor for the film Adaminte Makan Abu.

About National Film Awards:

- Established: 1954.
- Presented by: Directorate of Film Festivals.
- Ministry: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- Among India's most prestigious film awards.

Former CBFC Chairperson Pahlaj Nihalani Passes Away at 76

Veteran Bollywood producer and former CBFC Chairperson Pahlaj Nihalani has passed away at the age of 76 after suffering from liver-related ailments.



Key Considerations:

- Person: Pahlaj Nihalani
- Profession: Film Producer
- Former Position: CBFC Chairperson
- Age: 76 years

Background:

- Veteran Bollywood producer with a career spanning over four decades.
- Played a key role in launching Govinda and Chunky Panday.
- Entered film production with Haathkadi (1982).
- Produced notable films such as Ilzaam, Aankhen and Shola Aur Shabnam.
- Served as CBFC Chairperson from 2015 to 2017.

About Pahlaj Nihalani:

- Profession: Film Producer
- CBFC Tenure: 2015–2017
- Debut Production: Haathkadi (1982)
- Last Production: Anaari Is Back (2023)

About CBFC:

- Full Form: Central Board of Film Certification
- Ministry: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- Function: Certifies films for public exhibition in India
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- Current Chairperson: Shashi Shekhar Vempati

Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap Passes Away



Renowned constitutional expert and former Lok Sabha Secretary-General Subhash C. Kashyap passed away in New Delhi at the age of 97.

Key Considerations:

- Former Lok Sabha Secretary-General (1984–1990)
- Constitutional expert and scholar
- Award: Padma Bhushan (2003)

Background:

- Authored 100+ books on Constitution and Parliament.
- Major contributor to parliamentary reforms and constitutional literacy.
- Served as chief administrative and procedural advisor to Lok Sabha Speaker.

Additional Key Facts:

Lok Sabha Secretary-General is the highest permanent official of the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

Lok Sabha:

- Lower House of Parliament
- Present strength: 543 members
- Prominent constitutional experts include B.R. Ambedkar and Nani Palkhivala.

Renowned Playback Singer Suman Kalyanpur Passes Away at 89



Veteran playback singer Suman Kalyanpur passed away in Mumbai at the age of 89. She was known for her contribution to Hindi, Marathi, and several Indian-language songs.

Key Considerations:

- Name: Suman Kalyanpur
- Born: 28 January 1937, Dhaka (now Bangladesh)
- Died: Mumbai, 2026
- Known For: Hindi and multilingual playback singing
- Padma Bhushan: 2023

Background:

- Sang in Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Bhojpuri, Punjabi, and Odia.
- Famous songs include Aaj Kal Tere Mere Pyar Ke Charke, Na Tum Hame Jano, and Bahna Ne Bhai Ki Kalai Pe.

Awards & Honours:

- Padma Bhushan (2023)

- Lata Mangeshkar Award
- Mirchi Music Lifetime Achievement Award (2022)

Former CCI Chairman Dhanendra Kumar Passes Away



Former IAS officer and founding Chairman of the Competition Commission of India (CCI), Dhanendra Kumar passed away after a fire at his residence in Hauz Khas, New Delhi.

Key Considerations:

- Former Chairman: Competition Commission of India (CCI)
- CCI Tenure: 2009–2011
- IAS Batch: 1968 (Haryana Cadre)
- Cause of Death: Smoke inhalation following a residential fire
- Place: New Delhi

Background:

- Dhanendra Kumar was a retired IAS officer and the first Chairman of the Competition Commission of India.
- He also served as Executive Director representing India at the World Bank.

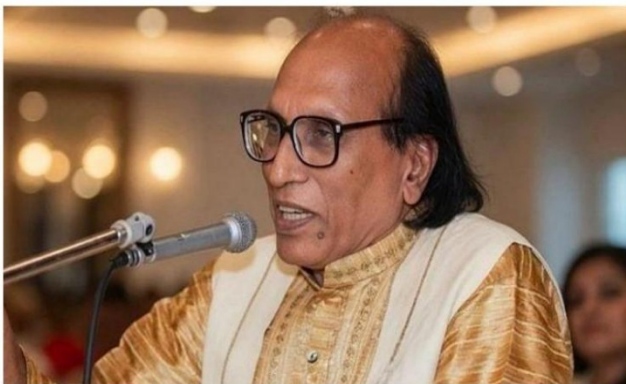
Key Highlights:

- Served as the first Chairman of CCI from 2009 to 2011.
- Played a crucial role in operationalising India's competition regulator.

About Competition Commission of India (CCI):

- Established Under: Competition Act, 2002
- Functional Since: 2009
- Administrative Ministry: Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- Headquarters: New Delhi

Renowned Urdu Poet Dr. Bashir Badr Passes Away at 91



Celebrated Urdu poet and Padma Shri awardee Dr. Bashir Badr passed away in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, at the age of 91.

Key Considerations:

- Personality: Dr. Bashir Badr
- Field: Urdu Poetry & Ghazal
- Age: 91 Years
- Place: Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- Award: Padma Shri (1999)

Background:

- Renowned for making Urdu poetry simple, relatable, and accessible.
- His ghazals blended emotional depth with everyday language.
- Widely quoted in literature, films, politics, and public discourse.

Key Highlights:

- Master of modern Urdu Ghazal.
- Passed away after prolonged illness and dementia.
- Among the most widely read contemporary Urdu poets.

Literary Contributions:

Poetry Collections:

- Aas
- Aamad
- Aahat
- Ikai
- Image
- Kulliyate Bashir Badr

Literary Criticism:

- Azadi Ke Bad Urdu Ghazal Ka Tanqidi Mutala
- Biswin Sadi Mein Ghazal

Academic Career:

- Lecturer at Aligarh Muslim University.
- Head, Urdu Department, Meerut College for nearly 17 years.

Awards & Honours:

- Padma Shri – Literature & Education
- Sahitya Akademi Award for Aas
- Honoured by Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy and Bihar Urdu Academy.
- Recipient of the Meer Academy Award.

Additional Key Facts:

- Known for popularising Urdu ghazals among common readers.
- His works remain influential in contemporary Indian literature.

Five-Time Olympian Shooter Raja Randhir Singh Passes Away



Veteran shooter and sports administrator Raja Randhir Singh passed away in New Delhi at the age of 79. He was a five-time Olympian and a key figure in Indian and Asian sports administration.

Key Considerations:

- Personality: Raja Randhir Singh
- Field: Shooting & Sports Administration
- Achievement: First Indian shooter to win Asian Games Gold
- Passed Away: New Delhi
- Age: 79 Years

Background:

- Represented India in five Olympic Games.
- Won India's first Asian Games gold medal in shooting at the Asian Games 1978.
- Served as a reserve shooter at the Tokyo Olympics 1964.

Awards & Honours:

- Arjuna Award
- Maharaja Ranjit Singh Award
- OCA Merit Award

Miscellaneous Events

George Kurian Resigns as Union Minister of State; Resignation Accepted by President

George Kurian resigned from the Union Council of Ministers, and President Droupadi Murmu accepted his resignation on the advice of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Key Considerations:

- Person: George Kurian
- Resigned Posts:
 - Minister of State, Minority Affairs
 - Minister of State, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying
- Accepted by: President Droupadi Murmu
- On advice of: Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- Reason: End of Rajya Sabha term; not re-nominated
- Earlier House: Rajya Sabha (Madhya Pradesh)
- Tenure as Minister: Since June 2024

Background:

- Ministers are appointed and removed under Article 75 of the Constitution
- Ministers must be members of Parliament or get elected within 6 months
- Failure to retain membership leads to constitutional exit from office
- Rajya Sabha seats are indirectly elected by state legislatures

- Declining support among MPs
- Assessment that leadership change needed before next general election

Elon Musk Becomes World's First Trillionaire After SpaceX IPO

Elon Musk has reportedly become the world's first trillionaire following SpaceX's record-breaking \$75 billion IPO.

Key Considerations:

- Person: Elon Musk
- Company: SpaceX
- Achievement: World's first trillionaire (reported)
- IPO Size: \$75 billion
- SpaceX Valuation: ~\$1.77 trillion (IPO stage)
- Market Value: Crossed \$2 trillion after listing
- Significance: Largest IPO in history, boost to global space economy

Additional Key Facts:

- SpaceX = Space Exploration Technologies Corp.
- Headquarters: Starbase, Texas, USA
- CEO: Elon Musk
- Key System: Starlink satellite internet network
- Major competitors: Blue Origin, Rocket Lab, Virgin Galactic
- IPO refers to first public share offering of a private company

Keir Starmer Announces Resignation as UK Prime Minister

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer has announced his resignation as both Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party. He will continue in office until a new leader is elected.

Key Considerations:

- Country: United Kingdom
- Prime Minister: Keir Starmer
- Party: Labour Party
- Resignation Date: 22 June 2026
- Leadership Process Begins: 9 July 2026
- Current Status: Will continue as PM until successor is elected
- Possible Successor: Andy Burnham

Key Reasons:

- Internal pressure within Labour Party

Sri Lanka Ranked 67th in Global Peace Index 2026, Second in South Asia

Sri Lanka has been ranked 67th out of 163 countries in the Global Peace Index (GPI) 2026, showing a significant improvement in peacefulness.

It is now the second most peaceful country in South Asia after Bhutan.

Key Considerations:

- Report: Global Peace Index 2026
- Publisher: Institute for Economics and Peace
- Sri Lanka Rank: 67th (out of 163 countries)
- Improvement: +14 positions
- South Asia Rank: 2nd (after Bhutan)

Background:

- Sri Lanka's ranking improved mainly due to better performance in the Militarisation domain

- The index measures peace across 163 countries covering 99.7% of the global population
- It evaluates trends in internal conflict, security, and military expenditure
- Global peace has declined overall, with many countries showing deterioration
- Number of countries involved in external conflicts has increased significantly since 2008

About Global Peace Index (GPI):

Measures national and global peacefulness annually

Covers three key domains:

- Societal Safety and Security
- Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict
- Militarisation
- Top 5 most peaceful countries (2026): Iceland, New Zealand, Switzerland, Austria, Singapore
- Bhutan ranks as the most peaceful country in South Asia (16th globally)

South Asia Rankings:

- Bhutan – 16th (1st in region)
- Sri Lanka – 67th
- Nepal – 111th
- Bangladesh – 117th
- India – 127th
- Pakistan – 152nd
- Afghanistan – 157th

Rajiv Bajaj to Step Down from Bajaj Finserv Board

Rajiv Bajaj has decided not to seek re-election as a Non-Executive Director of Bajaj Finserv and will step down after the company's AGM on 31 July 2026.

Key Considerations:

- Person in News: Rajiv Bajaj
- Company: Bajaj Finserv
- Position: Non-Executive Director
- AGM Date: 31 July 2026
- Reason: Increasing responsibilities at Bajaj Auto

Background:

- Rajiv Bajaj will retire by rotation and cease to be a director of Bajaj Finserv.
- He cited growing commitments at Bajaj Auto as the reason for reducing external responsibilities.
- He will continue as Managing Director of Bajaj Auto.

Bhavitha Mandava Makes Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2026 List

Indian model Bhavitha Mandava has been featured in the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2026 list under the Arts category for her rapid rise in the global fashion industry.

Key Considerations:

- Personality: Bhavitha Mandava
- Recognition: Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2026
- Category: Arts
- Hometown: Hyderabad
- Major Achievement: First Indian model to open Chanel's Métiers d'Art runway show in New York (December 2025)

Background:

- Bhavitha gained international recognition after being discovered in a New York subway.
- In December 2025, she became the first Indian model to open Chanel's Métiers d'Art runway show.
- In March 2026, she was appointed Chanel's first Indian House Ambassador.
- She was selected for Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia for her growing influence in global fashion.

CDS General Anil Chauhan Retires After Over Four Decades of Military Service

General Anil Chauhan retired after over 45 years of service in the Indian Armed Forces. He served as the 2nd Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and played a key role in defence reforms and joint military integration.

Key Considerations:

- Officer: General Anil Chauhan
- Post: 2nd CDS of India
- Tenure: 30 Sept 2022 – 30 May 2026
- Service: 45+ years
- Regiment: 11 Gorkha Rifles

Background:

- He was appointed CDS in 2022 after the death of General Bipin Rawat.
- Served in key command and strategic roles in the Indian Army.

About CDS:

- Created in 2019 after Kargil Review reforms.
- Top military adviser to the government on tri-services matters.
- Heads the Department of Military Affairs (DMA).

First CDS: Bipin Rawat

Defence Exercise of the Month

Exercise KHAAN QUEST 2026

The Indian Army contingent has departed for Mongolia to participate in the multinational military exercise KHAAN QUEST 2026. The exercise will focus on UN peace support operations and improving interoperability among participating nations.

Key Considerations:

- Exercise: KHAAN QUEST 2026
- Host Country: Mongolia
- Venue: Five Hills Training Area, Ulaanbaatar
- Duration: 20 June – 3 July 2026
- Indian Contingent: 40 personnel
- Indian Unit: JAT Regiment and other Arms & Services
- Focus: UN Peace Support Operations (Chapter VII)
- Aim: Enhance interoperability and multinational cooperation

Background:

- Annual multinational military exercise hosted by Mongolia
- Started as a bilateral exercise between Mongolia and USA
- Later expanded into a multinational peacekeeping exercise
- Focus on UN-mandated peacekeeping scenarios
- India participates regularly as part of defence cooperation

Additional Key Facts:

- Key Training Areas: C-IED drills, convoy protection, patrolling, cordon & search, HADR
- UN Peacekeeping: India among largest troop contributors globally
- UN Charter Chapter VII: Allows enforcement measures for peace & security
- India–Mongolia Strategic Partnership: Established in 2015
- Mongolia called “Land of the Eternal Blue Sky”
- Capital: Ulaanbaatar | Currency: Mongolian Tögrög
- 2025 marked 70 years of India–Mongolia diplomatic ties

Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX)

South Korea and Japan conducted a joint maritime search and rescue exercise after a gap of nine years. The exercise was held near Jeju Island and aimed at strengthening operational cooperation, maritime safety, and emergency response coordination between the two countries.

Key Considerations:

- Countries: South Korea and Japan
- Event: Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise
- Location: Near Jeju Island, South Korea
- Participating Agencies: Korea Coast Guard & Japan Coast Guard
- Gap Since Last Exercise: 9 Years

Background:

- The exercise focused on maritime search and rescue operations, emergency response coordination, communication, and information sharing.
- It was conducted to improve operational cooperation and disaster management capabilities at sea.
- The exercise comes amid efforts by South Korea and Japan to strengthen bilateral relations and regional security cooperation.
- The drill highlights the growing importance of maritime cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

About Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR):

- Refers to coordinated efforts to locate and assist people in distress at sea.
- Conducted under international maritime safety frameworks.
- Enhances disaster response and humanitarian assistance capabilities.

About Indo-Pacific Region:

- Strategic region extending from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.
- Important for global trade routes, maritime security, economic cooperation, and geopolitical stability.

Final Takeaway:

South Korea and Japan resumed their joint maritime search and rescue exercise after nine years, reflecting improving bilateral relations and growing cooperation on maritime safety and regional security in the Indo-Pacific region.

Important Days of the Month

Day	Observed/Celebrated As	Motto/Importance
July 1	Doctor's Day	To mark the Birth Anniversary of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the legendary physician and the second Chief Minister of West Bengal.
July 2	World UFO Day	It commemorates the date on which the famous Roswell incident was exposed to the public.
July 6	World Zoonoses Day	To commemorate the discovery of 1st vaccination against a zoonotic disease that can be spread between humans and animals.
July 11	World Population Day	To focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues.
July 12	National Simplicity Day	To mark the birth anniversary of Henry David Thoreau in 1817.
July 17	World Day for International Justice	To mark the adoption of the Rome Statute in 1998. With the help of this treaty, International Criminal Court (ICC) was established.
July 18	International Nelson Mandela Day	To recognise the former South African President, Nelson Mandela's contribution to the culture of peace and freedom.
July 26	Kargil Vijay Diwas	To commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in the conflict that took place in the mountains above Kargil
July 28	World Hepatitis Day	Let's Break It Down
July 29	International Tiger Day	This day was established in 2010 at Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia to raise awareness about the decline of wild tiger numbers.

Trending Topics of the Month

G7 Summit 2026: What is the G7 and What Was on the Agenda at the Évian-les-Bains Summit?



Introduction

The G7 Summit is one of the world's most influential gatherings of advanced economies, where leaders discuss major global challenges ranging from security and trade to climate change and emerging technologies. In 2026, the summit was held in Évian-les-Bains, France, bringing together leaders from the world's leading industrialized democracies along with invited partner countries.

What is the G7?

The Group of Seven (G7) is an informal forum of seven advanced economies that coordinate on global economic, political, and security issues. The members are:

- United States
- United Kingdom
- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Japan
- The European Union (EU) also participates in G7 meetings.

The group was created in the 1970s to address global economic challenges. Over time, its agenda expanded to include international security, climate change,

energy, health, technology, and geopolitical issues. Unlike many international organizations, the G7 does not have a permanent headquarters or secretariat. The presidency rotates annually among member countries, with the host country setting the summit agenda.

The 2026 Évian-les-Bains Summit

The 52nd G7 Summit was hosted by France from 15–17 June 2026 in the lakeside town of Évian-les-Bains, located near the French-Swiss border. The venue is historically significant because it previously hosted the G8 Summit in 2003.

French President Emmanuel Macron chaired the summit and invited several partner nations and international organizations to participate in discussions on key global issues.

Major Issues on the Summit Agenda

1. Russia–Ukraine War

The ongoing Russia–Ukraine conflict remained one of the most important topics at the summit.

G7 leaders discussed:

- Continued military, financial, and humanitarian support for Ukraine.

- Efforts to strengthen Ukraine's long-term security.
- Measures to maintain pressure on Russia through sanctions.
- Possibilities for achieving a sustainable peace.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy participated in summit discussions and sought continued international backing.

2. Middle East Tensions and Iran

The deteriorating security situation in West Asia received significant attention.

Leaders discussed:

- Rising tensions involving Iran.
- Regional stability and conflict prevention.
- Protection of critical maritime trade routes.
- Ensuring uninterrupted global energy supplies.

The issue was particularly important because instability in the region can affect global oil markets and international trade.

3. Global Economy and Trade

Amid slowing economic growth and persistent inflationary pressures in many countries, leaders focused on strengthening economic resilience.

Key discussions included:

- Promoting sustainable economic growth.
- Securing global supply chains.
- Addressing trade distortions.
- Enhancing investment and industrial competitiveness.

The summit also examined the impact of excess industrial production and state subsidies on global markets.

4. Critical Minerals and Supply Chain Security

Critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, and rare earth elements are essential for electric vehicles, renewable energy technologies, semiconductors, and defense industries.

The G7 explored ways to:

- Diversify sources of critical minerals.
- Reduce dependence on a limited number of suppliers.

- Strengthen strategic mineral partnerships.
- Build more resilient supply chains for clean-energy technologies.

5. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence emerged as a major theme of the summit.

Leaders discussed:

- Responsible development and use of AI.
- AI governance and regulatory frameworks.
- Risks related to misinformation and cybersecurity.
- Protection of children and vulnerable groups online.
- Balancing innovation with ethical safeguards.

The discussions reflected growing concerns about the rapid expansion of AI technologies and their societal impact.

6. Debt Challenges in Developing Countries

Many developing nations continue to face rising debt burdens and financing difficulties.

The G7 considered:

- Debt restructuring mechanisms.
- Financial assistance for vulnerable economies.
- Reforms to international financial institutions.
- Support for sustainable development and infrastructure projects.

The aim was to prevent debt crises from undermining economic growth in low- and middle-income countries.

7. Global Health Cooperation

Health security remained an important issue following lessons learned from recent global health emergencies.

Leaders discussed:

- Strengthening preparedness for future pandemics.
- Improving international disease surveillance.
- Expanding cooperation on vaccine development.
- Coordinating responses to outbreaks such as Ebola.

- Advancing global efforts in cancer research and treatment.

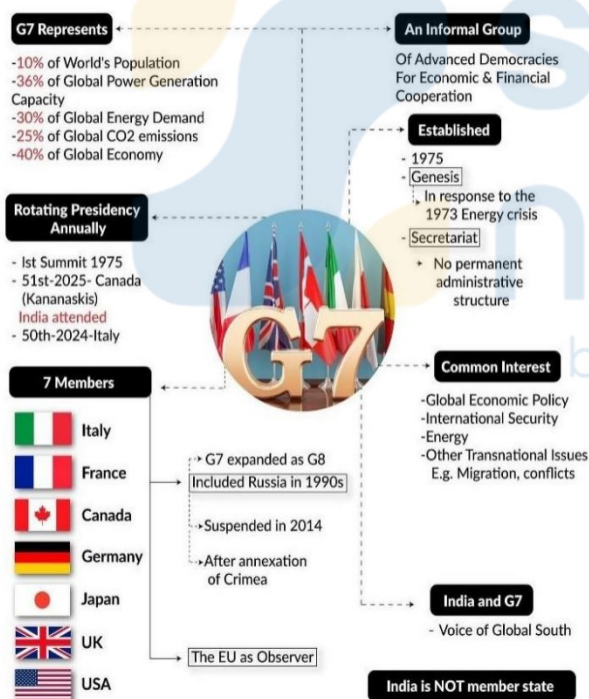
Participation of Partner Countries

Although not a G7 member, India was invited as a partner country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the summit and participated in discussions on:

- Global economic cooperation.
- Emerging technologies and AI.
- Energy security.
- Development partnerships.
- Reform of global governance institutions.

India's repeated participation reflects its growing importance in global economic and geopolitical affairs.

The Group of G7 Countries



Why the G7 Summit Matters

The G7 countries collectively account for a significant share of the world's economic output, technological innovation, and financial influence. While the group cannot make legally binding global

decisions, its discussions often shape international policies, economic strategies, and diplomatic initiatives.

As global challenges become increasingly interconnected, the G7 Summit serves as a key platform for coordinating responses to issues such as wars, economic uncertainty, technological change, climate challenges, and global development.

Conclusion

The 2026 Évian-les-Bains Summit focused on some of the most pressing issues facing the world today—ranging from the Russia-Ukraine war and Middle East tensions to AI governance, critical minerals, economic resilience, and global health. The summit highlighted the G7's continued role as a forum for addressing major international challenges and fostering cooperation among leading economies and partner nations.



Kharg Island Explained: Why Capturing Iran's Oil Hub Could Be Risky for U.S. Troops

Introduction

Kharg Island, a small island in the Persian Gulf, has recently become a major focus in discussions about the conflict involving Iran, the United States, and Israel. Although it may appear insignificant on a map, the island plays a critical role in Iran's economy because it serves as the country's main oil export terminal.

Military experts believe that while the United States could potentially capture the island, holding it would be far more difficult and could expose American troops to significant risks.



Where is Kharg Island?

Kharg Island is located in the northern Persian Gulf, about 25–26 kilometers (16 miles) off Iran's coast and roughly 480 kilometers northwest of the Strait of Hormuz. The island's deep-water facilities allow large oil tankers to load crude oil, something that is difficult at many points along Iran's shallow coastline.

Why is Kharg Island So Important?

Kharg Island is often called the lifeline of Iran's oil industry.

Key facts:

- Around 90% of Iran's crude oil exports pass through the island.
- It has been Iran's primary oil export hub for nearly seven decades.
- Most of the oil exported from Kharg Island is shipped to Asian markets, particularly China.
- The island's facilities can handle some of the world's largest oil tankers.

Because oil exports are a major source of government revenue, any disruption to Kharg Island would directly affect Iran's economy.

Why Has the Island Become a Strategic Target?

Some U.S. officials have viewed Kharg Island as a way to increase pressure on Iran.

If the island were captured or its oil infrastructure disabled:

- Iran's oil exports could be severely reduced.
- Tehran would lose a major source of revenue.
- Economic pressure on the Iranian government would increase.
- Iran's ability to finance military and government operations could be weakened.

However, military analysts argue that the operation may create more problems than it solves.

Why Would Capturing Kharg Island Be Risky?

1. U.S. Troops Would Become Easy Targets

Military experts believe that U.S. forces could likely seize the island relatively quickly. The challenge would be defending it afterward.

American troops stationed on the island would be within range of:

- Iranian missiles
- Armed drones
- Rocket attacks

➤ Naval assaults from nearby Iranian forces
Since the island is located close to the Iranian mainland, Tehran could continuously target any occupying force.

2. Iran Has Strong Defenses Nearby

Kharg Island is heavily protected by Iran's military and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Analysts warn that Iran could:

- Deploy naval mines around the island.
- Launch drone swarms.
- Conduct missile strikes from the mainland.
- Attack supply ships supporting U.S. forces.

This would make any long-term occupation extremely difficult.

3. Holding the Island Requires Large Military Resources

Former U.S. military commanders estimate that hundreds, and possibly around 800–1,000 troops, would be needed to secure the island.

In addition, the U.S. would need:

- Air defense systems
- Naval protection
- Constant supply missions
- Intelligence and surveillance support

This could tie down military resources for an extended period.

Impact on Global Oil Markets

A military operation against Kharg Island could have consequences far beyond Iran.

Possible effects include:

- Sharp increases in global oil prices.
- Disruptions to energy supplies.
- Greater instability in the Persian Gulf.
- Increased transportation and fuel costs worldwide.

Experts have warned that major damage to the island could trigger a significant shock to global energy

markets because so much Iranian oil passes through this single location.

Risk of Wider Regional Conflict

An attack on Kharg Island could also trigger retaliation by Iran.

Possible Iranian responses include:

- Attacks on U.S. military assets in the region.
 - Strikes on oil facilities in Gulf countries.
 - Disruption of shipping routes.
 - Escalation of tensions across the Middle East.
- Such actions could draw more countries into the conflict and further destabilize the region.

Why Has Kharg Island Largely Been Spared?

Despite its importance, major powers have generally avoided directly targeting the island's oil facilities.

The main reasons are:

- Fear of a global energy crisis.
- Risk of soaring oil prices.
- Possibility of a broader regional war.
- Concerns about long-term economic instability.

Even when military strikes occurred near the island, reports indicate that oil-export infrastructure was largely left intact to avoid disrupting global energy markets.

Conclusion

Kharg Island is far more than a small island in the Persian Gulf—it is the backbone of Iran's oil-export system and a crucial source of revenue for the country. While capturing the island could significantly weaken Iran economically, military experts warn that holding it would expose U.S. troops to constant missile, drone, and naval threats. Moreover, any attack on Kharg Island risks triggering wider regional conflict and major disruptions in global oil markets. For these reasons, many analysts view the island as a highly valuable but extremely dangerous military target.

PoK Protests Explained: Why Are People in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir on the Streets?

Introduction

Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) has witnessed large-scale protests and violent clashes in recent months, resulting in several deaths, injuries, arrests, and widespread unrest. While the immediate trigger was a dispute over reserved seats in the PoK Assembly, the protests reflect much deeper concerns related to economic hardship, political representation, and governance.

What Triggered the Recent Protests?

The immediate cause of the unrest is the issue of 12 seats reserved in the PoK Legislative Assembly for migrants from Jammu and Kashmir who are settled in different parts of Pakistan. A recent court ruling upheld these reserved seats, reigniting public anger and leading to widespread demonstrations.

Many local residents argue that these representatives are elected outside PoK and do not truly represent the interests of the people living in the region. They believe the arrangement gives Islamabad excessive influence over PoK's political system.

Understanding the Assembly Seat Controversy

The PoK Assembly has 53 seats.

These include:

- 33 directly elected seats.
- 12 seats reserved for Jammu and Kashmir migrants living elsewhere in Pakistan.
- 5 seats reserved for women.
- 1 seat for religious scholars (Ulema).
- 1 seat for overseas Kashmiris.
- 1 seat for technocrats.

Critics argue that nearly 20 seats are filled through various reservations, reducing the influence of local voters. The 12 migrant seats have become particularly controversial because local residents feel that people who do not live in PoK should not have such a significant role in deciding its politics.

Economic Grievances: The Real Source of Anger

Although the seat reservation issue sparked the latest protests, public dissatisfaction has been building for years.

1. High Electricity Bills

Residents complain about rising electricity prices despite the region generating significant hydropower through projects such as the Mangla Dam.

Many locals argue that they should receive cheaper electricity because their land and resources contribute to power generation.

2. Inflation and Cost of Living

People have been struggling with:

- Rising food prices.
- Shortages of subsidised wheat flour.
- Increasing taxes.
- High unemployment.

These economic difficulties have intensified frustration with the authorities.

3. Resource Exploitation Concerns

Many protesters believe that PoK's natural resources are being used without providing adequate benefits to local communities. This perception has fuelled demands for greater control over local resources and revenues.

Who Is Leading the Protests?

The movement is primarily being led by the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), a coalition of traders, professionals, civil society activists, and political groups.

The organisation initially focused on economic issues such as electricity tariffs and inflation but later expanded its demands to include political reforms and greater local representation.

How Has the Government Responded?

Authorities have adopted a tough approach to the protests.

Measures reportedly include:

- Banning the JAAC.
- Arresting protest leaders.
- Filing charges such as sedition and terrorism against activists.
- Deploying security forces.
- Internet restrictions and communication disruptions in some areas.
- Crackdowns on demonstrations.

The clashes between protesters and security personnel have led to multiple deaths and injuries, further escalating tensions.

Why Is History Important in This Issue?

The roots of the protests go beyond current economic problems.

Many residents feel that PoK has historically had limited political autonomy and remains heavily influenced by Pakistan's federal authorities. Critics argue that important decisions regarding governance, development, and representation are often shaped by Islamabad rather than local institutions.

As a result, the current movement is seen by many observers as a demand not only for economic relief but also for greater political participation and accountability.

What Is Happening in Gilgit-Baltistan?

The unrest has also drawn attention to neighbouring Gilgit-Baltistan, another region under Pakistan's administration that was part of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Like PoK, Gilgit-Baltistan has witnessed concerns over:

- Political representation.
- Economic development.
- Resource management.
- Federal government control.

Recent elections in the region have also faced allegations of interference and dissatisfaction among sections of the population.

International Attention

The protests have attracted attention beyond the region.

Members of the Kashmiri diaspora, particularly in the United Kingdom, have raised concerns about the situation and called for dialogue, protection of human rights, and a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

The unrest has also generated significant discussion on social media and among international observers due to the scale of the protests and the government's response.

Conclusion

The current protests in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir are not merely about 12 reserved Assembly seats. They are the result of long-standing grievances related to political representation, economic hardship, rising living costs, electricity tariffs, resource control, and perceptions of limited local autonomy. While the reservation issue acted as the immediate trigger, the movement reflects broader frustrations that have been building for years. How the authorities respond to these concerns will play a crucial role in determining the region's future stability.

POK: A HISTORY OF CONFLICT, A CONSTITUTIONAL LIMBO
26 KILLED IN PAKISTANI CRACKDOWN AS PROTESTS EXPOSE ISLAMABAD'S HYPOCRISY AND A DOOMED EXPERIMENT

26 KILLED
INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN PAKISTANI CRACKDOWN IN POK

HISTORICAL TIMELINE: 1947 TO 1949

- AUGUST 1947**
At Partition, Kashmir was a princely state ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh (Dogra Hindu ruler of a Muslim-majority state). He chose to remain independent and did not join India or Pakistan.
- OCTOBER 1947**
Tribal militias from Pakistan's North-West Frontier, supported by Pakistan, invaded Kashmir. When the Razakars, supported by the Pakistan Army, reached near Srinagar, Maharaja Hari Singh sought India's help and signed the Instrument of Accession on 26 October 1947.
- OCT 26, 1947**
Lord Mountbatten, Governor General of India, accepted the Instrument of Accession on behalf of India.
- 1947-JAN 5, 1949**
Skirmishes or the First India-Pakistan War continued till January 5, 1949. On January 5, 1949, a UN-sponsored ceasefire took place. India sent its troops, who stopped the Pakistan-backed forces.
- AFTER CEASEFIRE**
By the time the warring sides stopped attacking each other, one-third of Kashmir was already under the control of Pakistan. Two-thirds of the erstwhile princely state came into India, now called Jammu and Kashmir.

THE DIVIDED STATE (POST 1949)

PAKISTAN OCCUPIED KASHMIRE (POK)
GILGIT-BALTISTAN
JAMMU & KASHMIR (INDIA)

Legend: Pakistan-Controlled (PoK & Gilgit-Baltistan), India-Controlled Jammu & Kashmir

PAKISTAN'S CONTROL OVER POK: THE KARACHI AGREEMENT (1949)

During the war, Pakistan set up a provisional government called the "Azad Kashmir Government" in October 1947. It signed the Karachi Agreement in January 1949. According to the terms and conditions of the agreement:

- Pakistan took control of the defence of PoK.
- Islamabad handled the foreign affairs of the region.
- Pakistan administered the northern territories, later called Gilgit-Baltistan, besides the PoK.

ADMINISTRATIVE EVOLUTION

Earlier, the entire region of PoK was controlled by Pakistan. Later, PoK and Gilgit-Baltistan were separated. While PoK has a separate legislature and government, Gilgit-Baltistan has a different government structure. However, neither of them has been incorporated into the state of Pakistan.

AFTER 1971: SEEKING CONTROL

After Pakistan was defeated by India, leading to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, Islamabad turned its attention to PoK.

AJK INTERIM CONSTITUTION ACT, 1974

According to the Act, PoK was given:

- A Legislative Assembly
- A President
- A Prime Minister
- A Supreme Court
- Administrative institutions



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