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National

Goa Achieved 100% Functional Literacy Status under ULLAS

Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister (CM) of Goa announced that the state of Goa has officially achieved **100%** literacy rate under the Government of India (GoI)'s flagship initiative, Understanding for Lifelong Learning for All in Society (**ULLAS**)-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram which is also known as New India Literacy Programme (**NILP**).

- This announcement was made on the occasion of Goa's **39th** Statehood Day (May 30, 2025) celebrations held at Dinanath Mangeshkar Kala Mandir, Panaji in Goa.
- This marks a significant milestone in India's journey towards achieving the goal of 100% literacy by 2030, as outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP 2020).

Key Points:

i. Goa attained a literacy rate of 99.7%, which far exceeds the benchmark of 95% required for state as completely literate, as stipulated under the NILP.

- With this, Goa becomes the **2nd** Indian state after Mizoram (98.2%) to breach the mark of 95% set under NILP.

ii. The programme was implemented in Goa, through a network of schools, supported by Resource Adult Trainee Coordinators (**RATCS**) and wide base of volunteers that included retired teachers, teacher trainees, and educational professionals.

iii. The ULLAS is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) that aligns with NEP 2020. It is being implemented on volunteerism from 2022-2027.

About Goa:

Chief Minister (CM)- Pramod Sawant

Governor- P.S. Sreedharan Pillai

'Indira Gandhi and the Years That Transformed India' Book by Srinath Raghavan Released

New Delhi (Delhi)-based Penguin Random House India, published "Indira Gandhi and the Years That Transformed India", a comprehensive political biography authored by Srinath Raghavan.

- This book delves into the political journey of Indira Gandhi, India's first and only female Prime Minister (PM), highlighting the significant transformations in India during her tenure.

i. The book offers an in-depth examination of Indira Gandhi's political career, from her unexpected rise to power in 1966 to her assassination in 1984.

ii. It provides insights into pivotal events such as the Emergency period (1975–77), her electoral victories, and the socio-political challenges faced during her leadership.

iii. Srinath Raghavan is a distinguished historian and professor of history and international relations at Ashoka University, New Delhi.

- He has authored several acclaimed works, including India's War: The Making of Modern South Asia and Fierce Enigmas: A History of the United States in South Asia.

IOCL to Set Up India's Largest Green Hydrogen Plant at Panipat

New Delhi (Delhi) based Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) finalised the Levelized Cost of Hydrogen (LCoH) for establishing India's **largest Green Hydrogen Generation Unit** at its Panipat Refinery & Petrochemical Complex in **Panipat**, Haryana.

- This project marks IOCL's significant entry into the green hydrogen sector, contributing to India's broader goals of decarbonization and energy self-reliance.
- i. The facility, with a production capacity of 10,000 Tonnes Per Annum (TPA), is slated for commissioning by December 2027.
- ii. The green hydrogen produced at this facility will replace fossil-fuel-based hydrogen currently used in refinery operations.
- iii. This initiative aligns with India's National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM) and supports IOCL's commitment to achieving net-zero operational emissions by 2046.
- iv. Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **L&T Energy Green Tech Limited**, a subsidiary of Larsen & Toubro (L&T), has secured the contract to construct the plant on a build-own-operate (BOO) basis for 25 years.

Khichan & Menar Wetlands in Rajasthan Declared Ramsar Sites; India Leads Asia with 91 Wetlands

Minister **Bhupender Yadav**, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC), announced the designation of **Khichan (Phalodi)** and **Menar (Udaipur)** wetlands in Rajasthan as **Ramsar Sites**.

- **Rajasthan** now has **4 Ramsar Sites**, including Sambhar Salt Lake and Keoladeo Ghana National Park (Bharatpur).
- With this, India's total Ramsar Sites rise to **91**, the highest in Asia and third globally after the United Kingdom (UK) (175) and Mexico (142).

Note: Wetlands are areas of land that remain saturated with water either permanently or for part of the year.

Key Details of New Ramsar Sites:

1. About Menar Wetland Complex

- i. The Menar Wetland Complex, popularly known as the "**Bird Village**", is located across Menar and Kheroda villages in Vallabhnagar Taluka, Udaipur District, Rajasthan. It spans an area of 463.414 hectares.
- ii. It is a freshwater monsoon wetland system consisting of three ponds (Braham Talab, Dhand Talab, and Kheroda Talab) connected by agricultural lands.
- iii. Hosts 110 waterbird species (67 migratory species), including critically endangered white-rumped vulture and long-billed vulture.

2. About Khichan Wetland

- i. The Khichan Wetland, located in the northern Thar Desert, spans across Phalodi and Jodhpur Districts, Rajasthan, covering 54.187 hectares.
- ii. It comprises two water bodies, Ratri Nadi (river) and Vijaysagar Talab (pond) along with riparian zones and scrublands.
- iii. Hosts over 22,000 migratory demoiselle cranes annually and provides habitat for over 150 bird species.

About Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

- i. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, an intergovernmental treaty adopted in **1971** in

Union



Ramsar(India), provides a framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation of wetlands and their resources.

ii.The first Ramsar Sites in India were **Keoladeo National Park** (Rajasthan) and **Chilika Lake** (Odisha), designated in 1981.

iii.Tamil Nadu (TN) holds the **highest number of Ramsar Sites in India** with a total of 20 sites, followed by Uttar Pradesh (UP) with 10 sites, and Rajasthan with 4 sites.

iv.The largest Ramsar Site in India is Sundarbans Wetland (West Bengal, WB) covering 423,000 hectares (designated in 1992).

- The smallest Ramsar Site is Renuka Wetland (Himachal Pradesh, HP) covering 20 hectares (designated in 2005).

Yashasvi Solanki appointed as ADC to President of India

Lieutenant Commander(LtCdr) **Yashasvi Solanki**, has been appointed as an Aide-de-Camp (ADC) to the President of India (POI) in May 2025. She is the **first woman officer** from the **Indian Navy** has been posted as ADC to the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.The Ministry of Defence (MoD) approved the appointment, effective immediately.

- An ADC serves as a personal assistant and facilitates coordination and communication between the President and various arms of the establishment, ensuring seamless staff work and official protocol.
- i.The President typically has **five ADCs**, three from the Army, one each from the Navy and Air force.
- ii.In addition, the President may choose officers from any of the armed forces at their discretion to serve in the role of ADC.
- iii.The appointment of Yashasvi Solanki reflects her exemplary service and dedication. The selection underscores her professional excellence and increasing recognition of women's contributions in the Indian Navy.

Population Census 2027 to be conducted in 2 Phases Along with Enumeration of Castes

The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA)** announced that the upcoming Population Census 2027, **India's 16th decennial census**, will be conducted in two phases, and will also include the enumeration of castes.

- The exercise will be conducted under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948 and the Census Rules, 1990.

Key Points:

- i.The reference date for the Population Census 2027 will be 00:00 hours on 1st March 2027.
- ii.For the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh and the non-synchronous snow-bound areas of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, and states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the reference date will be 00:00 hours on 1st October 2026.
- iii.The census will be conducted in two phases:

- Phase I – House Listing and Housing Census
- Phase II – Population Enumeration

- iv.The census will also include enumeration of castes, a significant move as caste-based data (excluding Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) was last officially recorded in 1931.
- v.The 2027 census will be India's first digital census, utilizing mobile applications and online

platforms to enhance efficiency and accuracy. The collected data will undergo thorough verification and is expected to be finalized and released between late 2027 and 2030.

Background:

i. The last Population Census was conducted in 2011 in two phases:

- Phase I – House Listing (1st April to 30th September 2010)
- Phase II – Population Enumeration (9th February to 28th February 2011)

Reference date: 1st March 2011 (Except for snow-bound areas – 1st October 2010)

ii. The Census 2021 was planned in a similar two-phase format:

- Phase I (April–September 2020)
- Phase II (February 2021)

Overview of PM Narendra Modi's visit to J&K on June 06, 2025

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** visited the (UT) Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), where he laid the foundation stone, inaugurated and dedicated to the nation several development projects worth **over Rs 46,000 crore** at Katra, J&K.

- These projects aim to improve road and rail connectivity across the UT, with a focus on enhancing accessibility, promoting tourism, and generating employment.

i. During the visit, he inaugurated **Chenab Bridge**, the world's highest railway arch bridge, which is 359 meters (m) above the Chenab river and 35 m or 114 feet (ft.) taller than the Eiffel Tower (in Paris, France), located in Reasi District of J&K.

ii. He also inaugurated **Anji Khad Bridge**, India's 1st cable-stayed rail bridge that will serve the nation in a challenging terrain.

iii. Also, he flagged off two Vande Bharat Express trains from Katra Railway Station that will directly connect Jammu division with Kashmir.

- He also laid the foundation stone of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence in Katra, J&K. It will be built at a cost of more than **Rs 350 crore**.

Bengaluru Becomes India's 'Leopard Capital' with 85 Free-Ranging Leopards

Bengaluru (Karnataka) was declared the India's 'Leopard Capital' after a year-long camera-trap survey (2024-2025) by the Holématti Nature Foundation (HNF), headquartered in Bengaluru (Karnataka), led by conservation biologist **Dr. Sanjay Gubbi**, revealed that it had the highest number of free-ranging wild leopards among metropolitan cities, surpassing Mumbai (Maharashtra).

- The study estimated 80–85 leopards across the forests and scrublands surrounding Bengaluru, surpassing Mumbai's 54 leopards documented within Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai, Maharashtra.

i. The survey was carried out across 282 square kilometers (sq km) using over 250 camera traps, covering mixed habitats in Karnataka like Turahalli, B.M. Kaval, U.M. Kaval, Roerich Estate, and Bannerghatta National Park (BNP), among others.

ii. Out of the total, 54 leopards were recorded inside Bannerghatta National Park (BNP) and over 30 were found across reserved, deemed, and private forest lands on the city's outskirts.

iii. With this, Bengaluru earned the distinction of being the 'Leopard Capital' of India, and is

now the only Indian metro whose fringes support a full ensemble of large mammals such as tigers, dholes, elephants, gaur, and sambar, in addition to leopards.

President Droupadi Murmu Promulgates Ladakh Official Languages Regulation 2025

The Ministry of Law and Justice (MoL&J), Government of India (GoI) announced that **Droupadi Murmu**, the President of India has promulgated '**The Ladakh Official Languages Regulation, 2025**', which designates **English, Hindi, Urdu, Bhoti, and Purgi** as the official languages of the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh.

- The Regulation also stipulates that English will continue to be used “for all official purposes” as before its enactment
- The Administrator of Ladakh is instructed to establish institutional mechanisms and an Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages to promote native Ladakhi languages: Shina (Dardic), Brokskat (Dardic), Balti, and Ladakhi.

Other Related Reforms Enacted in Ladakh:

i. The Ladakh Reservation (Amendment) Regulation, 2025

- Provides 85% reservation in public employment for residents of Ladakh.
- Excludes the existing 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), resulting in a total reservation of 95%.

ii. Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (Amendment) Regulation, 2025

- One-third (1/3rd) reservation of seats for women in both the Leh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) and Kargil Autonomous Hill Development Council (KAHDC).

INS Guldar to Become India's First Underwater Museum & Artificial Coral Reef in Maharashtra

Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister (CM) of Maharashtra, virtually launched an innovative project to transform the decommissioned Indian Naval Ship (INS) **Guldar** into **India's first underwater museum** and **artificial coral reef**. The site is located near Nivati Rock in Vengurla Taluka, Sindhudurg district, **Maharashtra**.

- The initiative aims to merge heritage, ecology, and adventure to create a unique marine attraction that promotes sustainability, marine conservation, and tourism, offering activities such as scuba diving and underwater exploration.
- This marks the first instance in India of submerging a naval ship to repurpose it into an artificial reef and underwater museum.

i. The project is led by Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), the lead agency of the Government of Maharashtra, collaborating with marine and environmental experts.

ii. It is funded with **Rs. 46.91 crore** by the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), under the Special

Assistance to States for Capital Investment Scheme, granted on 27 December 2024.

iii.INS Guldar (1,120 tonnes; 83.9 meters (m) long, 9.7 m wide), a Kumbhir-class Landing Ship Tank (Medium) built in Poland, was commissioned into the Indian Navy on December 30, 1985. After nearly 39 years of service, it was decommissioned on January 12, 2024.

Adish Aggarwala Releases Book on PM Modi's Legal Reforms: 'Modi's Niti Shastra'

Senior Advocate **Dr. Adish C. Aggarwala**, former President of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and current Chairman of the All India Bar Association, has authored a book titled '**Modi's Niti Shastra: The World's His Oyster**'.

- The release coincides with the completion of 11 years of Prime Minister(PM) Narendra Modi's tenure, in June 2025 . The book was published by New Delhi(Delhi) based Lexidem Veritas Private Limited.
- i. The book outlines four foundational pillars that define India's legal transformation under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi.
- ii. The book highlights the enactment of new legislations, major amendments to existing laws, the repeal of over 1,500 outdated colonial-era statutes, and the removal of more than 3,000 cumbersome compliance norms, reflecting a shift towards a streamlined and citizen-focused legal framework.

First India–US Special Forces Exercise 'Tiger Claw 2025' Held in UP

The inaugural edition of the joint special forces exercise "**Tiger Claw**" between the Indian Air Force (IAF)'s **Garud Commandos** and the United States Air Force (USAF) concluded successfully at the Garud Regimental Training Centre(GRTC) at Chandinagar, Baghpat district, in Uttar Pradesh(UP).

- Tiger Claw 2025 was conducted at various locations across North India from **26 May to 10 June 2025**.
- During the joint exercise, the two forces engaged in mutual exchange of best practices in Special Operations, expanding partnership, and joint training between IAF and USAF to develop interoperability.

About Exercise Tiger Claw:

- i. In the name "Tiger Claw", 'tiger', the national animal of India symbolizes strength, agility and courage, and a 'Claw' is sharp, decisive and lethal, indicating the nature of Special Forces Operations which are focused, swift, and tactical.
- ii. Several institutional exchange and training programmes between the armed forces of the two countries were conducted at various levels.
- iv. The key drills, include Airfield seizure, hostage rescue, combat free-fall insertions, and precision strikes.

Note: The IAF and USAF conduct several other Air Force Exercises, including the bilateral Cope India, and participate in other multinational drills such as Tarang Shakti and Red Flag.

About Garud Commandos Force:

- i. The Garud Commando Force was formed in February 2004, serves as the elite special operations unit of the IAF and is named after the mythological bird 'Garuda'.
- ii. Garud commandos are directly recruited and undergo one of the longest and toughest training regimens, lasting up to three years.

India Ranks 15th Among Top FDI Destinations with USD 27.6 Billion Inflows in 2024 : UNCTAD

Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), officially launched the World Investment Report 2025 titled "International Investment in the Digital Economy" in Geneva, Switzerland. As per the report, **India's** Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows declined by **1.9% in 2024**, dropping from USD 28.1 billion in 2023 to **USD 27.6 billion**.

- The Global FDI flows were said to be 4% higher, totaling **USD 1.5 trillion**. But this number was boosted by unstable investments passing through certain countries. Without counting those, global FDI actually dropped by 11%, falling for the second year in a row.

Key Highlights:

- i. The United States of America (USA) continues to be the leading country for both foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows and outflows.
- ii. India's ranking for FDI inflows improved to **15th** in 2024 from 16th in 2023, while its position for FDI outflows rose to **18th** in 2024, up from 23rd the previous year. India emerged as the leading recipient of FDI within the South Asian region.
- iii. India secured the fourth position globally with 1,080 greenfield projects announced in 2024. It also ranked among the top five countries for international project finance, recording 97 deals during the year.

Bihar Pioneers India's First Mobile-Based E-Voting System for Urban Elections

Patna (Bihar) based **Bihar State Election Commission (SEC)** introduced a mobile-based electronic voting (**e-voting**) system for its municipal and urban local body elections scheduled on 28th June.

- This marks Bihar as the **first Indian state** to adopt this innovation aimed at enhancing voter accessibility and increasing turnout through remote voting via Android smart phones. Which allows eligible voters to cast their votes electronically without physically visiting polling booths.

Key Features:

i. Bihar's e-voting will be conducted using two Android-based mobile applications: "**e-Voting SECBHR**," developed by Pune (Maharashtra) based Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (**C-DAC**), and another by the Bihar SEC.

- Both apps incorporate advanced security features, including blockchain technology, liveness detection, facial recognition (face match, live scan, and comparison), ensuring secure and tamper-proof voting.
- ii. 10,000 voters have already registered for e-voting, and approximately 50,000 voters are expected to participate in the upcoming polls via this method.
- iv. The Bihar e-voting platform features a robust audit trail similar to the Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) used with Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

Tripura Declared India's Third 'Fully Literate' State After Mizoram & Goa

Tripura was declared the third 'Fully Literate State' in India, after Mizoram and Goa, upon achieving a literacy rate of **95.6%**, as announced by the Chief Minister (CM) of Tripura **Dr. Manik Saha**, during an event at Rabindra Satabarshiki Bhavan in Agartala, Tripura.

- The declaration aligns with the criteria set by the Government of India (GoI), where any State or Union Territory (UT) achieving over 95% literacy is granted the status of 'Fully Literate'.

Note: The Government of India (GoI) has set a target to achieve full literacy across India by the year 2030.

Implementation of ULLAS Programme:

i. This milestone was achieved through the successful implementation of the **ULLAS** (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) – New India Literacy Programme (NILP), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) launched in 2022 by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Capital – Agartala

National Park (NP)- Clouded Leopard NP & Rajbari (Bison) NP

UPSC Launches Pratibha Setu Portal for Near-Successful Candidates

The New Delhi (Delhi) based Union Public Service Commission (**UPSC**) under the direction of the Department of Personnel & Training (**DoPT**), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (MoPP&P) launched '**Pratibha Setu**' (Professional Resource And Talent Integration – Bridge for Hiring Aspirants), a revamped version of the Public Disclosure Scheme (PDS) introduced in 2018.

- UPSC Pratibha Setu is designed to provide a career-bridging platform for candidates who completed all stages of various UPSC examinations but were not included in the final merit list.
- This initiative aims to bridge the gap between deserving candidates and potential recruiters from both government and private sectors by providing access to a curated talent pool.

i. Only candidates who willingly give their consent will be listed in the database; participation is not automatic or mandatory.

ii. Examination Coverage: Civil Services, Engineering Services, Indian Forest Service (IFS), Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), Combined Defence Services (CDS), Medical Services, Geoscientist, and Indian Economic Service/Indian Statistical Service (IES/ISS) are included exams.

Dangeti Jahnvi Selected as Astronaut Candidate for Titans Space Mission

Dangeti Jahnvi from Palakollu, Andhra Pradesh (AP) has been selected as an Astronaut Candidate (**ASCAN**) for the space mission of the Florida, United States of America (USA) based Titan Space Industries (**TSI**), a private agency engaged in space research.

- Dangeti Jahnvi is the **first Indian** selected for TSI's orbital mission to the Orbital Port Space Station, scheduled for launch in 2029.

- She has also become the first Indian to successfully complete Washington (USA) based National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA)'s International Air and Space Program(IASP).

About Titan Space Mission (TSI):

- i.The TSI, formerly known as EarthLoop Orbital Cruise, is a commercial spaceflight initiative aimed at democratizing access to low-earth orbit.
- ii.The mission will be led by NASA Astronaut Colonel (Retired) **William Mc. Arthur Jr**, Chief Astronaut, TSI.
- iii.The mission will carry astronaut candidates on a 5-hour orbital journey, completing at least two full orbits around Earth at an altitude of 300 kilometers (kms).

- It will feature 3-hours of sustained zero-gravity, offering valuable research opportunities in **microgravity**.

CBSE Introduces Biannual Class 10 Board Exams from 2026

New Delhi (Delhi) based Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), under the Ministry of Education(MoE), has approved a **biannual** (occurring twice a year) **examination** system for its **Class 10** students, effective from **2026 academic session**.

- The new CBSE norm aims to reduce the pressure on students appearing for board exams by providing them with two opportunities in a year.
 - This move aligns with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- i.All students must appear for the first phase of board exams scheduled in **February**. The second phase, held in **May**, is optional and allows students to improve their performance.
 - ii.Results for the first phase will be announced in April, and for the second phase in June.
 - iii.Internal assessments will continue to be conducted only once during the academic session.

Kerala's Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary Become India's First Butterfly Sanctuary

The Kerala State Wildlife Board officially renamed the Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary, located in Kannur district(Kerala), as the Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary, making it India's **first** protected forest dedicated exclusively to butterflies. This decision recognizes the sanctuary's rich biodiversity and promotes eco-tourism.

- The renaming strengthens butterfly conservation efforts and positions the sanctuary as a global biodiversity hotspot.

About Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary:

- i.The sanctuary, established in **1984**, spans 55 square kilometres(sq.km) and is situated within the tropical and semi-evergreen forests of the Western Ghats.
- ii.It hosts over 266 butterfly species, which accounts for more than 80% of Kerala's butterfly population.

Indian Cricketer Shikhar Dhawan Debuts as Author, Pens Memoir

Former Indian Cricketer **Shikhar Dhawan** has debuted as an author with his memoir, "**The**

One: Cricket, My Life and More”, in which he has shared about his professional life as a cricketer, as a champion player and his personal life.

- The book is published by Gurugram (Haryana) based **HarperCollins India**.
- i. In his book, Shikhar has shared his journey from Delhi streets to global stardom. And also ultimate memoir with raw honesty, covering his rise, setbacks, relationships, controversies, and reflections beyond cricket.
- ii. Shikhar Dhawan started as a wicket keeper and later transitioned into an opening batsman. He played 34 test matches for India, scoring 2,315 runs, including 7 centuries. He made his test debut in 2013 against Australia.
- iii. He made his One Day International (ODI) debut in 2010 against Australia and represented until 2022. He has played 167 matches, scoring 6,793 runs including 17 centuries. He debuted in Twenty-20 International (T20I) against West Indies in 2011. He played 68 matches, scoring 1,759 runs.

Indian GM Praggnanandhaa Clinched UzChess Cup Masters 2025, Becomes India's No:1

Indian Chess Grandmaster (GM) **Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa** won the **2nd UzChess Cup Masters title** at Tashkent, Uzbekistan. With this win, his live elo rating increased to **2778.3**, elevating him as India's No:1 chess player and World No: 4.

- The 19-year-old GM defeated **Nodirbek Abdusattorov** of Uzbekistan in the final round to seal the championship.
- GM Magnus Carlsen (2839.2) remains world No:1, followed by GM Hikaru Nakamura (2807.0) and GM Fabiano Caruana (2784.2).

About UzChess Cup Masters 2025:

- i. The tournament was held from June 19 to 27, 2025.
- ii. The Masters section featured a single round-robin with 10 elite players over 9 rounds.
- iii. The total prize money amounted to USD 121,500, with **USD 80,000** allocated to the “Masters” group, USD 25,000 to the “Challengers,” USD 11,500 to the “Futures,” and USD 5,000 to the “Open” group.

About Ramesh Praggnanandhaa:

- i. Praggnanandhaa became the youngest (10 years, 10 months, and 19 days) International Master (IM) in 2016.
- ii. In 2023, he became runner-up at the Chess World Cup and secured a place in the 2024 Candidates Tournament.
- iii. In 2024, he won gold with India in the Open Section of the 45th Chess Olympiad, held in Budapest, Hungary.

International

UNGA Elected Five Countries as Non-Permanent Members to UNSC for 2026–2027

Term The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) elected five countries: **Bahrain, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Latvia, and Liberia**, as **non-permanent members** to the 15-member United Nations Security Council (UNSC), New York, the United States of America (USA), for a two-year term starting from 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2027.

- These countries will replace Algeria, Guyana, Sierra Leone, South Korea, and Slovenia, whose terms end on December 31, 2025.
- The elections highlight the UN's dedication to balanced geographic representation, with seats distributed among regional groups: two for Africa, one for Asia-Pacific, one for Latin America and the Caribbean, and one for Eastern Europe.



Note: India has held a non-permanent seat on the UNSC eight times, most recently during the 2021–2022 term. It has also put forward its candidature for the 2028–2029 term.

Key Highlights of the Election:

- A total of **188** United Nations (UN) Member States participated in a single-round secret ballot election held at the UN headquarters in New York City, the USA.
- The following votes were secured by each elected country, Bahrain (186 votes), Democratic Republic of the Congo (183 votes), Liberia (181 votes), Colombia (180 votes) and Latvia (178 votes).
- The five elected countries will join the current non-permanent members selected in 2024: **Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama, and Somalia**, who will serve on the Council through 2026.
- Latvia, serving its first term, highlighted its historical experience and commitment to multilateralism, peace, and security, especially in conflict zones like Ukraine, the Middle East, and Africa.

About the United Nations Security Council (UNSC):

The UNSC, one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN), is responsible for maintaining international peace and security.

The UNSC comprises 15 members:

- 5 permanent members with veto power:** China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom (UK), and the USA.
- 10 non-permanent members:** Elected for two-year staggered terms by the UNGA.
- Elections are held annually, and candidates must secure at least two-thirds majority (minimum 128 votes) in the 193-member General Assembly, even if uncontested.

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

Presidency – Guyana (June 2025)

Formed – 1945

Bangladesh Unveils New Currency Notes Excluding Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Portrait

Dhaka (Bangladesh) based Bangladesh Bank, the central bank of Bangladesh, released new

currency notes in denominations of **Taka(Tk) 20, Tk50, and Tk 1000**, marking a significant shift by removing the portrait of **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**, the nation's founding father, and featuring Hindu and Buddhist temples, historical landmarks, and cultural motifs instead.

- Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the **first President** and former Prime Minister (**PM**) of Bangladesh, had appeared on every banknote since the formation of Bangladesh in **1971**.

Key Points:

- The denomination Tk 20 features Cultural and Religious Heritage the **Kantajew Temple** in Dinajpur and **Somapura Mahavihara** in Naogaon, Bangladesh.
- The denomination Tk 50 features Artistic Works of Ahsan Manzil, a palace in Dhaka and artwork by **Zainul Abedin**, depicting the Bengal famine during the British colonial rule.
- The Tk 1000 denomination is Historical Landmark showcases the **National Martyr's Memorial** and honoring those who died in the 1971 liberation war.
- Under the new series and design, the currency notes do not feature any human portraits.
- Along with the new notes, the existing bank notes, featuring the portrait of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and coins remain in circulation.

India Elected to UN ECOSOC for 2026-2028 Term

India was elected to the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (**ECOSOC**) for a **three-year term** from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2028. The election was held at the UN Headquarters in New York City, the United States of America (USA).

- India was elected as one of the **18 new member nations** to ECOSOC by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), reaffirming its commitment to multilateral diplomacy and sustainable development initiatives.
- India's Permanent Representative to the UN, **Parvathaneni Harish**, who assumed office in September 2024, play a pivotal role in representing India's interests and contributions within the council.
 - India** received 181 out of 187 valid votes, showing strong global backing. From the Asia-Pacific group, **China** (180 votes), **Lebanon** (183 votes), and **Turkmenistan** (183 votes) were also elected.

About United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):

President – His Excellency Bob Rae

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

Established – 1945

CCPI 2025: India Ranks 10th; Down from 7th in 2024

In the Climate Change Performance Index (**CCPI**) **2025**, India secured the **10th position** with a score of **67.99**, dropping three places from its 7th rank in 2024. Despite this decline, India remains among the **top-performing countries** in global climate action.

- India secured a high rating in the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions and Energy Use categories, a medium rating in Climate Policy, and a low rating in Renewable Energy.

- The CCPI 2025 left the top three positions vacant due to the absence of any country achieving a “very high” overall rating. Denmark topped the index at the 4th position. It was followed by the Netherlands (6th) and the United Kingdom (UK) (7th).

About Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI):

- i. The CCPI has been published annually since **2005** by three environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs): **Germanwatch** (based in Bonn, Germany), **NewClimate Institute** (based in Cologne, Germany), and the **Climate Action Network (CAN) International** (based in Beirut, Lebanon).
- ii. The CCPI 2025 edition evaluates the climate performance of **63** countries and the European Union (EU), which collectively account for over 90% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.

Global Data Centre Market Comparison 2025: Mumbai Secures 6th Spot Globally, USA's Virginia Leads

Illinois, United States of America (USA) based Cushman & Wakefield Inc. (C&W) released its ‘**2025 Global Data Center Market Comparison report**’. According to the report, **Mumbai** (Maharashtra) ranked **6th** globally with 335 Megawatts (MW) of data centre capacity under construction as of end-2024.



- As per the report, **Virginia** (United States of America, USA) ranks 1st globally with 1,834 MW of data centre capacity under construction, followed by **Atlanta** (USA) with 1,078 MW, and **Columbus** (USA) with 546 MW.
- i. The 2025 Global Data Center Market Comparison report ranks **97 cities worldwide** based on their data centre capacity under construction.
 - ii. Mumbai, leads the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, is the only Indian city in the top 10 global rankings for data centre capacity under construction and also ranks as the **7th** most established data centre market in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region.
 - iii. **Pune** (Maharashtra) and **Bengaluru** (Karnataka) ranks 4th and 5th respectively among APAC's emerging data centre markets.

WEF's Global Gender Gap Report 2025 : India Slips to 131st; Iceland Topped

Cologny (Switzerland) based World Economic Forum (WEF) released **19th** edition of the annual report titled “**Global Gender Gap Report**”. India ranked 131st out of 148 countries, falling two positions from the previous year with a score of **0.644**.

- **Iceland** has topped the rankings for the 16th time with a score of 0.926, followed by Finland (0.879), Norway (0.863), United Kingdom (UK) (0.838) and New Zealand (0.827).

Highlights of Global Gender Gap Report 2025:

- i. The 2025 Index, benchmarks gender parity across **148 economies**, providing a basis for the analysis for gender parity developments across two-thirds of the world's economies.
- ii. The 2025 Global Gender Gap Index shows that while **no country has achieved full gender parity**, each of the top 10 ranked economies have closed at least 80% of their gender gaps.
- iii. Globally, the gender gap has narrowed to **68.8%**, marking the quickest improvement since the pandemic, but if current trends continue, it will take another 123 years to achieve full gender equality.

ILO's Data: India's Social Security Coverage Surged to 64.3%; Ranked 2nd Globally

Geneva (Switzerland) based International Labour Organisation (ILO) released its latest 'ILO Database on International Labour Statistics (ILOSTAT) database'. As per the data, India's social security coverage has surged from 19% (in 2015) to **64.3% (in 2025)**, which marks an increase of 45 basis points (bps) over the last 10 years.

- The data further revealed that India now ranks at **2nd** position globally in **terms of beneficiary** count, with more than 94 crore people, are now covered under at least one social protection benefit.
- These figures were highlighted by Union Minister **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoL&E) during a bilateral meeting with Gilbert F. Hounbo, Director General (DG) of ILO on the sidelines of the International Labour Conference (ILC) of ILO.

Note: The 113th session of the ILC of ILO held from June 10 to 12, 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Key Progress made by India in Social Security:

- i. India is also the world's **1st country** to update its 2025 social protection coverage data in the ILOSTAT database, reinforcing its leadership globally in digital governance and transparency in welfare systems.
- ii. The current 64.3% figure represents Phase-I of a wider **social protection data pooling exercise**, focusing on central sector and women-centric schemes across 8 selected states.

- With further phases and additional social security schemes under review, experts project that India's overall coverage will soon **exceed 100 crore beneficiaries**.
- iii. Also, the increase in Social Protection Coverage will help in strengthening India's international engagements, particularly in finalizing Social Security Agreements (SSAs) with developed countries.

3rd United Nations Ocean Conference (UNCO3) Held From June 09 to June 13, 2025 in Nice, France – Part I

The **3rd** United Nations Ocean Conference (UNCO3) was held in Nice, France from June 09 to June 13, 2025. The 5-day conference was hosted jointly by the Governments of **France and Costa Rica**.

- **Theme of UNCO3:** ‘Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean’.

Li Junha (China), Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, was appointed as the Secretary General of UNCO3 by the UN Secretary-General, to overall monitor its preparations.

- Also, Miguel de Serpa Soares (Portugal), Under-Secretary General for Legal Affairs, was appointed as Special Adviser to the Presidents of the conference on ocean and legal matters.

Key Highlights of UNCO3:

i. In June 2025, Rome (Italy) based Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) released its latest report titled ‘Review of the State of World Marine Fisheries Resources-2025’ during the UNCO3.

Vietnam Joins BRICS as 10th Partner Country

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil has announced that **Vietnam** has officially joined the **BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) as the **10th** partner country. Vietnam’s inclusion as a partner country reflects BRICS’ ongoing expansion and its efforts to enhance its role as a diplomatic counterbalance to Western powers.

- As a partner country, Vietnam can take part in BRICS summits, working groups, ministerial-level meetings, and collaborative projects, but it doesn’t hold full voting privileges.
- The other partner countries are Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda and Uzbekistan.

Note: Vietnam also holds a significant role in various international forums, including the United Nations (UN), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia-Pacific Cooperation (APEC), Group of Seven (G7), Group of Twenty (G20) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Partner Country in BRICS:

- i. The partner country was created at the **16th** BRICS Summit (2024) in Kazan, Russia.
- ii. It is a new category of affiliation, introduced by the group to broaden engagement with emerging economies without granting them full membership.
- iii. A partner country is officially recognized as a participant in BRICS activities, but not a full member.
- iv. The partner country’s status allows BRICS to expand influence without overwhelming internal structure. It also serves as a pathway for possible future full membership .

About BRICS:

- i. BRICS was formed in September **2006**, and it originally had 4 emerging economies as its members, including Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC).
- ii. BRIC group was renamed as BRICS after South Africa was accepted as a full member of BRIC in 2010.

iii. **BRICS member countries** include, Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Indonesia.

Former New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern's Memoir: A Different Kind of Power

A Memoir, “**A Different Kind of Power**”, written by **Jacinda Kate Laurell Ardern**, former New Zealand Prime Minister (PM) has been released. The book was published by Virago Press, an imprint of Little, Brown Book Group (UK), and Crown Publishing Group, a division of the United States of America(USA) based Penguin Random House.

- Jacinda Ardern served as the **40th** PM of New Zealand from 2017 to 2023. At the age of 37, she became the **youngest PM** in over 150 years .

Key Points:

- i. In her memoir, Jacinda Ardern recounts her personal and political journey with warmth, humour, and vulnerability, including the significant moment of discovering her pregnancy while in the midst of coalition government negotiations.
- ii. She also shared her experience at the massacre of Christ Church, the swift introduction of gun-control reforms, and a data driven “Zero-COVID” pandemic strategy that led to exceptionally low death rates.
- iii. In her book, she redefines empathy, vulnerability, and sensitivity as potent leadership assets, which are evident in her ten guiding principles drawn from her career.

EIU Global Liveability Index 2025: Denmark's Copenhagen Most Liveable City, Syria's Damascus Least Liveable City

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) released the Global Liveability Index 2025, ranking Copenhagen (Denmark) as the most liveable city in the world, ending the three-year **reign of Vienna (Austria)**.

- Austria's **Vienna** dropped to 2nd position, while Switzerland's **Zurich** retained its 3rd position in the 2025 list.
- **Damascus** (Syria) remains the least liveable city in the world.

Note: No Indian city is ranked on the 2025 list of the top 10 liveable cities in the world.

About EIU's Global Liveability Index:

- i. The EIU Index ranks **173** cities across the world by assessing which location offers the best and worst living conditions.
- ii. The annual index ranks cities based on 30 qualitative and quantitative indicators, which are broadly classified into 5 categories:
 - **Stability:** Evaluating crime rates, terrorism, and policies
 - **Healthcare:** Access to health systems, hospitals, and medications
 - **Culture and environment:** Air quality, cultural activities, etc.

- Education: Quality and access to education
 - Infrastructure: Transport systems, housing, utilities, telecommunications
- iii. The average liveability score across the 173 cities in the index was the same as last year, at **76.1** out of 100.

Pakistan Appointed Chair of the 1988 TSC & Vice-Chair of 1373 CTC

Pakistan has been appointed as Chair of the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee (TSC); Vice-Chair of 1373 Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) as part of its 2025-26 term as non-permanent member of United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

- Apart from it, Pakistan has been appointed co-chair of the Informal Working Groups on Documentation and on the General UNSC Sanctions Issues.
- i. **Asim Aftikhar Ahmad** (Pakistan) has been appointed as chair of TSC for the period ending on December 31, 2025.

- While, Russia and Guyana have been appointed as two Vice-Chairs of TSC for 2025.
- ii. **Algeria** has been appointed as Chair of 1373 CTC, while France, Pakistan and Russia have been appointed as its Vice-Chairs.
- iii. As per the list of chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the UNSC, Denmark has been appointed as Chair of 1267 ISIL and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee of the UNSC; while Russia and Sierra Leone have appointed as its Vice-Chairs.

About United Nations Security Council (UNSC):

President – Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett from Guyana (As of June 2025)

Headquarters- New York City, the United States of America (USA)

Established – 1945

Skytrax's 2025 World Airline Awards: Qatar Retained the World's Best Airline ; IndiGo named as Best Airline in India/South Asia

Doha

(Qatar) based **Qatar Airways** has retained the **World's Best Airline for 2025**, winning the title for the **9th** time at the **Skytrax's World Airline Awards 2025** which was held at Paris Air Show, in the Air and Space Museum at the fabulous art deco Hall of Eight Columns of Le Bourget Airport in Paris (France).

- Qatar Airways won awards in various other categories, including Best Airline in the Middle East, World's Best Business Class, and World's Best Inflight Entertainment.
- **Singapore Airlines** secured the 2nd position, followed by **Cathay Pacific Airways** from Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), China in 3rd place, while Dubai (United Arab Emirates)-based Emirates and Japan-based ANA – All Nippon Airways were ranked 4th and 5th, respectively.

- **IndiGo**, India's largest airline by market cap has been named as the Best Airline as well as Best Low-Cost Airline in South Asia for 2025 and it also secured the 3rd position among low-cost airlines

About World Airline Awards :

- i. The World Airline Awards were started in **1999**, when Skytrax launched its 1st international, annual airline customer satisfaction survey.
- ii. These awards are widely known as the '**Oscars of the aviation industry**', which is decided through international voting.
- iii. This year winners were decided based on votes collected from surveys of around 22.3 million customers, from September 2024 to May 2025, and covered over 325 global airlines.

51st G7 Summit Held from June 15-17, 2025 in Alberta, Canada

The **51st** Group of Seven (**G7**) **Summit** was held from June 15th to 17th 2025 in Kananaskis, situated in the province of **Alberta, Canada**. The summit was hosted under Canada's G7 Presidency, led by Prime Minister(PM) **Mark Carney**.

- The summit marked **50 years of partnership** and cooperation among G7 member nations since the inaugural G7 meeting in 1975 (Rambouillet, France).

Note: The **52nd G7 Summit** is set to take place in June 2026 in Évian-les-Bains city located in Haute-Savoie, **France**.

Highlights of 51st G7 Summit :

- i. The participating leaders included: Mark Carney, PM of Canada (Host); Emmanuel Macron, President of France; Friedrich Merz, Chancellor of Germany; Giorgia Meloni, PM of Italy; Shigeru Ishiba, PM of Japan; Keir Starmer, PM of the UK; Donald Trump, President of the USA ; António Costa, President of the European Council; and Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission.
- ii. Canada **invited** leaders from Australia, Brazil, India, Mexico, South Africa (SA), South Korea, and Ukraine to take part in the Outreach Sessions of the summit.
- Prime Minister (PM) of India, **Narendra Modi** visited Canada from June 16 to 17, 2025, to participate in the 51st G7 Summit at the invitation of PM of Canada Mark Carney. This marked PM Modi's sixth consecutive appearance at the G7 Summit.
- iii. Under the Presidency of Canada, the 51st G7 Summit reinforced international cooperation by releasing a series of joint statements focused on pressing global issues. These included enhancing the security of critical minerals supply chains, promoting the responsible use and sharing of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and advancing collaboration in quantum technology.
- iv. During the closing of the 51st G7 Summit, PM of Canada Mark Carney announced over **USD 2 bn** in new military aid for Ukraine this year, along with a **USD 2.3 bn** loan under the G7 Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration (**ERA**) Loans mechanism.

Sustainable Development Report 2025: Finland Topped; India Enters Top 100 for First time

The New York (United States of America) based United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Solutions Network (**SDSN**) released the **10th** edition of the Sustainable Development Report (**SDR**) titled "Financing Sustainable Development to 2030 and Mid Century". For the first time, India entered the top 100 on the 2025 Sustainable

Development Goals Index(SDGi) , ranking 99th out of 193 countries with a score of 66.95, improving from 109th place in 2024.

- **Finland** has secured the first place with a score of 87.02, followed by Sweden with 85.74 and Denmark with 85.26.
- China also showed strong performance, ranking 49th with a score of 74.39, thus entering the top 50.

Key Findings:

i. A decade after the adoption of the SDGs, progress is alarmingly behind schedule, with fewer than 20% of targets expected to be met by 2030.

- Only **17%** of the targets are on track to be achieved worldwide.

ii. As per the report, among the neighboring countries, Bhutan is ranked 74th with a score of 70.5, Nepal (85) with a score of 68.6, Bangladesh (114) with 63.9 and Pakistan (140) with 57 points.

Axiom Space Launches Ax-4 Mission to ISS Carrying Astronauts from USA, India, Poland & Hungary

Texas (United States of America, USA) based **Axiom Space**, in collaboration with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX), launched its fourth private mission, **Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4)**, to the International Space Station (ISS). The crew lifted off aboard a SpaceX **Falcon 9 rocket**, which propelled the new Dragon spacecraft named '**Grace**' into orbit from Launch Complex 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Florida, USA.



- The crew members are Peggy Whitson (USA), Subhanshu Shukla (India), Sławosz Uznański-Wiśniewski (Poland) and Tibor Kapu (Hungary).
- This mission marks the first ISS visits by astronauts from India, Poland, and Hungary, and their second government-sponsored human spaceflights in over 40 years.
- The Ax-4 mission will last for 14 days, during which the crew will stay aboard the ISS.

Key Points:

- Axiom Space signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Hyderabad (Telangana)-based **Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited**, India's leading private space launch service provider, to collaborate on enhancing access to Low-Earth Orbit (LEO), research payloads, orbital data centers, and future missions to Axiom Station.
- The agreement was signed by Tejpal Bhatia, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Axiom Space, and Pawan Kumar Chandana, CEO of Skyroot Aerospace.

The Netherlands Hosted NATO Summit from June 24 to 25, 2025

The Netherlands hosted the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Summit 2025 at the World Forum in its capital city, The Hague from June 24 to June 25, 2025.

- This was for the 1st time since the formation of NATO in 1949 that the Netherlands hosted a NATO summit.

Key Highlights of NATO Summit:**NATO adopted new 5% GDP Defence Spending Target at The Hague Summit:**

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte announced that NATO countries have agreed to increase defence spending to **5%** of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annually. This announcement was made following 32 member countries unanimously voted in favor of it during the NATO Summit 2025.

Defence

NOMADIC ELEPHANT 2025: 17th India, Mongolia Joint Military Exercise held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

The 17th edition of Exercise **NOMADIC ELEPHANT**, annual bilateral joint military exercise between India and Mongolia commenced on May 31, 2025, at the Special Forces Training Centre in **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**.

- The exercise is scheduled to run until June 13, 2025.
- The aim of the exercise is to enhance joint military capabilities between the two countries.

Note: The 16th edition of the exercise was held in Umroi, Meghalaya in July 2024.

Key People:

The opening ceremony was attended by key dignitaries, including India's Ambassador to Mongolia, Atul Malhari Gotsurve, and Major General Lkhagvasuren Ganselem from the Mongolian side.

Participants:

- i. The Indian contingent comprising 45 personnel, mainly the troops from a battalion of the ARUNACHAL SCOUTS are the participants.
- ii. The Mongolian Armed Forces contingent, also containing similar strength, represented by 150 units.

About Ex NOMADIC ELEPHANT:

- i. Exercise **NOMADIC ELEPHANT** is a bilateral military exercise conducted annually between the Indian Army and the Mongolian Armed Forces.
- ii. The exercise was initiated in 2004 and conducted alternatively in India and Mongolia.
- iii. The exercise underscores the shared commitment of India and Mongolia towards regional security, peace and stability.

NATO Launches Annual Military Exercise BALTOPS 25 in Latvia

Brussels (Belgium) based North Atlantic Treaty Organization (**NATO**) launched its 53rd edition of NATO's premier multinational maritime-focused exercise **Baltic Operations 2025** (**BALTOPS 25**) in **Latvia**.

- The exercise aims to enhance cooperation and interoperability among allied forces, strengthen rapid response capabilities across all military branches, and demonstrate NATO's commitment to regional security and defence of the Baltic Sea region.
- The event is being conducted from 5th to 20th June 2025.

Key Points:

- i. The exercise is organized by Oeiras, Portugal based NATO's Naval Striking and Support Forces (**STRIKFORNATO**) and hosted by Latvia in the Baltic Sea region.

IN Conducts PASSEX with UK's CSG in North Arabian Sea

The Indian Navy(IN) participated in a Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with the United Kingdom's (UK) Carrier Strike Group (CSG) in the **North Arabian Sea**. The exercise demonstrated the advanced combat readiness of both navies and strengthened strategic naval cooperation beyond regular joint drills.

- The two-day drill, held from June 9 to 10, 2025, aimed at enhancing operational coordination and interoperability between the two naval forces.

i.Participating Forces:

- The IN deployed its stealth frigate Indian Naval Ship(INS) Tabar, a submarine, and the P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft.
- The UK's Royal Navy contributed its aircraft carrier His/Her Majesty's Ship(HMS) Prince of Wales and frigate HMS Richmond.

IA Participates in 22nd Exercise 'Khaan Quest' in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

The Indian Army(IA) participated in the **22nd** edition of **Exercise Khaan Quest**, held from June 14 to 28, 2025, at the Five Hills Training Area in Ulaanbaatar, **Mongolia**.

- The exercise brought together military contingents from 24 countries to enhance interoperability and refine peacekeeping skills under the United Nations (UN) mandate.

Note: The 21st edition of the exercise was conducted in Mongolia from July 27 to August 9, 2024.

IA Contingent:

The IA contingent, comprising **40** personnel, is primarily represented by troops from a battalion of the Kumaon Regiment, along with members from both arms and services.

- The contingent was led by Lieutenant General(Lt Gen) **Pushpendra Singh**, Director General of Operational Logistics & Strategic Management (DG OL & SM).
- The team includes one woman officer and two women soldiers, reflecting the commitment of Indian Army towards gender inclusivity.

Background:

i.The Exercise Khaan Quest began as a bilateral exercise between the United States of America (USA) and the Mongolian Armed Forces in **2003**.

About Exercise Khaan Quest 2025:

i.The exercise aims to promote military-to-military cooperation, mutual learning, and multinational coordination in peacekeeping operations

SIPRI Report 2025: India Expands Nuclear Arsenal, Advances Canisterised MIRV Missiles

Solna (Sweden) based Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (**SIPRI**) released its latest Yearbook for 2025: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security. The report highlighted that India continues to maintain an edge over Pakistan in nuclear capabilities.

- As per the report, India has expanded its nuclear arsenal from 172 warheads (in 2024) to an estimated **180 (in 2025)**, as of January 2025.
- i. The report further underscored that India's new '**canisterised**' missiles, which allow warheads to be pre-mounted and transported more safely, could potentially carry nuclear warheads even during 'peacetime'.
- ii. SIPRI highlighted that all 9 nuclear-armed countries, namely the United States of America (USA), Russia, the United Kingdom (UK), France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and Israel, continued to invest significantly in modernizing their nuclear forces in 2024.

8th India-France Joint Military 'Ex-SHAKTI' Commences in France

The **8th edition** of India-France joint military "**Exercise SHAKTI**" commenced on June 18, 2025, at Camp Larzac, La Cavalerie in **France**. The exercise is scheduled to run till July 01, 2025.

- The exercise aims to enhance the joint military capability of both countries to undertake multi-domain operations.
- Exercise SHAKTI-VIII reflects the rising defence cooperation between India and France and will bolster strategic ties between the two countries.

Key Participants:

- i. The Indian contingent of 90 personnel is primarily represented by a Battalion of the Jammu & Kashmir (**J&K**) **Rifles**, along with personnel from other arms and services.
- ii. The French contingent is being represented by the 13th Foreign Legion Half-Brigade (13th DBLE), consisting of 90 personnel.

About Ex-SHAKTI:

- i. It is a **biennial** training exercise conducted alternatively in India and France.
- ii. It will enable both countries to exchange best practices in tactics, techniques, and procedures for conducting joint military operations.
- iii. India hosted the 1st edition of Ex-SHAKTI in Chaubattia, Uttarakhand in 2011.

Note: The 7th edition of Ex-SHAKTI was held at Umroi, in a fully developed and modern Foreign Training Node in Meghalaya in May 2024.

Other Military Exercises between India & France:

- i. **Exercise GARUDA** – Between the Indian Air Forces and the French Air and Space Force
- ii. **Exercise VARUNA** – Between the Indian Navy and the French Navy

IN Inducts first Indigenous Anti-Submarine Warship 'INS Arnala'

Indian Navy (IN) inducted Indian Navy Ship (INS) **Arnala**, India's first indigenously designed and built Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) warship, at the Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP).

- It was commissioned into the Eastern Naval Command(ENC) of the IN, during a commissioning ceremony presided over by Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General **Anil Chauhan** and hosted by Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of ENC.
- INS Arnala, the first in the series of 16 ASW-SWCs, was built by Kolkata (West Bengal) based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited(GRSE).

About INS Arnala:

- i.INS Arnala, built under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, was delivered in May 2025, at Larsen & Toubro (L&T) in Kattupalli, Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu (TN).
- ii.INS Arnala is named after the historic **Arnala Fort** located off the coast of Vasai in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It was constructed in 1737 by the Marathas under the leadership of Chimaji Balaji Bhat, military commander and statesman of the Maratha Empire.
- iii.INS Arnala is a **77-meter(m)**-long warship, with a gross tonnage of over **1490 tonnes(t)**. It is the **largest** Indian-Naval warship to be propelled by a Diesel Engine-Waterjet combination.

GoI Launches 'Operation Sindhu' to Evacuate Nationals from Conflict-Hit Iran

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India(GoI), launched '**Operation Sindhu**', a humanitarian evacuation mission to rescue **Indian nationals**, especially students and pilgrims, stranded in **conflict-hit Iran**, amid escalating tensions between Iran and Israel.

- The main objective of this is to ensure safe evacuation of Indians from conflict zones, prioritizing students and vulnerable groups.
- i.As of 21st June 2025, a total of 517 Indian nationals have been evacuated from conflict-hit Iran.
 - ii.The Indian Embassy in Tehran(Iran) has been proactively managing the evacuation efforts by offering emergency contact numbers and maintaining a dedicated Telegram channel for timely assistance.
 - iii.Following official requests from the Governments of Nepal and Sri Lanka, the Indian Embassy in Tehran (Iran) extended Operation Sindhu to facilitate the evacuation of Nepalese and Sri Lankan nationals stranded in conflict-affected regions of Iran.

Appointments or Resign/Retired

Luis Montenegro Reappointed as Prime Minister of Portugal

Luis Filipe Montenegro Cardoso de Morais Esteves, leader of the Democratic Alliance (AD) Party has been appointed as **the Prime Minister (PM) of Portugal**, following the legislative elections held on May 18, 2025.

- The AD party secured 91 seats in the 230-member legislature in the election.
- Luis will form the government with Chega, a national conservative party in Portugal which secured 60 seats and Socialist Party (PS) which secured 58 seats.



About

Luis

Montenegro:

- Luis Filipe Montenegro Cardoso de Morais Esteves is a lawyer and a politician.
- In 2002, he was elected to the Portuguese Parliament, representing Aveiro, and served till 2018. He was reelected in four consecutive legislative elections: 2005, 2009, 2011 and 2015.
- In 2011, he became the leader of the Social Democratic Party Parliamentary Group between 2011 and 2017.
- In 2022, he became the President of the Social Democratic Party.
- In April **2024**, he was appointed at the PM of Portugal.

Brand Ambassador Appointments in May 2025: Shubman Gill–Oakley, Shraddha Kapoor–Eureka Forbes, Dushyanth Sridhar–Ramraj Cotton

California, United States of America (USA) based **Oakley Inc.** a renowned eyewear brand under the umbrella of Italy-based Luxottica Group S.p.A announced the appointment of Indian cricketer **Shubman Gill** as its new **brand ambassador in India**.

- This collaboration positions Gill as the face of Oakley's latest campaign, 'Artifacts from the Future' targeting India's youth and sports enthusiasts.
- With this, Gill joins Oakley's global roster of elite athletes, including football star Kylian Mbappé (France), Basketball player Damian Lillard (USA), and Football player Patrick Mahomes II (USA).

Eureka Forbes Appoints Shraddha Kapoor as Brand Ambassador

Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Eureka Forbes Ltd**, India's leading health and hygiene solutions provider, appointed Bollywood actress **Shraddha Kapoor** as the Brand Ambassador for its 'Forbes SmartClean Robotic Vacuum Cleaners range' to promote cleaner, healthier lifestyles and strengthen connections with young, urban consumers.

Germany's Annalena Baerbock elected President of the UNGA

Former German Foreign Minister **Annalena Baerbock** was elected President of the **80th session** of the New York, United States of America (USA) based United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), following her win of **167 votes** in favour out of 188 seats in a secret ballot.

- She will assume office on **9 September 2025**, succeeding the current President of UNGA, **Philemon Yang**, former Prime Minister(PM) of Cameroon.

- Annalena Baerbock becomes the first woman from the Western European Group to hold the post and the **fifth woman** overall to lead the UNGA.

Note: The one year presidency rotates among the world body's five regional groups : African Group; Asia-Pacific Group; Eastern European Group; Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) and Western European and Other States Group (WEOG)

About Annalena Baerbock:

- i. Annalena Baerbock, German politician and diplomat, is known for advocating a “feminist foreign policy” and emphasizes climate action and inclusive multilateralism.
- ii. She joined the German Green Party in 2005 and became the chair of the party's Brandenburg Chapter from 2009 to 2013.
- iii. From 2018 to 2022, she served as the co-leader of the Federal Green Party and was re-elected in 2019.

- In 2021, she became the candidate for Chancellor of the Green Party in the federal election.

iv. Following the 2021 election, she was appointed as **Germany's first female foreign minister**, serving from December 2021 to May 2025 under Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

About United Nations General Assembly (UNGA):

- i. The UNGA, established in 1945, is the main representative body of the UN, comprising all 193 Member States. Its headquarters is located in New York, United States of America (USA).
- ii. It is the main policy-making organ of the organization and provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues by the Charter.

Lee Jae-myung Elected as President of South Korea

Lee Jae-myung, leader of the Democratic Party of Korea (DPK), was elected as the 14th President of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), following a snap presidential election held on 3rd June 2025.

- Lee Jae-myung secured 49.42% of the votes, defeating the conservative candidate Kim Moon-soo, who received 41.15%. The voter turnout reached 79.38%, the highest since 1997, indicating active public participation amid six months of political instability.
- The election was necessitated after the impeachment of former President **Yoon Suk Yeol** due to his brief imposition of martial law.

About Lee Jae-myung:

- i. He began his career as a human rights and labor lawyer, advocating for workers' rights and social justice.
- ii. He entered politics in 2005 and was elected Mayor of Seongnam in 2010. He held the position of Governor of Gyeonggi Province between 2018 and 2021.
- iii. He previously contested the presidential elections in 2017 and again in 2022, narrowly missing victory in the latter against Yoon Suk Yeol.
- iv. From 2022 to 2025, he served as a Member of the National Assembly representing the Gyeongang B constituency and also led the Democratic Party of Korea (DPK).

S Mahendra Dev Appointed as Chairperson of EAC-PM

The Government of India(GoI) appointed economist **Prof S Mahendra Dev** as the **Chairperson** of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (**EAC-PM**) for a period of two years. He succeeds **Suman Bery**, Vice-Chairman of National Institution for Transforming India(NITI) Aayog, who held the position following the demise of Bibek Debroy on 1 November 2024.



- Following his appointment, Prof Mahendra Dev resigned from the Board of Directors of Axis Bank, as the role of Chairperson is a full-time position.

About the Appointment:

- i.The reconstitution of the EAC-PM was approved by Prime Minister(PM) **Narendra Modi**, and notified by the **Cabinet Secretariat**.
- ii.The newly appointed part-time members of the EAC-PM include Soumya Kanti Ghosh, K V Raju, Chetan Ghate, Pami Dua, Pulak Ghosh, and Gourav Vallabh. Notably, Poonam Gupta was excluded from the reconstituted council.

About Prof S Mahendra Dev:

- i.Prof Mahendra Dev began his academic career at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai(Maharashtra) in 1988.
- ii.He served as the Chairman of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (**CACP**), under the Ministry of Agriculture(MoA) from 2008 to 2010.
- iii.He was also a Member of the National Statistical Commission(NSC) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation(MoSPI) from 2013 to 2016.
- iv.From 2010 to 2022, he held the position of **Director** and Vice-Chancellor at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (**IGIDR**), located in Mumbai.

About Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM):

- i.The EAC-PM is an independent, non-constitutional, and non-statutory advisory body constituted to provide expert advice on economic and related matters directly to the Prime Minister(PM) of India.
- ii.The Council is headed by a Chairperson alongside full-time and part-time members.

Katrina Kaif Appointed as Global Tourism Ambassador of Maldives

Malé (Maldives)-based Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (**MMPRC**), also known as Visit Maldives, appointed Bollywood actor **Katrina Kaif** as its Global Tourism Ambassador.

In this role, she will spearhead international promotional efforts under the “**Sunny Side of Life**” campaign, designed to boost the Maldives’ global tourism appeal ahead of the summer season and reinforce ties with India.

- i.Katrina Kaif, widely recognised across India for her popularity and international fan base, is set to represent the tropical island nation in global tourism campaigns.

ii. She will serve as a brand ambassador to promote luxury tourism in the Maldives, focusing on major markets such as India, the United Kingdom (UK), Russia, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Anuradha Thakur Appointed as First Woman Secretary of DEA

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) announced the appointment of **Anuradha Thakur** as the **first woman Secretary** of the Department of Economic Affairs (**DEA**), effective from 1 July 2025. She will succeed **Ajay Seth**, who retires on 30 June 2025.

- Currently serving as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in the DEA, she will be responsible for shaping India's economic policies, preparing the national budget, and collaborating with global financial institutions such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), and International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- The appointment was formalized through notification S.O. 2700(E) issued under the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Act, 1992.

Board Memberships:

1. SEBI:

i. **Anuradha Thakur** will serve as an ex-officio part-time member on the SEBI Board from 1 July 2025, representing the DEA.

ii. SEBI Board Composition:

- **Chairperson:** Tuhin Kanta Pandey
- **Three full-time members:** Ananth Narayan G, Amarjeet Singh, and Kamlesh Chandra Varshney
- **Three part-time ex-officio members:** RBI Deputy Governor – Rajeshwar Rao; Department of Economic Affairs Secretary – Ajay Seth (to be replaced by Anuradha Thakur); Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MoCA) Secretary – Deepti Gaur Mukerjee

About

Anuradha

Thakur:

i. Anuradha Thakur is a 1994-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the Himachal Pradesh (HP) cadre.

ii. She served as Additional Secretary in MCA, where she managed the Prime Minister (PM)'s Internship Programme and initiatives under the Companies Act, 2013.

iii. She was the Director of the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO).

About Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI):

Chairman – Tuhin Kanta Pandey

Headquarters – Mumbai, Maharashtra

The SEBI was constituted as a non-statutory body on April 12, 1988 through a resolution of the Government of India (GoI). It was given statutory powers on 30 January 1992 through the SEBI Act, 1992.

Cristiano Ronaldo Named Global Ambassador for Esports World Cup 2025

Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) based **Esports World Cup Foundation** has announced **Cristiano Ronaldo**, captain of Riyadh-based Al Nassr, a football club, as the **Global Ambassador** for the Esports World Cup (EWC) 2025, to be held in Riyadh from July 7 to August 24, 2025.

- Through this partnership, the organization aims to unlock its reach beyond traditional sports audiences and bridge the gap between sports and competitive gaming.

Key Points:

i. As a global ambassador, Ronaldo will lead EWC's international campaign and participate in key activities throughout the seven-week event at Boulevard City in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

ii. He will also appear as playable character in FATAL FURY: City of the Wolves, one of 25 major tournaments featured in EWC 2025.

Note: EWC is an annual international esports tournament series run by the Esports World Cup Foundation, a Non-Profit Organization.

- It features a multi-game, multi-platform format, offering clubs and players the opportunity to showcase their skills across diverse competitions.

Zou Jiayi Elected as AIIB's First Woman President

Zou Jiayi, former Vice Finance Minister of China, was elected President of the Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) during its 10th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors. She will assume the role for a five-year term starting **January 16, 2026**.

- She will succeed **Jin Liqun**, the founding President of the AIIB, becoming the AIIB's second President and its first-ever female leader.

About Zou Jiayi:

i. Zou Jiayi is an experienced leader with over three decades of experience in global finance policy at the highest levels.

ii. She joined the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Republic of China, in 1988 and held roles across international departments.

iii. From 1996 to 2009, she served as China's Executive Director(ED) and Alternate ED at Washington, United States of America (USA) based World Bank.

iv. She was moved to the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) in 2015. She served as Vice Minister of Supervision from 2017 to 2018 and CCDI Standing Committee Member.

- She was nicknamed the “**tiger-fighter**” for her role in high-profile anti-corruption efforts.

About Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB):

AIIB is a multilateral development bank, focused on developing Asia, but with members all over the world.

China is the largest shareholder of the AIIB, with 26.54% voting shares.

- India is the second-largest shareholder with 7.58%, followed by Russia with 5.9% and Germany with 4.1%.

Honours/ Awards

Thailand's Opal Suchata Chuangsri Crowned Miss World 2025 in Hyderabad

Opal Suchata Chuangsri from Thailand was crowned Miss World 2025 at the 72nd edition of the Miss World pageant held at the HITEX Exhibition Centre in Hyderabad, Telangana, India.

- Opal Suchata was crowned by Miss World 2024, **Krystyna Pyszková** from the Czech Republic.
 - She made history by becoming the first woman from Thailand and only the second from Southeast Asia, after India in 2017, to win the Miss World title.
- i. The First Runner-up title was awarded to Hasset Dereje Admassu from Ethiopia, while Maja Klajda from Poland was declared the Second Runner-up at the Miss World 2025 pageant.
- ii. The event featured 108 contestants from global territories and was co-hosted by Miss World 2016 Stephanie Del Valle and Indian television personality Sachiin Kumbhar.

President Draupadi Murmu Conferred 92 Distinguished Service Awards to Indian Armed Force Personnels

President of India Draupadi Murmu conferred **Distinguished Service decorations** on **92 Personnel** of the Armed Forces and other personnel drawn from the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Border Roads Organization (BRO) during the Defence Investiture Ceremony 2025 (Phase-II) at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The awards comprised **30** Param Vishisht Seva Medals (**PVSM**), **5** Uttam Yudh Seva Medals (**UYSM**), and **57** Ati Vishisht Seva Medals (**AVSM**), honouring the recipients for their exemplary leadership, dedication, and distinguished service to the nation.
- Lieutenant (Lt) General (Gen) **Manoj Kumar Katiyar**, Commander, Western Command, and Lt Gen **Dhiraj Seth**, Commander, Southern Command, received the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM).

Padma Awardee Javed Akhtar Honoured with Dostoevsky Star Award

Renowned screenwriter, lyricist, and poet **Javed Akhtar** was honoured with the **Dostoevsky Star Award**, Russia's highest literary honour by the Russian House in Mumbai, Maharashtra, for his role in promoting cultural dialogue and preserving literary heritage.

- Javed Akhtar is the **first Indian** to receive the Dostoevsky Award.
- As part of the felicitation, a poem book of Akhtar, translated into Russian by Ramdas Akella was also released at the event.

About Javed Akhtar:

- i. He was born on January 17, 1945, in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh (MP).
- ii. He worked as a screenwriter in Hindi movies such as Zanjeer (1973), Sholay (1975), Deewaar (1975), Don (1978)
- iii. He worked as a lyric writer in movies such as Dil Chahta Hai, Kal Ho Naa Ho, Lagaan, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara

Awards and Honours:

i. He was conferred with **Padma Shri** in **1999** and **Padma Bhushan** in **2007** for his contributions in the field of literature.

ii. He was the recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award in 2013 for Urdu poetry collection Lava.

iii. First Indian to receive the Richard Dawkins Award in 2020 for championing rationalism and secularism

iv. He received 5 National Award for Best Lyrics for the songs in Films such as “Sandese Aate Hain” in Border (1997), “Ma Rewa” in Godmother (1999), “Panchi Nadiya Pawan Ke Jhoke” in Refugee (2000), “Radha Kaise Na Jale” and “O Mitwa” in Lagaan (2001) and “Saathiya” in Saathiya (2002).

Note: The award named after Russian literary giant Fyodor Dostoevsky, it honours global figures who advance cross-cultural literary exchange and philosophical discourse .

Chanel's Global CEO Leena Nair Awarded Commander of British Empire Honour

Indian-origin British, **Leena Nair**, Global Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of French Luxury brand **Chanel, Inc.**, has been awarded the Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) **honour** in recognition of her exceptional leadership in the retail and consumer sector.

- She received the award from **Prince William**, the Prince of Wales, during an investiture ceremony held at Windsor Castle in the United Kingdom (UK).

About 2025 King New Year Honours List:

i. In December 2024, Cabinet Office of British Government released King Charles' 2025 New Year Honours List in London, the UK.

ii. This latest edition of the list featured over 1,200 recipients across various sectors like: sport, healthcare, academia and voluntary service. This year total **30 Indian-origin** persons included in the list.

iii. The list is released annually by the Cabinet Office in the name of the British monarch includes: CBE, Order of the British Empire (OBE), and Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBEs).

King Charles III Confers Knighthood on David Beckham for Sporting Achievements and Charity Work

British football icon **David Robert Joseph Beckham** was formally awarded a **Knighthood** by King Charles III during the monarch's annual birthday celebrations, recognizing his remarkable contributions to sports and charitable causes.

- Apart from him, actor **Gary Oldman** and musician **Roger Daltrey** are among the most high-profile names to receive knighthoods in King Charles III's Birthday Honours list this year.

Key Points:

i. David Beckham's illustrious football career spanned over two decades, during which he

became one of the most recognizable athletes globally. He played for top clubs such as Manchester United, Real Madrid, AC Milan and LA Galaxy and Paris Saint-Germain.

ii. The honours list is prepared by the United Kingdom(UK) government and signed off by the monarch, with nominees reviewed by independent panels.

About the United Kingdom (UK):

Prime Minister(PM) – Sir Keir Starmer

Capital – London

Currency – Pound Sterling (GBP)

Brand Finance India 100 Ranking 2025: Tata Group Retains Top Position with USD 31.6 B Brand Value

London (United Kingdom, UK) based **Brand Finance**, an independent brand valuation consultancy, released the **India 100 Ranking 2025**, highlighting total brand value of India's top 100 brands has surged to **USD 236.5 billion**, reflecting the strong growth of India's corporate sector.

- **Tata Group** retained its **1st rank**, becoming the first Indian brand to surpass USD 30 billion, with a brand value of USD 31.6 billion, marking a 10% year-on-year (Y-o-Y) increase.

i. **Infosys Limited** came in 2nd place, with its brand value rising by 15% to USD 16.3 billion, keeping its top spot in the Information Technology(IT) Services sector. At the same time, **HDFC Group** ranked 3rd, growing 37% to USD 14.2 billion, strengthening its role as a major leader in financial services.

ii. The other brands in the top 10 include State Bank of India (SBI) at 6th, HCL Technologies Limited (HCLTech) at 7th, Bharti Airtel Limited (Airtel) at 8th, Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T) at 9th, and Mahindra Group at 10th position.

iii. **Taj Hotels**, for the 4th consecutive year, holds the title of the **strongest Indian brand** with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 92.2 out of 100 and AAA+ rating.

About Brand Finance Plc.:

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – David Haigh

Managing Director (MD) of Brand Finance India – Ajimon Francis

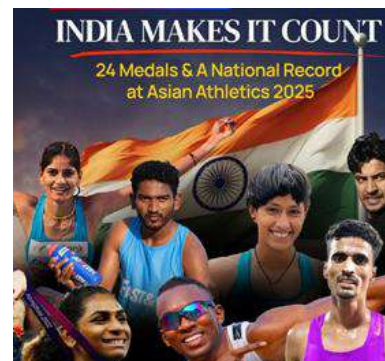
Headquarters – London, the United Kingdom (UK)

Established -1996

Sports

Asian Athletics Championships 2025: India Finishes 2nd with 24 Medals; China Tops

India finished second in the overall medal tally at the 26th Asian Athletics Championships with a commendable haul of 24 medals — 8 gold, 10 silver, and 6 bronze. **China topped** the standings with 32 medals (19 gold, 9 silver, 4 bronze).



- The Asian Athletics Championships 2025, organized by the Pathum Thani (Thailand)-based Asian Athletics Association (AAA), took place from May 27 to 31, 2025, at the Gumi Civic Stadium in Gumi, **South Korea**.

Highlights:

i. Gulveer Singh achieved a remarkable feat by winning gold medals in both the men's 10,000 meters (m) and 5,000m race.

ii. Avinash Sable ended India's 36-year wait for a gold medal in the men's 3000m steeplechase event.

iii. Tejaswin Shankar won a silver medal in the men's decathlon at the 2025 Asian Athletics Championships, becoming the first Indian to win two medals in this event.

About the Asian Athletics Association (AAA):

President – Dahlan Jumaan al-Hamad (Qatar)

Headquarters – Pathum Thani, Thailand

Established – 1973

Oscar Piastri wins F1 Spanish Grand Prix 2025

Oscar Piastri, representing United Kingdom (UK)-based McLaren Racing Limited, clinched his **5th** Formula One (F1) Grand Prix (GP) victory of the 2025 season by winning the Formula 1 Aramco Gran Premio de España **2025 (Spanish Grand Prix)** held at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya in Barcelona, Spain. This victory marked Piastri's 7th career F1 win and his eighth straight podium finish.

Key Highlights:

i. Oscar Piastri secured pole position with a lap margin of 0.209 seconds, the largest of the season, and successfully converted it into a race win, leading a McLaren 1-2 finish.

ii. His McLaren teammate **Lando Norris** secured 2nd position (+2.471 seconds), contributing to a McLaren 1-2 finish.

iii. With this victory, he extended his lead in the Drivers' Championship standings to **186 points**, ahead of his teammate Lando Norris (176 points) and Max Verstappen of Red Bull Racing (137 points).

Glenn Maxwell Retires from ODI Cricket, Heinrich Klaasen Retires from International Cricket

Australian all-rounder **Glenn Maxwell** announced retirement from the One Day Internationals (ODIs) cricket, bringing an end to a distinguished 13-year career in the ODI format, choosing to focus on the Twenty-20 Internationals (**T20I**) format ahead of 2026 International Cricket Council (**ICC**) T20 World Cup, which is scheduled to be held in India and Sri Lanka.

- Earlier he retired from the test cricket format in **2017**.

About Glenn Maxwell:

i. He began his illustrious career in ODI in 2012 against Afghanistan, scoring 3,990 runs (4 centuries and 23 fifties) and picking up 77 wickets from 149 ODI matches.

- He made his debut in test matches in 2013 against India and T20I in 2012 against Pakistan.

ii. He has been part of two world cup winning squads for Australia in ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in **2015** and **2023**.

iii. He scored fastest double century (201 runs) from 128 balls against Afghanistan in the 2023 ICC World Cup.

iv. His final ODI appearance was against India in the ICC Men's Champions Trophy in 2025.

Indian Premier League 2025: RCB Defeat PBKS to Secure First Title in 18 Years

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) secured their **first** Indian Premier League (IPL) title, defeating Punjab Kings (PBKS) by 6 runs in the final at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad (Gujarat).

- In the finals, RCB set a target of 190/9 in 20 overs with Virat Kohli scoring 43 off 35 balls, while PBKS were limited to 184/7, falling short by 6 runs despite Shashank Singh's 61 off 30 balls.
- Royal Challengers Bengaluru all-rounder Krunal Pandya awarded player of the match in the finals and became the first player to win 'Player of the Match' award in two IPL finals, previously for MI in 2017.

About Indian Premier League (IPL):

i. IPL is a franchise-based Twenty20 (T20) cricket league held annually in India and organized by the Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

ii. The BCCI has established the IPL Governing Council to oversee the IPL operations. The council is currently chaired by **Arun Dhumal**.

iii. The **18th season** of IPL, also known as TATA IPL 2025, was held from March 22 to June 3, 2025.

iv. **Broadcasting Rights: JioHotstar** (merger of JioCinema and Disney+ Hotstar), now holding domestic digital broadcasting rights

Ulaanbaatar Open 2025 Wrestling: India Secured 2nd Spot with 21 Medals; Host Mongolia Topped

The Ulaanbaatar Open 2025 Wrestling was conducted from May 29 to June 1, 2025, at the Buyant-Ukhua Sports Palace in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. It was the first-ever United World Wrestling (UWW) Ranking Series event and served as the third stage of the 2025 UWW Ranking Series.



- **India** secured the **2nd position** in the medal tally with a total of **21** medals (6 gold, 7 silver, and 8 bronze), while host nation **Mongolia** topped the table with 29 medals (7 gold, 10 silver, and 12 bronze).

About Ulaanbaatar Open 2025:

i. The tournament witnessed the participation of over 350 wrestlers from 17 countries, competing across freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling disciplines.

- A total of **31 Indian wrestlers** participated in the event, comprising 11 in men's freestyle, 10 in Greco-Roman, and 10 in women's wrestling categories.

ii. The UWW allocated a total prize money of **390,000 Swiss Francs (CHF)** for the event. The gold medalists received 1,500 CHF, silver medalists earned 750 CHF, and bronze medalists were awarded 500 CHF each.

Note: The fourth and final leg of UWW Ranking Series 2025 is scheduled to be held in Budapest, Hungary, from July 17 to 20, 2025.

Paris Saint-Germain Wins First UEFA Champions League Title

In May 2025, Paris (France) based **Paris Saint-Germain (PSG)** Football Club won their **first-ever UEFA** (Union of European Football Associations) **Champions League (UCL) 2025** title by defeating Italy based **Inter Milan** Football Club (FC) with a historic **5-0** victory in the final held at Allianz Arena, Munich, **Germany**.

- This win marks the largest margin of victory in a Champions League final in the tournament's 70-year history (1955–2025).
- The 2024–25 UEFA Champions League was the **70th edition** of Europe's premier club football competition and the 33rd season since its rebranding from the European Champion Clubs' Cup to the UEFA Champions League in 1992.

ii. Desire Doue, the 19-year-old midfielder, played a pivotal role by scoring two goals and assisting one. He provided the early assist to Achraf Hakimi, who scored the opening goal, and later netted goals in the 20th minute and just after the 60th minute.

iii. PSG team was led by Head Coach Luis Enrique, who secured his second UEFA Champions League title. He previously won the title with Barcelona (Spain) in 2015.

Note: With this UCL win, PSG became only the second French club to win the Champions League, after Olympique de Marseille in 1993.

Norway Chess 2025: Magnus Carlsen and Anna Muzychuk Clinch Titles in 13th Edition, Gukesh Dommaraju Finishes third

The 13th edition of **Norway Chess 2025**, an annual international chess tournament, was held in Stavanger, Norway from 26th May to 6th June 2025. The event included both the **Open section** and the **2nd Norway Chess Women's tournament**, featuring leading global chess players.

Norway Chess Open Title:

i. Five-time World Chess Champion **Magnus Carlsen** (Norway) won his 7th Norway Chess title in the Open section, finishing with 16 points.

ii. Fabiano Caruana (United States of America) finished second with 15.5 points, while Dommaraju Gukesh (India) secured third place with 14.5 points, replicating his third-place finish from the previous edition.

Women's Title:

i. **Anna Muzychuk** (Ukraine), a two-time World Blitz Chess Champion, emerged as the champion of the 2nd Norway Chess Women's Tournament, finishing with 16.5 points.

ii. In the final round, she drew the classical game against Indian Grandmaster R Vaishali, earning 1 point. Though she lost the Armageddon tie-break, she retained her lead.

iii. Lei Tingjie (China) secured second place with 16 points. Koneru Humpy (India), a two-time World Rapid Chess Champion, finished third with 15 points.

About Magnus Carlsen:

i. Carlsen clinched his first World Chess Championship title in 2013 by defeating Viswanathan Anand. He successfully defended this title in 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2021, totaling five classical world championships.

ii. Highest Elo Rating: Carlsen achieved a peak FIDE rating of 2882, the highest ever recorded.

About Anna Muzychuk:

She is a renowned chess player from Ukraine, and is one of the top female Grandmasters (GM) in the world. She is known for her exceptional skills in rapid and blitz formats and has represented Ukraine in several top international chess tournaments.

French Open 2025: Carlos Alcaraz won men's singles title & Coco Gauff won women's singles title

Spanish tennis player **Carlos Alcaraz** (World No. 2) defeated Italy's **Jannik Sinner** (World No. 1) in the **men's singles final** of the **French Open 2025**, held at Stade Roland Garros, Paris, France.

- With this win, Alcaraz clinched his second French Open title and fifth Grand Slam title overall.
- In the **Women's Singles** final of the **French Open 2025**, United States of America (USA) based **Coco Gauff** (World No.2) defeated **Aryna Sabalenka** (World No.1) of Belarus to clinch her maiden French Open title and second Grand Slam title overall, following her 2023 US Open victory.
- i. In Men's Doubles, Marcel Granollers (Spain) and Horacio Zeballos (Argentina) defeated Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski (United Kingdom, UK).
- ii. In Women's Doubles, Sara Errani and Jasmine Paolini (both Italy) defeated Anna Danilina (Russia-Kazakhstan) and Aleksandra Krunic (Serbia).

Portugal Claims Second UEFA Nations League Title with Penalty Shootout Victory Over Spain

Portugal clinched their second Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Nations League title by defeating **Spain** 5-3 in a penalty shootout after a 2-2 draw in the final at the Allianz Arena, Munich, Germany.

- The fourth edition of the tournament, held from September 2024 to June 2025.

Match Highlights:

- i. The final match saw both teams scoring 2 goals each in regulation time, leading to extra time and eventually a penalty shootout.
- ii. Spain players who scored the goals are Martin Zubimendi (21st minute) and Mikel Oyarzabal (45th minute). For Portugal Nuno Mendes scored the first goal at 26 minute and Cristiano Ronaldo scored the second in the 61st minute, which marked his 138th international goal.
- iii. With this win, Portugal became the first nation to win the UEFA Nations League title twice since its inception in 2018–19. Portugal won their first UEFA Nations League title in 2019,

defeating the Netherlands 1-0 in the final.

iv. Cristiano Ronaldo, aged over 40 years, became the oldest player to score in a Nations League final, surpassing Luka Modrić (37 years) from the 2023 edition.

v. Nuno Mendes was awarded the Player of the Match for his performance in the final and contribution in the semi-final.

vi. Spain scored 25 goals in the 2024–25 UEFA Nations League, the most by any team in a single edition.

About UEFA Nations League:

The UEFA Nations League, organized by Nyon (Switzerland)-based Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), established in 2018, is a biennial competition to enhance competitive football among European nations.

About Union of European Football Associations (UEFA):

President – Aleksander Čeferin

Headquarters – Nyon, Switzerland

Founded – 1954

Former Indian Cricketer MS Dhoni, Among 7 Cricketers Inducted to ICC Hall of Fame

Former Indian Cricket Captain **Mahendra Singh (MS) Dhoni** was inducted into the International Cricket Council (ICC) **Hall of Fame** in the Class of 2025 during a special ceremony held at Abbey Road Studios in London, the United Kingdom (UK).



- MS Dhoni was among 7 international cricketers (5 men and 2 women) who joined the ICC Hall of Fame such as: Graeme Smith and Hashim Amla (South Africa), Matthew Hayden (Australia), Daniel Vettori (New Zealand) and Sana Mir (Pakistan) and Sarah Taylor (England).

- With this, the total number of ICC Hall of Fame inductees reaches **to 122**.

i. MS Dhoni, fondly known as ‘Captain Cool’ due to his nonchalant demeanour on the field, has now become the **11th** Indian and **9th** Indian male cricketer to join the prestigious list of international cricketers.

- He now joins some of the legendary Indian cricketers who are already part of this list: Sunil Gavaskar, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Virendra Sehwag, among others.

ii. MS Dhoni holds the record of only captain in cricket history to win all 3 ICC white-ball trophies i.e. India’s 1st T20 World Cup (2007), One Day International (ODI) World Cup (2011) and Champions Trophy (2013).

iii. Former Pakistan’s women cricket team captain, **Sana Mir** became the 1st woman from Pakistan to be included in the ICC Hall of Fame.

- During her 15 year long cricket career which included 8 years as captain, Mir took total 150 wickets in 121 ODIs and 89 wickets in 106 T20Is, scoring 1630 and 820 runs respectively.

West Indies Cricketer Nicholas Pooran Retires from International Cricket

Trinidad and Tobago-based cricketer **Nicholas Pooran**, a prominent **West Indies** white-ball player, announced his retirement from international cricket at the **age of 29**. The decision marks a shift in his career as he chooses to focus on franchise-based T20 leagues around the world.

About Nicholas Pooran:

i. He is left-handed wicketkeeper-batter, debuted in Twenty20 International (T20I) on 23 September 2016 against Pakistan, and in One Day Internationals (ODIs) on 20 February 2019 versus England

- He played 61 ODIs, scoring 1,983 runs (including 3 centuries) and has taken 6 wickets.
- He is the leading T20I run scorer with 2,275 runs in 106 matches with 98 as his highest score in a T20 match.

ii. In his Franchise career, he played for Mumbai Indians (MI), Punjab Kings, Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), and Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

- In 2025, he scored **524** runs for LSG in the IPL

South Africa Clinches ICC World Test Championship 2023–25 Title

South Africa defeated defending champions Australia by 5 wickets in the **2023–25 International Cricket Council (ICC) World Test Championship (WTC)** final at Lord's Cricket Ground, London, **England**.

- This victory ended South Africa's 27-year ICC trophy drought, marking their first senior men's ICC title since the 1998 ICC Knockout Trophy.
- The **3rd edition** of the ICC WTC was held from June 16, 2023, to June 14, 2025.



i. **Aiden Markram** received the **Man of the Match** award for his match-winning century, becoming the first South African to score a hundred in an ICC WTC final.

ii. The total prize pool of **USD 5.76 million** (Rs. 49.24 crore) was announced.

George Russell Wins F1 Canadian Grand Prix 2025

George Russell, representing Germany-based Mercedes, clinched his 1st Formula One (F1) Grand Prix (GP) victory of the 2025 season by winning the **63rd** edition of the **Canadian Grand Prix** at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in **Montreal, Canada**. This victory marked Russell's **fourth** career F1 win and his 20th podium finish.

- Teammates, Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris, representing United Kingdom (UK)-based McLaren collided in closing gaps, ending their podium hopes.
- With this Victory, George Russell stands at **4th place** with **136** points (pts) in the Drivers' Championship Standings 2025.

Key Highlights:

- i. George Russell secured pole position with a lap margin of **0.228** seconds (secs) and claimed the fastest lap on lap 63.
- ii. Max Verstappen, representing Austria-based Red Bull, secured second place and Andrea Kimi Antonelli, teammate of George Russell, claimed third place and his first F1 podium finish.

U Mumba Clinches Their Maiden Ultimate Table Tennis Title

Mumbai (Maharashtra) based franchise, **U Mumba Table Tennis (TT)**, clinched their first maiden **Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT)** title with a dominant win **8-4 win** against the **Jaipur Patriots** in the **6th** UTT final at EKA Arena in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

- This tournament was held from May 31 to June 15, 2025, featuring 8 teams across India.
- i. Akash Pal was named Indian Player of the Final, Bernadette Szocs received Foreign Player of the Final honours and Jeet Chandra was awarded the "Shot of the Final"
 - ii. Harmeet Desai (Dempo Goa Challengers) and Bernadette Szocs were awarded Male and Female Most Valuable Players (MVPs) of UTT Season 6, respectively
 - iii. The champion U Mumba earned Rs 60 lakh, while Jaipur Patriots received Rs 40 lakh, and semifinalists Dabang Delhi TTC and the Challengers took home Rs 17.5 lakh each.

About Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT):

- i. Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) is India's premier professional table tennis league, established to promote the sport and develop Indian talent on a global platform.
- ii. It was launched in 2017 by 11Sports, an initiative of Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Vita Dani, co-owner of Chennaiyin FC (Indian Super League team) under Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI).

Neeraj Chopra Wins Paris Diamond League 2025 with 88.16m Javelin Throw

Neeraj Chopra, India's Olympic gold medallist and World No. 2 javelin thrower, won the **Paris Diamond League 2025** title with a throw of 88.16 metres (m) on his first attempt at the Stade Sébastien Charléty, Paris, France.

- German thrower **Julian Weber** (World No.3) finished second with an opening throw of 87.88 m, while Brazil's **Luiz Mauricio da Silva** finished third with 86.62 m, setting a new South American record.
 - Anderson Peters of Grenada, the World No. 1, came fifth with 80.29 m.
- Note:** In May 2025, Neeraj Chopra **crossed the 90 m** mark with a throw of 90.23 m during the Doha leg of the Diamond League, securing a second-place behind Julian Weber.
- Career Highlights in Diamond League:**
- i. Paris DL 2025 marked Chopra's first win in Paris; he previously finished fifth with 84.67 m in 2017.

ii. His last DL victory was in June 2023 at Lausanne (Switzerland) with a throw of 87.66 m. Between that and Paris 2025, he recorded six runner-up finishes.

iii. This was his fifth Career DL title, following previous wins in Lausanne 2022, Zurich 2022, Doha 2023, and Lausanne 2023.

About Paris Diamond League (DL) 2025:

i. The Paris leg was the eighth event out of 15 meetings in the DL 2025 season, which will conclude with a two-day final in Zurich, Switzerland, in August 2025.

ii. The event is organized by **World Athletics** and featured 14 athletic disciplines, including men's 200 m, 5000 m, and javelin throw, along with women's 100 m, 3000 m steeplechase, and pole vault events.

Arjuna Awardee Lalit Upadhyay Announces Retirement from International Hockey

Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, a two-time Olympic bronze medallist, announced his **retirement** from **international hockey** after playing 183 matches and scoring 67 goals for India. The announcement came after his final appearance against Belgium in the European leg of the Fédération Internationale de Hockey (FIH) Pro League 2024–25.

- In 2021, he was honoured with the **Arjuna Award**, India's second-highest sporting award, for his significant contribution to Indian hockey.

Career Achievements of Lalit Upadhyay:

i. Lalit Upadhyay hails from Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and began his senior international hockey career in 2014, debuting at the Hockey World Cup 2014.

ii. He was an integral part of the Indian hockey team that ended a 41-year Olympic medal drought by winning the bronze medal at the **Tokyo Olympics 2020**.

- And a member of second consecutive Olympic bronze medal at the **Paris Olympics 2024**.

iii. He was a part of the Indian team that secured gold medals at the Asian Champions Trophy in both 2016 and 2018 and Silver medal in 2022 Commonwealth Games.

iv. Since 2022, he has served as a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP) in the Uttar Pradesh Police.

Obituary

Former Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani died in Air India Plane Crash

Veteran Indian politician and Former Chief Minister (CM) of Gujarat, **Vijay Ramniklalbhai Rupani** died in Air India flight 'AI171' operated by a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which crashed into a residential area in Meghani Nagar after taking off from the Ahmedabad Airport officially **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport**, Gujarat on June 12, 2025.

- He is the 2nd Gujarat CM (serving/former) to die in an Air Plane crash, following **Balwantrai Gopalji Mehta** (2nd CM of Gujarat of independent India) who was killed in 1965 when his plane was shot down by a Pakistani jet during the Indo-Pak war.
- Vijay Rupani was born on August 02, 1956 in Rangoon (now Yangon) in Myanmar.

About Vijay Rupani:

- i. Vijay Rupani, a prominent leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) served as the **16th** CM of Gujarat from August 2016 to September 2021.
- ii. He started his political career as an activist of Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP), student wing of Rashtra Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and became a Municipal Corporator in Rajkot in 1987.
- iii. In 1996-97, he became the Mayor of Rajkot and later, he served as a Member of Parliament (MP) of the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of the Parliament) from 2006 to 2012.
- iv. As state cabinet minister, he held various portfolios like: transport, labour, and water supply from 2014 to 2016.
- v. He won his 1st state Assembly election from Rajkot West in a bypoll held in 2014.
- vi. He was appointed President of BJP Gujarat in February 2016. He succeeded Anandiben Patel as CM of Gujarat following her resignation in August 2016.

Important Days with theme

World No Tobacco Day 2025 – May 31

World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) is annually observed across the globe on May 31 to raise global awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and advocate for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption.

- The annual observance of WNTD is observed by Geneva (Switzerland) based World Health Organization (WHO).
- The 2025 WNTD theme, “**Unmasking the Appeal: Exposing Industry Tactics on Tobacco and Nicotine Products,**” focuses on revealing how the tobacco and nicotine industries engineer products and deploy deceptive marketing to target youth.



Background:

- i. The Member States of WHO established World No Tobacco Day in 1987 to spread awareness about preventable diseases and deaths caused by tobacco.
- ii. In 1987, the World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted Resolution WHA40.38, designating 7 April 1988 as the first “World No-Smoking Day”
- iii. Subsequently, in **1988**, the WHA passed Resolution WHA42.19, declaring that World No Tobacco Day would be observed annually on **31 May**.

World Milk Day 2025 – June 01

World Milk Day (WMD) is observed globally on June 1 every year to highlight the nutritional importance of milk, promote its consumption, and acknowledge the vital role of the dairy sector in supporting global nutrition, economic growth, and sustainability.

- The annual observance of the day was led by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN).
- The theme for WMD 2025 is “**Let’s Celebrate the Power of Dairy,**” underscores dairy’s multifaceted impact on health, livelihoods, and economies worldwide.

Background:

- i. WMD was established in 2001 by FAO to promote milk’s benefits and celebrate the global dairy sector.
- ii. The **first** WMD was observed on **June 1, 2001**.

World Bicycle Day 2025 – June 3

The United Nations (UN’s) **World Bicycle Day** is observed annually across the globe on **June 3** to emphasize the bicycle’s role as a simple, affordable, reliable, clean, and environmentally sustainable means of transportation.

- The day also highlighted the bicycle’s contribution to health, education, and social inclusion, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Background:

i. The idea for World Bicycle Day was initiated by Polish-American social scientist Leszek J. Sibilski, who launched a global campaign advocating for UN designated day to recognize the significance of bicycles.

ii. The UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/72/272 on April 12, 2018, declaring June 3 as World Bicycle Day.

- The resolution was supported by all 193 UN member states, with Turkmenistan sponsoring and 56 countries co-sponsoring.

iii. The **first** World Bicycle Day was celebrated on **June 3, 2018**.

World Environment Day 2025 – June 5

The United Nations (UN's) World Environment Day (**WED**) is annually observed across the globe on **June 5** to promote awareness and action towards environmental protection and sustainability.

- The theme for WED 2025 was “**Beat Plastic Pollution**“, emphasizing the urgent need to address plastic waste's detrimental impacts on ecosystems, wildlife, and human health.
- The **Republic of Korea** hosts the global celebrations for the second time, having previously hosted in 1997.

**Key points:**

i. On June 4, 2025, New Delhi (Delhi) based Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)'s **State of India's Environment in Figures**

2025 released a report providing a data-driven analysis of India's environmental and developmental status.

ii. On June 5, 2025, **Narendra Modi**, Prime Minister (PM) of India led a tree plantation initiative at Bhagwan Mahavir Vanasthali Park in New Delhi, planting a Banyan sapling under the campaign 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam.'

World Oceans Day 2025 – June 8

The United Nations (UN's) World Oceans Day (**WOD**) is annually observed across the globe on **June 8** to raise awareness about human impacts on oceans, foster a global conservation movement, and promote sustainable ocean management.

- WOD 2025 was hosted by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (**DOALOS**) under the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN, the event is jointly organised with **Oceanic Global**, a non-profit organisation.
- The theme for WOD 2025, “**Wonder: Sustaining What Sustains Us**”, highlights the ocean's beauty, mystery, and its vital, irreplaceable role in supporting life on Earth.

- As part of WOD 2025, **UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3)** will be held in Nice, **France** from June 9 to 13, 2025 under the theme “Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean.”

Background:

- i. The idea of an ocean day was first proposed by Canada on 8 June **1992** during the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, **UNCED**).
- ii. On 5 December **2008**, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/63/111, officially designating 8 June as World Oceans Day.
- iii. The inaugural WOD celebration was held on June 8, **2009**.

World Day Against Child Labour 2025 – June 12

The United Nations (UN's) World Day Against Child Labour (**WDACL**) is observed annually across the globe on **June 12** to raise awareness about child labour and mobilize efforts for its elimination.

- The theme for WDACL 2025 is “**Progress is clear, but there's more to do: let's speed up efforts!**”.

World Blood Donor Day 2025 – June 14

World Blood Donor Day (**WBDD**) is observed annually on **June 14** worldwide to recognize the contributions of voluntary, unpaid blood donors and raise awareness about the critical need for safe blood and blood products.

- June 14, 2025, marks the **21st anniversary of WBDD**, observed under the World Health Organization's (WHO) leadership.
- The theme of WBDD 2025, “**Give blood, give hope: together we save lives,**” emphasizes the collective strength and life-saving impact of voluntary blood donations.
- **Italy** hosts the 2025 global events through its Rome (Italy)-based National Blood Centre (Centro Nazionale Sangue, CNS).

**Background:**

- i. WBDD was established in 2004 by WHO to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Karl Landsteiner** (1868–1943), the Austrian-American biologist and physician who discovered the ABO blood group system in 1901.
- ii. The first WBDD was observed on **June 14, 2004**, and was jointly organised by WHO, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations (IFBDO), and the International Society of Blood

Transfusion (ISBT).

World Refugee Day 2025 – June 20

The United Nations (UN's) **World Refugee Day** is annually observed on **June 20** to honor refugees worldwide and recognize their immense strength and courage in fleeing conflict or persecution.

- The annual observance is led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (**UNHCR**), headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, in collaboration with key partners such as the World Health Organization (**WHO**) and various other international organisations.
- The theme for World Refugee Day 2025 is “**Solidarity with Refugees**”, emphasizing the need for united action to support displaced individuals.

Background:

i. In December 2000, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted resolution A/RES/55/76, designating June 20 as World Refugee Day.

ii. The inaugural World Refugee Day was held on **June 20, 2001**.

About United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

President – Filippo Grandi

Headquarters – Geneva, Switzerland

Founded – 1950

International Day of Yoga 2025 – June 21

The United Nations (UN's) International Day of Yoga (**IDY**) is annually observed across the globe on **June 21** to promote awareness about the physical and mental health benefits of Yoga, a 5,000-year-old ancient practice that originated in India.

- June 21, 2025, marks the **11th** observance of IYD.
- The theme for IDY 2025, “**Yoga for One Earth, One Health**”, emphasizes the deep interconnection between individual health and planetary well-being.

Background:

i. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/69/131 on December 11, **2014**, declaring June 21 as IDY.

ii. The first IYD was observed on **June 21, 2015**.

2025 Events:

i. On IYD 2025, a national event was led by **PM Narendra Modi** in **Visakhapatnam**, Andhra Pradesh (AP), where over 3 lakh participants performed the Common Yoga Protocol (**CYP**) simultaneously with thousands at **100,000+ locations** across India, part of the “**Yoga Sangam**” initiative.

ii. On the occasion of IYD 2025, Uttarakhand Chief Minister (CM) **Pushkar Singh Dhami** launched **India's first dedicated Yoga Policy**, positioning the state as a global wellness hub.

International Day of the celebration of Solstice 2025 – June 21

The International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice, observed annually on June 21, highlights the cultural and astronomical significance of solstices across different religions and ethnic traditions worldwide.

- The United Nations (UN) established this day to promote awareness about solstices and equinoxes, emphasizing their impact on seasons, agriculture, and cultural festivities.

Background :

- i. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution **A/RES/73/300** on June 20, **2019**, proclaiming June 21 as the International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice.
- ii. The day aims to educate people about the astronomical phenomena of solstices and equinoxes and their influence on global traditions.

About Solstice?

- i. A solstice (derived from Latin *sol* meaning “sun” and *sistere* meaning “to stand still”) occurs when the Sun reaches its northernmost or southernmost point relative to the equator.
- ii. There are two solstices each year:

- **June Solstice** (*Summer Solstice* in the Northern Hemisphere): Occurs on or around **21 June**. It marks the **longest day** and **shortest night** of the year.
- **December Solstice** (*Winter Solstice* in the Northern Hemisphere): Occurs on or around **21 December**. It marks the shortest day and longest night of the year.

About Equinox:

An equinox (from Latin *aequus* meaning “equal” and *nox* meaning “night”) occurs when the Sun is directly above the Equator, resulting in nearly equal day and night durations. The two equinoxes are:

- **March Equinox** (*Spring/Vernal Equinox*): Occurs on or around 20 March, marking the beginning of spring.
- **September Equinox** (*Autumnal Equinox*): Occurs on or around 23 September, marking the beginning of autumn.

World Music Day 2025 – June 21

World Music Day or Fête de la Musique is observed on 21st June every year, and the celebrations are guided by a central theme that highlights the relevance of music in addressing contemporary global concerns. The day promotes unity, creativity, and emotional connection through musical performances across public spaces worldwide.

- The day holds cultural and historical significance, promoting the idea that music should be freely shared and accessible to all. It is inspired by the French slogan “**Faites de la musique**” (translated as “**Make Music**”), which reflects the core purpose of the observance, to inspire self-expression and participation through music.
- The **2025** celebration marked the 43rd anniversary of **World Music Day**.

Theme:

- i. The theme for World Music Day 2025 is “**Healing Through Harmony.**”
- ii. It highlights the therapeutic power of music in promoting emotional well-being, relieving

stress, and fostering unity across communities.

International Olympic Day 2025 – June 23

International Olympic Day is annually observed across the globe on 23 June to promote participation in sports and celebrate the ideals of excellence, friendship, and respect through physical activities, cultural events, and educational initiatives.

- The day commemorates the establishment of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on 23rd June 1894 at the Sorbonne in Paris, where French historian Baron Pierre de Coubertin initiated the revival of the ancient Olympic Games, which led to the first modern Olympics in Athens, Greece in 1896.
- The theme for International Olympic Day 2025 is **“Let’s Move?”**, encouraging individuals to become active through walking, playing, running, or dancing.

Background:

i. The idea of International Olympic Day was first proposed in **1947** by **Dr. Josef Gruss**, an IOC member from Czechoslovakia, during the 41st IOC Session in Stockholm (Sweden) to promote the Olympic spirit.

ii. It was officially adopted during the 42nd IOC Session held in January 1948 at St. Moritz (Switzerland).