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CONTENT

National.....3
International.....24
Defence.....34
Appointments or Resign/Retired.....38
Honours/ Awards.....43
Sports.....48
Obituary.....52
Important Days with theme.....57

National

NSO Released Publication “Energy Statistics India 2026”

The National Statistics Office (NSO), under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the 33rd edition of its annual publication, “Energy Statistics India 2026”.

- The report provides a comprehensive dataset on India’s energy reserves, capacity, production, and consumption and import/export of all the energy commodities, including: Coal, Lignite, Petroleum, Natural Gas (PNG), Renewable Energy (RE), among others, of India, along with analytical tools like energy balance tables, sankey diagrams, and Sustainable Energy Indicators as per International Standards for the Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25).

Key Highlights

Surge in RE Potential: The publication highlighted a significant surge in India’s Renewable Energy (RE) potential, which stood at 47,04,043 MegaWatt(MW) as on March 31, 2025.

- Among all the RE sources in India, Solar Energy dominated this segment, with a staggering growth of 33,43,378 MW (during FY: 2024-25) (around 71% of total potential); followed by Wind Power (11,63,856 MW) and Large Hydro (1,33,410 MW).

Credit Flow: The publication revealed that the Credit Flow to the energy sector in India has increased more than 6-times i.e. from an amount of Rs 1,688 crore (in 2021) to Rs 10,325 crore (in 2025)

Regional Concentration: The report noted that over 70% of India’s total potential for generation of RE is concentrated in six states viz. Rajasthan (23.70%), Maharashtra (14.26%), Gujarat (9.10%), Andhra Pradesh (9.1%), Karnataka (8.59%) and Madhya Pradesh(8.09%).

GRSE Kolkata Delivered Three Frontline Warships, Dunagiri, Sanshodhak and Agray to Indian Navy.

Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE), Indian Defence Public Sector Unit (PSU) delivered three frontline platforms: advanced guided missile frigate ‘**Dunagiri**’, the survey vessel ‘**Sanshodhak**’, and anti-submarine warfare shallow watercraft ‘**Agray**’, to the Indian Navy (IN).

- These deliveries marked a major milestone for indigenous defence manufacturing, enhancing the IN’s capabilities in strike, survey, and anti-submarine warfare.

Key Details:

Dunagiri(Yard 3023): It is the second Nilgiri-Class stealth frigate built under Project 17A after Indian Naval Ship (INS) Nilgiri.

INS Sanshodhak (Yard 3028): It is the 4th and last Survey Vessel Large (SVL), bolsters INs hydrographic and survey capabilities.

Agray– ASW-SWC: Launched on March 13, 2024, it is the fourth of eight ASW SWC, and is designed for coastal defence operations.

Overview of PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Gujarat on March 31, 2026

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** visited **Gujarat** where he visited Gandhinagar, Sanand (Ahmedabad) and Vav–Tharad (Banaskantha) to launch and dedicate multiple development projects worth over Rs. 20,000 crore.

Highlights of the visits:

Gandhinagar: On the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, the PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Samrat Samprati Museum** at Koba Tirth in Gandhinagar, dedicated to showcasing the rich historical, cultural, and spiritual legacy of Jainism.

Sanand: He inaugurated the **Kaynes Semicon Plant** at Sanand Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC), Ahmedabad, marking the commencement of commercial semiconductor production in India.

Vav-Tharad: PM Modi laid the foundation stone, inaugurated, and dedicated to the nation multiple development projects worth over **Rs. 20,000 crore** across key sectors including power, railways, roads, health, urban, rural, and tribal development.

He inaugurated the Ahmedabad–Dholera Expressway built at a cost of over Rs. 5,100 crore, enhancing regional connectivity and supporting industrial growth in the Dholera Special Investment Region (DSIR).

MoEFCC Designates 'Bhavasagara' as India's first National Repository for Deep-Sea Fauna

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (**MoEFCC**) officially designated the **Bhavasagara Referral Centre** at Center for Marine Living Resources & Ecology (CMLRE), Kochi, Kerala as **India's first National Repository for Deep-Sea Fauna**.

- This recognition, granted under section 39 of the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, designates the centre as a key national facility for the conservation, research, and documentation of India's rich deep-sea biodiversity.

Key Functions:

Maintain Secure Custody: Preserves representative biological samples as voucher specimens along with essential data, including Deoxyribonucleic Acid (**DNA**) sequences, for future scientific use.

Hold Type Specimens: Serves as the official custodian of newly discovered deep-sea species from Indian waters.

Capacity Building: Promotes expertise in deep-sea taxonomy in line with the United Nations (UN) **Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)**.

MoE & CBSE Launches AI and Computational Thinking Curriculum for Classes 3–8

The Ministry of Education (**MoE**) in collaboration with the Central Board of Secondary Education (**CBSE**) launched a new **curriculum** on Computational Thinking (**CT**) and Artificial Intelligence (**AI**) for Classes 3 to 8, to be implemented from the 2026–27 academic session.

- The MoE released three key documents, including the curriculum, a teachers' handbook, and learning materials.

Key Features of Curriculum:

Focus Areas: The curriculum introduces foundational concepts of AI, coding, data handling,

logical reasoning, and algorithmic thinking at the elementary and middle school levels.

Grade-wise Approach:

- **Classes 3–5:** Activity-based learning with basic computational thinking and logic-building exercises
- **Classes 6–8:** Introduction to AI concepts, coding fundamentals, and real-world applications

Alignment: The curriculum aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023.

Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan Releases Sudha Murty's Book 'Tides of Time' on Parliamentary Murals

The Vice President (VP) of India and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Chandrapuram Ponnusami (C. P.) Radhakrishnan, released the book 'Tides of Time: Bharat's History through Murals in Parliament' authored by Sudha Murty, Member of Parliament (MP), Rajya Sabha, at Samvidhan Sadan, New Delhi (Delhi).

- The volume, published by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, documents the visual archives of Parliament while showcasing India's civilizational journey through its murals in an accessible manner.

About the Book:

Content: The book covers 124 mural panels (including 58 commissioned in 1954) tracing history from Mohenjo-daro of the Indus Valley Civilization to Independence in 1947.

Legacy: The murals reflect India's traditions of dialogue, diversity, continuity and portraying Bharat as the 'Mother of Democracy,' rooted in systems like Vaishali and the Kudavolai system, with Parliament embodying debate, discussion, and dissent.

Symbolism: Heritage elements like the Sengol reflect "Vikas bhi, Virasat bhi," linking tradition with modern governance.

Israel's PLR Systems Delivers First Batch of NEGEV LMGs to India

Israel Weapon Industries (IWI) announced the delivery of the first batch of **2,000 NEGEV 7.62×51 Light Machine Guns** (LMGs) to India. The delivery was carried out by **PLR Systems**, a joint venture (JV) between IWI and the Adani Group, marking a significant milestone under the 'Make in India' initiative with technology transfer.

- The delivery is part of a larger August 2024 contract for 41,000 LMGs, with another 4,000 units to be supplied by end-2026.

About NEGEV Light Machine Guns:

Manufacturer: PLR Systems, India's first private-sector company to manufacture small arms and ammunition, is producing the NEGEV LMGs at its facility in **Malanpur, Madhya Pradesh**(MP).

Weapon: The NEGEV 7.62×51 LMG, used by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), fires 7.62 millimetre (mm) ammunition, supports semi- and fully automatic modes, and is effective against fortified targets in high-intensity and urban combat.

Features: It is lightweight, highly reliable in harsh conditions, equipped with Picatinny rails and tritium night sights, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-compliant, and adaptable

for use on helicopters, vehicles, and naval platforms.

Partnership: PLR Systems has also secured a contract to supply 170,000 Close-Quarter Battle (CQB) carbines, with the first batch of 18,000 units expected to be delivered in 2026

NSE and IGX Partner to Launch India's First Domestic Benchmark Natural Gas Derivatives

The National Stock Exchange of India (NSE), India's leading stock exchange, announced a strategic collaboration with Indian Gas Exchange Limited (IGX), India's first automated national-level gas trading platform, to launch **India's first exchange-traded natural gas derivatives** based on a domestic benchmark, aimed at improving risk management in the gas market.

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has approved the initiative, with the launch date to be announced soon.

About Natural Gas Derivatives Initiative:

Product: The NSE will introduce **Indian Natural Gas Futures contracts** based on the Gas Index of India (GIXI) developed by IGX, with pricing linked to actual trades on the IGX platform.

Benefits: The initiative will provide efficient risk management tools for producers, consumers, financial institutions, brokers, and investors, while enhancing market efficiency, liquidity, and transparency in India's gas market.

IGX: Operating under the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), it facilitates natural gas trading and price discovery, supporting NSE's expansion into domestically benchmarked commodity derivatives.

MoE Declares NCERT as 'Deemed to be University' Under Distinct Category

The Ministry of Education (MoE), through its Department of Higher Education (DHE), declared the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) as a **'Deemed to be University'** under a distinct category as per Section 3 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956.

NCERT Deemed-to-be-University Status:

Constituents: The status covers NCERT along with six of its constituent institutions across India includes: Regional Institute of Education (RIE), Ajmer (Rajasthan); RIE, Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh, MP); RIE, Bhubaneswar (Odisha); RIE, Mysuru (Karnataka) ; North East RIE, Shillong (Meghalaya); Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE), Bhopal (MP).

Academic: NCERT can now offer Diploma, Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate (PG), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), and specialised programmes while continuing curriculum development.

Funds: NCERT shall not divert assets or funds without prior permission from the UGC and Central Government, and must not engage in commercial or profit-making activities.

MIB Notifies TV Rating Policy 2026 to Enhance Transparency, Accountability & Credibility

In April 2026, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) notified the 'Television (TV) Rating Policy (TRP 2026)', replacing the existing 2014 guidelines TV governing audience measurement in India.

Key Reforms in TRP Guidelines 2026:

Viewership: As per TRP 2026, any viewership arising out of landing page will be excluded in viewership measurement

Governance Norms: The policy mandates that at least 50% of the Board must be independent directors with no links to broadcasters or advertisers, and prohibits consultancy roles to prevent conflicts of interest.

Net-Worth: MIB has eased the minimum net worth requirement for a company willing to register as TV rating agency from existing **Rs 20 crore to Rs.5 crore.**

Sample Size: As per the notification, TV rating agencies are now required to scale up their operations to **80,000 metered(m) homes** within 18 months (6 months for existing rating agencies), with a long-term goal of 1.20 lakh homes.

Russia's First Deputy PM Denis Manturov Visited India to co-chair IRIGC-TEC

Denis Manturov, first Deputy Prime Minister (PM) of Russia, was on two-day official visit to India from April 2 to 3, 2026, aimed to bolster bilateral relations across key sectors.

Key Details of Visit:

IRIGC-TEC: During his visit, he co-chaired the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (**IRIGC-TEC**) along with Union Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The IRIGC-TEC serves as a key institutional mechanism to review and advance strategic economic ties between the two countries.

Bilateral Meeting: He also held a high-level meeting with Union Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, where both leaders discussed cooperation in trade, industry, energy, fertilizers, connectivity, mobility, and emerging areas like technology, innovation, and critical minerals.

- They also reviewed the progress on the implementation of the various outcomes of the 23rd India Russia Annual Summit held in December 2025.

Former CBI Director R.K. Raghavan's Autobiography 'A Road Well Travelled' Released

Businessman R.T. Chari released the updated edition of the autobiography 'A Road Well Travelled', authored by former Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director Raghava Krishnaswami (R.K.) Raghavan, at a formal event in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, TN.

- The first copy was received by **Nandini Azad**, President of the Indian Cooperative Network for Women (ICNW).
- Originally published by Westland Publications in 2020, the book was reissued by Creative Workshop.

About the Autobiography:

Overview: The updated autobiography of R.K. Raghavan traces his career from the Indian Police Service (IPS) state cadre through the Intelligence Bureau (IB) to serving as Director of the CBI.

Assassination: The book begins with the 1991 assassination of former Prime Minister (PM)

of India Rajiv Gandhi at Sriperumbudur, where he was part of the security team and cites the withdrawal of Special Protection Group (SPG) cover as a key factor.

Awards: He has been awarded the Indian Police Medal for Meritorious Service and the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

GoI Notifies Amaravati now sole capital of Andhra Pradesh

The Ministry of Law & Justice (MoL&J) formally notified **Amaravati** as the exclusive capital of Andhra Pradesh (AP) after both houses of Parliament i.e. Lok Sabha (Lower House) and Rajya Sabha (Upper House), passed **Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Act, 2026** and received presidential assent.

- With passage of the Amendment Act and President's assent, Amaravati will now be the permanent capital city of AP.

Key Details:

Effective From: As per the official notification, the newly enacted Amendment Act, shall be deemed to have come into force on June 02, 2024.

Key Changes: The AP Reorganisation (Amendment) Act, 2026, amended the **Section 5 of AP Reorganisation (APR Act, 2014)** which stated that Hyderabad would remain the common capital of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh for 10 years.

- Also, by inserting the word "Amaravati" into the APR Act, 2014, it nullifies the decision of previous AP government which proposed 3 capitals for the state – Amaravati, the legislative capital; Visakhapatnam, the executive capital; and Kurnool, the judicial capital.

India's Indigenously Built Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam, TN Achieves Criticality

India's 1st indigenously developed **500 Megawatt electric (MWe)** Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (**PFBR**) at Kalpakkam in Tamil Nadu (TN), successfully achieved **first criticality**, marking the start of a controlled nuclear fission chain reaction.

- This achievement will give a significant boost to the crucial **second stage** of India's 3-stage nuclear programme.

About PFBR:

Type of Breeder: It is a sodium-cooled, pool-type Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) that produces more fuel than it consumes.

Designed by: It was designed by the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), a Research & Development (R&D) centre under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).

Developed by: PFBR, developed and operated by Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited (BHAVINI), a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) which works under the DAE.

Fuel Used: For the initial phase, FBR will operate using Uranium-Plutonium Mixed Oxide (**MOX**) fuel.

Breeding Process: The core of the reactor is surrounded by a blanket of Uranium-238 and fast neutrons convert these fertile Uranium-238 into fissile fuel.

Significance: Once operational, India will be the second country after Russia to run a commercial Fast Breeder Reactor.

Amul Becomes 1st Indian FMCG Company to Hit Rs 1 Trillion Turnover in FY26

Anand Milk Union Limited (AMUL) became the **first company** in India's Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector to achieve an annual turnover of **over Rs 1 lakh crore** (Rs 1 trillion) in Financial Year 2025–26 (FY26), registering around 11% growth over the previous year.

About AMUL's Milestone:

Financial Performance: For FY26, the federation reported a total group turnover of **Rs 1,00,000 crore**, becoming the largest FMCG organisation in India.

- Its marketing arm, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), reported revenue of Rs 73,450 crore in FY26, up from Rs 65,911 crore in FY25 (11.4% growth).

Saraswat Cooperative Bank:

Milestone: Saraswat Cooperative Bank, India's largest Urban Cooperative Bank (UCB) headquartered in Mumbai (Maharashtra), **crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore** total business mark, strengthening its position in the cooperative banking sector.

- The management expressed confidence in doubling this business to reach the next Rs 1 lakh crore milestone within the next 7 to 8 years.

Bhopal RPO Becomes First in India to Launch Braille & Sign Language Services

The Regional Passport Office (RPO), Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh (MP) introduced **Braille script and sign language services**, becoming the **first** in India to offer these accessibility features for differently-abled applicants.

- The initiative was inaugurated by **B.S. Mubarak**, Joint Secretary (Passport Seva Programme) and Chief Passport Officer, in the presence of Regional Passport Officer Shitanshu Chaurasiya at RPO, Bhopal.

About Braille & Sign Language Services:

Braille script services: Braille booklets explaining the complete passport application process, along with essential do's and don'ts, have been introduced for visually impaired applicants.

- Braille signage plates have been installed within the office to facilitate easier navigation.

Sign language videos: Instructional videos in Sign Language (SL) guide speech and hearing-impaired applicants on application types, document requirements, and the process, with QR code (Quick Response code) access placed near queues and counters for easy reference.

Cabinet Approves Two Mega Hydro Power Projects Worth Rs.40,175.33 Crore in AR

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by the Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi**, has approved two mega **hydroelectric projects** in Arunachal Pradesh (AR) with a combined investment of **Rs. 40,175.33 crore** to boost renewable energy, strengthen energy security, and promote sustainable development in the North-Eastern region.

- The projects comprise the 1200 megawatt (MW) **Kalai-II Hydro Electric Project** (HEP) in Anjaw District and the 1720 MW **Kamala HEP** across Kamle, Kra Daadi, and Kurung Kumey Districts.

About Kalai-II Hydro Electric Project:

Project: The CCEA approved Rs.14,105.83 crore for the Kalai-II Hydro Electric Project (HEP) on the Lohit River in Anjaw District, AR, which includes development of around 29 kilometres (km) of roads and bridges to improve local connectivity in Namsai and Anjaw Districts.

Capacity: The Kalai-II HEP has an installed capacity of 1,200 MW (6×190 MW + 1×60 MW), is expected to generate 4,852.95 Million Units (MU) annually, and is planned for completion within 78 months.

About Kamala Hydro Electric Project:

Investment: The CCEA approved Rs.26,069.50 crore for the Kamala HEP in Kamle, Kra Daadi, and Kurung Kumey Districts, AR, including Rs.4,743.98 crore for flood moderation, Rs.1,340 crore for enabling infrastructure, and Rs.750 crore as Central Financial Assistance (CFA) for the State's equity share.

Capacity: The project has an installed capacity of 1,720 MW (8×210 MW + 1×40 MW) and is expected to generate 6,870 MU annually, supporting peak demand management, national grid balancing, and flood moderation in the Brahmaputra valley.

India Withdraws Proposal To Host COP 33 Climate Summit 2028

India officially withdrew its proposal to host COP33 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2028, leaving **South Korea** as the sole bidder.

- Rajat Agarwal**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change(MoEFCC) informed the chair of United Nation(UN) Asia-Pacific Group(currently Pakistan), within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (which conducts the climate conference) via letter, citing a 'review of its commitments'.

Key Details:

India's Proposal: Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi had conveyed India's proposal to host COP33 during his special address at the inauguration of the High-Level Segment (HLS) of COP28 in December 2023 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Previous COP Hosting: India previously hosted only COP8 in 2002 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, Delhi.

COP: It is the highest decision-making body under the UNFCCC, where Parties meet annually to assess progress on climate goals, negotiate commitments, and mobilise climate finance and action.

Puducherry Election Commission Deploys 'Nila' Robot to Welcome Voters at Polling Booth

Puducherry election authorities deployed 'Nila' saree-clad humanoid robot for the first time in Assembly elections at VOC Government School polling booth in Puducherry.

About

Nila:

Purpose: The initiative aimed to create a 'high-tech' and welcoming environment for voters, particularly to attract younger citizens and first-time voters.

Development: Developed by Coimbatore based Robo Mirror, Nila was dressed in a traditional saree and greeted voters with flowers, provided booth directions, and assisted elderly and first-

time voters.

Functionality: Event-based interactive robot, detects voters via sensors, answers queries in Tamil/English with walking ability, hand waves. It is designed for multiple public settings, including weddings, official functions, and elections.

VP C. P. Radhakrishnan Releases Updated Constitution of India in Sindhi Language Vice President of India C. P. Radhakrishnan released the updated edition of the Constitution of India in Sindhi language in both Devanagari Script (1st edition) and Persian Script (2nd edition) in Uparashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi, Delhi, on the occasion of Sindhi Language Day (Sindhi Bhasha Diwas) on April 10, 2026, promoting linguistic inclusivity by making constitutional provisions accessible in citizens' mother tongues.

About the Constitution in Sindhi Language:

Significance: The initiative enhances accessibility, inclusivity, and democratic participation for Sindhi speakers.

Authority: The initiative is implemented by the Legislative Department under the MoL&J in line with Articles 343, 345, and 350B, while Sindhi's inclusion in the Eighth Schedule through the 21st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1967 affirms its cultural significance.

Translations: Part of a wider initiative translating the Constitution into languages like Bodo, Dogri, Santhali, Tamil, Gujarati, and Nepali.

Vision: Strengthens democracy, bridges governance gaps, and supports linguistic diversity aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Indian Army Launches 'Radio Sikkim Sundari' to Boost Border Connectivity in Sikkim

The Indian Army (IA)'s **Trishakti Corps** launched '**Radio Sikkim Sundari (88.4 Frequency modulation, FM)**', in East Sikkim near the India–China border, marking the **first** border village community radio station in Sikkim.

About Sikkim Sundari:

Infrastructure: The station uses Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) and **Solar backup** for uninterrupted service, while a dedicated encoder enables streaming via the Google Play Store application (app).

Significance: The initiative promotes socio-economic development, cultural preservation, and youth empowerment through programs on agriculture, health, and education, while also strengthening last-mile connectivity in border areas under the **Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)**.

Other Initiatives: Similar IA initiatives include Radio Sangam (88.8 FM) in Rajouri, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K); Ibex Tarana (88.4 FM) in Jyotirmath, Uttarakhand and high-altitude radio stations in Drass and Kharu in Ladakh.

MoC&I Notified India's First Chip Fabrication Plant at Dholera SEZ, Gujarat

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I) notified **India's first chip fabrication plant**, a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) to be established by Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing Private Limited (TSMPL), a subsidiary of Tata Group, at **Dholera SEZ, Gujarat**, with a proposed investment of **Rs 91,000 crore**.

About Chip Fabrication Plant:

Objective: The SEZ is designed to support electronic hardware, software, and Information Technology (IT)-enabled services with enabling infrastructure and a dedicated approval mechanism to streamline operations and logistics.

Size: The SEZ covers 66.166 hectares (ha) of land and is designed to strengthen India's semiconductor ecosystem and import substitution strategy.

Policy: The approval follows amendments to SEZ Rules 2006 in 2025 to promote semiconductor and electronics investments.

MeitY Constituted AIGEG To Drive AI Governance Strategy of India

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (**MeitY**), constituted the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance and Economic Group (AIGEG).

- This newly formed high-level inter-ministerial body will serve as India's central institutional mechanism for AI governance policy development and coordination.

Key Details of AIGEG:

Recommended by: This new high-level interministerial group was one of the 3 institutions proposed in India's AI Governance Guidelines and the Economic Survey.

- The guidelines had recommended setting up an inter-ministerial body to steer a **whole-of-government approach** to AI governance, with a view to align the actions of ministries, departments, regulators and advisory bodies around a coherent national strategy.

Technical Support: As per MeitY official notification, AIGEG will be supported by a Technology and Policy Expert Committee (**TPEC**).

Composition: Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, MeitY will serve as the chairperson of AIGEG.

- Apart from Chairperson, Union Minister of State (**MoS**) Jitin Prasada, MeitY will serve as Vice Chairperson of the group, while S. Krishnan Secretary, MeitY has been appointed as the Member Convener.

CDS Anil Chauhan Flags Off 'Surya Devbhoomi Challenge 2.0' in Uttarakhand

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), **General Anil Chauhan**, formally flagged off the 2nd edition of the 'Surya Devbhoomi Challenge 2.0', a high-altitude endurance event, in Badrinath, Uttarakhand.

- The 5-day event will continue till April 20, 2026 across the Char Dham corridor of Uttarakhand, covering 3 sacred Kedars-Kalpeshwar, Rudranath, and Tungnath.

About Surya Devbhoomi Challenge 2.0:

Organiser: The 113-kilometer long expedition is being organised by Indian Army (**IA**) in strategic partnership with IconMetrix and is supported by the Tourism Department of Uttarakhand Government.

Key Role of IconMetrix: It will ensure that the expedition reaches a pan-India demographic i.e. from the running clubs of Ahmedabad (Gujarat) to the trail communities in Kolkata (West Bengal, WB).

Significance: The event, under the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP), is expected to boost tourism and generate employment opportunities in border villages of the state.

Overview of Austria Chancellor Christian Stocker's Visit To India from April 14-17, 2026

The Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria **Dr. Christian Stocker** visited India from **14–17 April 2026** on an official visit at the invitation of Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, marking the first visit by an Austrian Chancellor to India in 42 years and the first official visit of Chancellor Stocker to India.

Highlights of the Visit:

Bilateral Meetings: During his visit to India, Christian Stocker and PM Narendra Modi held talks in New Delhi (Delhi) to strengthen bilateral cooperation and exchange views on regional, global, and multilateral issues.

- He also met President Droupadi Murmu and Union Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

IAJEC: As part of the Visit, the 17th session of the India–Austria Joint Economic Commission (IAJEC) was held in New Delhi as a key platform to review and advance bilateral economic relations.

India–Austria Business Forum: The forum was held at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi, during the visit of Christian Stocker with participation from senior government officials and industry leaders.

- A bilateral Fast-Track Mechanism (FTM) was signed and operationalised to facilitate investments.

Outcomes: India and Austria signed multiple agreements across audiovisual co-production, Foreign Trade Mechanisms (FTM), defence cooperation, counter-terrorism, food safety, and skill development to strengthen bilateral ties.

CEA: India Targets 100 GW Nuclear Power Capacity by 2047

Ghanshyam Prasad, Chairman of Central Electricity Authority (CEA) announced that India has set a target to increase its nuclear power capacity from the existing 8.8 Giga Watt (GW) to **100 GW by 2047** marking over a tenfold increase.

- The announcement was made on the sidelines of the inaugural session to focus on India's 100 GW Nuclear Power Roadmap held in New Delhi, Delhi.

Key Details:

Investment: He further mentioned that the set target for 2047 requires an investment of **at least Rs 20 lakh crore**, assuming a baseline cost of Rs 22 crore per MegaWatt (MW).

Other Key Requirements: He also outlined other key requirements to achieve the 100 GW target: legislative reforms, streamlined processes and operational frameworks to support large-scale nuclear deployment.

Key Constraints: He identified long approval timelines for nuclear projects (currently, the entire process takes around 13 years) that may extend the target year. So, he suggested the need to reduce the regulatory timelines for such projects to about 8-9 years.

MHA receives Indigenously Developed Satellite Imaging System 'Prajna' for real-time security support

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) received an indigenously developed satellite imaging system '**Prajna**', aimed at enhancing the real-time decision support for the security agencies.

- Samir V. Kamat, Secretary of the Department of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D) officially handed over the satellite imaging system to Govind Mohan, Secretary of MHA, at a ceremony held at Kartavya Bhawan-3 in New Delhi, Delhi.

About**Prajna:**

Developed by: Prajna, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled system, was developed by Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR), DRDO.

Significance: The new satellite imaging system is expected to play a significant role in monitoring sensitive regions, tracking suspicious activities and supporting counter-terrorism and border management efforts.

India Launches First Advanced 3D Glass Chip Packaging Unit in Odisha

Odisha hosted the groundbreaking ceremony of Heterogeneous Integration Packaging Solutions (Three dimensional(3D) Glass Solutions), **India's first advanced glass semiconductor packaging unit**, at Info Valley, Khordha district, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

- Mohan Charan Majhi, Chief Minister (CM) of Odisha, graced the ceremony in the presence of Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

About Advanced 3D Glass Chip Packaging Unit:

Developer: The project is being implemented by 3D Glass Solutions Inc. (3DGS), the United States of America (USA), through its wholly owned Indian subsidiary Heterogeneous Integration Packaging Solutions Private Limited (HIPSPL).

Investment: The project involves a total outlay of approximately **Rs. 1,943.53 crore**, supported by both Central Rs. 799 crore and State fiscal incentives of Rs. 399.5 crore under the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM).

Production Capacity: Once operational, the unit is projected to produce 70,000 glass panels, 50 million assembled units and around 13,000 advanced 3D Heterogeneous Integration (3DHI) modules annually.

Timeline: Commercial production is slated to begin by August 2028, with full-scale volume production targeted for 2030.

Applications: The chips will cater to key sectors such as aerospace, defence, artificial intelligence (AI), 5G technologies, and data centres.

Overview of South Korean President Lee Jae Myung's Visit to India from 19-21 April 2026

Lee Jae Myung, the President of the Republic of Korea (ROK) paid a state visit to India from 19th to 21st April 2026 at the invitation of Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, marking the first state visit to India by a South Korean President in eight years.

- He was accompanied by **First Lady Kim Hea Kyung** and a high-level delegation including ministers, senior officials, and business leaders.
- President Lee arrived at the airport in New Delhi, Delhi, where he was received by Union Minister of State (MoS) Harsh Malhotra.

Key Highlights of Lee's Visit:

Bilateral Summit: On 20 April 2026, PM Modi and President Lee held a bilateral meeting at Hyderabad House, New Delhi.

- During the meeting, discussions were focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation across a wide spectrum of areas like: financial services, shipbuilding, artificial intelligence (AI), energy, semiconductors, and defence, cultural and people-to-people ties, green energy and trade, including the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

India-ROK Special Strategic Partnership (SSP): Both countries announced the following Joint Strategic Vision for implementing and adding further content to the India-ROK Special Strategic Partnership in the next five years (2026-2030).

Other Key Outcomes: Some of the key outcomes are: establishment of an Industrial Cooperation Committee (ICC); framework for the India–Korea Digital Bridge focusing on Artificial Intelligence (AI), semiconductors, and Information Technology (IT); resumption of negotiations to upgrade the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA); cultural exchange Programme for 2026–2030 and cooperation in sports and creative industries, among others.

MoEF&CC declares ShekhaJheel Bird Sanctuary in UP as Ramsar Site

Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) announced the designation of **ShekhaJheel Bird Sanctuary** in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh (UP) as a Ramsar site.

Key Highlights

Total Wetlands: With this new addition, the total number of Ramsar sites in India has increased to **99**, while the number of Ramsar sites in UP has risen to **12**.

ShekhaJheel: The sanctuary located in western UP is a key winter resting site for migratory birds along the Central Asian Flyway, hosting species like bar-headed geese, painted storks, and ducks.

- The lake provides a mix of wetland, grassland, and forest habitats, making it ideal for wildlife conservation.

States: As of February 2026, TamilNadu (TN) has the highest number of Ramsar Sites in India, with **20** designated wetlands. **Uttar Pradesh (UP)** has the 2nd highest number of Ramsar sites with 12 sites.

Eveready commissions India's first alkaline battery unit in Jammu

Eveready Industries India Ltd. (EIL), the country's dry-cell market leader, inaugurated India's only operating alkaline battery manufacturing facility in the Samba district of **Jammu**, Union Territory(UT) of Jammu and Kashmir(**J&K**).

- It aims to increase its market share in the country's alkaline battery segment to around 25% in value in the next three years from 16% by both domestic and export opportunities.
- The state-of-the-art greenfield unit was officially opened by the **Manoj Sinha**, Lieutenant Governor of J&K, in the presence of Mohit Burman (Promoter & Non-Executive Director),(EIL) and Anirban Banerjee (CEO),(EIL).

Strategic Significance:

For decades, India has relied heavily on imported alkaline batteries or local zinc-carbon ones.

- **Focus on Premiumization** With the demand for high-drain electronic devices surging, the plant will primarily produce the **Ultima Alkaline** range to cater to the premium segment.
- **High-Drain Performance:** Alkaline batteries offer much higher energy density than zinc-carbon, making them essential for modern “high-drain” devices like smart locks, digital cameras, and high-tech toys.
- **Import Substitution:** By making these “end-to-end” in Jammu, Eveready reduces India’s dependence on imports (mostly from Southeast Asia and China), leading to better margins and supply chain resilience.

Former Army Chief General MM Naravane Launches Book “The Curious and The Classified”

General Manoj Mukund Naravane (Retd), former Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), launched his new book titled “The Curious and the Classified: Unearthing Military Myths and Mysteries,” published by Rupa Publications.

- He served as the 28th COAS from December 2019 to April 2022 and is also the author of The Cantonment Conspiracy (2025).

About the Book:

Overview: This non-fiction work explores the myths, memories, and lesser-known stories shaping the traditions of India’s armed forces, highlighting their history, courage, culture, and curiosity in uniform.

Legends: It traces the 17th–18th century Sikh Army origins of the popular cheer ‘Chak de Phatte’ and explores the enduring legend of Baba Harbhajan Singh, celebrated in military folklore.

Union MoS Jayant Chaudhary Launched India’s First UNESCO Chair on Gender Inclusion and Skill Development

Union Minister of State (MoS) (Independent Charge, IC) Jayant Chaudhary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MoSDE), formally launched **India’s (Asia’s) first** “United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Chair on Gender Inclusion and Skill Development”, during the International Conference on “**Women Leading the Future of Work**” at Symbiosis Skills and Professional University (SSPU) in Pune, Maharashtra.

- The conference, organised in partnership with UNESCO, brought together global institutions, policymakers, industry leaders, and academia to deliberate on strengthening women’s participation in emerging sectors.

Key Details:

Aim: It aims to expand access to future-ready skills for women and improve employability in emerging sectors like: Artificial Intelligence (AI), semiconductor, among others.

Key Sectors: The chair is expected to generate opportunities for women into sectors like: robotics, semiconductor technology, advanced manufacturing and defence.

Key Activities: The initiative will also work on policy inputs, international collaboration and training frameworks, aligned with UNESCO priorities.

Leadership: The newly established UNESCO chair will be led by Swati Mujumdar, pro-chancellor of SSPU.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal Launches Bharat Taxi app in Mumbai, Maharashtra

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Ministry of Commerce & Industry (MoC&I), launched the Bharat Taxi, India's 1st cooperative-led ride-hailing platform, auto-rickshaw and cab driver, onboarding programme and application (app) in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- This launch aimed to enhance earnings and welfare outcomes for drivers through a cooperative-led ride-hailing platform.

About Bharat Taxi App:

Impact: This newly launched app will offer various benefits to taxi drivers such as: zero commission, no subscription charges, free insurance cover of **Rs 5 lakh**, and access to MUDRA loans.

Background: In June 2025, eight national-level cooperative institutions established the Bharat Taxi under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS Act, 2002) and was officially launched on February 05, 2026.

Key Progress: Since its launch, the initial base of the taxi has been increased to more than 25,000 rides per day.

- So far, Bharat Taxi has onboarded 5.17 lakh customers, while more than 50 lakh customers have availed the service.

Union Minister Jaishankar Launches Logo, Theme and Website for 4th India-Africa Forum Summit

Union Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam(S.) Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs(MEA), officially launched the **logo**, **theme**, and **website** for the 4th India-Africa Forum Summit (**IAFS-IV**).

- This event marks a season of renewal for India-Africa ties, after the third summit held in 2015.

About 4th India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-IV):

Event: The summit is scheduled for **31 May 2026** in New Delhi, Delhi in collaboration with the African Union Commission .

- Preparatory meetings of senior officials are scheduled for May 28 2026, followed by the India–Africa Foreign Ministers' meeting on May 29 2026.

Logo: Features a **Lion** superimposed on interlocked maps of India and Africa, symbolizing pride, courage and a shared identity.

Theme: "IA SPIRIT: India-Africa Strategic Partnership for Innovation, Resilience, and Inclusive Transformation."

- 'SPIRIT' captures the essence of a relationship that goes beyond transactions, and is marked by shared values, mutual respect, solidarity and collaboration.

Rocklink India Opens India's First Lithium-Ion Battery & Rare Earth Recycling Plant in UP

Rocklink India Private Limited inaugurated India's first integrated lithium-ion battery and rare earth magnet recycling facility at the Sikandrabad, Bulandshahr district, Uttar Pradesh (UP).

- It focuses on recovering critical minerals to support key sectors such as electric vehicles, renewable energy, electronics, and defence applications.

About Integrated Battery & Rare Earth Recycling Facility:

Capacity: The plant handles 10,000 tonnes per annum (TPA) of lithium-ion batteries producing 5,000–6,000 tonnes of black mass, processes rare earth magnets at 60 tonnes per month (TPM), and includes a planned rare earth chloride unit of 1,500 TPA by 2026.

Materials: It recovers lithium, cobalt, nickel, manganese, and rare earth elements such as neodymium, dysprosium, and terbium used in advanced technologies.

Technology: Using proprietary R2 recycling technology, the facility processes 95 types of battery scrap, safely manages volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and achieves over 98% recovery efficiency for aluminium, copper, and iron.

Features: The plant enables battery refurbishment, rare earth magnet recycling Neodymium Iron Boron (NdFeB), Samarium Cobalt (SmCo), Aluminium Nickel Cobalt (AlNiCo), semi-automated dismantling, reverse logistics via Magcycle™, and compliance with Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) norms through a Know Your Material approach.

Six Border Villages in J-K Included Under Vibrant Village Programme-II

The Government of India (GoI) announced the inclusion of **six** strategically located **border villages** in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K's) **Kathua district** under the second phase of the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP-II), aimed at boosting development and improving living conditions in remote frontier regions.

Key Details:

Selected Villages: The villages, **Bobiya, Kadyala, Gajnal, Karol Krishna, Rathua, and Gujjar Chak**, located along the International Border were identified during a meeting chaired by Rajesh Sharma held in Kathua, J&K.

Background: The VVP was launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to develop border villages and reduce out-migration from India's remote frontier areas.

VVP-II: In April 2025, The union cabinet has approved 2nd phase of Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP-II) with total budget outlay of **Rs 6,839** crore, for the comprehensive development of the villages located in the blocks along all International Land Borders (ILBs), other than Northern border already covered under VVP-I.

DRDO Unveils Advanced Armoured Platforms (Tracked & Wheeled) in Maharashtra

Dr Samir V Kamat, Secretary of the Department of Defence Research & Development (DDR&D) and Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), unveiled the **Advanced Armoured Platforms (Tracked and Wheeled)**, at the DRDO laboratory in Ahilyanagar, Maharashtra, to enhance mobility, firepower, and protection for the evolving needs of the Indian Armed Forces.

About Indigenous Advanced Armoured Platforms:

Overview: The platforms were unveiled for the Indian Army (IA) as part of the Future Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV) programme to replace ageing **BMP-2K Sarath Infantry Fighting Vehicles (IFVs)**.

Indigenous Development: These platforms have been designed and developed by the Vehicles

Research and Development Establishment (**VRDE**), a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**), with **65%** indigenous content, which is planned to increase to 90% in line with the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative in defence manufacturing.

Manufacturing: Produced by Tata Advanced Systems Limited (**TASL**) and Bharat Forge Limited (**BFL**) with support from Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (**MSMEs**), strengthening the defence industrial ecosystem.

MSJE Launched SMILE–Beggary Survey Mobile App During Chintan Shivir 2026

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (**MSJE**) launched the **SMILE** (Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise)–**Beggary Survey Mobile Application** (App) during the **Chintan Shivir** held in Chandigarh (Punjab) from 24–26 April 2026.

- The SMILE–Beggary initiative under the SMILE Scheme (2021–2026) of MSJE supports rehabilitation through shelter, skills, and reintegration, with a mobile app enabling real-time data collection and monitoring.

About SMILE–Beggary Survey Mobile Application:

Features: The application enables real-time data capture, geo-tagging, hotspot mapping, analytics dashboards, and end-to-end monitoring from identification to rehabilitation.

Coverage: Expanded to **181 cities**, the initiative creates a centralised national database for identifying vulnerable populations and improving policy planning.

Process: It records demographic and socio-economic details and links beneficiaries to shelter homes, healthcare, counselling, de-addiction, skill training, and reintegration services.

Integration: It is supported by model shelter home guidelines and complemented by the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) 2.0 App, which aids drug demand reduction and provides access to Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System (MANAS).

India–New Zealand Signed FTA in New Delhi; 100% Duty-Free Access & USD 20 Billion Investment

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I) and Todd McClay, New Zealand’s Minister for Trade and Investment, signed the India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (IN-NZ FTA) at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, Delhi.

- The agreement aims to strengthen trade, services, investment, mobility, and overall economic cooperation in line with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

About India–New Zealand FTA:

Access: India gains 100% duty-free access on all 8,284 tariff lines to New Zealand while India liberalises 70.03% of tariff lines covering 95% of bilateral trade value with key exclusions.

Services: New Zealand opens 118 sectors with Most Favoured Nation (MFN) commitments across 139 sub-sectors including Information Technology (IT), education, finance, and tourism.

Investment: New Zealand commits **USD 20 billion over 15 years** in infrastructure, renewable energy, manufacturing, and startups.

Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Releases NITI Aayog’s Report on ‘Moving Towards Effective City Government’

The Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA),

released the report titled ‘Moving Towards Effective City Government – A framework for Million-plus Cities’ by National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, Delhi.

- The report highlights the pivotal role of urbanisation in achieving India’s long-term development goals, including the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047 and a USD 30 trillion economy.

Key Highlights of the Report:

Methodology: The report is based on extensive deliberations, rigorous analysis, and a review of global best practices carried out in consultation with experts.

Identification: The report identifies persistent governance issues, including weak and fragmented leadership structures, constrained fiscal capacity, and capacity gaps that limit service delivery and urban performance.

Focus: The report stresses the need to strengthen institutional structures alongside sectoral reforms, while positioning million-plus cities as key engines of national economic growth.

Jordan joins India-led Global Initiatives ISA, CDRI and GBA

The Hashemite Kingdom of **Jordan** formally joined the International Solar Alliance (**ISA**), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (**CDRI**), and Global Biofuels Alliance (**GBA**), strengthening strategic cooperation with India in clean energy, climate resilience, and sustainable fuels.

- The membership documents were formally handed over by **Yousef Abdelghani**, Jordan’s Ambassador to India, to **Dr. Neena Malhotra**, Secretary (South), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi, Delhi.

Significance of Jordan’s Entry:

Climate: Jordan’s participation expands India-led clean energy diplomacy, strengthens Middle East engagement, and reinforces India’s role as a global climate leader through multilateral platforms.

ISA: Jordan joined ISA to achieve **50%** electricity generation from renewables by 2030, gaining access to global best practices, storage technologies, and low-interest financing.

CDRI: Jordan’s participation in CDRI, supports resilience in water and transport sectors and includes involvement in initiatives like Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) and Global Infrastructure Resilience Survey (GIRS).

GBA: Jordan’s entry into the GBA focuses on utilising agricultural and municipal solid waste for biofuel production to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Relations: It deepens India–Jordan ties, marking 75 years of diplomatic relations, advancing a “futuristic partnership” led by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi and King of Jordan Abdullah II, and supporting trade growth from USD 3 billion to USD 5 billion.

Right to Safe Road Travel Part of Article 21 of Constitution: SC

The Supreme Court of India (SC) officially declared ‘**Right to Safe Road Travel**’ is an integral part of the **Right to Life** under **Article 21** of the Constitution.

- The judgment was delivered in the matter of In Re: Phalodi Accident, where the Court examined issues related to road safety and accountability on highways and expressways.

Key Directives & Mandates:

Legal Significance: The judgment expands Article 21 of the Constitution of India by recognising commuter safety as a fundamental right and emphasises the State's duty to ensure safe infrastructure and prevent avoidable loss of life.

Restrictions : The Court banned unauthorised dhabas and eateries on the Right of Way (ROW) of National Highways(NH) and mandated that no new licences or No Objection Certificates(NOC) be issued without approval from the National Highways Authority of India(NHAI).

Highway Safety Measures: The Court barred heavy vehicle parking on highways outside designated areas and mandated patrols, surveillance, and emergency response systems for improved road safety.

Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy Flags Off 'Vikram-1', India's First Private Rocket by Skyroot Aerospace

A. Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister (CM) of Telangana, flagged off the flight hardware of 'Vikram-1', India's first privately built orbital rocket developed by Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited, from its Max-Q campus in Hyderabad, Telangana to the Satish Dhawan Space Centre(SDSC) in Sriharikota(Andhra Pradesh, AP).

About Vikram-1:

Purpose: This maiden flight will be a demonstration mission carrying several CubeSats to validate the vehicle's orbital capabilities.

Technical Specifications : It is a multi-stage launch vehicle specifically engineered to carry satellites weighing up to 350 kilogram(kg) into Low Earth Orbit (LEO), the region of space ranging from 160 kilometer(km) to 2,000 km above Earth.

Timeline: The mission is tentatively scheduled for **June 2026**, subject to final approval from the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center(IN-SPACe), under the Department of Space (DOS), and with the technical oversight of Indian Space Research Organisation(ISRO).

UP Introduces 10-year 'Warranty' Model for Rural Water Schemes under JJM

Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister(CM) of Uttar Pradesh(UP), announced a **10-year warranty** model for rural water schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission(JJM) to ensure long-term sustainability and accountability.

- With this initiative, UP has become the first state to mandate long-term accountability under the JJM.

Key Benefits of Scheme:

Policy Framework: Under the 'Jal Arpan' initiative, the policy transfers ownership of village water infrastructure to Gram Panchayats(GPs) while mandating construction agencies to **operate and maintain the systems for 10 years**.

Initiative: The state has deployed over 33,000 solar-powered water schemes, cutting maintenance costs by around 52% while enhancing efficiency and sustainability.

Monitoring: Strengthened water monitoring with 75 district labs, a state facility, mobile National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) -accredited labs, and in-house plant labs, along with a Citizen Charter to ensure standards for water quantity, quality, and delivery.

Overview of PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Sikkim on 27-28 April 2026; Inaugurates Rs 4,000 Crore Projects

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** visited **Sikkim** on 27–28 April 2026, to participate in the closing ceremony of the state's **50th Year** (Golden Jubilee) of Statehood celebrations held at Paljor Stadium, Gangtok, Sikkim.

- During the visit, he inaugurated, launched, and laid foundation stones for over 30 development projects worth over **Rs.4,000 crore** across sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, connectivity and others.

Highlights of the Visit:

50th Year of Statehood Celebrations: PM Narendra Modi visited Sikkim to participate in the closing ceremony of the State's 50-year celebrations, which had begun in May 2025.

Orchidarium Visit: During his visit to Sikkim, PM Narendra Modi visited the Swarnajayanti Maitri Manjari Park in Gangtok, a world-class Orchid Experience Centre showcasing the state's rich floral heritage.

North-East Cricket Infrastructure Expansion: PM Modi inaugurated the **Indoor Cricket Academy** at Rangpo, Pakyong district, Sikkim, and virtually launched five more state-of-the-art academies at Doimukh (Arunachal Pradesh, AR), Imphal (Manipur), Madankurklang (Meghalaya), Aizawl (Mizoram), and Sovima, Chümoukedima district near Dimapur (Nagaland).

LG Vinai Kumar Saxena Approves Notification of 5 New Districts for Ladakh

Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena officially notified the creation of five new districts in the Union Territory (UT), following preliminary approval by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in August 2024.

- With this, the number of districts in the UT has increased from two to **seven**.

About 5 New Districts:

New Districts: The new districts are **Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar, and Drass**.

- Previously, Ladakh comprised only two districts, Leh and Kargil.

Origin: Three districts, Nubra (Diskit), Sham (Khaltse), and Changthang (Nyoma), have been carved out of Leh district, while Zaskar (Padum) and Drass (Ranbirpura) have been created from Kargil district.

Appointments: LG Saxena approved the appointment of Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and Superintendents of Police (SPs) for all five new units to ensure the new districts become functional without delay.

SkyHop Aviation Receives DGCA Approval for India's First Commercial Seaplane Service in Lakshadweep

SkyHop Aviation Private Limited, received its Air Operator Certificate (AOC) from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), enabling it to launch India's first commercial seaplane services, with initial operations planned in Union Territory (UT) Lakshadweep.

- The approval, following an earlier No Objection Certificate (NOC) from MoCA, enables commercial operations to boost last-mile connectivity, reduce travel time, promote tourism, and improve access to remote areas..

About SkyHop Seaplane Operations:

Aircraft: The 19-seater De Havilland Canada **(DHC)-6 Twin Otter** has been indigenously converted into a seaplane with float attachments, enabling operations on water and short runways.

Operations: Initial phase in Lakshadweep connects five islands with mainland India via seaplane docks at Agatti, Kiltan, and Kavaratti along with prior certification through successful water take-off and landing trials at Ganga Barrage (Rishikesh) and Tehri Lake in Uttarakhand.

Seaplanes: Aircraft capable of taking off and landing on water using floats or hulls, making them suitable for remote, coastal, and island regions without airport infrastructure.

Scheme: Aligned with UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik), launched in 2016 by MoCA, it aims to enhance regional air connectivity and make air travel affordable for the common citizen.

International

Overview of WTO's 14th Ministerial Conference Held in Yaoundé, Cameroon

The World Trade Organization (WTO) held its 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14) from March 26 to 30, 2026 in Yaoundé, Cameroon, focusing on key challenges and future priorities of the global multilateral trading system.

- The conference was chaired by **Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana**, Minister of Trade of Cameroon.

Highlights of MC14:

Overview: The Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body of the WTO and is usually held once every two years (biennial).

Indian Delegation: The Indian team was led by **Union Minister Piyush Goyal**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), supported by officials from the Permanent Mission of India in Geneva, Switzerland.

Outcomes: Members agreed to continue talks on fisheries subsidies ahead of MC15. Two decisions were adopted to improve small economies' integration and strengthen S&DT under SPS and TBT agreements. A draft "Yaoundé Package" was also prepared for further negotiations in Geneva (Switzerland).

Skytrax World Airport Awards 2026: Singapore's Changi Tops; 5 Indian Airports in Top 100

Singapore's Changi Airport was named the world's best airport for the 14th time since 2000 at the Skytrax World Airport Awards 2026 held during the Passenger Terminal Expo & Conference (PTE) World in London, United Kingdom (UK), and also won awards for World's Best Airport Dining, Best Airport in the 60–70 Million Passenger Category, Best Airport Immigration Service, and Best Airport in Asia.

- South Korea's Seoul Incheon Airport** ranked No. 2 globally and won World's Most Family Friendly Airport, while **Japan's Tokyo Haneda Airport** ranked No. 3 with awards for World's Cleanest Airport (Major Airport), World's Best Domestic Airport, and World's Best Airport for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM) & Accessible Facilities
- Five Indian airports were featured among the world's top 100, with Delhi's **Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport** ranking within the top 30 globally.

Key Findings:

Rankings: Hong Kong International Airport (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR)) rose to No. 4 with key service awards, while Tokyo Narita's Narita International Airport (NRT) ranked as No.5 and won the global award for World's Best Airport Staff at the Skytrax World Airport Awards 2026.

Top Indian Rank: Five Indian airports were featured among the world's top 100, with **Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport** ranked 28th (up from 32nd) and was awarded Best Airport in India & South Asia.

- Kempegowda International Airport** (Bengaluru, Karnataka) ranked 41st and won Best Regional Airport in India & South Asia for the third consecutive year, **Rajiv Gandhi**

International Airport (Hyderabad, Telangana) has once again earned global recognition by winning the 'Best Airport Staff in India and South Asia 2026' award, while Manohar International Airport (Goa) ranked 64th and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (Mumbai, Maharashtra) ranked 66th, both improving their positions.

NASA Launched Four Astronauts on World's First Crewed Lunar Mission 'Artemis II'

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched the **Artemis II mission** from Kennedy Space Center in Florida, the United States of America (USA), using the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket and **Orion crew capsule**, sending four astronauts on a crewed test flight to the Moon's vicinity, marking the first human journey beyond low Earth orbit since Apollo 17 in 1972.

- The four-member crew includes Commander **Reid Wiseman** (USA), **Pilot Victor Glover** (USA), Mission Specialist **Christina Koch** (USA), and Mission Specialist **Jeremy Hansen** (Canada, Canadian Space Agency).

About Artemis II Mission:

Aim: The mission aims to orbit the Moon and safely return to Earth while testing spacecraft systems, crew performance, deep-space operations, life-support systems, and safety in a high-radiation environment beyond Earth's orbit.

Program: Artemis II is the first crewed mission under NASA Artemis program launched in 2017 to advance human lunar exploration and long-term Moon presence.

Achievement: Jeremy Hansen becomes the first Canadian astronaut to participate in a lunar mission, while Christina Koch holds the record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman (328 days) and Victor Glover becomes the first person of color on a lunar mission.

Mission: The mission will carry astronauts around the Moon and return to Earth in a nearly 10-day journey, traveling about 406,000 kilometer (km) (252,000 miles), the farthest distance for human spaceflight, surpassing Apollo 13.

India Elected to UN ECOSOC Bodies; Preeti Saran Re-elected to Key-Rights Panel

The Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations (UN) announced that **India** was elected by acclamation to **three subsidiary bodies** of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

India Secures Key Positions in UN Bodies:

Commissions and Committees: India has been elected to UN bodies, including

- Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) for the 2027–2030 term,
- Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO Committee) for 2027–2030, and
- Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) for 2027–2029.

Re-elected: India's Ambassador **Preeti Saran** has been re-elected to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) for the 2027–2030 term, reinforcing India's presence in key human rights bodies.

Tracxn Report: India Ranks 4th Globally in Tech Funding with USD 11.7 Billion in FY26

Tracxn, a leading market intelligence platform, released its 'India Tech Annual Funding Report 2026', stating that India's technology start-ups raised USD 11.7 billion (B) in Financial Year 2025–26 (FY26), reflecting an 18% decline from USD 14.3 billion in FY25 but a 20% increase over USD 9.7 billion in FY24.

- India ranked as the **fourth-highest** funded country globally in FY26, behind the United States of America (USA) (USD 426B), the United Kingdom (UK) (USD 17.8B), and China (USD 15B), while ahead of Germany (USD 8.4B) and France (USD 8.1B).

Key Findings:

Deals: India recorded **13 funding rounds** above **USD 100 million**, with notable deals including Nextra (USD 710 million), Neysa (USD 600 million), and Inox Clean Energy (USD 344 million).

IPOs: A total of **47 IPOs** were recorded, marking a 52% increase from FY25, with major listings including Lenskart, Groww, and Meesho.

Unicorns: **Six unicorns** such as Neysa, Raise, Navi, Jumbotail, JSW One MSME, and Juspay, were created in FY26, reflecting a 50% increase compared to FY25 and FY24.

Acquisitions: A total of **129** acquisitions were recorded, down 15% from FY25, with top deals including Resulticks acquired by Diginex (USD 2 billion) and Brahma acquired by Polymarket (USD 1.2 billion).

Top Cities: **Bengaluru (Karnataka)** accounted for 33% of total funding, followed by Mumbai (Maharashtra) with a 21% share.

Meta Unveils 'Muse Spark' AI Model to Strengthen Position in Global AI Race

Meta Platforms Inc., a multinational technology company, launched its new Artificial Intelligence (AI) model '**Muse Spark**', the first from its superintelligence team under the Avocado series.

- The model aims to strengthen Meta's position in the global AI race by developing advanced reasoning capabilities and integrating AI into everyday user experiences.

About Muse Spark AI:

Features: It is a multimodal model capable of text, image, and reasoning tasks, offering Instant, Thinking, and Contemplating modes (multi-agent reasoning), and supporting applications like image analysis, problem-solving, content generation, and recommendations.

Deployment: Initially available on Meta AI platforms, it will **replace Llama**-based chatbots across WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and smart glasses.

Safety: The model follows safety frameworks to restrict high-risk outputs, though it shows 'evaluation awareness,' requiring further research.

Crew members of NASA's Artemis II moon mission returned to Earth

All the four crew members of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s Artemis II lunar mission returned to Earth, splashing down in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California, the United States of America (USA).

- The crew members of the mission, featuring Reid Wiseman (Commander, the United States of America, USA), Victor Glover (Pilot, USA), Christina Koch (Mission Specialist, USA), and Jeremy Hansen (Mission Specialist, Canada), were carried by NASA's **Orion capsule**, named '**Integrity**', completing a 10-day long journey around the moon and back.

Key Details:

Ship to Ship Call: The mission scripted history by completing the **1st-ever ship to ship** call between a human moon mission and the International Space Station (ISS).

- During the call, Christina Koch on Artemis-II spoke with Jessica Meir on ISS.

Other Record: Previously, the lunar mission set a new record for the **farthest distance** humans have travelled from Earth.

- The spacecraft covered a total distance of 252,752 miles from Earth during a flyby of the moon's far side, surpassing the Apollo 13 record of 248,655 miles achieved in 1970.

Overview of 9th Indian Ocean Conference held in Port Louis, Mauritius

The 9th Indian Ocean Conference (**IOC 2026**) was held with the theme "**Collective Stewardship for Indian Ocean Governance**", from April 10 to 12, 2026 in Port Louis, Mauritius.

About IOC 2026:

Objective : The IOC 2026 aims to bring together key maritime states and stakeholders to strengthen regional cooperation under the framework of Security And Growth for All in the Region (**SAGAR**).

Organiser: The 3-day conference was jointly organised by India Foundation (IF) in association with the **Government of Mauritius**.

India's Representation: India was represented by External Affairs Minister (EAM) Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), who visited Mauritius on April 9–10, 2026.

Key Engagements: At IOC 2026, he delivered the keynote address, held bilateral discussions with the Mauritian leadership, reviewed India–Mauritius bilateral relations, and engaged with counterparts from participating nations.

Worldline Report 2025: UPI processes 228.5 billion transactions in 2025

Worldline SA, a payment technology company, released its annual report titled "India Digital Payments Report- Year 2025 in Review", stating that India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed 228.5 billion transactions in 2025, marking a 33% year-on-year (Y-o-Y) increase from 172.2 billion transactions in 2024.

- The report further highlighted that the total value of these transactions reached **Rs 299.74 trillion** in 2025, consolidating UPI's position as the default payment method for daily commerce in India.

Key Findings:

UPI Dominance: The report highlighted that Person-to-Merchant (P2M) transactions increased **34% to 143.82 billion**, reflecting UPI dominance in merchant payments.

Expansion of Merchant Infrastructure: The report revealed that merchant acceptance infrastructure expanded significantly, with UPI Quick Response (QR) codes increasing to 731.38 million, which marks an Y-o-Y increase of 15%.

Decline in ATS: As per the report, the Average Ticket Size (ATS) of all UPI transactions continued to decrease by 9% i.e. from Rs 1,437 in 2024 to Rs 1,314 in 2025, while merchant payments ATS declined to Rs 592, which indicates the digitisation of small ticket purchases.

Cards in Circulation: The report showed the total number of cards in circulation were more than **1.62 billion** in 2025.

TIME 100 2026: Ranbir Kapoor, Sundar Pichai Among World's Most Influential People
TIME, the 102-year-old global media brand, revealed the 23rd edition of annual "TIME 100 Most Influential People 2026" in the world.

- 2026 list features only **3 Indians** including: Sundar Pichai, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Google and Alphabet, Chef Vikas Khanna and renowned actor Ranbir Kapoor.

Key Personalities on TIME 2026 List:

Key Categories: The List has been divided into **6 different categories:** Leaders, Icons, Artists, Innovators, Pioneers and Titans, featuring a mix of heads of state, tech CEOs, celebrities, scientists, social-movement leaders, and rising global voices, with representation from over 25 countries.

Leaders & Geopolitics: This year's list features nearly 40% of the political figures, reflecting a year of high-stakes diplomacy and leadership transitions.

Some of the prominent global leaders include: Donald Trump, President of the United States of America (USA) & Xi Jinping, President of China, appeared on the list for the record 14th time.

Young Leaders: Zohran Mamdani, Indian-origin Mayor of New York City (the USA); Balendra Shah, the 35-year-old Prime Minister (PM) of Nepal.

Other Key Names: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s astronaut Reid Wiseman, commander of the Artemis II mission, named in the 'pioneers' category; Jennie (Blackpink) in artists category; famous American Actress Kate Hudson in 'icons' category; celebrated British fashion designer, businesswoman Victoria Beckham in 'icons' category, among others.

India and Germany Launches Commemorative Logo to Mark 75 Years of Diplomatic Ties

India and Germany officially launched a commemorative logo, to celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, during the India-Germany Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) held in Berlin, Germany.

- The FOC was co-chaired by Vikram Misri, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and Dr. Géza Andreas von Geyr, German State Secretary.

Key Highlights:

Logo: The logo was selected through a joint competition hosted on the **MyGov** platform, inviting participants from both nations to symbolize the deep-rooted friendship.

Strategic Review: During the consultations, both sides undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral relations covering trade and investment, defence and security, technology, green and sustainable development, mobility, and people-to-people exchanges, and agreed to expand cooperation in emerging areas.

China Emerged India's Top Trade Partner in FY26; Deficit Widens to USD 112 Billion

The Government of India (GoI)'s latest data showed that **China** emerged as **India's largest trading partner** in Financial Year 2025-26 (**FY26**), with bilateral trade reaching **USD 151.1 billion**. However, India's trade deficit with China widened to **USD 112.16 billion** during the period.

- China has replaced the United States of America (USA) which was India's largest trading partner for four consecutive years till FY25.

Key Details:

Export & Import from China: As per the official data, India's exports to China surged 36.66% to USD 19.47 billion in FY26, while imports increased 16% to USD 131.63 billion during the same period.

Major Trading Partners: The data revealed the major trading partners with which India registered negative exports growth in FY26: the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (UK), Singapore, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Australia, France, South Africa, and Malaysia.

- Further, India's imports from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, Switzerland, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Germany, Thailand, and Malaysia recorded positive growth in FY26.

IMF's WEO 2026: USA Topped, India Slips to 6th Spot in Global GDP Rankings

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) released its latest April 2026 World Economic Outlook (WEO) titled "Global Economy in the Shadow of War". As per the data, **India** has slipped from the 4th spot to **6th spot** in global Gross Domestic Product (**GDP**) rankings, despite the country being one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

- The data revealed that India's economy is projected to reach **USD 3.92 trillion in 2025**, up from USD 3.5 trillion in 2024, placing it behind the United Kingdom(UK) (USD 4 trillion) and Japan (USD 4.4 trillion).

Key Findings:

Top 3 Major Economies: The latest data estimated that the United States of America(USA)will continue to retain its position in global GDP rankings, with a projected GDP of **USD 39 trillion**.

- It is followed by China (USD 27.5 trillion); Germany (USD 5 trillion).

India Fastest-Growing Economy: Despite change in India's global rankings, the country will continue to be the fastest-growing major economy in the world. India is expected to reclaim the 4th position by 2027 as its GDP increases to USD 4.58 trillion, and will further overtake Japan by 2028.

- As per IMF latest estimates, India's GDP is estimated to reach **USD 6.17 trillion by 2030**.

WEF April 2026 Data : Global GDP Set to Jump USD 56 Trillion in 5 years

The World Economic Forum (WEF) released its April 2026 insights report titled, 'Growth in the New Economy: Towards a Blueprint'highlighting that the global economy is projected to expand by USD 56 trillion over the next five years, driven by advancements in Artificial Intelligence(AI), quantum computing, and other emerging technologies.

Key Findings:

Sectoral Growth: The WEF highlights that growth will be concentrated in sectors where digitisation and automation materially raise productivity, particularly Information Technology (IT) services, advanced manufacturing, energy and other technology-driven industries.

Regional growth contribution: Global growth is expected to increasingly shift towards middle-income economies, which are projected to contribute around 65% of cumulative Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth between 2025 and 2030.

- In contrast, low-income economies, despite recording the fastest growth rates, are likely to account for only about **1%** of global growth.
- Regionally, **Asia** is set to remain the primary engine of global expansion, contributing more than **50%** of total growth.

USA Unveils Space Nuclear Power Plan, Targets Moon Reactor by 2030

The United States of America (USA)'s Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) formally launched the National Space Technology Memorandum-3 (NSTM-3), a national initiative to advance space nuclear power, targeting deployment of low- to mid-power reactors in orbit, on the Moon and Mars in the 2030s.

Key Details of Guidelines:

Moon Reactor: As per the newly launched nuclear space programme, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has been tasked to start a programme within 30 days to develop a mid-power reactor with lunar surface version expected to launch by **2030**.

Orbital Reactor : The USA's Department of Defense has been tasked with developing a mission-ready in-space reactor by **2031**, subject to funding.

Key Role of DOE: The USA's Department of Energy (DOE) is required to assess within 60 days whether the USA reactor industry can build up to 4 space reactors within 5 years.

NASA Announces SpaceX to Launch Rosalind Franklin Rover to Mars 2028

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced that SpaceX's **Falcon Heavy rocket** will launch the European Space Agency (ESA)'s **Rosalind Franklin rover to Mars, in 2028**.

- It will be launched from Launch Complex 39A at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, the United States of America (USA).

About Rosalind Franklin rover:

Project: NASA has approved the implementation of Rosalind Franklin Support and Augmentation (ROSA) project. It is part of the ExoMars mission.

Objective: Under the mission, the Rosalind Franklin rover will drill up to 2 meters(m) beneath Mars' surface to search for signs of past or present microbial life, becoming the first Mars rover to explore subsurface life on the Red Planet.

Role of NASA: Under ROSA project, NASA will facilitate critical support systems and technologies to ensure the success of the mission: include launch services, braking engines for the landing platform, and radioisotope heater units to maintain internal temperature of the rover in extreme martian conditions.

Background: In 2024, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between NASA and ESA, formalizing the agreement to expand NASA's role in the ExoMars programme.

MoCI Data: Singapore emerges as top FDI source in Apr-Dec FY26, high inflows from tax havens

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (MoCI) released data which showed that **Singapore** emerged as the top source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) equity in inflows in April-December of Financial Year 2025-26 (FY26) at **USD 17.6 billion**, accounting for 37% of the total share of FDI.

- The data further showed India received USD 47.87 billion of FDI equity inflows in April-December of FY26.

Key Findings:

Other Top FDI Sources: Other than Singapore, the United States of America (USA) (USD 7.8 billion) and Mauritius (USD 4.8 billion) were the next two largest sources of FDI, accounting for 16% and 10% of the total FDI inflows, respectively.

- Also, Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were among the top 5 investor countries.

States-wise FDI Distribution: As per the data, Maharashtra received the highest FDI inflows i.e. at USD 15.38 billion in April-December of FY26; followed by Karnataka (USD 11.15 billion) in the three quarters of FY26.

China Selects Two Pakistani Astronauts for Tiangong Space Station Training

The China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) announced that it has selected two Pakistani candidates '**Muhammad Zeeshan Ali**' and '**KhurramDaud**' for astronaut training under China's human spaceflight programme, marking a major milestone in **China-Pakistan space cooperation**.

- This also represents China's first inclusion of foreign astronauts, with one expected to become the first Pakistani to reach Earth's orbit and visit the Tiangong space station.

About Pakistan-China Space Mission:

Selection: Muhammad Zeeshan Ali and KhurramDaud were chosen as reserve astronauts after multiple rounds and will undergo advanced training in China, with one to be selected as a payload specialist for a future Tiangong mission to conduct scientific experiments, technology demonstrations, and research.

Agreement: The collaboration strengthens China's space diplomacy and global outreach while enabling Pakistan's entry into human spaceflight and boosting its scientific and technological capabilities.

Background: The selection follows a February 2025 agreement between China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) and Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) covering astronaut training, experiments, and mission collaboration.

NASA Unveils 'Roman Space Telescope' to Probe Mysteries of Dark Matter

In April 2026, the United States of America (USA) space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) unveiled the '**Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope**', a powerful wide-field observatory designed to survey vast regions of the universe and detect planets beyond the solar system.

About Roman Space Telescope:

Purpose: It will also study dark matter and dark energy, unseen forces that make up about 95% of the universe.

Legacy: The telescope is named after Nancy Grace Roman, NASA's first Chief Astronomer,

often called the ‘mother of the Hubble Space Telescope’ for her pioneering role in advancing space-based astronomy.

Cost: The telescope was built at a cost of **USD 4 billion** (Bn) in more than a decade and will be positioned 1.5 million (mn) kilometres (kms) from earth to probe vast regions of space.

Data Flow: The telescope will transmit around **11 terabytes (TB)** of data to earth each day.

Knight Frank’s Wealth Report 2026: USA Topped; India Ranks 6th in Ultra-wealthy Population

Knight Frank, global property consultant firm, released the 20th edition of ‘The Wealth Report 2026’. As per the report, India ranked **6th** position globally with estimated **19,877** Ultra-High Net-Worth Individuals (UHNWIs) and 207 billionaires in 2026, which accounts for **2.8%** of the world’s ultra-wealthy population, up from just over 2% 5 years ago.

- The number of UHNWIs and billionaires in India is projected to increase by 27% (to 25,217) and 51% (to 313), respectively, by 2031.

Key Findings:

UHNWIs: Globally, the number of UHNWIs increased from 551,435 (in 2021) and **713,626** (in 2026) indicating to nearly 89 new UHNWIs being created every day over the last 5 years.

Top 5 Wealth Market: As per the report, the United States of America (USA) continued to be the world’s dominant wealth market, with 251,352 UHNWIs in 2026, followed by China (121,677 UHNWIs), Germany (38,215), and the United Kingdom (UK) (27,876).

India-Specific: The report revealed that the number of billionaires in India increased 58% over the last 5 years to 207 in 2026, which makes it the **3rd-largest** globally, after the USA (914), and China (485).

UNESCO Adds 12 New Global Geoparks, Expanding Network to 241 Sites

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated **12 new Global Geoparks**, bringing the total to **241 sites** across 51 countries, covering over 882,000 square kilometres (Sq km).

- The newly added sites span across China, France, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, Portugal, Russia, Tunisia (first-ever), and Uruguay.

About UNESCO Global Geoparks:

Establishment: Created as an official UNESCO label in **2015**, these sites use a “bottom-up” approach involving local stakeholders.

Purpose: The designation aims to protect geological heritage while promoting environmental education, sustainable development, and local community empowerment.

Duration: The status is granted for **four years**. To maintain the title, sites undergo a revalidation process.

New Geoparks Added (2026): Changshan (China), Mt. Siguniang (China), Terres d’Hérault (France), Nisyros (Greece), Joyce Country and Western Lakes (Ireland), Mine-Akiyoshidai Karst Plateau (Japan), Lenggong (Malaysia), Sarawak Delta (Malaysia), Algarvensis (Portugal), Toratau (Russia), Dahar (Tunisia), and Manantiales Serranos (Uruguay).

SIPRI Report 2025: USA Topped; India Becomes 5th-Largest Military Spender

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), an independent international think tank, released its latest “SIPRI Fact Sheet April 2026 titled “TRENDS IN WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURE, 2025” stating that India became the 5th-largest military

spender in the world in 2025, with defence expenditure reaching **USD 92.1 billion**, 8.9% increase from the previous year, accounting for **3.2%** of global spending.

- The United States of America (**USA**) topped the list with USD 954 billion, followed by China (USD 336 billion), Russia (USD 190 billion), and Germany (USD 114 billion).

About Global Military Spending 2025:

Global: World military expenditure reached USD 2,887 billion in 2025 marking the 11th consecutive year of growth with Europe as the main contributor due to the Russia–Ukraine war.

Regions: Europe’s spending rose 14% to USD 864 billion, Asia–Oceania increased 8.1% to USD 681 billion, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) European members spent USD 559 billion with 22 of 29 meeting the 2% Gross Domestic Product (GDP) target.

Leaders: USA spent USD 954 billion (−7.5% year-on-year (YoY), declining share), China USD 336 billion (1.7% of GDP), Russia USD 190 billion (+5.9%), and Germany USD 114 billion (+24%).

UAE Announces Withdrawal From OPEC & OPEC+ Oil Alliance

The United Arab Emirates (**UAE**) officially announced its decision to exit the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (**OPEC**) and the wider **OPEC+** alliance, effective **May 1, 2026**.

- UAE, joined OPEC in 1967, the group’s third-largest producer after Saudi Arabia and Iraq, accounts for around 12% of total output.

Reasons for Withdrawal:

Production Constraints: The UAE’s state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) has significantly expanded capacity to around 5 million barrels per day. OPEC+ production quotas limited full utilisation of this capacity.

National Interest & Flexibility: The move reflects UAE’s long-term strategy to gain greater flexibility in production decisions and align energy policy with national economic priorities.

China Launches Pakistani Satellite ‘PRSC-EO3’ Aboard Long March-6 Rocket

China’s national space agency China National Space Administration (**CNSA**) launched **Pakistan’s PRSC-EO3** (Pakistan Remote Sensing Satellite–Earth Observation-3) aboard a **Long March-6 rocket** from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in Shanxi Province, successfully placing it into its designated orbit and marking the 640th mission of China’s Long March rocket series.

About PRSC-EO3 Satellite:

Satellite: PRSC-EO3 is an Electro-Optical (EO) Earth Observation satellite developed indigenously by SUPARCO as part of Pakistan’s EO constellation.

Technology: The satellite uses visible, near-infrared, and ultraviolet sensors with advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based onboard data processing and multi-geometry imaging for high-resolution and 3D (Dimension) terrain analysis.

Defence

Union Minister Rajnath Singh Commissioned Advanced Stealth Frigate 'INS Taragiri' in Visakhapatnam, AP

Union Minister **Rajnath Singh**, Ministry of Defence (MoD) formally commissioned the advanced stealth frigate Indian Naval Ship (INS) **Taragiri (F41)** into the Indian Navy (IN) at Naval Dockyard in **Visakhapatnam**, Andhra Pradesh (AP).

- Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Anil Chauhan; Admiral Dinesh Kumar (DK) Tripathi, Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), IN; Captain Jagmohan (Retd.), Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), were among those present during the commissioning.

About INS Taragiri:

Design & Lineage: INS Taragiri, the fourth stealth frigate under **Project 17A**, has been designed by the Warship Design Bureau (**WDB**) and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (**MDL**).

- It follows the earlier vessels: INS Nilgiri, INS Udaygiri, and INS Himgiri.

Predecessor: This newly commissioned stealth frigate joins the **Eastern Fleet** on the eastern seaboard, replacing the Leander-class frigate of the same name that served in the Indian Navy from 1980 to 2013.

Arms and Ammunition: The vessel features a vast range of weapons including Supersonic Surface-to-Surface missiles; Medium-range Surface-to-Air Missiles (MRSAM); advanced anti-submarine warfare system; and advanced indigenous Sound Navigation and Ranging (SONAR) systems, among others.

Indian Navy Commissions Third Nuclear-Powered Ballistic Missile Submarine INS Aridhaman

Indian Navy (IN) commissioned its third indigenously built Ship, Submersible, Ballistic, Nuclear (**SSBN**), 'Indian Naval Ship (INS) **Aridhaman (S4)**', at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP).

- The ceremony was presided over by **Union Minister Rajnath Singh**, Ministry of Defence (MoD), who also laid the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art **Large Cavitation Tunnel (LCT)**.

About INS Aridhaman:

Overview: INS Aridhaman is constructed under the Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project at Visakhapatnam. It belongs to the Arihant class, following INS Arihant (2016) and INS Arighaat (2024), and features enhanced capacity for submarine-launched ballistic missiles, with most technical specifications remaining classified.

Builder: The ship was constructed at the Shipbuilding Centre (**SBC**), Visakhapatnam.

Weaponry: Equipped with eight vertical launch tubes, it can carry either 8 K-4 Intermediate-Range Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) with a 3,500 kilometre (km) range or 24 K-15 Sagarika short-range SLBMs with a 750 km range.

Indigenous Content: The vessel features approximately **70%** indigenous content.

ISRO Launches 'Mission MITRA' in Ladakh to Test Crew Safety for Human Spaceflight

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched 'Mission MITRA (Mapping of Interoperable Traits & Reliability Assessment)', a high-altitude analogue mission from **Leh, Ladakh**, conducted between **April 2 and 9, 2026**, to gather vital data on crew performance and human factors for India's Gaganyaan program and future long-duration space missions.

- The initiative, led by **ISRO's Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC)** in collaboration with **Protoplanet Private Limited**, aims to simulate space-like conditions to study team behavior, resilience, and communication for India's Gaganyaan crew.

About Mission MITRA:

Objective: Mission MITRA is a week-long high-altitude exercise testing physiological, psychological, and operational performance under extreme cold, low oxygen (hypoxia), and isolation, with a multidisciplinary team monitoring safety and generating data for future human spaceflight.

Crew: Four Gaganyaan astronaut-designates, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, Ajith Krishnan, Angad Pratap, and P. Balakrishnan Nair, participated in the exercise at 3,500 metres (m) altitude.

Operational Interoperability: This study is targeted to generate vital understanding on the team inter-operability between crew (gaganyatris) and ground control teams and effectiveness of decision making under environmental and operational stress.

India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Cyclone-IV' Begins in Egypt

The fourth edition of the India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise, 'Cyclone-IV', officially commenced at Rangers Forces Headquarters, Anshas, Egypt.

- The exercise is a 9-day joint engagement, scheduled to be held from **April 9 to 17, 2026**.

About Exercise Cyclone-IV:

Objective: The exercise aims to strengthen joint mission planning capabilities and enhance interoperability by facilitating the exchange of best practices in special operations.

Focus: Participating troops will engage in a range of training activities centred on special operational tactics, techniques, and procedures, particularly in desert and semi-desert terrain.

Participants:

- Indian Contingent:** The Indian Army(IA) has deployed a contingent of 25 personnel drawn from its **Special Forces units**.
- Egyptian Contingent:** The host nation is represented by personnel from the Egyptian Special Forces Group and Rangers Forces.

ISRO Successfully Completes Integrated Air Drop Test-02 for Gaganyaan Mission at Sriharikota, AP

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted the second Integrated

Air Drop Test (**IADT-02**) at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, **Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh** (AP), marking a key milestone in the **Gaganyaan Mission**.

- The test evaluated and validated the parachute-based deceleration and recovery system for controlled descent, ensuring safe astronaut return during re-entry and abort situations.

About IADT-02:

Process: Conducted a simulated Crew Module weighing about 5.7 tonnes (equivalent to Gaganyaan G1 mission) was lifted by an Indian Air Force (IAF) Chinook helicopter to ~3 kilometre (km) altitude and released over a designated sea drop zone near Sriharikota coast.

Operations: A sequence of 10 parachutes of four types was deployed to reduce velocity for safe touchdown, followed by successful Crew Module recovery in coordination with the Indian Navy (IN) after splashdown.

Significance: The test validated descent and landing systems, marking a major step toward readiness for the Gaganyaan G1 mission and strengthening human spaceflight safety.

India-Uzbekistan Joint Military Exercise DUSTLIK 2026 Begins in Namangan

The **Seventh** edition of the India-Uzbekistan Joint Exercise, '**DUSTLIK 2026**', officially commenced at Gurumsaray Field Training Area in Namangan, Uzbekistan.

- The 13-day exercise is being conducted from April 12 to 25, 2026.

About Exercise DUSTLIK:

Objective: To strengthen military cooperation and enhance joint operational capabilities in semi-mountainous terrain, focusing on physical fitness, joint planning, tactical drills, and special arms skills.

Participants:

- Indian Contingent:**The Indian Armed Forces contingent, comprising 60 personnel, includes 45 personnel from the Indian Army (IA), primarily from a battalion of the MAHAR Regiment and 15 personnel from the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- Uzbekistan Contingent:** The host contingent also comprises around 60 personnel from the Uzbekistan Army and Air Force.

Interoperability: Establishing a unified command-and-control framework and sharing "Best Practices" in Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs).

Validation Phase: The training will culminate in an intensive **48-hour validation phase** to test the joint operational readiness of both contingents.

IA Flags Off First Blue Water Sailing Expedition 'SamudraSahas' from Mumbai

The Indian Army(IA)'s **Regiment of Artillery** flagged off its first blue water sailing expedition '**SamudraSahas**' from Marve, Mumbai(Maharashtra).

- The voyage, inaugurated by **N. S. Sarna**, Commandant of the School of Artillery, marks the bicentenary (200 years) of the Regiment and pays tribute to the maritime legacy of ChhatrapatiShivajiMaharaj.

About**SamudraSahas:**

Voyage Details: The expedition will cover about 520 nautical miles along the Konkan Coast using 21-foot Seabird class boats, divided into four legs: Mumbai–Vijaydurg (Maharashtra)–Goa–Vijaydurg–Mumbai.

Sailing Conditions: Sailing around 7 nautical miles off the coast, the team will face varying wind speeds from 2–4 knots to 10–15 knots, requiring high levels of seamanship, endurance, and coordination.

Team & Training: The expedition is led by **Kshitij Nair** and **Prakash Funde**, with ground support under VardhanShidhye. The crew underwent pre-expedition training at the Heavy Bridge Training Centre, Marve.

Support: The expedition is supported administratively and operationally by the Indian Navy(IN) and the Indian Coast Guard(ICG).

Pakistan Successfully Test-Fires Indigenous Taimoor Anti-Ship Cruise Missile

The **Pakistan Navy** successfully conducted a live test-firing of an indigenously developed **Taimoor air-launched anti-ship cruise missile (ALCM)**, marking a significant enhancement in its maritime strike capability, according to the Inter-Services Public Relations (**ISPR**).

- Deployed from Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Air Force (PAF), the system enables coordinated air–sea and multi-domain operations, with the test showcasing its ability to precisely detect, track, and neutralise sea-based threats at extended ranges.

About Taimoor Missile System:

Overview: The Taimoor is an indigenously developed ALCM of Pakistan with anti-ship and secondary land-attack capability, offering precision strikes up to approximately 600 kilometer (km) with stand-off engagement advantage.

Test: The Pakistan Navy demonstrated exceptional precision, validating its detection, targeting, and neutralisation capabilities.

Significance: The system enhances naval strike strength, maritime security, and deterrence, while advancing defence modernisation and battlefield flexibility.

Appointments or Resign/Retired

ACC Appoints Vir Vikram Yadav as Director General of DGCA

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) appointed **Vir Vikram Yadav**, a 1996-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Odisha cadre, as the Director General (DG) of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), under the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), as part of a senior-level bureaucratic reshuffle.

- He succeeded **Faiz Ahmed Kidwai**, who has been appointed as Additional Secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) under Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions(MoPP&P).

About Vir Vikram Yadav

Experience: He has held key administrative positions in both state and central governments, gaining extensive experience in governance, policy implementation, and regulatory administration.

Previous Position: Prior to this appointment, he served as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

IndiGo Appoints William Walsh as New CEO

India's largest airline, **IndiGo**, appointed aviation veteran William Walsh as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), with his tenure set to begin in August 2026.

- He will succeed **Pieter Elbers**, who resigned on 10 March 2026 following a major operational crisis that resulted in over 4,500 flight cancellations in late 2025.

About William Walsh:

Profile: He is a highly influential aviation leader with over 40 years of experience, having begun his career as a cadet pilot at Aer Lingus in 1979.

Leadership: He served as CEO at Aer Lingus (2000–2005), British Airways (2005–2011), International Airlines Group (IAG) (2011–2020).

IATA Role: He has been Director General (DG) of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) since April 2021 until July 2026.

Expertise: His expertise includes large-scale airline operations, mergers and restructuring, crisis management, and global aviation leadership.

Recognition: In March 2014, he was named the 2014 Laureate for Commercial Aviation by 'Aviation Week & Space Technology'.

Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth Assumes Charge as Vice Chief of the Army Staff

Lieutenant General (Lt Gen) Dhiraj Seth assumed the office of the 49th Vice Chief of the Army Staff (VCOAS) of the Indian Army (IA), while **Lt Gen Sandeep Jain** succeeded him as **GOC-in-C, Southern Command**.

- Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth replaced **Lt Gen Pushendra Pal Singh**, who assumed command as General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Western Command at Chandimandir near Chandigarh, Haryana.
- Meanwhile, Lt Gen V.M.B. Krishnan took over as GOC-in-C, Eastern Command at Fort William, Kolkata, West Bengal(WB).

Role of VCOAS:

Position Hierarchy: The VCOAS is the second-highest-ranking officer in the Indian Army

and the senior-most Principal Staff Officer (PSO) to the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS).

Function: As the deputy professional head, the officer serves as a senior adviser to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and manages strategic planning and operational logistics.

Myanmar Parliament Elects Min Aung Hlaing as President

Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General and former Commander-in-Chief of the Tatmadaw (Armed Forces of Myanmar), was elected as the **11th President** of Myanmar by the **Pyidaungsu Hluttaw** (Assembly of the Union), the legislature of Myanmar.

Background:

Election: The election took place in a parliament dominated by the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) and appointed armed forces representatives.

Outcome: **Min Aung Hlaing** won 429 of 584 votes, while **Nan Ni Ni Aye**, regional Member of Parliament (MP) from Karen State, and **U Nyo Saw** were elected as Vice-Presidents of Myanmar.

Croatian High Jumper 'Blanka Vlašić' Appointed International Event Ambassador for TCS World 10K Bengaluru 2026

Procam International, a sports management company in India, announced that Croatian high jumper and double Olympic medallist **Blanka Vlašić** has been appointed as the **International Event Ambassador** for the **18th** edition of the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) **World 10K Bengaluru**.

- The event, a World Athletics Gold Label race scheduled for 26 April 2026 in Bengaluru (Karnataka), is widely regarded as one of the premier 10 kilometre (km) distance running events globally.

About Blanka Vlašić:

Identity: Blanka Vlašić is a Croatian athlete specializing in women's high jump.

Olympics: She won a silver medal at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games held in Beijing, China, and a bronze medal at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Records: Her personal best of 2.08 metres (m) (2009) is the Croatian national record and ranks as the third-highest jump in women's high jump history.

Career: She has multiple World Championship and World Indoor titles and currently serves as Vice President of the Croatian Olympic Committee while contributing to the Champions for Peace initiative.

Jindal Stainless Appoints Actor Ranveer Singh as Brand Ambassador

Jindal Stainless Limited (JSL), a leading stainless steel manufacturing company in India, appointed renowned actor **Ranveer Singh** as its **1st brand ambassador**.

- This collaboration will give a major boost to enhance brand visibility and expand the consumer base of the company.

Key Details:

Objective: The initiative aims to enhance awareness, strengthen audience connect, and highlight the importance of stainless steel in everyday life and infrastructure.

Campaign : Through this association, Ranveer Singh will feature in campaigns across television (TV), digital, and social media platforms.

Growth: The company reported an annual turnover of Rs 40,182 crore in Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25). It plans to scale up its facilities to reach 4.2 Million Tonnes (MT) of annual melt capacity in FY25.

- As of March 2025, it has a total of 16 stainless manufacturing and processing units in India and overseas, including Spain and Indonesia, and worldwide network in 12 countries.

Vietnam Parliament Re-elects Tô Lâm as President

Tô Lâm, General Secretary of Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), was unanimously re-elected as the **President of Vietnam** by the National Assembly of Vietnam (NA) during its 16th session, securing a new five-year term.

- His new term will run from 2026 to 2031, having served as President since May 2024.

Background:

Election: The NA elected Tô Lâm (To Lam) as President with 100% support (495/495 deputies present) in the 500-seat assembly.

Shift: This development marks a shift in Vietnam's power structure, as the roles of Party General Secretary and State President have traditionally been held by separate individuals.

PM: During the same session, **Le Minh Hung**, former Governor of the State Bank of Vietnam (SBV), was elected as Prime Minister (PM) of Vietnam.

Iraqi Parliament Elects Nizar Amedi As New President

The Parliament of **Iraq** elected former Environment Minister **Nizar Mohammed Saeed Amedi**, a member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), as the country's **9th President** during a decisive voting session held in Baghdad, Iraq.

- He succeeds **Abdul Latif Rashid** and becomes the 6th Iraqi Head of State since 2003.

Background:

Strong Lead: In the first round, Nizar Amedi secured 208 votes, while Muthanna Amin got 17 votes and Fuad Hussein received 16 votes.

- The election proceeded to a second round between Amedi and Amin after no candidate achieved the required two-thirds majority in the first round.

Victory: Nizar Amedi secured 227 votes in the second-round runoff, defeating Muthanna Amin Nader, who received 15 votes, and subsequently took the constitutional oath as President.

Quorum Achieved: Around 250 lawmakers attended the session out of 329 members, crossing the required quorum of 220 for the election.

Samrat Choudhary Sworn-in as New CM of Bihar After Nitish Kumar Steps Down

Samrat Choudhary was sworn in as the 24th Chief Minister (CM) of Bihar, becoming the first Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader to hold the post, with the oath administered by **Bihar Governor Syed Ata Hasnain** at Raj Bhavan, in Patna (Bihar).

Key Details:

Leadership Transition: He succeeded **Nitish Kumar**, who resigned as CM of Bihar after being elected to the Rajya Sabha, bringing an end to his long tenure from February 2015 to April 2026.

Dy CM: **Vijay Kumar Choudhary** and **Bijendra Prasad Yadav** were sworn in as the Deputy Chief Ministers (Dy CM) of Bihar.

Infosys Appoints Tennis Star Carlos Alcaraz as Global Brand Ambassador

Infosys, a technology company, has appointed men's World No. 1 tennis player Carlos Alcaraz of Spain as its Global Brand Ambassador. This deal follows a successful history of Infosys partnering with tennis icons, including Rafael Nadal(Spain) and IgaŚwiątek(poland).

Key Details of Partnership:

Innovation: Leveraging **Infosys Topaz (IT)**, Infosys will collaborate with Carlos Alcaraz and his coaching team to develop Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven match analytics and personalised performance applications for match preparation and in-game strategy.

Collaboration: The partnership will also extend beyond the court through joint initiatives between Infosys and the Carlos Alcaraz Foundation.

About Carlos Alcaraz:

Profile: Carlos AlcarazGarfia is a Spanish professional tennis player. As of April 2026, he is placed in history by becoming the **youngest man** to complete a Career Grand Slam (winning all four major titles).

Achievements: He has won multiple Grand Slam titles, including the US Open and Wimbledon, became the youngest World No. 1 in the men's Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) rankings in the modern era, and secured several ATP Masters 1000 titles, establishing himself as one of the leading players in international tennis.

Apple Named John Ternus as Next CEO; Tim Cook to Step Down

Apple Inc., American multinational technology company, officially announced that **John Ternus**, the current Senior Vice President of Hardware Engineering, will assume the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) effective September 1, 2026.

- He will succeed **Tim Cook**, who will step down as CEO and continue as Executive Chairman, overseeing policy and long-term strategy.

About John Ternus:

Early Life: He began his career at Virtual Research Systems, working on early virtual reality headsets, which later influenced his involvement in advanced products like Vision Pro.

Joining Apple:He joined Apple Inc. in 2001, led the first iPad's design in 2010, became Vice President in 2013 overseeing major products, drove the shift to Apple Silicon, and rose to Senior Vice President in 2021, reporting to Tim Cook.

Justice Lisa Gill Appointed Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court

Justice Lisa Gill was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh(AP) High Court, effective **April 25, 2026**, following the retirement of Justice **Dhiraj Singh Thakur**. She becomes the first woman Chief Justice of the AP High Court after her recent transfer from Punjab & Haryana High Court.

Appointment Process:

The Supreme Court Collegium recommended Justice Gill's appointment on February 27, 2026, following the government's consultation process. President of India **Droupadi Murmu** notified her appointment in exercise of powers under Article 217(1) of the Constitution. This follows her transfer from Punjab & Haryana High Court notified on March 5, 2026.

Career Background of Lisa Gill:

Enrolled as advocate: 1990 at Punjab & Haryana High Court

Elevated as Judge: March 2014 (Punjab & Haryana HC)

Education: LL.B., LL.M. from Panjab University, Chandigarh

Notable: 12+ years judicial experience at elevation to Chief Justice

Judicial Significance: Justice Gill's appointment marks a milestone as the first woman CJ of AP High Court since its separate formation in 2019. It reflects SC Collegium's advance-transfer policy for smoother HC leadership transitions. She assumed charge as AP HC Judge on March 13, 2026, ahead of her elevation.

Ashok Lahiri Appointed as Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog; Gobardhan Das Named Member

The Government of India (GoI) appointed veteran economist **Dr. Ashok Lahiri**, a former Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) to the GoI, as the new **Vice-Chairman** and eminent Scientist **Dr. Gobardhan Das**, Director, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (**IISER**), Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh (MP), as full time **Member of NITI Aayog** (National Institution for Transforming India).

- Dr. Ashok Lahiri succeeds **Suman Bery**, who completes his four-year tenure on May 1, 2026, and becomes the second-highest authority in NITI Aayog after the Chairperson.

About New Appointee:

Dr. Ashok Kumar Lahiri : He is one of India's most experienced and senior economists, with a career spanning over four decades, having held key roles in public finance and government policy.

- He is currently serving as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Balurghat in West Bengal (WB).

Reliance Enterprise Intelligence Appointed 'Parminder Singh' as CEO

In April 2026, Reliance Enterprise Intelligence Limited (**REIL**), a joint venture (JV) between Reliance Intelligence Limited and Meta's Facebook Overseas Inc., appointed **Parminder Singh** as its Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) with immediate effect.

About Parminder Singh:

Profile: He is a global technology leader with over 30 years of experience across Google, Apple, Twitter, and IBM, specializing in scaling digital businesses, enterprise strategy, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven transformation.

Roles: He served as Managing Director (MD) at Google (Asia-Pacific) and Twitter (Southeast Asia, India, and Middle East & North Africa (MENA)) and as Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) and Chief Digital Officer (CDO) at Mediacorp, leading digital and AI transformation.

Ventures: He co-founded ClayboxAI and WeKamp, focusing on AI leadership, advisory, and community platforms.

Honours/ Awards

Tripura Panchayats Win Top Honours at DDUPSVP & NDPSVP 2025 Awards

Tripura achieved a major milestone as three of its Panchayats secured top honours at the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (**DDUPSVP**) 2025 and the Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (**NDPSVP**) 2025, presented by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR).

Award Winners:

District Rank: Sepahijala District Panchayat (DP) secured 1st rank in the Best DP category under NDPSVP.

Healthy Category: Kanchanbari GP (Unakoti district, Tripura) secured 1st rank under the Healthy Panchayat category of DDUPSVP.

Women Category: Baikunthapur GP (West Tripura district, Tripura) secured 3rd rank under the Women-Friendly Panchayat category of DDUPSVP.

Financial Incentives: Sepahijala District Panchayat will receive **Rs 5 crore**, Kanchanbari Gram Panchayat **Rs 1 crore**, and Baikunthapur Gram Panchayat **Rs 50 lakh**.

Uttarakhand & Odisha Police Honoured with the Prestigious President's Police Colours

The President of India **Droupadi Murmu** approved the conferment of the prestigious **President's Police Colour (Nishaan)**, the highest national honour for a state police force, on the Uttarakhand Police (2 April 2026) and Odisha Police (30 March 2026) in recognition of their exceptional service, professionalism, and commitment to internal security and public safety.

About Uttarakhand Police:

Award: The Uttarakhand Police was honoured for recognising bravery, discipline, professional excellence, and long-term dedication to the nation during the Silver Jubilee Year of statehood.

Leadership: Uttarakhand's Chief Minister (CM) Pushkar Singh Dhami and Director General of Police (DGP) Deepam Seth guided the force, which is acknowledged for its service in disaster management, notably the 2013 Kedarnath tragedy, and managing large-scale events like the Maha Kumbh and Char Dham Yatra.

About Odisha Police:

Award: The Odisha Police was conferred the award for recognising exceptional discipline, service excellence, bravery, professionalism, and long-term institutional contribution, coinciding with the 90th Police Foundation Day (Utkal Divas).

Leadership: Odisha's Director General of Police (DGP) Y B Khurania and Additional Director General (ADG) Prateek Mohanty led the force, which has been operational since 1936 and is acknowledged for anti-Maoist operations, crime prevention, and citizen-centric initiatives.

UP's Divya Singh Becomes First Indian Woman to Cycle to Everest Base Camp in 14 Days

Divya Singh, a 28-year-old teacher from Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh, UP), created history by becoming the **first Indian woman** and **second woman globally**, after Tammat Bil Khoar of Bangladesh, to reach **Mount Everest Base Camp (EBC)** on a bicycle.

About the Expedition:

Support & Management: The expedition was flagged off by Gorakhpur district officials and

managed by **Rustadventure1**.

Route: The expedition covered **Kathmandu (Nepal) to EBC** via Saleri, Surke, Phakding, Namche Bazaar, Lobuche, and Gorakshep over 14 days with 10–12 hours of daily cycling.

Altitude: She reached a height of 5,364 metres (m) (17,560 feet) above sea level under extreme high-altitude conditions.

Indian Botanist N. Alim Yusuf Wins WWF Award For Invasive Plants Detection

App Indian botanist from Kerala, **N. Alim Yusuf** was honoured with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) **National Award** at the National ECHO Youth Innovation Summit 2026, held as part of the International Youth Biodiversity Conference, in Hyderabad, Telangana.

- He received the award for the development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered mobile application (app), '**NeophyteID**' to detect invasive plant species in Kerala.

About WWF National Award:

Monetary Prize: During the summit, he received **Rs 1.5 lakh** as seed grant from WWF to further develop and scale his project.

NeophyteID App: The app capable of identifying around 100 invasive plant species in Kerala, was developed by researchers at the Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute for Plant Sciences (MGBIPS) at Olavanna, Kozhikode (Kerala).

Technology Used: The mobile app is powered by the advanced Machine Learning (ML) model **YOLOv11**, supporting only two languages i.e. Malayalam and English.

Bloomberg Billionaires Index 2026: Gautam Adani Overtakes MukeshAmbani To Become Asia's Richest Person

Bloomberg News published the latest edition of Bloomberg Billionaires Index 2026, a daily ranking of the world's 500 wealthiest people. Gautam Adani, Chairman of Adani Group, has replaced MukeshAmbani, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), to become the richest person in Asia.

- As of 17 April 2026, Adani's net worth stood at **USD 92.6 billion**, placing him at 19th position globally. Ambani followed as the second richest in Asia and 20th globally, with a net worth of USD 90.8 billion.

Key Findings:

World's Richest Persons: Elon Musk, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Tesla Motors and founder and Chief Executive Officer(CEO) of SpaceX(Space Exploration Technologies Corporation); continued to retain the top position with **USD 656 billion**.

- He is followed by Larry Page, CEO of Google Inc. (USD 286 billion); and Jeff Bezos, founder of e-commerce giant Amazon (USD 269 billion).

Other Prominent Indians: Other Indian billionaires featured on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index include Lakshmi Mittal, executive chairman of ArcelorMittal (62nd, USD 36.9 billion), Shiv Nadar, Founder of HCL Technologies Limited (70th, USD 33.5 billion), and Shapoor Mistry & family (71st, USD 33.2 billion).

Bollywood Actress Sayani Gupta Named Person of the Year by Harvard SAA

Bollywood actress **Sayani Gupta** was named the **South Asian 'Person of the Year'** by the

Harvard University South Asian Association (SAA), recognising her exceptional contribution to film, story telling, and representation.

- She will formally receive the award at Harvard University later in April 2026.

Key Details:

Person of the Year Award: It is an annual award, presented by Harvard University to individuals whose work has significantly influenced global perceptions of South Asian talent and identity.

- It celebrates contributions across arts, leadership, activism, and public service.

Last Year Indian Winner: In 2025, Michelin-star Chef Vikas Khanna was honored by Harvard University SAA.

IARI Director Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Rao Conferred 9th Prof. M.S. Swaminathan Award Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Rao, the Director and Vice-Chancellor of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Indian Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR-IARI), was conferred the **9th Prof. M.S. Swaminathan Award** for 2024-25 in Hyderabad, Telangana, coinciding with the birth centenary year of M. S. Swaminathan, the pioneer of India's Green Revolution.

- The award was presented by M. Venkaiah Naidu, Former Vice President of India, in recognition of his exceptional and sustained contributions to climate-resilient farming and natural resource management.

About M.S. Swaminathan Award:

Award Overview: The award was established to honour the legacy of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, regarded as the Father of India's Green Revolution, who played a pivotal role in making the country self-reliant in agriculture and modernising farming practices during the 1960s and 1970s.

Instituted By: Established in 2004-05 by the Retired ICAR Employees Association (RICAREA) in collaboration with Nuziveedu Seeds Limited.

Purpose: It recognizes eminent scientists whose lifetime contributions have made a measurable impact on India's food security and agricultural sustainability by awarding a **Gold Medal** and a cash prize of **Rs.2 Lakh**.

Former MP Santosh Kumar Honoured as 'Global Green Icon' at World Climate Leaders Conclave in UK

Joginapally Santosh Kumar, a former Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament(MP) and prominent environmentalist, was conferred the **'Global Green Icon'** during the **World Climate Leaders Conclave 2026** held at **House of Lords** in London, the United Kingdom(UK).

- The award recognizes his pioneering role in the success of the Green India Challenge, mobilizing millions of citizens through massive afforestation and ecological restoration efforts.

About Santhosh Kumar:

Profile: He is a prominent Indian politician and environmentalist.

Parliamentary Role: He was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Bharat RashtraSamithi (BRS), representing Telangana in 2018.

Key Initiatives: He is the founder of the Green India Challenge(GIC, 2018), one of the world's

largest citizen-led afforestation movements, and also serves as the Chairman of the Igniting Minds Organisation.

Commonwealth Presentation: In April 2026, he presented the 'Green India model' to the Commonwealth Secretariat as a scalable template for 56 member nations to achieve the United Nations(UN) Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs).

Books: He has authored notable works including VrikshaVedam 2.0 and Wings of Passion.

Laureus World Sports Awards 2026: Carlos Alcaraz & Aryna Sabalenka Win Sportsman & Sportswoman of the Year

The Laureus World Sports Academy presented the **26th** annual **Laureus World Sports Awards** at Cibeles Palace, in **Madrid, Spain**, recognizing global sporting excellence for outstanding performances during the 2025 season.

- Spain's **Carlos Alcaraz** won the Sportsman of the Year award for their outstanding 2025 performances, while Belarusian tennis player **Aryna Sabalenka** was named Laureus World Sportswoman of the Year.

About Laureus World Sports Awards 2026:

Hosts: The ceremony was co-hosted for the first time by Serbian tennis player Novak Djokovic, a five-time Laureus winner and 24-time Grand Slam champion, alongside Chinese-American Olympic freestyle skiing champion Eileen Gu.

Categories: The awards recognized winners across 11 major categories.

Team: Paris Saint-Germain won World Team of the Year after a historic 2025 season featuring six trophies, including their first Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Champions League title with a 5–0 final win over Inter Milan.

Milestones: Notable age-related achievements included 18-year-old Lamine Yamal becoming the youngest athlete to win two Laureus awards.

WEF's Young Global Leaders Class of 2026: 10 Indians Featured Including Jay Shah and Isha Ambani

The World Economic Forum(WEF) announced the Young Global Leaders (YGL) Class of 2026, recognising 118 leaders from 55 countries for their contributions across sectors.

- From India, the YGL Class of 2026 includes prominent leaders from government, business, and social sectors such as Jay Shah, Isha Ambani, Sumit Gupta, Abhishek Bansal, Ameve Sharma, Suhani Jalota, Aniket Doegar, Supriya Paul, Dr Edmond Clint Fernandes, and Natsuki Sugai.

About Young Global Leaders Class of 2026:

YGL Initiative: The YGL initiative was established in **2004** by the WEF to identify leaders **under 40 years** of age for a structured five-year leadership programme.

Notable Leaders: These seven leaders represent a glimpse of the 118 individuals in the 2026 cohort, including Kemi Lala Akindoju (Nigeria; Founder, The Make It Happen Production Company Ltd), Nick Frosst (Canada; Co-founder, Cohere), Thea LaFond (Dominica; Track & Field athlete), Isha Ambani (India; Director, Reliance Retail Ventures), Dan Wu (China; Founder & CEO, Hero Games), Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri (Indonesia; Vice Minister of Trade), and Paola Longoria (Mexico; Athlete and member of Congress).

Programme: The selected leaders will participate in a five-year leadership programme based in Geneva(Switzerland), aimed at fostering collaboration and addressing global challenges.

General Upendra Dwivedi Inducted into US Army War College International Hall of Fame

General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of Indian Army(IA), was inducted into the International Hall of Fame (HoF) of the United States Army War College (USAWC) at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, United States of America (USA).

- He received the honour during his official visit to the United States of America(USA), making the occasion both professionally and personally significant.

Criteria: The International HoF recognises military leaders for outstanding contributions to national security and global military cooperation.

Significance: General Upendra Dwivedi became the third IA Chief to be inducted into the USAWC International Hall of Fame after **General V. K. Singh** and **General Bikram Singh**, and is also a Distinguished Fellow and alumnus of USAWC.

AP's Guntur Municipal Corporation Wins UNIDO GEM Award 2026 in Vienna, Austria

The Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC), Andhra Pradesh (AP), has won the **4th** edition of the Gender Equality Mobilisation (GEM) Award presented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

- On behalf of GMC, **Olga Rataj**, Sustainable Cities Project Manager & Industrial Development Officer (IDO), received the award during the International Day of Women in Industry 2026(April 21) celebrations held in Vienna, Austria.

About Gender Equality Mobilisation (GEM) Award:

Origin: The GEM Award, established in 2018 by the UNIDO, is a prestigious international recognition that honours outstanding initiatives and leadership advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

GMC Recognition: The award honours GMC's exemplary efforts in advancing sustainable urban development, efficient resource management, and environmentally responsible industrial practices under the **Global Eco-Industrial Parks initiative**.

Sports

South Africa Batter Rassie van der Dussen Announces Retirement from International Cricket

South African top-order batter **Rassie van der Dussen**(37) announced his retirement from **international cricket** and will continue to play for the Lions and mentor young players.

About Rassie van der Dussen:

International Career: He made his Twenty20 International (T20I) and One Day International (ODI) debuts in 2018 against Zimbabwe and England, respectively, at age 29, and played his first Test in 2019 against England.

Performance: Across formats, he played 18 Tests, scoring 905 runs with 6 fifties; 71 ODIs, amassing 2,657 runs with 6 centuries and 17 fifties, and holding the second-highest ODI average for South Africa after AB de Villiers.

- He also played 57 T20Is, scoring 1,406 runs with 10 fifties and captained the side eight times.

Achievements: He was among the leading run-scorers in the 2019 and 2023 ODI World Cups and the 2025 Champions Trophy, and was named in the ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year 2021.

Khelo India Tribal Games 2026 Held in Chhattisgarh; Karnataka Tops with 38 Medals

The inaugural Khelo India Tribal Games 2026 (**KITG 2026**) concluded in Chhattisgarh, held across Raipur, Jagdalpur, and Surguja from 25 March to 3 April 2026, with Karnataka emerging as the overall champion by winning 38 medals, including 23 gold, 8 silver, and 7 bronze.

- Odisha** secured second position with a total of 57 medals (21 gold, 15 silver, and 21 bronze), while **Jharkhand** finished third with a total of **35** medals (16 gold, 8 silver, and 11 bronze).

About Khelo India Tribal Games 2026:

Launch: The inaugural event was launched by **Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya**, MoYAS, in Raipur on March 25, 2026.

Organisers: The event is jointly organised by the MoYAS, Sports Authority of India (SAI), Indian Olympic Association (IOA), National Sports Federations (NSFs), and the Chhattisgarh State Organising Committee.

Sports: Seven medal sports – Archery, Athletics, Football, Hockey, Swimming, Weightlifting, and Wrestling, were featured along with demonstration sports like Mallakhamb and Kabaddi.

Medals: A total of 338 medals are contested across seven sports disciplines, including 106 gold, 106 silver, and 126 bronze medals, with athletics offering the highest share, followed by swimming, wrestling, and weightlifting.

2026 Asian Wrestling Championships Held in Kyrgyzstan; Iran Tops, India ranks 5th with 17 Medals

The Indian wrestling team concluded the 22nd edition of the Senior Asian Wrestling

Championships, held from April 6–12, 2026 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, ranking 5th with a total of 17 medals, including 2 Gold, 6 Silver, and 9 Bronze.

- **Iran** topped the standings with **18 medals** including 6 gold, 6 silver, and 6 bronze, followed by Japan with 15 medals (6 gold, 5 silver, and 4 bronze), and China with 14 medals (5 gold, 1 silver, and 8 bronze).

About Asian Wrestling Championships 2026:

Organizer: The event was conducted by the Asian Associated Wrestling Committee (AAWC) under the authority of United World Wrestling (UWW).

Disciplines: The event featured around 324 wrestlers from 21 countries competing for 30 gold medals across three disciplines, Greco-Roman, Women's Wrestling, and Men's Freestyle.

India's Performance: India fielded a **30-member** contingent across Men's Freestyle, Women's Wrestling, and Greco-Roman.

Sujeet Kalkal won gold in the 65 kg freestyle category, while Abhimanyu Mandwal secured gold in the 70 kg freestyle category.

2026 Asian Boxing Championships Held in Mongolia; Kazakhstan Topped, India Finished 2nd with 16 Medals

The Indian boxing team concluded its campaign at the Asian Boxing Championships 2026, held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 28 March to 11 April 2026, securing second place with 16 medals, including 5 Gold, 3 Silver, and 8 Bronze.

- **Kazakhstan** topped the standings with 6 gold, 4 silver, and 5 bronze (15 total) and Uzbekistan secured 3rd place with 4 gold, 2 silver, and 8 bronze (14).

About Asian Boxing Championships 2026:

Debut: The championships marked the inaugural Elite edition under Asian Boxing and the first continental event aligned with the World Boxing ranking system.

Organiser: The 2026 event was organized by the Mongolian Boxing Federation in affiliation with Asian Boxing.

Qualification: Finalists in approved weight categories earned direct qualification for the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, and the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

2026 Badminton Asia Championships South Korea Tops, India's Ayush Shetty Claims Silver

The Badminton Asia Championships 2026, also known as The Bank of Ningbo Badminton Asia Championships 2026, the 43rd edition of the continental badminton tournament, was held from April 7 to April 12, 2026, at the Ningbo Olympic Sports Center Gymnasium in Ningbo, China.

- **South Korea** ranked first with 3 gold, 1 silver, and 1 bronze medal (5 total), followed by **China** in second with 2 gold, 2 silver, and 2 bronze medals (6 total), and **Thailand** in third with 0 gold, 1 silver, and 1 bronze medal (2 total).

About Badminton Asia Championships 2026:

Organiser: The tournament was organized by Badminton Asia and hosted by the Chinese Badminton Association (CBA).

India's Silver Win: India finished fourth as 20-year-old Ayush Shetty, ranked world No. 25, secured a historic men's singles silver medal—becoming the first Indian in 61 years to reach the final and only the second after Dinesh Khanna.

India's R. Vaishali Wins FIDE Women's Candidates 2026, Qualifies for World Championship 2026

Indian Chess Grandmaster (GM) **R. Vaishali** became the **first Indian woman** to win the International Chess Federation (**FIDE**) **Women's Candidates Tournament 2026**, held in Pegeia, Cyprus from 28 March to 16 April 2026, after defeating Kateryna L'Agno (Russia) in the final round to finish with 8.5 points from 14 rounds.

- With this victory, R. Vaishali will challenge reigning five-time Women's World Champion **Ju Wenjun** of China in the upcoming Women's World Chess Championship 2026.

About FIDE Candidates Tournament 2026:

Event: The FIDE Candidates Tournament 2026 is divided into two sections: Open (Men's) and Women's, which determine the challengers for the World Chess Championship titles in their respective categories.

Format: It followed a double round-robin format involving 8 players.

Organiser: The event was organised by International Chess Federation (FIDE).

Open Section: **Javokhir Sindarov** of Uzbekistan won the Open Candidates Tournament 2026 and, after securing the title with one round remaining, drew his final game against Wei Yi to finish with a record score of 10/14.

India Selected for FIFA Women's Development Programme on Commercial Strategy 2026

International Association Football Federation or Fédération Internationale de Football Association (**FIFA**) selected **India** as one of 12 countries for its **Women's Development Programme (Commercial Strategy 2026)** following a successful application and presentation by the All India Football Federation (**AIFF**).

- The programme aims to strengthen the commercial viability, sustainability, and professional structure of women's football globally.

About FIFA Women's Development Programme 2026:

Countries: India is among 12 participating nations including Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Scotland, Canada, Mexico, Finland, Ghana, Jordan, Lithuania, and Paraguay.

Timeline: The programme will be conducted online from **May to October 2026** for stakeholders across India's women's football ecosystem.

Licensing: The initiative prepares clubs, including those in the Indian Women's League (IWL), for the upcoming club licensing system by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

India to host SAFF Women's Championship 2026 in Goa

The South Asian Football Federation (SAFF), announced that **India** is set to host the **SAFF Women's Championship 2026**, the premier regional tournament, scheduled to take place from May 24 to June 7, 2026 at Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (Fatorda) Stadium in Margao, **Goa**.

- This marks India's first time hosting the SAFF Women's Championship since 2016 in Siliguri, while Goa previously hosted a SAFF event during the men's championship in 1999.

About SAFF Women's Championship 2026:

Background: The tournament, held approximately every two years since its inaugural edition in 2010, was last conducted in 2024 in Nepal, where the hosts lost the final 2–1 to Bangladesh.

Format: Six teams will compete in the tournament, with Group A comprising Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan, and Group B featuring India, Bangladesh, and Maldives.

- The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semifinals.

Pakistan Exit: Pakistan officially withdrew from the tournament, citing lack of government clearance.

Kenya's Sabastian Sawe Becomes First Athlete to Run Sub-Two-Hour Competitive Marathon at London Marathon 2026

Kenyan athlete **Sabastian Kimaru Sawe** won the **men's elite race** at the London Marathon 2026 in London, United Kingdom (UK) and made history by becoming the **first athlete to complete a sub-two-hour marathon** in a competitive race, breaking the previous world record set by **Kelvin Kiptum** (Kenya) in 2023.

- Sabastian Kimaru Sawe completed the 42.2-kilometre(km) marathon in 1 hour 59 minutes 30 seconds.

About London Marathon 2026:

Podium: Sabastian Sawe maintained a strong pace, surged in the final 10 kilometer (km) to win gold by 11 seconds over Yomif Kejelcha (Ethiopia), (silver), with the podium completed by Jacob Kiplimo (Uganda) (bronze), with all three surpassing the previous world record time.

Women: Tigst Assefa (Ethiopia) won, setting a women-only world record and defending her title.

Wheelchair: Marcel Hug and Catherine Debrunner (Switzerland) won the men's and women's wheelchair events respectively.

Obituary

Former Suriname President Chandrikapersad Santokhi Passed Away

Former President of Suriname **Chandrikapersad “Chan” Santokhi**, a prominent leader of the Indian diaspora, passed away at the age of 67.

- He served as the President of Suriname from 2020 to 2025, a period marked by significant economic reforms and a deepening of ties with India.

About Chandrikapersad Santokhi:

Honour: He was honoured with the **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman**, (the Highest Indian award for Overseas Indian or institutions, instituted by the Ministry of External Affairs, MEA), on 9 January 2021 during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

Significance: Became the first Surinamese President to take oath in Sanskrit, symbolising strong cultural links with India and highlighting the role of the Indian diaspora.

Former Union minister and Veteran Congress Leader Mohsina Kidwai Passed Away

Veteran Indian National Congress (INC) leader and former Union Minister **Mohsina Kidwai** passed away at the age of 94 in Noida, Uttar Pradesh (UP).

About Mohsina Kidwai:

Member of Parliament(MoP): She served three terms in the Lok Sabha (6th, 7th, and 8th) representing the Meerut constituency from 1978 to 1989.

Rajya Sabha: She represented Chhattisgarh in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) for two consecutive terms between 2004 and 2016.

Cabinet Portfolios: Under the leadership of Prime Ministers(PM) Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, she held several key portfolios, including **Minister of Rural Development, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Minister of Transport, and Minister of Urban Development.**

Memoir: Her memoir, ‘My Life in Indian Politics(2024)’, reflects her experiences and insights from decades of public service.

Former Union minister and Veteran Congress Leader Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury Passed Away

Veteran Indian National Congress (INC) leader and former Union Minister **Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury**, popularly known as ‘**DaluBabu**’, passed away at the age of 88 in Kolkata, West Bengal(WB).

- He was born on 12 January 1938 in Malda district, Bengal Province(Present WB).

About Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury:

Profile: He was a prominent political figure from WB and was widely respected for his contributions to public service and grassroots politics.

- He served as the District Congress President for 15 years.

Legislative Career: He was elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) of the Kaliachak assembly constituency from 1996 to 2006.

Parliamentary Tenure: In 2006, he was elected as a Member of Parliament (MP) in a by-election following the demise of Ghani Khan Choudhury.

- He served as a Congress MP from Malda South from 2009 to 2019.

Ministerial Role: He was elected as Minister of State (MoS) for Health and Family Welfare in 2012 and held the position until 2014.

India's Oldest Living Test Cricketer C.D. Gopinath Passed Away

India's Oldest living test cricketer ChingleputDoraikannu (C.D.) **Gopinath** passed away at the age of **96** in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN). He was born on March 01, 1930 in Chennai, TN.

- He was also the world's second-oldest living Test cricketer after Neil Harvey (97 years, 183 days).
- Following his demise, former Indian wicketkeeper-batter **ChanduPatankar** (95 years, 136 days) became the oldest living Indian Test cricketer.

About CD Gopinath:

Test Career: During his illustrious cricket career, he played eight test matches and 12 innings, scored 242 runs at an average of 22, including one half-century (50s).

Key Accomplishments: A right-handed batter Gopinath played 83 first class matches and 119 innings, scored 4259 runs at an average of 42.16, including 9 centuries (100s) and 23 half-centuries (50s).

Legendary Singer and Padma Vibhushan Awardee Asha Bhosle Passed Away

Legendary playback singer and Padma Vibhushan Awardee **Asha Bhosle** passed away at the age of 92 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. She was born on September 8, 1933 in Sangli, former princely state of Sangli(now in Maharashtra).

- She was honoured with **Padma Vibhushan**, second-highest civilian award in India, in **2008** in the field of Arts.

About Asha Bhosle:

Career: Began singing in 1943, sustaining an extraordinary eight-decade career, recording over 12,000 songs in 20+ languages, and showcasing unmatched versatility across film, classical, ghazals, pop, cabaret, folk, bhajans, and RabindraSangeet.

Awards and Honours:Recognized by Guinness World Records in 2011 as the most recorded artist in music history.

- Received the DadasahebPhalke Award (2000), highest recognition in Indian cinema; and LataMangeshkar Award in 1989 and 1999.
- Secured 7 Filmfare Awards and received the Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001.

Mahavir Chakra Awardee Col. SonamWangchuk Passed Away

Mahavir Chakra (MVC) awardee, **Colonel (Col.) SonamWangchuk**, widely revered as the 'Lion of Ladakh', passed away at the age of 61 in Leh, Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh. He was born on January 27 1964 in Sankar village, Leh district.

- The Government of India (GoI) honoured him with MVC, India's second highest wartime gallantry award, in 1999.

About Col. SonamWangchuk:

Military Service: He belonged to the Ladakh Scouts, a regiment renowned for high-altitude

warfare, and played a key role in operations across the challenging terrains of Ladakh.

Leadership: During 1999 Kargil War, he played a pivotal role in clearing the enemy along the Chorbat La axis in the Batalik sector and securing the Line of Control (LOC) with Pakistan in Ladakh.

Honour: The GoI named two posts namely, 'Sonam 1' and 'Sonam 2' in his honour, recognising his role in Kargil war.

Former IOA and WSF President N.Ramachandran Passed Away

Narayana(N.) **Ramachandran**, popularly known as 'Rami' and former President of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the World Squash Federation (WSF), passed away at the age of 77 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN). He was born in 1948 in Chennai.

About N.Ramachandran:

Administration: He was one of the most influential sports figures, serving in top leadership roles across multiple federations.

- President of the Asian Squash Federation (**ASF**) (2001–2009):
- Indian Olympic Association (**IOA**): Served as Associate Vice-President in 2001, later as Vice-President in 2005, and subsequently as President of the IOA from 2014 to 2017.
- President of the World Squash Federation (**WSF**) (2008–2016).

Initiative: He established the Indian Squash Academy (**ISA**) in Chennai in 2000 to promote and develop squash talent in India by providing world-class training

Padma Shri awardee and Bundeli Martial Arts Pioneer BhagwandasRaikwar Passed

Away Padma Shri awardee **BhagwandasRaikwar**, popularly known as 'Dau' and a pioneer of Bundeli martial arts, passed away at the age of 83 in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh(MP). He was born on January 2, 1944, in the Bundelkhand region of MP.

- He was conferred the **Padma Shri**, India's fourth-highest civilian award, in the field of Sports (specifically for Traditional Martial Arts) in 2026 .

About BhagwandasRaikwar:

Profile: He was a renowned practitioner and pioneer of Bundeli martial arts, celebrated for his significant contribution to preserving India's traditional war art forms.

- He was a master of weapon-based combat, specializing in the use of the *lathi* (staff), *talwar* (sword), *bhala* (spear), *dhal* (shield), and *trishul* (trident).

Foundation: In 1964, he founded the ChhatrasalBundelkhandAkhada in Sagar, MP, using his own limited resources.

Former Andhra Pradesh CM Nadendla Bhaskara Rao Passed Away

former Chief Minister (CM)of undivided Andhra Pradesh (AP) **Nadendla Bhaskara Rao**, passed away at the age of 90 years in Hyderabad, Telangana. He was born on 23 June 1935 in Guntur, Madras Presidency, British India (now in AP).

- He served as CM from 16 August to 16 September 1984 (31 days), one of the shortest tenures in the state, assuming office during N. T. Rama Rao's absence.

About Nadendla Bhaskara Rao:

Early Career: Elected as Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Vijayawada East, AP, in 1978 and served as minister (1978–1989) under Marri Chenna Reddy and T. Anjaiah.

TDP Formation: Co-founded Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in 1982 with N. T. Rama Rao, and became Finance Minister after its 1983 electoral victory.

Olympic Bronze Medallist Gurbax Singh Grewal Passed Away

Renowned Indian hockey player **Gurbax Singh Grewal** passed away at the age of 84 in New Delhi, Delhi. He was born on April 1, 1942 in Lyallpur (now Faisalabad, Pakistan).

- He was part of the Indian men's hockey team that won a bronze medal at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics (Mexico).

About Gurbax Singh Grewal:

Early Career: In his early 20s, he pursued hockey professionally and represented Western Railways, where he built a distinguished playing career.

Olympic Milestone: He was part of the 1968 Indian Olympic hockey team and also shared the field with his brother, Balbir Singh Grewal, marking a rare instance of two siblings representing India at the same Olympic Games.

Contribution: After retirement, Gurbax Singh Grewal served as Honorary Secretary of the Mumbai Hockey Association and worked as a coach, contributing to player development and mentoring young talent.

Padma Shri Awardee and Photojournalist Raghu Rai Passed Away

Veteran photographer **Raghu Rai**, known as the 'Father of Indian Photojournalism', passed away at the age of 83 in New Delhi, Delhi. He was born on 18 December 1942 in Jhang, Punjab Province, British India (now Pakistan).

- He was awarded the **Padma Shri**, India's fourth-highest civilian honour, in **1972** in the field of art.

About Raghu Rai:

Career: Originally trained as a civil engineer, he started his professional career with The Statesman in 1966, where he chronicled major national events through his photography.

Iconic Work: In 1977, he became the first Indian photographer nominated to Magnum Photos by Henri Cartier-Bresson.

- He created powerful portraits of figures such as Mother Teresa, Dalai Lama, Indira Gandhi, and Satyajit Ray, and captured defining moments like the Bangladesh Liberation War (1971) and the Bhopal Gas Tragedy (1984).

Awards & Recognitions: He received several prestigious honours, including Photographer of the Year (the United States of America, USA, 1992), the Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters (France, 2009), the Lifetime Achievement Award (2017) from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), and the Académie des Beaux-Arts Photography Award (2019).

Spiritual Leader & Padma Shri Awardee Guru Muni Narayana Prasad Passed Away

Renowned spiritual leader and Padma Shri awardee, **Guru Muni Narayana Prasad**, head of Narayana Gurukulam, passed away in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala at the age of 87. He was born on December 9, 1938, in Thiruvananthapuram.

- He was awarded the **Padma Shri**, India's fourth-highest civilian award in **2024** in the field of Literature & Education.

About Muni Narayana Prasad

Spiritual Role: He joined the Narayana Gurukulam in 1958, received spiritual initiation from Nitya Chaitanya Yati in the mid-1980s, and became its president in 1999.

Leadership: He has served as the head of Narayana Gurukulam since 1999, becoming the third leader after Nataraja Guru and Nitya Chaitanya Yati.

Literary Work: Over the decades, he authored around 130 books in Malayalam and English, covering Vedanta, philosophy, and religion, including detailed commentaries on major Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.

Global Engagement: He participated in a world religious leaders' meet in Moscow in 1987 and headed the Gita Ashram in Fiji from 1989 to 1991.

Honours: He also received the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award twice, in 2015 and 2018.

Important Days with theme

World Autism Awareness Day 2026 – April 2

The United Nations (UN's) **World Autism Awareness Day** (WAAD) is observed every year on **April 2** to raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and promote the rights and inclusion of autistic individuals.

- 2026 Theme:** “Autism and Humanity – Every Life Has Value.”

Background:

Adoption: On 18 December **2007**, the United Nations General Assembly (**UNGA**) adopted Resolution A/RES/62/139, officially declaring April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day.

First Observance: WAAD was first observed on **April 2, 2008**.

Led by: The Switzerland-based Institute of Neurodiversity (ION), a neuro-minority-founded organisation operating in 40 countries, is leading the event in collaboration with the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC).

Ribbon Symbol: The puzzle ribbon, adopted in 1999, features bright colours such as red, yellow, and blue and represents the complexity and diversity of autism.

National Maritime Day 2026 – April 5

National Maritime Day (**NMD**) is observed annually in **India** on **April 5** to celebrate the country's maritime heritage and recognize the vital role of the shipping sector in trade, connectivity, and national development.

- 5th April 2026 marks the **63rd** observance of the NMD
- 2026 Theme:** “Maritime India – Empowering Progress”.

Background:

Origin: National Maritime Day (NMD) was initiated by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), Government of India (GoI).

First Observance: The first National Maritime Day was observed on 5 April 1964.

Maritime Week 2026: National Maritime Week 2026 also known as **Merchant Navy Week**, was observed from **29 March to 5 April 2026**, culminating in the 63rd NMD.

World Health Day 2026 – April 7

The United Nations (UN's) **World Health Day** is observed annually across the globe on **7th April** to promote global health awareness and highlight the role of scientific collaboration in addressing health challenges.

- 2026 Theme:** “Together for Health. Stand with Science”.

Background:

Proposal: The World Health Organization (WHO) proposed World Health Day during the First World Health Assembly (WHA) in 1948 and continues to sponsor it annually in collaboration with other health organizations to promote global health awareness.

- April 7 marks the founding of WHO in 1948

1st Observance: World Health Day has been observed annually on April 7 since 1950.
2026 Events: The International One Health Summit (5–7 April 2026), hosted by France in Lyon, France.

- The inaugural Global Forum of WHO Collaborating Centres (7–9 April 2026).

Central Reserve Police Force Valour Day 2026- April 9

The Central Reserve Police Force (**CRPF**) **Valour Day**, also known as **Shaurya Diwas**, is observed every year on **9 April** across India to honour the bravery of CRPF personnel during the 1965 Battle of Sardar Post in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat.

- 9th April 2026 marks the observance of the **61st** CRPF Valour Day.

Background :

Operation Desert Hawk: On April 9, 1965, the Pakistani Army launched Operation Desert Hawk, sending a full infantry brigade to attack Sardar Post, but a small unit of the 2nd Battalion CRPF bravely repulsed the assault in the Rann of Kutch, killing 34 soldiers, capturing 4, and sacrificing 6 of their own men.

CRPF Valour Day: April 9 is observed every year as CRPF Valour Day to honour the bravery and sacrifice of CRPF personnel.

World Homeopathy Day 2026 – April 10

World Homeopathy Day (WHD) is observed annually across the globe on **April 10** to mark the birth anniversary of German Physician **Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy.**

- **2026 Theme:** “Homoeopathy for Sustainable Health”

Background: The Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (**CCRH**) under the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) has commemorated WHD in India since 2016.

2026 Event:

Global Event: World Homoeopathy Day 2026 is hosted by the London College of Homeopathy in the United Kingdom (UK), bringing together global practitioners, researchers, educators, and students under the theme “Harmony through Homoeopathy: Healing Beyond Borders.”

Event in India: On 10 April 2026, the **Ministry of AYUSH** organised a two-day interactive forum at VigyanBhawan, New Delhi (Delhi) to commemorate World Homoeopathy Day 2026, focusing on sustainable healthcare.

Siachen Day 2026– April 13

Siachen Day is observed annually by the Indian Army (IA) on 13 April to commemorate Operation Meghdoot (1984), when Indian troops secured key positions at Bilafond La Pass on the Siachen Glacier, gaining a strategic advantage in the Kashmir region.

- 13th April 2026 marks the 42nd year of IA’s presence at Siachen Glacier.

About Operation Meghdoot:

Launch: Operation Meghdoot was launched by the IA on **13 April 1984** to secure the **Siachen**

Glacier, marking the world's longest ongoing military operation.

Reason : The operation was initiated after intelligence inputs indicated that Pakistan was planning military action in the Siachen region.

Leadership: The operation was led by **Manohar Lal Chibber**, **Prem Nath Hoon**, and **Shiv Sharma**.

Anniversary of JallianwalaBagh Massacre 2026 – April 13

The anniversary of the JallianwalaBagh Massacre, also known as the Amritsar Massacre, is observed annually across India on 13 April to commemorate the tragic incident that took place in 1919 in Amritsar, Punjab (then under British India, now in India).

- 13 April 2026 commemorates the **107th anniversary** of the massacre.

About JallianwalaBagh Massacre:

Massacre: Hundreds of unarmed people gathered at JallianwalaBagh, Amritsar, during Baisakhi.

- **Reginald Dyer** ordered troops to fire on the peaceful crowd protesting the **Rowlatt Act**. The firing continued until bullets ran low, killing at least 379 people (official count), though the real number was much higher.

Hunter Commission: After the JallianwalaBagh Massacre, the British government set up the Hunter Commission in 1919, headed by William Hunter, to investigate the incident.

World Art Day 2026 – April 15

World Art Day (WAD) is observed annually across the globe on **April 15** to promote the link between art and society, raise awareness of diverse artistic expressions, and recognise artists' contributions to sustainable development.

- **2026 Theme:** “A Garden of Expression: Cultivating Community through Art”

Background:

Declaration: In April **2011**, during the 17th General Assembly of the International Association of Art (IAA) in Guadalajara (Mexico), a proposal by the Turkish National Committee was adopted to declare April 15 as World Art Day.

First Celebration: The inaugural World Art Day was celebrated on **April 15, 2012**.

Organising Body: The IAA (France) affiliated with UNESCO, leads the global celebrations of WAD.

UNESCO Recognition: In **2019**, during its 40th General Conference, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) officially proclaimed World Art Day as an international observance.

Significance of Date: The observance marks the birth anniversary of **Leonardo da Vinci** (15 April 1452), symbolising ideals of freedom of expression, tolerance, and brotherhood.

International Day For Monuments and Sites 2026 – April 18

The International Day for Monuments and Sites (**IDMS**), popularly known as **World Heritage Day**, is observed every year across the world on **April 18** to highlight the significance of safeguarding cultural and historical heritage.

- 2026 Theme:** “ Emergency Response for Living Heritage in Contexts of Conflicts and Disasters”

Background:

Establishment: IDMS was instituted in 1982 by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

UNESCO Approval: In 1983, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) formally approved the global observance of IDMS during its 22nd General Conference.

First Observation: The International Day for Monuments and Sites was observed for the first time in **1983**.

World Liver Day 2026 – April 19

World Liver Day (WLD) is observed annually on April 19 worldwide to raise awareness about liver health and promote prevention and management of liver-related diseases.

- 2026 Theme:** “Solid Habits, Strong Liver”

Background:

Launch: WLD was first launched in India in **2019** to raise awareness about rising liver disease cases.

Expansion: The day expanded into a global observance in **2023** by major international liver health organisations, which are now jointly urging the World Health Organization (WHO) to formally recognise April 19 as WLD worldwide.

Collaborating Organisations: Key global bodies involved include the European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL); Asian Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver (APASL), American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), Asociacion Latinoamericana para el Estudio del Hgado (ALEH), and Society on Liver Disease in Africa (SOLDA).

National Civil Services Day 2026 – April 21

National Civil Services Day is observed across India on 21st April to recognize the role of civil servants in governance and encourage renewed commitment to public service, citizens' welfare, and administrative excellence.

- 2026 Theme:** “Viksit Bharat: Citizen-Centric Governance and Development at the Last Mile”

Background:

Establishment: Government of India (GoI) formally established National Civil Services Day in **2006**, with the first celebration held at VigyanBhawan, New Delhi by Manmohan Singh.

Date significance: GoI selected 21 April to commemorate Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's 1947 address at Metcalfe House, Delhi.

2026 Events: The 18th Civil Services Day 2026 was held on April 21 at VigyanBhawan, New Delhi, with Vice President (VP) **C. P. Radhakrishnan** as Chief Guest, during which the Prime Minister's (PM's) Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2025 were conferred to recognise outstanding governance by civil servants, districts, and organisations.

International Mother Earth Day 2026 – April 22

The United Nations (UN) **International Mother Earth Day** or Earth Day is observed annually on **April 22** to promote environmental awareness, highlight human–Earth interdependence, and encourage balanced, sustainable development.

• **2026 Theme:** “Our Power, Our Planet”

Background:

Establishment: Officially recognized in 2009 through United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/63/278, introduced by Bolivia with support from over 50 member states, with the first observance held on April 22, 2009.

Origins: First proposed by American peace activist John McConnell at a 1969 UNESCO conference in San Francisco, United States of America (USA).

First observance: The inaugural Earth Day was celebrated on **April 22, 1970**.

Initiative: The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) aims to prevent, halt, and reverse global ecosystem degradation while supporting poverty reduction, climate action, and biodiversity conservation.

World Book and Copyright Day 2026 – April 23

World Book and Copyright Day is observed annually across the world on **23 April** to highlight the importance of books, authors, and copyright in promoting knowledge, culture, and education globally.

Background:

Establishment: World Book and Copyright Day was officially established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) during its General Conference in Paris in 1995.

Date Choice: April 23 was chosen as it marks the death anniversaries of renowned literary figures such as William Shakespeare (England), Miguel de Cervantes (Spain), and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (Peru).

First Event: The first official celebration of World Book and Copyright Day was held on 23 April 1996 in Barcelona, Spain.

2026 World Book Capital: Rabat has been designated as the 2026 World Book Capital, by the WBC Advisory Committee, focusing on expanding access to books, strengthening publishing, and promoting literacy, and is the 26th city to receive the title.

National Panchayati Raj Day 2026 – April 24

National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD), also known as **National Local Self-Government Day**, is annually observed across India on **April 24** to mark the establishment of the Panchayati Raj system and celebrate its role in strengthening grassroots democracy and decentralized governance.

• **2026 Theme:** “Sashakt Panchayat, Sarvangeen Vikas(Empowered Panchayat, Comprehensive Development)”

Background:

Declaration: The Government of India (GoI), in consultation with states, designated 24 April as National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD), which was officially declared in **2010** by Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister (PM) of India.

First Observance: The first-ever NPRD was observed on **24 April 2010**.

Date Significance: The date marks the institutionalisation of Panchayati Raj through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, effective in 1993, which added Part IX “The Panchayats” and granted constitutional status to Panchayats as institutions of self-government under Article 243B.

2026 Events: NPRD was observed on April 24, 2026, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, Delhi, by the MoPR with participation from PRIs across states, districts, blocks, and Gram Panchayats.

- Key releases include the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0 report and three “Meri Panchayat Meri Dharohar” publications under the Panchayat Dharohar Initiative highlighting rural heritage.

World Intellectual Property Day 2026 – April 26

World Intellectual Property Day (**World IP Day**) is observed annually across the globe on **April 26** to promote awareness about intellectual property rights and highlight how patents, copyrights, trademarks, and designs shape everyday life while celebrating creativity and innovation.

- **2026 Theme:** “IP and Sports: Ready, Set, Innovate”

Background:

Origin: Established in 2000 by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to promote awareness and understanding of intellectual property.

First Observance: The first World IP Day was celebrated on 26 April 2001.

Significance: The date commemorates the enforcement of the Convention Establishing the WIPO, which came into force in 1970.

World Immunization Week 2026 – April 24 to 30

World Immunization Week (WIW) was observed annually across the globe in the last week of **April**, led by the World Health Organization (**WHO**) to promote the life-saving benefits of immunization for people of all ages against vaccine-preventable diseases.

- World Immunization Week 2026 was observed from **April 24 to 30, 2026.**
- **2026 Theme:** “For Every Generation, Vaccines Work”

Background:

Initiation: Initiated in 2003 in the Americas, WIW expanded to all six WHO regions by 2012, engaging over 180 countries, territories, and areas.

WHA Resolution: In May 2012, the 65th World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted Resolution WHA65.18, designating the last week of April as World Immunization Week.