

CONTENTS

1. National	3
2. International.....	10
3. Appointments	15
4. Sports.....	16
5. Science and Technology.....	17
6. Books and Authors.....	19
7. Important Days.....	20
8. Obituaries	22
9. Ranking.....	22
10. Prize and Awards.....	24
11. Summit's and MOU'S.....	26
12. Economy.....	27



NATIONAL

India to Host CIP–South Asia Regional Centre in Agra

- The Union Cabinet approved the establishment of the CIP–South Asia Regional Centre (CSARC) of the International Potato Center (CIP) at Singna, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, allocating 10 hectares of land for its development.
- With an investment of ₹171 crore—₹111 crore from India and ₹60 crore from CIP—the centre aims to enhance potato and sweet potato productivity, promote value-chain linkages, and improve nutrition and rural employment.
- The CSARC will serve not only Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal, but also neighbouring South Asian countries, strengthening India's agricultural leadership in the region.
- India, the world's second-largest potato producer, will gain access to CIP's global germplasm bank, benefiting from disease-free, climate-resilient, and high-yield varieties, thereby reducing import dependency and enhancing export potential.
- Active in India since 1975 through ICAR, CIP is headquartered in Lima, Peru, and has piloted innovations like zero-tillage potato farming in Bihar and operates a Centre of Excellence in Bagalkot, Karnataka.

India Refuses to Sign SCO Defence Ministers' Statement

- On the sidelines of the SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting in Qingdao, China, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh refused to endorse the joint communique due to the omission of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which killed 26 Hindu pilgrims.
- Singh demanded explicit references to terrorism in the statement and called for accountability of cross-border terrorism sponsors, declaring that peace cannot co-exist with terrorism.
- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) attributed the failed consensus to one particular country—widely inferred to be Pakistan—which objected to the terrorism language.
- India's refusal, especially at a China-chaired summit, sent a diplomatic signal reinforcing its principled stand amid regional sensitivities and ongoing border tensions.
- Singh referenced Operation Sindoor, India's retaliatory response to the Pahalgam attack, warning that terror epicentres are no longer safe, thereby strengthening India's anti-terror stance in multilateral forums.

India Unveils Longest Wildlife Overpass on Delhi–Mumbai Expressway

- India inaugurated its longest wildlife overpass corridor, a 12 km eco-sensitive passage built along the Delhi–Mumbai Expressway, cutting through the buffer zone of Ranthambore Tiger Reserve.
- The infrastructure includes five wildlife overpasses of approximately 500 metres each, and a 1.2 km-long underpass, which is the longest dedicated wildlife tunnel in the country.
- The corridor uses 4-metre boundary walls and 2-metre sound barriers to prevent animal entry onto roadways and to mitigate traffic noise disturbances.
- 35,000 trees were planted along the route, and green infrastructure like drip irrigation and rainwater harvesting every 500 metres strengthens the ecological design.
- Developed by NHAI with ecological inputs from the Wildlife Institute of India and MoEFCC, the corridor aims to protect species like tigers, leopards, and bears, reducing human-wildlife conflict significantly.

India Mandates Birth Certificate Before Hospital Discharge

- The Registrar General of India (RGI) issued a directive to all States and Union Territories, instructing that birth certificates be issued before hospital discharge, especially in government facilities, which handle over 50% of institutional births.
- Under Section 12 of the RBD Act, 1969, as amended in 2023, birth registration must be done through a central portal, and the digital certificate is the only valid proof of birth from 1 October 2023 onward.
- The RGI emphasized issuance within seven days, electronically or physically, urging public health centres and hospitals to integrate this into discharge protocols.
- The move is supported by recent improvements in the Civil Registration System (CRS), including state rule amendments and a centralized digital portal for registration.

- With birth certificates now required for school admission, government jobs, passports, and more, the directive supports India's aim of universal legal identity, aligning with UN SDG goals and raising national registration coverage from 86% (2014) to over 96% (2024).

India Rejects Hague Arbitration Ruling on Indus Waters Treaty

- India formally rejected a ruling by the Hague-based Court of Arbitration (CoA) concerning the Kishanganga and Ratle hydropower projects under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, calling the CoA illegally constituted.
- India argued it never consented to the CoA process, maintaining that the Neutral Expert mechanism is the only valid dispute resolution path under the treaty's provisions.
- The rejection follows India's decision to place the treaty in abeyance after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, asserting that Pakistan must end support for terrorism before treaty obligations resume.
- While Pakistan sought arbitration, the CoA claimed jurisdiction, creating a procedural conflict between unilateral arbitration and mutual consent mechanisms.
- The ruling has deepened bilateral tensions, as India insists the CoA's actions constitute a "charade", while Pakistan warns against unilateral hydrological developments, escalating the post-Pahalgam standoff.

Amit Shah Inaugurates National Turmeric Board HQ in Nizamabad

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the National Turmeric Board headquarters in Nizamabad, Telangana, fulfilling a 40-year demand of turmeric farmers across India.
- Officially approved on January 14, 2025, the Board operates under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, with a budget of ₹200 crore, focusing on quality enhancement, research, branding, and export promotion.
- The headquarters is located in Vinayak Nagar, cementing Nizamabad's role as India's turmeric capital, and is chaired by a Telangana native, as highlighted by Shah.
- The Board aims to achieve US\$1 billion in turmeric exports by 2030, with projected income gains of ₹6,000–7,000 per quintal for farmers over the next three years.
- Farmers will benefit from direct market linkages, training in harvesting and compliance, and support from cooperatives like Bharat Cooperative Exports Ltd. and National Cooperative Organics Ltd.

India Bans Jute Imports from Bangladesh via Land and Sea Ports

- Between June 27–29, 2025, India's DGFT banned the import of jute products from Bangladesh via all routes except the Nhava Sheva seaport, to curb subsidized imports and protect domestic jute producers.
- The ban includes raw jute, bast fibres, jute yarn, and woven fabrics, closing off informal land routes that previously bypassed anti-dumping duties.
- The move may disrupt small-scale trade by shifting commerce from Kolkata's land routes to more expensive sea logistics, affecting delivery times and costs.
- Despite prior safeguards, Indian jute prices fell below MSP (₹5,335/quintal), and mills suffered debt accumulation and under-utilization; the ban seeks to stabilize market conditions.
- The decision also reflects geopolitical tensions with Bangladesh, amid growing friction over trade and recent statements by its interim Prime Minister Muhammad Yunus.

National Indicator Framework 2025 Tracks SDG Progress in India

- On June 29, 2025, during Statistics Day, MoSPI released the National Indicator Framework (NIF) Progress Report 2025, assessing India's SDG performance through 284 indicators across 17 goals.
- Social protection coverage increased from 22% (2016) to 64.3% (2025), while agricultural GVA per worker rose from ₹61,247 to ₹94,110, reflecting gains in livelihoods.
- Rural access to safe drinking water improved to 99.62%, and renewable energy's share in generation rose from 16.02% to 22.13%, with per capita capacity reaching 156 W.
- Recycling plants increased from 829 to 3,036, and waste processing coverage grew from 17.97% to 80.7%, marking a leap in solid waste management.
- Start-up registrations jumped from 453 (2016) to 34,293 (2024), internet subscriptions hit 954 million, and emissions intensity dropped by 36%, while Gini coefficients fell, indicating rising digital inclusion and reduced inequality.

INS Udaygiri Commissioned Under Project 17A in Record Time

- INS Udaygiri, the second stealth frigate under Project 17A, was commissioned into the Indian Navy by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDSL), only 37 months after its launch, demonstrating India's accelerating naval manufacturing capacity.
- Compared to earlier Shivalik-class vessels, Udaygiri features stealth shaping, radar/infrared reduction, and upgraded sensor and weapons systems including MR-SAM, supersonic missiles, and a CODOG propulsion system.
- The warship has over 75% indigenous content, involving more than 200 MSMEs, and utilizes Integrated Platform Management Systems (IPMS) for streamlined operations and reliability.
- Its construction followed the block-stage pre-outfitting model, allowing faster and more efficient assembly—a milestone for the Navy's Warship Design Bureau, which now celebrates its 100th vessel design.
- INS Udaygiri is part of a seven-frigate fleet being built jointly by MDSL and GRSE, with the remaining five vessels to be delivered by end of 2026, enhancing India's blue-water naval strength.

India Surpasses Global Average in Under-Five Mortality Reduction

- As per the 2024 UNIGME report, India achieved a 78% decline in the under-five mortality rate (U5MR) from 1990 to 2023, exceeding the global average reduction of 61%, alongside a 70% drop in neonatal mortality.
- The proportion of zero-dose children—those who received no vaccines—fell from 0.11% in 2023 to 0.06% in 2024, reflecting intensified outreach through the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP).
- UIP conducts 1.3 crore sessions annually, vaccinating 2.6 crore infants and 2.9 crore pregnant women, supported by health workers across the country.
- National campaigns like the Zero Dose Implementation Plan (2024) and Mission Indradhanush have immunized 5.46 crore children and 1.32 crore women since 2017, bolstering child health metrics.
- India also recorded an 86% drop in maternal mortality, now around 80 per lakh live births, surpassing the global decline of 48%, drawing UN recognition for its vaccination and child health achievements.

INS Tamal Commissioned in Russia, Marks End of Foreign Warship Inductions

- On 1 July 2025, INS Tamal (F71) was commissioned at Yantar Shipyard, Kaliningrad, becoming the last foreign-built warship to enter the Indian Navy, underlining India's shift to indigenous shipbuilding.
- It is an upgraded Talwar-class (Project 1135.6) "Tushil" variant, the eighth in its class, and features BrahMos cruise missiles, Shtil-1 air defence, and RBU-6000 ASW rockets, delivering four-dimensional combat capability.
- The vessel is powered by Ukrainian M7N1 gas turbines, hosts Kamov helicopters, and is crewed by 250 sailors and 26 officers, commanded by Captain Sridhar Tata, a gunnery and missile warfare expert.
- With ~26% indigenous systems, INS Tamal serves as a transition platform toward fully indigenous designs like the Nilgiri-class (P-17A) and future Tripur-class frigates.
- Assigned to the Western Fleet at Karwar, the ship enhances India's blue-water maritime presence and reaffirms strategic India-Russia naval cooperation.

Karnataka Introduces Controversial Fake News Prohibition Bill, 2025

- In June 2025, the Karnataka government introduced the Mis-Information and Fake News (Prohibition) Bill, 2025, aiming to criminalize the spread of false content on digital platforms, drawing concerns over free speech and constitutional rights.
- The Bill defines fake news to include fabricated audio, video, and quotes, while misinformation refers to false statements made knowingly or recklessly, with satire and opinion exempted under the "reasonable person" standard.
- Penalties include 2–5 years in prison for misinformation and up to 7 years plus ₹10 lakh fine for fake news, with 2-year terms for aiding such offences.
- A six-member Regulatory Authority, chaired by the state I&B Minister and including legislators and industry representatives, will issue Correction and Disabling Directions to platforms.
- The Bill establishes special courts, empowers police to file non-bailable FIRs, and imposes stringent bail conditions, raising serious legal and civil liberties questions.

NCB's Operation MED MAX Busts Global Drug Network

- The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) launched Operation MED MAX, uncovering a global pharmaceutical drug trafficking syndicate, beginning with a 3.7 kg Tramadol seizure in Delhi.
- The investigation led to the arrest of eight individuals across Delhi, Jaipur, Roorkee, and Udupi, where a call-centre coordinated over 50 international consignments
- The syndicate operated across four continents, shipping to the U.S., Australia, Estonia, Spain, and more, using cryptocurrency, encrypted apps, and anonymous drop-shipping.
- Intelligence shared with the DEA and Interpol led to arrests in Alabama, a pill factory bust in Australia, and indictment of a UAE-based kingpin and an Indian-American financier.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah commended NCB's coordination efforts, stating it exemplified a "zero-tolerance" policy and earned praise from the U.S. Embassy for transnational cooperation.

Jio Becomes World's Largest Fixed Wireless Access Provider

- Reliance Jio became the world's largest Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) provider, surpassing T-Mobile (U.S.) with 6.88 million subscribers, according to ICICI Securities.
- Jio's aggressive growth includes 0.74 million monthly additions and the reclassification of 1 million unlicensed-band users, bringing its net FWA base to 5.9 million.
- Since launching AirFiber in September 2023, Jio has delivered plug-and-play 5G broadband to homes and SMEs, starting at ₹599/month, driving digital inclusion in remote areas.
- With 5G coverage across 98% of India, Jio now commands over 50% of India's total broadband market, significantly outpacing Airtel (~31%).
- Jio's leadership in FWA signals India's global digital infrastructure maturity, providing a scalable model for developing countries to leapfrog into 5G connectivity without fibre.

India Hosts 23rd Regional Meeting on Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

- From July 1–3, 2025, India hosted the 23rd Regional Meeting of National Authorities (Asia) under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in New Delhi, with 38 delegates from 24 Asian nations and observers from OPCW and UNRCPD.
- The meeting focused on strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing chemical safety, reviewing legislative frameworks, and discussing emerging technologies like AI in CWC implementation.
- India's leadership was evident through its National Authority for Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC), created under the Chemical Weapons Convention Act, 2000, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs.
- India also mentored Kenya's National Authority and promoted bilateral cooperation, while the Indian Chemical Council was commended for receiving the OPCW–The Hague Award 2024—the first global industry body to do so.
- The Chemical Weapons Convention came into effect in 1997, with 193 member states, and is implemented by the OPCW, which won the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize for its disarmament efforts.

SC Affirms Legislative Powers in Nandini Sundar Case Verdict

- On May 15, 2025, the Supreme Court in *Nandini Sundar & Ors. v. State of Chhattisgarh* upheld that state legislatures can enact laws—even post-judicial orders—so long as they remain constitutional.
- The ruling followed the Court's 2011 directive disbanding groups like Salwa Judum and barring Special Police Officers (SPOs) from anti-Maoist duties due to Article 14 and Article 21 violations.
- In response, Chhattisgarh passed the Auxiliary Armed Police Force Act, 2011, mandating 6-month training, non-combat roles, and vetting procedures for new recruits.
- The Court clarified that law-making is not contempt unless the legislation is unconstitutional, affirming the doctrine of separation of powers and legislative autonomy
- The judgment reinforced that while the judiciary may review a law's constitutionality, it cannot penalize legislatures for enacting laws that address previously adjudicated matters.

MP High Court Overturns Saif Ali Khan's Inheritance Decree in Bhopal Estate Case

- On June 30, 2025, the Madhya Pradesh High Court, led by Justice Sanjay Dwivedi, set aside a 2000 trial court ruling that had declared Saif Ali Khan, Sharmila Tagore, and family as sole heirs to the ₹15,000 crore Bhopal Nawab estate, and ordered a fresh trial.

- The court held that the earlier ruling improperly relied on a 1997 Allahabad High Court judgment, which was later overruled by the Supreme Court, and must now be reassessed under current legal principles.
- The retrial will re-examine whether the properties must be partitioned among all heirs under Muslim Personal Law, or if they legally vested with Sajida Sultan, based on royal succession and merger agreements.
- Historic properties at stake include the Flag Staff House, Noor-Us-Sabah Palace, and Dar-Us-Salam, and the trial court is expected to deliver a decision within one year.
- A separate dispute continues over whether some of these assets qualify as “enemy property”, following the Nawab’s elder daughter’s migration to Pakistan.

Himachal Pradesh Becomes First Indian State to Use Facial Authentication for PDS

- In July 2025, Himachal Pradesh became the first state in India to implement Aadhaar-based facial recognition (FaceAuth) for Public Distribution System (PDS) ration authentication, replacing OTPs and fingerprint methods.
- The facial authentication process uses a mobile app on Fair Price Shop (FPS) owners’ smartphones, enabling real-time biometric authentication through live facial scans tied to the Aadhaar database.
- The new method significantly improved authentication success in remote and hilly areas, especially aiding the elderly and people with poor fingerprint readability or low mobile connectivity.
- This tech-driven governance initiative was led by the Department of Digital Technologies and Governance (DDTG) and supported by Gokul Butail, Principal Advisor to the Chief Minister
- Himachal’s successful pilot is expected to serve as a national model, encouraging other states and central agencies to adopt AI-based service delivery in ration distribution and public welfare schemes.

Haryana to Establish Asia’s Largest Jungle Safari in Aravallis

- On July 6, 2025, the Haryana government unveiled plans to build Asia’s largest jungle safari park across 10,000 acres in the Aravalli Hills spanning Gurugram and Nuh districts, aimed at promoting eco-tourism, biodiversity conservation, and employment generation.
- The safari, five times larger than the Sharjah safari (~2,000 acres), will include big-cat zones, aviaries, herpetarium, botanical gardens, and themed biomes representing diverse ecosystems such as tropical and desert habitats.
- The project emphasizes eco-friendly infrastructure, sustainable tourism practices, and restoration of the Aravalli ecosystem, and was launched in the presence of the Chief Minister and Union ministers.
- Authorities have consulted with the Vantara wildlife facility in Gujarat to incorporate best practices into the park’s design and management.
- Although the initiative promises local economic benefits, some environmentalists have raised legal and ecological concerns about potential damage to the fragile Aravalli landscape, which are currently under review.

Bihar Reserves 35% Government Jobs for Domicile Women

- On July 8–9, 2025, the Bihar Cabinet approved a key revision in its women’s reservation policy, restricting the 35% quota in state government jobs exclusively to Bihar domiciled women.
- Eligible candidates must meet domicile conditions such as three years of residence, property ownership, or marriage to a Bihari resident, with voter ID admissible as supporting documentation.
- Non-resident women from other states will no longer be eligible under the reserved category and must compete through general recruitment, though already-employed non-domicile women retain their benefits.
- Additional announcements included the formation of a Bihar Youth Commission, enhanced financial support for differently-abled candidates, and a pension increase from ₹400 to ₹1,000 for widowed and differently-abled women.
- Coming ahead of the October–November 2025 assembly elections, the policy aligns with rising demands for domicile-based quotas and is viewed as a strategic move to mobilize women voters.

Banakacherla Project Sparks Interstate Water Dispute

- Andhra Pradesh accelerated plans for the ₹80,000–82,000 crore Polavaram–Banakacherla river-linking project, sparking opposition from Telangana, which cited legal violations of the 2014 Reorganisation Act and tribunal awards.

- The project seeks to divert 200 TMC of surplus Godavari water annually through tunnels and lift systems to the Banakacherla reservoir, covering ~40,000 acres, with potential 50% central funding under river-linking schemes.
- Telangana CM Revanth Reddy demanded Apex Council clearance, CWC vetting, and environmental approvals, warning of legal action and offering water-sharing reciprocity if Andhra Pradesh issued a No Objection Certificate (NOC)
- Within Andhra, while officials claimed compliance with surplus water rights, experts raised concerns over high maintenance costs (~₹50,000/acre), flood risks, and contractor-driven planning.
- The Centre raised queries about energy feasibility and simultaneous flood management, while technical clearances from KRMB, GRMB, and CWC remain pending obstacles.

PARAKH RS Survey Reveals Deep Learning Gaps in Indian Schools

- On July 9, 2025, the 2025 PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan surveyed 21.15 lakh students across 781 districts, revealing significant deficits in foundational literacy, numeracy, and subject-specific understanding in Grades 3, 6, and 9.
- In Grade 3, only 55% could order numbers up to 99, and 60% showed basic language comprehension; performance dropped further in fractions, place value, and real-life math in Grade 6.
- By Grade 9, only 31% grasped number sets, 28% applied percentages, and fewer than 50% demonstrated understanding in science, civics, or current affairs, indicating deteriorating learning continuity.
- Institutional, regional, and urban-rural disparities were observed; Kendriya Vidyalayas underperformed in early maths but excelled in Grade 9 language, while Punjab, Kerala, and Himachal led across grades.
- The findings underscore an urgent need for foundational education reform, improved pedagogy, and assessment-linked interventions, especially in low-performing districts of the Northeast and tribal regions.

India Launches First Indigenous Diving Support Vessel INS Nistar

- On July 9, 2025, Hindustan Shipyard Limited delivered INS Nistar, India's first indigenously designed and built Diving Support Vessel (DSV), to the Indian Navy at Visakhapatnam, ahead of its commissioning on July 18.
- INS Nistar, a 9,350–10,000-tonne vessel measuring ~118 meters, is equipped for saturation diving, underwater ROVs, side-scan sonar, and deep-submergence rescue operations.
- Serving as the “mother ship” to the Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV), the ship will support submarine rescue, helicopter operations, and act as a floating medical centre with ICU, hyperbaric chamber, and eight-bed hospital.
- Featuring DP-II dynamic positioning, a 15-tonne subsea crane, and over 60-day endurance, it reflects cutting-edge capability in maritime safety and underwater recovery.
- With over 80% indigenous content and involvement from 120 MSMEs, the vessel embodies the goals of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and continues the legacy of the 1971-era Soviet-built INS Nistar.

Maharashtra Declares Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav as Official State Festival

- The Maharashtra Government declared Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav a State Festival, as announced in the Legislative Assembly by Cultural Affairs Minister Ashish Shelar, following a proposal by MLA Hemant Rasane.
- The state allocated over ₹100 crore to support infrastructure, security, and nationwide and international promotion of the 10-day festival, reinforcing its cultural and economic significance.
- Ganeshotsav, originally popularized by Lokmanya Tilak in 1893, was recognized as a symbol of freedom, social unity, and linguistic pride, and will now receive formal state backing to reflect that heritage.
- The state revoked previous restrictions on Plaster of Paris (POP) idols, based on the Kakodkar Committee's study, thereby allowing their manufacture, sale, and immersion during the festival.
- Enhanced logistical and legal support will be provided to mandals, with thematic encouragement for patriotism, Operation Sindoor, and social awareness, marking a significant administrative shift post-COVID regulations.

UNESCO Removes Three African Sites from World Heritage Danger List

- At the 47th UNESCO World Heritage Committee session in Paris, three African sites—Rainforests of the Atsinanana (Madagascar), Abu Mena (Egypt), and Old Town of Ghadamès (Libya)—were removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

- Atsinanana, endangered since 2010, saw 63% forest restoration, suppression of illegal logging, and a dramatic fall in lemur poaching, aided by satellite monitoring and replanting.
- Abu Mena, inscribed in 1979 and listed as endangered in 2001, was stabilized through drainage systems and a conservation plan to address rising groundwater from nearby irrigation.
- Ghadamès, a UNESCO site since 1986, faced threats from conflict, wildfires, and floods, but was restored through infrastructure repair, risk management training, and community engagement.
- UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay reaffirmed the agency's Africa-first priority, noting similar site recoveries in DR Congo, Uganda, and Senegal since 2021, reflecting successful continent-wide conservation efforts.

India to Host ISSF World Cup 2027 and Junior Worlds 2028

- On July 10, 2025, the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) awarded New Delhi the hosting rights for the 2027 ISSF World Cup (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun) and the 2028 ISSF Junior World Championship, marking a new milestone for Indian shooting.
- The 2027 World Cup will feature senior-level international competition across rifle, pistol, and shotgun, while the 2028 Junior Worlds will be hosted in India for the first time.
- These events add to India's robust shooting calendar, including the ISSF Junior World Cup (Sept 2025) and the Asian Rifle/Pistol Cup (Feb 2026), solidifying India's role as a reliable host.
- India will also launch its first domestic Shooting League of India (SLI) in November 2025, expanding professional-level competition for emerging Indian shooters.
- NRAI President Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo and Secretary General K. Sultan Singh welcomed the decision, highlighting its importance for athlete exposure, training readiness, and India's global sporting stature.

Indian Army Launches Operation SHIVA 2025 for Amarnath Yatra Security

- The Indian Army launched Operation SHIVA 2025 to safeguard the Amarnath Yatra, in coordination with CAPFs and civil authorities, following a terror threat in Pahalgam earlier in April.
- Over 8,500 troops have been deployed along the Nunwan-Pahalgam and Baltal routes, with surveillance managed through drone-jamming systems, UAV patrols, and real-time tracking.
- The Army has undertaken track repairs, bridge reinforcements, and landslide mitigation, while deploying QRTs, medical staff, and helicopters for emergency evacuation.
- The 38-day pilgrimage (July 3–August 9) has already attracted over 1.4 lakh pilgrims, each tagged with traceable IDs and monitored through multi-agency coordination.
- The operation exemplifies high-altitude integrated defence operations, blending technological surveillance with ground logistics to ensure pilgrim safety amid evolving threat perceptions.

Arthunkal Police Station Becomes India's First ISO-Certified Police Station

- Arthunkal Police Station in Alappuzha, Kerala became India's first to receive ISO 9001:2015 QMS certification from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).
- The station passed a rigorous two-stage audit that evaluated performance in crime prevention, investigation, public grievance redressal, record-keeping, and infrastructure.
- The certification was presented by BIS Deputy Director General Praveen Khanna, in the presence of DGP Ravada Azad Chandrashekhar and other senior police officials.
- This achievement is part of the Modernised Cherthala Police Programme, led by ASP Harish Jain, aimed at reforming police operations to match national and global standards.
- The milestone demonstrates growing emphasis on community policing, accountability, and process-driven governance in Indian law enforcement, setting a benchmark for replication nationwide.

Maharashtra Passes Urban Maoism Bill to Counter Extremism in Cities

- The Maharashtra Assembly passed the Maharashtra Special Public Security Bill, which was first introduced in 2024. It is also called the Urban Maoism Bill, targeting left-wing extremism in urban settings.
- The Bill defines and criminalizes activities like supporting banned groups, disrupting public order, spreading disobedience, and fundraising through speech, writing, or symbols.
- Offences are cognisable and non-bailable, carrying 2–7 years' imprisonment and fines up to ₹5 lakh, with the power to forfeit property before conviction after a 15-day notice.

- After 1,200+ public suggestions, safeguards were added, such as limiting focus to organisations, raising investigation level to ACP/DSP, and mandating review by a retired High Court judge-led advisory board.
- While the government defends it as necessary for public safety, critics warn that vague definitions and pre-conviction penalties may threaten free speech and legal due process.

India Launches World's First Traditional Knowledge Digital Library

- India launched the world's first Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), an AI-powered, multilingual platform archiving India's ancient medicinal wisdom from Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Homeopathy.
- The platform uses semantic AI to index formulations from ancient texts, making them digitally searchable, accessible for researchers, and safeguarded against biopiracy.
- TKDL offers legal protection by acting as prior art in international patent systems, preventing illegitimate claims on indigenous knowledge
- Recognised globally, WHO lauded the initiative as a model for integrating traditional medicine into modern health innovation and IP frameworks.
- Digitisation of documents in Sanskrit, Urdu, Arabic, and regional languages ensures the preservation of cultural heritage, while enabling scientific validation and pharmaceutical development from traditional sources.

Gujarat Becomes First State to Join Cruise Bharat Mission

- In July 2025, Gujarat became the first Indian state to adopt the Cruise Bharat Mission, promoting structured coastal and riverine cruise tourism across its 2,340 km coastline.
- The state unveiled three new cruise circuits: Padala Island–Rann of Kutch, Porbandar–Veraval–Diu, and Dwarka–Okha–Jamnagar, covering religious, cultural, and ecological destinations.
- A Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) workshop on May 6 initiated cruise tourism policy planning on infrastructure readiness, port processing, and capacity building.
- Integration with Ghogha–Hazira Ro-Pax services expands connectivity, complementing the Cruise Bharat vision to grow sea tourism tenfold by 2029.
- Gujarat's move positions it as a national model for cruise tourism, likely to spur employment, enhance hospitality services, and attract foreign exchange through maritime circuits.

India's First Digital Nomad Village Inaugurated in Sikkim

- On July 14, 2025, Yakten village in Pakyong district, Sikkim, was inaugurated as India's first Digital Nomad Village under the "Nomad Sikkim" initiative, led by the District Administration and Sarvahitey NGO.
- The village is equipped with dual high-speed internet lines, village-wide Wi-Fi, and power backups, ensuring uninterrupted digital access for remote-working professionals.
- Emphasizing eco-friendly development, Yakten functions as a zero-waste community, promotes local homestays, and is aligning with the Jal Jeevan Mission to solve water scarcity.
- The initiative seeks to bridge seasonal tourism gaps, boost local incomes up to fivefold, and foster youth entrepreneurship under the "One Family, One Entrepreneur" scheme.
- Positioned as a national pilot, Yakten blends cultural immersion with digital productivity, offering a model to replicate across India for decentralized rural digital economies and sustainable tourism.

India to Introduce E10 Shinkansen by 2030 After E5 Trials

- India's Mumbai–Ahmedabad high-speed rail corridor will initially deploy Japan's E5 Shinkansen trains for trial runs in FY 2026–27, followed by the introduction of the advanced E10 series by 2030.
- The E10 series, India's eventual mainline fleet, will debut simultaneously in India and Japan, making India the first foreign country to adopt it in parallel.
- Derived from Japan's ALFA-X prototypes, the E10 model boasts enhanced aerodynamics, energy efficiency, and earthquake safety systems, aligning with next-gen high-speed rail standards.
- The project showcases deepening India–Japan strategic cooperation in transport infrastructure, particularly in technology transfer, rolling stock manufacturing, and rail modernization.
- This joint rollout of E10 emphasizes India's commitment to leveraging cutting-edge rail innovations, positioning the country at the forefront of Asia's high-speed rail revolution.

Delhi Notifies 2025 Transgender Rights Protection Rules

- In July 2025, the Delhi Social Welfare Department notified the Delhi Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2025, aligning with the Transgender Persons Act, 2019 to ensure legal safeguards and welfare programs.
- District Magistrates are mandated to issue identity certificates—including updated gender, name, and photo—within 30 days, with applications accepted via self-declaration and no medical requirement.
- The rules also establish the Transgender Welfare Empowerment Board, chaired by the Social Welfare Minister, and include NGO and trans community representatives to guide policy and grievance redressal.
- The rules ban discrimination across education, healthcare, employment, and public services, advancing social inclusion and legal recognition for Delhi's transgender residents.
- Despite a 2011 census estimate of 4,200 transgender individuals, only 546 identity certificates have been issued so far, prompting calls for better implementation and outreach.

INS Nistar Commissioned as India's First Indigenous Diving Support Vessel

- The Indian Navy commissioned INS Nistar, India's first indigenously designed and constructed diving support vessel, at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam, in a ceremony led by MoS Defence Sanjay Seth and Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi.
- Built by Hindustan Shipyard Ltd with over 80% indigenous content involving 120 MSMEs, INS Nistar is equipped with deep-sea rescue tools such as saturation diving systems, DSRV support, and a 15-tonne subsea crane.
- The vessel strengthens India's submarine rescue and underwater salvage capabilities, positioning India as a Preferred Submarine Rescue Partner in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Weighing over 10,000 tonnes and measuring 118 meters, it succeeds the Soviet-era Nistar and joins vessels like INS Nipun and INS Nireekshak in enhancing the Navy's rescue fleet.
- With a helipad, ICU, operation theatre, and 60-day endurance, INS Nistar is a versatile asset for disaster relief, search-and-rescue, and regional maritime security missions.

India Raises Wheat and Rice Reserve Prices Under OMSS-D Scheme

- The Government of India increased reserve prices for wheat and rice to align with MSP hikes, manage surplus foodgrain stocks, and control food inflation through open market sales (OMSS-D).
- The reserve price for wheat is now set at ₹2,550/quintal, a 10.9% increase, valid through June 30, 2026, compared to the new MSP of ₹2,425/quintal (6.6% rise).
- For rice, revised prices effective November 1, 2025, include ₹2,890/quintal for private buyers, ₹2,320 for ethanol/state use, and ₹3,090 for custom-milled rice, reflecting a ~3.2% hike.
- As of June 1, 2025, India held ~37.9 million tonnes of rice and ~36.9 million tonnes of wheat, enabling surplus offloading without breaching buffer stock norms.
- The move supports price stability, farmer earnings, and efficient stock rotation, balancing national food security with inflation management.

Bombay High Court Acquits All Accused in 2006 Mumbai Train Blasts Case

- On 21 July 2025, a special bench of the Bombay High Court comprising Justices Anil Kilor and S.C. Chandak acquitted all 12 men previously convicted in the 11 July 2006 Mumbai train blasts case, overturning the 2015 death and life sentences.
- The blasts, which occurred during rush hour across seven trains on Mumbai's Western Line, killed 189–209 people and injured over 700.
- The Court held that the prosecution failed to prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt, with serious issues including unauthorized identification parades, questionable confessions, and unreliable forensic evidence.
- Witness testimonies were found inconsistent, and key details—such as the bomb model—remained unestablished, casting doubt on the entire investigation.
- The acquittal, after 18 years of incarceration, is being seen as a landmark ruling emphasizing procedural fairness and will likely prompt scrutiny of ATS practices and a possible Supreme Court appeal by the Maharashtra government.

INTERNATIONAL

Iran Suspends Cooperation with IAEA After Airstrike Fallout

- Iran's parliament (Majlis) passed and the Guardian Council ratified a law suspending all cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) following U.S. and Israeli airstrikes on its nuclear facilities.
- The new law prohibits inspections, surveillance, and reporting unless specifically approved by Iran's Supreme National Security Council, effectively cutting off international oversight.
- Iranian authorities accused the IAEA of political bias and of leaking sensitive intelligence to Israel, though these allegations were firmly rejected by IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi.
- The move is seen as a significant threat to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) framework and has raised fears of unmonitored advancement in Iran's nuclear programme.
- Nations such as France and Germany condemned Iran's action, calling for a resumption of cooperation, with analysts warning of broader implications for regional security and global non-proliferation efforts.

Rwanda and DRC Sign U.S.-Brokered Peace Agreement

- On June 27, 2025, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) signed a U.S.-mediated peace agreement in Washington, pledging to cease hostilities and respect territorial integrity.
- The agreement mandates Rwanda to withdraw its troops from eastern DRC within 90 days, while DRC will cease operations against the FDLR militia.
- A joint security mechanism is to be created within 30 days, with Doha expected to host continued peace dialogues and negotiation support.
- An accompanying economic cooperation framework will focus on critical minerals like cobalt, lithium, and tantalum, with incentives for Western investment.
- Although mediated by Secretary Marco Rubio and President Trump, the absence of armed groups like M23 has raised concerns about the inclusiveness and enforcement of the peace process.

QUAD Conducts First At-Sea Observer Mission for Maritime Security

- On June 30, 2025, the QUAD nations—India, the U.S., Japan, and Australia—launched the first-ever “QUAD at Sea Ship Observer Mission”, embarking on the USCGC Stratton en route to Guam, in line with the Wilmington Declaration.
- Each country deployed two officers, including women personnel, to facilitate cross-embarkation, operational synergy, and shared best practices in maritime safety, disaster response, and domain awareness.
- The initiative aims to promote a rules-based Indo-Pacific, complementing existing naval exercises like Malabar with a coast guard-level collaboration framework.
- India's participation supports its SAGAR doctrine and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), reinforcing regional stability and its leadership in maritime diplomacy.
- As the first mission of its kind, it paves the way for expanded observer programs, enhancing interoperability, mutual trust, and QUAD's collective capacity to respond to emerging maritime challenges.

Pakistan Assumes UNSC Presidency in July 2025

- On 1 July 2025, Pakistan assumed the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council, part of its 2025–26 non-permanent term, following a 182-vote election by the General Assembly.
- The presidency is chaired by Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, with Pakistan pledging to uphold multilateralism, conflict resolution, and international law during its tenure.
- Key UNSC events under Pakistan's presidency include a July 22 open debate on multilateral peacebuilding, July 23 session on Palestine, and a July 24 briefing on cooperation with regional organisations.
- Pakistan intends to showcase its roles in the Taliban Sanctions Committee and Counter-Terrorism Committee, while India is expected to counter with UN SDG achievements and highlight cross-border terrorism.
- Pakistan aligns its UNSC agenda with its national SDG framework, supported by UN's One Programme III, emphasizing green development and policy coordination.

UN Women Flags Global Gender Equality Backslide in 2025

- In its 2024–25 global report, UN Women warned of a "historic and precarious moment" for gender equality, citing regression in women's rights in nearly 1 in 4 countries.
- In 2023, 85,000 women and girls were killed—mainly by intimate partners—and over 600 million women lived near conflict zones, up 50% over the past decade.
- Gender gaps persist: women earn 20% less, do 2.5x more unpaid care work, and face a 277 million person digital divide, threatening \$500 billion in GDP losses.
- 2025 marks 30 years of the Beijing Declaration and 25 years of UNSC Resolution 1325, both landmark frameworks for women's rights, peace, and leadership in conflict resolution.
- UN Women, now in its 15th year, urges renewed investment in data, leadership, safety, and economic empowerment, emphasizing that 80% of peace processes still exclude women.

Russia Officially Recognizes Taliban Regime in Afghanistan

- In July 2025, Russia became the first country to formally recognize the Taliban government by accepting the credentials of Taliban envoy Gul Hassan Hassan in Moscow, ending nearly four years of informal engagement since August 2021.
- This recognition follows Russia's decision in April 2025 to remove the Taliban from its list of terrorist organizations, signaling a policy shift towards formal diplomatic ties.
- The move is expected to bolster cooperation in areas such as trade, energy, infrastructure, counter-terrorism, and anti-drug trafficking, thereby institutionalizing Russia's strategic interests in South and Central Asia.
- Russia's decision enhances its geopolitical foothold in the region, especially in countering threats like ISIS-K, while further isolating Western powers that have withheld formal recognition due to human rights concerns.
- The Taliban welcomed the recognition as "historic," while other nations such as China, Pakistan, Iran, and Uzbekistan continue diplomatic engagement without extending official recognition.

Quad Unveils Critical Minerals Initiative to Counter China's Monopoly

- Between July 1–2, 2025, the Quad foreign ministers from Australia, India, Japan, and the United States launched the Critical Minerals Initiative in Washington, D.C., aimed at securing diversified mineral supply chains.
- The initiative is designed to reduce dependence on China, which dominates rare earth processing and recently imposed export restrictions on seven minerals in April 2025, raising global security concerns.
- Quad leaders emphasized the risks of economic coercion, price manipulation, and supply disruptions, stating that reliance on a single nation threatens national security and industrial resilience.
- The announcement, led by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, was accompanied by meetings with 30 private-sector firms exploring cooperation in exploration, refining, and processing.
- As part of the broader Indo-Pacific strategy, the initiative complements Quad efforts in maritime security, technological collaboration, and maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific amid rising Chinese assertiveness.

US Enacts 1% Remittance Tax under 'Big Beautiful Bill'

- The US Congress passed the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act", introducing a 1% remittance tax effective from January 1, 2026, to fund immigration enforcement and deportation programs.
- The tax applies to non-bank outbound transfers over \$15, sparing transactions via US banks, credit/debit cards, and other formal channels.
- With India receiving \$129 billion in remittances in FY 2023–24 (28% from the US), the tax could reduce formal inflows by up to \$500 million, though exemptions will cushion the effect.
- The tax could prompt some senders to shift to informal channels such as hawala or crypto, as studies show each 1% increase in cost leads to a ~1.6% decline in remittances.
- While the projected macroeconomic impact on India is modest, the levy could hurt recipient households, affecting their health, education, and livelihood resilience.

Elon Musk Launches New Political Party in the United States

- On July 5, 2025, Elon Musk launched a new political party in the US called the "America Party", through his platform X (formerly Twitter), aiming to challenge the traditional two-party dominance.

- The party promotes fiscal conservatism, Bitcoin adoption, AI-driven defence, deregulation, pro-natalist policies, Second Amendment rights, and freedom of expression, creating a unique ideological platform.
- Musk announced that the party would focus on key congressional races by targeting “two to three Senate seats” and “eight to ten House districts” to hold legislative sway.
- Political and financial backlash followed: Tesla shares fell 7–8%, and former President Donald Trump dismissed the move as a “ridiculous” third-party stunt likely to split conservative votes.
- Despite legal and organizational hurdles, the party gained support from public figures like Mark Cuban, Andrew Yang, and Anthony Scaramucci, who offered assistance in ballot access and grassroots building.

Bulgaria to Join Eurozone on January 1, 2026

- On July 8, 2025, EU finance ministers approved Bulgaria’s accession to the eurozone, fixing the conversion rate at €1 = 1.95583 levs and making Bulgaria the 21st eurozone member from January 1, 2026.
- Bulgaria satisfied all Maastricht convergence criteria, including inflation control (at ~2.7%), fiscal balance, and a stable ERM II exit rate, securing approval from the European Commission, ECB, and European Parliament.
- Prime Minister Rosen Zhelyazkov projected economic benefits such as higher growth, investment, and purchasing power, with consumer safeguards like no conversion fees and transparent pricing.
- Despite institutional backing, public opinion remains divided—about 53% oppose euro adoption, citing fears over inflation and loss of monetary sovereignty, and some parties unsuccessfully called for a referendum.
- The euro transition marks a significant step in Bulgaria’s EU integration journey, which began with its 2007 accession, reinforcing its commitment to the European single currency framework.

BRICS Rejects EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism

- On July 8–9, 2025, the BRICS bloc officially condemned and rejected the EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), calling it a “discriminatory and protectionist” measure targeting developing economies.
- CBAM, part of the EU’s Fit for 55 climate package, imposes a carbon price on imports like steel, cement, aluminium, and fertilizers, based on EU ETS standards to curb carbon leakage.
- BRICS countries criticized it as a “carbon tariff” that burdens their exports, undermines climate transition investments, and violates the principles of international trade law.
- The mechanism’s reporting phase began in October 2023, with full enforcement due by January 1, 2026, raising concerns about trade competitiveness and export taxation.
- The rejection highlights a growing North-South divide in global climate diplomacy, with BRICS demanding more equitable approaches to carbon regulation and financial responsibility-sharing.

Nvidia Becomes World’s First \$4 Trillion Company

- On July 9–10, 2025, Nvidia became the first publicly traded company to cross a \$4 trillion market capitalization, with its shares peaking at \$164.42 before closing at \$164.10, surpassing the combined valuations of several tech giants and national exchanges.
- This valuation surge was fueled by escalating demand for Nvidia’s AI-centric chips, used by Amazon, Microsoft, Meta, Google, and OpenAI for advanced data centers and large model training.
- Nvidia’s stock has risen 287% over two years, with 18% growth in 2025 alone, while maintaining a forward P/E ratio of 33–34×, lower than its five-year average and peers like Tesla.
- The firm reported Q1 2025 revenue of \$44.1 billion, marking a 69% year-on-year growth, and forecasted Q2 revenue near \$45 billion, solidifying its dominance in the AI sector.
- CEO Jensen Huang’s net worth rose by \$1 billion to over \$140 billion, while Nvidia’s S&P 500 weight reached 7–7.5%, despite U.S. export restrictions on China-bound chips.

India and Namibia Sign MoUs and Launch UPI Integration

- During his July 9, 2025 state visit to Namibia, PM Narendra Modi and President Dr. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah signed multiple MoUs in sectors including entrepreneurship, health, cybersecurity, and digital payments, strengthening bilateral ties.
- India will establish an Entrepreneurship Development Centre, and partner with Namibia on pharmaceutical collaboration and medical infrastructure enhancement.
- Namibia became the first foreign country to adopt India’s UPI platform, following a licensing pact between NPCI and the Bank of Namibia, with launch slated for late 2025.

- Namibia joined two India-led global coalitions—CDRI and the Global Biofuels Alliance, and also held talks with India on defence, energy, education, and critical minerals trade.
- Modi was conferred Namibia's highest civilian honour, the Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis, during India's first prime ministerial visit to the country in 27 years.

ICC Issues Historic Gender-Based Arrest Warrants Against Taliban Leaders

- In July 2025, the International Criminal Court (ICC) unsealed arrest warrants for Taliban Supreme Leader Haibatullah Akhundzada and Chief Justice Abdul Hakim Haqqani, citing crimes against humanity.
- The charges include gender-based persecution, murder, torture, and repression of women, girls, and LGBTQI+ individuals, invoking Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute.
- These are the first ICC warrants explicitly addressing gender persecution, marking a legal milestone for accountability in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan post-August 2021 takeover.
- The Taliban rejected the ICC's jurisdiction, calling the warrants "baseless rhetoric" and insisting their governance aligns with Islamic Sharia law.
- Despite weak historical enforcement, 125 ICC member states are legally obligated to detain the accused if they enter their jurisdictions, prompting praise from human rights advocates for the symbolic and legal importance of the move.

Maratha Military Forts Named India's 44th UNESCO World Heritage Site

- On July 10, 2025, UNESCO inscribed the Maratha Military Landscapes as India's 44th World Heritage Site during the 47th WHC session in Paris.
- The listing includes 12 forts—11 in Maharashtra and 1 in Tamil Nadu (Gingee Fort)—representing 17th–19th century Maratha military architecture.
- Recognised under Criteria (iv) and (vi) for architecture and history, the site spans 1,577 hectares, with a 96,500 ha buffer zone, and highlights strategic hilltop and coastal defence.
- The nomination was accepted after ICOMOS evaluation and an 18-month assessment, citing ties to figures like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who was born in Shivneri Fort.
- The Maharashtra Government has launched 10-year conservation efforts, including around Salher Fort, focusing on infrastructure development, visitor regulation, and interpretive tourism.

UK Lowers Voting Age to 16 in Landmark Democratic Reform

- The United Kingdom officially lowered the voting age from 18 to 16, marking a historic shift in electoral policy and expanding youth political participation.
- The reform was passed after extensive parliamentary debate, supported by civil society groups and youth-led advocacy movements, signalling broader acceptance of youth empowerment in national decision-making.
- The change aligns the UK with countries like Austria, Brazil, and Scotland, where 16-year-olds are already eligible to vote in elections.
- To support informed participation, the UK government plans to introduce civic education into secondary school curricula, equipping young voters with knowledge on democratic processes and civic responsibilities.
- This step is seen as a democratic milestone, reflecting the UK's effort to adapt to evolving generational priorities and potentially influencing similar reforms in other democracies.

WHO Declares Senegal Free of Trachoma, a Neglected Tropical Disease

- The World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared Senegal free of trachoma, making it the ninth African country and 25th globally to eliminate the disease as a public health problem.
- Senegal's campaign began with national mapping in 2000, reaching completion by 2017, and involved extensive community-level intervention.
- The country successfully implemented WHO's SAFE strategy—Surgery, Antibiotics (azithromycin), Facial cleanliness, and Environmental improvements—covering 2.8 million people in 24 districts.
- Elimination efforts were led by Senegal's Ministry of Health, supported by national programs PNLC and PNPSO, in partnership with WHO and allied organizations.
- This achievement builds on Senegal's prior success in eliminating dracunculiasis (Guinea-worm disease) in 2004, reinforcing its leadership in tackling neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).

President Trump Signs GENIUS Act, U.S.'s First Major Crypto Legislation

- On 18 July 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump signed the GENIUS Act (Guiding and Establishing National Innovation for U.S. Stablecoins Act), establishing the country's first comprehensive federal framework for stablecoin regulation.
- The Act mandates that payment stablecoins be 100% backed by U.S. dollars or Treasuries, with monthly public disclosures, AML compliance, and consumer protection safeguards.
- It passed the Senate (68–30) on 17 June 2025 and the House (308–122) on 17 July 2025, receiving bipartisan support and strong endorsement from crypto industry leaders.
- The law shifts regulatory control to agencies like the Treasury, SEC, and CFTC, granting them powers to freeze or seize assets under legal orders.
- The Act aims to reinforce the U.S. dollar's reserve status, promote crypto innovation, and establish the U.S. as the "crypto capital of the planet", with markets reacting positively post-signing.

APPOINTMENTS**Four Eminent Individuals Nominated to Rajya Sabha Under Article 80(1)(a)**

- President Droupadi Murmu, acting under Article 80(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution, nominated four distinguished individuals to the Rajya Sabha, filling the vacancies left by retiring nominated members.
- The appointees include Ujjwal Nikam, a public prosecutor famous for cases like the 26/11 Mumbai attacks; Harsh Vardhan Shringla, former Foreign Secretary and G20 Chief Coordinator; Dr. Meenakshi Jain, historian and Padma Shri awardee; and C. Sadanandan Master, a Kerala-based social worker and BJP leader.
- The Constitution permits up to 12 nominated members in the Rajya Sabha, drawn from fields such as literature, science, art, and social service, with each serving a six-year term and the option to join a political party within six months.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the nominations, citing the appointees' contributions to justice, diplomacy, academia, and grassroots service.
- The move reflects the government's recognition of excellence in public service and national development, spanning diverse professional backgrounds.

President Murmu Appoints New Governors for Haryana, Goa, and Ladakh

- President Droupadi Murmu appointed Prof. Ashim Kumar Ghosh as Governor of Haryana, Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju as Governor of Goa, and Kavinder Gupta as the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.
- Prof. Ghosh, a former BJP West Bengal president and academician, assumed charge in Haryana, while Raju, a former Civil Aviation Minister and senior TDP leader, was appointed to Goa.
- Kavinder Gupta, former J&K Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader, succeeded Brigadier B.D. Mishra as the administrative head of Ladakh.
- The appointments reflect a strategic realignment of governance structures, promoting administrative continuity, political representation, and leadership diversity across different regions.
- The inclusion of leaders from both BJP and TDP backgrounds signifies the Centre's intent to ensure cross-party collaboration and regionally rooted leadership in key constitutional roles.

Sub Lt Aastha Poonia Becomes First Woman Navy Fighter Pilot Trainee

- On July 3, 2025, Sub Lt Aastha Poonia became the first woman inducted into the fighter stream of Indian Naval Aviation, receiving the prestigious 'Wings of Gold' at INS Dega, Visakhapatnam.
- She successfully completed the Second Basic Hawk Conversion Course and was honored by Rear Admiral Janak Bevli, signifying her entry into elite combat aviation.
- Poonia will now begin advanced training to qualify for operating carrier-based MiG-29K and Rafale M fighter jets from INS Vikramaditya and INS Vikrant.
- Her induction marks a significant step in gender inclusivity and reflects the Navy's commitment to empowering women in frontline combat roles under

Zou Jiayi Elected as First Female AIIB President

- During the 10th Annual Governors' Meeting of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Zou Jiayi was elected as the second president, becoming the first woman to head the institution.

- Zou, a former Vice Finance Minister of China, brings over 30 years of experience in international finance and has held senior roles linked to the World Bank, ADB, and New Development Bank.
- Her five-year term begins on January 16, 2026, succeeding Jin Liqun, who served since January 2016, overseeing AIIB's growth from 57 to 110 members and approving over \$60 billion in projects.
- Jiayi is expected to expand AIIB's global presence, enhance climate finance, and strengthen alignment with major international development institutions.

SPORTS

Harikrishnan A. Becomes India's 87th Chess Grandmaster

- On July 12, 2025, A. Harikrishnan, a 23-year-old from Chennai, became India's 87th Grandmaster after earning his final norm at the La Plagne International Chess Festival in France.
- His first and second norms were achieved at the Andújar Open (Spain) and in Switzerland, completing all criteria required for the GM title, a feat achieved during a self-driven European tournament circuit
- Harikrishnan, trained by GM Shyam Sundar Mohanraj, had promised his coach he would return home only after earning the GM title—a promise he fulfilled.
- He is the 32nd Grandmaster from Tamil Nadu, reinforcing the state's identity as India's chess powerhouse, often referred to as the "chess factory" of India.
- Known for his strong calculation skills and ability to endure 9–10 back-to-back tournaments, Harikrishnan now aims to reach a FIDE rating between 2550–2600, guided by his coach's mentorship.

India to Host Shooting World Cup in 2027 and Junior Worlds in 2028

- During its executive committee meeting on **July 10, 2025**, the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) awarded **New Delhi** the hosting rights for two major global shooting competitions: the **ISSF World Cup (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun)** in **2027** and the **ISSF Junior World Championship (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun)** in **2028**.
- **2027 ISSF World Cup:** New Delhi will host one of the premier international shooting competitions (covering rifle, pistol, and shotgun), elevating India's profile in senior-level shooting sports .
- **2028 Junior World Championship:** The city will also stage the ISSF Junior World Championship for rifle, pistol, and shotgun events—marking the first time India hosts the Junior Worlds.

Union Cabinet Clears New National Sports Policy to Boost India's Sporting Ecosystem

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Modi, on July 1, 2025, approved the National Sports Policy 2025—also branded “Khelo Bharat Niti”. The policy replaces the 2001 framework to transform India into a global sporting power and boost its chances of hosting the 2036 Olympics. Introduced on July 1, the policy is built on five pillars: Excellence on Global Stage, Sports for Economic Development, Sports for Social Development, Sports as a People's Movement, Integration with Education (NEP 2020).
- Proposes fitness indices in schools, colleges, workplaces; campaigns like family weekends, yoga challenges, and community-level sports events to popularize fitness.
- Plans for sports facilities in rural and urban regions, a Sports Regulatory Board to oversee federations, and reforms for transparent, professional federation governance.
- Will promote sports tourism, international event hosting, growth in indigenous sports equipment manufacturing, and support startups via PPP/CSR-driven funding.
- Encourages participation from women, tribal/economically weaker groups, PwDs, LGBTQ+ individuals; aims to revive traditional Indian games; integrating sports into education under NEP 2020 framework.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ananth Tech Approved for India's First Private Satellite Internet

- On July 5, 2025, Ananth Technologies, based in Hyderabad, received regulatory clearance from IN-SPACe to launch India's first private satellite broadband using a GEO satellite.
- The company will deploy a 4-ton geostationary satellite with 100 Gbps capacity, scheduled for service launch in 2028, with an investment of ₹3,000 crore.
- The GEO satellite—stationed at 35,000 km altitude—will offer nationwide coverage but higher latency, unlike LEO constellations such as Starlink and OneWeb.
- The approval reflects the impact of the Indian Space Policy 2023, which encourages private-sector participation in satellite communications and broader space commercialization.
- Ananth Tech will compete with global firms and domestic players like Jio Satellite Communications, reinforcing India's ascent in the private space sector.

DRDO and IAF Successfully Test Astra BVRAAM with Indigenous RF Seeker

- On the Odisha coast, the DRDO and Indian Air Force successfully conducted two test-firings of the Astra Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) using a Su-30 MKI aircraft in July 2025.
- The missile was equipped with an indigenously developed Radio Frequency (RF) seeker, which accurately tracked and engaged unmanned aerial targets under varying flight conditions.
- The Astra demonstrated full operational capacity, including guidance, navigation, and flight control, validated by data from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur.
- With a range exceeding 100 km, Astra is designed for Indian fighter jets and integrates components from over 50 Indian partners, including HAL and DRDO labs, under the Make in India programme.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and DRDO Chairman Dr. Samir V. Kamat hailed the milestone as a major advancement in self-reliant missile technology, boosting India's air combat capability.

Starlink Gets IN-SPACe Clearance for Satellite Internet in India

- In July 2025, India's space regulator IN-SPACe granted five-year operational approval to Starlink Satellite Communications Pvt. Ltd., a SpaceX subsidiary, for deploying its Gen-1 LEO satellite constellation.
- The constellation, comprising 4,408 satellites at 540–570 km altitude, will offer up to 600 Gbps aggregate broadband capacity to urban and remote users.
- This clearance reflects India's evolving space policy, aligning with the Digital India mission and allowing private international operators to expand connectivity access.
- Starlink must still obtain spectrum allocation from the Department of Telecommunications and establish ground stations to operationalize services.
- India now becomes the third South Asian country to embrace LEO satellite internet, signalling a shift towards global digital integration and policy openness to innovation.

India Reaches 50% Installed Non-Fossil Fuel Power Capacity

- India officially achieved the milestone of 50% installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources, meeting its 2030 Paris Agreement goal five years ahead of schedule.
- By mid-June 2025, India's total installed capacity stood at ~484.8 GW, of which ~242.8 GW came from solar, wind, hydro, and nuclear sources.
- A record 28 GW of renewables was added in 2024, followed by another 16.3 GW between January and May 2025, the fastest growth rate since 2022.
- Although coal-based power still dominates generation, it registered a 3% decline in the first half of 2025, signaling a gradual shift toward clean energy.
- Future plans include expanding battery storage, developing green hydrogen, enhancing grid infrastructure, and introducing 80 GW of new coal capacity by 2032 to manage rising energy demand.

Israel Launches Dror-1, Its Most Advanced Communications Satellite

- On July 15, 2025, Israel launched its Dror-1 satellite, its most advanced communications satellite, aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida, with an operational life of 15 years.

- Developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Dror-1 features a fully digital payload, advanced signal processing, and is built to ensure secure, high-capacity communication.
- The satellite strengthens Israel's autonomous communication infrastructure, reducing reliance on foreign networks and providing resilience during geopolitical conflicts.
- Built for dual-use, Dror-1 will serve both military and civilian sectors, supporting secure defense systems, internet access, and commercial broadcasting.
- The launch marks Israel's first fully indigenous communications satellite in over a decade and aligns with its national space strategy, backed by the government to promote technological independence in aerospace.

Shubhanshu Shukla Returns After Historic ISS Mission

- Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla safely returned to Earth after an 18-day mission aboard the International Space Station (ISS), becoming the first Indian on the ISS and the second Indian in space after Rakesh Sharma (1984).
- He completed over 310 orbits, covering approximately 13 million kilometers, before returning via SpaceX's Dragon capsule "Grace", which splashed down off the California coast.
- During the mission, Shukla conducted seven microgravity experiments involving plant growth, muscle regeneration, and algae, contributing to future space-based life sciences.
- His role is pivotal for India's upcoming Gaganyaan mission, offering hands-on experience for ISRO's first human spaceflight program.
- National leaders, including PM Modi and President Murmu, celebrated his return, while his emotional reunion with his family in Houston inspired widespread public admiration and youth engagement in STEM.

Gujarat Launches India's First Tribal Genome Sequencing Project

- Gujarat became the first state in India to launch a Tribal Genome Sequencing Project, aiming to decode the genomes of 2,000 individuals from over 20 tribal communities across 17 districts.
- The project, titled 'Creation of Reference Genome Database', is being led by the Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC) in partnership with the Tribal Development Department.
- Sample collection includes 4,158 biological specimens, with special focus on genetic trios (both parents and one child), targeting healthy adults for insights into inherited diseases, natural immunity, and nutritional issues.
- The initiative includes an ethical framework—emphasizing gender balance (50% female participants), community consent, and alignment with tribal cultural values.
- Outcomes are expected to improve precision healthcare, addressing tribal-specific challenges such as sickle cell anemia, malnutrition, and infant mortality, while guiding future personalized medicine approaches.

Akash Prime Successfully Tested at 15,000 Feet in Ladakh by Indian Army

- The Indian Army successfully tested the Akash Prime surface-to-air missile system at an altitude of over 15,000 feet in Ladakh, in coordination with DRDO.
- The missile system intercepted and destroyed two high-speed unmanned aerial targets, demonstrating its capability in low-oxygen, high-altitude conditions.
- Akash Prime includes enhancements like an indigenous radio-frequency seeker, optimized guidance, mobile launchers, and a 20–30 km range with 18 km flight ceiling.
- The Army plans to deploy two Akash Prime regiments along the China border, enhancing its layered air defence posture in strategically sensitive zones.
- The system has already seen action during Operation Sindoor, helping neutralize drone threats, and now forms a key element of India's indigenous air defence network.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

V.V. Kumar Honoured with Commemorative Book on 90th Birthday

- On the occasion of his 90th birthday, legendary Indian leg-spinner V.V. Kumar was honoured at a function in Chennai, where the book *Celebrating V.V. Kumar @ 90* was officially released to commemorate his cricketing legacy.
- The first copy was presented to Kumar by C.D. Gopinath, the last surviving member of India's first Test victory, with tributes from G.R. Viswanath, S. Venkataraghavan, and N. Ram of *The Hindu*.
- Kumar, known for his mastery of leg-spin and cheerful personality, played only 2 Tests (including a five-wicket debut in 1961) but became the first bowler to take over 400 wickets in the Ranji Trophy, finishing with 599 first-class wickets.
- The book originated from Tamil Nadu cricket veterans and was compiled by sportswriter Partab Ramchand, capturing personal anecdotes and career milestones.
- The event served as a tribute to Indian cricket's unsung domestic heroes, highlighting Kumar's enduring influence on generations of cricketers in Tamil Nadu and beyond.

Shikhar Dhawan Releases Autobiography "The One"

- On June 26, 2025, cricketer Shikhar Dhawan launched his autobiography *"The One: Cricket, My Life and More"*, published by HarperCollins India, offering readers an intimate account of his cricketing journey and personal evolution.
- The book explores Dhawan's rise from Delhi cricket grounds to becoming one of India's most formidable opening batsmen, while also reflecting on mental health struggles, selection disappointments, and emotional lows.
- It features candid anecdotes about locker room camaraderie, off-field controversies, and moments of vulnerability, making it a powerful narrative of self-discovery and public life pressures.
- Contributions from Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Yuvraj Singh, and Harbhajan Singh add diverse perspectives to the memoir, making it a collective reflection on India's modern cricket era.
- More than a sports memoir, *The One* emphasizes themes of resilience, identity transformation, and emotional growth, providing inspiration to readers navigating their own personal and professional challenges.

V.S. Ravi Launches "Confessions of a Shakespeare Addict" in Hyderabad

- On July 7, 2025, retired IPS officer and literary columnist V.S. Ravi launched his latest book *"Confessions of a Shakespeare Addict"* in Hyderabad, reflecting on his lifelong devotion to the works of William Shakespeare.
- The book blends memoir and literary commentary, tracing Ravi's journey from his early fascination with Shakespeare to performing verses from *Hamlet* across the globe, including in front of Nobel Laureate C.F. Powell.
- The event was attended by former dignitaries such as P.S. Ramamohan Rao, S. Chakravarthy, and A.K. Khan, who praised Ravi's ability to make Shakespeare relevant and emotionally resonant for modern readers.
- The Hindu Group Chairperson Nirmala Lakshman conveyed appreciation for Ravi's literary contributions and for making classical literature accessible to wider audiences through his columns.
- Moderated by B. Krishna Rao, the event was warmly received by literature enthusiasts, with Ravi's book expected to appeal to students, readers, and admirers of timeless storytelling.

"Das Paise ka Postcard" Rekindles the Era of Handwritten Letters

- On July 10, 2025, retired Indian Army officer S.N. Ahmed launched his nostalgic book *"Das Paise ka Postcard"* in Hyderabad, celebrating the emotional significance of postcards as a means of personal communication before the digital age.
- The book, released by veteran actor and theatre director Vinay Varma, recounts how handwritten messages once served as vital emotional lifelines for families separated by distance and time.
- Varma praised the book's message, emphasizing its potential to connect younger generations with the intimacy and depth of written correspondence, which he said is often lost in today's instant messaging culture.
- The book also explores the ritual of receiving, reading, and treasuring postcards—a fading cultural memory that once defined emotional connections for countless Indian households.

- A stage adaptation of the book is underway, promising to translate its themes of love, longing, and personal touch into a theatrical experience that revives the warmth of India's postcard era.

IMPORTANT DAYS

India Celebrates National Statistics Day Honouring P.C. Mahalanobis

- On 29th June, India observed National Statistics Day in honour of Prof. P.C. Mahalanobis (1893–1972), celebrated as the Father of Indian Statistics and a key architect of post-independence economic planning.
- He founded the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in 1931, and was instrumental in establishing the National Sample Survey Office (1950) and the Central Statistical Organisation (1951).
- His creation of the Mahalanobis Distance in 1936 revolutionized statistical analysis and is now used globally in pattern recognition, clustering, and outlier detection.
- As author of the Feldman–Mahalanobis model for the Second Five-Year Plan (1956–61), he prioritized heavy industry and influenced India's strategy of import substitution industrialization.
- Awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1968, Mahalanobis's work bridged science and policy, leading to his birthday being designated as National Statistics Day in 2007.

World Population Day 2025 Highlights India's Youth Demographic

- On July 11, 2025, World Population Day was observed globally with the theme “Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world”, spotlighting youth-focused population and reproductive health challenges.
- India, with 371 million youth (aged 15–29) making up 27.2% of its population and nearly 65% under 35, holds the world's largest youth population, offering potential for a powerful demographic dividend.
- The National Youth Policy 2024, aligned with NEP 2020 and the SDGs, emphasizes skills, leadership, digital access, and volunteerism, supported by schemes like PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Startup India, and NSS.
- The 2025 theme also stresses access to sexual and reproductive health services, ensuring informed life choices, gender equality, and social justice.
- Experts from states like Odisha, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh have urged for region-specific strategies that integrate youth empowerment with holistic well-being, focusing on childcare, ageing, and working-age support.

International Day of the Tropics 2025: Acknowledging Diversity and Urgent Challenges

- The International Day of the Tropics is observed annually on 29 June, and the 2025 observance marks its ninth edition since its proclamation by the UN General Assembly in 2016 via Resolution A/RES/70/267.
- This date commemorates the release of the first *State of the Tropics Report* on 29 June 2014, which offered landmark insights into tropical ecological, economic, and social systems.
- Covering nearly 40% of Earth's surface, the Tropics host over 80% of global biodiversity and a significant share of cultural and linguistic diversity, but face challenges like deforestation, climate change, and urban inequality.
- The observance does not adopt a fixed annual theme, allowing broad attention to tropical issues such as rising temperatures, pollution, and development disparities.
- The day calls for global awareness, scientific collaboration, and sustainable development initiatives to help tropical nations address vulnerabilities and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

National Doctor's Day 2025 Honouring the Healers and Their Inner Struggles

- National Doctor's Day is observed annually on July 1 in India to honour the legacy of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, a legendary physician and former Chief Minister of West Bengal, whose birth and death anniversaries fall on this date.
- Officially established in 1991, the day recognises the selfless service and ethical dedication of doctors who form the backbone of India's healthcare system.
- The 2025 theme, “*Behind the Mask: Who Heals the Healers?*”, focuses on the mental and emotional well-being of doctors, urging institutional support for their psychological resilience.
- Dr. B.C. Roy was instrumental in founding the Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Medical Council of India (MCI) and was awarded the Bharat Ratna for his dual contributions to medicine and public service.

- The day is commemorated with public gratitude, awareness campaigns, and calls for healthcare reforms, reminding society that doctors too require care, rest, and dignity.

World Population Day 2025: Youth, Rights, and a Sustainable Future

- World Population Day is observed on July 11 every year to raise awareness about the impacts of population growth on health, development, and the environment, inspired by Five Billion Day (1987) and officially established by the UNDP in 1989.
- The 2025 theme, *"Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world,"* emphasizes reproductive autonomy, gender equality, and the role of youth in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- As of 2025, the global population has surpassed 8.1 billion, with India (1.46 billion) overtaking China as the world's most populous country, prompting urgent reforms in healthcare, urban planning, and youth employment.
- The top 5 most populous countries include India, China, the U.S., Indonesia, and Pakistan, while Macau, Monaco, and Singapore lead in population density.
- The day calls for youth empowerment, universal reproductive healthcare, and sustainable resource planning amid rising urbanisation and demographic challenges.

World Day for International Justice 2025: Global Pledge Against Impunity

- World Day for International Justice is observed every year on July 17, marking the adoption of the Rome Statute in 1998, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC) to prosecute genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
- The day was officially declared during the 2010 Kampala Review Conference, and it underscores the global resolve to end impunity and ensure justice across borders through international legal mechanisms.
- The 2025 observance focuses on promoting awareness of the ICC's mandate, encouraging global cooperation to punish serious crimes, and reaffirming the need to uphold international law in conflict zones.
- Key events include survivor testimonies, panel discussions, and mock trials, alongside global digital outreach using hashtags like #JusticeDay2025 to engage youth and civil society.
- With ongoing crises in Ukraine, Gaza, and parts of Africa, the day holds contemporary urgency, reminding the world that justice and accountability are foundational to peace, security, and human dignity.

National Flag Day 2025: Honouring the Legacy of the Tiranga

- National Flag Day is observed annually on July 22 to commemorate the adoption of the Indian National Flag by the Constituent Assembly in 1947, symbolising the spirit of independence and unity in a newly sovereign India.
- The Tiranga's evolution began with early designs like Sister Nivedita's 1904 flag, culminating in the final version adopted days before independence, featuring saffron, white, and green bands with the Ashoka Chakra at the centre.
- Each element of the flag embodies key national ideals: saffron represents courage, white denotes peace and truth, green signifies growth, and the 24-spoke navy blue Ashoka Chakra reflects righteousness and forward progress.
- National Flag Day 2025 highlights not just patriotic fervour but also civic awareness, reminding citizens of their duty under the Flag Code of India to uphold the dignity of the flag.
- Celebrations include flag hoisting ceremonies, patriotic speeches, and educational events across schools and government institutions to foster intergenerational respect for the Tiranga and its constitutional significance.

Kargil Vijay Diwas 2025: Honouring the Spirit of Sacrifice

- Kargil Vijay Diwas, observed annually on July 26, commemorates India's victory in the 1999 Kargil War, and in 2025, it marks the 26th anniversary of that historic triumph against infiltrating enemy forces along the Line of Control in Kargil, Jammu & Kashmir.
- The war began in May 1999, when intruders occupied strategic mountain peaks; India responded with Operation Vijay, mobilizing over 200,000 troops to reclaim lost territory in extreme high-altitude conditions, eventually declaring victory on July 26, 1999.
- The day pays tribute to over 500 Indian soldiers who laid down their lives, including Captain Vikram Batra, who was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra, India's highest wartime gallantry award.

- National celebrations include wreath-laying ceremonies at the Kargil War Memorial (Dras), speeches, patriotic performances, and tributes in print and electronic media to honour the courage and sacrifice of the armed forces.
- Schools commemorate the day through assemblies, talks by veterans, quizzes, essays, and film screenings, instilling patriotism and awareness of military history among younger generations.

OBITUARIES

Vatsala, Asia's Oldest Elephant, Dies at 100 in Panna Tiger Reserve

- Vatsala, believed to be Asia's oldest elephant, passed away on July 8, 2025, at Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh, at an estimated age of over 100 years, marking the end of a remarkable life of service, care, and legacy in wildlife conservation.
- Originally from Nilambur forests of Kerala, she was transferred to Hoshangabad in 1971 and later to Panna in 1993, where she served in tiger tracking patrols and later mentored younger elephants after retiring in 2003.
- Panna Tiger Reserve, with a core area of 576 sq. km and home to over 55 tigers, is celebrated for its successful tiger reintroduction after complete tiger extinction between 2006–08, initiated under R. Sreenivasa Murthy.
- The reserve lies along the Ken River and supports diverse flora like teak and mahua, and fauna including tigers, leopards, hyenas, crocodiles, and over 300 bird species.
- Vatsala's legacy symbolizes intergenerational ecological stewardship, earning reverence among forest staff, conservationists, and tourists across decades.

Fauja Singh, World's Oldest Marathon Runner, Dies at 114 in Road Accident

- Fauja Singh, renowned globally as the 'Turbaned Tornado', died at 114 years old on July 14, 2025, after being hit by an unidentified vehicle while walking near his village Bias on the Jalandhar-Pathankot highway, Punjab.
- Born on April 1, 1911, Singh began long-distance running at the age of 89, after personal tragedies, and went on to complete nine international marathons, including in London, New York, and Toronto.
- He carried the Olympic torch in both the 2004 Athens and 2012 London Olympics, becoming a symbol of enduring human strength, discipline, and late-life reinvention.
- Singh was featured alongside global icons such as Muhammad Ali and David Beckham in international fitness campaigns, inspiring millions with his unmatched stamina and simplicity.
- His tragic passing has shocked the nation; tributes have poured in, and Punjab Police have launched an investigation into the accident that took the life of this legendary athlete.

RANKINGS

2nd NER District SDG Index Highlights Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim Leadership

- On July 7, 2025, NITI Aayog, MoDoNER, and the UNDP launched the second edition of the North Eastern Region (NER) District SDG Index, covering 121 districts across 8 northeastern states, to evaluate localized progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The share of 'Front Runner' districts (score 65–99) rose from 62% in 2021 to 85% in 2023–24, indicating significant improvement in social, economic, and environmental outcomes.
- Hnathial (Mizoram) ranked highest with a score of 81.43, while Longding (Arunachal Pradesh) had the lowest at 58.71; all districts in Sikkim, Mizoram, and Tripura achieved 'Front Runner' status.
- Strong gains were noted in health, education, water and sanitation, and economic growth, especially in Assam and 93 districts showing improvement in the Good Health and Well-being goal.
- The index is an important policy tool for evidence-based planning, supports SDG localisation, and aligns with long-term national development frameworks like Viksit Bharat @2047.

TATA Becomes India's First \$30 Billion Brand

- Brand Finance announced that the TATA Group had reached a brand valuation of USD 31.6 billion, becoming the first Indian brand to surpass the USD 30 billion threshold.
- This milestone marked a 10% rise from its 2024 valuation of USD 28.6 billion, earning it the 60th rank in the Brand Finance Global 500 list for 2025.

- TATA retained its AAA- brand strength rating, reflecting consistent performance and robust global recognition in line with top global companies like Apple and Microsoft.
- The brand has now held the title of India's most valuable brand for 16 consecutive years, ahead of prominent Indian companies such as LIC, HDFC, SBI, and ICICI.
- Brand Finance defines brand value as the net economic benefit a trademark owner gains from licensing the brand, underscoring the intangible strength of TATA in both domestic and global markets.

India's Gini Index at 25.5—Among Most Equal Globally, Says World Bank

- The World Bank, in its July 2025 report, placed India's consumption-based Gini Index at 25.5 for 2022–23, ranking it as the fourth most equal country globally—behind only the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and Belarus.
- The Gini Index, which measures inequality on a scale from 0 to 100, shows India faring better than China (35.7) and the USA (41.8), and also surpassing all G7 and G20 countries in consumption equity.
- India's score improved from 28.8 in 2011, and this downward trend coincides with the lifting of 171 million people above the poverty line during that period.
- Critics argue the figure hides income-based disparities, as the World Inequality Database estimates India's income Gini may exceed 0.60, and wealth remains heavily concentrated in the top 1%, which holds 22.6% of national income.
- Experts like Thomas Piketty advocate progressive taxation—such as a 2% wealth tax and 33% inheritance tax—to reduce inequality and strengthen social investment.

India Rises to Rank 99 in UN SDG Index 2025

- According to the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) report for 2025, India ranks 99th out of 193 countries, improving from 109th in 2024 with a score of 67.0.
- While global SDG progress is off track—only 17% of targets are on course—Europe dominates the top rankings with Finland (87.0), Sweden, and Denmark in the top three.
- India ranks behind Maldives (53rd), Bhutan (74th), Nepal (85th), and Sri Lanka (93rd), but above Bangladesh (114th) and Pakistan (140th); China is at 49th and the USA at 44th.
- India's rise reflects improvements in healthcare, education, renewable energy, water access, and inequality reduction, though challenges remain in climate adaptation and infrastructure.
- The report emphasizes the urgency of international cooperation, local action, and policy reforms to meet the 2030 SDG targets, especially for the Global South.

India Ranks 3rd in Global Unicorn Index 2025

- The Hurun Global Unicorn Index 2025 ranks India third globally with 64 unicorns, behind the United States (758) and China (343), out of a total of 1,523 unicorns worldwide.
- India's unicorn hubs include Bengaluru (7th globally), Mumbai (22nd), and Gurugram (27th), with sectoral strengths in fintech, gaming, and ed-tech.
- Notable Indian unicorns include Zerodha (~US\$8.2B), Dream11 (~US\$8B), and Razorpay (~US\$7.5B), demonstrating India's growing startup valuation and tech ecosystem.
- Globally, Fintech (197), SaaS (151), and AI (128) dominate the unicorn sector mix, with unicorns now present in 52 countries and 307 cities.
- The U.S. retains its lead with 758 unicorns, including SpaceX (~US\$350B), while China holds strong in Beijing and Shanghai with companies like ByteDance and Shein.

Zepto Co-Founders Top Hurun India Under-30 List 2025

- On July 17, 2025, Kaivalya Vohra and Aadit Palicha, both aged 22, topped the inaugural Avendus-Wealth Hurun India Under-30 List, recognizing them as the youngest and most impactful entrepreneurs in the country.
- As co-founders of Zepto, a quick-commerce company, they have led exponential growth in youth-driven retail innovation, symbolizing India's expanding startup ecosystem.
- The list features 79 honorees from diverse fields like technology, healthcare, finance, and retail, illustrating the broad spectrum of first-generation, self-made entrepreneurship.
- Collectively, these entrepreneurs have raised \$5.2 billion in equity and \$270 million in debt, while creating over 64,000 jobs across India.

- Mumbai leads the ranking with 15 founders, including the Zepto duo, reinforcing its reputation as India's premier innovation hub for emerging business leaders.

PRIZE AND AWARDS

Leila Aboulela Wins 2025 PEN Pinter Prize for Literary Courage

- On July 9, 2025, Leila Aboulela, a Sudanese-Scottish author, was awarded the 2025 PEN Pinter Prize, which recognises writers with an unwavering commitment to truth and free expression.
- Born in Khartoum and based in Aberdeen, Aboulela is known for novels like *The Translator*, *Minaret*, and *River Spirit*, which explore themes of migration, faith, and Muslim women's experiences.
- Judges described her writing as "a balm, a shelter, and an inspiration", commending her for crafting empathetic narratives around displacement and identity.
- She will be presented the award on October 10, 2025, at the British Library, where she will also select the Writer of Courage, an individual honored for defending freedom of expression.
- Aboulela now joins past laureates like Arundhati Roy, Salman Rushdie, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, further cementing her place in contemporary global literary circles.

PM Modi Conferred Ghana's Officer of the Order of the Star

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian PM in over 30 years to visit Ghana, where he was awarded the Officer of the Order of the Star, the country's second-highest civilian honour.
- President John Dramani Mahama conferred the award for Modi's global leadership and statesmanship, which Modi dedicated to India's youth and cultural diversity.
- The two countries elevated their ties to a Comprehensive Partnership, signing MoUs on Ayurveda, trade standards, cultural exchange, and ministerial dialogue during a state banquet in Accra.
- India pledged deeper cooperation in digital technology, healthcare, infrastructure, and defence, and committed to doubling trade and introducing UPI digital payments in Ghana.
- This honour adds to Modi's 29 international recognitions, making him India's most globally decorated leader, underscoring India's growing Africa-focused diplomacy.

PM Modi Awarded 'Key to the City' During Argentina Visit

- During his visit to Argentina on July 6, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was presented the "Key to the City of Buenos Aires" by Jorge Macri, Chief of the City Government, marking a major diplomatic gesture.
- Modi's visit was the first bilateral trip by an Indian PM to Argentina since 1968, emphasizing growing ties in trade, defence, energy, agriculture, critical minerals like lithium, and sports.
- High-level talks were held with President Javier Milei, followed by tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and General José de San Martín, deepening shared civilizational ties.
- The Indian diaspora in Buenos Aires gave Modi a warm welcome with cultural performances, flag-waving, and slogans that highlighted India's growing soft power in Latin America.
- This visit was part of Modi's five-nation diplomatic tour, situated between his visit to Trinidad & Tobago—where he received the country's highest civilian honour—and the BRICS Summit in Brazil.

President Murmu Presents Kalinga Ratna Award 2024 to Dharmendra Pradhan

- On July 15–16, 2025, President Droupadi Murmu presented the Kalinga Ratna Award 2024 to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at a cultural event in Cuttack, commemorating the 600th birth anniversary of Adikabi Sarala Das, the legendary Odia poet.
- The event, held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, celebrated Odia literary heritage, with Murmu emphasizing the National Education Policy 2020's support for mother-tongue education.
- In his acceptance, Pradhan stressed the need to globalize the Odia language by integrating artificial intelligence and digital platforms into its preservation and promotion.
- The broader ceremony also recognized Bijaya Nayak with the Sarala Samman and highlighted contributions of other cultural figures to Odia literature and heritage.
- The award signifies national-level recognition for efforts in language preservation, cultural promotion, and education policy reform rooted in regional identity.

Kerala Sahitya Akademi Announces 2024 Literary Awards

- In Thrissur, the Kerala Sahitya Akademi announced the 2024 literary awards, recognising excellence in Malayalam literature across genres including novel, poetry, drama, and children's writing.
- G R Indu Gopan won Best Novel for *Aano*, Anitha Thampi received the Poetry Award for *Muringa Vazha Kariveppu*, and V Shinilal was honoured for the Short Story *Garisappa Aruvi Athava Oru Jalayathra*.
- The C B Kumar Essay Award went to M Swaraj for *Pookkalude Pusthakam*, while Akademi Fellowships were conferred upon K V Ramakrishnan and Ezhacheri Ramachandran, each receiving ₹50,000 and gold medals.
- Lifetime Contribution Awards were presented to six senior writers including P K N Panicker, Payyanur Kunhiraman, and Mallika Yunis, each receiving ₹30,000, a shawl, and a plaque.
- Other category winners included Sasidharan Naduvil for drama, Chinju Prakash for translation, and E N Sheeja for children's literature; no Vilasini Award was presented in 2024.

Varsha Deshpande Wins 2025 UN Population Award for Grassroots Advocacy

- Varsha Deshpande, founder of Dalit Mahila Vikas Mandal, received the 2025 UN Population Award (individual category) for her transformative work in reproductive health, women's rights, and anti-sex selection advocacy in India.
- For over 35 years, she has fought child marriage, gender-based violence, and sex-selective abortion, while promoting joint property rights and protections for informal women workers.
- She pioneered sting operations and community campaigns against gender-biased sex selection and served on national panels under the PCPNDT Act, shaping related policies.
- Deshpande becomes the third Indian to receive the award, after Indira Gandhi (1983) and J.R.D. Tata (1992), marking a historic recognition of grassroots women's leadership.
- In her World Population Day acceptance speech, she credited the award to collective activism for gender equality, calling it a reminder of the urgent need to ensure reproductive rights for all.

India Surpasses Diplomatic Milestone as PM Modi Honoured in Ghana

- On July 2, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana, the country's second-highest civilian honour, during his historic visit—the first by an Indian PM in over 30 years.
- The award recognized Modi's contributions to global diplomacy, youth empowerment, and India-Africa relations, which he dedicated to India's youth and cultural legacy.
- During his visit, India and Ghana upgraded bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Partnership, signing multiple MoUs on Ayurveda, cultural exchange, trade standards, and ministerial dialogues.
- Modi announced expanded cooperation in digital tech, agriculture, defence, healthcare, and plans to double bilateral trade, including the launch of UPI digital payments in Ghana.
- This recognition adds to Modi's 29 international awards, reinforcing his status as India's most internationally decorated leader and reflecting India's growing role in South-South diplomacy.

PM Modi Receives Brazil's Highest Civilian Honour

- On July 8, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the Grand Collar of the National Order of the Southern Cross, Brazil's highest civilian award, during his state visit following the BRICS Summit.
- The award, presented by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at Alvorada Palace, recognized Modi's role in enhancing bilateral ties and cooperation in BRICS, G20, and UN platforms.
- Modi was welcomed with a 114-horse ceremonial salute and vibrant Afro-Brazilian performances, reflecting the strong cultural diplomacy between the two nations.
- In his remarks, Modi expressed pride and gratitude, calling it a moment of honour for "140 crore Indians", and reaffirmed India-Brazil friendship.
- This is Modi's 26th international civilian award, adding to recognitions from Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana, Cyprus, and other countries, bolstering his global diplomatic stature.

INCOIS Wins National Geospatial Practitioner Award 2025 for Ocean Services Innovation

- The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) received the National Geospatial Practitioner Award 2025 at the Open Source GIS Day (Edition 02) held at IIT Bombay, for its use of open-source GIS tools in marine information services.
- INCOIS, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, was recognised for integrating platforms like QGIS and GeoServer into its public ocean data systems, enhancing marine advisory services for coastal communities and disaster agencies.

- Headquartered in Hyderabad, INCOIS delivers real-time alerts such as Potential Fishing Zones, tsunami warnings, and storm surge advisories, supporting both scientific and operational marine governance.
- By adopting open-source technology, INCOIS has improved cost efficiency, data transparency, and public access, strengthening India's climate resilience and coastal preparedness.
- The GIS-driven system draws from satellite data, IoT-enabled buoys, and ocean modelling, and is applied in fisheries guidance, marine mapping, and ecosystem monitoring.

SUMMIT's AND MOU's

PM Modi Highlights Global South Agenda at 17th BRICS Summit in Brazil

- On July 6–7, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the 17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he urged reforms in global governance and advocated for developing nations' representation in institutions like the UNSC, IMF, and World Bank.
- Modi took part in bilateral meetings, including with Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, and was greeted by the Indian diaspora with cultural performances like "Operation Sindoor."
- In his plenary speech, Modi criticized double standards in development and security frameworks and called for dismantling outdated "20th-century" global systems that marginalize the Global South.
- He also discussed technology access, climate finance, and AI regulation during economic and tech sessions, and gained BRICS support for India's bid to host COP33 in 2028.
- The summit also marked the entry of Indonesia as a BRICS member, with Modi welcoming the expansion while cautioning against diluting the original cohesion of the bloc.

NATO Adopts Historic 5% GDP Defence Spending Pledge

- At its summit on 24–25 June 2025 in The Hague, NATO members adopted a historic commitment to spend 5% of GDP on defense and security by 2035, the most ambitious target in the alliance's history.
- This includes 3.5% for core defense and 1.5% for broader security sectors, with a review mechanism set for 2029 to ensure progress and accountability.
- The 32-member bloc reaffirmed the Article 5 commitment to mutual defense, while also pledging continued military and industrial support to Ukraine without granting full NATO membership.
- U.S. President Donald Trump played a central role in securing consensus, and despite diplomatic friction, Spain opted out of the 5% pledge, maintaining its target at 2.1%.
- The summit also focused on Middle East tensions, particularly following U.S. strikes on Iranian nuclear sites, and included key bilateral talks such as the Trump–Zelensky meeting.

UN FFD4 Summit in Seville Adopts 'Seville Commitment'

- From June 29 to July 3, 2025, the UN's Fourth Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) was held in Seville, Spain, producing the 38-page Seville Commitment to close the \$4 trillion SDG financing gap.
- The declaration supports debt-for-climate swaps, disaster-linked debt pauses, and solidarity levies such as pollution and wealth taxes to fund sustainable development.
- Over 70 world leaders participated, but the United States notably withdrew over disagreements on climate, gender, and sustainability provisions.
- The summit called for global tax reforms, action against illicit flows, and blended finance mechanisms to incentivize private investment in development.
- There were also renewed demands to reform global financial institutions, including IMF, World Bank, and credit rating systems, to strengthen the voice of the Global South.

G7 Exempts U.S. Firms from Global Minimum Tax Rules

- During the G7 Summit (June 26–28, 2025), member nations agreed to exempt U.S.-based multinationals from the 15% global minimum tax under the OECD's Pillar Two, adopting a "side-by-side" tax system.
- The deal recognizes America's domestic GILTI tax regime as sufficient, thereby shielding U.S. firms from Income Inclusion Rule (IIR) and Undertaxed Profits Rule (UTPR) enforcement abroad.
- In return, the U.S. Treasury—under Secretary Scott Bessent—agreed to drop its controversial Section 899 "revenge tax", aimed at penalizing countries targeting American companies.
- The exemption is estimated to save U.S. corporations \$100 billion over a decade, averting double taxation and retaining U.S. leverage in global tax negotiations.

- Although G7 members endorsed the framework, its global application still depends on approval from all 147 Inclusive Framework nations, leaving room for geopolitical negotiations.

ECONOMY

Bihar to Host First Nuclear Power Plant under SMR Mission

- On 25 June 2025, Union Power Minister Manohar Lal Khattar announced that Bihar would establish its first nuclear power plant under India's Small Modular Reactor (SMR)-based Nuclear Energy Mission.
- SMRs are designed to be compact, cost-efficient, and safer, making them ideal for states like Bihar, which have growing power demands and a history of electricity deficits.
- The project forms part of a ₹20,000 crore budget under the Union Budget 2025–26, aiming to install one nuclear plant in every Indian state, with Bihar being among the first six states selected.
- The Centre also approved a 1,000 MW battery storage project with viability gap funding of ₹18 lakh per MW, and PM Modi laid the foundation for a 500 MWh BESS facility in Siwan on 20 June 2025.
- To address immediate energy needs, the Centre committed to supplying an additional 500 MW to Bihar over six months, while praising the state's reforms such as 8 million smart meters and reduced technical losses.

Sagarmala Finance Corporation Ltd Launched for Maritime Sector

- On June 26–27, 2025, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways launched Sagarmala Finance Corporation Ltd (SMFCL) as India's first maritime-focused NBFC, replacing the Sagarmala Development Company Ltd.
- Registered with the RBI as a Mini-Ratna Category I CPSE on June 19, SMFCL is tasked with closing credit gaps for ports, shipping firms, MSMEs, maritime institutions, and startups.
- It aligns with India's Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, offering financial support for shipbuilding, green energy, digital ports, cruise tourism, and maritime R&D.
- With an initial Tier I capital of ₹680 crore, the corporation aims to raise ₹3,400 crore through borrowing and partnerships, providing flexible term loans.
- Minister Sarbananda Sonowal described it as a response to a long-standing industry demand, empowering maritime stakeholders and supporting India's blue economy and port-led development strategy.

RBI Financial Stability Report Affirms Strong Systemic Resilience

- The RBI Financial Stability Report (June 2025) confirms that India's banking sector remains resilient, with gross NPAs at 2.3%—a multi-decade low—projected to stay under 2.5% through 2027 under normal conditions.
- Capital Adequacy (CRAR) stands at a record 17.2%, with stress tests showing that banks and NBFCs can withstand macroeconomic shocks, ensuring sectoral stability.
- Retail loan delinquencies are rising, especially in credit cards and microfinance, requiring closer monitoring of unsecured consumer credit.
- Household debt is moderate at 41.9% of GDP, with non-housing loans making up 54.9% of the household debt profile.
- The report flags global risks including trade fragmentation, climate volatility, and geopolitical tensions, but maintains a positive GDP outlook of 6.5% (2025–26) and 6.7% (2026–27), supported by low inflation and strong rural output.

Gujarat Becomes Third Indian State with Over 1 Crore Stock Market Investors

- Gujarat crossed the 1-crore investor milestone, becoming the third Indian state after Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh to reach this landmark, according to the National Stock Exchange (NSE).
- The total registered investor base in India reached 11.5 crore by May 2025, with over 11 lakh new additions that month, reversing a four-month decline and indicating renewed retail interest.
- Regionally, North India leads with 4.2 crore investors, followed by West (3.5 crore), South (2.4 crore), and East (1.4 crore), with the highest annual growth seen in North (24%) and East (23%).
- Gujarat's journey from ~20 lakh investors in FY 2015 to 1 crore in 2025 represents a 163% surge since FY 2020, fuelled by digital onboarding, IPO demand, and wealth creation awareness.
- The national growth trend showed India's investor base expanding from 9 crore in Feb 2024 to 11 crore by Jan 2025, though monthly additions dipped in early 2025 before rebounding.