

Weekly Current Affairs 20th September to 26th September 2026

CONTENTS

NATIONAL.....	2
INTERNATIONAL	8
AWARDS AND HONOURS	13
APPOINTMENTS	15
ENVIRONMENT	15
STATIC	16
SPORTS	17



IMPORTANT ONE LINERS

NATIONAL

'Secular, irreligious, or non-religious': How Constituent Assembly debated UCC

In the News: The Constituent Assembly debate on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) has returned to focus after Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated on September 13 that the UCC would be implemented in all 21 NDA-ruled states before 2029. Uttarakhand has already implemented a UCC since January 2025, while UCC-related Bills from Assam, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh are awaiting Presidential approval.

Key Points:

- **Constitutional Position:** Article 44 of the Constitution directs the State to endeavour to secure a Uniform Civil Code throughout India. It forms part of Part IV – Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP). Since DPSPs are non-justiciable, Article 44 cannot be directly enforced by courts but acts as a guiding principle for the State.
- **Draft Article 35 and Constituent Assembly Debate:** The UCC provision was originally contained in Draft Article 35, which was debated on November 23, 1948. Amendments seeking protection for personal laws were moved by Mohamed Ismail Sahib, Naziruddin Ahmad, Mahboob Ali Baig and Pocker Sahib Bahadur. The Assembly ultimately adopted the provision, which later became Article 44.
- **Debate on Secularism:** Syed Hussain Imam distinguished a secular State from an anti-religious or irreligious State and described it as essentially “non-religious”. During the debate, he questioned whether a single uniform civil code was both possible and desirable for a country as vast and diverse as India.
- **K.M. Munshi's Argument:** K.M. Munshi supported the inclusion of the UCC provision and argued that matters such as inheritance, succession and other social relations need not be treated solely as religious matters. He also emphasised that reform of personal laws was linked to improving the legal and social position of women.
- **Dr B.R. Ambedkar's Position:** Dr B.R. Ambedkar observed that India already possessed uniform laws governing many aspects of civil life, while areas such as marriage and succession continued to be governed by different personal laws. He also clarified that a future Parliament could initially make a common civil code voluntary, applying it only to citizens who chose to be governed by it.

Delhi's Chandni Chowk Town Hall to Become Global Heritage Centre

In the News: The Delhi government and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) have signed an MoU to conserve and redevelop the historic Town Hall complex in Chandni Chowk as a Global Heritage Centre. The project seeks to combine heritage conservation with museums, culture and tourism activities.

Key Points:

- **Agencies Involved:** The agreement was signed between the Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (DTTDC) and the MCD. DTTDC will undertake surveys, structural assessment and preparation of the Detailed Project Report for the redevelopment.
- **Heritage Complex:** The project covers the Town Hall, Press Building and adjoining Park, spread across nearly 12,180 square metres in the historic Chandni Chowk-Shahjahanabad area. Ownership of the complex will remain with the MCD.
- **Historical Background:** The Town Hall was constructed during the 1860s and initially housed the Lawrence Institute, including a museum, library and reading room. It later served as the headquarters of Delhi's municipal administration for more than a century.
- **Heritage Status:** The Town Hall complex is classified as a Grade-I heritage property. The redevelopment proposes adaptive reuse, under which the historic architectural identity will be retained while introducing museums, cultural spaces and tourism facilities.

- **Administrative Arrangement:** The initial term of the MoU is 30 years, with provision for extension by another 30 years through mutual agreement. A joint DTTDC-MCD working group will periodically monitor progress of the conservation project.

India's FinTech Ecosystem

In the News: The 7th edition of the Global FinTech Fest (GFF) 2026 was organised in Mumbai from 8–11 September 2026, highlighting India's growing role in global digital finance. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the event on September 8. The fest focused on emerging financial technologies, digital public infrastructure and inclusive finance.

Key Points:

- **Theme of GFF 2026:** The theme was "Potential to Impact: Agentic AI, Tokenisation, Quantum - Trusted, Connected, Global Systems for Inclusive Finance". It focused on the use of Agentic AI, tokenised financial assets and quantum technologies to develop secure and inclusive financial systems.
- **Organising Institutions:** GFF 2026 was principally organised by the **Payments Council of India (PCI), National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and Fintech Convergence Council (FCC)**. Major institutions supporting the event included RBI, SEBI, IFSCA, PFRDA, NITI Aayog and MeitY.
- **India's Digital Public Infrastructure:** India's FinTech ecosystem is supported by the **JAM Trinity—Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile—along with UPI, DigiLocker and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**. As of August 2026, around **59.15 crore Jan Dhan accounts** had been opened, while Aadhaar enrolments had crossed 144 crore by March 2026.
- **UPI Growth:** The **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** is a major pillar of India's digital payment ecosystem. It recorded **24,509 million transactions in August 2026**, while India continued expanding the international reach of UPI-based payment systems.
- **FinTech Regulation:** The **Reserve Bank of India** introduced its Regulatory Sandbox framework in 2019 and the framework for Self-Regulatory Organisation(s) in the FinTech sector in 2024. Cybersecurity, data protection, responsible innovation and consumer protection remain major themes in India's expanding FinTech ecosystem.

Nomadic Elephant 2026 Begins in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh

In the News: The 18th edition of the India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2026 began on 21 September 2026 at the Foreign Training Node in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand. The exercise will continue until 3 October 2026 and involves personnel from the Indian Army and Mongolian Armed Forces.

Key Points:

- **18th Edition:** Nomadic Elephant is an annual platoon-level bilateral military exercise conducted alternately in India and Mongolia. The previous edition was held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, in May-June 2025.
- **Participation:** The Indian Army and Mongolian Armed Forces are represented by 45 personnel each. The exercise aims to improve coordination, interoperability and the exchange of operational best practices between the two forces.
- **Operational Focus:** Training focuses on counter-insurgency operations in semi-urban and mountainous terrain under a United Nations mandate. It also strengthens cooperation in peacekeeping and mountain warfare environments.
- **Major Drills:** Activities include cordon and search operations, room intervention drills, special heliborne operations, cyber-security training, drones and counter-drone systems.
- **India-Mongolia Defence Ties:** Mongolia is an important strategic partner for India under its Act East Policy. Nomadic Elephant is a key component of growing bilateral defence cooperation.

President Amends Inter-State Council Order, 1990

In the News: President Droupadi Murmu issued the Inter-State Council (Amendment) Order, 2026, modifying the Inter-State Council Order, 1990. The amendment specifies circumstances in which Governors and Lieutenant Governors are to be invited to meetings of the Inter-State Council.

Key Points:

- **Constitutional Basis:** The amendment was issued under Article 263 of the Constitution, which empowers the President to establish an Inter-State Council for coordination and discussion of issues involving the Union and States.
- **States under President's Rule:** If a proclamation under Article 356 is in force in a State, the Governor of that State is to be invited to meetings of the Inter-State Council.
- **Delhi Provision:** Where an order under Article 239AB is in force in the National Capital Territory of Delhi, the Lieutenant Governor is to be invited to Council meetings. Article 239AB deals with failure of constitutional machinery in Delhi.
- **Puducherry and Jammu & Kashmir:** The amendment similarly covers Section 51 of the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963 for Puducherry and Section 73 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 for Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Inter-State Council:** The Council was constituted in 1990 following recommendations associated with the Sarkaria Commission. It serves as an important mechanism for Centre-State coordination and cooperative federalism.

India Co-Sponsors Inaugural P4M Summit at UN

In the News: India co-sponsored the inaugural Partners for Multilateralism, International Law, Peace & Prosperity (P4M) Summit held on 21 September 2026 on the sidelines of the 81st UN General Assembly. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called for a more representative, transparent and effective multilateral system.

Key Points:

- **P4M Initiative:** P4M stands for Partners for Multilateralism, International Law, Peace & Prosperity. Its initial co-sponsors include Australia, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, India and Kenya.
- **India's Participation:** External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar co-chaired the inaugural summit and highlighted the need for global institutions to respond more effectively to contemporary geopolitical, economic and developmental challenges.
- **Core Objectives:** The initiative promotes multilateral cooperation, respect for international law, peaceful settlement of disputes and inclusive global prosperity amid increasing geopolitical tensions.
- **Reform of Multilateralism:** India has consistently advocated reforms in global institutions, particularly the United Nations Security Council, to ensure greater representation for developing countries and reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.
- **UN General Assembly:** The summit was held during the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The United Nations was established in 1945 and is headquartered in New York.

How the Supreme Court has strengthened safeguards around arrest — and re-arrest

In the News: The Supreme Court strengthened constitutional protections against unlawful arrest by holding that non-compliance with safeguards under Articles 22(1) and 22(2) can invalidate an arrest. Under the case *Jaskaran Jeet Singh Deol v State of Punjab*, decided on 21 September 2026 by Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and A.S. Chandurkar. It also prescribed additional safeguards before a person released due to an unconstitutional arrest can be re-arrested.

Key Points:

- **Article 22 Safeguards:** Article 22(1) requires an arrested person to be informed of the grounds of arrest, while Article 22(2) requires production before a magistrate within 24 hours, excluding the time necessary for the journey.
- **Written Grounds of Arrest:** The Court reiterated that grounds of arrest should ordinarily be supplied in writing and in a language understood by the arrested person. Failure to comply with this constitutional requirement can render an arrest illegal.
- **Re-Arrest Requires Judicial Scrutiny:** Police cannot automatically re-arrest a person after an earlier arrest has been declared unconstitutional. Investigating agencies must approach the jurisdictional magistrate and explain why fresh custody is necessary.
- **Additional Accountability:** A re-arrest application must explain the earlier violation and carry the endorsement of the immediate superior of the concerned officer. The ruling also strengthens departmental accountability for violations of arrest safeguards.

- **Important Precedents:** Cases such as Pankaj Bansal v. Union of India (2023) and Mihir Rajesh Shah v. State of Maharashtra (2025) have contributed to the evolving jurisprudence on communication of grounds of arrest.

Cyclone Arnab: IMD Predicts Deep Depression Near Andhra-Odisha

In the News: A deep depression over the west-central and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal moved towards the north Andhra Pradesh-south Odisha coast on September 23, 2026. IMD indicated that the system would cross the coast between Visakhapatnam and Gopalpur, close to Kalingapatnam. Although the name “Arnab” was discussed in reports, the system had not intensified into a cyclonic storm and therefore was not formally assigned the name.

Key Points:

- **Landfall Region:** The deep depression crossed the north Andhra Pradesh and adjoining south Odisha coast between Visakhapatnam and Gopalpur, near Kalingapatnam. The system brought heavy to very heavy rainfall to parts of the coastal region and caused rough to very rough sea conditions.
- **Why It Was Not Named ‘Arnab’:** Tropical disturbances over the North Indian Ocean are assigned names only after attaining the intensity of a cyclonic storm. Since the system remained at the deep depression stage, the name “Arnab” was not formally used for it.
- **Origin of the Name Arnab:** “Arnab” was proposed by Bangladesh under the WMO/ESCAP system for naming tropical cyclones over the North Indian Ocean. Thirteen member countries contribute names that are used sequentially for cyclones developing over the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea.
- **Role of IMD:** The India Meteorological Department serves as the Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre for tropical cyclones over the North Indian Ocean. It monitors cyclonic systems and issues forecasts, warnings and advisories for India and neighbouring countries.
- **Cyclone Classification:** Cyclonic disturbances are classified as depression, deep depression, cyclonic storm, severe cyclonic storm and higher categories according to sustained wind speeds. A system receives an official cyclone name only after reaching the cyclonic storm category.

FSSAI Acts Against E-Commerce Food Claims

In the News: The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India initiated penal action against major e-commerce and quick-commerce platforms including Amazon, Flipkart, Swiggy Instamart, BigBasket and Zepto in September 2026. The action was related to alleged misleading claims, non-compliant product information and the online sale or listing of prohibited or potentially harmful food articles.

Key Points:

- **Platforms Covered:** FSSAI's enforcement action covered Amazon, Flipkart, Swiggy Instamart, BigBasket and Zepto. The action was initiated under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and regulations framed under it.
- **Issues Flagged:** The regulator raised concerns regarding misleading food claims, improper product descriptions and the listing of certain prohibited or poisonous articles. Such violations can attract penalties and other enforcement measures under food-safety laws.
- **About FSSAI:** The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India is a statutory body established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. It functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Regulatory Mandate:** FSSAI regulates the manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import of food products in India. It also sets standards relating to food quality, safety, packaging, labelling and permissible claims.
- **Online Food Regulation:** Growth in e-commerce and quick-commerce has increased regulatory scrutiny of online food listings. Platforms are expected to ensure that product labels, claims, expiry details and other mandatory information comply with applicable food-safety rules.

Why is the 2023 Election Commissioner appointment law controversial, and why did SC refer it to CJI?

In the News: A two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court referred petitions challenging the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 to the Chief Justice of

India. The judges differed on whether the matter required consideration by a Constitution Bench but agreed that it should be placed before the CJI.

Key Points:

- **Selection Committee Under the 2023 Act:** The Act provides for a Selection Committee comprising the Prime Minister as Chairperson, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister. The President appoints the CEC and Election Commissioners on the committee's recommendation.
- **Anoop Baranwal Judgment:** In *Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India* in 2 March 2023, a Constitution Bench prescribed an interim selection mechanism consisting of the Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition and Chief Justice of India. The arrangement was to continue until Parliament enacted a law.
- **Reason for Controversy:** The 2023 law replaced the Chief Justice of India in the selection committee with a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister. Petitioners argue that this gives the executive greater influence over appointments to the Election Commission.
- **Reference to the CJI:** The two judges differed on the constitutional issues involved and on whether a larger Bench was necessary. They agreed that the matter should be placed before the Chief Justice of India for appropriate administrative directions regarding the Bench that will hear the case.
- **Relevant Constitutional Provisions:** Article 324 deals with the superintendence, direction and control of elections by the Election Commission of India. Article 145(3) provides that a minimum of five Supreme Court judges must hear a case involving a substantial question of constitutional interpretation.

India-Netherlands Sign MoUs to Advance Gujarat's Kalpasar Project

In the News: India and the Netherlands signed two tripartite Memoranda of Understanding on September 24, 2026, to strengthen technical cooperation and capacity building for Gujarat's Kalpasar Project. The agreements were signed during the 9th India International Water Week 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The collaboration brings together Indian water-sector institutions and leading Dutch technical institutions.

Key Points:

- **Parties to the MoUs:** The agreements involve the Central Water Commission, the Kalpasar Department of the Government of Gujarat, and Dutch institutions Deltares and Delft University of Technology (TU Delft). The cooperation focuses on sharing Dutch expertise in advanced water and coastal engineering.
- **About Kalpasar Project:** The Kalpasar Project envisages creating a large freshwater reservoir across the Gulf of Khambhat in Gujarat. It is designed to utilise runoff from the Sabarmati, Mahi and Dhadhar rivers, supplemented by water conveyed from the Narmada River.
- **Areas of Cooperation:** The partnership covers hydraulic and hydrological modelling, coastal and structural engineering, climate resilience, technical reviews, capacity building and digital applications. Ecological considerations such as fish migration are also part of the cooperation framework.
- **India-Netherlands Water Partnership:** The Kalpasar Project was discussed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Netherlands in May 2026. A Letter of Intent for technical cooperation on the project was signed on May 16, 2026.
- **Dutch Afsluitdijk Model:** The Kalpasar concept has parallels with the Netherlands' Afsluitdijk, a major dam and causeway used for flood protection and freshwater management. The Dutch experience in dyke technologies, sluice systems and coastal infrastructure is expected to support the Gujarat project.

Maharashtra Declares Drought in 265 Talukas, Announces 12-Point Relief Package

In the News: The Maharashtra government declared drought in 265 of the state's 358 talukas after deficient monsoon rainfall and prolonged dry spells during the 2026 Kharif season. The declaration covers around 74% of the state and affects several districts across Marathwada, Vidarbha, North Maharashtra, Pune division and Konkan. The government also announced a 12-point relief package for farmers, students and rural households.

Key Points:

- **Drought Declaration:** Maharashtra activated drought measures in 265 talukas across 32 districts. The declaration was made after reports of rainfall deficit, crop stress and prolonged dry spells from June onwards. The decision allows the administration to begin formal relief and assessment procedures.
- **Trigger-1 Framework:** The declaration was made under Trigger-1 of the Drought Management Code, 2016. Trigger-1 is linked with rainfall deficiency and a dry spell of at least 21 days during the monsoon. It is the first stage used for identifying drought-like conditions and starting relief action.
- **Relief Measures:** The 12-point package includes restructuring of crop loans, land revenue concessions and deferment of recovery of agricultural loans. It also includes concessions on electricity bills for agricultural pumps and protection from disconnection in scarcity-hit villages.
- **Support for People and Livestock:** The relief plan includes water tankers, drinking-water arrangements, fodder availability and foodgrain support for farmers and agricultural labourers. Examination fees for school and college students in affected areas have also been waived.
- **Crop-Loss Assessment:** District collectors have been directed to conduct panchnamas and document crop damage using photographs and GPS coordinates. Financial assistance for crop losses will be decided after the field assessment is completed.

Centre Notifies Kandla, JNPA, Paradip and Mundra as Mega Ports

In the News: The Centre notified Deendayal Port at Kandla, Jawaharlal Nehru Port at Nhava Sheva, Paradip Port and Mundra Port as mega ports. The notification was issued by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways under the Indian Ports Act, 2025. This marks the first formal classification of ports as “mega ports” under the new legal framework.

Key Points:

- **Ports Notified:** The four notified mega ports are Deendayal Port, Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Paradip Port and Mundra Port. Deendayal, JNPA and Paradip are major ports, while Mundra is a non-major port. Their inclusion reflects cargo-handling capacity and strategic importance.
- **Legal Basis:** The notification was issued under Section 73 of the Indian Ports Act, 2025. The Act provides a framework for classification, regulation and coordinated development of ports. It also supports modernisation of India's port governance structure.
- **Strategic Role:** Mega ports are expected to support large-scale cargo movement, international trade and logistics efficiency. Such ports can function as major maritime hubs for container, bulk and other cargo operations. They are also important for India's export-import supply chains.
- **Port Network Context:** India has 12 major ports and more than 200 non-major ports. The new classification creates a separate category for ports with high capacity and national trade relevance. It also supports hub-and-spoke port development.
- **Maritime Economy Link:** The move is linked with India's aim to improve port-led development, coastal shipping and logistics competitiveness. Better port capacity can reduce turnaround time, improve freight movement and strengthen India's maritime trade infrastructure.

AFSPA Extended in Parts of Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh

In the News: The Centre extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 in specified areas of Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. The extension will remain in force for six months from October 1, unless withdrawn earlier. The decision was taken after a review of the law-and-order situation in the affected areas.

Key Points:

- **AFSPA Extension:** AFSPA has been extended in notified areas of the three North-Eastern states. The Act gives special powers to armed forces in areas declared as “disturbed areas.” Such notifications are reviewed periodically by the government.
- **Manipur Coverage:** In Manipur, the disturbed area declaration has been extended across the state, except areas under 13 police stations in five districts. This means AFSPA will continue to apply only in notified areas and not uniformly in all police-station jurisdictions.

- **Nagaland Coverage:** In Nagaland, AFSPA has been extended in nine districts, including Dimapur, Niuland, Chumoukedima, Mon, Kiphire, Noklak, Phek, Peren and Meluri. The notification also reflects continued security review in border and insurgency-affected areas.
- **Arunachal Pradesh Coverage:** In Arunachal Pradesh, AFSPA generally applies to specified districts and police-station areas bordering Assam, Nagaland and Myanmar. These areas are periodically notified based on security assessment and administrative review.

INTERNATIONAL

SLINEX-26: India and Sri Lanka Begin Naval Exercise

In the News: India and Sri Lanka are conducting the 13th edition of the bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-26 at Visakhapatnam from September 17 to 21, 2026. The exercise comprises a Harbour Phase followed by a Sea Phase and focuses on maritime cooperation and interoperability.

Key Points:

- **Participating Ships:** The Indian Navy is represented by INS Kavaratti, an indigenous Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette, and INS Jyoti, a Fleet Tanker. The Sri Lanka Navy is represented by SLNS Sindurala.
- **Exercise Structure:** SLINEX-26 began with a Harbour Phase under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command, followed by a Sea Phase. The harbour component includes professional exchanges, cross-deck visits and sharing of operational practices.
- **Sea Phase:** Activities at sea are designed to improve operational synergy and interoperability between the two navies. Such exercises help personnel practise coordinated maritime operations and strengthen communication between participating units.
- **Background of SLINEX:** The bilateral exercise was conceptualised in 2005 and has developed into an important platform for maritime engagement between India and Sri Lanka. It promotes mutual understanding and naval cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.
- **MAHASAGAR Vision:** SLINEX-26 has been linked with India's MAHASAGAR vision, which stands for Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions. The framework emphasises a secure, stable and inclusive maritime environment.

Angh: Nagaland Film Wins Platform Prize at TIFF 2026

In the News: Nagaland-based film **Angh**, directed by filmmaker **Theja Rio**, won the prestigious **Platform Prize at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) 2026**. The award gives the non-English-language film a pathway to eligibility for consideration in the **2027 Academy Awards' Best International Feature Film category**.

Key Points:

- **Film and Director:** *Angh* is the **feature directorial debut of Theja Rio**, a filmmaker from Nagaland. It became the only Indian film selected for TIFF 2026's Platform Competition, which featured 12 films and showcases distinctive directorial voices.
- **Story and Setting:** The film is set in **1960s Nagaland** and follows an ageing **Konyak village chief and his son** as their traditional society undergoes cultural and religious transformation. It explores themes such as tradition, family, memory, identity and cultural change.
- **Platform Prize:** TIFF's Platform programme is its major **juried competitive section**, designed to recognise filmmakers with bold and distinctive cinematic visions. *Angh* received a **C\$20,000 cash award and a trophy** along with the Platform Prize.
- **Oscar Eligibility:** Beginning with the 2026 Platform Prize, a winning eligible non-English-language film receives a **direct pathway to eligibility for consideration** for the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film. Thus, *Angh* entered the eligibility process for the **2027 Oscars**.
- **About TIFF:** **TIFF stands for Toronto International Film Festival** and is held in Toronto, Canada. The Platform Prize is associated with films demonstrating distinctive directorial vision and is one of the notable competitive honours presented at the festival.

WWF Global Conservation Conference Inaugurated in Jaipur

In the News: Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister **Bhupender Yadav** inaugurated the **WWF Global Conservation Conference in Jaipur, Rajasthan, on 21 September 2026**. Representatives from more than **100 countries** participated, with discussions focusing on conservation, coexistence and the involvement of local communities.

Key Points:

- **Conference and Organisation:** The conference was organised by the **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)**, an international conservation organisation. The Jaipur conference brought together conservation experts and representatives from more than 100 countries to discuss global biodiversity and wildlife-conservation challenges.
- **Conservation with Communities:** A major theme of the conference was the need to involve **local communities in conservation and human-wildlife coexistence**. The discussions stressed landscape-level conservation and protection of grasslands, forests and wetlands rather than focusing only on individual species.
- **Expansion of Protected Areas:** According to figures cited at the conference, India's number of **protected areas increased from around 750 to more than 1,000** over the previous decade. Tiger reserves increased from **47 to 58**, while elephant reserves rose from **30 to 33**.
- **Ramsar and Global Conventions:** The number of India's **Ramsar Sites increased from 24 to 101** over the period cited at the conference. India is also a party to important environmental agreements including **CITES, CMS, CBD and the Ramsar Convention**.
- **Rajasthan Conservation Initiatives:** The conference highlighted Rajasthan's **Great Indian Bustard conservation-breeding programme** and community-led protection of traditional sacred groves known as **Orans**. These efforts were cited as examples of species protection combined with community participation and land-restoration measures.

US, Denmark and Greenland Sign Defence Pact

In the News: The United States, Denmark and Greenland signed a trilateral security agreement on 22 September 2026 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The agreement expands defence cooperation in Greenland while recognising the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Denmark and the right of Greenlanders to self-determination.

Key Points:

- **Signatories:** The pact was signed by US President Donald Trump, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Greenland Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen. It focuses on security in the Arctic and North Atlantic region.
- **Expanded US Presence:** The agreement provides scope for an expanded American military presence in Greenland, including additional defence infrastructure and upgrades linked to the strategically important Arctic region.
- **Sovereignty Retained:** Greenland remains part of the Kingdom of Denmark. The agreement recognises Denmark's sovereignty and territorial integrity while affirming the right of Greenlanders to self-determination.
- **Strategic Importance:** Greenland lies between the Arctic and North Atlantic and occupies an important position along possible military and missile routes between North America, Europe and Russia. The US operates Pituffik Space Base in Greenland.
- **NATO Dimension:** The agreement is linked to wider NATO security cooperation and aims to strengthen the defence of the Arctic region. It is subject to the necessary domestic and parliamentary procedures before entering into force.

India-EU FTA: Copyright Concerns

In the News: Copyright provisions in the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement have drawn attention over their possible implications for India's existing copyright exceptions related to education, research, libraries and digital intermediaries. The Intellectual Property chapter has therefore become an important area of discussion.

Key Points:

- **India-EU FTA:** Negotiations on the trade agreement concluded in January 2026. Its Intellectual Property chapter covers copyright, trademarks, geographical indications, designs, undisclosed information and enforcement provisions.
- **Copyright Act, 1957:** Concerns centre on whether some FTA provisions could affect safeguards available under India's Copyright Act, 1957, particularly those related to education, research, archives and certain digital activities.
- **Section 52:** Section 52 of the Copyright Act lists acts that are not treated as copyright infringement. These include specified forms of fair dealing and certain uses for education, research and transient electronic storage.
- **Section 65A:** Section 65A deals with technological protection measures, commonly associated with digital locks or Digital Rights Management. It also contains protections for certain lawful uses and specified activities.
- **Government Position:** The Government of India has stated that the FTA's intellectual property provisions are consistent with India's existing IP regime and on January 29, the government released an FAQ saying the IP chapter does not require India to amend its IP laws.

Lonely Planet Best in Travel 2027: Gujarat and Darjeeling Railway Make India's Mark

In the News: Lonely Planet's *Best in Travel 2027* list included two Indian selections. Gujarat featured among the destinations recommended for travel in 2027, while a journey on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway was included among notable travel experiences. The annual selection highlights destinations and experiences from across the world.

Key Points:

- **Gujarat's Selection:** Gujarat was highlighted for its combination of natural landscapes, cultural heritage and wildlife. Major attractions include the Rann of Kutch, historic cities, traditional crafts, extensive coastline and the Gir landscape associated with Asiatic lions.
- **Darjeeling Himalayan Railway:** The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway connects New Jalpaiguri with Darjeeling in West Bengal. Popularly known as the "Toy Train", it is a narrow-gauge mountain railway noted for loops, zigzags and steep gradients.
- **UNESCO Recognition:** The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1999. It was later grouped with the Nilgiri Mountain Railway and Kalka-Shimla Railway under the collective World Heritage property called the Mountain Railways of India.
- **Rann of Kutch:** The Rann of Kutch is a vast salt-marsh region in Gujarat and is broadly divided into the Great Rann and Little Rann. The area is known for the Rann Utsav, traditional Kutchi crafts and important wildlife habitats.
- **About Best in Travel:** Lonely Planet publishes its *Best in Travel* selections annually to highlight noteworthy destinations and travel experiences for the following year. The list generally focuses on cultural experiences, natural attractions and emerging travel destinations.

US, Denmark and Greenland Sign New Arctic Defense Agreement

In the News: The United States, Denmark and Greenland signed a new Arctic security agreement in September 2026. The agreement supplements the 1951 Defense Agreement concerning Greenland and provides a framework for expanded US defence activities and infrastructure in the strategically important Arctic territory.

Key Points:

- **Expansion of US Defence Presence:** The agreement provides for modernisation and expansion of US defence-related operations at Pituffik Space Base. It also allows for additional defence facilities in Greenland under arrangements agreed by the parties.
- **1951 Defense Agreement:** The 1951 agreement between the United States and Denmark established the legal basis for US military activities in Greenland. It was concluded in the context of NATO and Cold War security requirements.
- **Pituffik Space Base:** Pituffik Space Base, formerly known as Thule Air Base, is located in northwestern Greenland. It plays an important role in missile warning, space surveillance and Arctic defence operations.
- **Greenland's Political Status:** Greenland is a self-governing territory within the Kingdom of Denmark. It exercises extensive domestic autonomy, while Denmark retains responsibility in areas such as foreign affairs and defence, subject to Greenland's growing role in matters directly affecting it.

Partners for Multilateralism Summit and V4+India

In the News: India participated in the inaugural Partners for Multilateralism, International Law, Peace and Prosperity Summit held on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2026. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also participated in the first V4+India Foreign Ministers' Meeting during the same UNGA session.

Key Points:

- **Partners for Multilateralism:** The initiative was launched with countries and regional actors including Australia, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, India and Kenya. It seeks to strengthen multilateral cooperation centred on international law and the United Nations system.
- **Major Areas of Cooperation:** The initiative covers reform of multilateral institutions, climate change, artificial intelligence, global health, supply chains, digital transformation and international financial architecture.
- **About the Visegrad Group:** The Visegrad Group, or V4, consists of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. It is a regional cooperation platform among four Central European countries and traces its origins to cooperation initiated in 1991.
- **V4+India Meeting:** The first V4+India Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in New York during the UN General Assembly session. Discussions focused on strengthening India's engagement with the Visegrad countries in areas including trade, technology, connectivity and international affairs.
- **India and Multilateral Platforms:** India participates in several multilateral and plurilateral forums such as the United Nations, G20, BRICS and SCO. India has also consistently supported reforms in global institutions to reflect contemporary geopolitical and economic realities.

G20 Nations Adopt 4 Consensus Outcomes on Energy, Water and Critical Minerals

In the News: G20 nations adopted four consensus outcomes at the G20 Energy Abundance Ministerial held in Houston, Texas. The outcomes focused on energy access, infrastructure development, water resilience and critical-mineral supply-chain security. The meeting highlighted the importance of affordable energy, reliable infrastructure and secure mineral value chains.

Key Points:

- **Four Consensus Outcomes:** The G20 outcomes covered household energy access, infrastructure permitting, water reuse and critical-mineral supply chains. These areas are linked with energy security, industrial growth and climate-resilient development. The outcomes were consensus-based and non-binding in nature.
- **Energy Access Focus:** One outcome focused on expanding access to affordable and reliable energy. It highlighted the role of secure energy systems in supporting households, industries and essential services. Energy access remains a major development priority for emerging economies.
- **Water Resilience:** The ministerial also focused on water reuse and water resilience. Water recycling and efficient water use can reduce pressure on freshwater resources. This is important for drought-prone areas, industries, agriculture and urban infrastructure.
- **Critical Minerals:** Critical minerals were highlighted as essential for clean energy, digital infrastructure, batteries, electric vehicles and advanced manufacturing. The G20 outcome called for stronger and more diversified mineral supply chains. Such cooperation is important because many minerals are concentrated in limited geographies.
- **Infrastructure and Regulation:** The outcomes also covered faster and more predictable permitting and regulatory systems for infrastructure projects. Efficient approvals can support energy projects, transmission networks, mining infrastructure and industrial investment.

What is 'enemy state' in UN Charter, which Japan wants removed

In the News: Japan renewed its call for removing the "enemy state" references from the United Nations Charter during the 81st UN General Assembly. Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said that the Charter should be reviewed as it still contains post-Second World War language. The issue has again brought attention to Articles 53, 77 and 107 of the UN Charter.

Key Points:

- **Meaning of Enemy State:** The term “enemy state” in the UN Charter refers to a state that was an enemy of any signatory of the Charter during the Second World War. The expression was inserted in the post-war context of 1945. It is now widely seen as an outdated reference in the Charter framework.
- **Relevant Articles:** The phrase appears in connection with Articles 53, 77 and 107 of the UN Charter. Article 53 deals with regional arrangements and enforcement action, while Article 107 relates to action taken after the Second World War. Article 77 contains a trusteeship-related reference.
- **Japan’s Position:** Japan has argued that the reference should be deleted because it no longer reflects present international realities. Japan has stated that it has contributed to international peace and the rule-based order after the Second World War. The demand is also linked with wider UN reform discussions.
- **UN Reform Context:** A 2005 UN General Assembly resolution had expressed the resolve to delete references to “enemy States” from the Charter. However, formal Charter amendment requires approval by two-thirds of the General Assembly and ratification by two-thirds of UN member states, including all five permanent members of the Security Council.

Indian Coast Guard Joins QUAD-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission

In the News: Indian Coast Guard Ship Shaunak sailed from Chennai for Perth, Australia, on September 25, 2026, under the QUAD-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission. The initiative brings together maritime personnel from India, Australia, Japan and the United States. It aims to improve professional cooperation, coordination and interoperability among the four Quad countries.

Key Points:

- **ICGS Shaunak Mission:** ICG Ship Shaunak is carrying personnel participating in professional shipboard exchanges during its voyage to Perth. The mission represents an important maritime engagement involving the coast guard and related services of the Quad partners.
- **Sea Riders Participation:** Six Sea Riders are participating in the mission, comprising two officers each from India and Japan and one officer each from Australia and the United States. They will take part in operational activities and professional exchanges aboard the vessel.
- **QUAD Membership:** The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue consists of India, Australia, Japan and the United States. Its cooperation covers areas such as maritime security, disaster response, critical technologies, infrastructure, health and Indo-Pacific connectivity.
- **May 2026 Joint Statement:** The observer mission is aligned with the Quad Foreign Ministers’ Joint Statement of May 26, 2026. The initiative supports cooperation for a free, open, inclusive and rules-based maritime order in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **MAHASAGAR Vision:** The mission also reflects India’s MAHASAGAR vision, which stands for “Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions.” It expands India’s earlier SAGAR approach towards wider regional maritime cooperation.

Oxford Global Cities Index 2026: Delhi Ranks 268th Among 1,000 Cities

In the News: Delhi ranked 268th among 1,000 cities in the Oxford Economics Global Cities Index 2026. It emerged as the highest-ranked Indian city in the index. The index evaluates major cities across economic strength, human capital, quality of life, environment and governance.

Key Points:

- **Delhi’s Rank:** Delhi secured the 268th position globally in the 2026 index. It was the highest-ranked Indian city among the 1,000 cities assessed. The ranking shows Delhi’s economic and human-capital strengths along with challenges in infrastructure and quality of life.
- **Other Indian Cities:** Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune also featured among the leading Indian cities in the index. Bengaluru ranked 311th and Mumbai ranked 330th. Indian cities performed strongly in growth potential but remained outside the overall global top 100.

- **About the Index:** The Oxford Economics Global Cities Index is a city-level ranking system. It assesses cities across five broad categories: Economics, Human Capital, Quality of Life, Environment and Governance. These indicators help compare urban competitiveness and liveability.
- **Urban Growth Context:** Several Indian cities are projected to become major contributors to future global urban economic growth. However, rapid urbanisation also creates pressure on housing, transport, pollution control and public services.

India Ranks 31st in WEF Travel & Tourism Development Index 2026

In the News: India ranked 31st among 110 economies in the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index 2026. The index was topped by Japan, followed by the United States, Spain, Australia and France. India improved its position due to cultural resources, cost competitiveness, connectivity and tourism infrastructure.

Key Points:

- **India's Rank:** India secured the 31st position in the 2026 index. It improved from its 2024 position and became one of the notable emerging tourism economies. The improvement reflects stronger tourism conditions after the pandemic period.
- **About TTDI:** The Travel & Tourism Development Index is released by the World Economic Forum. It measures conditions that support sustainable and resilient tourism development. It does not rank countries only on tourist arrivals or revenue.
- **Index Framework:** TTDI uses pillars related to enabling environment, tourism policy, infrastructure, resources and sustainability. It includes factors such as safety, health, digital readiness, air connectivity, price competitiveness and cultural resources.
- **India's Strengths:** India benefits from rich cultural heritage, natural attractions, competitive travel costs and growing tourism infrastructure. India is also among the countries with a large number of UNESCO World Heritage cultural sites.
- **Areas of Concern:** The index also points to gaps in tourist services, supporting infrastructure and environmental sustainability. These areas are important for long-term tourism competitiveness and better visitor experience.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Booker Prize 2026 Shortlist: Six Novels, Authors and Key Facts

In the News: The Booker Prize 2026 shortlist comprising six novels was announced in September 2026. The six books were selected from a 13-title longlist drawn from 163 submissions. The judging panel for the 2026 edition was chaired by classicist and writer Mary Beard.

Key Points:

- **Shortlisted Novels:** The six shortlisted titles are *The End of Everything* by M. John Harrison, *The Disappears* by Marlon James, *Black Bag* by Luke Kennard, *May We Feed the King* by Rebecca Perry, *The Things We Never Say* by Elizabeth Strout and *John of John* by Douglas Stuart.
- **Former Booker Winners:** Marlon James previously won the Booker Prize in 2015 for *A Brief History of Seven Killings*. Douglas Stuart won the 2020 Booker Prize for his debut novel *Shuggie Bain*.
- **Judging Panel:** Mary Beard chairs the 2026 judging panel. Other members include Raymond Antrobus, Jarvis Cocker, Rebecca Liu and Patricia Lockwood, representing backgrounds in literature, poetry, journalism and music.
- **Eligibility:** The Booker Prize is awarded annually for a work of long-form fiction written in English and published in the United Kingdom and/or Ireland within the specified eligibility period. Authors of any nationality may compete if the publication requirements are satisfied.
- **Prize Money:** The winner of the Booker Prize receives £50,000. Each shortlisted author also receives recognition and a monetary award, while the winning title typically gains significant international readership and publishing attention.

Shantanu Moitra to Receive National Lata Mangeshkar Award 2026 in Indore

In the News: Music composer Shantanu Moitra has been selected for the National Lata Mangeshkar Award 2026. The award ceremony will be held in Indore on September 28, the birth anniversary of Lata Mangeshkar. The honour recognises his contribution to music direction in Indian cinema.

Key Points:

- **Award Recipient:** Shantanu Moitra will receive the National Lata Mangeshkar Award 2026 for music direction. He is known for composing music for several acclaimed Hindi films. His work is associated with melody-driven film music and background scores.
- **Award Ceremony:** The ceremony will be held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, on September 28. The date marks the birth anniversary of legendary playback singer Lata Mangeshkar. Indore is also important because Lata Mangeshkar was born there in 1929.
- **About the Award:** The National Lata Mangeshkar Award was instituted by the Madhya Pradesh government in 1984. It honours major contributions to Indian music. The award alternates between the fields of music direction and playback singing.
- **Notable Works:** Shantanu Moitra's well-known film scores include Parineeta, Lage Raho Munna Bhai, 3 Idiots, Piku and 12th Fail. His compositions are recognised for combining classical, folk and contemporary musical styles.
- **Cultural Importance:** The award preserves the legacy of Lata Mangeshkar and recognises excellence in Indian music. It also strengthens Madhya Pradesh's association with major national-level cultural honours.

Mizoram Woman Farmer to Receive FAO 100 Women Heroes Award

In the News: Z. T. Lalrithangi, a woman farmer from Mizoram, has been selected among FAO's "100 Women Heroes in Agrifood Systems and Rural Development." She is a strawberry grower from Sangau village in Lawngtlai district. The recognition is part of the International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026.

Key Points:

- **Award Recipient:** Z. T. Lalrithangi, popularly known as Pi Mari-i, has been selected for the FAO 100 Women Heroes recognition. She belongs to Sangau village in south Mizoram's Lawngtlai district. Her recognition highlights women's contribution to rural livelihoods and agrifood systems.
- **Agricultural Work:** Lalrithangi is known for strawberry cultivation in Mizoram. Her work has helped promote horticulture-based livelihood opportunities in the region. She has also worked with agricultural institutions for value addition such as strawberry juice production.
- **FAO Recognition:** The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is recognising women contributors in agrifood systems and rural development. The initiative is linked with the International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026. It highlights women farmers' role in food security and rural economies.
- **Mizoram Context:** Mizoram's hilly terrain gives scope for horticulture, fruits and high-value crops. Recognition of a farmer from Lawngtlai district shows the role of local innovation in improving incomes. It also draws attention to women-led farming in the Northeast.
- **Previous Recognition:** Lalrithangi was earlier recognised as Lawngtlai district's best farmer at Horti Fair, Mizoram 2026. Her selection by FAO gives international visibility to her work. It also supports wider recognition of women farmers in Indian agriculture.

Roxy Mathew Koll and Neelima Satyam Receive AGU 2026 Honours

In the News: Indian scientists Roxy Mathew Koll and Neelima Satyam have been selected for major honours of the American Geophysical Union for 2026. Koll will receive the Pavel S. Molchanov Climate Communications Prize, while Satyam has been selected for the Devendra Lal Memorial Medal. The honourees will be recognised during AGU26 in San Francisco in December 2026.

Key Points:

- **Roxy Mathew Koll:** Koll is a climate scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and works extensively on the Indian Ocean, monsoon variability and climate extremes. He has been selected for the Pavel S. Molchanov Climate Communications Prize for communicating climate science to wider audiences.
- **Neelima Satyam:** Prof. Neelima Satyam is associated with the Department of Civil Engineering at IIT Indore and specialises in geotechnical engineering and natural hazards. She has been selected for the 2026 Devendra Lal Memorial Medal for contributions to Earth and space sciences.
- **About AGU:** The American Geophysical Union is an international scientific organisation devoted to Earth and space sciences. Its work spans atmospheric sciences, oceans, hydrology, seismology, natural hazards, planetary science and related interdisciplinary fields.
- **AGU26 Meeting:** The 2026 AGU honourees will be celebrated at AGU26 in San Francisco, California, in December. The theme of the 2026 annual meeting is "Where Science Connects."
- **Devendra Lal Connection:** The Devendra Lal Memorial Medal is named after renowned Indian geophysicist Devendra Lal. It recognises outstanding research contributions by scientists working in developing countries in areas connected with Earth and space sciences.

APPOINTMENTS

Mandeep K Bhandari Appointed New CBSE Chairperson

In the News: Senior IAS officer Mandeep K. Bhandari was appointed Chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education on September 25, 2026. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved his appointment as part of a wider senior-level administrative reshuffle. He will hold the post in the rank and pay of an Additional Secretary to the Government of India.

Key Points:

- **Administrative Background:** Mandeep K. Bhandari is a 2001-batch Indian Administrative Service officer of the AGMUT cadre. Before his new appointment, he served as Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Appointment Authority:** His appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. The CBSE Chairperson's post has been temporarily upgraded to the rank and pay of Additional Secretary to the Government of India.
- **About CBSE:** The Central Board of Secondary Education is a national-level school education board functioning under the Ministry of Education. It conducts major public examinations for Classes X and XII and affiliates schools in India and abroad.
- **Recent Leadership Changes:** Bhandari succeeds the arrangement under which Lokhande Prashant Sitaram had been handling responsibilities after earlier changes in CBSE leadership. The board witnessed multiple leadership changes during 2026.
- **Key Institutional Areas:** CBSE's responsibilities include school affiliation, curriculum implementation, examination administration, assessment reforms and academic standards. The board has also been expanding the use of digital systems in examination and evaluation processes.

ENVIRONMENT

6th Cycle of Tiger Reserve Evaluation Launched

In the News: The Union Environment Minister launched the inception workshop for the 6th cycle of Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves in India. The Technical Manual for MEE-TR 2026 was also released. The evaluation will cover all 58 tiger reserves in the country.

Key Points:

- **About MEE-TR:** Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves is a structured assessment of how effectively tiger reserves are managed. It examines planning, protection, habitat management, resources, monitoring systems and conservation outcomes.
- **6th Evaluation Cycle:** The 6th cycle will cover all 58 tiger reserves in India. It is being conducted to review reserve management and identify gaps in conservation practices. The exercise helps strengthen accountability in tiger reserve administration.
- **Institutions Involved:** The evaluation is organised by the National Tiger Conservation Authority in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India. NTCA provides statutory and technical guidance for tiger conservation and Project Tiger implementation.
- **New Assessment Focus:** The 2026 cycle includes updated criteria and places emphasis on issues such as solid waste management inside tiger reserves. This reflects the need to manage tourism pressure, habitat quality and ecological health together.

STATIC

Bhikaji Cama Birth Anniversary: Life, Contributions and Key Facts on the Flag of 1907

In the News: The birth anniversary of Bhikaji Cama was observed on September 24. She was one of the prominent women revolutionaries of India's freedom movement and is remembered for raising an early version of the Indian flag on foreign soil. Her 1907 flag-unfurling at Stuttgart remains an important episode in the history of Indian nationalism.

Key Points:

- **Birth and Early Life:** Bhikaji Rustom Cama was born on September 24, 1861, in Bombay. She belonged to a Parsi family and later became deeply involved in India's freedom struggle. She spent a major part of her political life in Europe.
- **Role in Freedom Movement:** Cama worked with Indian nationalists abroad and supported anti-colonial activities from London and Paris. She was associated with leaders such as Dadabhai Naoroji and other Indian revolutionaries. Her work helped internationalise the cause of Indian independence.
- **Flag of 1907:** Bhikaji Cama unfurled an early version of the Indian flag at the International Socialist Conference in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1907. This was one of the first occasions when an Indian flag was raised on foreign soil. The act symbolised India's demand for freedom before an international audience.
- **Features of the Flag:** The 1907 flag was a tricolour associated with India's nationalist aspirations. It carried the words "Vande Mataram" and included symbolic representations connected with India's provinces and communities. It was different from the present National Flag adopted in 1947.
- **Legacy:** Bhikaji Cama is remembered as a pioneering woman nationalist, international campaigner and symbol of political courage. Her contribution is important in the study of revolutionary nationalism, the Indian diaspora's role in the freedom movement and the evolution of India's national symbols.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Birth Anniversary 2026

In the News: India observed the 110th birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya on September 25, 2026. The Prime Minister and Vice-President paid tributes to him and recalled his ideas of Antyodaya and Integral Humanism. He was born on September 25, 1916, and was an influential political thinker and organiser in post-independence India.

Key Points:

- **Life and Background:** Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was born on September 25, 1916, and died on February 11, 1968. He was a writer, organiser and political thinker associated prominently with the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.
- **Integral Humanism:** Upadhyaya is associated with the philosophy of "Integral Humanism" or Ekatma Manav Darshan. The philosophy sought to view human development through an integrated relationship between the individual, society, economy and wider social institutions.
- **Concept of Antyodaya:** Antyodaya refers to the upliftment and welfare of the person at the lowest or most disadvantaged level of society. The concept later became associated with several welfare and development initiatives of the Government of India.

- **Deendayal Port:** Kandla Port in Gujarat was renamed Deendayal Port in 2017. The Union Cabinet approved the renaming as part of commemorations associated with Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.
- **Birth and Death Dates:** Upadhyaya was born on September 25, 1916, and died on February 11, 1968. September 25 is observed annually through commemorative programmes, while February 11 marks his death anniversary.

SPORTS

Asian Games 2026 Opening Ceremony: Time, Venue, Flag-Bearers & Mascot

In the News: The 20th Asian Games formally opened on September 19, 2026, in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. The opening ceremony was held at the Nagoya City Mizuho Park Athletic Stadium, beginning at 6:00 PM JST or 2:30 PM IST.

Key Points:

- **Edition and Schedule:** Aichi-Nagoya is hosting the 20th Asian Games, scheduled from September 19 to October 4, 2026. The programme features 43 sports, with athletes from National Olympic Committees across Asia participating.
- **Opening Ceremony Venue:** The ceremony took place at the Nagoya City Mizuho Park Athletic Stadium, also known as Paloma Mizuho Stadium. It began at 6 PM local time, corresponding to 2:30 PM in India.
- **India's Flag-Bearers:** Shooter Manu Bhaker and kabaddi player Pawan Sehrawat carried the Indian flag at the ceremony. Sehrawat replaced shot-putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor, who could not participate in the ceremony following an issue involving his official kit.
- **Official Mascot:** The official mascot is HONOHON, inspired by the athletes' fiery passion and the Shachihoko, a cultural symbol associated with Aichi-Nagoya. Its name is derived from a Japanese expression connected with a rising flame.
- **Slogan and Host History:** The Games use the official slogan "IMAGINE ONE ASIA." Japan previously hosted the Asian Games in Tokyo in 1958 and Hiroshima in 1994, making Aichi-Nagoya another major chapter in the country's Asian Games history.

Savita Punia Becomes India's Most-Capped Women's Hockey Player

In the News: Veteran Indian goalkeeper **Savita** became the **most-capped player in the history of Indian women's hockey** on 21 September 2026. She achieved the milestone during India's Pool B match against Indonesia at the **Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games in Japan**, reaching 321 senior international appearances.

Key Points:

- **Record Achievement:** Savita registered her **321st senior international appearance** against Indonesia, surpassing former Indian striker **Vandana Katariya's record of 320 caps**. She had equalled Vandana's record a day earlier during India's 19-0 victory against Uzbekistan.
- **Career Beginning:** Savita made her **senior international debut in 2009** and developed into one of India's leading hockey goalkeepers. Known as the **"Wall of India"**, she represented the country at multiple Olympic Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and international hockey tournaments.
- **Major Milestone:** She completed her **300th international cap in February 2025** during an FIH Hockey Pro League match against the Netherlands. She became only the second Indian woman after Vandana Katariya, and the second Indian goalkeeper after **P.R. Sreejesh**, to reach 300 international appearances.
- **Major Achievements:** Savita was vice-captain of the Indian team that finished **fourth at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics** and captained India to bronze at the **2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games**. She also led India to the inaugural **FIH Nations Cup title in 2022**.
- **Awards and Recognition:** Savita has been named **FIH Goalkeeper of the Year three times** and received the **Arjuna Award in 2018** and **Padma Shri in 2025**. Hockey India announced a **₹10 lakh cash reward** after she became India's most-capped women's hockey player.