

Weekly Current Affairs 27th September to 3rd October 2026

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IMPORTANT ONE LINERS

NATIONAL

Election Commission's nine new decisions

In the News: The Election Commission of India (ECI) announced nine administrative and procedural decisions after a meeting on September 26, 2026. The measures address issues relating to Commission meetings, electoral-roll IT systems, official travel and directions to officers. However, some questions concerning Form 6 and electoral-roll appeals remain unaffected by the new decisions.

Key Points:

- **Commission Meetings:** Agendas for meetings of the Election Commission will now be circulated before each meeting, while formal minutes will be issued afterwards. This establishes a documented procedure for deliberations involving the Chief Election Commissioner and the two Election Commissioners.
- **ECINet Review:** The Commission decided that ECINet, its integrated digital platform for election-related services, will be reviewed by a committee headed by a senior Deputy Election Commissioner. The committee will also include an independent expert from an IIT or IIIT.
- **New IT Systems:** New IT modules and portals relating to election administration will first be examined by a committee of officers before being placed before the full Commission. Field election officials will also be provided greater system flexibility where operationally required.
- **Administrative Decisions:** Foreign visits by Election Commission officers will require the Commission's approval. The ECI also stated that directions issued by Election Commissioners to officers should be complied with according to the prescribed institutional process.
- **What Remains Unchanged:** The announcement did not specifically resolve questions concerning the additional parental-information field in the online Form 6, nor did it clarify the authorisation of certain electoral-roll appeals in West Bengal. The extra parental question in the online Form 6 on ECINet has been removed. It also does not address who authorised appeals in West Bengal against voters whose inclusion had been ordered by judicial officers. Form 6 is prescribed under the Registration of Electors Rules for inclusion of names in electoral rolls.

Tamil Nadu government withdraws G.O. exempting Public (Law and Order) Department from RTI Act

In the News: The Tamil Nadu government revoked G.O. Ms. No. 57, dated September 21, which had exempted the Public (Law and Order) Department from most provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005. The earlier notification had treated the department as an intelligence and security organisation under Section 24(4) of the RTI Act.

Key Points:

- **Government Order Revoked:** G.O. Ms. No. 57 had been issued by the Human Resources Management Department on September 21, 2026. The Tamil Nadu government formally revoked the order on September 27 after the notification became publicly known.
- **Section 24(4) of RTI Act:** Section 24(4) empowers a State Government to notify intelligence and security organisations established by it as exempt from the RTI Act. Such notifications must be published in the Official Gazette and laid before the State Legislature.
- **Important Exception:** Even organisations exempted under Section 24 cannot exclude information concerning allegations of corruption or human-rights violations. For human-rights cases, disclosure requires approval of the State Information Commission and must ordinarily be provided within 45 days.
- **Role of the Department:** The Public (Law and Order) Department deals with matters including police action, custodial deaths, police firing, preventive detention and references involving human-rights issues. This gave the exemption particular relevance to public-access and accountability provisions under the RTI framework.
- **About RTI Act:** The Right to Information Act was enacted in 2005 to establish a statutory mechanism through which citizens can obtain information held by public authorities. It also created the Central Information Commission and State Information Commissions as appellate institutions.

Kandla Begins Development of India's First Port-Based E-Methanol Facility

In the News: The foundation stone for India's first port-based e-methanol production facility was laid at Deendayal Port Authority (DPA), Kandla, Gujarat. The project is designed to produce green fuel for ships and strengthen India's green maritime and clean-energy ecosystem. It is also linked with India's long-term Net Zero 2070 target.

Key Points:

- **Location and Implementing Partners:** The facility is being developed at Deendayal Port Authority in Kandla, Gujarat. Assam Petro-Chemicals Limited (APCL) had earlier signed a joint initiative with DPA for setting up the e-methanol plant. Capital contribution is in a 76:24 ratio.
- **Production Capacity:** The proposed facility has a planned production capacity of around 150 tonnes per day (TPD) of e-methanol. The fuel is intended primarily for maritime applications and green shipping.
- **What is E-Methanol?:** E-methanol is a synthetic methanol produced using renewable hydrogen and captured carbon dioxide. It is increasingly being considered as a lower-carbon alternative to conventional marine fuels.
- **Green Shipping Initiative:** Kandla has already conducted a shore-to-ship methanol bunkering trial. DPA is working towards supplying Renewable Fuels of Non-Biological Origin compliant e-methanol for vessels operating on major international shipping routes.
- **About Deendayal Port:** Deendayal Port, formerly known as Kandla Port, is a major port located in the Gulf of Kutch in Gujarat. It functions under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and is strategically important for India's western maritime trade.

India's First LNG-Powered Train Flagged Off from Sabarmati

In the News: Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah flagged off India's first LNG-powered train from Sabarmati Railway Station in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, on September 27, 2026. The initiative introduces LNG-diesel dual-fuel technology into Indian Railways and aims to reduce diesel consumption, emissions and operating costs.

Key Points:

- **First LNG Train:** The train is India's first railway service to use Liquefied Natural Gas as part of its propulsion system. It uses a dual-fuel arrangement combining LNG with conventional diesel rather than operating solely on LNG.
- **Technology Used:** The LNG system has been incorporated into the train's Driving Power Cars. The conversion is expected to substitute nearly 40% of diesel consumption and thereby lower carbon dioxide and other pollutant emissions.
- **Why LNG Matters:** LNG is natural gas cooled to approximately -162°C, converting it into liquid form for easier storage and transportation. It produces lower particulate matter and sulphur emissions than conventional diesel fuel.
- **Indian Railways' Green Target:** The LNG initiative forms part of Indian Railways' wider transition towards cleaner transport technologies. Indian Railways has set a target of achieving Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2030.
- **Related Railway Projects:** The Sabarmati programme also included railway safety and infrastructure projects such as the WAG-12 maintenance shed, Kavach deployment, automatic signalling and railway line-doubling works.

Jharkhand's Traditional Musical Instrument Mandar Gets GI Tag

In the News: Jharkhand's traditional folk percussion instrument, the Mandar, has received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. It has been registered as "Mandar of Jharkhand", recognising its distinctive craftsmanship and deep association with the cultural traditions of the state. The GI recognition also helps protect its regional identity and traditional production methods.

Key Points:

- **GI Registration:** The instrument has been registered as "Mandar of Jharkhand" under GI Application No. 777. The application was filed in September 2021, and the geographical area covered under the registration is Jharkhand.
- **Applicant and Production Centre:** The application was filed by Raidih Mandar Producer Company Limited from Gumla district. Raidih and nearby areas are known for artisan families involved in the traditional manufacture of the Mandar.

- **About the Mandar:** The Mandar is a traditional double-headed percussion instrument widely used by tribal and folk communities of Jharkhand. It is played during festivals, dances, rituals, marriages and community gatherings.
- **Distinctive Features:** The instrument is made using traditional techniques and locally available materials. Its characteristic shape, sound and craftsmanship have been preserved across generations, particularly in the Chotanagpur region.
- **Geographical Indication:** A GI tag identifies goods whose quality, reputation or characteristics are closely associated with a specific geographical origin. In India, GI registration is governed by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, and the GI Registry is located in Chennai.

Bankers' Books Evidence Act 2026 Comes into Force from October 1

In the News: The Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 2026 came into force on October 1, 2026, replacing the colonial-era Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891. The new law modernises the rules governing the admissibility and authentication of banking records in legal proceedings, particularly in view of digital banking.

Key Points:

- **Replacement of the 1891 Law:** The Act replaces the Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891, which had governed the evidentiary use of bank records for more than a century. The revised framework reflects major changes in banking technology, digital transactions and record-keeping practices.
- **Recognition of Digital Banking Records:** The law follows a technology-neutral approach and covers records maintained in physical, electronic, digital, virtual and cloud-based forms. Properly authenticated electronic banking records can be produced as evidence before courts and other authorities.
- **Standardised Certification:** The Act simplifies and standardises the certification of copies of banking records. Certification can be undertaken through prescribed manual, digital or electronic authentication mechanisms, reducing procedural difficulties in legal proceedings.
- **Scope of Legal Proceedings:** The framework applies to court proceedings, arbitrations, investigations and inquiries. It is also relevant to proceedings conducted under India's new criminal-law framework, including the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.
- **Protection for Bank Officials:** Where a bank is not itself a party to a proceeding, its officials are protected from routine requirements to personally appear merely to prove banking records. This is intended to reduce unnecessary administrative burden on banking institutions.

How cockpit doors changed after 9/11 — and could have impacted flydubai attack

In the News: A September 30, 2026 incident aboard flydubai Flight FZ1073 from Dubai to Tel Aviv renewed attention on cockpit-security systems. The co-pilot allegedly attacked the captain while the aircraft was over Saudi Arabia, and the wounded captain managed to unlock the reinforced cockpit door, allowing others to intervene. Investigations into the circumstances of the incident are continuing. the aircraft diverted to Saudi Arabia

Key Points:

- **Post-9/11 Cockpit Security:** Before the September 11, 2001 attacks, cockpit doors primarily separated the flight deck from the passenger cabin and offered limited protection against forced entry. After the attacks, aviation authorities introduced substantially stronger flight-deck security requirements.
- **Reinforced Door Standards:** The US Federal Aviation Administration amended aviation rules in January 2002 to require reinforced flight-deck doors on specified passenger aircraft. Such doors were designed to resist forcible intrusion and ballistic penetration.
- **Modern Cockpit Door System:** Modern cockpit doors can normally be locked securely from inside the flight deck. Cabin crew may request entry through coded systems, while pilots inside the cockpit can approve or deny access.
- **Germanwings Flight 9525:** The 2015 Germanwings crash highlighted the danger of threats originating inside the cockpit. The first officer prevented the captain from re-entering the cockpit, prompting changes in cockpit-access procedures in several jurisdictions.
- **International Civil Aviation Organization:** ICAO is the United Nations specialised agency responsible for international civil aviation standards. It was established under the Chicago Convention of 1944 and is headquartered in Montreal, Canada.

Jawahar Dweep Becomes India's First Plastic-Free Oil Terminal

In the News: The Mumbai Port Authority declared the Jawahar Dweep Marine Oil Terminal India's first plastic-free oil terminal. The announcement was made during Swachhata Abhiyan 2026 in the presence of Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal.

Key Points:

- **Jawahar Dweep Marine Oil Terminal:** Jawahar Dweep is an important oil-handling facility of the Mumbai Port Authority. The plastic-free declaration is aimed at reducing single-use plastics and promoting environmentally sustainable port operations.
- **Mumbai Port Authority:** Mumbai Port is one of India's major ports and functions under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. It handles cargo, petroleum products and other maritime trade operations.
- **Major Port Authorities Act, 2021:** Major ports in India are governed under the Major Port Authorities Act, 2021. The legislation replaced the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 and provided greater operational autonomy to major port authorities.
- **Oil Spill Response Facilities:** New oil-spill response facilities were also dedicated at Mumbai Port. Such infrastructure is designed to contain, recover and manage petroleum spills that can cause serious marine and coastal pollution.
- **MARPOL Convention:** International rules for preventing pollution from ships are primarily contained in the MARPOL Convention administered by the International Maritime Organization. MARPOL contains six technical annexes dealing with different types of marine pollution.

Gujarat UCC Bill Receives Presidential Assent

In the News: President Droupadi Murmu granted assent to the Gujarat Uniform Civil Code Bill, 2026 in September 2026. The legislation establishes a common legal framework for specified civil matters such as marriage, divorce, succession and live-in relationships, subject to exemptions contained in the law.

Key Points:

- **Article 44:** The Uniform Civil Code is mentioned in Article 44 of the Constitution of India. It forms part of the Directive Principles of State Policy and states that the State shall endeavour to secure a uniform civil code for citizens throughout India.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy:** The Directive Principles are contained in Part IV of the Constitution. They are not enforceable by courts but are regarded as fundamental principles for governance and policymaking.
- **Concurrent List:** Marriage, divorce, adoption, wills, intestacy, succession, joint family and partition are covered under Entry 5 of the Concurrent List in the Seventh Schedule. Both Parliament and State Legislatures can legislate on subjects in this list.
- **Scheduled Tribe Exemption:** The Gujarat legislation provides exemptions for members of Scheduled Tribes and certain communities whose customary practices receive constitutional protection. Such exemptions recognise distinct customary and tribal legal traditions.
- **State-Level UCC:** Gujarat became another State to enact a State-level Uniform Civil Code framework after Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand had earlier enacted and implemented its own Uniform Civil Code legislation.

INTERNATIONAL

Portugal, Mauritius back India's bid for permanent UN Security Council seat

In the News: Portugal and Mauritius expressed support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council during the general debate of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly in New York. Portugal called for a more representative Council with permanent seats for India, Brazil and Africa, while Mauritius reiterated its support for India in recognition of its constructive role in global affairs.

Key Points:

- **Portugal's Support:** Portuguese Prime Minister Luís Montenegro called for reform of the Security Council to make it more representative of present-day realities. He advocated permanent seats for India, Brazil and Africa.
- **Mauritius' Position:** Mauritian Foreign Minister Dhananjay Ramful reiterated Mauritius' support for India's candidature for a permanent seat, commensurate with its constructive role in global affairs. Mauritius also supports the positions of the G4 and L.69 groups on Council reform, and backs the Common African Position, which seeks at least two permanent and five non-permanent seats for Africa.
- **Current UNSC Structure:** The Security Council has 15 members. Five are permanent members with veto power: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The other 10 are non-permanent members elected for two-year terms.
- **G4 Grouping:** India, Brazil, Germany and Japan form the G4, which advocates reform and expansion of the Security Council, including in the permanent category. In the same debate, the Marshall Islands endorsed permanent membership for all G4 members. India is also part of the L.69 group of developing countries working towards comprehensive UNSC reform.
- **Procedure for UNSC Reform:** Changing the composition of the Security Council requires an amendment to the UN Charter under Article 108. The amendment must be adopted by two-thirds of all members of the General Assembly. It must then be ratified by two-thirds of UN member states, including all five permanent members.

1,400 New Words and Definitions Added to Merriam-Webster.com

In the News: Merriam-Webster announced on September 15, 2026 that it had added about 1,400 new words and definitions to its online dictionary. The additions include terms drawn from technology, social media, music, popular culture and changing patterns of everyday communication.

Key Points:

- **Major Dictionary Update:** The 1,400 additions represent one of Merriam-Webster's periodic updates to document changes in contemporary English. The organisation stated that entries are added when evidence shows that their usage has become sufficiently widespread and established.
- **Notable New Entries:** Among the newly recognised terms are "vibe coding", "yacht rock", "parasocial", "Mandela effect", "looksmaxxing", "Rickroll" and "meme coin". The entries reflect the growing influence of digital culture and technology on language.
- **Criteria for Inclusion:** Merriam-Webster does not add a word merely because it becomes temporarily popular. Lexicographers examine evidence of frequent, widespread and meaningful use and analyse examples of how the term is used in context.
- **Vibe Coding:** The term is associated with software development in which a person relies heavily on artificial intelligence tools to generate code from natural-language instructions. Its inclusion reflects the impact of generative AI on technological vocabulary.
- **Merriam-Webster:** Merriam-Webster is a major American dictionary publisher headquartered in Springfield, Massachusetts. Its lexicographical work traces its roots to Noah Webster's dictionaries, while the Merriam company acquired rights to Webster's dictionary legacy in the 19th century.

Trinidad and Tobago to Become First Caribbean Nation to Adopt UPI

In the News: Trinidad and Tobago is pursuing implementation of India's Unified Payments Interface technology, making it the first Caribbean nation to adopt a payments platform based on UPI. High Commissioner Chandradath Singh highlighted the initiative on September 28, 2026, as part of expanding India-Trinidad and Tobago digital cooperation.

Key Points:

- **India-Trinidad UPI Agreement:** NPCI International Payments Limited and Trinidad and Tobago's Ministry of Digital Transformation entered into an agreement in 2024 to develop a real-time payment platform modelled on India's UPI.
- **First in the Caribbean:** Trinidad and Tobago is the first Caribbean country to move towards adopting UPI technology. The proposed system is intended to facilitate fast and interoperable digital transactions and strengthen financial inclusion.

- **Transaction Categories:** The payment architecture is intended to support Person-to-Person, Person-to-Merchant and Government-to-Person transactions. It seeks to provide a reliable and efficient domestic real-time payments infrastructure.
- **About UPI:** UPI was developed by the National Payments Corporation of India and was launched in 2016. It enables instant bank-to-bank payments through mobile applications using identifiers such as UPI IDs and linked accounts.
- **Bilateral Relations:** India and Trinidad and Tobago have expanded cooperation in digital public infrastructure, healthcare, education, energy and pharmaceuticals. The two countries established diplomatic relations in 1962, while Port of Spain is the capital of Trinidad and Tobago.

India at FAO COFO 28: Forest Cover, Bonn Challenge and Climate Action

In the News: India presented its forest and landscape restoration achievements at the 28th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO 28), held at FAO Headquarters in Rome from September 28 to October 2, 2026. India highlighted its expanding forest and tree cover, progress under the Bonn Challenge and enhanced carbon-sink commitments.

Key Points:

- **India's Forest and Tree Cover:** India's forest and tree cover stands at 82.74 million hectares, accounting for 25.17% of the country's geographical area. According to FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025, India ranks 9th globally in forest area and 3rd in net annual forest-area gain.
- **Bonn Challenge Commitment:** India has committed to restoring 26 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2030 under the Bonn Challenge. Of this target, about 21.76 million hectares have already been brought under restoration, indicating substantial progress towards the commitment.
- **Carbon-Sink Target:** India created an additional carbon sink of about 2.29 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2021 compared with 2005 levels. The country has enhanced its ambition to create an additional carbon sink of 3.5–4.0 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2035.
- **Major Restoration Programmes:** India highlighted the Aravalli Green Wall initiative, under which about 6.45 million hectares of degraded land have been identified for restoration. It also showcased MISHTI for mangrove restoration and the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam or Plant4Mother campaign, under which more than 3.5 billion saplings have been planted.
- **About COFO:** The Committee on Forestry is FAO's principal global intergovernmental body dealing with forestry and meets every two years. COFO 28 also considered the State of the World's Forests 2026 report, which focuses on restoring forests and landscapes for a sustainable future.

India Adds Five Sites to UNESCO Tentative List

In the News: Five new heritage properties and proposals were added to India's UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in September 2026, raising the country's total to 78. The additions range from Buddhist and Gupta-era heritage to temple architecture, tribal history and a transnational proposal linked with Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha movement.

Key Points:

- **Five New Entries:** The additions are Bagh Cave Paintings, Udaigiri Caves, Ginnorgarh Fort, Group of Temples of the Chambal Valley—Bateshwar, Padavali and Kakarmath—and the Sites of Satyagraha. Four of the five newly added properties are located in Madhya Pradesh.
- **Sites of Satyagraha:** This is a serial transnational proposal involving India and South Africa and traces the development of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violent resistance. It includes nine components—two in South Africa and seven in India—associated with different stages in the evolution of Satyagraha.
- **Udaigiri and Bagh Caves:** Udaigiri in Madhya Pradesh contains an important rock-cut sacred ensemble associated mainly with Gupta patronage of the late 4th and early 5th centuries. The Bagh complex consists of nine Buddhist rock-cut caves noted especially for their mural paintings.
- **Meaning of Tentative List:** A UNESCO Tentative List is an inventory of properties that a State Party may consider for future nomination to the World Heritage List. Inclusion in the Tentative List does not itself confer World Heritage status but is a necessary preliminary step for a future nomination.

- **India and UNESCO World Heritage:** India ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1977 and presently has 45 properties on UNESCO's World Heritage List. These comprise cultural, natural and mixed heritage properties, while the Tentative List serves as the pipeline for possible future nominations.

11th BIMSTEC Counter-Terrorism Meeting Held in New Delhi

In the News: India hosted the 11th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (JWG-CTTC) in New Delhi on September 28–29, 2026. Delegations from all seven BIMSTEC countries participated, with the meeting chaired by Suhel Ajaz Khan, Additional Secretary for Counter Terrorism in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Key Points:

- **Focus of the Meeting:** Delegates discussed traditional terrorism as well as emerging non-traditional security threats affecting the Bay of Bengal region. Recommendations were considered to improve coordination, information sharing and regional cooperation against terrorism and organised transnational crime.
- **Specialised Sub-Groups:** Discussions covered human trafficking, narcotics and precursor chemicals, anti-money laundering and terror financing, legal and law-enforcement cooperation, and counter-radicalisation and terrorism. These specialised mechanisms operate under the wider JWG-CTTC framework.
- **Seven BIMSTEC Members:** BIMSTEC consists of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It connects countries of South Asia and Southeast Asia around the Bay of Bengal and was established through the Bangkok Declaration on June 6, 1997.
- **India Leads Security Sector:** Under BIMSTEC's rationalised sectoral framework, India is the lead country for the Security sector. Its three principal sub-sectors are Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Disaster Management and Energy.
- **BIMSTEC Secretariat:** The organisation's permanent Secretariat is located in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and was inaugurated in September 2014. The Secretariat coordinates and monitors implementation of decisions taken collectively by the seven member countries.

Nobel Prize 2026

In the News: The 2026 Nobel Prize announcements are scheduled between 5 October and 12 October 2026. The Nobel Prizes recognise outstanding contributions in areas such as science, literature, peace and economics. The awards trace their origin to the will of Swedish inventor and industrialist Alfred Nobel.

Key Points:

- **Origin of the Nobel Prizes:** The Nobel Prizes were established according to the will of Alfred Nobel, a Swedish chemist, engineer and inventor. The first Nobel Prizes were awarded in 1901.
- **Original Categories:** Alfred Nobel's will provided for prizes in Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature and Peace. These are regarded as the five original Nobel Prize categories.
- **Prize in Economic Sciences:** The Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel was established by Sweden's central bank in 1968. It was awarded for the first time in 1969.
- **Awarding Institutions:** The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awards the prizes in Physics, Chemistry and Economic Sciences. The Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet selects the Medicine laureate, while the Swedish Academy awards the Literature Prize.
- **Nobel Peace Prize:** The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in Oslo, Norway, by the Norwegian Nobel Committee. The other major Nobel award ceremonies are held in Stockholm, Sweden.

Fatima Ezzahra El Mansouri Becomes Morocco's First Woman Prime Minister

In the News: Morocco's King Mohammed VI appointed Fatima Ezzahra El Mansouri as Head of Government and asked her to form a new government. The appointment made her the first woman to head the Moroccan government.

Key Points:

- **Historic Appointment:** El Mansouri became the first woman to serve as Morocco's Head of Government. The appointment was made by King Mohammed VI at the Royal Palace in Rabat.
- **Political Affiliation:** She is associated with the Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM). The party emerged as a major political force following the September 2026 parliamentary election.
- **Constitutional Provision:** The appointment of the Head of Government is governed by Article 47 of the Moroccan Constitution. It provides for the King to appoint the Head of Government from the political party that ranks first in elections to the House of Representatives.
- **Political Background:** El Mansouri is a lawyer and she has also held ministerial responsibilities related to urban planning and territorial development. She is serving her second term as Mayor of Marrakech and was the city's first woman mayor (2009).
- **About Morocco:** Morocco is a constitutional monarchy in North Africa, with Rabat as its capital. It has coastlines along both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea and lies close to Europe across the Strait of Gibraltar.

ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise AIME-2026 Begins in Philippines

In the News: The second edition of the ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise, AIME-2026, began at Subic Bay in the Philippines in September 2026. Indian Naval Ships Sahyadri and Kulish participated along with maritime forces from ASEAN member countries.

Key Points:

- **Second Edition of AIME:** AIME-2026 is the second edition of the ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise. The inaugural edition was held in 2023, marking an important step in expanding practical maritime cooperation between India and ASEAN countries.
- **Indian Naval Participation:** India deployed INS Sahyadri, a Shivalik-class stealth multi-role frigate, and INS Kulish, a missile corvette. Their participation highlights India's focus on improving naval interoperability with Southeast Asian maritime forces.
- **Harbour and Sea Phases:** The exercise includes both harbour and sea phases. The harbour phase consists of professional exchanges and operational planning, while the sea phase involves coordinated maritime drills and naval manoeuvres.
- **India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation:** AIME forms part of India's wider strategic engagement with ASEAN under the Act East Policy. Maritime security is important because Southeast Asia lies along critical sea lanes connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans.
- **MAHASAGAR Vision:** The exercise also complements India's MAHASAGAR vision, which stands for Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions. It emphasises maritime partnerships, regional security and cooperative development.

Rogun Dam Nears World's Tallest Height

In the News: Construction of the Rogun Hydropower Project in Tajikistan has advanced significantly, with the dam approaching its planned height of 335 metres. Once completed, it is expected to become the world's tallest dam and one of Central Asia's most important hydropower projects.

Key Points:

- **Location and River:** The Rogun Dam is being constructed on the Vakhsh River in Tajikistan. The Vakhsh is a major tributary of the Amu Darya, one of Central Asia's most important transboundary river systems.
- **Planned Height and Capacity:** Rogun is designed as a 335-metre-high rockfill dam with a clay core. Its proposed installed power-generation capacity is 3,600 MW through six generating units of 600 MW each.
- **Importance for Tajikistan:** The project is expected to substantially increase Tajikistan's renewable-energy capacity and help reduce recurring winter electricity shortages. It is also expected to support electricity exports to neighbouring countries.
- **World Bank Support:** The World Bank has provided significant financial assistance for the Rogun Hydropower Project. International financing is intended to support construction as well as environmental and social safeguards associated with the project.

California Bans Child Marriage

In the News: California enacted legislation in September 2026 establishing 18 years as the minimum age for marriage and domestic partnerships without exceptions. The law removes provisions that had earlier permitted minors to marry under certain circumstances. It will become the 18th state to ban marriage under 18 without exception.

Key Points:

- **Minimum Marriage Age:** The legislation fixes the minimum marriage age at 18 years and eliminates exceptions based on parental permission. It represents a major change in California's family-law framework concerning marriage involving minors.
- **Assembly Bill 1267:** The reform was enacted through Assembly Bill 1267. The legislation removes legal mechanisms that previously allowed persons below 18 years to marry or enter domestic partnerships with parental and judicial involvement. Governor Newsom signed AB 1267 on September 30, and the law takes effect on January 1, 2027.
- **Earlier Legal Position:** California previously had no fixed statutory minimum age for marriage. Minors could marry after obtaining parental consent and approval from a court, making the state unusual among major US jurisdictions.
- **State-Level Regulation:** Marriage laws in the United States are largely determined by individual states rather than through a single nationwide marriage code. As a result, legal minimum ages and exceptions have historically varied across different states.

End of Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq

In the News: The Global Coalition's military mission under Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq concluded in September 2026, marking the end of the coalition's long-running military mission in the country against the Islamic State.

Key Points:

- **Launch of Operation:** Operation Inherent Resolve was launched in 2014 as the US-led military campaign against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. It was established in response to the rapid territorial expansion of the Islamic State across the two countries.
- **Rise of ISIS:** The operation followed ISIS's capture of large territories in Iraq and Syria in 2014, including the Iraqi city of Mosul. The group subsequently declared a self-proclaimed caliphate across areas under its control.
- **Role of the Coalition:** Coalition activities included air strikes, intelligence support, military training and assistance to Iraqi and Kurdish security forces. These operations contributed to the eventual dismantling of ISIS's territorial control.
- **Security Transition:** Following the conclusion of the coalition mission, Iraqi Security Forces and Kurdish Peshmerga forces are expected to assume primary responsibility for counter-terrorism and domestic security operations in Iraq.
- **ISIS and Daesh:** ISIS stands for Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, while Daesh is another widely used designation for the organisation. Although its territorial caliphate was defeated, dispersed cells and networks continue to pose security concerns in parts of the region.

From giraffes to pandas: The millennia-long history of animal diplomacy

In the News: Animal diplomacy returned to attention in 2026 following renewed discussions involving China and the United States over giant pandas. The practice of exchanging animals as gifts or loans has existed for centuries and has often been used as a symbol of friendship, prestige and diplomatic goodwill.

Key Points:

- **Animal Diplomacy:** Animal diplomacy refers to the gifting, lending or exchange of animals between countries as a diplomatic gesture. Such exchanges may also support wildlife conservation, scientific research and cultural relations.
- **China's Panda Diplomacy:** China is internationally associated with panda diplomacy. Following US President Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972, China gifted giant pandas Ling-Ling and Hsing-Hsing to the United States.
- **Harun al-Rashid and Charlemagne:** In the early ninth century, Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid presented an elephant named Abul-Abbas to Charlemagne. The gift became one of the best-known examples of animal diplomacy in medieval history.

- **Giraffe and Ming China:** In the early fifteenth century, a giraffe from East Africa reached the court of the Ming emperor in China. Its arrival was associated with the maritime expeditions of Admiral Zheng He and was interpreted as an auspicious diplomatic gift.
- **India and Animal Diplomacy:** Jawaharlal Nehru used elephants as symbols of friendship with several countries. India has also used modern wildlife cooperation, including cheetah translocation partnerships with African countries, as part of international conservation cooperation.

COP31 2026: Venue, Dates, President, Key Officials and Major Facts

In the News: The 31st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31) will be held from 9–20 November 2026 in Antalya, Türkiye. Türkiye will host the annual climate conference for the first time, with Murat Kurum serving as COP31 President and Australia's Chris Bowen leading the negotiations.

Key Points:

- **Venue and Schedule:** COP31 will take place at the Antalya EXPO Center in Soğucaksu, Antalya, from November 9 to 20, 2026. Representatives of Parties to the UNFCCC, international organisations, scientists, businesses and civil society groups are expected to participate.
- **COP31 Presidency:** Murat Kurum, Türkiye's Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, has been nominated as the President of COP31. Türkiye will oversee the overall political direction and organisation of the conference.
- **President of Negotiations:** Chris Bowen, Australia's Minister for Climate Change and Energy, will serve as President of Negotiations. The arrangement reflects cooperation between Türkiye and Australia in managing the negotiating process of COP31.
- **Associated Meetings:** COP31 will also include CMA 8, the eighth meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, and CMP 21, the 21st meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. Sessions of the SBI and SBSTA will also be held alongside the conference.
- **UNFCCC Background:** The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1994. The Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015 and seeks to keep the rise in global average temperature well below 2°C while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

G7 Agrees to Release 100 Million Barrels of Oil

In the News: The Group of Seven countries agreed to release 100 million barrels of crude oil and fuel products from emergency reserves to ease pressure on global energy markets. The decision came amid supply disruptions, higher fuel prices and geopolitical tensions affecting energy flows.

Key Points:

- **100-Million-Barrel Release:** The coordinated release is intended to increase short-term oil availability and reduce pressure on international fuel markets. The supply is expected to include crude oil as well as refined products such as diesel.
- **Country Contributions:** The United States is expected to make a major contribution through its Strategic Petroleum Reserve. European and Asian participants are also expected to contribute oil and fuel products from their respective emergency stocks.
- **International Energy Agency:** The International Energy Agency was established in 1974 following the 1973 oil crisis and is headquartered in Paris, France. Its members maintain emergency oil reserves to deal with severe disruptions in energy supply.
- **G7 Composition:** The G7 consists of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union also participates in G7 meetings but is not counted as one of the seven members.
- **Strategic Petroleum Reserves:** Emergency petroleum reserves are maintained to protect economies against major interruptions in oil supply. Governments may release these stocks during wars, natural disasters or other events that significantly disrupt global energy markets.

KAZIND 2026

In the News: The ninth edition of Exercise KAZIND, the joint military exercise between India and Kazakhstan, is being conducted at Oskemen, Kazakhstan, from September 28 to October 11, 2026. A 60-member Indian Armed Forces contingent is participating in the exercise.

Key Points:

- **Participating Forces:** India has deployed a 60-member contingent primarily drawn from a battalion of the Garhwal Rifles, along with personnel from other arms and services and the Indian Air Force. Kazakhstan is represented mainly by personnel from its Land Forces.
- **Primary Objective:** KAZIND aims to improve interoperability and coordination between the armed forces of India and Kazakhstan. The exercise focuses on joint operations and the exchange of tactical practices.
- **Operational Training:** The 2026 edition includes counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban and mountainous terrain, tactical planning and air mobility. Training also includes the use of unmanned aerial systems and counter-drone capabilities.
- **India-Kazakhstan Relations:** Kazakhstan is the largest country in Central Asia by area and shares borders with Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Its capital is Astana.
- **Defence Cooperation:** KAZIND forms part of the wider defence cooperation between India and Kazakhstan. The exercise strengthens military coordination, operational familiarity and cooperation in areas such as counter-terrorism.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Cool Leaders Award 2026: Singapore, UAE and Dong Mingzhu Recognised

In the News: Singapore, the United Arab Emirates and Chinese business leader Dong Mingzhu were named the inaugural “Cool Leaders” at the Global Cooling Pledge Assembly held in Singapore on September 17, 2026. The awards recognise leadership in sustainable cooling and resilience against extreme heat.

Key Points:

- **Inaugural Cool Leaders:** Singapore and the UAE received country-level recognition, while Dong Mingzhu, Chairwoman of Gree Electric Appliances, was selected as the individual Cool Leader. She was the sole individual recipient of the inaugural awards.
- **Singapore's Recognition:** Singapore was recognised for its work in passive cooling and heat resilience. Passive cooling involves reducing indoor temperatures through building design, ventilation, shading and other methods requiring limited mechanical cooling.
- **UAE's Recognition:** The United Arab Emirates was honoured for leadership in district cooling and for promoting sustainable cooling within international climate and development policy.
- **Dong Mingzhu:** Dong Mingzhu was recognised for advancing energy-efficient and low-carbon cooling technologies, including Gree's Zero Carbon Source air-conditioning system. She serves as Chairwoman of Gree Electric Appliances.
- **Global Cooling Pledge:** The awards were announced under the Global Cooling Pledge framework supported by the UNEP-led Cool Coalition. The pledge promotes energy-efficient cooling, climate-friendly refrigerants and improved resilience to extreme heat.

WorldSkills Shanghai 2026: India Finishes 10th With Six Silver Medals

In the News: India finished 10th at the 48th WorldSkills Competition held in Shanghai, China, from September 22 to 27, 2026. Team India won six Silver Medals and 20 Medals for Excellence, improving from its 13th-place finish at WorldSkills Lyon 2024.

Key Points:

- **India's Performance:** India secured six Silver Medals and 20 Medals for Excellence at Shanghai 2026. The country sent its largest-ever WorldSkills contingent, comprising 70 competitors across 63 skills.

- **Silver Medallists:** India's six Silver Medals came in Bakery, Dental Prosthetics, Digital Interactive Media Design, Industrial Design Technology, Logistics and Freight Forwarding, and Retail Sales.
- **Best of Nation:** Bakery silver medallist Smriti Nambiar received the "Best of Nation" recognition for India. The honour is presented to a competitor whose performance particularly represents excellence for their country.
- **About WorldSkills:** WorldSkills Competition is a major international vocational skills event in which young professionals compete across technical, industrial and service skills. Shanghai 2026 was the 48th edition and featured more than 1,400 competitors from nearly 70 countries and regions.
- **Previous Performance:** At WorldSkills Lyon 2024, India had ranked 13th with four Bronze Medals and 12 Medals for Excellence. The Shanghai performance therefore represented an improvement in both ranking and medal achievements.

ENVIRONMENT

UN Adopts First Declaration on Sea-Level Rise and Continuity of Island Statehood

In the News: The United Nations General Assembly adopted a political declaration on sea-level rise during a high-level plenary meeting in New York in September 2026. The declaration addresses the continuity of statehood and sovereignty of countries facing territorial loss due to climate-induced sea-level rise.

Key Points:

- **UN High-Level Meeting:** The issue was discussed at a high-level plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. The initiative reflects growing international concern over the impact of sea-level rise on low-lying and island countries.
- **Continuity of Statehood:** The declaration supports the principle that statehood and sovereignty may continue even if physical territory is affected by rising sea levels. This is especially significant for low-lying island nations.
- **Maritime Zones:** The declaration also addresses the stability of maritime boundaries and zones established under international law. This is important for Exclusive Economic Zones, marine resources and maritime jurisdiction.
- **Role of UNCLOS:** The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides the international legal framework for maritime zones, territorial seas and Exclusive Economic Zones. Sea-level rise has raised new questions regarding the long-term stability of these boundaries.
- **Small Island Developing States:** Countries such as Tuvalu, Kiribati and the Marshall Islands are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise. Rising seas threaten settlements, freshwater supplies, infrastructure, livelihoods, cultural heritage and territorial integrity.

SCIENCE AND TECH

SpaceX Starship Reaches Orbit for First Time, Deploys 26 Starlink Satellites

In the News: SpaceX's Starship reached Earth orbit for the first time during its 14th integrated flight test on September 28, 2026. Launched from Starbase in South Texas, the spacecraft successfully deployed 26 next-generation Starlink V3 satellites, marking Starship's first operational satellite deployment.

Key Points:

- **Historic Orbital Flight:** Flight 14 marked the first time Starship completed an orbital insertion after earlier developmental test flights had followed suborbital trajectories. The achievement is important for SpaceX's objective of turning Starship into a regular heavy-lift orbital launch vehicle.

- **Starlink V3 Deployment:** Starship released 26 next-generation Starlink V3 satellites into orbit. The larger V3 spacecraft are designed to substantially increase the capacity and user speeds of SpaceX's global satellite-broadband network and are too large for standard deployment aboard Falcon 9.
- **Starship Architecture:** The launch system consists of the Super Heavy first-stage booster and the Starship upper-stage spacecraft. Super Heavy uses 33 Raptor engines, while the upper stage uses six Raptor engines, with the system ultimately intended for rapid and full reusability.
- **Mission Shortened:** One of the upper stage's six engines shut down during ascent, but Starship was still able to reach orbit. SpaceX subsequently shortened the planned multi-orbit mission, deorbited the spacecraft after roughly two to three hours and brought it back through the atmosphere over the Pacific.
- **Importance for Future Missions:** Starship is central to SpaceX's plans for large-scale satellite deployment and future missions beyond Earth. Its development is also significant for NASA's Artemis lunar programme, which is relying on a Starship-derived human landing system for future astronaut missions to the Moon.

STATIC

Bhagat Singh Birth Anniversary 2026

In the News: India observed the 119th birth anniversary of revolutionary freedom fighter Shaheed Bhagat Singh on September 28, 2026. Born in 1907, Bhagat Singh became one of the leading figures of India's revolutionary nationalist movement and was associated with the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.

Key Points:

- **Birth and Early Life:** Bhagat Singh was born on September 28, 1907, at Banga village in Lyallpur district of undivided Punjab, now in Faisalabad district of Pakistan. His parents were Kishan Singh and Vidyavati.
- **Revolutionary Organisations:** Bhagat Singh was closely associated with the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association and the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. The HSRA emerged from the reorganisation of the Hindustan Republican Association in 1928.
- **Saunders Case:** Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and other revolutionaries became involved in the killing of British police officer J. P. Saunders in Lahore in December 1928. The action followed protests against the Simon Commission during which Lala Lajpat Rai was injured.
- **Central Legislative Assembly Bombing:** On April 8, 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw bombs in the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi while protesting against the Public Safety Bill and Trade Disputes Bill. They subsequently surrendered themselves for arrest.
- **Martyrdom:** Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar were executed at Lahore Central Jail on March 23, 1931, in connection with the Lahore Conspiracy Case. March 23 is observed as Shaheed Diwas in remembrance of their sacrifice.

206th Birth Anniversary of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

In the News: The 206th birth anniversary of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was observed on 26 September 2026. Born on 26 September 1820, Vidyasagar was an influential nineteenth-century educator, social reformer, writer and Sanskrit scholar closely associated with the Bengal Renaissance.

Key Points:

- **Early Life and Education:** Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was born in Birsingha village in Midnapore in 1820. He studied at the Sanskrit College in Calcutta and earned the title "Vidyasagar," meaning Ocean of Knowledge, because of his exceptional scholarship.
- **Widow Remarriage Reform:** Vidyasagar strongly advocated the right of Hindu widows to remarry. His sustained social campaign contributed to the enactment of the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act, 1856.

- **Promotion of Women's Education:** He actively supported the expansion of girls' education and played an important role in establishing and encouraging schools for women. His work challenged several social restrictions that limited educational access for girls.
- **Contribution to Bengali Language:** Vidyasagar played a major role in simplifying and standardising Bengali prose. His work Barnaparichay became one of the most influential introductory Bengali-language textbooks.
- **Role in the Bengal Renaissance:** Vidyasagar was a prominent figure of the Bengal Renaissance. His work combined social reform, education, literary development and humanitarian concerns and had a lasting influence on nineteenth-century Indian society.

International Day of Non-Violence 2026 and Lal Bahadur Shastri Jayanti

In the News: October 2, 2026 marked the International Day of Non-Violence as well as the birth anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. The day is associated with the principles of peace, non-violence, national service and public remembrance.

Key Points:

- **International Day of Non-Violence:** The United Nations observes October 2 every year as the International Day of Non-Violence. The date was chosen to coincide with the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- **UN Resolution:** The observance was established by the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution A/RES/61/271 in 2007. The resolution emphasises education and public awareness to promote a culture of peace and non-violence.
- **Lal Bahadur Shastri:** Lal Bahadur Shastri was born on October 2, 1904 at Mughalsarai in present-day Uttar Pradesh. He served as the second Prime Minister of India from June 1964 until January 1966.
- **Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan:** Shastri popularised the slogan "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan", highlighting the importance of soldiers and farmers. His tenure coincided with the India-Pakistan War of 1965 and efforts to strengthen domestic food production.
- **Tashkent Declaration:** India and Pakistan signed the Tashkent Declaration in January 1966 following the 1965 war. The agreement was mediated by the Soviet Union, and Shastri died in Tashkent on January 11, 1966 shortly after its signing.

SPORTS

Virat Kohli becomes only the second after Tendulkar to reach 15,000 ODI runs

In the News: Virat Kohli became only the second batter in men's One Day International cricket to cross 15,000 runs. He achieved the milestone against the West Indies in the first ODI at the Greenfield International Stadium, Thiruvananthapuram, on September 27, 2026, joining Sachin Tendulkar in the exclusive club.

Key Points:

- **15,000-Run Milestone:** Kohli crossed 15,000 ODI runs with a boundary during India's chase against the West Indies. According to the ICC, he became both the second batter to reach the mark and the fastest to achieve 15,000 men's ODI runs.
- **Sachin Tendulkar's Record:** Tendulkar remains the highest run-scorer in ODI history with 18,426 runs from 463 matches. He was the first batter to cross the 15,000-run milestone and remains the benchmark for total career runs in the format.
- **Kohli's ODI Records:** Kohli had already been the fastest batter to reach the milestones of 8,000, 9,000, 10,000, 11,000, 12,000, 13,000 and 14,000 ODI runs. The 15,000-run mark extended this sequence of batting records.
- **Century in the Match:** Kohli also scored a century against the West Indies in the same match. The innings produced his 55th ODI hundred and took his overall international-century tally to 86.
- **All-Time ODI Run Scorers:** After Tendulkar and Kohli, Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara is third among the leading ODI run-scorers with 14,234 runs. Kohli's milestone therefore made him only the second player in ODI history to cross the 15,000-run threshold.

Bodhana Sivanandan Becomes Youngest Woman Grandmaster at 11

In the News: Indian-origin British chess prodigy Bodhana Sivanandan became the youngest player in history to fulfil the requirements for the Woman Grandmaster (WGM) title at the age of 11. She achieved the landmark while representing England on the top board at the 46th FIDE Chess Olympiad in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Key Points:

- **Record-Breaking WGM Title:** Sivanandan secured her third and final WGM norm during the Samarkand Olympiad, making her the youngest player ever to meet the title requirements. She played all 8 points on top board on England's top board and scored an impressive 8 points on top board. Her achievement broke the record of Kateryna Lagno, who earned the WGM title at 12 years and four months.
- **WGM and GM Distinction:** Woman Grandmaster is a women-specific lifelong title awarded by FIDE and is distinct from the unrestricted Grandmaster title. Sivanandan had already crossed the required 2300 rating threshold and completed the necessary WGM norms with her Olympiad performance.
- **Previous Age Record:** Her achievement surpassed the previous record associated with Kateryna Lagno. Sivanandan achieved the distinction while still only 11, establishing a new global age record.
- **International Master Progress:** Earlier in 2026, Sivanandan became the youngest girl ever to earn an International Master norm, breaking a record previously held by Judit Polgár. Former world champion Hou Yifan of China also earned the title at 12, and remains the youngest woman to have secured the full Grandmaster title, which she achieved at 14. Her Olympiad performance gave her a second IM norm, moving her closer to the higher International Master title.
- **British Women's Champion:** In August 2026, Sivanandan had already become the youngest-ever British Women's Chess Champion at age 11. She represents England internationally and had earlier made her Chess Olympiad debut at just nine years of age in Budapest in 2024. She scored 8 points on England's top board.

Rohit Sharma Reaches 12,000 ODI Runs and 200 Sixes in One Country

In the News: Indian batter Rohit Sharma crossed the milestone of 12,000 runs in One Day International cricket during India's ODI series against the West Indies in 2026. He also achieved the landmark of 200 ODI sixes in India.

Key Points:

- **12,000 ODI Runs:** Rohit Sharma became one of the few Indian batters to cross 12,000 runs in men's ODI cricket. He joined an elite group of Indian players that includes Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli.
- **Speed to the Milestone:** Rohit reached the 12,000-run mark in relatively few ODI innings compared with several other legendary international batters. The milestone further strengthened his position among India's most successful ODI batters.
- **200 ODI Sixes at Home:** Rohit became the first batter to hit 200 ODI sixes in a single country, achieving the feat in India. His record reflects his reputation as one of the most prolific six-hitters in the history of limited-overs cricket.
- **ODI Century Record:** Rohit has accumulated more than 30 centuries in ODI cricket, placing him among the leading century-makers in the format. His record as an opening batter has been particularly significant in India's white-ball cricket history.
- **Highest ODI Individual Score:** Rohit Sharma holds the record for the highest individual score in men's ODI cricket. He scored 264 runs against Sri Lanka at Eden Gardens, Kolkata, in 2014 and is also the only batter to have scored three ODI double centuries.

ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027 Schedule: India Fixtures, Groups, Format, Venues and Dates

In the News: The International Cricket Council announced the schedule for the 2027 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in October 2026. The tournament will be jointly hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia from October 2 to November 21, 2027, with 14 teams participating.

Key Points:

- **Host Countries:** South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia will jointly host the 2027 Men's Cricket World Cup. South Africa and Zimbabwe had earlier jointly hosted the 2003 edition along with Kenya.
- **Tournament Format:** Fourteen teams will participate in the tournament. The competition will include an initial Super Series than group stage followed by the Super 7 stage, semi-finals and the final.
- **India's Group:** India has been placed in Group A along with Australia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe and a qualifying team. Group-stage performances will determine progression to the next phase.
- **India's Fixtures:** India is scheduled to play matches at venues including Cape Town, Johannesburg, Tshwane, Bloemfontein and Victoria Falls during the initial phase of the tournament.
- **Final Venue:** The final of the 2027 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup is scheduled to be played in Johannesburg on November 21, 2027. The ICC is the global governing body for international cricket and is headquartered in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

15-Year-Old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Joins TIME100 Next 2026: Indian Names in TIME100

In the News: Indian cricketer Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, aged 15, has been included in the TIME100 Next 2026 list of emerging global personalities. He is the youngest honouree on the 2026 list and the only Indian athlete included among the selected sportspersons.

Key Points:

- **TIME100 Next Recognition:** TIME100 Next recognises 100 emerging personalities from different fields who are expected to influence the future. The list includes individuals from areas such as arts, leadership, innovation, advocacy and sports.
- **Vaibhav's Category:** Sooryavanshi has been included in the "Phenoms" category. He is among the sportspersons featured in the 2026 edition and is the only cricketer among the selected athletes.
- **Early Cricket Career:** Sooryavanshi made his senior Ranji Trophy debut for Bihar at a very young age. Rajasthan Royals later bought him for ₹1 crore ahead of IPL 2025, making him the youngest player purchased at an IPL auction.
- **IPL Record:** During IPL 2025, he scored a 35-ball century against Gujarat Titans. The innings made him the youngest centurion in IPL history and one of the youngest players to achieve a major batting milestone in franchise cricket.
- **TIME100 Next India:** TIME also announced an India-focused edition of TIME100 Next in 2026 in partnership with Reliance. The initiative is intended to recognise emerging Indian leaders and achievers across different sectors.

India Wins Asian Games 2026 Women's Hockey Gold After 44 Years

In the News: The Indian women's hockey team won the gold medal at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games 2026 by defeating China 1-0 in the final on October 2, 2026. The victory ended India's 44-year wait for an Asian Games women's hockey gold and also secured qualification for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

Key Points:

- **Historic Gold Medal:** India defeated China 1-0 in the final, with Lalremsiami scoring the decisive goal in the 10th minute. The victory gave India the women's hockey title at the Asian Games after more than four decades.
- **44-Year Wait Ends:** India's previous Asian Games women's hockey gold medal had come at the 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi. The 2026 victory therefore became India's second gold medal in the event.
- **Olympic Qualification:** By winning the Asian Games title, India secured a direct qualification berth for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games. Continental champions receive qualification opportunities under the Olympic hockey qualification framework.
- **Key Defensive Performance:** Goalkeeper Savita Punia played a major role in the final and made a crucial penalty-stroke save. India successfully defended its narrow lead against the defending Asian Games champions.
- **Asian Games 2026:** The 20th Asian Games were hosted in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, in 2026. The event brought together athletes from countries across Asia in a wide range of sporting disciplines.