

## Weekly Current Affairs 31st May to 6th June 2026

### CONTENTS

NATIONAL.....	2
INTERNATIONAL .....	11
AWARDS AND HONOURS.....	15
SCIENCE AND TECH.....	16
ENVIRONMENT .....	17
IMPORTANT DAYS .....	18
APPOINTMENTS .....	19
SPORTS .....	21



## IMPORTANT ONE LINERS

### NATIONAL

#### Can Election Commission decide who is an Indian citizen? What Supreme Court said in SIR verdict

**In the News:** The Supreme Court upheld the Election Commission of India's power to conduct Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. The Court clarified that the Election Commission may conduct a limited enquiry into citizenship only for deciding voter-roll eligibility. It cannot finally decide whether a person is an Indian citizen, as formal citizenship determination remains with the competent authority under the Citizenship Act.

#### Key Points:

- **Limited Citizenship Enquiry:** The Court held that the Election Commission can examine citizenship-related material only for inclusion or exclusion from electoral rolls. Such scrutiny is limited to electoral eligibility and does not amount to a final declaration on citizenship.
- **Competent Authority:** Formal adjudication of citizenship remains within the domain of the competent authority under the Citizenship Act. If the Election Commission is not satisfied about a person's eligibility, the matter must be referred to the competent Central Government authority.
- **Legal Basis:** The Court traced the SIR exercise to Article 324 of the Constitution and Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. It held that the exercise supports free and fair elections by maintaining accurate electoral rolls.
- **Documents and Aadhaar:** The Court accepted the Election Commission's discretion in prescribing documents for verification. It clarified that Aadhaar may be considered for identity, but it is not conclusive proof of citizenship or domicile.
- **Procedural Safeguards:** The Court emphasised show-cause notices, reasoned orders, appeals and judicial review as safeguards against arbitrary exclusion. It held that the SIR process must remain fair, proportionate and legally controlled.

#### What Is Samadhan Didi? India's New AI Chatbot for Citizen Grievances Explained

**In the News:** Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched the CPGRAMS AI-enabled voice chatbot Samadhan Didi at Kartavya Bhawan, New Delhi. The chatbot has been developed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in collaboration with Bhashini. It allows citizens to register public grievances by speaking in their own language and helps route complaints to the correct authority.

#### Key Points:

- **About Samadhan Didi:** Samadhan Didi is an AI-enabled voice chatbot integrated with CPGRAMS, the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System. It is designed to make grievance filing simpler for citizens who may not know the correct ministry, department, category or sub-category for their complaint.
- **Voice-Based Grievance Filing:** Citizens can describe their grievance in plain words by speaking in their own language. The chatbot understands the concern, asks relevant clarifying questions and automatically identifies the appropriate ministry, department, category and sub-category.
- **Role of DARPG and Bhashini:** The chatbot has been developed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in collaboration with Bhashini. It combines language capabilities with grievance-classification models trained on CPGRAMS data to support multilingual access across Indian languages.
- **Secure Governance Platform:** The system has been developed within secure government infrastructure to support data privacy. It aims to improve citizen access, reduce procedural confusion and make public grievance redressal more responsive through technology-enabled classification and filing.



- **Language Accessibility:** CPGRAMS already supports the 22 languages of the Eighth Schedule, and efforts are underway to include regional and indigenous languages such as Bhojpuri, Garo, Khasi, Mijo and Bodhi in a phased manner. This expands access for citizens from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

### Delhi High Court Frames Right to Be Forgotten Rules

**In the News:** The Delhi High Court recognised the Right to be Forgotten as a constitutionally protected facet of informational privacy under Article 21. Justice Sachin Datta laid down a framework for de-indexing and masking personal information from online judicial records. The ruling balances privacy, dignity and reputation with open justice, press freedom and public access to court records.

#### Key Points:

- **Constitutional Basis:** The Court held that the Right to be Forgotten flows from informational privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution. It applies where continued public digital accessibility of personal information is no longer relevant or serves no legitimate public purpose.
- **De-Indexing Explained:** De-indexing does not delete a judgment or remove the original judicial record. It prevents the webpage or record from appearing in name-based search results, while the underlying source material remains available through purposeful searches.
- **Masking of Personal Details:** Masking means replacing names and personal identifiers in publicly accessible digital versions of judicial records with neutral references such as ABC or XYZ. The complete and unredacted version remains preserved in court archives for courts, parties, advocates and authorities with legitimate legal purpose.
- **Eligible Categories:** The ruling arose from petitions filed by acquitted persons, discharged persons, parties to matrimonial disputes and individuals whose names appeared incidentally in judicial records. Relief depends on the nature of the information, continuing relevance, public interest and harm to dignity, privacy and reputation.
- **Duties of Online Platforms:** Once a competent court passes a masking order, search engines are required to de-index the masked judgment from name-based searches. Legal database platforms such as Indian Kanoon must disable name-based search functionality for that judgment while keeping judicial records institutionally preserved.

### Can privacy trump parentage? Why Supreme Court upheld DNA test in paternity case

**In the News:** The Supreme Court upheld a DNA test order in a paternity dispute where a man challenged directions requiring him to undergo testing. The case involved a civil suit filed by a person claiming to be his biological son and seeking declaration of parentage. The Court held that privacy concerns must be balanced with the need for a clear answer where paternity itself is directly in issue.

#### Key Points:

- **Supreme Court Ruling:** The Bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N. Kotiswar Singh upheld concurrent orders directing DNA testing in a paternity dispute. The Court noted that the question of paternity was central to the civil suit and could not be resolved categorically through other available evidence.
- **Test for DNA Orders:** The Court stated that DNA testing may be ordered where the result is directly in issue and no other evidence can substitute the scientific answer. It also considered whether such testing serves the interests of justice and the parties involved.
- **Privacy and Parentage:** The Court recognised that DNA testing affects privacy but balanced it against the claimant's need for closure on a lifelong question of parentage. The ruling treated privacy as important but not absolute when paternity is the core legal issue.
- **Background of the Case:** The claimant sought a declaration that he was the son of the appellant and was therefore entitled to a share in his property. Earlier litigation involved maintenance-related proceedings, but the Court found that the civil suit directly raised the issue of paternity.

## Justice V. Mohana Sworn In as Supreme Court Judge

**In the News:** Justice V. Mohana was sworn in as a judge of the Supreme Court of India along with four other newly appointed judges. Chief Justice of India Surya Kant administered the oath, taking the Supreme Court's working strength to 37 judges. Justice Mohana's elevation is notable because she was directly elevated from the Bar and became one of the few women judges in the Supreme Court's history.

### Key Points:

- **New Supreme Court Judge:** Justice Venkata Subramani Mohana took oath as a judge of the Supreme Court of India. She was among five judges sworn in after the Central Government cleared the Collegium recommendations. Her appointment added to the representation of women in the country's highest court.
- **Direct Elevation from Bar:** Justice Mohana was directly elevated from the Bar to the Supreme Court Bench. She is recorded as the second woman lawyer to be directly elevated to the Supreme Court after Justice Indu Malhotra. This makes her appointment significant in the history of judicial elevation from the legal profession.
- **Five Judges Took Oath:** The new judges sworn in were Justices Sheel Nagu, Shree Chandrashekhar, Sanjeev Sachdeva, Arun Palli and V. Mohana. The first four were serving as High Court Chief Justices before elevation. Justice Mohana was elevated as a senior advocate from the Bar.
- **Women in Supreme Court:** Justice Mohana became the 12th woman judge in the Supreme Court's history. Before her appointment, Justice B. V. Nagarathna was the only woman judge serving in the Supreme Court. Her elevation came after a gap of nearly five years in appointment of a woman judge to the apex court.
- **Collegium and Appointment:** The Supreme Court Collegium headed by CJI Surya Kant recommended the five names for elevation. After approval by the Central Government, the judges were sworn in at the Supreme Court. The appointments are linked with filling vacancies and strengthening the judicial capacity of the apex court.

## Prison Statistics India Report 2024

**In the News:** The Prison Statistics India Report 2024, released by the National Crime Records Bureau, recorded changes in India's prison infrastructure, occupancy and inmate profile. The national prison occupancy rate declined from 120.8% in 2023 to 112.7% in 2024. The report also highlighted gender composition, women's prisons, undertrial concerns, staffing issues and the need for continued prison reforms.

### Key Points:

- **About the Report:** Prison Statistics India is an annual NCRB publication on prisons across States and Union Territories. It compiles data on prison population, convicts, undertrials, detenués, capacity, occupancy, staff, infrastructure and rehabilitation measures. The report is used for policy planning, prison administration and justice-sector reform.
- **Occupancy and Capacity:** India's prison occupancy rate declined to 112.7% in 2024 from 120.8% in 2023. The total number of prisons rose marginally to 1,333, while prison capacity increased and the number of prisoners declined. The figures indicate improvement, but overcrowding remained a national concern.
- **Gender Profile of Prisoners:** Male prisoners formed 95.8% of the prison population, while female prisoners formed 4.14%. The report recorded 122 transgender prisoners. India had only 34 women jails, and many States and Union Territories did not have separate women prisons.
- **Delhi and Overcrowding:** Delhi recorded the highest prison occupancy rate among States and Union Territories. Its prisons operated far beyond sanctioned capacity, with overcrowding also reported in regions such as Meghalaya, Jammu and Kashmir and Madhya Pradesh. This shows uneven prison-capacity pressure across the country.

## DK Shivakumar Takes Oath as Karnataka's 18th Chief Minister

**In the News:** D. K. Shivakumar was sworn in as the 18th Chief Minister of Karnataka at Lok Bhavan in Bengaluru. Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot administered the oath, and G. Parameshwara took oath as Deputy Chief Minister. Shivakumar succeeded Siddaramaiah after being elected leader of the Congress Legislature Party.

### Key Points:

- **New Chief Minister:** D. K. Shivakumar became Karnataka's 18th Chief Minister. He is a senior Congress leader and an eight-time MLA from Kanakapura.
- **Oath Ceremony:** The oath ceremony was held at Lok Bhavan in Bengaluru. Along with Shivakumar, several ministers were also inducted into the new Council of Ministers.
- **Deputy Chief Minister:** G. Parameshwara was sworn in as Deputy Chief Minister. The cabinet formation marked a leadership transition within the Karnataka government.
- **Political Background:** Shivakumar earlier served as Deputy Chief Minister under Siddaramaiah. He was chosen as the Congress Legislature Party leader before taking charge as Chief Minister.

### Government Launches PMRC Scheme 2026 to Attract Top Indian-Origin Researchers

**In the News:** The Ministry of Education launched the Prime Minister Research Chair Scheme 2026 to attract accomplished Indian-origin researchers, scientists and technology leaders working abroad. The scheme aims to embed world-class researchers in premier Indian institutions. Applications have been opened through the official PMRC portal.

#### Key Points:

- **About PMRC:** The Prime Minister Research Chair Scheme is a national research initiative for Indian-origin researchers. It aims to strengthen India's higher education and research ecosystem.
- **Eligible Applicants:** The scheme is open to Indian nationals working abroad, Overseas Citizen of India cardholders and Persons of Indian Origin. Applicants must have strong achievements in research, innovation or technology.
- **Research Support:** Selected researchers will receive fellowship support, research grants and access to laboratories. They will also get opportunities to collaborate with leading government institutions in India.
- **Categories of Engagement:** The scheme includes Young Research Fellows, Senior Research Fellows and Research Chairs. These categories cover early-career researchers, experienced researchers and globally recognised research leaders.

### Lokhande Prashant Sitaram Appointed CBSE Chairperson, Varun Bhardwaj Named Secretary

**In the News:** The Central Government appointed senior IAS officer Lokhande Prashant Sitaram as Chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education. Varun Bhardwaj was appointed as the new Secretary of CBSE. The appointments came after a reshuffle linked with concerns over the On-Screen Marking System.

#### Key Points:

- **New CBSE Chairperson:** Lokhande Prashant Sitaram, a 2001-batch AGMUT cadre IAS officer, was appointed CBSE Chairperson. He will serve in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.
- **New CBSE Secretary:** Varun Bhardwaj was named the new Secretary of CBSE. He replaced Himanshu Gupta after the reshuffle in the Board's top administration.
- **Previous Officials:** The appointments followed the transfer of former CBSE Chairperson Rahul Singh and Secretary Himanshu Gupta. The changes came during scrutiny of the Board's marking-related systems.
- **CBSE Role:** CBSE is one of India's major national school education boards. It conducts board examinations, frames academic policies and manages affiliated schools across India and abroad.

### Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai Appointed as Next Chief Justice of Patna High Court

**In the News:** The Central Government notified the appointment of Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai as Chief Justice of the Patna High Court. She was serving as a judge of the Sikkim High Court before the appointment. The Supreme Court Collegium had recommended her name for elevation as Chief Justice of Patna High Court.

#### Key Points:

- **Appointment Notified:** Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai was appointed Chief Justice of the Patna High Court. The appointment followed the recommendation made by the Supreme Court Collegium.
- **Constitutional Basis:** The appointment was made by the President under Article 217(1) of the Constitution. This provision deals with the appointment and conditions of High Court judges.
- **Previous Position:** Justice Rai was serving as a judge of the Sikkim High Court. She is recorded as the first woman from Sikkim to be elevated as a judge of the Sikkim High Court.
- **Patna High Court:** She was appointed after the retirement of incumbent Chief Justice Sangam Kumar Sahoo. Her appointment adds to women's representation in senior judicial offices.

### India's 1st Blue Bond

**In the News:** Sagarmala Finance Corporation is preparing to issue India's first blue bond to finance maritime and coastal infrastructure projects. The government-owned maritime lender is under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. The proposed bond will diversify funding sources and support ocean-linked sustainable infrastructure.

#### Key Points:

- **About Blue Bond:** A blue bond is a debt instrument used to raise funds for ocean, water and coastal sustainability projects. It is linked with the broader blue economy and marine infrastructure.
- **Issuer:** Sagarmala Finance Corporation is preparing the proposed issue. It is a government-owned maritime-focused lender under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- **Fundraising Plan:** The proposed issue may raise up to ₹1,000 crore, including a greenshoe option. The funds are expected to support maritime and coastal infrastructure financing.
- **Maritime Finance Link:** Sagarmala Finance Corporation became a licensed NBFC in 2025. It also manages the Maritime Development Fund and supports long-term maritime sector financing.

### Fotu La Tunnel Project Approved in Ladakh

**In the News:** The Union Government approved the Fotu La Tunnel project in Ladakh to improve all-weather connectivity on the Srinagar-Leh highway. The project involves construction of a unidirectional twin-tube tunnel with approach roads. It is expected to improve travel reliability and reduce difficulties caused by high-altitude weather conditions.

#### Key Points:

- **Project Location:** The tunnel will be constructed at Fotu La Pass in Ladakh. Fotu La is located on the strategic Srinagar-Leh highway, which is vital for civilian and defence movement.
- **Project Cost:** The project has been approved at a cost of about ₹1,196 crore to ₹1,198 crore. It includes a twin-tube tunnel and related approach-road works.
- **Tunnel Structure:** The project length is reported at around 2.65 km, including a 1.96-km tunnel and 0.69 km of approach roads. The tunnel will improve movement across difficult mountain terrain.
- **Connectivity Benefits:** The tunnel is expected to shorten travel distance and improve all-weather access to Ladakh. It will also support safer and more reliable movement on the high-altitude route.

### Amendments to the Immigration and Foreigners Rules, 2025

**In the News:** The Central Government notified the Immigration and Foreigners (Amendment) Rules, 2026, making changes to the Immigration and Foreigners Rules, 2025. The amendments revise registration timelines for foreigners seeking to extend their stay in India. They also introduce an online appeal mechanism under the Bureau of Immigration.

#### Key Points:

- **Revised Registration Timeline:** The new rule eases the registration timeline by allowing foreigners to register any time within the 180-day visa period if they wish to extend their stay in India. This replaces the earlier requirement of

completing registration within 14 days after the end of the 180-day period. However, late registration beyond the permitted period is now allowed only in emergent circumstances, making delayed compliance more restricted.

- **Late Registration Rule:** Late registration beyond the prescribed period will be permitted only in emergent circumstances. This makes timely registration more important for foreign nationals staying in India beyond the original permitted period. The provision aims to improve monitoring of foreigners' stay and compliance status.
- **Online Appeal System:** An online appeal system has been added for the first time under the amended rules. A person affected by an order can file an appeal before the Commissioner of the Bureau of Immigration. The appeal must be filed within 30 days from receiving the order.
- **Decision Timeline:** The Commissioner must decide the appeal after giving the affected person an opportunity of hearing. The matter is required to be resolved within 60 days. This creates a defined administrative process for immigration-related grievances.

### Assam-Meghalaya Border Conflict

**In the News:** The Assam-Meghalaya border issue came into focus after tensions in the disputed Lapangap area along the inter-state boundary. Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma met Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in Dispur to discuss the situation. Officials and local representatives later agreed on steps to maintain peace and allow cultivation activities to continue.

#### Key Points:

- **Disputed Area:** The recent tension centred on Lapangap in Meghalaya's West Jaintia Hills and adjoining areas near Assam's West Karbi Anglong. The dispute involved land ownership, cultivation rights and restrictions on farming activities in the area of difference.
- **Chief Ministers' Meeting:** Conrad K. Sangma and Himanta Biswa Sarma held discussions to ease tensions and maintain law and order. The meeting was part of continuing efforts to seek an amicable settlement of unresolved border issues between the two States.
- **Joint Cultivation Understanding:** A high-level meeting agreed that Lapangap villagers would continue paddy cultivation in the foothills. Villagers from Tahpat would continue seasonal cultivation such as banana, pineapple, ginger and other crops on hilltops and slopes.
- **Peace and Order:** Both sides reaffirmed commitment to peace, harmony and tranquillity in the disputed area. They also agreed to avoid activities that could disturb law and order while the permanent boundary issue remains under consideration.
- **Border Dispute Context:** Assam and Meghalaya have long-standing boundary disputes in several areas after Meghalaya was carved out as a separate State. The Lapangap development shows how local land-use issues can become wider inter-state administrative and security concerns.

### Gujarat's new police range for Pakistan border, with implications for national security

**In the News:** The Gujarat Government approved a new Banaskantha Police Range by bifurcating the existing Border Range along the India-Pakistan border. The new range will be headquartered at Palanpur. The move aims to improve supervision, border policing, coordination with security agencies and administrative response in sensitive border districts.

#### Key Points:

- **New Banaskantha Range:** Gujarat created the Banaskantha Police Range as a separate jurisdiction. It will include Banaskantha, Patan and Vav-Tharad districts, which are important because of their proximity to Pakistan and Rajasthan.
- **Existing Border Range:** The earlier Border Range included West Kutch, East Kutch, Patan and Banaskantha. After reorganisation, the Border Range will focus mainly on West Kutch, East Kutch and Morbi, improving supervision of the Kutch border sector.

- **Border and Coastal Stretch:** The earlier Border Range covered around 406 km of the India-Pakistan land border and about 238 km of coastline. This large jurisdiction created difficulties in inspection, command, supervision and coordination.
- **Administrative Rationale:** The State cited the creation of Vav-Tharad district and the large distance between Kutch and Banaskantha as reasons for the restructuring. Two Inspector General-level officers will now supervise different parts of the sensitive border region.

### FSSAI Launches Official Vegan Logo to Improve Consumer Awareness and Transparency

**In the News:** The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India notified the Food Safety and Standards (Vegan Foods) Amendment Regulations, 2026. The amendments introduce a standardised vegan logo for approved vegan food packages. The new labelling requirement will come into force from July 1, 2027, to improve consumer clarity and prevent misleading claims.

#### Key Points:

- **About Vegan Logo:** The standardised vegan logo will be used on approved vegan food packages. It is meant to help consumers quickly identify genuine vegan products and make informed food choices.
- **Regulatory Framework:** The amendment revises the Food Safety and Standards (Vegan Foods) Regulations, 2022. It strengthens the rules for definition, labelling, approval and logo endorsement of vegan food products.
- **FBO Approval Requirement:** Food Business Operators must obtain approval before using the vegan logo on products. This ensures that only compliant products carry the official vegan designation.
- **Consumer Transparency:** The logo aims to reduce confusion in the growing vegan food market. Uniform logo specifications will also help maintain consistency across food packages.
- **Role of FSSAI:** FSSAI is India's apex food safety regulator under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It regulates food standards, food safety compliance, labelling and consumer protection in the food sector

### India Reaches Landmark of 100 Ramsar Sites with Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary

**In the News:** India reached the milestone of 100 Ramsar sites after Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary, also known as Surha Tal, in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh, was designated as a Wetland of International Importance. The designation was made on World Environment Day and was welcomed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. With this, India became the country with the highest number of Ramsar sites in Asia and ranked third globally after the United Kingdom and Mexico.

#### Key Points:

- **100th Ramsar Site:** Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary became India's 100th Ramsar site. The wetland is located at Surha Tal in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh. It is rich in avifaunal biodiversity and attracts both migratory and resident bird species.
- **About the Sanctuary:** Jai Prakash Narayan Bird Sanctuary was established in 1991. It covers an area of 34.32 square kilometres and is governed by the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department. The site is important for bird conservation, wetland ecology and local biodiversity protection.
- **Uttar Pradesh Milestone:** This became the 13th Ramsar site of Uttar Pradesh, adding to the State's growing list of internationally recognised wetlands. Uttar Pradesh now has the highest number of Ramsar sites among Indian States. The certificate was presented by Uttar Pradesh Forest Minister Arun Kumar Saxena to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the World Environment Day event.
- **India's Global Ranking:** With 100 Ramsar sites, India now ranks third globally after the United Kingdom, which has 176 Ramsar sites, and Mexico, which has 144 Ramsar sites. India also has the highest number of Ramsar sites in Asia, making this a major wetland-conservation milestone.
- **Ramsar Convention and Expansion:** India joined the Ramsar Convention on February 1, 1982. Earlier in 2026, Patna Bird Sanctuary in Etah, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhari-Dhand in Kutch, Gujarat, became India's 98th and 99th Ramsar sites. India's Ramsar network expanded from 26 sites in 2014 to 100 sites in 2026, marking more than 280% growth.

- **Ecological Importance:** Ramsar sites are wetlands recognised for their international ecological importance. Wetlands support biodiversity, groundwater recharge, flood control, water security and climate resilience. Their conservation is important for ecological balance, sustainable livelihoods and protection of migratory bird habitats.

### 73rd NEC Plenary Meeting

**In the News:** The 73rd Plenary Meeting of the North Eastern Council was held at the State Convention Centre in Shillong, Meghalaya, on June 4, 2026. The meeting was chaired by Union Home Minister and NEC Chairman Amit Shah. Union Minister for DoNER and NEC Vice-Chairman Jyotiraditya M. Scindia highlighted the development roadmap for the North Eastern Region aligned with Viksit Bharat 2047.

#### Key Points:

- **About NEC:** The North Eastern Council was established under the North Eastern Council Act, 1971. It serves as the apex regional planning body for the North Eastern Region. The Council supports coordinated development, inter-state cooperation and region-specific planning for the eight North Eastern States.
- **Meeting Participation:** The plenary was attended by Governors, Chief Ministers and senior officials from all eight North Eastern States. Minister of State for DoNER Sukanta Majumdar, Meghalaya Governor C. H. Vijay 2047.
- **High-Level Task Forces:** Eight High-Level Task Forces presented sectoral action plans for the North East. Their focus areas included investment promotion, agriculture and horticulture, tourism, sports, infrastructure and connectivity, economic corridors, self-reliance in milk, eggs, fish and meat, and handloom and handicrafts.
- **DoNER's Role:** The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region was described as a facilitator, coordinator and bridge for regional growth. Its Three-C framework of Connect, Converge and Catalyse was highlighted as a guiding approach for faster and coordinated implementation of development projects.
- **Vision 2047 Link:** The meeting discussed the North East Vision Plan 2047 in alignment with the national goal of Viksit Bharat 2047. The plan seeks to transform the region into a hub of connectivity, economic growth, innovation, sustainability and cultural prosperity by the centenary year of India's independence.

### India Launches E85 Fuel: 85% Ethanol Blend to Reduce Oil Imports and Emissions

**In the News:** India launched E85 fuel, a petrol blend containing 85% ethanol and 15% petrol, to promote cleaner mobility and reduce dependence on imported crude oil. Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said E85 would be sold at a lower price than existing E20 fuel. The rollout is linked with India's ethanol-blending roadmap, flex-fuel vehicle adoption and expansion of E85 retail infrastructure.

#### Key Points:

- **About E85 Fuel:** E85 is a high-ethanol fuel blend containing 85% ethanol and 15% petrol. It is meant for flex-fuel vehicles capable of running on higher ethanol blends without engine damage. The fuel has a Research Octane Number above 108, supporting better combustion quality in compatible engines.
- **Price Advantage:** The fuel is expected to be around ₹20 per litre cheaper than regular E20 fuel. The lower price is intended to encourage consumers and automakers to shift gradually toward higher ethanol-based mobility. The price advantage also supports wider adoption of flex-fuel transport.
- **Flex-Fuel Vehicles:** Hero MotoCorp launched flex-fuel versions of Splendor+ and HF Deluxe, capable of running on petrol blended with up to 85% ethanol. Maruti Suzuki also unveiled the Wagon R Flex Fuel as India's first mass-market flex-fuel passenger car. The Wagon R Flex Fuel is capable of running on E20 to E85 ethanol blends.
- **Retail Rollout Plan:** The first phase of E85 rollout will focus on selected urban corridors. Around 50 to 100 outlets are planned across Delhi-NCR and the Mumbai-Pune-Nagpur belt. The government has also indicated a target of 5,000 E85 retail pumps by December 2027.
- **Energy and Environment Link:** Ethanol blending helps reduce India's dependence on imported petroleum and supports domestic ethanol production from sugarcane, maize and other feedstocks. India is also working toward a 26% ethanol blending target by 2030-31. E85 is estimated to produce around 61% lower greenhouse gas emissions than petrol.

### India's 7th Regional Meteorological Centre Inaugurated in Jammu

**In the News:** Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated India's seventh Regional Meteorological Centre in Jammu. The centre will serve Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. It is intended to strengthen district-level forecasts, mountain weather warnings and disaster preparedness in the north-western Himalayan region.

#### Key Points:

- **New RMC in Jammu:** The Jammu centre is India's seventh Regional Meteorological Centre. It expands the India Meteorological Department's regional forecasting network for Himalayan and high-altitude areas.
- **Coverage Area:** The centre will provide services for Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. These regions face weather risks such as snow, flash floods, landslides, cloudbursts and temperature extremes.
- **Disaster Preparedness:** The RMC will improve early warnings for flash floods and mountain weather events. Such forecasting is important for public safety, agriculture, tourism, pilgrimage routes and road connectivity.
- **District-Level Forecasting:** The centre is expected to provide more localised weather information. District-level forecasts help administrations plan emergency response and issue timely alerts during severe weather conditions.

### Delhi Gets 18 New Namoo Oxygen Parks Under 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' Campaign

**In the News:** Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta inaugurated 18 Namoo Oxygen Parks in Delhi on World Environment Day 2026. The initiative was launched under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign. Delhi has also set a target to develop 100 Oxygen Parks and plant 15 lakh trees in the year.

#### Key Points:

- **Namoo Oxygen Parks:** Eighteen Namoo Oxygen Parks were inaugurated across Delhi. These parks are intended to increase green spaces, improve local air quality and support urban environmental restoration.
- **Campaign Link:** The initiative is linked with the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign. The campaign encourages citizens to plant trees in honour of their mothers and participate in environmental protection.
- **Delhi's Green Target:** Delhi aims to develop 100 Oxygen Parks across the city. The government also announced a plan to plant 15 lakh trees during the year to expand the city's green cover.
- **Urban Ecology Role:** Oxygen Parks can support biodiversity, provide cooling spaces and reduce urban heat stress. They are also useful for public recreation and local environmental awareness.
- **World Environment Day Context:** The launch took place on World Environment Day 2026. The timing connects the initiative with wider climate, pollution-control and urban greening efforts.

### SkyCast System

**In the News:** India's first SkyCast System was inaugurated at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi, around May 29-30, 2026. The system was launched at Glide Path 10 to provide real-time aviation weather intelligence. The next SkyCast facility is planned at Jewar Airport, followed by expansion across other airports.

#### Key Points:

- **About SkyCast:** SkyCast is an advanced integrated aviation weather monitoring system. It provides real-time atmospheric intelligence to pilots, airport operators and air traffic stakeholders. The system supports safer take-off, landing and runway operations during difficult weather.
- **Mission Mausam Link:** The system has been developed under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mission Mausam initiative. It is co-developed with scientists from the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology. The project strengthens India's weather-smart aviation infrastructure.
- **Technology Suite:** SkyCast includes advanced instruments such as Radar Wind Profiler, SODAR, Microwave Radiometer, ground-based Fog Aerosol Spectrometer and cloud lidar-based ceilometer. These instruments help track fog, aerosols, turbulence, moisture, visibility and atmospheric conditions.
- **Aviation Standards:** The system is designed to meet international aviation-weather standards, including ICAO and FAA norms. It will help reduce weather-linked disruptions such as delays, diversions and cancellations. It is especially useful for airports affected by fog and low visibility.

- **Expansion Plan:** The first system has been installed at IGI Airport, New Delhi, and the next facility is planned at Jewar Airport. The system will later be expanded to other airports. India became the 19th country to deploy such an advanced integrated aviation weather monitoring system.

### MAHA Water Mission

**In the News:** The ANRF-Ministry of Jal Shakti MAHA Water Mission was launched on June 1, 2026, to support innovation in India's water sector. MAHA stands for Missions for Advancement in High-Impact Areas. The mission will support startups, MSMEs, universities, national laboratories, research organisations and industry partners working on scalable water solutions.

#### Key Points:

- **About the Mission:** The MAHA Water Mission is a national platform to accelerate technology development in the water sector. It connects science, entrepreneurship, academia, industry and grassroots implementation. It aims to support field-ready and scalable solutions for India's water challenges.
- **Funding Outlay:** The mission has a projected outlay of ₹200 crore over five years. The funding will be jointly contributed by the Anusandhan National Research Foundation and the Ministry of Jal Shakti. Each consortium may receive support of up to ₹20 crore.
- **Supported Participants:** The programme will support multidisciplinary consortia involving universities, national laboratories, research organisations, startups, MSMEs and industry partners. This widens research funding beyond traditional academic institutions and encourages applied innovation.
- **Focus Areas:** The mission addresses water scarcity, groundwater depletion, water quality, climate-induced water stress and sustainable water-resource management. Key areas include water treatment, medical technologies, 6G communications and other high-impact technology applications linked with water-sector innovation.
- **Institutional Additions:** Union Jal Shakti Minister C. R. Patil was present at the launch. The event also saw the signing of an MoU between the Department of Water Resources and ISRO. It also included the launch of the JSJB-CTR Portal and App.

## INTERNATIONAL

### India-Oman CEPA Comes Into Force from June 1

**In the News:** The India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement came into force on June 1, 2026. The agreement gives Indian exporters wide duty-free access to Oman's market and strengthens cooperation in goods, services, investment and digital trade. It is expected to deepen India's economic engagement with the Gulf region.

#### Key Points:

- **About CEPA:** The India-Oman CEPA is a comprehensive trade agreement covering goods, services and wider economic cooperation. It is broader than a basic free trade agreement and aims to strengthen bilateral trade and investment flows.
- **Market Access:** Oman has offered zero-duty access on 98.08% of its tariff lines, covering 99.38% of India's exports to Oman. India has placed 2,789 tariff lines in the exclusion list to protect sensitive domestic sectors. The agreement will reduce tariff barriers and improve the competitiveness of Indian exports in the Omani market.
- **Key Beneficiary Sectors:** The agreement is expected to support food and beverages, agriculture, textiles, chemicals, petrochemicals, engineering goods and pharmaceuticals. Services and professional mobility are also expected to gain from improved access.
- **Certificate of Origin:** Preferential certificates of origin for exports to Oman are to be issued through the Trade Connect portal. These certificates are required for exporters to claim duty concessions under the agreement.

### Malaysia Enforces Social Media Ban for Under-16 Users



**In the News:** Malaysia began enforcing new rules restricting children under 16 from owning social media accounts from June 1, 2026. The policy applies to major platforms and requires age-verification systems to prevent underage account creation. The regulation is part of Malaysia's wider push to reduce harmful online exposure for minors.

#### Key Points:

- **Age Restriction:** Children below 16 years are not allowed to own social media accounts under the new Malaysian rule. The measure targets large platforms with significant user bases, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.
- **Platform Duties:** Social media companies must introduce age-verification systems and block underage users. They are also expected to provide reporting mechanisms for harmful content and adopt safety-by-design protections for children.
- **Regulatory Objective:** The policy aims to protect minors from harmful content, cyberbullying, grooming, scams and manipulative platform features. Malaysia has stepped up scrutiny of online platforms after rising concerns over harmful digital content.
- **Penalty Framework:** Non-compliant companies may face fines, while parents are not penalised if children bypass restrictions. The regulatory burden is placed mainly on digital platforms and their compliance systems

#### India Signs BrahMos Missile Deal with Vietnam

**In the News:** India signed a deal with Vietnam to supply BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles. The agreement marks another major step in India's defence export outreach to Southeast Asia. BrahMos is jointly developed by India and Russia and is known for its supersonic speed and precision-strike capability.

#### Key Points:

- **India-Vietnam Deal:** The agreement covers the supply of BrahMos missile systems to Vietnam. It also includes training and logistical support, making it a complete defence cooperation package.
- **About BrahMos:** BrahMos is a supersonic cruise missile jointly developed by India and Russia. Its name is derived from the Brahmaputra and Moskva rivers, representing the Indian and Russian partnership.
- **Missile Variants:** BrahMos has land, sea and air-launched variants. The naval version can be deployed from warships for anti-ship missions, making it important for maritime security and coastal defence.
- **Southeast Asia Outreach:** India had earlier exported BrahMos to the Philippines, which became the first foreign buyer of the missile system. The Vietnam deal further expands India's defence cooperation in Southeast Asia.
- **Regional Defence Link:** India's Defence Secretary confirmed the Vietnam deal and also indicated that negotiations with Indonesia for a similar missile agreement were nearing completion. This reflects growing demand for Indian strategic defence platforms.

#### Did Pope Leo's AI encyclical give Anthropic a legitimacy boost ahead of its IPO push?

**In the News:** Debate intensified after Pope Leo XIV released his AI-focused encyclical Magnifica Humanitas and Anthropic co-founder Chris Olah appeared at the Vatican event. The document warned against AI harms linked to work, war, inequality, corporate concentration and environmental stress. The timing drew attention because Anthropic has filed for USIPO a major IPO and has built its public image around AI safety.

#### Key Points:

- **About the Encyclical:** Pope Leo XIV's Magnifica Humanitas addressed the social and ethical consequences of artificial intelligence. It warned that AI is not merely a technical issue because it affects rights, opportunities, freedom, labour and social structures.
- **Anthropic's Vatican Presence:** Anthropic co-founder Chris Olah appeared alongside Pope Leo XIV during the Vatican event. This drew scrutiny because Anthropic is a major AI developer whose technology operates within the same industry risks identified by the encyclical.
- **Legitimacy Debate:** Critics argued that Anthropic's engagement with the Vatican could strengthen its pro-safety image without resolving deeper concerns over labour displacement, data-centre sustainability and corporate power. Supporters viewed the engagement as a useful dialogue between religious ethics and frontier AI development.

- **IPO Context:** Anthropic has confidentially filed for a US initial public offering, making its public credibility and investor-facing reputation especially important. Reports noted that the company could become one of the most closely watched AI listings as investor interest in frontier AI remains high.
- **Key Ethical Concerns:** The encyclical called for robust legal frameworks, independent oversight and human responsibility in decisions affected by AI. It also warned against leaving AI governance mainly to profit-driven firms and concentrated private power.

### Bangladesh Elected to Lead 81st UN General Assembly Session

**In the News:** Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman was elected President of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly. He secured 99 votes against Cyprus candidate Andreas S. Kakouris, who received 91 votes. The election marks Bangladesh's return to the UNGA presidency after nearly four decades.

#### Key Points:

- **Election Result:** Dr Khalilur Rahman of Bangladesh was elected President of the 81st UN General Assembly session. He defeated Cyprus candidate Andreas S. Kakouris in a contested vote at the United Nations.
- **Bangladesh's UNGA Role:** Bangladesh has held the UNGA presidency earlier as well, with the previous instance recorded in 1986-87. The 2026 election gives Bangladesh a major leadership role in the world's main deliberative body.
- **About UNGA President:** The President of the General Assembly presides over UNGA meetings and guides the session's agenda. The office is important for managing debates, high-level discussions and consensus-building among UN member states.
- **81st Session Timeline:** Dr Khalilur Rahman is expected to assume the role at the start of the 81st UNGA session in September 2026. The high-level general debate will bring together heads of state, governments and senior representatives.

### Pope Appoints First Lay Woman to Vatican Department

**In the News:** Pope Leo XIV appointed Maria Montserrat Alvarado as Prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for Communication. She is currently President and Chief Operating Officer of EWTN News and will succeed Paolo Ruffini. The appointment is significant because she is the first laywoman, meaning a non-religious sister, to head a Vatican dicastery.

#### Key Points:

- **New Appointment:** Maria Montserrat Alvarado has been appointed Prefect of the Dicastery for Communication. She will take charge from November 2026 and replace Paolo Ruffini, who had held the position since 2018.
- **First Laywoman Prefect:** Alvarado is the first laywoman to head a Vatican dicastery. This distinction is important because Sister Simona Brambilla had already become the first woman to head a Vatican dicastery in January 2025.
- **About the Dicastery:** The Dicastery for Communication oversees the Vatican's media and communication system. Its work includes the Vatican news portal, radio services, newspaper, press office and other official communication platforms.
- **Professional Background:** Alvarado is originally from Mexico City and has been associated with EWTN News. She became President and Chief Operating Officer of EWTN News in 2023 before being named to the Vatican role.

### Beaufort Castle

**In the News:** Beaufort Castle in southern Lebanon came into focus after Israeli forces reportedly seized the 900-year-old fortress and the surrounding strategic ridge. The medieval site is located near Nabatiyeh and overlooks the Litani River. Its capture drew attention because the castle has long held military, historical and cultural importance in the Israel-Lebanon conflict zone.

#### Key Points:

- **Location:** Beaufort Castle is located in southern Lebanon near Nabatiyeh and close to the Israeli border. It stands on a high ridge overlooking the Litani River and provides views across parts of southern Lebanon and northern Israel.
- **Local Name:** The castle is also known as Qalaat al-Shaqif or Shaqif Arnoun. The name is linked with the steep and rocky landscape around the fortress.
- **Historical Background:** The fortress was originally built by Crusaders in the 12th century over earlier fortifications. Over time, it was controlled by several powers, including Crusaders, Saladin's forces, Mamluks, Ottomans, French Mandate authorities, the PLO and Israel.
- **Strategic Importance:** Beaufort Castle has served as a military position for centuries because of its height and location. Its ridge gives tactical visibility over surrounding areas, making it important in southern Lebanon's security geography.
- **Recent Context:** Israeli forces had previously captured the castle in 1982 and controlled it until their withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000. Its recent seizure again placed the site at the centre of military developments involving Israel and Hezbollah.

### Khalilur Rahman Elected President of 81st UNGA Session

**In the News:** Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman was elected President of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly. He secured 99 votes and defeated Cyprus candidate Andreas S. Kakouris, who received 91 votes. The 81st UNGA session will begin in September 2026, marking Bangladesh's return to the post after nearly four decades.

#### Key Points:

- **Election Result:** Dr Khalilur Rahman was elected President of the 81st UN General Assembly session in a contested vote at the UN headquarters. He defeated Cyprus candidate Andreas S. Kakouris, making the result significant for Bangladesh's diplomatic profile.
- **Bangladesh's UNGA Presidency:** Bangladesh last held the UNGA presidency during the 1986-87 session. The earlier president from Bangladesh was Humayun Rashid Choudhury, who served as President of the 41st United Nations General Assembly.
- **Role of UNGA President:** The President of the General Assembly presides over UNGA meetings and guides discussions among all UN member states. The office helps manage agenda-setting, high-level debates, procedural coordination and consensus-building.
- **Session Timeline:** The 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly will begin on September 8, 2026. The high-level general debate is scheduled to begin on September 22, bringing together heads of state, governments and senior representatives.
- **About UNGA:** The United Nations General Assembly is the main deliberative body of the United Nations. It includes all UN member states and discusses issues such as peace, development, human rights, climate action and international cooperation.

### UN General Assembly Elects 5 New Non-Permanent Members to Security Council for 2027–2028

**In the News:** The United Nations General Assembly elected Austria, Kyrgyzstan, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, and Zimbabwe as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council. They will serve two-year terms beginning January 1, 2027. Kyrgyzstan secured its first-ever Security Council seat after defeating the Philippines in the Asia-Pacific Group contest.

#### Key Points:

- **Newly Elected Members:** Austria, Kyrgyzstan, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, and Zimbabwe were elected to the 15-member UN Security Council. They will join the Council as non-permanent members for the 2027-2028 term.
- **Regional Representation:** Zimbabwe will replace Somalia, Trinidad and Tobago will replace Panama, and Kyrgyzstan will replace Pakistan. Austria and Portugal will replace Denmark and Greece from the Western European and Others Group.
- **Kyrgyzstan's Milestone:** Kyrgyzstan won its first-ever seat on the UN Security Council. It defeated the Philippines after four rounds of voting in the Asia-Pacific Group election.
- **UNSC Structure:** The Security Council has 15 members, including five permanent members and ten elected non-permanent members. The permanent members are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

- **Role of Security Council:** The UN Security Council is responsible for maintaining international peace and security. It can impose sanctions, authorise peacekeeping missions and approve the use of force under the UN framework.

### India and UK Launch Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory

**In the News:** India and the United Kingdom launched the India-UK Critical Minerals Global Supply Chain Observatory in New Delhi on June 4, 2026. The initiative was launched by Union Minister of Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy and UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper. It aims to strengthen supply-chain intelligence for critical minerals used in clean energy, advanced manufacturing and emerging technologies.

#### Key Points:

- **About the Observatory:** The Global Supply Chain Observatory is a data-driven platform for monitoring critical mineral supply chains. It will track global supply risks, market disruptions, mineral availability and supply-chain trends. The platform is designed to support informed policy decisions and industrial planning.
- **Institutional Partners:** The initiative is a joint effort of TEXMiN at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad and the University of Cambridge. TEXMiN stands for Technology Innovation in Exploration and Mining Foundation. It was set up by the Department of Science and Technology at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad.
- **Strategic Importance:** Critical minerals are essential for clean energy systems, batteries, electric vehicles, semiconductors and advanced manufacturing. The observatory will help identify vulnerabilities in global mineral supply chains. It will support secure, diversified and reliable access to minerals needed for future technologies.
- **Policy Linkage:** The initiative supports India's National Critical Mineral Mission and the India-UK Technology Security Initiative. It reflects growing cooperation between India and the UK in mineral security, technology resilience and sustainable industrial supply chains. It also strengthens research-led collaboration in strategic resource planning.
- **Launch Background:** The observatory was announced during the India-UK Prime Ministerial engagement in October 2025. It was later formalised through a Research Collaboration Agreement signed in March 2026. The launch in New Delhi marked an important step in converting the bilateral understanding into an operational platform.

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

### Tamil Nadu Farmer Honoured as UN FAO Soil Farmer Hero for Sustainable Farming Success

**In the News:** Tamil Nadu farmer Valluvan from the Pollachi region came into focus during the May 30, 2026 Save Soil-Cauvery Calling press conference, where the 13.4-crore-trees milestone was announced. Valluvan had earlier been recognised by the FAO in 2024 under its "Farming Heroes - Guardians of Soil Health" recognition. His farming model is linked with soil restoration, agroforestry and climate-resilient agriculture.

#### Key Points:

- **About the Recognition:** Valluvan was recognised under the FAO's "Farming Heroes - Guardians of Soil Health" initiative. The recognition highlighted farmers using practical soil-management methods to improve land health, reduce ecological stress and strengthen agricultural sustainability.
- **Shift from Coconut Monocropping:** Valluvan earlier faced losses from coconut cultivation because of high input costs and limited returns. He shifted from a single-crop system to multi-crop and multi-tier tree-based farming, reducing dependence on one crop.
- **Sustainable Farming Model:** His farm follows a tree-based agriculture approach with multiple crops grown together. Such systems help improve soil cover, support biodiversity, reduce erosion and make farms more resilient to weather and water stress.
- **Save Soil-Cauvery Calling Link:** Valluvan's work has been associated with the Save Soil-Cauvery Calling initiative, which promotes tree-based farming and soil restoration in the Cauvery basin. The May 2026 press conference highlighted the wider milestone of 13.4 crore trees under the movement.

## Meet the Indian Students Who Won the Earth Prize 2026 with Plas-Stick Innovation

**In the News:** Three Indian students, Vivaan Chhawchharia, Ariana Agarwal and Avyana Mehta, won The Earth Prize 2026 for their Plas-Stick innovation. Their solution uses tamarind seed-based biodegradable material to remove microplastics from water. The achievement brought global attention to youth-led environmental innovation from India.

### Key Points:

- **About the Winners:** Vivaan Chhawchharia, Ariana Agarwal and Avyana Mehta are 16-year-old Indian students recognised for developing Plas-Stick. Their project won The Earth Prize 2026, a global environmental competition for young innovators. Their achievement highlights India's growing participation in student-led sustainability solutions. It is the first Indian team ever to win the global prize.
- **What is Plas-Stick:** Plas-Stick is a biodegradable material made from tamarind seed waste. It is designed to attract microplastic particles present in contaminated water. Once the particles clump together, they can be removed with the help of a magnet.
- **Microplastic Problem:** Microplastics are tiny plastic particles that contaminate water and are difficult to remove through ordinary filtration systems. They are a growing concern for drinking water safety, aquatic ecosystems and public health. Plas-Stick addresses this problem through a low-cost and chemical-free method.
- **Technology and Support:** The project used tamarind seed powder as the main raw material, making it suitable for a country where tamarind waste is widely available. The students also received guidance from professionals associated with IIT Guwahati during development. The innovation is relevant for rural and low-resource water treatment.

## Idris Elba Receives Knighthood from King Charles III, Becomes Sir Idris Elba

**In the News:** British actor Idris Elba received a knighthood from King Charles III at Windsor Castle. The honour was awarded for his services to young people and his wider contribution to public life. After receiving the honour, Idris Elba is formally entitled to use the title "Sir".

### Key Points:

- **Knighthood Ceremony:** Idris Elba was knighted by King Charles III during an investiture ceremony at Windsor Castle. The honour places him among public figures recognised through the United Kingdom's honours system.
- **Reason for Honour:** Elba received the knighthood for his services to young people. His work includes youth advocacy, community empowerment and support through initiatives such as the Elba Hope Foundation.
- **Title and Significance:** A knighthood is one of the United Kingdom's high civilian honours granted by the monarch. After receiving the honour, a male recipient may use the title "Sir" before his name.
- **Professional Profile:** Idris Elba is known for major roles in *The Wire* and *Luther*. He has also worked in films, music and public campaigns, making him a widely recognised British cultural figure.
- **King's Trust Link:** Elba earlier received support from The King's Trust, formerly The Prince's Trust, to attend drama training. This link is notable because King Charles's youth charity played a role in supporting his early artistic career.

## SCIENCE AND TECH

### RudraM-II Missile Successfully Flight-Tested

**In the News:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Indian Air Force successfully conducted flight tests of the RudraM-II air-to-surface missile. The missile was tested from an airborne platform under extreme release conditions. The trial validated the performance of key subsystems and demonstrated the maturity of India's indigenous advanced weapon technologies.

### Key Points:

- **About RudraM-II:** RudraM-II is an indigenous air-to-surface missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation. It is designed for precision strike roles from fighter aircraft. The missile is part of India's growing inventory of advanced air-launched weapon systems. Tested from Su-30 MK-I over the Bay of Bengal, integrated with DRDL, HEMRL, ARDE, ITR Chandipur, HAL; intended for Suppression of Enemy Air Defences (SEAD).
- **Agencies Involved:** The successful test was conducted jointly by DRDO and the Indian Air Force. The trial involved coordination between missile developers, test-range teams, aircraft operators and associated defence industry partners.
- **Test Conditions:** The missile was tested under extreme release conditions from an airborne platform. Such testing checks how the missile performs after release from an aircraft under demanding flight parameters.
- **Subsystem Validation:** The flight test established the capability of critical subsystems during the missile's trajectory. Range instruments recorded flight data and confirmed that the trial objectives were achieved.

### NASA Ends MAVEN Mars Mission

**In the News:** NASA officially ended the MAVEN Mars mission after losing contact with the spacecraft for several months. MAVEN, short for Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution, had studied the Martian atmosphere for more than 11 years. The spacecraft far exceeded its original one-year mission and contributed major data on how Mars lost much of its atmosphere.

### Key Points:

- **About MAVEN:** MAVEN stands for Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution. It was launched in 2013 and entered orbit around Mars in 2014 to study the planet's upper atmosphere, solar wind interaction and atmospheric escape.
- **Mission End:** NASA ended the mission after the spacecraft stopped communicating in December 2025. Available data indicated that MAVEN entered an unrecoverable state after a spacecraft anomaly involving unexpected spinning and loss of power.
- **Scientific Contribution:** MAVEN helped scientists understand how solar wind and solar storms stripped gases from the Martian atmosphere over time. Its findings supported studies on Mars changing from a warmer, wetter world to the cold and dry planet seen today.
- **Relay Role:** Besides scientific work, MAVEN also acted as a communications relay for Mars surface missions. It helped transmit data from rovers such as Curiosity and Perseverance back to Earth.
- **Current Status:** NASA expects MAVEN to remain in elliptical orbit around Mars for several decades. Other Mars orbiters will continue communication-support functions, keeping the wider Mars mission network operational.

## ENVIRONMENT

### What Is a Bambi Bucket? How the Indian Air Force Fought the Kasauli Forest Fire

**In the News:** The Indian Air Force carried out aerial firefighting operations to control a major forest fire near Kasauli in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh. Mi-17 V5 helicopters used Bambi Buckets to collect water from Sukhna Lake in Chandigarh and drop it over affected forest areas. The operation was conducted with the Army, State administration, Forest Department and local authorities.

### Key Points:

- **About Bambi Bucket:** A Bambi Bucket is a specialised collapsible bucket suspended below a helicopter for aerial firefighting. It is used to collect water from lakes or reservoirs and release it over forest fire hotspots. Such systems are useful in steep, rugged and inaccessible terrain where ground firefighting teams face movement restrictions.
- **Kasauli Forest Fire:** The fire spread across the Kasauli Beat area of Solan district and threatened residential areas, civil infrastructure and military establishments. Dry vegetation, difficult slopes and weather conditions made the situation more serious. The affected region required rapid aerial intervention to prevent the fire from spreading further.



- **IAF Helicopter Operations:** The Indian Air Force deployed Mi-17 V5 medium-lift helicopters for Bambi Bucket operations after an initial assessment by a Cheetah helicopter. Water was lifted from Sukhna Lake, and each sortie carried nearly 2,000 to 2,500 litres of water. More than 93,000 litres of water were discharged over the affected area.
- **Night-Time Operation:** The Kasauli mission marked the first successful night Bambi Bucket operation by the Indian Air Force using Night Vision Goggles. The operation was carried out in mountainous terrain under difficult visibility conditions. It required precise flying, careful coordination and rapid aircraft servicing for round-the-clock firefighting.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World No Tobacco Day 2026: History, Theme, Significance and Health Impact Explained

**In the News:** World No Tobacco Day 2026 was observed on May 31 with the theme “Unmask the appeal – countering tobacco and nicotine addiction.” The campaign focuses on how tobacco and nicotine industries use attractive products and marketing to draw young people into addiction. The day is led by the World Health Organization.

#### Key Points:

- **Date and Origin:** World No Tobacco Day is observed every year on May 31. WHO Member States created the observance in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and preventable deaths and diseases caused by tobacco use.
- **2026 Theme:** The 2026 theme is “Unmask the appeal – countering tobacco and nicotine addiction.” It highlights how tobacco and nicotine products are repackaged and marketed to attract children and adolescents.
- **Youth Protection:** The campaign focuses strongly on protecting young people from nicotine addiction. It covers products such as e-cigarettes, vapes, nicotine pouches and other attractive or misleading tobacco-related products.
- **Health Impact:** Tobacco use is linked with long-term disease risks, including cancer and other chronic conditions. Health experts describe tobacco-related harm as slow-building because many diseases develop gradually over years.
- **Public Health Role:** The day supports awareness, prevention and quitting efforts. It also strengthens the case for stronger tobacco-control measures, youth-focused regulation and public health campaigns against nicotine dependence.

### Goa Statehood Day

**In the News:** Goa celebrated its 40th Statehood Day on May 30, 2026, at Kala Academy, Panaji, in the presence of Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan. The celebration marked four decades of Goa’s statehood, progress, cultural identity and governance journey. Goa became a full-fledged State of India on May 30, 1987, after being administered as a Union Territory along with Daman and Diu.

#### Key Points:

- **Statehood Day:** Goa Statehood Day is observed every year on May 30. It commemorates the day in 1987 when Goa became the 25th State of India after the Goa, Daman and Diu Reorganisation Act came into effect.
- **2026 Celebration:** The 40th Statehood Day event was held at Kala Academy, Panaji. Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan attended the celebration and described Goa as a blend of culture, heritage, education and civic consciousness.
- **Historical Background:** Goa was liberated from Portuguese rule in December 1961 through Operation Vijay. After liberation, Goa, Daman and Diu were administered as a Union Territory before Goa attained separate statehood in 1987.
- **Administrative Significance:** Goa’s statehood separated it from the former Union Territory structure and gave it a full State government framework. Daman and Diu continued separately as a Union Territory after Goa became a State.
- **Key Highlights of the Event:** The 2026 programme included a documentary on Goa’s transformation, release of a commemorative stamp and special cover on Mario Miranda, and launch of the coffee table book “Goa Engineering the Next Era.”



## World Environment Day 2026

**In the News:** World Environment Day 2026 was observed globally on June 5 under the leadership of the United Nations Environment Programme. The 2026 global observance was hosted by Azerbaijan in Baku. The campaign focused on climate change and carried the message of urgent action through the #NowForClimate call.

### Key Points:

- **Theme and Focus:** World Environment Day 2026 focused on climate change and the need for urgent climate action. The campaign highlighted the signals being sent by the Earth through rising temperatures, extreme weather and ecological stress. It called for faster action by governments, communities, institutions and individuals.
- **Host Country:** Azerbaijan hosted the global commemoration of World Environment Day 2026 in Baku. The host country changes every year, and official events are organised around the selected environmental priority. Azerbaijan's hosting was linked with its wider climate and green-development agenda.
- **About the Day:** World Environment Day is observed every year on June 5 and is led by the United Nations Environment Programme. It was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972 and first celebrated in 1973. It is one of the largest global platforms for environmental awareness and public action.
- **Campaign Message:** The 2026 campaign used the call #NowForClimate to encourage immediate climate action. It focused on guiding the global transition already underway through sustainable choices, climate resilience and responsible environmental behaviour. The campaign also encouraged events, community action and creative public participation.

## APPOINTMENTS

### Neelkanth Mishra Appointed World Bank Executive Director

**In the News:** Economist Neelkanth Mishra has been appointed as India's Executive Director at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. He will succeed Parameswaran Iyer, whose term is nearing completion.

### Key Points:

- **New Appointment:** Neelkanth Mishra has been appointed Executive Director at the World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. His appointment is for a tenure of three years from the date he assumes charge.
- **Approving Authority:** The appointment was cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. The committee is the key authority for senior appointments in the Union Government and important international assignments.
- **Successor to Parameswaran Iyer:** Mishra will succeed Parameswaran Iyer, a retired IAS officer, who had been serving as India's Executive Director at the World Bank. Iyer's tenure has been extended until the new incumbent assumes charge.
- **Professional Background:** Neelkanth Mishra is a well-known economist and has served as Chief Economist at Axis Bank and Head of Global Research at Axis Capital. He has also been associated with India's economic policy ecosystem.

### Veteran Diplomat Vipul Appointed India's Next Ambassador to Saudi Arabia

**In the News:** The Ministry of External Affairs appointed senior diplomat Vipul as India's next Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He is a 1998-batch Indian Foreign Service officer and was serving as India's Ambassador to Qatar. He is expected to take up the assignment in Riyadh shortly. He is the first non-Muslim envoy to Saudi Arabia since 1948/Independence.

### Key Points:

- **New Ambassador:** Vipul has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. The appointment was announced by the Ministry of External Affairs and places him in one of India's key diplomatic posts in West Asia.
- **IFS Background:** Vipul is a 1998-batch officer of the Indian Foreign Service. Before this appointment, he was serving as India's Ambassador to Qatar, giving him direct diplomatic experience in the Gulf region.

- **Successor in Riyadh:** He will succeed Sohail Ajaz Khan as India's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. The transition comes at a time when India's engagement with Gulf countries remains important for energy, trade, investment and diaspora welfare.
- **India-Saudi Relations:** Saudi Arabia is one of India's major partners in West Asia. The relationship includes energy cooperation, trade, investment, defence engagement, Hajj coordination and welfare of the large Indian community living in the Kingdom.

### Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit Named Next Vice Chief

**In the News:** Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit has been appointed as the next Vice Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force. He is scheduled to assume charge on July 1, 2026. At present, he is serving as Chief of Integrated Defence Staff at Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff.

#### Key Points:

- **New Appointment:** Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit will take over as Vice Chief of the Air Staff. The Vice Chief is one of the senior-most appointments in the Indian Air Force and assists in operational planning, force preparedness and capability development.
- **Current Position:** Before his new appointment, he was serving as Chief of Integrated Defence Staff. This post is linked with tri-service coordination, defence reforms and efforts to improve jointness among the Army, Navy and Air Force.
- **Flying Career:** Air Marshal Dixit is a fighter pilot and experienced test pilot with more than 3,300 hours of flying experience. He has flown aircraft including the MiG-21 and has worked in important roles connected with training, aircraft testing and operational readiness.
- **Defence Reforms Role:** He has contributed to defence reforms and jointness among the armed forces. His experience at Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff is significant because India has been working toward better coordination and theatre-level integration of military capabilities.
- **Indigenous Capability Link:** Air Marshal Dixit has been associated with indigenous fighter aircraft programmes and major fighter acquisition processes. His appointment is relevant to the Indian Air Force's modernisation priorities, including combat readiness, domestic aerospace development and future force planning.

### South Korea Nominates Han Seong-sook as Prime Minister

**In the News:** South Korean President Lee Jae Myung nominated Han Seong-sook as the country's next Prime Minister on June 7, 2026. The nomination came after the June 6 news date, making it a post-publication update for that edition. If confirmed by the National Assembly, Han will become the first woman Prime Minister of South Korea in nearly two decades.

#### Key Points:

- **New Nomination:** Han Seong-sook has been nominated as South Korea's next Prime Minister by President Lee Jae Myung. The nomination requires approval by the National Assembly before she can formally assume office. The post supports the President in administration and government coordination.
- **Former Naver CEO:** Han is the former Chief Executive Officer of Naver, South Korea's major internet company. She served as CEO from 2017 to 2022 and became Naver's first female CEO. Her nomination is therefore strongly linked with South Korea's digital economy and technology leadership.
- **Professional Background:** Before her corporate leadership role, Han worked as a technology reporter and later held senior positions at NHN. Her profile combines media, technology and platform-economy experience. This background makes her nomination significant for innovation-led governance.
- **Historic Significance:** If confirmed, Han will become the first woman Prime Minister of South Korea in nearly two decades. She is around 58-59 years old and is expected to bring a technology-sector perspective to the senior political office.



- **Technology and Economy Focus:** South Korea's presidential office highlighted Han's experience in the technology sector. Her nomination is linked with artificial intelligence, startup growth, inclusive development and innovation-led economic policy.

## SPORTS

### RCB Win IPL 2026 Final by 5 Wickets, Defend Title Against Gujarat Titans

**In the News:** Royal Challengers Bengaluru won the IPL 2026 final by defeating Gujarat Titans by five wickets. RCB successfully defended their title and secured a second consecutive IPL championship. Virat Kohli played a match-winning unbeaten innings in the chase at Ahmedabad.

#### Key Points:

- **Final Result:** Royal Challengers Bengaluru defeated Gujarat Titans by five wickets in the IPL 2026 final. RCB chased down Gujarat's target with 12 balls remaining and retained the title.
- **Venue and Score:** The final was played at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. Gujarat Titans scored 155/8, while RCB reached 161/5 in 18 overs.
- **Key Performer:** Virat Kohli anchored the chase with an unbeaten 75 off 42 balls. His innings helped RCB win their second IPL title and complete back-to-back championship victories.
- **Captain and Coach:** RCB captain Rajat Patidar credited head coach Andy Flower for improving the team culture. Flower's coaching role was highlighted after Bengaluru retained the IPL title.

### ICC Suspends Cricket Canada Membership Over Governance Breaches

**In the News:** The International Cricket Council suspended Cricket Canada's membership with immediate effect over serious breaches of membership obligations. The decision followed ICC Board meetings in Ahmedabad and came after governance-related concerns and an anti-corruption investigation. Despite the suspension, Canada's national teams remain eligible to participate in ICC events under a controlled funding mechanism.

#### Key Points:

- **Reason for Suspension:** The ICC suspended Cricket Canada due to serious breaches of its membership obligations. The action is linked with governance and administrative concerns within the national cricket body. The suspension affects Cricket Canada as an ICC member association but does not immediately remove Canadian teams from international competition.
- **Teams Remain Eligible:** Canadian national teams will continue to participate in ICC events during the suspension period. ICC funding for team operations will be released through a controlled mechanism. This arrangement is meant to protect players and national-team programmes while governance issues are addressed.
- **Reinstatement Conditions:** Cricket Canada will have to meet a set of conditions to regain full ICC membership. These conditions are expected to focus on governance, administration, financial controls and compliance with ICC membership rules. Progress will be monitored by an ICC Normalisation Committee with support from ICC management.
- **Governance Allegations:** The suspension followed wider scrutiny after allegations involving corruption, match manipulation, threats to players and weak financial oversight. The ICC action places emphasis on accountability, transparent administration and integrity standards in associate-member cricket governance.
- **Recent ICC Pattern:** The Cricket Canada decision follows a similar ICC action against USA Cricket over membership-rule breaches. In both cases, national teams were allowed to continue in ICC events while the governing bodies faced corrective conditions. This shows the ICC's approach of separating player participation from administrative non-compliance.

## Messi Creates History! First Footballer Ever to Win Princess of Asturias Sports Award

**In the News:** Lionel Messi has been awarded the 2026 Princess of Asturias Award for Sports. The award recognises his outstanding sporting career, global influence and sustained charitable work for children's education and healthcare. Messi became the first individual footballer to receive this prestigious Spanish honour.

### Key Points:

- **Historic Recognition:** Lionel Messi became the first individual footballer to win the Princess of Asturias Award for Sports. The award was given in recognition of his extraordinary football career and wider contribution to society.
- **About the Award:** The Princess of Asturias Awards are among Spain's most respected international honours. The Sports Award recognises careers that promote the development of sport and show its wider social value.
- **Jury's Recognition:** The jury highlighted Messi's talent, sporting achievements and charitable work. His sustained efforts in promoting access to education and healthcare for disadvantaged children were specifically recognised.
- **Football Career:** Messi is regarded as one of the greatest footballers in history. His career includes major achievements with FC Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain, Inter Miami and the Argentina national team.
- **Argentina Connection:** Messi led Argentina to the FIFA World Cup title in Qatar in 2022. The honour further strengthens his international legacy beyond club football and individual records.

## David Beckham to Receive Star on Hollywood Walk of Fame Ahead of FIFA World Cup 2026

**In the News:** Former England football captain David Beckham is set to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The ceremony is scheduled in Los Angeles shortly before the FIFA World Cup 2026 begins in North America. The honour recognises Beckham's contribution to football, sports entertainment and global popular culture.

### Key Points:

- **Hollywood Walk of Fame Honour:** David Beckham will receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in the Sports Entertainment category. The recognition places him among global personalities honoured for lasting public and cultural influence.
- **Ceremony Details:** The ceremony is scheduled to take place on Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles. Victoria Beckham and actor Tom Cruise are expected to attend the event.
- **Football Legacy:** Beckham is a former England captain and one of the most recognised footballers of his generation. He played for clubs including Manchester United, Real Madrid, LA Galaxy, AC Milan and Paris Saint-Germain.
- **United States Link:** Beckham's role in promoting football in the United States has been highlighted as a major reason for the honour. His move to LA Galaxy helped raise soccer's profile in the American sports market.
- **World Cup Context:** The recognition comes as the United States, Canada and Mexico prepare to host the FIFA World Cup 2026. Beckham's honour is closely linked with football's growing visibility in North America.

## Four Indian-Origin Players Set to Feature at FIFA World Cup 2026

**In the News:** Four footballers of Indian origin are set to feature at the FIFA World Cup 2026, even though India has not qualified for the tournament. The players are linked with New Zealand, Qatar, Australia and Democratic Republic of Congo. This will be the first FIFA World Cup edition where four Indian-origin players are expected to participate in the same tournament.

### Key Points:

- **Indian-Origin Representation:** The four Indian-origin players are Sarpreet Singh, Tahsin Mohammed Jamshid, Nishan Velupillay and Samuel Moutoussamy. They represent different national football systems while carrying Indian-origin links. Their presence gives the 2026 FIFA World Cup a strong Indian diaspora connection.
- **Countries Represented:** Sarpreet Singh is linked with New Zealand, Tahsin Mohammed Jamshid with Qatar, Nishan Velupillay with Australia and Samuel Moutoussamy with Democratic Republic of Congo. Their participation reflects Indian-origin representation across Oceania, West Asia, Africa and the wider global football structure.

- **Tahsin Mohammed Jamshid Milestone:** Tahsin Mohammed Jamshid holds an Indian passport, making him a historic case for Indian football. He is recorded as the first Indian passport holder to feature at a FIFA World Cup. He used his Indian passport throughout his career and does not possess a special Qatari mission passport.
- **Earlier Indian-Origin Precedent:** Before the 2026 edition, Vikash Dhorasoo was the previous Indian-origin player to feature at a FIFA World Cup. He played for France in midfield at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. His family roots trace to Andhra Pradesh through Mauritius.
- **Tournament Context:** FIFA World Cup 2026 will be jointly hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. It will be the first 48-team edition of the tournament, expanding global participation. India has not yet qualified for a FIFA World Cup, making the Indian-origin participation angle especially notable.

### FIFA World Cup Mascots Throughout the Years: Meaning, Symbolism & Full List

**In the News:** FIFA World Cup mascots came into focus ahead of the 2026 tournament, which will be hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. FIFA has introduced three mascots for the 2026 edition: Maple the Moose, Zayu the Jaguar and Clutch the Bald Eagle. World Cup mascots are used to represent the culture, identity and spirit of the host nation.

#### Key Points:

- **2026 Mascots:** The official mascots for FIFA World Cup 2026 are Maple the Moose for Canada, Zayu the Jaguar for Mexico and Clutch the Bald Eagle for the United States. Each mascot represents one host country and reflects its national identity, culture and sporting spirit.
- **Symbolism of 2026 Mascots:** Maple represents creativity, resilience and leadership, while Zayu symbolises Mexican heritage, strength, unity and joy. Clutch represents courage, leadership and unity, drawing from the bald eagle as a major American national symbol.
- **Origin of Mascots:** FIFA World Cup mascots began with World Cup Willie at the 1966 England World Cup. Since then, mascots have become a regular feature of the tournament and are used in promotions, merchandise, public engagement and broadcast identity.
- **Full Mascot List:** Major FIFA World Cup mascots include Willie, Juanito, Tip and Tap, Gauchito, Naranjito, Pique, Ciao, Striker, Footix, Ato, Goleo VI, Zakumi, Fuleco, Zabivaka, La'eeb, and the 2026 trio Maple, Zayu and Clutch. Each mascot is linked with the host country's culture or tournament identity.