

## Weekly Current Affairs 7<sup>th</sup> June to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2026

### CONTENTS

NATIONAL.....	2
INTERNATIONAL.....	12
SCIENCE AND TECH.....	17
ENVIRONMENT.....	18
APPOINTMENT.....	20
ECONOMY.....	20
AWARDS AND HONOURS.....	21
IMPORTANT DAYS.....	22
SPORTS.....	23



## IMPORTANT ONE LINERS

### NATIONAL

#### Right to Protest (CJP)

**In the News:** The Cockroach Janta Party, a youth-led satirical protest movement, held its first street protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. Students and young participants joined the demonstration over examination paper leaks, recruitment irregularities and education-sector accountability. The protest also brought attention to the constitutional right to peaceful protest and the limits that authorities may impose for public order.

#### Key Points:

- **CJP Debut Protest:** The Cockroach Janta Party held its first major street protest in New Delhi's designated protest zone near Parliament. The gathering was led by founder Abhijeet Dipke after his return to India. Protesters used masks, slogans and satire to highlight student concerns over exam leaks and administrative accountability.
- **Student Participation:** Students and youth groups formed a major part of the protest. Their concerns centred on paper leaks, grading errors, recruitment scams and the pressure created by competitive examinations. The movement has gained visibility because it connects online mobilisation with on-ground student participation.
- **Main Demand:** CJP demanded accountability from the Union Education Ministry over repeated examination-related failures. The group called for the resignation or removal of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. After the debut protest, CJP indicated that it may organise wider nationwide protests if its demand is not met.
- **Right to Protest:** The right to protest in India flows from Article 19(1)(a), which protects freedom of speech and expression, and Article 19(1)(b), which protects peaceful and unarmed assembly. This right is subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2) and Article 19(3), including public order, sovereignty and security concerns.

#### Andaman and Nicobar Islands Record India's Lowest Fertility Rate in NFHS-6

**In the News:** Andaman and Nicobar Islands recorded India's lowest Total Fertility Rate in the National Family Health Survey-6. The Union Territory's TFR stood at 0.9, far below the replacement level of 2.1. The finding highlights a sharp demographic shift, with declining child population and a rising elderly share.

#### Key Points:

- **Lowest Fertility Rate:** Andaman and Nicobar Islands recorded a Total Fertility Rate of 0.9 in NFHS-6. This is the lowest fertility rate recorded anywhere in India. A TFR below 2.1 indicates long-term population decline if the trend continues.
- **About NFHS-6:** NFHS-6 was released by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It was conducted during 2023-24 with the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, as the nodal agency. The survey provides district-level data on health, population, nutrition and family welfare.
- **Demographic Change:** The share of children under five declined from 5.3% in NFHS-5 to 3.7% in NFHS-6. The population aged 60 years and above increased from 11% to 12.6%. This indicates an ageing trend in the Union Territory.
- **Possible Causes:** Smaller family preference, better access to family planning, women's literacy and economic independence are cited as possible reasons for the decline. The trend also reflects changing socio-economic conditions and family-size choices.

#### Yoga for Healthy Ageing Theme Announced for IDY 2026

**In the News:** The theme for International Day of Yoga 2026 has been announced as "Yoga for Healthy Ageing." The 12th International Day of Yoga will be observed on June 21, 2026. The theme highlights yoga's role in physical fitness, mental balance, preventive health and geriatric well-being.



### Key Points:

- **Theme for 2026:** “Yoga for Healthy Ageing” is the theme for International Day of Yoga 2026. It focuses on using yoga to support active, healthy and dignified ageing. The theme is relevant as ageing populations are becoming a major health-policy concern worldwide.
- **About IDY:** International Day of Yoga is observed every year on June 21. The day was adopted by the United Nations to recognise yoga’s contribution to health and well-being. India has played a central role in promoting the observance globally.
- **Health Focus:** The 2026 theme highlights yoga’s benefits in flexibility, balance, breathing, stress reduction and lifestyle management. These aspects are important for older persons and for preventing non-communicable diseases.
- **Public Participation:** IDY events usually include mass yoga demonstrations, awareness campaigns and institutional participation. Ministries, schools, universities, yoga organisations and Indian missions abroad organise activities around the day.

### Indore to Host BRICS Agriculture Meeting 2026, Focus on Food Security and Smart Farming

**In the News:** Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that Indore is hosting the BRICS Agriculture Working Group meeting and Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in June 2026 under India's BRICS Chairmanship. The Working Group meeting is scheduled from June 9 to 11, while the ministerial-level meeting is scheduled from June 12 to 13. The discussions focus on food security, climate-smart farming, agricultural trade and farmer welfare.

### Key Points:

- **BRICS Agriculture Meeting:** The BRICS Agriculture Working Group meeting is being held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. It brings together representatives from BRICS member countries for discussions on agricultural cooperation. The meeting is part of India’s BRICS-related engagements in 2026.
- **Main Agenda:** The deliberations focus on food security, climate-resilient farming, smart agriculture and farmer welfare. Agricultural trade and cooperation in research are also part of the agenda. These areas are important because food systems are affected by climate change, input costs and market disruptions.
- **BRICS Membership:** BRICS brings together major emerging economies including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, along with new members such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The platform works on economic, development and global-governance issues. Agriculture has become a key area of cooperation among member countries.
- **India’s Role:** India is using the meeting to highlight its agricultural strength, innovation and digital farming practices. The Indore meeting also places Madhya Pradesh in focus as an agricultural and diplomatic venue. It reflects India’s effort to promote technology-led and farmer-centric agriculture at global forums.

### Ordinance-Created Supreme Court Posts and Judicial Independence

**In the News:** The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026 increased the sanctioned strength of Supreme Court judges. The number of judges excluding the Chief Justice of India was raised from 33 to 37. With the Chief Justice included, the total sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court increased from 34 to 38 judges.

### Key Points:

- **About the Ordinance:** The Ordinance amended the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956. It increased the sanctioned number of Supreme Court judges by four. The stated objective was to help the Court deal with rising pendency and improve justice delivery.
- **Constitutional Basis:** Article 124(1) of the Constitution allows Parliament to prescribe a larger number of Supreme Court judges by law. Article 123 allows the President to promulgate an Ordinance when Parliament is not in session. An Ordinance has the force of law but must be placed before Parliament.
- **Judicial Independence Angle:** The Ordinance creates additional sanctioned posts but does not appoint judges by itself. Judicial appointments continue under the constitutional appointment process. In practice, recommendations for Supreme Court judges are made through the Collegium system.



- **Pendency and Capacity:** Increasing judge strength is meant to improve the Court's institutional capacity. More judges can help in forming more benches and hearing a larger number of cases. However, the actual impact depends on timely appointments, infrastructure and case-management reforms.
- **Separation of Powers:** The issue is relevant to the relationship between the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. The Executive can initiate an Ordinance, Parliament must approve the change, and judicial appointments follow a separate constitutional process. This separation is central to judicial independence.

### SC on the Right to Travel Abroad vs. Speedy Trial

**In the News:** The Supreme Court held that the right to travel abroad under Article 21 is not absolute. The Court said it must be balanced with the victim's right to a speedy trial and the larger interest of criminal justice. The ruling came in a case where an accused sought permission to travel abroad during pending criminal proceedings.

#### Key Points:

- **Right to Travel Abroad:** The right to travel abroad is treated as part of personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution. However, like other liberty rights, it can be regulated through lawful and reasonable restrictions. Courts examine the facts of each case before granting permission.
- **Speedy Trial Concern:** The Supreme Court noted that travel permission should not delay criminal proceedings. A complainant or victim also has an interest in timely trial and effective justice. This makes speedy trial an important factor in such cases.
- **Court's Balance:** The Court balanced the accused's personal liberty with the rights of the complainant and the needs of the justice system. It indicated that personal convenience or medical reasons must be tested against the availability of treatment in India and the risk of delaying proceedings.
- **Article 21 Dimension:** Both personal liberty and speedy trial are connected with Article 21. The ruling shows that Article 21 rights may come into conflict in criminal cases. Courts must balance competing claims instead of treating one right as automatically superior.

### 42nd Anniversary of Operation Bluestar

**In the News:** The 42nd anniversary of Operation Bluestar was observed on June 6, 2026. The anniversary was marked at the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar, including observances linked with the Akal Takht. The day recalls the Indian Army operation carried out in June 1984 during a period of militancy in Punjab.

#### Key Points:

- **About Operation Bluestar:** Operation Bluestar was a military operation conducted by the Indian Army in June 1984. It took place at the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar. The operation was aimed at removing armed militants from the complex.
- **Historical Context:** The operation occurred during the tenure of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. It was linked with the security situation in Punjab and the presence of militants inside the temple complex. The episode remains one of the most sensitive events in modern Indian history.
- **Akal Takht and Golden Temple:** The Akal Takht is one of the most important Sikh institutions and is located within the Golden Temple complex. During the operation, the Akal Takht suffered major damage. The religious and emotional significance of the site made the event deeply controversial.
- **Aftermath:** Operation Bluestar had major political and social consequences. It was followed by the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984 and anti-Sikh violence in several parts of India. The event continues to be remembered in discussions on internal security and communal harmony.
- **Anniversary Observance:** The anniversary is observed every year by Sikh organisations and devotees. In 2026, the 42nd anniversary was marked in Amritsar with religious and commemorative events. The occasion remains sensitive from the perspective of law and order.



### Zojila tunnel breakthrough: India's longest road tunnel inches closer to completion

**In the News:** A historic breakthrough was achieved at the Zojila Tunnel project in June 2026. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari witnessed the breakthrough of the main tunnel at the eastern portal near Minamarg in Kargil. The milestone brings the strategically important all-weather road link between Kashmir and Ladakh closer to completion.

#### Key Points:

- **About Zojila Tunnel:** The Zojila Tunnel is a 13.153-km road tunnel being built in the Himalayan region. It is planned as the world's longest single-tube bi-directional road tunnel at high altitude. The tunnel will pass under the Zojila Pass between Kashmir and Ladakh.
- **Connectivity Importance:** The tunnel will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh. Zojila Pass often faces heavy snowfall, avalanches and seasonal closure. The tunnel will reduce disruption on this important route.
- **Breakthrough Milestone:** The breakthrough means excavation has connected the tunnel ends, but the project is not yet fully complete. Finishing works, safety systems, ventilation, road surfacing and operational arrangements still remain. The milestone is a major step before final commissioning.
- **Safety Features:** The tunnel project includes modern ventilation, automatic fire detection, CCTV surveillance and pedestrian cross-passage facilities. It also includes snow galleries, bridges, culverts and avalanche-protection structures. These features are required because the project is located in difficult Himalayan terrain.

### Uttar Pradesh Launches 'Project Ganga' to Bring High-Speed Internet to Rural Areas

**In the News:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched 'Project Ganga' in Lucknow to improve last-mile digital connectivity in rural areas. The project aims to provide high-speed broadband to around 20 lakh families and create a network of Digital Service Providers across the state. It is linked with digital education, telemedicine, e-governance, skill development and rural employment.

#### Key Points:

- **About Project Ganga:** Project Ganga stands for Government Assisted Network for Growth and Advancement. It is a digital inclusion initiative designed to expand fibre-based broadband connectivity in Uttar Pradesh, especially in poorly connected rural and semi-urban areas.
- **Coverage and Timeline:** The project aims to connect over 20 lakh households with high-speed broadband in the next 2–3 years. In the first phase, it will be rolled out in 21 districts of Uttar Pradesh.
- **Digital Service Providers:** The state plans to prepare around 8,000–10,000 Digital Service Providers at the Nyaya Panchayat level. These local entrepreneurs will support last-mile internet delivery and digital services in their respective areas.
- **Employment and Women Participation:** The initiative is expected to generate more than one lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities. Around 50% participation of women has been targeted, making it relevant for digital inclusion, rural livelihoods and women entrepreneurship.
- **Institutional Partnership:** One OTT Intertainment Limited, the broadband vertical of Hinduja Global Solutions, is associated with the project as a knowledge partner and implementation enabler. Broadband services under the project will be offered under the brand name "Ganga Fiber."

### Narendra Modi Becomes India's Longest Continuously Serving Elected Prime Minister

**In the News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi became India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister. His continuous tenure from May 26, 2014 reached 4,399 days, surpassing Jawaharlal Nehru's elected Prime Ministerial tenure of 4,398 days from May 13, 1952 to May 27, 1964. The milestone is important in the context of India's parliamentary democracy and leadership continuity.

#### Key Points:

- **Record Milestone:** Narendra Modi took oath as Prime Minister on May 26, 2014. By June 10, 2026, his uninterrupted elected tenure reached 4,399 days, making him the longest-serving elected Prime Minister in India's history.

- **Comparison with Nehru:** Jawaharlal Nehru's elected Prime Ministerial tenure is counted from May 13, 1952, after the first general elections, to May 27, 1964. His elected tenure was 4,398 days, which Modi surpassed by one day.
- **Three Consecutive Mandates:** Modi has led the Union government after the 2014, 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The event is relevant for electoral mandates, parliamentary leadership and political continuity in India.
- **Constitutional Position:** The Prime Minister is the head of the Council of Ministers under India's parliamentary system. The President appoints the Prime Minister, but the office depends on majority support in the Lok Sabha

### Death Anniversary of Birsa Munda

**In the News:** June 9 is observed as the death anniversary of Birsa Munda, the tribal freedom fighter and social reformer associated with the Munda tribe. He died on June 9, 1900, in Ranchi Jail at a young age. His legacy remains central to tribal resistance, cultural identity and anti-colonial movements in India.

#### Key Points:

- **Early Life and Identity:** Birsa Munda was born on November 15, 1875, in Ulihatu, now in Khunti district of Jharkhand. He belonged to the Munda tribe and later came to be revered as "Dharti Abba," meaning Father of the Earth.
- **Ulgulan Movement:** Birsa Munda led the Ulgulan or Great Revolt against exploitative colonial systems. The movement challenged British rule, missionary influence, forced labour, moneylenders and land alienation affecting tribal communities.
- **Tribal Rights and Land Issues:** His movement focused on the protection of jal, jungle and zameen. It is important for understanding tribal land rights, colonial forest policies, customary rights and the socio-economic roots of tribal resistance.
- **Death and Legacy:** He was captured by the British and imprisoned in Ranchi Jail, where he died on June 9, 1900. Although British authorities recorded cholera as the cause, his death remains widely remembered as martyrdom in tribal and nationalist memory.
- **Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas:** Since 2021, November 15, his birth anniversary, is observed as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas. The day recognises the contribution of tribal freedom fighters and highlights the role of tribal communities in India's freedom struggle.

### Khurram Parvez gets bail: Why Delhi HC granted relief despite stringent UAPA conditions

**In the News:** The Delhi High Court granted bail to Kashmiri human rights activist Khurram Parvez in a UAPA case registered by the National Investigation Agency. The Court considered prolonged incarceration, slow progress of trial and the right to personal liberty under Article 21. The ruling is significant because UAPA contains strict bail restrictions under Section 43D(5).

#### Key Points:

- **Case Background:** Khurram Parvez was arrested on November 22, 2021, in a case alleging terror funding and links with Lashkar-e-Taiba. The NIA alleged that a network recruited Over Ground Workers, collected information on security installations and facilitated terror funding.
- **Delhi High Court Bench:** A division bench of Justice Navin Chawla and Justice Ravinder Dubeja allowed his appeal against the trial court's December 17, 2024 order denying bail. The High Court did not give a final opinion on the merits of the allegations.
- **Ground of Prolonged Custody:** The Court noted that Parvez had remained in custody since November 2021 and the case was still at the stage of arguments on charge. The prosecution proposed to examine 197 witnesses, making early completion of trial unlikely.
- **Article 21 and UAPA Bail Bar:** The Court held that the right to personal liberty under Article 21 must be balanced against restrictions under Section 43D(5) of UAPA. This makes the order important for understanding the relationship between national security laws and constitutional liberty.



- **Prima Facie Assessment:** The Court observed that the prosecution case substantially relied on the statement of a co-accused who had turned approver, and whose testimony was yet to be tested during trial. The Court clarified that the allegations and defence would be examined at the trial stage.

### Operation Milap: Gujarat Police Trace 1,470 Missing Persons in One Month

**In the News:** Gujarat Police traced 1,470 missing persons during a month-long statewide drive named Operation Milap under Deputy CM Harsh Sanghavi and DGP G.S. Malik. The operation was launched across Gujarat on May 7, 2026, to review pending missing-person cases and reunite people with their families. Women and children formed a major share of the traced persons, making the drive important for policing, child protection and public safety.

#### Key Points:

- **Statewide Missing-Person Drive:** Operation Milap was conducted across Gujarat to reopen and investigate pending missing-person cases. Police records showed that 24,767 people had been reported missing in Gujarat since 2007. The drive focused on family reunification, timely intervention and public confidence in policing.
- **Recovery Profile:** Out of 1,470 traced persons, 852 were women, 342 were men, 42 were minor boys and 234 were minor girls. Surat City Police recorded the highest number of recoveries, tracing 341 missing persons. The data shows that women and children formed the most vulnerable category in the operation.
- **Investigation Methods:** Police used both technical intelligence and human intelligence during the operation. Teams reviewed old records, digital trails, social media activity, transport hubs and shelter homes. Mobile-phone analysis, field verification, interstate coordination and family counselling helped trace long-pending cases.
- **Major Trends Identified:** Police found adolescent girls to be one of the most vulnerable groups in missing-person cases. Romantic relationships, elopement, family conflict, educational setbacks and domestic disputes were identified as major reasons. Migration among labour families also complicated tracing because many cases involved interstate movement.

### Kerala Launches India's 1st Judiciary-Integrated Wildlife Crime System

**In the News:** Kerala launched HAWK, or Hostile Activity Watch Kernel, as a digital system for wildlife offence management. The system integrates forest enforcement records with the District Court Management System through an Application Programming Interface. It has been described as India's first judiciary-integrated digital wildlife offence management system for wildlife crimes.

#### Key Points:

- **HAWK e-Court Integration:** HAWK enables online submission and tracking of wildlife offence records linked with the judiciary. The system connects forest offence data with the District Court Management System through an API. This reduces dependence on physical paperwork and improves coordination between forest officials and courts.
- **First-of-its-Kind System:** Kerala became the first state to launch a fully digitised, judiciary-integrated wildlife offence management system. The system is significant because wildlife-crime cases require fast documentation, evidence tracking and prosecution support. It represents a shift from manual case handling to court-linked digital governance.
- **Institutions Involved:** The system was developed by the Kerala Forest Department with the Wildlife Trust of India. NTT Data supported the technology component of the platform. Forest officers can use dashboards to monitor case pendency, investigation progress and crime patterns.
- **Core Functions:** HAWK tracks wildlife offences from the Preliminary Offence Report stage to court verdicts and witness testimonies. It also stores data on wildlife mortality, illegal weapon seizures, vehicle involvement and repeat offenders. The system works as both a case-management tool and an ecological intelligence platform.

### VB-GRAM G Scheme

**In the News:** The Union Government proposed an interim allocation of ₹95,692 crore for the transition from MGNREGA/MGNREGS to Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission Gramin, or VB-G RAM G. Union Rural

Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the scheme would ensure uninterrupted rural employment. The Act is scheduled to come into force across the country from July 1, 2026.

#### Key Points:

- **Interim Allocation:** The Centre announced an interim allocation of ₹95,692 crore under VB-G RAM G. The allocation aims to ensure that rural employment and development activities continue without disruption after June 30. The Minister stated that there should not be a gap of even a single day in work availability.
- **Transition from MGNREGS:** VB-G RAM G is positioned as the new rural employment guarantee framework replacing the existing MGNREGS structure. States and Union Territories were asked to complete preparations before the July 1 rollout. The scheme aims to retain the employment guarantee component while allowing greater flexibility for rural asset creation.
- **State-wise Allocation:** Uttar Pradesh received the highest interim allocation at ₹9,721.48 crore. West Bengal followed with ₹8,508 crore, while Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar also received major allocations. The allocation was worked out on the basis of expenditure under MGNREGS in the previous year.
- **Implementation Preparedness:** The government stated that 26 states had completed procedural requirements for implementing the new scheme. Jharkhand, Karnataka, Telangana and Mizoram were yet to complete all formalities but assured the Centre of preparation. States were asked to notify the state scheme, complete e-KYC and undertake district- and block-level awareness activities.

#### What Delhi HC ruled in quashing NewsClick case on foreign funding, cheating

**In the News:** The Delhi High Court quashed the EOW FIR and the Enforcement Directorate's ECIR against NewsClick and its founder-editor Prabir Purkayastha. The case related to allegations of foreign funding, cheating, criminal breach of trust and money laundering. Justice Neena Bansal Krishna held that the allegations did not disclose the basic ingredients of the alleged offences.

#### Key Points:

- **Cases Quashed:** The High Court quashed both the EOW FIR and the ED's money-laundering case against NewsClick and Prabir Purkayastha. The FIR alleged that NewsClick received about ₹9.59 crore as foreign direct investment from Worldwide Media Holdings LLC. The allegation was that shares were overvalued to bypass foreign investment restrictions in digital news media.
- **FDI Finding:** The Court noted that no cap on foreign investment in digital news media existed when the investment was received in 2018. NewsClick had also relied on a government clarification that online publications did not fall within the ambit of print media. The Court held that the claim of violating foreign investment restrictions was unsustainable.
- **Economic Decision Not Criminal Offence:** The Court observed that the share valuation was carried out by an independent chartered accountant under FEMA regulations. It held that the share price was decided through negotiation between NewsClick and Worldwide Media Holdings LLC. The Court treated the valuation as an economic decision and not as a criminal offence.
- **Cheating and Breach of Trust Not Made Out:** The Court held that cheating was not established because there was no identifiable victim who claimed to have been deceived. It also held that criminal breach of trust could not stand because there was no entrustment of property or allegation of misappropriation. Since the main offences were not made out, the ED case based on the FIR also could not survive.

#### JNPA Emerges as India's Top Container Port in 2025, Ranks 22nd Globally

**In the News:** Maharashtra's Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority retained its position as India's best-performing container port in the World Bank's Container Port Performance Index 2025. It climbed one place to secure the 22nd global rank, making it a major indicator of India's improving port efficiency and maritime logistics capacity. The ranking is significant because container ports are closely linked with trade competitiveness, export movement and supply-chain reliability.

### Key Points:

- **About the Ranking:** JNPA was ranked 22nd globally in CPPI 2025, which is published by the World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence. The index measures how efficiently container ports handle vessels by looking at the time ships spend in port. A better rank reflects faster handling, reduced delays and stronger logistics performance.
- **Indian Port Comparison:** Pipavav Port ranked 28th and became India's best-performing private container port in the index. Mundra Port slipped to 30th position, while Visakhapatnam Port fell to 104th place. These movements show that Indian port rankings can vary sharply based on operational efficiency and turnaround performance.
- **Importance of JNPA:** JNPA is one of India's most important container gateways and plays a major role in international trade through the western coast. The port crossed 8 million TEUs and handled more than 102 million metric tonnes of cargo in FY 2025–26. This makes it important for questions on maritime infrastructure, exports and logistics connectivity.
- **Policy Context:** The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways recently launched the Logistics Port Performance Index under the Sagar Aankalan framework. It evaluates Indian ports on indicators such as vessel turnaround time, container dwell time and berth productivity. This reflects India's focus on benchmarking, digital reforms and port modernisation.

### Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra: India's First WhatsApp AI Advisory for Oilseed Cultivation

**In the News:** Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra, a WhatsApp-based AI advisory service for oilseed farmers, has been highlighted as India's first nationwide WhatsApp AI advisory for oilseed cultivation. It was developed by ICAR-Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research, Hyderabad, and comes at a time when India is trying to boost domestic oilseed production and reduce dependence on edible oil imports.

### Key Points:

- **About the Initiative:** Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra is a multilingual, 24×7 and research-based advisory service available through WhatsApp. It was launched by the Secretary, DARE and Director General, ICAR during the National Oilseeds Conference in New Delhi on February 6, 2026. Farmers do not need a separate application to use the service.
- **How Farmers Can Use It:** Farmers can save the number +91 4024598180 as Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra and send questions on WhatsApp in any Indian language. The chatbot responds with crop-specific guidance free of cost. This makes the service accessible because WhatsApp is already widely used among farmers.
- **Crops Covered:** The advisory covers oilseed crops such as groundnut, mustard, sesame, sunflower, soybean, niger and other major oilseeds. It provides guidance on variety selection, crop management, pest control, disease management, irrigation and post-harvest practices. This makes it useful across different stages of the crop cycle.
- **Institutions Involved:** The knowledge base has been developed with the support of ICAR-IIOR, ICAR-National Soybean Research Institute, ICAR-Indian Institute of Groundnut Research, ICAR-Indian Institute of Rapeseed and Mustard Research, and PC-Unit for Sesame and Niger. This gives the platform a strong scientific and institutional base.

### Who Is Gitika Talukdar? Assam's Trailblazing FIFA World Cup Photojournalist

**In the News:** Assam-based photojournalist Gitika Talukdar received FIFA accreditation to cover the 2026 Men's FIFA World Cup, marking her third consecutive assignment at the men's football World Cup. Reports state that she is the only female photojournalist from India selected for the 2026 tournament, making her achievement important for Indian sports journalism and representation from the Northeast.

### Key Points:

- **Identity and Achievement:** Gitika Talukdar is an Assam-based sports photojournalist known for covering major global sporting events. Her 2026 FIFA World Cup accreditation is being seen as a major professional milestone. It also highlights the growing presence of Indian women in international sports media.
- **Third FIFA World Cup Assignment:** The 2026 World Cup will be her third consecutive men's FIFA World Cup assignment after Russia 2018 and Qatar 2022. Such repeated accreditation reflects consistency and recognition in a competitive media environment. Covering FIFA events requires official approval and access to restricted media zones.



- **Other Major Events Covered:** She has also covered the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup, the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, the Tokyo Olympics 2020 and the Paris Olympics 2024. This makes her career important not just for football coverage but for international sports photography in general. Her work represents Indian media at global sporting platforms.
- **Why It Matters:** Sports photography is a highly competitive field, especially at events like the FIFA World Cup and Olympics. Her achievement is significant because India is not participating in the FIFA World Cup as a playing nation, yet an Indian professional is present at the global stage through media coverage. This widens the meaning of Indian participation in world sports.
- **Northeast Representation:** Talukdar's recognition is also important for Assam and Northeast India, regions that have produced many sportspersons and sports professionals. Her journey shows the growing contribution of the Northeast beyond playing fields, including journalism, photography and sports documentation. It is a useful example for questions on women in media and regional representation.

### India Advances Mission Sudarshan Chakra Missile Shield

**In the News:** Mission Sudarshan Chakra is India's planned national security shield announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his 2025 Independence Day address. The mission aims to strengthen India's ability to protect strategic and civilian areas through new technology-based defence systems by 2035. It has been described as a powerful weapon system that can both neutralise enemy attacks and enable precise counter-action.

#### Key Points:

- **Origin of the Mission:** Mission Sudarshan Chakra was announced from the Red Fort on August 15, 2025. The Prime Minister said that by 2035, important national places including strategic and civilian areas should receive complete security cover through new technological platforms. The mission takes its name from the Sudarshan Chakra of Shri Krishna.
- **Core Objective:** The mission aims to create a comprehensive national security shield for both strategic and civilian assets. It is meant to improve India's response to changing methods of warfare, including attacks using advanced technology. The official description places emphasis on security cover, rapid response and precise action.
- **Three Broad Goals:** Official describes three main goals: research, development and manufacturing within India; anticipation of future warfare through predictive technologies; and creation of precise targeted systems for counter-action. These points make the mission important for defence technology and indigenous capability.
- **2035 Target:** The mission is planned over a ten-year horizon, with 2035 as the target year for expanding the national security shield. It covers not only military sites but also civilian locations such as hospitals, railways and centres of faith. This makes it broader than a conventional missile shield and closer to an integrated national defence architecture.

### 11th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog

**In the News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 11th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog on June 11, 2026, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre in New Delhi. The theme of the meeting was "Inclusive Human Development for Viksit Bharat@2047". It was attended by Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors and Administrators representing 28 States and 5 Union Territories.

#### Key Points:

- **Theme of the Meeting:** The central theme was Inclusive Human Development for Viksit Bharat@2047. The focus was on making development outcomes more inclusive across age, region, gender and socio-economic background. This connects the meeting with India's long-term goal of becoming a developed country by 2047.
- **Participation and Significance:** The meeting was attended by representatives of 28 States and 5 Union Territories. This was the first time when Chief Ministers of all 28 States participated in a NITI Aayog Governing Council Meeting. This makes it important from the perspective of cooperative federalism.
- **Focus on Youth and Skills:** The Prime Minister highlighted India's demographic strength, noting that nearly 70 crore Indians are below the age of 25 years. States were urged to convert this demographic dividend into a development

dividend through education, skilling and capacity-building. This links human development with employment and future-ready skills.

- **Economic and Governance Priorities:** The meeting discussed opportunities for youth, MSMEs, investments and trade agreements. States were asked to strengthen One District One Product initiatives and prepare export-oriented strategies. Governance, transparency, ease of doing business, data centres and artificial intelligence were also highlighted as important areas.
- **Development Monitoring:** The Prime Minister emphasised district-level evaluation and suggested identifying 100 districts in agriculture on the lines of the aspirational district approach. He also called for a monitoring framework with targeted 100-day and five-year goals. This makes the meeting relevant to questions on NITI Aayog, governance reform and outcome-based policy planning.

### Centre Proposes Unified Broadcasting Rules for TV and Radio Services

**In the News:** The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting released the draft Telecommunications (Television, Radio and Associated Services) Rules, 2026 for public consultation. The draft rules seek to bring television, radio and associated broadcasting services under a unified framework based on the Telecommunications Act, 2023. The proposal aims to replace multiple older guidelines with a simplified regulatory structure.

#### Key Points:

- **Unified Regulatory Framework:** The draft rules propose a common framework for television channels, radio services, DTH, HITS, IPTV, teleports and associated broadcasting services. The rules seek to consolidate separate guidelines that were earlier issued under the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.
- **Legal Basis:** The new rules are framed under the Telecommunications Act, 2023, which replaced the colonial-era Telegraph Act, 1885. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will administer the provisions related to television, radio and associated services.
- **Simplified Authorisation Process:** The draft proposes digital implementation of the authorisation process and simplified procedures for broadcasters. It also removes the requirement of signing the Grant of Permission Agreement, making the regulatory process more streamlined.
- **Services Covered and Excluded:** The draft covers television channels, DTH, HITS, FM radio, community radio and IPTV services delivered through closed networks. OTT streaming services are not covered under these rules and continue to be regulated separately under the IT Rules.
- **Public Consultation:** The Ministry has invited comments and suggestions from stakeholders till July 27, 2026. Once notified, the rules will replace several existing guidelines and create a single rule book for the broadcasting sector.

### EAC-PM Recommendations on Delimitation

**In the News:** The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister released a working paper on India's next delimitation of parliamentary constituencies. The paper proposed a targeted approach for splitting large Lok Sabha constituencies instead of applying a uniform formula across all seats. The recommendation is significant because delimitation is linked to representation, population distribution and electoral fairness.

#### Key Points:

- **Targeted Delimitation Model:** The working paper suggested splitting 170 large Lok Sabha constituencies using a targeted criterion. The model proposes that 59 constituencies should be split into two and 111 constituencies should be split into three.
- **Proposed Increase in Lok Sabha Seats:** The proposal could raise the strength of the Lok Sabha from 543 elected seats to 824 seats. The aim is to reduce the size of very large constituencies and improve voter-representative linkage.
- **Representation Challenge:** The paper noted that India's parliamentary constituencies are very large by global standards. Some constituencies have more than 32 lakh voters, creating pressure on representation and public outreach.

- **Turnout and Participation:** The paper estimated that the targeted model could improve voter turnout in the next general election. It also highlighted concerns related to urban constituencies, women voters and uneven participation across social groups.
- **Constitutional Background:** Delimitation in India is connected with the readjustment of constituencies after the Census. The issue is politically sensitive because it affects the distribution of seats across states and the balance between population-based representation and federal equity.

### ASI Finds Ancient Inscriptions in Nallamala Tiger Reserve

**In the News:** The Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India documented important inscriptions and rock art during a survey in the Nallamala-Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve region. The survey identified evidence of ancient habitation, rock paintings and inscriptions spread across different historical periods. The findings are important for understanding the cultural history of the Deccan and early settlement patterns in South India.

#### Key Points:

- **Major Archaeological Discovery:** The ASI team documented 25 inscriptions during a three-day survey conducted from June 11 to June 13, 2026. The inscriptions were found in the Nallamala Reserve Forest region, including areas near the Krishna River.
- **Rock Paintings and Motifs:** Rock paintings and geometric patterns were identified in caves near Alatom village. Preliminary assessment suggests that some of these may belong to the Megalithic and Early Historic periods, around 1500 BCE.
- **Inscriptions Across Periods:** The inscriptions span nearly 1,400 years, from the second century CE to the 16th century CE. This makes the site important for studying continuity in political, cultural and linguistic history.
- **Scripts and Languages:** Some early inscriptions are linked to the Satavahana period and are written in Prakrit using Brahmi script. Later inscriptions are in Telugu and Kannada, reflecting changing regional powers and script traditions.
- **Heritage and Conservation:** The discovery inside a tiger reserve shows the overlap between natural heritage and cultural heritage. Further study will require coordination between ASI, forest authorities and conservation agencies.

## INTERNATIONAL

### South Asian University

**In the News:** South Asian University came into focus as a spotlight topic linked with admissions for the 2026-27 academic session. The university is based in New Delhi and was established as a regional centre of excellence for students and researchers from South Asia. SAUET for the session was conducted on April 25-26, 2026, and the direct-mode admission deadline was extended to June 15, 2026.

#### Key Points:

- **About South Asian University:** South Asian University is an international university established by the member nations of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. The SAARC member countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Afghanistan's SAARC membership has, however, been practically frozen since the Taliban takeover in August 2021.
- **Origin and Establishment:** The idea of South Asian University was proposed at the 13th SAARC Summit held in Dhaka in 2005. The agreement for establishing the university was signed during the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi in 2007. The university opened its doors to students in August 2010.
- **Location and Campus:** South Asian University is located at Maidan Garhi in New Delhi. The university shifted to its permanent residential campus in February 2023 after earlier functioning from temporary campuses. Its location in India gives New Delhi an important role in SAARC-linked higher education cooperation.
- **Academic Focus:** The university offers undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes across multiple disciplines. Its academic areas include economics, computer science, biotechnology, mathematics, sociology, international relations, law, management, climate change and related fields.



**Degree Recognition and SAARC Context:** Degrees and certificates awarded by South Asian University are recognised in SAARC member states under the SAU agreement. India's University Grants Commission also recognises SAU degrees. The university remains important even though the broader SAARC framework has been largely dormant since the 18th SAARC Summit in 2014.

### **SIPRI Report 2026: India Widens Nuclear Lead Over Pakistan with 190 Warheads**

**In the News:** SIPRI Yearbook 2026 reported that India's nuclear arsenal reached an estimated 190 warheads at the start of 2026. Pakistan was estimated to have 170 nuclear warheads. The report also noted that nuclear-armed states are modernising their arsenals amid rising geopolitical and escalation risks.

#### **Key Points:**

- **India's Nuclear Arsenal:** SIPRI estimated India's nuclear inventory at 190 warheads in January 2026. Pakistan's inventory was estimated at 170 warheads. This places India ahead of Pakistan in estimated nuclear warhead count.
- **About SIPRI:** The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute publishes the SIPRI Yearbook annually. It tracks developments in armaments, disarmament, nuclear forces, arms transfers, military expenditure and international security.
- **Global Nuclear Context:** SIPRI reported that the nine nuclear-armed states together possessed around 12,187 nuclear weapons. The report highlighted continued modernisation and increasing reliance on nuclear weapons as instruments of national power.
- **India's Deployed Warheads:** SIPRI estimated that India had 12 deployed nuclear warheads in 2026. It also noted that China and India may occasionally deploy a small number of warheads on missiles during peacetime.

### **Abu Dhabi Dialogue**

**In the News:** The Abu Dhabi Dialogue has gained relevance after India participated in the 8th Ministerial Consultations of the platform in Dubai. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Prashant Pise, Additional Secretary, Emigration Policy & Welfare. The dialogue remains important for cooperation on labour mobility, migrant worker welfare, skills development and safe migration between Asian labour-origin countries and destination countries.

#### **Key Points:**

- **About Abu Dhabi Dialogue:** The Abu Dhabi Dialogue was established in 2008 as a regional, voluntary and non-binding consultative mechanism. It provides a platform for countries of labour origin and destination to discuss contractual labour mobility. The process focuses on cooperation, policy coordination and sharing of best practices among member states.
- **Membership Structure:** The platform includes Asian countries of labour origin and destination states, mainly from the Gulf region. India is an active participant because a large number of Indian workers are employed in West Asian countries. The grouping is significant for issues linked to migration governance, remittances and worker protection.
- **India's Participation:** India's engagement in the dialogue reflects its focus on safe, orderly and legal migration. The platform allows India to raise issues related to the welfare, rights and working conditions of Indian migrant workers. It also helps in strengthening cooperation with countries such as the UAE on labour mobility.
- **Focus Areas:** The dialogue covers contractual labour mobility, skills development, recruitment practices and technology-based migration management. It promotes better coordination between sending and receiving countries. These areas are important for reducing exploitation and improving transparency in overseas employment.
- **Importance for Migrant Workers:** The Abu Dhabi Dialogue supports discussions on fair recruitment, worker welfare and safer migration channels. It helps governments exchange experiences on labour-market reforms and protection mechanisms. The process is especially relevant for South Asian workers employed in Gulf economies.

### **SAPLING Dialogue 2026**

**In the News:** The Ministry of Food Processing Industries, in collaboration with the World Bank Group, concluded the two-day SAPLING Dialogue 2026 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The dialogue focused on strengthening food processing, nutrition,

employment generation, and sustainable growth in South Asia. It brought together policymakers, industry representatives, startups, financial institutions, researchers, and development partners.

#### Key Points:

- **About SAPLING Dialogue 2026:** SAPLING stands for South Asian Policy Leadership for Improved Nutrition and Growth. The dialogue was organised by MoFPI and the World Bank Group. Its theme was “Unlocking Value: Advancing Food Processing for Employment Generation and Sustainable Growth in South Asia.”
- **Focus on Food Processing:** The event highlighted food processing as a bridge between agriculture, industry, nutrition, and employment. It stressed value addition, reduction of post-harvest losses, and stronger food supply chains. The discussion also underlined India’s growing role as a food processing hub in South Asia.
- **Major Areas Discussed:** Sessions covered agricultural supply chains, food safety standards, investment mobilisation, and technology adoption. The dialogue also focused on formalising small and informal food processors. Regional cooperation in food processing and nutrition remained a key theme.
- **Innovation and Investment Angle:** An Innovation Fair was organised to showcase solutions in cold chain, digital traceability, packaging, storage, and processing. The platform connected startups, policymakers, investors, and industry players. It aimed to promote practical partnerships in the food processing ecosystem.
- **Important Report Released:** The report “Assessment of the Level of Food Processing in India” was released during the event. It noted that India’s level of food processing rose from around 10% in 2016 to nearly 17% in 2023. The report identified fruits, vegetables, and dairy as major areas with future potential.

#### UPI-NPI Corridor Launched for India-Nepal Remittances

**In the News:** India and Nepal launched a peer-to-peer cross-border remittance mechanism linking India’s UPI with Nepal’s National Payments Interface. The corridor enables instant, secure, and low-cost digital money transfers between the two countries. It is expected to support migrant workers, families, travellers, merchants, and small businesses.

#### Key Points:

- **About the Corridor:** The UPI-NPI corridor connects India’s Unified Payments Interface with Nepal’s National Payments Interface. It allows person-to-person digital remittances through mobile banking applications and digital wallets. The system supports real-time cross-border payments between India and Nepal.
- **Implementing Institutions:** The integration was carried out by NPCI International Payments Limited and Nepal Clearing House Limited. NIPL is the international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India. NCHL plays a major role in Nepal’s digital payment infrastructure.
- **Benefits for Travellers and Merchants:** The payment linkage reduces dependence on physical cash and currency exchange. Travellers can make easier digital payments, while merchants can receive faster settlements. It can also support tourism, border trade, and small-value cross-border commerce.
- **UPI’s Global Reach:** UPI has become a major part of India’s digital public infrastructure outreach. Its acceptance in several countries reflects India’s push to internationalise

#### UN Carbon Credits Under Paris Agreement Face Scrutiny

**In the News:** The first UN carbon credits issued under the Paris Agreement’s Article 6.4 mechanism have come under scrutiny. Concerns were raised over a Myanmar cookstove project linked to the new carbon crediting system. The issue has renewed debate on transparency, environmental integrity, and human-rights safeguards in global carbon markets.

#### Key Points:

- **About Article 6.4 Mechanism:** Article 6.4 of the Paris Agreement creates a UN-supervised carbon crediting mechanism. It allows verified emission reductions to generate carbon credits. These credits may be used by countries or other actors to support climate targets.

- **Reason for Scrutiny:** The controversy relates to a Myanmar cookstove project that issued credits under the Article 6.4 mechanism. Civil society groups questioned the project's governance, monitoring, and emission-reduction claims. Concerns were also raised about possible institutional links in Myanmar's political context.
- **Concerns Raised by Groups:** The objections focused on human rights, transparency, verification quality, and environmental credibility. Groups alleged that the project may have overstated its climate benefits. They called for stronger checks before further issuance, transfer, or use of the credits.
- **Role of the Supervisory Body:** The Article 6.4 Supervisory Body oversees the functioning of the Paris Agreement carbon crediting mechanism. It approves methodologies, registers activities, accredits verification bodies, and manages related registry processes. Its role is central to maintaining credibility in the UN carbon market framework.
- **Broader Climate Governance Issue:** The case highlights the challenge of creating reliable carbon markets under international climate law. It shows why safeguards, independent verification, grievance redress, and transparency are important. The controversy may influence future rules on carbon credit integrity under the Paris Agreement.

### India and Nepal Launch UPI-NPI Cross-Border Remittance Service

**In the News:** India and Nepal officially launched a peer-to-peer cross-border remittance mechanism on June 6, 2026, by linking India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) with Nepal's National Payments Interface (NPI). The service enables real-time, secure and instant money transfers through mobile banking applications and digital wallets. The initiative strengthens India-Nepal digital financial connectivity and supports easier personal remittances between the two neighbouring countries.

#### Key Points:

- **UPI-NPI Linkage:** The new mechanism creates a direct connection between India's UPI and Nepal's NPI. It allows users in both countries to send money instantly without depending on traditional remittance channels. This is significant because India and Nepal share strong social, economic and labour-migration links.
- **Implementing Agencies:** The technical integration has been carried out by NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) and Nepal Clearing House Limited (NCHL). NIPL is the international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India, while NCHL operates Nepal's digital payment infrastructure. This makes the initiative an important example of cross-border cooperation in digital public infrastructure.
- **Benefit for Remittances:** The service is designed to make personal remittances faster, safer and more affordable. Families, migrant workers, students and frequent cross-border users can benefit from easier money transfers. It also reduces dependence on cash handling, physical currency exchange and slower transfer methods.
- **Importance for Travellers and Merchants:** The linkage improves convenience for Indian travellers visiting Nepal and Nepalese users connected with India. Local businesses can receive more digital payments, especially in areas with high tourist or cross-border movement. This can support small merchants by increasing payment options and transaction volumes.

### Elon Musk Becomes World's First Trillionaire After SpaceX IPO

**In the News:** Elon Musk became the world's first trillionaire after SpaceX made its stock market debut in the United States. SpaceX's IPO valued the company at more than \$2 trillion and placed it among the largest American companies by market value. The development marks a major moment in global business, private space technology and wealth creation.

#### Key Points:

- **SpaceX Public Listing:** SpaceX debuted on US markets on June 12, 2026. The company sold shares before the market debut and its listing attracted strong investor demand because of its role in rockets, satellites and space-based internet services.
- **Musk's Trillionaire Status:** The IPO increased Elon Musk's wealth enough to make him the first person to reach trillionaire status. His fortune is strongly linked to his holdings in SpaceX, Tesla and other technology ventures.
- **Company Valuation:** SpaceX opened with a valuation of more than \$2 trillion, making it one of the largest companies in the United States by market value. The listing placed the company in the same broad valuation league as major technology giants.

- **Starlink and Revenue Growth:** Starlink is a major part of SpaceX's business model and revenue expectations. The satellite internet business has become central to SpaceX's commercial value, along with launch services and future space projects.

### Sudarsan Pattnaik Becomes First Indian to Win Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026

**In the News:** Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik won the Russia Grand Sand Master Cup 2026. He became the first Indian to receive the honour at the II International Festival of Sand Sculpture in the Kaliningrad Region of Russia. His winning artwork focused on climate change and global warming.

#### Key Points:

- **Historic Achievement:** Sudarsan Pattnaik became the first Indian to win the Russia Grand Sand Master Cup. The achievement adds to India's recognition in international sand art and cultural competitions.
- **Festival Venue and Participation:** The award was given at the II International Festival of Sand Sculpture in Russia's Kaliningrad Region. The event brought together sand sculptors from different countries, making it an international platform for temporary art.
- **Winning Sculpture:** Pattnaik's winning sculpture was a three-metre-tall artwork based on climate change and global warming. It showed two contrasting faces of the Earth, one linked with environmental damage and the other with afforestation and sustainable living.
- **Profile of the Artist:** Sudarsan Pattnaik is a well-known sand artist from Odisha. He is known for large-scale sand sculptures on social, environmental and national themes and has received the Padma Shri.
- **Art and Public Messaging:** Sand art is a temporary visual art form created using compacted sand and water. Pattnaik's work is often used to communicate public messages on issues such as climate change, peace, disaster awareness and national events.

### Global Peace Index 2026: Top 10 Safest Countries in the World

**In the News:** The Global Peace Index 2026 ranked Iceland as the world's most peaceful country for the 19th consecutive year. The index covers 163 independent states and territories and measures peace through indicators related to societal safety, conflict and militarisation. India's rank fell to 127th, showing concerns related to internal security, conflict indicators and regional tensions.

#### Key Points:

- **About the Index:** The Global Peace Index is released by the Institute for Economics and Peace. It measures peacefulness across 163 countries and territories using indicators related to safety and security, ongoing conflict and militarisation.
- **Top 10 Countries:** The top 10 countries in the 2026 ranking are Iceland, New Zealand, Switzerland, Slovenia, Ireland, Austria, Portugal, Singapore, Finland and Japan. Iceland retained the first position for the 19th consecutive year.
- **India's Position:** India was ranked 127th in the Global Peace Index 2026, down from 115th in 2025. The fall indicates a decline in India's overall peacefulness score compared to the previous year.
- **Global Trend:** The report noted that global peace has continued to decline due to rising armed conflicts and increased international tensions. The number of active state-based conflicts has reached a very high level compared to earlier decades.
- **Least Peaceful Countries:** Russia was ranked as the least peaceful country in the 2026 index. Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ukraine and Israel were also placed among the lowest-ranked countries.

## SCIENCE AND TECH

### NASA Names Artemis III Crew for Historic 2027 Moon Mission Test Flight

**In the News:** NASA has announced the four prime crew members for Artemis III, planned as a 2027 mission linked to the Artemis programme. The mission will test Orion's rendezvous and docking operations with commercial human landing system test versions in Earth orbit. It will help prepare the systems required for later crewed lunar landing missions under NASA's Moon-to-Mars exploration plan.

#### Key Points:

- **Crew Members:** The Artemis III crew includes Randy Bresnik as commander, Luca Parmitano as pilot, and Andre Douglas and Frank Rubio as mission specialists. Bob Hines has been named as the backup crew member. The crew selection is significant because it reflects NASA's preparation for complex future lunar operations.
- **Mission Objective:** Artemis III will focus on testing Orion's docking and operational coordination with commercial lander systems. The mission is designed to validate key procedures before sending astronauts for more advanced lunar surface operations. These tests are important for building reliability in human spaceflight systems.
- **Role of Commercial Landers:** Blue Origin and SpaceX are developing human landing system test versions connected with the Artemis architecture. The mission will test interfaces, software, propulsion and communication-related systems. This shows the increasing role of private companies in major space exploration missions.
- **Launch Vehicle and Spacecraft:** The mission will use NASA's Space Launch System rocket and Orion spacecraft. SLS is NASA's heavy-lift launch vehicle, while Orion is designed for deep-space crew missions. Both are central to the Artemis programme and future Moon-to-Mars missions.
- **International Cooperation:** Luca Parmitano's selection highlights the role of the European Space Agency in the Artemis programme. ESA provides the European Service Module for Orion, which supplies power, propulsion, air and water. The mission reflects the growing importance of international partnerships in space exploration.

### IN-SPACe Opens LVM-3 Launch Vehicle Programme

**In the News:** IN-SPACe has invited Indian private industry to participate in the technology transfer programme for ISRO's LVM-3 launch vehicle. The move aims to enable capable Indian entities or consortiums to realise, produce and commercially operate the heavy-lift launch vehicle. It is a major step toward greater private-sector participation in India's space economy.

#### Key Points:

- **About the Programme:** The programme focuses on transferring LVM-3 technology from ISRO to eligible Indian industries. Selected entities will be expected to absorb the technology and undertake end-to-end realisation of the vehicle. This is meant to expand India's launch capacity and strengthen commercial space services.
- **About IN-SPACe:** IN-SPACe stands for Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre. It functions as a single-window agency under the Department of Space for promoting and authorising space activities. Its role has become important after India opened the space sector to greater private participation.
- **About LVM-3:** LVM-3, earlier known as GSLV Mk-III, is ISRO's heavy-lift launch vehicle. It is a three-stage launch vehicle consisting of solid strap-on motors, a liquid core stage and a cryogenic upper stage. It has been used in important missions such as Chandrayaan-2, Chandrayaan-3 and OneWeb satellite launches.
- **Technical Significance:** LVM-3 has the capability to carry heavy payloads to Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit and low Earth orbit. Its heavy-lift capacity makes it important for communication satellites, deep-space missions and commercial launches. It is one of the most important operational launch vehicles developed by ISRO.
- **Industry Participation:** ISRO will provide technical support and handholding to the selected private participant for a defined period. The initiative aims to shift operational launch vehicle production toward industry-led execution. It also supports India's broader goal of expanding its share in the global space launch market.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Kaziranga National Park and Raptors

**In the News:** Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve in Assam has emerged as a major avian hotspot after a new survey recorded significant diversity of raptors and storks. The survey was conducted by KNPTR Director Sonali Ghosh with 10 expert enumerators in late February and early March 2026. The report was released on World Environment Day, June 5, highlighting Kaziranga's importance beyond one-horned rhinoceros conservation.

#### Key Points:

- **Survey Findings:** The survey documented 30 raptor species with 217 individual birds and six stork species with 266 individual birds. The findings strengthen Kaziranga's position as an important habitat for birds of prey, storks and wetland-dependent species in the Brahmaputra floodplain ecosystem.
- **Raptor Diversity:** Kaziranga now hosts a large share of India's raptor diversity, with about 50 raptor species recorded in the park and adjoining landscape. Raptors include birds of prey such as eagles, falcons, vultures, buzzards and owls. Their presence indicates a strong predator-prey balance and healthy habitat quality.
- **Important Species Recorded:** Notable species recorded include globally threatened Slender-billed Vulture, Red-headed Vulture, Greater Adjutant, Lesser Adjutant, Pallas's Fish Eagle and Black-necked Stork. These species are important because many of them are linked with threatened wetland, grassland and scavenger-bird conservation.
- **Stork Habitat:** Kaziranga supports six of India's eight stork species, showing the importance of its wetlands, tall trees and floodplain ecosystem. Among storks, the Asian Openbill was the most common and the Greater Adjutant was among the rarest. Storks depend on wetland habitats for feeding, nesting and breeding.
- **Pallas's Fish Eagle Breeding Site:** Kaziranga is an important global breeding site for Pallas's Fish Eagle. The Wildlife Institute of India recorded 10 active nests of the species in 2020. This makes the park significant for protecting nesting habitats, wetland prey base and large riverine bird species.
- **About Kaziranga:** Kaziranga National Park is located in Assam and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is one of the last major undisturbed natural areas in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain. The park is known for the world's largest population of the Indian one-horned rhinoceros and also supports tigers, elephants, wild water buffalo, swamp deer and thousands of birds.

### Bonn Climate Conference Calls for \$120 Billion Adaptation Finance

**In the News:** The Bonn Climate Conference, also called SB64, began in Germany under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process. Health and climate groups called for public, grant-based adaptation finance to be tripled to at least USD 120 billion by 2035. The demand highlights the rising cost of climate resilience for vulnerable countries and communities.

#### Key Points:

- **About SB64:** The Bonn Climate Conference is the 64th session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies. It is being held from June 8 to June 18, 2026. The meeting helps prepare technical and negotiation tracks before the next UN climate summit.
- **Adaptation Finance Demand:** Health groups called for public, grant-based adaptation finance to reach at least USD 120 billion by 2035. The demand focuses on climate resilience in health, water, sanitation, food systems and disaster planning.
- **Health and Climate Link:** Climate impacts increase risks of malnutrition, waterborne diseases, extreme heat exposure and disruption of health services. Adaptation finance is needed to strengthen health systems and protect vulnerable populations.
- **Fossil Fuel Transition:** The conference discussions also include energy transition roadmaps and the need to align climate action with the 1.5°C pathway. Countries are expected to address fossil fuel dependence and just transition concerns.



## Bonn Climate Conference 2026: Health Alliance Urges \$120 Billion Adaptation Finance Goal by 2035

**In the News:** The Bonn Climate Conference 2026, also known as SB64, began in Germany under the UNFCCC process. Health and climate groups urged governments to triple public, grant-based adaptation finance to at least USD 120 billion by 2035. The demand focuses on protecting vulnerable populations from climate-linked health risks and preparing negotiations ahead of the next COP.

### Key Points:

- **About SB64:** The Bonn Climate Conference is the 64th session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies. It is being held from June 8 to June 18, 2026. The meeting prepares technical and negotiation tracks for the next UN climate summit.
- **Adaptation Finance Demand:** Health groups called for public, grant-based adaptation finance to reach at least USD 120 billion by 2035. The demand seeks stronger funding for climate resilience in health systems, water, sanitation, food systems and disaster preparedness.
- **Health and Climate Link:** Climate change increases the risk of heat stress, malnutrition, vector-borne diseases, waterborne diseases and disruption of healthcare services. Adaptation finance is needed to strengthen hospitals, public health systems and community-level protection.
- **Fossil Fuel Transition:** The conference discussions include the need to align fossil fuel phase-out plans with the 1.5°C pathway. Health groups have linked delayed climate action with higher disease burden, air pollution and extreme-weather impacts.
- **Climate Justice Angle:** Developing countries and vulnerable communities face higher climate risks despite limited financial capacity. Grant-based adaptation finance is important because loans can increase debt pressure on countries already facing climate-linked losses.

## Economic Threat of El Niño to India

**In the News:** El Niño has emerged as a major economic risk for India because of its possible impact on the southwest monsoon. The Finance Ministry has warned that deficient rainfall could affect kharif crops, food inflation, rural demand and overall growth. The Centre has also identified 197 vulnerable districts and prepared contingency plans.

### Key Points:

- **About El Niño:** El Niño is linked with abnormal warming of the central and eastern Pacific Ocean. It can weaken the Indian summer monsoon and increase the risk of drought-like conditions. India's agriculture remains highly sensitive to monsoon rainfall.
- **Kharif Crop Risk:** A weak monsoon can affect sowing and yields of kharif crops such as pulses, oilseeds, rice and coarse cereals. Lower output can reduce farm income and disturb food supply. Rainfed regions and small farmers are especially vulnerable.
- **Food Inflation Pressure:** Lower crop production can push up prices of vegetables, pulses, edible oils and cereals. Food inflation can quickly affect household budgets and complicate monetary policy decisions. The risk becomes sharper when global energy and fertiliser costs are already elevated.
- **Rural Demand Impact:** Agriculture influences rural wages, farm incomes and consumption of goods such as two-wheelers, FMCG products, tractors and housing materials. Weak rainfall can reduce rural purchasing power and slow demand in sectors dependent on the rural economy.
- **Preparedness Measures:** The Centre has identified 197 districts as highly vulnerable to El Niño-related stress. Contingency plans include crop advisories, water management, support for farmers and coordination with State administrations to reduce agricultural and economic losses.

## El Niño Returns in 2026: Global Weather Patterns Face Major Disruptions

**In the News:** The World Meteorological Organization has warned that El Niño conditions are developing in 2026 and are likely to influence global temperature and rainfall patterns. WMO has indicated an 80% likelihood of El Niño during June-August 2026, with probabilities near or above 90% for continuation until at least November. The event may increase risks linked to heatwaves, droughts, heavy rainfall, agriculture, water supply and public health.

### Key Points:

- **About El Niño:** El Niño is the warm phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, marked by warming of sea-surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. It usually occurs every two to seven years and may last around nine to twelve months. It alters wind, rainfall and temperature patterns across many regions.
- **2026 Forecast:** WMO has stated that unusually warm ocean waters in the tropical Pacific are supporting the development of El Niño. Most forecast models suggest that the 2026 event may be at least moderate and possibly strong. NOAA has also placed the Pacific under an El Niño Watch, indicating high chances of its emergence in 2026.
- **Global Weather Impact:** El Niño generally increases global temperatures and changes rainfall distribution across continents. It is often linked with drought in Australia, Indonesia and parts of southern Asia, while some regions may experience heavier rainfall. The impact varies depending on the timing, strength and interaction with other climate patterns.
- **Impact on South Asia:** WMO has noted that South Asia is expected to receive below-average monsoon rainfall during the developing El Niño phase. Such a pattern can affect agriculture, food prices, water availability and power demand. India's monsoon-sensitive economy makes El Niño an important climate indicator.
- **Climate Risk and Preparedness:** A warmer atmosphere can intensify the effects associated with El Niño by increasing heat stress and extreme rainfall risks. WMO has emphasized the role of seasonal forecasts and early warnings for agriculture, health, water management and disaster preparedness. The event highlights the importance of climate monitoring systems and regional coordination.

## APPOINTMENT

### Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth Appointed Next Chief of Army Staff

**In the News:** The Government of India has appointed Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth as the next Chief of the Army Staff. He will assume charge from the afternoon of June 30, 2026, after the retirement of General Upendra Dwivedi. Lt Gen Seth is presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and has nearly four decades of service in the Indian Army.

### Key Pointes:

- **Appointment as Chief of Army Staff:** Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth has been appointed as the next Chief of the Army Staff with effect from June 30, 2026. He will succeed General Upendra Dwivedi, who retires from service on the same day. The Chief of Army Staff is the professional head of the Indian Army.
- **Service Background:** Lt Gen Seth is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla. He was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986. His career has covered operational, strategic, capability development and institutional roles within the Army.
- **Command Experience:** He has commanded an Armoured Regiment in the Desert Sector and an Armoured Brigade in the Western Theatre. He has also commanded a Counter-Insurgency Force in Jammu and Kashmir. As a Lieutenant General, he commanded the Sudarshan Chakra Corps, one of the Army's major strike formations.

**Professional Military Education:** Lt Gen Seth has completed the Higher Command Course and the National Defence College course. He has also attended the Command and Staff Course in Paris. These credentials reflect exposure to higher defence planning, military strategy and international professional training.

## ECONOMY

### PM-EAC (Economic Advisory Council)

**In the News:** The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister came into focus after Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting with the Council to discuss India's growth strategy and the impact of global economic uncertainty. The discussion covered economic reforms, investment climate, ease of doing business and India's preparedness amid external shocks. The Council acts as an expert advisory body for economic and related policy matters.



### Key Points:

- **About PM-EAC:** The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister is an independent body constituted to advise the Government of India, specifically the Prime Minister. It provides inputs on economic and related issues. The Council supports evidence-based policymaking through research, analysis and expert consultation.
- **Current Composition:** The EAC-PM is chaired by Prof. S. Mahendra Dev. It has a Chairman, three full-time members and eleven part-time members. Full-time members include Sanjeev Sanyal, Sanjay Kumar Mishra and Dr Shamika Ravi.
- **Main Functions:** The Council analyses economic trends, policy challenges and development priorities. It can examine any issue referred to it by the Prime Minister and may also take up important economic matters on its own for policy advice.
- **Policy Relevance:** PM-EAC's work is linked with macroeconomic policy, employment, investment, growth, fiscal issues, welfare, reforms and long-term development planning. It gives expert inputs that help the Prime Minister assess domestic and global economic conditions.

### IPO (Initial Public Offering)

**In the News:** IPOs came into focus after reports that SpaceX is preparing one of the world's largest public listings. The company is reportedly targeting a \$75 billion fundraise at a valuation of about \$1.75 trillion. The development has drawn attention to capital markets, public share sales, investor participation and the financial scrutiny companies face before listing.

### Key Points:

- **Meaning of IPO:** An Initial Public Offering is the process through which a private company offers its shares to the public for the first time. After an IPO, the company becomes publicly listed on a stock exchange. It allows investors to buy shares and become part-owners of the company.
- **Why Companies Launch IPOs:** Companies use IPOs to raise capital for expansion, debt repayment, technology investment, acquisitions or business diversification. In the SpaceX case, the proposed IPO is linked with raising large funds for ambitious projects, including satellite expansion and artificial intelligence-linked infrastructure.
- **SpaceX IPO Context:** SpaceX is reportedly planning to list on Nasdaq under the ticker symbol SPCX. The company is seeking a large public issue at a very high valuation. Its financial disclosures have attracted scrutiny because Starlink is profitable, while other segments, including AI-related operations, have reported heavy losses.
- **How IPO Pricing Works:** In an IPO, companies and investment banks decide the offer price or price band based on valuation, demand, financial performance and market conditions. Investors apply for shares before listing, but allotment depends on demand and category-wise allocation. After listing, shares trade freely in the secondary market.
- **Investor Risk:** IPO investment carries market risk because listing price may rise or fall after trading begins. Investors examine revenue, profit, debt, governance, future growth and valuation before applying. A high-profile IPO may attract strong demand, but strong demand alone does not guarantee long-term returns.

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

### President Murmu Confers Kirti Chakras at Defence Ceremony

**In the News:** President Droupadi Murmu conferred gallantry awards during Phase-I of the Defence Investiture Ceremony 2026 at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi. The awards included seven Kirti Chakras, including two posthumous. Personnel from the Defence Forces, Central Armed Police Forces and State/Union Territory Police were honoured.

### Key Points:

- **Gallantry Awards Presented:** President Murmu conferred 07 Kirti Chakras, 15 Vir Chakras and 29 Shaurya Chakras during the ceremony. Among these, 02 Kirti Chakras, 03 Vir Chakras and 01 Shaurya Chakra were awarded posthumously.

- **About Kirti Chakra:** Kirti Chakra is India's second-highest peacetime gallantry award, ranking below only the Ashoka Chakra. It is awarded for conspicuous bravery, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the battlefield. It may be awarded to military and eligible civilian personnel.
- **Ceremony Venue:** The Defence Investiture Ceremony was held at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi. The President of India, as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, presents gallantry and distinguished service awards at such ceremonies.
- **Awardees Covered:** The 2026 Phase-I ceremony honoured personnel from the Defence Forces, CAPFs and State/UT Police. The awards recognised exceptional courage, devotion to duty and sacrifice in high-risk situations.
- **Institutional Importance:** Gallantry awards publicly recognise acts of bravery and national service. They also highlight the role of armed forces and security personnel in combat, counter-insurgency, internal security and other hazardous duties.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Day Against Child Labour 2026: Theme, History, Global Data and India's Effort

**In the News:** World Day Against Child Labour 2026 was observed on June 12 to raise awareness against child labour and protect children from exploitation. The 2026 theme is "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair Play for Children, Decent Work for Adults." The observance highlights the need for education, social protection, decent work for adults and strict enforcement of child labour laws.

#### Key Points:

- **Theme for 2026:** The theme of World Day Against Child Labour 2026 is "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair Play for Children, Decent Work for Adults." It calls for stronger action to keep children in school and away from exploitative work. The theme also links child protection with decent livelihoods for adults.
- **History of the Day:** World Day Against Child Labour was launched by the International Labour Organization in 2002. It is observed every year on June 12. The day brings governments, employers, workers' organisations and civil society together to renew action against child labour.
- **Global Child Labour Data:** Recent ILO-UNICEF estimates show that about 138 million children are still engaged in child labour worldwide. Around 54 million of them are involved in hazardous work that harms their health, safety or development. The figures show that the world has not achieved the target of ending child labour by 2025.
- **SDG Linkage:** The fight against child labour is linked with Sustainable Development Goal 8.7. This target calls for ending forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour. The 2026 observance stresses education, social protection, stronger enforcement and responsible supply chains.
- **India's Legal Framework:** In India, the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, amended in 2016, prohibits employment of children below 14 years in all occupations and processes. It also prohibits adolescents aged 14 to 18 years from working in hazardous occupations and processes. Article 24 of the Constitution also prohibits employment of children below 14 years in factories, mines and hazardous work.
- **India's Efforts:** India uses the PENCIL portal, or Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour, to support reporting and enforcement against child labour. The National Child Labour Project has been merged with Samagra Shiksha for education-linked rehabilitation. Other related measures include compulsory education under the Right to Education Act and action through district-level enforcement authorities.

## SPORTS

### India Wins 114 Medals at World Yogasana Championships

**In the News:** India topped the medal table at the inaugural World Yogasana Championships 2026 held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The Indian contingent won 114 medals, including 102 gold medals. The event marked an important step in promoting yogasana as a competitive global sport.

#### Key Points:

- **India's Medal Tally:** India won 114 medals at the World Yogasana Championships 2026. The haul included 102 gold medals, placing India at the top of the medal table. The performance reflected India's dominance in the discipline.
- **Event Venue:** The inaugural World Yogasana Championships were held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The event brought together athletes from multiple countries and promoted yogasana as a structured competitive sport.
- **Japan's Performance:** Japan finished second with 11 medals, including 3 gold, 3 silver and 5 bronze medals. The result showed growing international participation in yogasana competitions beyond India.
- **About Yogasana Sport:** Yogasana as a competitive discipline evaluates posture, balance, flexibility, strength, control and presentation. It converts traditional yogic postures into a judged sporting format.

### ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026: Schedule, Teams, Format and Venue

**In the News:** The ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 is scheduled to begin on June 12, 2026, in England and Wales. It will be the 10th edition of the tournament and the biggest Women's T20 World Cup so far. The event will feature 12 teams, 33 matches and seven main venues, with the final to be played at Lord's on July 5, 2026.

#### Key Points:

- **Tournament Schedule:** The ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 will be held from June 12 to July 5, 2026. The tournament will begin with the group stage and end with the final at Lord's in London. The two semi-finals are scheduled at The Oval on June 30 and July 2.
- **Participating Teams:** A record 12 teams will take part in the tournament. England qualified as host, while India, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and West Indies qualified through rankings. Bangladesh, Scotland, Ireland and the Netherlands qualified through the Global Qualifier.
- **Group Division:** The teams qualified through rankings: Bangladesh, Scotland, Ireland and the Netherlands have been divided into two groups of six each. Group 1 includes Australia, Bangladesh, India, Netherlands, Pakistan and South Africa. Group 2 includes England, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, Sri Lanka and West Indies.
- **Tournament Format:** Each team will play the other teams in its group in a round-robin format. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals. The winners of the two semi-finals will play the final for the title.
- **Main Venues:** The 33 matches will be played across seven venues. These are Old Trafford in Manchester, Headingley in Leeds, Edgbaston in Birmingham, Bristol County Ground, Hampshire Bowl in Southampton, The Oval in London and Lord's in London. Lord's has been chosen as the venue for the final.
- **Prize Money:** The ICC announced a record prize money pool of USD 8.76 million for the 2026 edition. The winners will receive USD 2.34 million and the runners-up will receive USD 1.17 million. The prize structure reflects the growing commercial and sporting profile of women's cricket.

### FIFA World Cup 2026 Opening Ceremony: Full Schedule, Country Wise Performers List

**In the News:** The FIFA World Cup 2026 opened with a historic three-country ceremony format across Mexico, Canada and the United States. The first opening ceremony was held in Mexico City on June 11, followed by separate ceremonies in Toronto and Los Angeles on June 12. The tournament is the first FIFA World Cup hosted by three countries and features 48 teams, 104 matches and 16 host cities.

#### Key Points:

- **Historic Three-Ceremony Format:** For the first time in FIFA World Cup history, three separate opening ceremonies are being held in three host nations. Mexico City hosted the first ceremony on June 11, while Toronto and Los Angeles are

hosting ceremonies on June 12. The format reflects the joint hosting of the tournament by Mexico, Canada and the United States.

- **Opening Ceremony Schedule:** Mexico's ceremony was held at Mexico City Stadium before Mexico vs South Africa. Canada's ceremony is scheduled at Toronto Stadium before Canada vs Bosnia and Herzegovina. The United States ceremony is scheduled at Los Angeles Stadium before USA vs Paraguay.
- **Mexico Performers List:** The Mexico ceremony featured Shakira, Burna Boy, Alejandro Fernández, Belinda, Danny Ocean, J Balvin, Lila Downs, Los Ángeles Azules, Maná and Tyla. Shakira and Burna Boy performed "Dai Dai", the official song of FIFA World Cup 2026. Alejandro Fernández performed Mexico's national anthem, while Tyla performed South Africa's national anthem.
- **Canada Performers List:** Canada's opening ceremony features Alanis Morissette, Alessia Cara, Elyanna, Jessie Reyez, Michael Bublé, Nora Fatehi, Sanjoy, VegeDREAM and William Prince. Alanis Morissette is scheduled to perform Canada's national anthem. Aleksandar Gajić will perform the national anthem of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Will Arnett will join as a FIFA World Cup 2026 Ambassador.
- **United States Performers List:** The Los Angeles ceremony features Katy Perry, Future, Anitta, LISA, Rema and Tyla. Dan + Shay will perform the United States national anthem, while Purahei Soul will perform Paraguay's national anthem. Jason Sudeikis will appear as a FIFA World Cup 2026 Ambassador during the pre-match ceremony.

### Kane Williamson Retires from International Cricket After 16-Year Career

**In the News:** New Zealand batter and former captain Kane Williamson has announced his retirement from international cricket with immediate effect. His retirement ends a 16-year international career in which he became New Zealand's all-time leading run-scorer. He will not take further part in New Zealand's ongoing Test series in England.

#### Key Pointes:

- **End of International Career:** Kane Williamson retired from international cricket after playing 378 matches across formats. He finished with 19,346 international runs, including 48 centuries. His retirement marks the departure of one of New Zealand's most successful batters.
- **Test Cricket Record:** Williamson played 110 Test matches and scored 9,515 runs with 33 centuries. He is regarded as one of New Zealand's finest Test batters because of his consistency, technique and performance in different conditions. His Test average remained above 54 at the end of his career.
- **White-Ball Career:** In ODIs, Williamson played 175 matches and was a major figure in New Zealand's middle order. He also represented New Zealand in 93 T20 Internationals. Across formats, he was known for calm batting, strike rotation and leadership under pressure.
- **Captaincy and ICC Achievements:** Williamson led New Zealand to victory in the inaugural ICC World Test Championship final against India in 2021. He also captained New Zealand in the 2019 ODI World Cup final, where the team finished runner-up after a tied final and Super Over.
- **Legacy in World Cricket:** Williamson was part of the modern "Fab Four" group along with Virat Kohli, Joe Root and Steve Smith. His career is associated with technical excellence, sportsmanship and calm leadership. He is expected to continue playing franchise cricket after retirement from international cricket.