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SSC - CGL	12,256	22 Jun 2026
CTET	-	10 Jun 2026

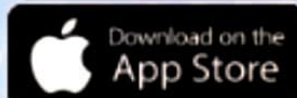
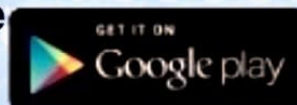
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Assistant Director
Ministry of Youth Affairs



Amanpreet Singh
Assistant Director
Sports Authority of India



Lovish Garg
IPS, Rank 184



Himanshu Gupta
IAS, Rank 7

My association with PANACEA for about 5 months was very fruitful. I got good motivation to achieve my goals. Thank you Bharti Sir for your constant support. I suggest students to make a goal in life and PANACEA is a good centre to guide you.
Himanshu



Aditya Uppal
IAS, Rank 19

I came to bharti sir when I was at the crossroads of my career. It was his motivation coupled with guidance that I took the decision to appear for the civil services and finally cracked it in my very first attempt. I owe my success to him a lot. Thank you sir for being the guiding light for me and many others like me. Aditya uppal (civil services exam 2013 AIR 202) (Indian revenue service) 1:54 pm



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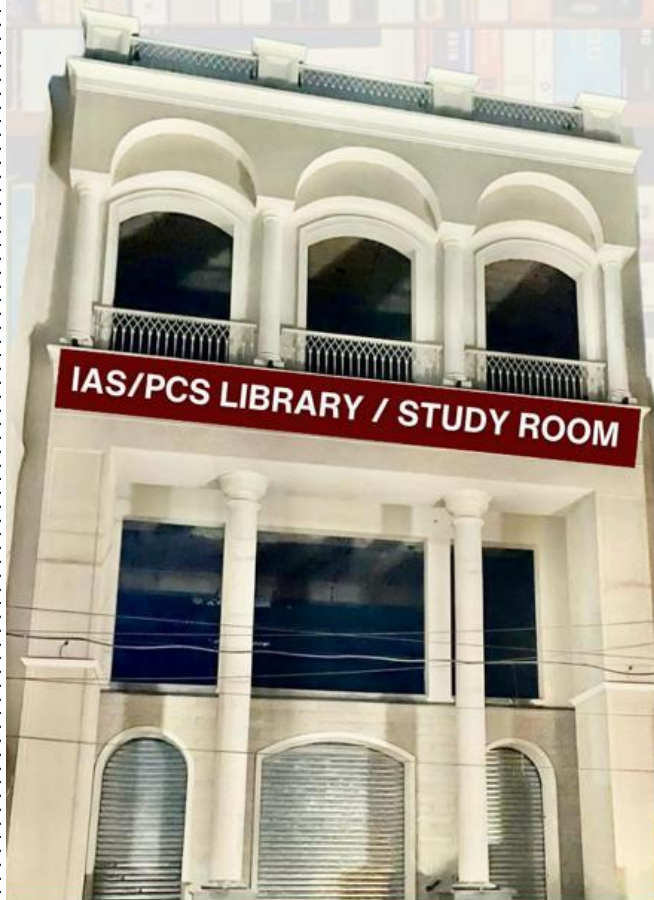


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3. Ketan Singla
4. Ramanpreet Kaur
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8. Shruti Bharti
9. Chhavi
10. Pinki Saini
11. Harshi Gagat
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14. Gurtej Singh
15. Gurbax Singh
16. Manav Nahar
17. Mohit Bhatt

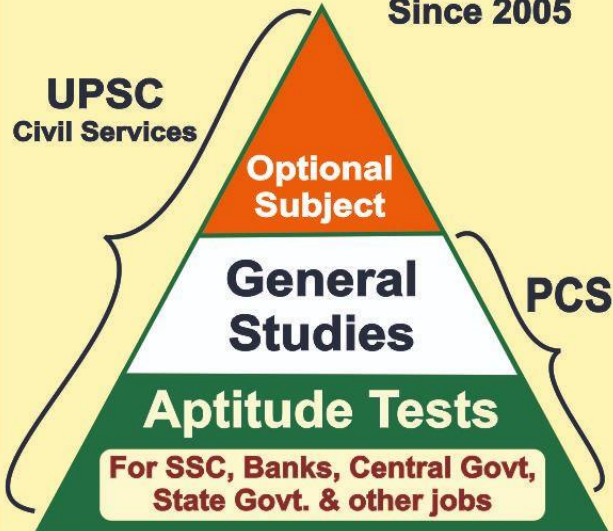
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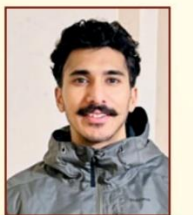
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- IBPS - RRB PO & Clerk
- IBPS - Specialist Officer
- SBI - PO & Clerk
- RBI - Officer & Assistant
- NABARD - Grade A & B
- SEBI - Grade A Officer

Insurance Exams

- LIC AAO & Assistants
- GIC AO & Assistants

State Govt. Exams

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- Co-operative Inspectors
- High Court Clerks
- Taxation Inspectors
- Police SI & Constables
- PUDA, GLADA & PSPCL
- Tehsil Welfare Officer etc.
- Revenue Patwari
- Naib Tehsildar
- Municipal Corporation
- Agricultural Devt. Officer
- Labour Inspector
- Section Officer

Central Govt. Exams

- SSC - CGL
- SSC - CHSL for +2
- Intelligence Bureau
- EPF Clerk
- EPF Asstt. Commissioner
- FCI
- PSUs & Railway
- Delhi Police SI/ASI
- Constable/Head Constable
- Assistant Commandant
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1. NATIONAL NEWS

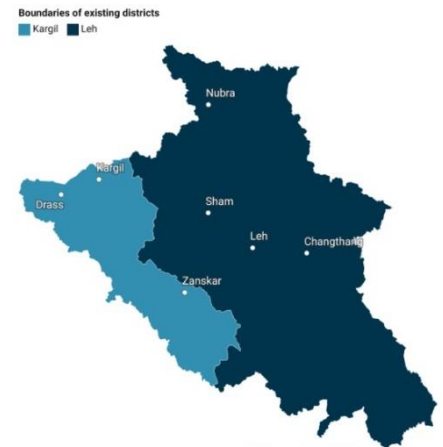
1. Creation of 5 New Districts in Ladakh

The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Vinai Kumar Saxena, has sanctioned the formation of five new districts to improve administrative efficiency and strengthen governance at the grassroots level.

New Districts:

The five newly established districts along with their headquarters are:

- Nubra – Diskit
- Sham – Khaltse
- Changthang – Nyoma
- Zaskar – Padum
- Drass – Drass-Ranbirpura



Earlier Structure: Previously, Ladakh had only two districts—Leh and Kargil. Nubra, Sham, and Changthang have been separated from Leh, while Zaskar and Drass have been carved out of Kargil.

Decentralised Governance: This move aims to make administration more accessible in remote Himalayan areas, where people earlier had to travel long distances.

Strategic and Inclusive Development: The decision supports the vision of “Viksit Ladakh,” promoting balanced development across challenging terrains.

Economic Impact: Establishing new district headquarters is likely to create employment opportunities through the development of administrative infrastructure and related services.

2. Right to Safe Road Travel (SC Judgment)

The Supreme Court of India has ruled that safe travel on highways and protection from road accidents are integral to the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

Constitutional Interpretation:

The Court clarified that Article 21 places a positive duty on the State to ensure road safety. Preventable accidents and fatalities indicate a failure to uphold this obligation.

Alarming Data:

Although National Highways make up only about 2% of India’s road network, they account for nearly 30% of total road deaths, reflecting serious safety concerns.

Key Directives:

- Immediate ban on new commercial structures (like dhabas/eateries) within highway right-of-way.
- Strict prohibition on parking of heavy/commercial vehicles on highways, except at designated areas.
- District Magistrates must remove unauthorized roadside structures within 60 days.
- No licenses for highway-side establishments without approval from National Highways Authority of India or PWD.

Institutional Measure:

A District Highway Safety Task Force will be set up in every district to ensure enforcement of safety norms.

3. Asia's First UNESCO Chair on Gender Inclusion



India has launched Asia's first UNESCO Chair on Gender Inclusion and Skill Development at Symbiosis Skills and Professional University in Pune.

About the Initiative:

The UNESCO Chair on Gender Inclusion and Skill Development is a global academic initiative designed to reduce gender disparities in technical and vocational education and training (TVET). It was inaugurated on 24 April 2026.

Key Stakeholders:

- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- UNESCO
- Symbiosis Skills and Professional University

Objective:

To promote gender equity in skill development by enabling women to actively participate in emerging and high-growth economic sectors.

Key Features:

- **Sector Focus:** Emphasis on training women in advanced fields such as semiconductors, AI, robotics, advanced manufacturing, and defence technology.
- **Global Collaboration:** Launched during a conference on the future of work with participation from International Labour Organization, UNESCO-UNEVOC (Germany), and the UNESCO Global Skills Academy (Paris).
- **Inclusive Approach:** Targets women from underserved communities, ensuring access to industry-relevant skills and employment pathways.
- **Industry Linkages:** Involves over 40 industry leaders and policymakers to align training with market demand.

Policy Integration: Supported by both the Skill Development and Education ministries to embed gender-inclusive skilling into the national framework.

4. India's First Commercial Seaplane Service

India's first commercial seaplane service has received approval from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. The service will be operated by SkyHop Aviation.



Key Highlights:

- **Launch Location:** Initial operations will begin in Lakshadweep.
- **Connectivity:** The service will connect five islands within Lakshadweep and link them to the mainland, improving regional accessibility.
- **Aircraft:** A 19-seater seaplane will be used for operations.
- **Trial Runs:** Successful water take-offs and landings were conducted in Rishikesh.

5. Vikram-1 Private Rocket

A. Revanth Reddy flagged off the flight hardware of India's first privately developed orbital rocket, Vikram-1.

Event: The rollout of Vikram-1's flight hardware marks a significant milestone in India's private space sector.

Developer: The rocket has been developed by Skyroot Aerospace, based in Hyderabad.



Launch Details: The maiden orbital launch is planned for June 2026 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre.

About Vikram-1:

- A three-stage launch vehicle built using carbon-composite structures.
- Capable of carrying up to 350 kg payload to Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- Equipped with advanced 3D-printed engines.
- Utilises both solid and liquid propulsion systems.
- Recognised as India's first privately built orbital rocket.

Strategic Vision:

Telangana is positioning itself as a major aerospace hub, already hosting global players like Boeing, Airbus, and Safran, with a long-term goal of becoming a global aerospace leader by 2047.

6. X-Band Doppler Weather Radar – Mahabaleshwar



The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology has installed an X-band Doppler Weather Radar at Mahabaleshwar under Mission Mausam.

About Doppler Weather Radar:

A Doppler Weather Radar operates on the principle of the Doppler Effect to determine the velocity and position of atmospheric particles like raindrops and clouds.

Working Mechanism:

- The radar emits radio waves into the atmosphere.
- These waves are reflected back by precipitation particles.
- The time taken for the signals to return helps calculate distance.
- Changes in frequency (Doppler shift) indicate the speed and movement of clouds or rainfall.

7. Reconstitution of NITI Aayog

The Government of India has reconstituted NITI Aayog, appointing Ashok Kumar Lahiri as Vice-Chairperson in place of Suman K. Bery. The new composition includes five full-time members, with greater representation from health, biotechnology, and deep-tech domains. This shift indicates a move away from a purely economics-focused body toward a science, technology, and innovation-driven policy approach. It also aligns with efforts to enhance the ease of doing research and development in India through flexible regulatory frameworks.

About:

- Established in 2015 by a Union Cabinet resolution, replacing the Planning Commission.
- Functions as the Government of India's premier public policy think tank.
- Promotes cooperative federalism through a bottom-up planning approach involving states.

Legal Status:

- Advisory, extra-constitutional, and non-statutory body.
- Does not have legislative or executive powers.

Composition and Structure

- **Chairperson:** Prime Minister of India
- **Vice-Chairperson:** Appointed by the Prime Minister (Cabinet rank).
- **Governing Council:** Includes Chief Ministers of states and Lt. Governors of Union Territories.
- **CEO:** Appointed by the Prime Minister; holds Secretary-level rank.
- **Full-Time Members:** Domain experts from diverse sectors.
- **Regional Councils:** Formed for specific regional issues.
- **Ex-Officio Members:** Up to four Union Ministers nominated by the PM.

8. Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) 2.0

Thematic Framework

PAI assesses Gram Panchayat/Equivalent to GP performance across the following nine LSDG themes:

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6	Theme 7	Theme 8	Theme 9
Poverty Free and Enhanced Livelihoods in Panchayat	Healthy Panchayat	Child-Friendly Panchayat	Water Sufficient Panchayat	Clean and Green Panchayat	Panchayat with Self-Sufficient Infrastructure	Socially Just and Socially Secured Panchayat	Panchayat with Good Governance	Women Friendly Panchayat

PAI 2.0 has been released as a comprehensive performance assessment of over 2.5 lakh Panchayats across India, serving as a nationwide report card for grassroots governance.

About PAI:

The Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) is an initiative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. It is the world's first national framework designed to measure the progress of Rural Local Government Institutions such as Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Traditional Local Bodies (TLBs) using objective, data-driven indicators. The index is aligned with the Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs), which adapts the 17 global SDGs into 9 themes relevant to Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Assessment Framework:

Based on overall and thematic scores, Panchayats are categorized into five performance levels: Achiever (90+), Front Runner (75–<90), Performer (60–<75), Aspirant (40–<60), and Beginner (<40). This grading system allows structured comparison and evaluation of local governance performance.

9. Index of Service Production (ISP)

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has proposed the Index of Service Production (ISP) to measure India's services sector output on a monthly basis, addressing a major data gap.

About ISP:

The ISP will be a high-frequency indicator, similar to the Index of Industrial Production, and developed by the National Statistical Office. Using 2024–25 as the base year, it will track over 40 service sub-sectors using GST data, administrative sources, and surveys, with CPI-based proxies for price adjustment.

The index will provide real, output-based data (unlike survey-based PMI), improving policymaking and economic monitoring. However, it may initially exclude parts of the informal sector and GST-exempt services like health and education.

10. India's 1st Green Methanol Production Plan

India is set to establish its first green methanol production plant at Deendayal Port Authority in Gujarat. The project will use the invasive shrub **Prosopis juliflora** as the main feedstock for producing green methanol fuel.

About the Project

The proposed plant will initially produce around 5 tonnes of green methanol per day. It will use gasification technology, in which biomass is converted into syngas containing hydrogen (H₂), carbon monoxide (CO), and carbon dioxide (CO₂). This syngas is then chemically processed to produce methanol.

The project is currently being developed as a demonstration plant. In future phases, larger commercial plants with capacities between 100 and 500 tonnes per day are expected to be developed.

The project is important because it supports India's transition towards:

- Green ports
- Clean energy
- Sustainable shipping fuels

It will help reduce India's dependence on imported fossil fuels and promote the use of low-carbon fuels in the maritime sector.

The initiative also supports the goals of the International Maritime Organization, which aims to achieve net-zero emissions in international shipping by 2050.

By converting invasive biomass into fuel, the project also combines:

- Waste management
- Environmental restoration
- Renewable energy production

Prosopis juliflora

- *Prosopis juliflora* is an invasive shrub species originally native to Mexico and Central America.
- It was introduced in India during the 1920s and later expanded widely in Gujarat around 1961 to control desertification and soil erosion.



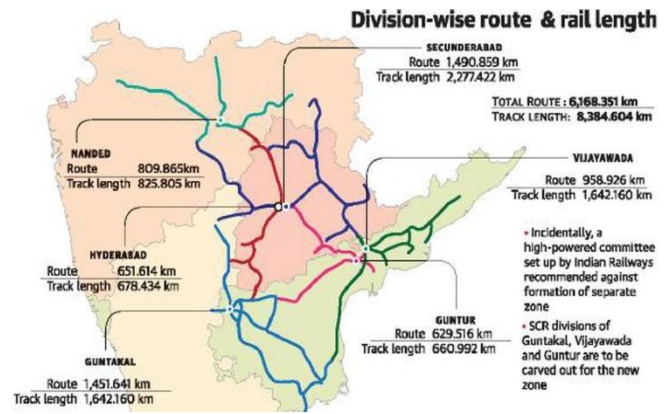
11. The South Coast Railway Zone

The South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR) was recently in news after the Union Cabinet approved the bifurcation of the Waltair Railway Division, one of the highest revenue-earning divisions of Indian Railways. The move is aimed at creating the new South Coast Railway Zone to improve railway administration and regional connectivity.

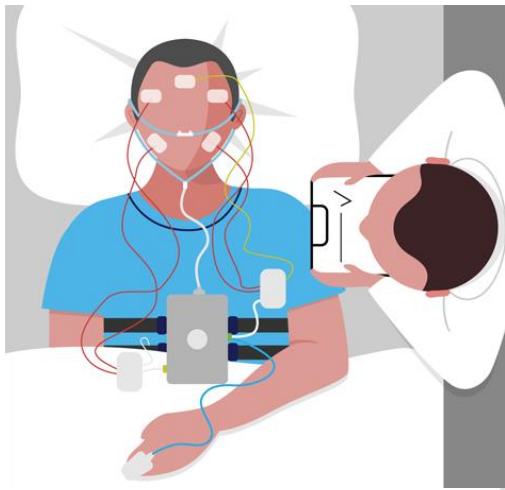
About South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR)

The South Coast Railway Zone (SCoR) was approved by the Union Cabinet on 7 February 2025 and has its headquarters at Visakhapatnam. The zone covers parts of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu, including important railway divisions such as Vijayawada, Guntur, and Visakhapatnam. The new zone was created

to fulfil the commitments made under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, and to improve logistics, industrial growth, and tourism in the region.



12. Apnoea Test



The Apnoea Test was recently in news after the Supreme Court of India agreed to examine a medical plea challenging the reliability and safety of the test used for determining brain death in Kerala. The plea argued that the procedure may sometimes be medically inconclusive and could potentially worsen the patient's condition.

About the Apnoea Test

The apnoea test is a mandatory clinical procedure used to determine brain death, also known as death by neurologic criteria. It mainly checks whether the brainstem, which controls automatic functions such as breathing, is still functioning. During the test, doctors temporarily disconnect the ventilator to allow carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels in the blood to rise. Before this, the patient is given 100% oxygen for about 10 minutes to maintain oxygen reserves.

Procedure and Significance

As CO₂ levels rise to a threshold level, usually 60 mmHg or higher, a healthy brainstem should trigger spontaneous breathing. Doctors closely observe the chest and abdomen for any breathing effort. If no breathing movement occurs, the test is considered positive for brain death. However, the procedure is stopped immediately if oxygen levels fall below safe limits or blood pressure becomes unstable. The apnoea test is important because confirmation of brain death legally permits organ donation and organ retrieval. At the same time, critics argue that temporary ventilator withdrawal may increase CO₂ and acidosis, potentially causing further damage to already compromised brain tissue.

13. Padma Doree

Padma Doree was recently unveiled by the North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation (NEHDC). The initiative aims to promote sustainable textiles

and strengthen collaboration between traditional weaving communities across different regions of India.

About Padma Doree

Padma Doree is a unique cross-cultural textile initiative that combines the Eri (Ahimsa) silk traditions of Northeast India with the famous Chanderi weaving heritage of Madhya Pradesh.



The initiative was launched by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) and is being implemented by NEHHDC. It seeks to promote sustainable textile production, preserve traditional craftsmanship, and create new livelihood opportunities for artisans.

Padma Doree represents a convergence of textile traditions and generational weaving knowledge from two culturally significant regions of India. The textiles are produced using natural dyes, reflecting environmentally sustainable and traditional dyeing practices. A major feature of the initiative is its use of Eri silk, also known as Ahimsa silk, which follows a non-violent silk production method where silkworms are not harmed during the process. The initiative also highlights India's rich textile heritage while encouraging ethical and eco-friendly fashion practices.

14. Sikkim Becomes India's First Paperless Judiciary State



Sikkim was recently declared the first Indian state to adopt a fully paperless judiciary. The announcement was made by Surya Kant during the National Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education held in Gangtok.

About the Paperless Judiciary Initiative

The conclave was organised by the High Court of Sikkim and the Sikkim Judicial Academy. The paperless judiciary system involves complete digital functioning of courts, including e-filing of cases, digital maintenance of records, virtual hearings, and automated judicial workflows. The initiative aims to improve efficiency in justice delivery by reducing paperwork, speeding up hearings, and lowering case pendency. It also enhances transparency and accessibility in judicial administration.

Use of Technology in Judiciary

The Indian judiciary is increasingly integrating advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence for judicial administration and legal research. Tools like SUPACE (Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court Efficiency) and SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software) are being used for case management, legal research, and translation of judicial documents. The initiative reflects India's growing focus on digital governance and technology-driven judicial reforms.

15. India's First Barrier-Less Toll System Launched in Gujarat



India recently launched its first barrier-less toll collection system based on Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) technology on the Surat–Bharuch stretch of NH-48 in Gujarat. The initiative marks a major transformation in highway toll collection and traffic management.

About the MLFF Toll System

The Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF)

system removes physical toll booths and barriers, allowing vehicles to move continuously at highway speeds without stopping for toll payment. The system has been operationalised on the Surat–Bharuch corridor of National Highway-48 and is aimed at improving travel efficiency on busy road networks.

The technology uses Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras along with FASTag integration for automatic toll deduction. Vehicles are identified digitally, and toll charges are deducted electronically without manual intervention.

Objectives and Significance

The barrier-less toll system aims to reduce traffic congestion, save travel time, improve fuel efficiency, and lower vehicular emissions. It is also expected to improve logistics efficiency and facilitate faster movement of passengers and goods, thereby supporting “Ease of Living” and “Ease of Doing Business.”

The project is being implemented by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

16. JANANI Platform

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the JANANI (Journey of Antenatal, Natal and Neonatal Integrated Care) platform during the National Summit on Best Practices. JANANI is an upgraded digital platform developed from the existing Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) portal. It is designed to maintain digital health records of women throughout their reproductive years by tracking important maternal and child healthcare services.



Objectives and Key Features

The main aim of JANANI is to improve monitoring and delivery of maternal and child healthcare services across the entire continuum of care. The platform creates longitudinal health records by capturing services from antenatal care and childbirth to neonatal care and family planning. It also provides QR-enabled Mother and Child Health cards, automated alerts for high-risk pregnancies, citizen reminders for immunization and antenatal visits, and real-time dashboards for authorities. Registration can be done through ABHA, Aadhaar, or mobile numbers, while self-registration is also available through web and mobile applications.

Significance of the Platform

JANANI is integrated with platforms such as U-WIN and POSHAN Abhiyaan to strengthen coordination between healthcare, immunization, and nutrition services. Its pan-India search facility helps migrant populations access healthcare records from any location, ensuring continuity of treatment. The use of biometric verification and unique identifiers also prevents duplicate records and improves the reliability and accuracy of health data.

17. Road RADAR Initiative

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee launched the 'Road RADAR' (Real-time Air Pollution Detection Across Roads) initiative to strengthen monitoring and control of road-related air pollution in Delhi. The programme aims to identify pollution hotspots in real time and ensure quick corrective action against dispersed pollution sources across the city.



Key Features

Under the initiative, dedicated field surveyors have been deployed in every district to conduct regular on-ground inspections of roads across Delhi. The surveyors work under daily supervision and monitor pollution-prone locations throughout the working week. A total of 13 surveyors will collectively cover nearly 18,000 km of roads under the jurisdiction of agencies such as the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, New Delhi Municipal Council, Public Works Department, and Delhi Cantonment Board.

18. One Case One Data Initiative



Recently, the Supreme Court of India launched two digital initiatives — 'One Case One Data' and 'Su Sahay' — to improve judicial administration and enhance access to justice through technology-driven solutions.

'One Case One Data' is a digital integration initiative aimed at linking data from the Supreme Court, High Courts, district courts, and taluka

courts into a single unified system. The initiative seeks to streamline case management and create a comprehensive interconnected judicial database across the country, improving coordination and efficiency within the judiciary.

Su Sahay and Significance

‘Su Sahay’ is an AI-powered chatbot integrated with the Supreme Court website to assist litigants and citizens in accessing court-related services and procedures more easily. Developed by the National Informatics Centre in collaboration with the Supreme Court Registry, the chatbot provides front-end guidance and simplifies user interaction with the judicial system. These initiatives promote digitisation, accessibility, efficiency, and technology-based justice delivery while ensuring the continued role of human oversight in legal processes.

19. UDGAM Portal

oneindia



**UDGAM
PORTAL**

आसानी से जानें
बैंक में पड़े बिना दावे
की राशि

The Reserve Bank of India launched the UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access Information) portal to help users identify unclaimed deposits and dormant accounts across multiple banks. Recently, the Supreme Court of India reviewed the functioning of the portal following a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) concerning dormant funds and the difficulties faced by legal heirs in

accessing them.

Features and Integration

The UDGAM portal enables users to search for unclaimed deposits/accounts and either claim the deposits or reactivate their accounts by contacting the respective banks directly. The portal currently integrates 30 banks, which account for nearly 90% of the funds under the Depositors’ Education and Awareness Fund (DEAF). Since its launch in August 2023, the platform has introduced several improvements, including optional registration, address-based search features, and relaxed login and search restrictions. By April 2026, more than 20 lakh users had conducted around 44 lakh searches on the portal.

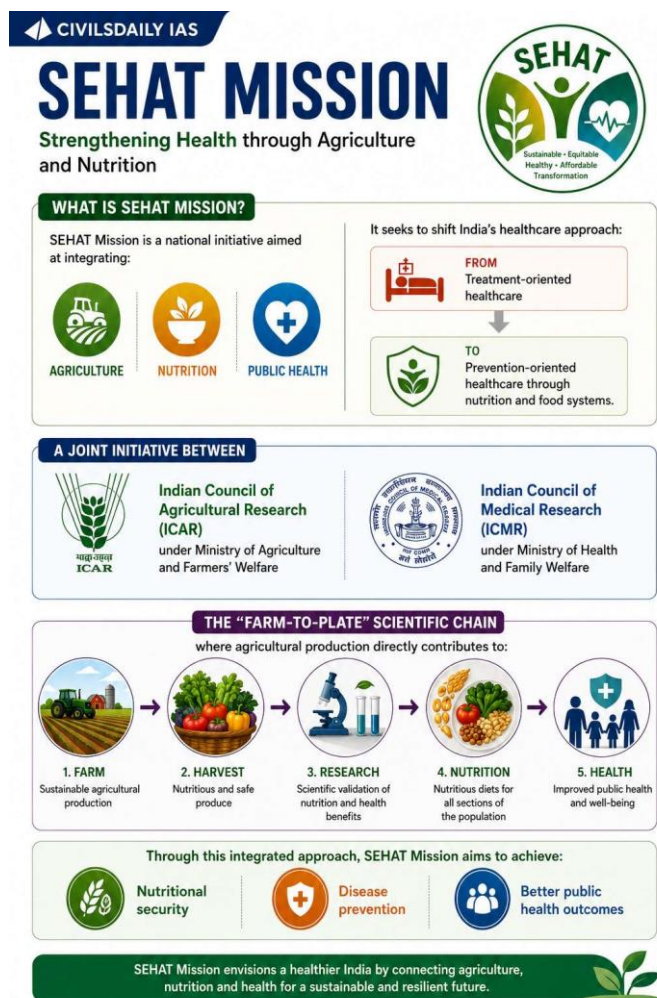
20. SEHAT Mission

The Union Government launched the SEHAT (Science Excellence for Health through Agricultural Transformation) Mission in New Delhi. The initiative marks the first formal convergence between India’s agriculture and health sectors to address malnutrition and the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The mission promotes a preventive healthcare approach by linking farming, nutrition, and public health.

Objectives and Institutional Framework

The SEHAT Mission is a joint partnership between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare and the Indian Council of Medical Research under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Its main objective is to

create a scientific framework for “Healthy Food, Healthy Farms, and a Healthy India.” The mission seeks to establish a farm-to-plate system where agricultural production directly supports nutritional security and disease prevention.



21. India Launches Operation Ragepill

The Narcotics Control Bureau announced Operation Ragepill, which led to the dismantling of an international syndicate involved in Captagon trafficking. The operation resulted in India's first seizure of about 227.7 kg of Captagon tablets and powder, with an estimated illicit market value of ₹182 crore. Captagon is a synthetic stimulant linked to fenetylline and amphetamine. It has been abused in West Asia and the Middle East, and it is classified as a psychostimulant drug. The substance has been associated with illicit trafficking networks across West Asia, North Africa, and parts of Europe. India regulates narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances through the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985. The law covers production, possession, transport, sale, and consumption of prohibited substances.

22. Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar Committee

The Union Government has constituted a high-level committee under the chairmanship of Justice Prakash Prabhakar Naolekar to examine challenges arising from unnatural

demographic changes and illegal immigration in different parts of India. The committee includes the Census Commissioner of India, former IAS officer Durga Shankar Mishra, former IPS officer Balaji Srivastava, economist Shamika Ravi, and the Joint Secretary (Foreigners-I), Ministry of Home Affairs, as Member Secretary.

Objectives and Significance

The committee will conduct a detailed assessment of demographic changes linked to illegal immigration and infiltration, analyze abnormal population trends among different communities, and recommend policy measures to address these challenges. It has been empowered to collect field data, study migration patterns, and review census changes at district and village levels. The committee is expected to submit a time-bound report containing recommendations on demographic stabilization, border management, and data-monitoring mechanisms. Its findings are intended to strengthen national security, improve migration management, and protect vulnerable tribal communities from demographic imbalances and cultural erosion.

23. Nirbhay Raho Initiative

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has launched the Nirbhay Raho Initiative, a gender-responsive governance program funded through the Nirbhaya Fund. The initiative aims to make Panchayats safer and more inclusive by empowering local representatives to address gender-based violence, promote legal awareness, and ensure better access to justice for women in rural areas. It seeks to strengthen grassroots governance by equipping local leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to respond effectively to women's safety concerns.



The initiative is built on three pillars—Nirbhay Netri, which trains and empowers elected women representatives; Nirbhay Chetna, which sensitizes male representatives towards gender equality; and Nirbhay Drishti, which enhances safety infrastructure through CCTV installation in Gram Panchayats. Covering over 32 lakh elected Panchayat representatives, the program provides training on issues such as domestic violence, child marriage, cyber safety, and victim support. It follows a Training of Trainers (ToT) model, enabling trained personnel to spread awareness and capacity-building efforts across states, districts, and blocks.

24. National AI Doctors Mission (NAIDM)

The National AI Doctors Mission (NAIDM) was launched at Health AI Con 2026 in New Delhi to equip India's medical professionals with knowledge and skills related to Artificial Intelligence (AI). Developed by Medical Dialogues in collaboration with the National Medical Forum, the initiative aims to train doctors in AI applications, clinical integration, and the ethical use of digital technologies in healthcare. The mission supports the growing

role of AI in areas such as medical imaging, clinical decision-making, workflow automation, and digital health services.

Significance and Key Features

NAIDM seeks to address gaps in AI literacy, governance, and standardized training among healthcare professionals. The mission aligns with national initiatives such as Digital India, the National Digital Health Mission, and the vision of Viksit Bharat. Emphasizing responsible and equitable use of AI, it promotes ethical practices, clinical accountability, and patient safety while preparing doctors to effectively utilize emerging technologies in healthcare delivery.



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2. STATE NEWS

25. Ru-Soam



UNESCO has partnered with the Sikkim government to document the indigenous engineering practice of Ru-Soam bridges.

About Ru-Soam Bridges:

Ru-Soam bridges are traditional cane bridges built by the Lepcha community, mainly in the Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve. In the Lepcha language, 'Ru' means cane (rattan) and 'Soam' means bridge. These structures are made using locally available materials like bamboo, cane, and wood, reflecting sustainable and eco-friendly construction practices.

Structural Features and Significance:

The bridge is formed using two parallel canes (soamgyang) anchored to trees at both ends, creating a suspended structure. It includes swinging cane loops (ahool) and a bamboo deck (soamgur) for walking. These bridges can extend up to 100 metres and typically allow two to three people to cross at a time. Ru-Soam bridges demonstrate advanced indigenous engineering, balancing strength, flexibility, and ecological harmony, and continue to be functional examples of sustainable infrastructure.

26. Project Him Sarovar Launched in Ladakh

Vinai Kumar Saxena launched Project Him Sarovar in Ladakh to address water scarcity and enhance long-term water security in the region.

Key Features:

- **Launch:** Initiated on 10 April 2026.
- **Objective:** To improve water availability through scientific snow harvesting, strengthen irrigation, enhance climate resilience, and create sustainable "green and blue assets."
- **Implementation:** Construction of 50 small water bodies across Leh and Kargil to store snowmelt.



Need and Support:

Ladakh faces extremely low rainfall and relies heavily on glaciers and snowmelt for water. The project is supported by institutions like the Indian Army, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, and Border Roads Organisation, along with local communities, ensuring coordinated implementation in challenging terrain.

27. Prehistoric Rock Art Site Discovered in Nilgiris



The Yaakai Heritage Trust has reported the rediscovery of the prehistoric rock painting site “Oor Pare” in the Nilgiris district, highlighting its archaeological and cultural importance.

Location and Features:

The site is located near Vellarikombai village in the Kotagiri region at an altitude of about 1100 meters. The rock shelter is traditionally used by indigenous Irula community and Kurumba community, especially during honey collection. Around 30 clear figures and several faint ones have been identified, all painted in red ochre, forming a monochrome composition.

Artistic Style and Significance:

The paintings include fine-line drawings, thick strokes, and geometric forms. They depict anthropomorphic figures with conical headgear, elongated bodies, ladder-like structures, and ritual symbols such as dotted rectangles, indicating prehistoric ritual practices and belief systems. Evidence of repainting and superimposition suggests multiple phases of artistic activity over time. Nearby sites like Eluthuparai and Tholikkiparai also reflect similar layered traditions.

28. 50th Statehood Celebrations of Sikkim

The Prime Minister of India visited Gangtok to attend the closing ceremony of Sikkim’s year-long 50th Statehood celebrations.

The celebrations mark 50 years since Sikkim became part of India in 1975. Originally established as a kingdom in 1642 under Phuntsong Namgyal, it later became a British protectorate through the Treaty of Tumlong (1861). After India’s independence, the 1950 Indo-Sikkim Treaty made it an Indian protectorate with internal autonomy. Political unrest in the 1970s led to the 1973 Tripartite Agreement and a 1975 referendum, where an overwhelming majority voted to abolish the monarchy. This was followed by the 36th Constitutional Amendment Act, making Sikkim India’s 22nd state.



29. Bengaluru Police Introduce AI-Powered Multilingual Namma 112

Bengaluru City Police recently upgraded the Namma 112 emergency response system with a multilingual AI-based solution called VANKI. The initiative aims to remove language barriers during emergencies and improve access to public safety services.



About VANKI and Namma 112

VANKI, which stands for Multilingual Voice AI for Nationwide Key Interventions, has been integrated into the Namma 112 emergency helpline system. It uses Artificial Intelligence to instantly understand, translate, and relay information shared by callers in different languages to emergency operators in real time.

The system currently supports more than 10 languages, including Indian languages such as Bengali, Gujarati, Odia, Manipuri, Kashmiri, Nepali, and Assamese, along with foreign languages like Spanish, French, and Arabic. This helps emergency teams respond quickly and accurately by dispatching police, ambulance, or fire services without delays caused by language differences.

Namma 112 functions under India's Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), where 112 serves as the national emergency helpline number. Bengaluru has become the first city in India to introduce multilingual AI support in emergency services. The initiative is expected to make public safety systems more inclusive and accessible, especially for migrants, students, workers, and international visitors living in the city.

30. PMAY-U 2.0 Odisha Performance



Odisha has retained the top national position in completed houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U 2.0) since March 2025. The state has completed 2,008 affordable urban houses, while several additional units remain under construction. The achievement has been linked to effective coordination among municipal bodies, streamlined land acquisition, and regular monitoring by state authorities.

About PMAY-U 2.0

PMAY-U 2.0 is a flagship housing scheme of the Government of India aimed at achieving "Housing for All" by 2028 through affordable urban housing. The programme focuses on urban affordability, financial inclusion, and support for economically weaker sections and low-income groups. Odisha's performance demonstrates how efficient implementation and administrative coordination can accelerate housing delivery and reduce project backlogs.

31. Baksa Honey & ODOP

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority facilitated the first-ever export of 20 metric tons of Baksa Honey from the aspirational district of Baksa to the USA. The honey has been identified as the signature product of the district under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative due to its traditional importance and export potential.



About Baksa Honey

Baksa Honey is a premium near-organic honey variety produced in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam. It is sourced from pesticide-free and eco-friendly environments, reflecting the rich biodiversity of the region's forest and agricultural flora. The honey is valued for its nutritional and medicinal properties and has long been associated with traditional practices of local communities such as the Bodo tribes. It is processed in APEDA-supported facilities equipped with testing laboratories to ensure compliance with international food safety standards.

Significance of the Export

The export initiative is expected to provide nearly 43% higher price realisation for local beekeepers compared to local market prices. It strengthens the rural economy of an aspirational district by creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for indigenous beekeeping communities. The initiative also highlights the potential of the North Eastern Region as a hub for high-value agricultural and niche export products.

About ODOP Initiative

The One District One Product (ODOP) initiative aims to identify, brand, and promote a unique product from every district in India to transform districts into export hubs. The programme focuses on product development, skill enhancement, infrastructure support, financial assistance, and global branding of district-specific products such as Baksa Honey, Bhagalpur Silk, and Agra Leather. It also prioritises balanced regional development, particularly in aspirational and underserved districts.

32. Meri Rasoi Yojana



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann launched the 'Meri Rasoi Yojna' in Bhalwan village of Sangrur district to provide free nutritional food kits to poor and economically weaker families in the state. The welfare initiative aims to reduce the burden of rising household expenses and strengthen food security among vulnerable sections of society.

Key Features of the Scheme

Under the scheme, nearly 40 lakh beneficiary families will

receive a specially prepared kitchen kit every three months free of cost. The kits will include essential grocery items such as mustard oil, pulses, sugar, salt, turmeric, and other household necessities. Blue card holders with an annual income of up to ₹60,000 are eligible to avail the benefits of the scheme.

Implementation and Budget

The Punjab State Cooperative Supply and Marketing Federation Limited (Markfed) will procure the food kits, while the Food and Civil Supplies Department will distribute them through ration depots across the state. The Punjab government has allocated nearly ₹950 crore for the implementation of the scheme.

33. Ahmedabad–Dholera Rail Project



The Government of India approved the Ahmedabad (Sarkhej)–Dholera Semi High-Speed Double Line rail project on 13 May 2026. The project, estimated at around ₹20,667 crore, will add nearly 134 km of railway line in Gujarat and is considered India's first semi high-speed rail corridor developed using indigenous technology.

Route and Connectivity

The rail corridor will connect Ahmedabad, the Dholera Special Investment Region, the upcoming Dholera Airport, and the Lothal National Maritime Heritage Complex. The project is expected to improve transport connectivity in the Ahmedabad–Dholera industrial and infrastructure region and support economic development.

Speed and Timeline

The corridor is designed for train operations at a maximum speed of 220 kmph, with operational speeds planned at 200 kmph. The project aims to reduce travel time between Sabarmati and Dholera to about 48 minutes. The targeted completion timeline for the project is 2030–31.

34. India's First Geothermal Power Plant in Ladakh



Ladakh is set to host India's first geothermal power plant in the Puga Valley at an altitude of about 14,000 feet. The Union Territory's Lieutenant Governor has approved a five-year extension of the MoU with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). Under the agreement, ONGC will establish a 1-MW pilot geothermal power plant and prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the large-scale development of geothermal resources in

the region.

Geothermal Energy Potential in India

Geothermal energy utilizes heat stored within the Earth's crust and can be used for electricity generation as well as heating and cooling applications. The Geological Survey of India has identified 381 hot springs and 10 major geothermal provinces, including the Himalayan region and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. India's geothermal power potential is estimated at around 10,600 MW, with the Puga and Chumathang areas of Ladakh considered the most promising. The National Policy on Geothermal Energy (2025) aims to make geothermal energy a key component of India's renewable energy mix, supporting energy security and the country's Net Zero 2070 goal.

35. Banda: World's Hottest City During Heatwave



Banda, located in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh along the banks of the Ken River, recently recorded temperatures as high as 48.2°C, making it one of the hottest places in the world during the north Indian heatwave. The city serves as the headquarters of Banda district and lies in the drought-prone, semi-arid Bundelkhand region.

Reasons for Extreme Heat

Banda's intense temperatures result from a combination of natural and human-induced factors. Anticyclonic weather conditions trap hot air, while the rocky plateau terrain near the Tropic of Cancer absorbs and retains heat. Post-harvest barren fields, declining green cover, excessive sand mining in the Ken River, shrinking water bodies, and heat emissions from brick kilns and mining activities further aggravate the heatwave. The broader Bundelkhand region is characterized by dry plateau landscapes, water scarcity, dependence on outdoor labour, and a fragile ecosystem highly vulnerable to desertification and climate change.

36. India's First Hydrogen Train to Debut in Haryana



India is set to launch its first hydrogen-powered train on the Jind–Sonipat route in Haryana, marking a significant step toward clean and sustainable transportation. The train will run on green hydrogen fuel cells, which generate electricity while emitting only water vapor, making it a zero-emission alternative to conventional diesel-powered trains. Hydrogen fuel for the project will be supplied from a dedicated plant at Jind.

The initiative is part of Indian Railways' efforts to adopt eco-friendly technologies and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Besides lowering carbon emissions and supporting India's net-zero ambitions, hydrogen trains are expected to reduce long-term operational costs. The train is also equipped with advanced safety features, including hydrogen leak detection and fire prevention systems, ensuring safe and efficient operations.

3. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

37. UAE Exit from OPEC & OPEC+



The United Arab Emirates has announced its withdrawal from Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and the broader OPEC+ alliance, effective 1 May 2026, marking a major shift in global energy geopolitics.

About OPEC and OPEC+:

OPEC was established in 1960 at the Baghdad Conference to coordinate petroleum policies and stabilise oil markets. The UAE joined in 1967 and has been a key member. OPEC+ was formed in 2016 as a coalition of OPEC and other major oil producers to manage global oil supply and prices, accounting for a large share of global crude production.

Reasons for Exit:

The UAE decided to exit due to restrictive production quotas that limited its ability to expand output despite increasing capacity. It also seeks greater flexibility to pursue its own energy strategy, including maximising short-term oil revenues while preparing for a long-term transition to renewable energy.

38. Project Freedom

The United States recently announced a temporary suspension of Project Freedom to allow diplomatic negotiations between Iran and the US mediated by Pakistan. The mission was launched in response to the Iranian blockade in the Strait of Hormuz.

About Project Freedom

Project Freedom is a United States military and humanitarian operation launched in May 2026 to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and safely escort stranded merchant ships through the region. The mission was initiated after Iran blocked shipping routes in the Persian Gulf, severely affecting global trade and maritime security.



Objectives and Key Features

The mission aims to rescue nearly 23,000 civilians from 87 countries who were stranded on ships in the Persian Gulf. Another major objective is to restore global trade through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical route that carries nearly 20% of the world's oil supply. The United

States Central Command (CENTCOM) created an “Enhanced Security Area” through Omani waters to protect neutral ships from Iranian drones, mines, and fast attack boats. The operation includes guided-missile destroyers, unmanned platforms, F-16 and F-35 fighter aircraft, and Sea Hawk helicopters providing continuous defensive surveillance. However, CENTCOM warned that the region remains highly dangerous due to the presence of Iranian naval mines that have not been completely cleared.

39. International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit



India will host the first summit of the International Big Cat Alliance in New Delhi from 1–2 June 2026. The summit is expected to adopt the ‘Delhi Declaration’, the first global declaration dedicated to big cat conservation, focusing on shared priorities, transboundary cooperation, and landscape-based conservation strategies. The summit theme is “Save Big Cats, Save Humanity, Save Ecosystem.”

Origins of IBCA

The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) was launched by Narendra Modi in 2023 during the 50th anniversary celebrations of Project Tiger. It received formal approval from the Union Cabinet in February 2024. The alliance was established through the National Tiger Conservation Authority under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate

Change.

Objectives of the Alliance

The primary objective of IBCA is the conservation of seven major big cat species — tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma. The alliance aims to strengthen global cooperation in wildlife conservation through knowledge sharing, capacity building, research collaboration, and financial support for conservation programmes.

Membership and Functioning

IBCA currently consists of 24 member countries and 5 observer countries, including Kazakhstan, Namibia, Thailand, Ecuador, and Vietnam. All United Nations member states are eligible to join the alliance. It functions as a global platform for sharing conservation expertise, creating technical knowledge repositories, and supporting coordinated international action for protecting big cats and their habitats.

Need and Significance

Big cat species across the world are increasingly threatened by habitat destruction, poaching, climate change, and human-wildlife conflict. IBCA seeks to address these challenges through coordinated international conservation efforts and long-term ecological planning. By

promoting a landscape-based conservation approach, the alliance aims to protect biodiversity and maintain ecological balance.

Funding Support

India has committed ₹150 crore for the period 2023–2028 to support the activities of IBCA. The alliance is also exploring additional financial assistance through bilateral cooperation, multilateral institutions, and donor organizations to strengthen global conservation initiatives.

40. President of Uganda



Yoweri Museveni has been elected as the President of Uganda for a seventh term. The oath-taking ceremony was held at Kololo Independence Grounds in Kampala. Museveni has been in power since 1986, making him one of Africa's longest-serving leaders. He secured more than 71% of the vote, while opposition leader Bobi Wine received nearly 25%. The election was marked by reports of internet shutdowns

and intimidation of opposition groups

41. India and Italy to Celebrate 2027 as the Year of Culture and Tourism

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Italy, India and Italy announced that 2027 will be celebrated as the "Year of Culture and Tourism." The initiative aims to deepen people-to-people ties, promote cultural exchanges, and boost tourism between the two countries. Through a series of events, exhibitions, and collaborative programs, both nations seek to showcase their rich heritage and strengthen mutual understanding.

Strengthening the Strategic Partnership

The two countries reaffirmed their commitment to the India–Italy Special Strategic Partnership. Leaders emphasized the importance of regular cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, defense, education, and innovation. The partnership reflects the growing convergence of interests between India and Italy on regional and global issues.

Expanding Cooperation in Emerging Sectors

India and Italy agreed to enhance collaboration in clean energy, artificial intelligence, advanced technology, and sustainable development. Both countries recognized the importance of innovation-driven growth and committed to exploring new opportunities in research, manufacturing, and green technologies.

Support for the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor

The leaders also reiterated their support for the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). The corridor is expected to improve connectivity, facilitate trade, and

strengthen economic integration across Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, creating new opportunities for growth and cooperation.

Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam Initiative

As a symbol of friendship and sustainability, Prime Minister Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni planted a Black Mulberry sapling in Rome under the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative. Known as "Krishna Toot" in India, the tree planting reflected the shared commitment of both nations towards environmental conservation while highlighting the cultural bonds between India and Italy.⁵⁻⁶



42. PM Modi Receives Sweden's Highest Civilian Honour

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred Sweden's highest honour for a foreign Head of Government, the "Royal Order of the Polar Star, Commander Grand Cross," during his visit to Sweden. The award was presented by Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden and marked the 31st international honour received by the Prime Minister from a foreign nation.

Significance of the Award

Instituted in 1748, the Royal Order of the Polar Star is awarded for exceptional public service and contributions to international cooperation. The honour reflects the growing India–Sweden strategic partnership and expanding collaboration in areas such as trade, innovation, green transition, artificial intelligence, defence, and sustainability. During the visit, Prime Minister Modi also held bilateral talks with Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson.



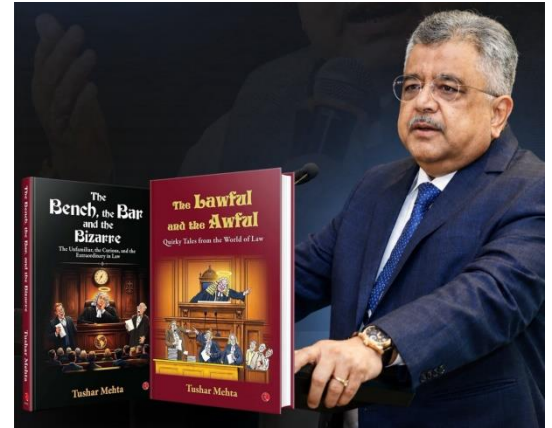
4. BOOKS AND AUTHORS

43. Tushar Mehta's Books

Tushar Mehta launched two books titled *The Bench, the Bar & the Bizarre* and *The Lawful and the Awful* at Bharat Mandapam. The event was presided over by Surya Kant and attended by Amit Shah and R. Venkataramani.

About the Books

The two books present the lighter side of the legal profession through humorous anecdotes and unusual incidents drawn mainly from foreign jurisdictions. The works have attracted attention within the legal fraternity across both the Bar and the Bench. Tushar Mehta deliberately excluded Indian judges and domestic legal anecdotes, considering his continued legal practice in India.



Highlights of the Event

During the launch, Chief Justice Surya Kant humorously remarked on how Tushar Mehta managed to find time to write two books despite his demanding legal schedule involving court appearances and government responsibilities. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also praised Mehta and observed that the gathering would naturally be viewed in the context of court-government relations because of the presence of top legal and political dignitaries. The launch highlights an effort to present the legal profession in a more engaging and accessible manner through humour and storytelling. It also reflects the growing interest in legal literature that combines professional experiences with lighter narratives while maintaining respect for judicial institutions.

5. BANKING / ECONOMY

44. PaRRVA : Past Risk & Return Verification Agency

The Securities and Exchange Board of India has operationalised the Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA), which will become fully functional from 4 May 2026 after a pilot phase.

About PaRRVA:

PaRRVA is a regulatory framework and data verification system designed to authenticate past performance claims (risk and return) made by financial market entities. CARE Ratings Limited has been designated as the official PaRRVA, while the National Stock Exchange will act as the data centre. It verifies claims related to investment advisory, research services, and algorithmic trading, and allows only verified data to be used in advertisements.

PaRRVA enhances transparency and accountability in financial markets by standardising performance reporting. It helps investors access reliable data for informed decision-making and curbs misleading or exaggerated claims by intermediaries, thereby strengthening investor protection.

45. USTR Special 301 Report

India was recently included in the Priority Watch List of the 2026 Special 301 Report released by the United States Trade Representative (USTR). The designation reflects US concerns regarding India's protection and enforcement of intellectual property (IP) rights.

About the USTR Special 301 Report

The Special 301 Report is an annual review conducted by the USTR to assess how US trading partners protect and enforce intellectual property rights such as patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets. The report categorises countries into three groups:

- Priority Foreign Country (most severe category)
- Priority Watch List
- Watch List

The report is issued under Section 301 of the US Trade Act of 1974 and is used as a policy tool to pressure countries to strengthen IP laws and enforcement mechanisms.

Why India was Included

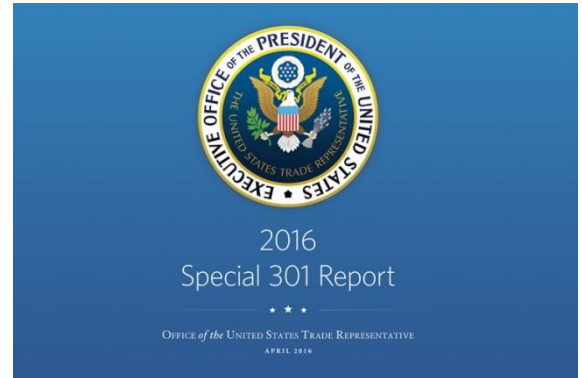
India's inclusion in the Priority Watch List reflects continuing US concerns over:

- Weak patent protection and long approval delays
- Inadequate enforcement of IP rights
- Online piracy and counterfeit goods
- Market access barriers for IP-intensive industries such as pharmaceuticals, technology, and digital content

The USTR stated that India remains one of the most challenging major economies regarding IP protection and enforcement despite certain reforms and administrative improvements.

Implications and Global Context

Being on the Priority Watch List does not result in immediate sanctions, but it increases US scrutiny and may influence bilateral trade negotiations. In severe cases, unresolved disputes can lead to investigations or trade action under Section 301 of the Trade Act. In 2026, countries such as Chile, China, Indonesia, Russia, and Venezuela were also placed on the Priority Watch List, while Vietnam was designated as a "Priority Foreign Country," the highest risk category.



46. India Sugar Export Ban 2026



The DGFT banned sugar exports till September 2026 to protect domestic supply, control inflation, and prepare for possible El Niño-related production risks.

Reasons and Industry Status

The ban was imposed due to concerns over weak monsoons, fertilizer supply disruptions, and rising food inflation. India is the world's second-largest sugar producer, with Maharashtra leading production in

2025–26.

Ethanol and Challenges

The sugar sector is increasingly linked with the Ethanol Blending Programme, which provides mills with alternative revenue. However, issues such as water stress, cane arrears, and pricing distortions continue to affect the industry.

Implications

The ban may impact sugar-importing countries and attract WTO criticism, but it is expected to strengthen domestic food security and support India's renewable energy goals.

47. South Korea Robot Monk

A humanoid AI robot named Gabi was ordained as a Buddhist monk by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism during celebrations for Buddha's birthday in Seoul, South Korea. The initiative aimed to highlight the coexistence of technology and spirituality while promoting values such as compassion, wisdom, and responsibility.



About Gabi

Gabi is a four-foot humanoid robot made of algorithms and aluminium and became the first robotic monk of the Jogye Order. During the ordination ceremony held at Jogyesa Temple, the robot took adapted Buddhist vows, including promises to follow humans, avoid harmful actions, and conserve energy.

Role of AI in Religion

Following ordination, Gabi participated in Buddhist events such as the Lotus Lantern Festival alongside other humanoid and autonomous robots. The development reflects growing experimentation with AI in religion worldwide, including AI-generated sermons, robotic prayer companions, and spiritual chatbots in different faith traditions.

48. Intellectual Property & IP Catalyst, cipie.in Platform



The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology launched the IP Catalyst initiative and its digital platform, cipie.in, during a national conference in New Delhi. The initiative is designed to accelerate the journey from “Patent to Product” by supporting innovation, commercialization, and technology transfer in the Electronics and IT sectors.

About the Initiative

IP Catalyst is a comprehensive support framework that manages the complete innovation lifecycle, from research and patent filing to commercialization and market deployment. It functions as a specialised accelerator for intellectual property in Electronics and IT. The initiative is implemented by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune.

Key Features

The initiative provides a unified digital platform offering IP filing support, international patent assistance for startups and MSMEs, prior-art searches, IP advisory services, technology readiness assessments, and IP valuation. It also promotes technology transfer, licensing, industry-academia-startup collaboration, and support for converting prototypes into market-ready products.

IP Catalyst aims to strengthen indigenous innovation and support the Make in India initiative by ensuring that publicly funded research reaches industries and markets. It also reduces financial barriers related to international patenting, helping Indian startups and MSMEs compete globally in advanced technology sectors.

49. Urtan and Dhirauli Mines

❖ *Urtan Mine: Located in Anuppur district, Madhya Pradesh; allocated to JMS Mining Pvt. Ltd.*

❖ *Dhirauli Mine: Located in Singrauli district, Madhya Pradesh; allocated to Mahan Energen Ltd., a subsidiary of Adani Power*

The Ministry of Coal announced the commencement of coal production from the Urtan and Dhirauli coal mines in Madhya Pradesh. This operationalization marks a historic institutional milestone, with Urtan emerging as the very first underground coal mine to initiate production under India’s new market-driven commercial coal auction regime

The Urtan and Dhirauli mines are freshly operationalized, high-capacity coal blocks allocated to private players under the government’s liberalized commercial coal mining framework. Moving away from the old captive-use constraints, these mines extract non-coking coal that can be freely sold on the open market, blended, or exported to maximize domestic energy

50. SARTHAK-PDS Scheme

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the SARTHAK-PDS (Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling-Income with Automation in PDS),

a technology-driven umbrella scheme aimed at strengthening the implementation of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013. The scheme integrates two existing programs—assistance for intra-state movement of foodgrains and FPS dealer margins under NFSA, and the SMART-PDS modernization scheme—under a single framework. Implemented by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, it seeks to ensure efficient last-mile delivery of subsidized foodgrains while providing financial support for transportation, storage, and fair price shop operations.

SARTHAK-PDS leverages advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Natural Language Processing (NLP), and Blockchain to improve transparency, efficiency, and fraud detection in the Public Distribution System. It includes AI-enabled modules—NIRMAL, ASHA, and SAKSHAM—along with a unified database integrating platforms such as IM-PDS, Mera Ration, Anna Mitra, and Anna Sahayata. The scheme also establishes State Command and Control Centres for real-time monitoring of inventories and e-PoS devices, while promoting standardized and transparent operations through ISO-certified processes.



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6. SUMMIT, RANKS AND REPORTS

51. World Press Freedom Index



India was ranked 157th out of 180 countries in the 2026 released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF). India's ranking dropped from 151st in 2025, while the report noted that the global average score for press freedom has reached its lowest level in the last 25 years.

Key Findings of the Report

For the first time in the history of the index, more than half of the 180 countries assessed were classified as having a “difficult” or “very serious” situation for journalism. The report highlighted a sharp global decline in the “legal indicator,” stating that governments are increasingly using national security laws, anti-terror laws, and Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) to silence journalists and media organisations.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) was identified as the most dangerous region for journalists, with 18 out of 19 countries falling under the “difficult” or “very serious” category. Norway retained the top position for the 10th consecutive year, followed by the Netherlands, Estonia, Denmark, and Sweden. The bottom five countries were Eritrea, North Korea, China, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

India's Position

India ranked 157th out of 180 countries in the index. According to RSF, major reasons for India's decline include rising violence against journalists, concentration of media ownership, and increasing use of national security laws against independent journalism. The report classified the press freedom situation in India as “very serious.”

52. THE Asia University Rankings 2026

According to the 2026 Asia University Rankings released by Times Higher Education (THE), India recorded the highest number of ranked institutions in Asia. Indian Institute of Science (IISc) emerged as the top-ranked Indian institution.

India's Performance

IISc Bengaluru secured the 43rd position in Asia, although it slipped from 38th rank in the previous year. India led the rankings with 128 institutions featured in the list, ahead of Japan and China in terms of the total number of ranked universities.

Other top-performing Indian institutions included:

- Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences
- Indian Institute of Technology Indore

- Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences
- Jamia Millia Islamia

Top Asian Universities and Methodology

China continued to dominate the top positions in Asia, with Tsinghua University and Peking University securing the first and second ranks respectively. Other leading institutions included the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, The University of Tokyo, and the University of Hong Kong.

The 2026 rankings used the WUR 3.0 methodology, which gives greater importance to research quality, research environment, and international outlook while assessing universities across Asia.

53. LEADS 2025 Report



The Government of India approved the Ahmedabad (Sarkhej)–Dholera Semi High-Speed Double Line rail project on 13 May 2026. The project, estimated at nearly ₹20,667 crore, will add around 134 km of railway line in Gujarat and is regarded as India’s first semi high-speed rail corridor based on indigenous technology.

Route and Strategic Connectivity

The corridor will connect Ahmedabad with the Dholera Special Investment Region, the upcoming Dholera International Airport, and the Lothal National Maritime Heritage Complex. The project is expected to significantly improve regional transport connectivity and strengthen Gujarat’s industrial, logistics, and infrastructure network.

Speed and Operational Features

The rail line is designed for train speeds up to 220 kmph, while trains are expected to operate at 200 kmph. The project aims to reduce travel time between Sabarmati and Dholera to nearly 48 minutes. Completion of the project is targeted for 2030–31, making it one of India’s major upcoming high-speed transport infrastructure projects.

Alignment with National Infrastructure Plans

The project is aligned with the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, which focuses on integrated multimodal connectivity and efficient logistics planning. It also complements India’s growing semi high-speed rail ecosystem that includes the Vande Bharat Express and other indigenous railway modernisation initiatives.

Economic and Developmental Significance

The corridor is expected to boost industrial growth, trade, tourism, and urbanisation in the Ahmedabad–Dholera region. Improved rail connectivity will support the development of Dholera as a major industrial and smart city hub while also enhancing access to heritage tourism sites such as Lothal, an important Harappan maritime archaeological site.

Broader Importance

The project reflects India's increasing emphasis on modern rail infrastructure, indigenous engineering capability, and faster passenger transportation systems. It also supports the broader goals of reducing logistics costs, improving regional mobility, and strengthening economic integration through advanced transport networks.

7. APPOINTMENTS / RESIGNATIONS

54. Lt Gen N S Raja Subramani Appointed India's Next CDS



Lieutenant General N S Raja Subramani (Retd.) was appointed as India's next Chief of Defence Staff on 9 May 2026. He will take charge from General Anil Chauhan on 30 May 2026 and will also serve as Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Military Affairs. The Chief of Defence Staff is the senior-most military officer in India's armed forces. The office was created in 2019 after the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee and the Group of Ministers on defence reforms. He was commissioned into The Garhwal Rifles in December 1985. His service in the Indian Army spans more than 37 years

55. N. Rangasamy Takes Oath as CM of Puducherry

N. Rangasamy was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Puducherry for the fifth time on 13 May 2026. The oath of office and secrecy was administered by Lieutenant Governor K. Kailashnathan at Lok Nivas in Puducherry. He leads a National Democratic Alliance government in the Union Territory, which began its second consecutive term in power.

Puducherry is a Union Territory with a legislative assembly, and its Council of Ministers is headed by the Chief Minister. The Union Territory follows the parliamentary system of government under the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963, and the Chief Minister is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.



56. Assam CM Swearing-In 2026

Himanta Biswa Sarma is scheduled to take oath as the Chief Minister of Assam on 12 May 2026. The ceremony will mark his second consecutive term as Chief Minister of Assam after the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance secured a majority in the 126-member Assam Legislative Assembly. The Assam Legislative Assembly is a unicameral



legislature with 126 elected members. A majority in the House requires support of at least 64 members, and the National Democratic Alliance won 102 seats in the assembly polls. The Chief Minister is the head of the elected state government in India under Article 164 of the Constitution. In Assam, the Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor and must command the support of the majority of members in the Legislative Assembly.

57. WEST BENGAL NEW CM



Suvendu Adhikari was sworn in as the Chief Minister of West Bengal on 9 May 2026. He became the first Bharatiya Janata Party Chief Minister of the state and the 9th person to hold the office in West Bengal. The Bharatiya Janata Party won 207 of 294 seats in the 2026 West Bengal Legislative Assembly election. The result ended the Trinamool Congress government's 15-year tenure in the state.

58. Tamil Nadu CM 2026

C. Joseph Vijay, known as Thalapathy Vijay, was sworn in as the 9th Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 10 May 2026. The oath of office and secrecy was administered at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai by Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar. Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) was founded by Vijay in February 2024. The party became the first non-Dravidian party to take power in Tamil Nadu since 1967, after the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam dominated state politics for nearly six decades



59. Ali al-Zaidi: Iraq's New Prime Minister



Ali Falih Kadhim al-Zaidi, a businessman and finance professional, became Iraq's Prime Minister after receiving parliamentary approval. He holds degrees in Law, Finance, and Banking and previously served as Chairman of the National Holding Company (Al Wataniya Holding).

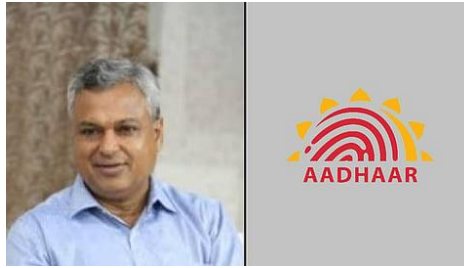
Government Formation

Parliament approved 14 cabinet ministers, allowing al-Zaidi to formally assume office after months of political deadlock. Following the confidence vote, he and the approved ministers took the constitutional oath and began their tenure in government.

60. Newly Appointed CEO of UIDAI

Saurabh Vijay has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India. A senior IAS officer, he is responsible for overseeing the

administration and implementation of Aadhaar-related services across the country. As CEO, he will provide strategic leadership to the organization and ensure the efficient delivery of digital identity services to citizens.



61. V. D. Satheesan Becomes Kerala Chief Minister

V. D. Satheesan assumed office as the 13th Chief Minister of Kerala on 18 May 2026. A senior Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in the previous Assembly, he took charge following the formation of a new government in the state. As Chief Minister, he is responsible for leading the state administration and implementing government policies and development programmes.



UNION PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION PROGRAMME OF EXAMINATIONS/RECRUITMENT TESTS (RTs) -2026					
Sl. No.	Name of Examination	Date of Notification	Last Date for receipt of Applications	Date of commencement of Exam	Duration of Exam
1.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			10.01.2026 (Saturday)	2 Days
2.	Reserved for UPSC Examination			17.01.2026 (Saturday)	2 Days
3.	Combined Geo-Scientist (Preliminary) Examination, 2026	03.09.2025	23.09.2025	08.02.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
4.	Engineering Services (Preliminary) Examination, 2026	17.09.2025	07.10.2025	08.02.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
5.	CBI (DSP) LDCE	24.12.2025	13.01.2026	28.02.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAY
6.	CISF AC(EXE) LDCE-2026	03.12.2025	23.12.2025	08.03.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
7.	N.D.A. & N.A. Examination (I), 2026	10.12.2025	30.12.2025	12.04.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
8.	C.D.S. Examination (I), 2026				
9.	Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination, 2026	14.01.2026	03.02.2026	24.05.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
10.	Indian Forest Service (Preliminary) Examination, 2026 through CS(P) Examination 2026				
11.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			06.06.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
12.	I.E.S./I.S.S. Examination, 2026	11.02.2026	03.03.2026	19.06.2026 (Friday)	3 DAYS
13.	Combined Geo-Scientist (Main) Examination, 2026			20.06.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
14.	Engineering Services (Main) Examination, 2026			21.06.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
15.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			04.07.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
16.	Central Armed Police Forces (ACs) Examination, 2026	18.02.2026	10.03.2026	19.07.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
17.	Combined Medical Services Examination, 2026	11.03.2026	31.03.2026	02.08.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
18.	Reserved for UPSC Examination			08.08.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
19.	Civil Services (Main) Examination, 2026			21.08.2026 (Friday)	5 DAYS
20.	N.D.A. & N.A. Examination (II), 2026	20.05.2026	09.06.2026	13.09.2026 (Sunday)	1 DAY
21.	C.D.S. Examination (II), 2026				
22.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			26.09.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
23.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			10.10.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
24.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			31.10.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
25.	Indian Forest Service (Main) Examination, 2026			22.11.2026 (Sunday)	7 DAYS
26.	S.O./Steno (GD-B/GD-I) LDCE	16.09.2026	06.10.2026	12.12.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS
27.	Reserved for UPSC RT/ Examination			19.12.2026 (Saturday)	2 DAYS

Note: The dates of notification, commencement and duration of Examinations/ RTs are liable to alteration, if the circumstances so warrant.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR OF EXAMINATIONS FOR THE YEAR 2026-2027

S.No.	Name of Examination	Tier/Phase	Date of Advertisement	Closing Date	Month of Exam
1.	JSA / LDC Grade Limited Departmental Competitive Examination, 2025 (for DoPT only)	Paper-I (CBE)*	16 March 2026	07 April 2026	May 2026
2.	SSA / UDC Grade Limited Departmental Competitive Examination, 2025 (for DoPT only)	Paper-I (CBE)*	16 March 2026	07 April 2026	May 2026
3.	ASO Grade Limited Departmental Competitive Examination, 2025	Paper-I (CBE)*	16 March 2026	07 April 2026	May 2026
4.	Combined Graduate Level Examination, 2026	Tier-I (CBE)*	March 2026	April 2026	May – June 2026
5.	Junior Engineer (Civil, Mechanical & Electrical) Examination, 2026	Paper-I (CBE)*	March 2026	April 2026	May – June 2026
6.	Selection Post Examination, Phase-XIV, 2026	CBE*	March 2026	April 2026	May – July 2026
7.	Combined Higher Secondary (10+2) Level Examination, 2026	Tier-I (CBE)*	April 2026	May 2026	July – September 2026
8.	Stenographer Grade 'C' & 'D' Examination, 2026	CBE*	April 2026	May 2026	August – September 2026
9.	Combined Hindi Translators Examination, 2026	Paper-I (CBE)*	April 2026	May 2026	August – September 2026
10.	Multi-Tasking (Non-Technical) Staff & Havaladar (CBIC & CBN) Examination, 2026	CBE*	June 2026	July 2026	September – November 2026
11.	Sub-Inspector in Delhi Police & Central Armed Police Forces Examination, 2026	Paper-I (CBE)*	May 2026	June 2026	October – November 2026
12.	Constables (GD) in Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), NIA, SSF and Rifleman (GD) in Assam Rifles Examination, 2027	CBE*	September 2026	October 2026	January – March 2027

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8. DEFENCE NEWS

62. NASM-SR Missile Test

The Defence Research and Development Organisation, along with the Indian Navy, successfully carried out the maiden salvo launch of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile–Short Range (NASM-SR) from a helicopter platform over the Bay of Bengal.



Key Highlights:

- **Salvo Launch:** Two missiles were fired in quick succession from a single helicopter, marking India's first such capability.
- **Performance:** Both missiles achieved precision targeting, including accurate waterline hits on targets.
- **Tracking:** The test was monitored by the Integrated Test Range using radar, telemetry, and electro-optical systems.

Features of NASM-SR:

- Air-launched, short-range anti-ship missile.
- Uses solid booster and long-burn sustainer propulsion.
- Equipped with fibre-optic gyroscope-based navigation, radio altimeter, advanced seeker, and two-way data link.
- Includes jet-vane control and advanced guidance for high precision and manoeuvrability.

Development and Significance:

Developed by Research Centre Imarat in collaboration with other DRDO labs and industry partners, the missile strengthens India's indigenous defence capability. The successful test enhances naval strike power and supports self-reliance in advanced missile systems.

63. Multilateral Exercise 'Pragati'



The Indian Army is set to host Exercise PRAGATI, a multinational exercise aimed at strengthening regional military cooperation under India's Act East Policy.

Key Details:

The two-week exercise will be held at the Foreign Training Node in Umroi, Meghalaya. PRAGATI (Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region) will see participation from 11 countries, including Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Maldives, and Seychelles.

Objectives and Significance:

The exercise aims to enhance operational synergy in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations, improve interoperability through standardised procedures and communication, and strengthen coordination for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). It reinforces India's strategic engagement with neighbouring and Indo-Pacific nations.

64. INS Mahendragiri Inducted into Indian Navy

Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) recently delivered the stealth frigate INS Mahendragiri to the Indian Navy under Project-17A. The delivery highlights India's growing indigenous defence manufacturing capability under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

**About INS Mahendragiri**

INS Mahendragiri is a Nilgiri-class stealth guided-missile frigate and is among the warships being developed under Project-17A. It was designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and supervised by the Warship Overseeing Team in Mumbai. The frigate is equipped with advanced stealth features, modern weapons systems, and improved combat capabilities.

About Project-17A

Project-17A was launched by the Indian Navy in 2019 to build a series of advanced stealth frigates with improved automation, survivability, and combat efficiency. The ships are being constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE). The first ship under the project, INS Nilgiri, was launched in 2019. Other ships in the project include INS Udaygiri, INS Himgiri, INS Taragiri, INS Dunagiri, and INS Vindhyagiri. The project demonstrates India's progress in indigenous warship design and defence manufacturing.

65. CINBAX-II 2026

The Indian Army is participating in the second edition of the India-Cambodia Joint Military Exercise, CINBAX-II 2026, being held in Kampong Speu Province, Cambodia. The first edition of the exercise was conducted in Pune in December 2024.

About CINBAX-II 2026

CINBAX is a bilateral military exercise conducted between India and Cambodia to improve defence cooperation and operational coordination. The 2026 exercise includes participation of 120 Indian Army personnel, mainly from the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment, along with 160 soldiers from the Royal Cambodian Army.

The main objective of the exercise is to achieve operational synergy, exchange best practices, and strengthen coordination during joint counter-terrorism missions. The exercise focuses on Counter-Terrorism (CT) operations in semi-urban and jungle environments and includes training in modern warfare techniques such as drone operations, sniper tactics, and mortar handling.



Strategic Importance

CINBAX-II is conducted under the framework of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which authorises the UN Security Council to take measures, including military action and sanctions, to maintain international peace and security. The exercise reflects the evolving nature of modern UN peacekeeping operations and joint military preparedness.

The exercise is also strategically important for strengthening defence ties between India and Cambodia under India's Act East Policy launched in 2014. It supports India's broader military diplomacy efforts and enhances cooperation with Southeast Asian nations.

9. AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

66. 'VM Frames' Filmmaking Competition

The Ministry of Culture has launched the "VM Frames" National Filmmaking Competition to commemorate 150 years of Vande Mataram.

Key Points:

- Purpose: Encourages citizens to creatively interpret the spirit of Vande Mataram through visual storytelling.
- Categories: Open in three formats—Reels, AI-based Films, and Short Films.
- Collaboration: Conducted with States, Union Territories, and Indian Missions abroad.
- Themes: Patriotism, cultural identity, unity, and the vision of a progressive New India.

67. Assam Physicist Atanu Nath Wins Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics 2026



Atanu Nath, a physicist from Assam, was recently honoured with the 2026 Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics for his contribution to the international Muon g-2 experiment. The award is considered one of the world's most prestigious science honours and is often called the "Oscars of Science."

About the Award and Research

The 2026 Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics was awarded to 377 researchers worldwide, including 11 scientists from India. Atanu Nath is regarded as the first scientist from Northeast India to receive this honour. The award recognised the scientists' contribution to the Muon g-2 experiment, a major international physics project conducted at leading research centres such as CERN, Brookhaven National Laboratory, and Fermilab. The experiment studies the magnetic behaviour of muons to test the accuracy of the Standard Model of particle physics.

About Atanu Nath

Atanu Nath completed his postgraduate studies at the S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences and later pursued advanced academic training at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. In 2013, he moved to Italy for his PhD at the University of Naples Federico II. He returned to India in 2020 and joined Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati as a postdoctoral researcher before taking up a teaching position at Tihu College in 2022.

68. Pulitzer Prize 2026

Anand RK, Suparna Sharma, and Natalie Obiko Pearson won the in the Illustrated Reporting and Commentary category for their work titled trAPPed. The project investigated India's "digital arrest" scam through visual storytelling and investigative journalism.

About the Pulitzer Prize and trAPPed

The Pulitzer Prize is one of the world's most prestigious awards in journalism, literature, and the arts. It was established in 1917 and is administered by Columbia University. The Illustrated Reporting and Commentary category recognises journalism that combines visual storytelling with detailed reporting.

The award-winning project trAPPed, published by Bloomberg, investigated a case in which a neurologist in India was subjected to a "digital arrest" scam through her phone. The work highlighted issues related to cyber fraud, online intimidation, surveillance, and organised scam networks operating through digital platforms.

Important Facts

Anand RK is a Mumbai-based illustrator known for graphic storytelling in investigative journalism, while Suparna Sharma is an experienced Indian journalist who has worked extensively on systemic failures and social issues. Digital arrest scams involve fraudsters posing as government or law enforcement officials and intimidating victims through phone or online communication. The 2026 Pulitzer Prize recognised the growing role of visual investigative journalism in exposing cybercrime and digital fraud.

69. National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026



The National Florence Nightingale Awards 2026 were presented to 15 nursing professionals at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 12 May 2026, observed as International Nurses Day. Droupadi Murmu conferred the awards, and each recipient received a Certificate of Merit, a medal, and a cash prize of ₹1 lakh.

About the Awards

The National Florence Nightingale Awards are instituted by the Union

Health Ministry to honour outstanding nursing professionals in India. The awards recognise the services of Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), registered nurses, nursing officers, and nursing educators for their contribution to healthcare delivery and public service.

Notable Awardees

Aysha Beebi K from Lakshadweep received the award for conducting a critical midnight delivery on a remote island in 2026. Kulwinder Parhi from Ladakh was recognised for nearly three decades of healthcare service in high-altitude and difficult terrain conditions.

Other Contributions and Significance

Dr. Sharwan Kumar Dhaka was honoured for Covid-19 vaccination outreach and public health services, while Lissamma P.V. received recognition for contributions to military healthcare. The awards are among the highest honours for nursing professionals in India and highlight the vital role played by nurses in strengthening healthcare services across the country.

70. Meteoritical Society Honour

Kuljeet Kaur Marhas was elected a Fellow of The Meteoritical Society for 2026, becoming the first Indian woman to receive this honour in meteoritics and planetary science. She is associated with the Planetary Science Division of the Physical Research Laboratory.

About The Meteoritical Society

The Meteoritical Society is an international scientific body focused on meteorites, planetary materials, and Solar System research. Fellowship in the society is awarded to scientists recognised for significant contributions to planetary science and laboratory studies related to extraterrestrial materials. In the society's 93-year history, Prof. Marhas became only the third Indian scientist to receive this distinction.



Research Contributions

Prof. Marhas has conducted extensive research on short-lived radionuclides and stable isotopes found in extraterrestrial materials. Her work includes studies on pre-solar grains, Calcium-Aluminium-rich Inclusions (CAIs), chondrules, and organic matter in meteorites, which are important for understanding cosmochemistry and the early Solar System.

Analytical Techniques and Significance

She has analysed samples from major space missions such as Stardust, Hayabusa, and Apollo program. Her research uses advanced techniques like Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometry and nanoSIMS for isotopic and elemental analysis at microscopic scales. She is also a Fellow of the American Geophysical Union and recipient of the Devendra Lal Memorial Medal.

10. SCIENCE AND TECH

71. Artemether-Lumefantrine for Infants

The World Health Organization has granted prequalification to Coartem® Baby, the first malaria treatment specifically designed for newborns and young infants.

About Coartem Baby:

Coartem® Baby (artemether-lumefantrine) is the first approved antimalarial drug developed for infants weighing between 2–5 kg. It was developed through collaboration between Novartis and Medicines for Malaria Venture to address a long-standing treatment gap where infants were previously given medicines meant for older children.

WHO prequalification ensures the drug meets global standards of quality, safety, and efficacy, enabling procurement by UN agencies and governments. This marks a major public health milestone, improving access to safe and effective malaria treatment for newborns, especially in malaria-endemic regions, and reducing risks associated with improper dosing of existing drugs.

72. Cyborg Botany – Future of agriculture



Scientists are advancing the field of cyborg botany to enable plants to communicate their internal health in real time by converting biological signals into electronic data.

About Cyborg Botany:

Cyborg botany is an emerging interdisciplinary field combining biology, engineering, and materials science to integrate electronic components into living plants. By embedding nanowires, transistors, and conductive polymers (such as PEDOT)

into plant tissues, these systems act as biosensors that capture biochemical responses (to light, water, or pests) and convert them into digital signals for external monitoring.

Features and Significance:

Cyborg plants can provide real-time data on plant health, detect stress factors like water deficiency or disease at an early stage, and even support bio-hybrid robotics using plant signals. This innovation enables precision agriculture by optimizing the use of water, fertilizers, and chemicals, while also allowing plants to function as environmental sensors for monitoring pollution and ecosystem changes.

73. Himadri Anode Material Plant (WB)

Himadri Speciality Chemical Ltd has commissioned India's first anode material plant, marking its entry into the lithium-ion battery value chain for EVs and energy storage.

Key Details:

- Location: Mahistikry in Hooghly district, West Bengal.
- Capacity: Initial production capacity of 200 MTPA of anode materials.
- Expansion: Commissioned a 70,000 MTPA speciality carbon black line, increasing total capacity to 250,000 MTPA—now the world's largest single-location facility.
- Exports: Plans to supply to global markets, especially the US and Europe.



Technology and Significance:

The plant uses in-house developed “Meso-coke” technology, built over 14 years of research, ensuring backward integration. It supports India's push for self-reliance in battery manufacturing, strengthens the EV ecosystem, and reduces dependence on imports of critical battery materials.

74. Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope



The NASA has completed the final assembly of the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope, marking a major milestone ahead of its planned 2026 launch.

About the Telescope:

The Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope is a next-generation space observatory designed to study the universe in visible and near-infrared light. Built at the Goddard Space Flight Center, it features a 2.4-metre primary mirror (similar to the Hubble Space Telescope) but can capture images covering 100 times more sky area in a single shot, making it about 1,000 times faster for large surveys.

Key Features and Objectives:

- **Wide-Field Imaging:** Enables large-scale mapping of galaxies and cosmic structures.
- **Dark Energy Research:** Aims to study the expansion of the universe and distribution of dark matter.
- **Time-Domain Astronomy:** Repeated sky scans will help detect transient events like supernovae.
- **Exoplanet Detection:** Equipped with a coronagraph to directly image distant planets by blocking starlight.

The mission will generate vast 3D maps of the universe, helping scientists better understand cosmic evolution, dark energy, and galaxy formation. It represents a major advancement beyond Hubble in survey capability and will strengthen future space observation and exoplanet research.

75. Mission Drishti: World's 1st OptoSAR Satellite

Indian space start-up GalaxEye successfully launched its first satellite Mission Drishti aboard the Falcon 9 rocket, marking a major milestone in simultaneous multi-sensor Earth observation.

**Key Highlights**

- Mission Drishti is the world's first OptoSAR satellite capable of capturing both optical and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) images of the same location simultaneously.
- Weighing around 190 kg, it is India's largest privately developed Earth observation satellite.
- The satellite combines:
 - Optical imaging → clear and intuitive visuals
 - SAR imaging → works through clouds and at night

OptoSAR Technology

- Traditional optical satellites cannot function properly during:
 - Cloud cover
 - Night-time conditions
- SAR sensors overcome this limitation by penetrating:
 - Clouds
 - Rain
 - Darkness
- Mission Drishti integrates both technologies together for all-weather, day-and-night imaging.

76. Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)

Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) was recently in news after a tigress and her surviving cub died at the Mukki quarantine facility in Madhya Pradesh's Kanha Tiger Reserve following a suspected outbreak of the disease. The incident has raised concerns about the spread of infectious diseases from domestic animals to endangered wildlife populations.

About CDV

CDV is a highly contagious and potentially fatal viral disease caused by a single-stranded RNA virus of the Paramyxoviridae family, the same family as measles and mumps. It affects many mammals, including domestic dogs, tigers, lions, and ferrets, and attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and nervous systems. The disease was first officially reported in Spain in 1761, while its viral cause was identified by Henri Carré in 1905. Historically, CDV has contributed to major declines in wildlife populations such as Serengeti lions and black-footed ferrets.

Transmission, Symptoms and Prevention

Domestic dogs are the primary carriers of the virus and often spread it to wildlife at the forest-village interface. The virus spreads through aerosol droplets from coughing or sneezing, direct contact with infected bodily fluids, or consumption of contaminated carcasses. Symptoms include fever, coughing, eye and nose discharge, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle twitching, seizures, paralysis, and convulsions in severe cases. There is currently no specific cure for CDV, and treatment mainly focuses on supportive care such as IV fluids, antibiotics, and anti-seizure medicines. Vaccination of domestic and stray dogs remains the most effective preventive measure to protect wildlife populations.

77. Hantavirus Outbreak

A suspected outbreak of Hantavirus was recently reported aboard the Dutch cruise ship MV Hondius near Cape Verde, leaving nearly 150 people stranded. The incident has renewed global attention on zoonotic viral diseases transmitted through rodents.

About Hantavirus

Hantaviruses are a group of viruses that cause severe diseases such as Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) and Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome (HFRS). HPS mainly affects the lungs and causes acute respiratory distress, while HFRS is associated with internal bleeding and kidney failure. The disease is zoonotic in nature and is primarily carried by rodents such as deer mice, white-footed mice, and cotton rats.

Humans usually become infected by inhaling airborne viral particles released from infected rodent urine, saliva, or droppings during activities like sweeping or cleaning contaminated areas. The infection initially causes flu-like symptoms such as fever, muscle pain, fatigue, and headache after an incubation period of 1–8 weeks. In severe cases, it rapidly progresses to breathing difficulty, chest tightness, and lung failure. Diagnosis is generally done using PCR tests similar to those used for Covid-19.

Treatment and Prevention

There is currently no specific antiviral treatment, vaccine, or cure for Hantavirus infection. Medical treatment mainly focuses on supportive care, including oxygen therapy and mechanical ventilation during severe respiratory stages. The virus is generally less contagious than diseases like Covid-19 because human-to-human transmission is rare, although the Andes strain found in Argentina and Chile has shown limited human transmission cases.

People working or living in rodent-prone environments, such as farmers, construction workers, and campers, are at higher risk of infection. Prevention mainly depends on effective rodent control, maintaining sanitation, and avoiding exposure to rodent waste in homes and workplaces.

78. Indian Army Conducts Op Netra 1.0 in Ladakh

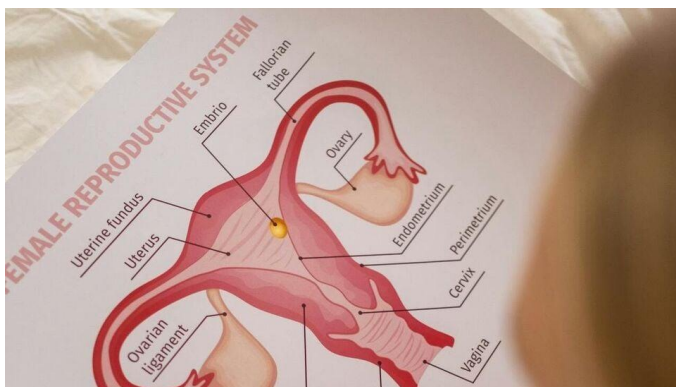
The Indian Army recently conducted 'Op Netra 1.0', a high-altitude advanced surgical eye camp in Leh. The initiative highlighted the Army's commitment to humanitarian outreach and specialised healthcare services in remote regions.

About Op Netra 1.0

Op Netra 1.0 was a four-day advanced surgical eye camp organised by the Indian Army in April 2026 to provide specialised ophthalmic treatment and advanced eye surgeries in high-altitude areas. The camp was inaugurated by Hitesh Bhalla, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of 14 Corps.

An important feature of the operation was the launch of the indigenously developed Op Netra App, which digitised patient records, improved diagnostic accuracy, and streamlined surgical scheduling through QR-based identification systems. The initiative benefited both civilians and armed forces personnel living in remote areas.

79. PCOS renamed as PMOS



Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) was officially renamed Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS) in May 2026 after a 14-year global effort. The renaming aims to reflect the condition's true nature as a complex metabolic and hormonal disorder rather than merely an ovarian disease, while also reducing stigma and improving early diagnosis.

Reasons for Renaming

The earlier term "polycystic" was considered scientifically misleading because the condition does not involve true ovarian cysts, but rather arrested follicular development that appears cyst-like in ultrasounds. The new name highlights the disorder's multi-systemic nature involving endocrine, metabolic, and reproductive dysfunctions such as insulin resistance,

hormonal imbalance, and irregular ovulation. The reclassification is also intended to address delayed diagnosis, as nearly 70% of affected individuals remain undiagnosed globally.

About PMOS

Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome is a chronic and complex disorder affecting women of reproductive age. It is characterised by high androgen levels, irregular menstrual cycles, chronic anovulation, and metabolic abnormalities. Common symptoms include irregular periods, excessive hair growth (hirsutism), weight gain, and fertility-related problems. The disorder is associated with genetic, neuroendocrine, and lifestyle-related factors such as obesity, sedentary habits, and unhealthy diets.

80. Skyroot Aerospace Unicorn



Skyroot Aerospace raised nearly \$60 million at a valuation of \$1.1 billion, becoming a unicorn as it prepares for the maiden launch of its Vikram-1 orbital rocket. The funding round was co-led by Sherpalo Ventures and GIC, with participation from several global investors.

About Skyroot Aerospace

Founded by Pawan Kumar Chandana and Naga Bharath Daka, Skyroot Aerospace aims to make space access affordable and accessible by designing and launching a family of launch vehicles. The company gained recognition in 2022 after launching Vikram-S, India's first privately built rocket to reach space.

Vikram-1 and Technology

Skyroot is now preparing for the launch of Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital rocket. The rocket is designed to carry small satellites of up to 350 kg into low Earth orbit and uses advanced technologies such as carbon composite structures, 3D-printed engines, and in-house developed propulsion systems. The new funding will also support the development of Vikram-2, a more advanced launch vehicle powered by a cryogenic stage.

81. ICGS Achal & Adamy-class FPV



ICGS Amulya is a newly commissioned Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) of the Indian Coast Guard built by Goa Shipyard Limited. It is the third vessel in the Adamy-class FPV series and has been developed with over 60% indigenous components under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

Key Features

ICGS Amulya is 51 metres long and is powered by two 3000 KW advanced diesel engines, enabling a

maximum speed of 27 knots. The vessel has an operational range of 1,500 nautical miles, allowing long-duration missions at sea. It is equipped with one 30 mm CRN-91 gun and two 12.7 mm stabilised remote-controlled guns supported by advanced fire-control and target acquisition systems.

Operational Role

The vessel is stationed at Paradip under the operational control of the Commander, Coast Guard Region (North East). It is designed for multiple missions including maritime surveillance, interdiction, search and rescue operations, anti-smuggling activities, and pollution response, strengthening maritime security along India's eastern coast.

82. Kamikaze Drone & VTOL Technology



The Indian Army inducted two indigenously developed combat systems — the UAV-Launched Precision Guided Munition (ULPGM) and the AGNIKAA VTOL-1 FPV Kamikaze Drone — under the Emergency Procurement (EP-6) programme to strengthen precision strike and battlefield capabilities. The systems were formally handed over in Hyderabad after successful high-altitude trials and electronic warfare evaluations.

UAV-Launched Precision Guided Munition (ULPGM)

The ULPGM has been jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation and Adani Defence & Aerospace. It is described as India's first indigenous loitering munition of its kind and is designed for precision engagement missions. The system is equipped with an Imaging Infrared (IIR) seeker and can function effectively in GPS-denied and electronically jammed environments. It has a UAV range of 20 km, a strike range of 2.5 km, carries a 2 kg warhead, and offers an accuracy of one metre circular error probable (CEP).

AGNIKAA VTOL-1 FPV Kamikaze Drone

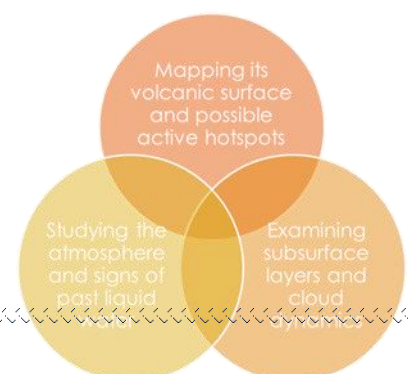
The AGNIKAA VTOL-1 FPV Kamikaze Drone is an anti-personnel combat drone developed for use in both urban warfare and open battlefield conditions. The drone is capable of carrying out quick and accurate strikes on enemy targets within a radius of 5 km. It is designed to improve tactical battlefield response and support precision attack operations.

83. Sweden Joins India's Shukrayaan Mission

During Prime Minister official visit to Sweden, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Swedish National Space Agency signed a MoU formalizing Sweden's participation in India's upcoming Venus Orbiter Mission.

What is Shukrayaan?

Officially named the Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM), Shukrayaan (meaning Venus Craft) is India's first dedicated

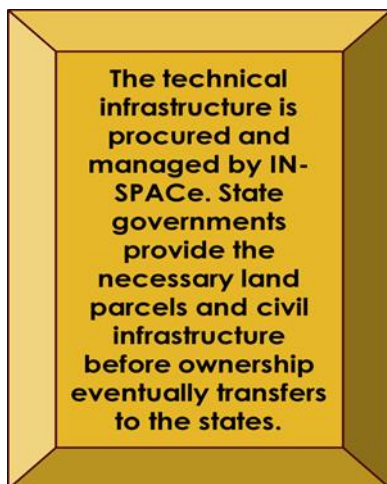


planetary exploration mission targeting Venus. Approved by the Union Cabinet with a budget of ₹1,236 crore, the spacecraft will carry 19 scientific payloads. It will be launched on March 29, 2028 aboard ISRO's heavy lift LVM-3 rocket. The overarching mission aims to conduct a comprehensive global survey of Venus—a planet that evolved into a scorching, toxic greenhouse world despite sharing a similar size and origin to Earth. Shukrayaan will map the planet's volcanic surface, look for active hotspots, sound its subsurface layers, monitor cloud dynamics, and investigate whether Venus once possessed liquid water.

Key Features of the Collaboration:

Integrated Plasma Package: Sweden's contribution is a highly specialized instrument named the Venusian Neutrals Analyser (VNA). **The VISWAS Component:** The VNA will be integrated into a larger, comprehensive sensory payload named VISWAS (Venus Ionospheric and Solar Wind particle AnalySer). **International Synergy:** Sweden joins other top-tier global space entities—such as Russia (providing the VIRAL instrument) and Germany (collaborating on the RAVI experiment)

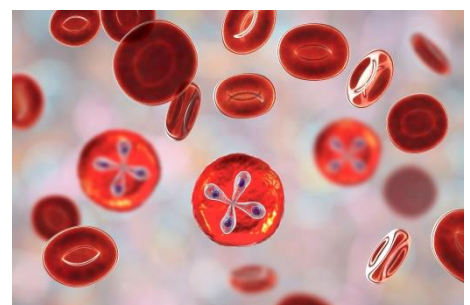
84. Department of Space Approves Space Facilities



The Department of Space approved Common Technical Facilities in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu on 22 May 2026. The facilities are linked to India's private-sector space manufacturing ecosystem and are being developed with the involvement of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre. A Space Manufacturing Park will come up at Khoraj near Ahmedabad in Gujarat. The park will focus on spacecraft and complex payload systems, including structural assembly and electronic validation. A Space Vehicles Cluster will be developed at Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu. The site is located near the upcoming small vehicle launch complex at Kulasekharapatnam.

85. Babesia (Babesiosis)

Babesia is a genus of microscopic protozoan parasites that infect red blood cells and cause a disease known as babesiosis. The parasite is primarily transmitted through the bite of infected Ixodes (deer) ticks and commonly affects animals such as cattle, dogs, and other mammals, though humans can also be infected. Recently, two lion cubs in the Gir National Park region of Gujarat reportedly died due to suspected Babesia infection.



Symptoms and Treatment

Most infections cause mild or no symptoms, but severe cases may lead to high fever, fatigue, anemia, and destruction of red blood cells. In extreme situations, complications such as respiratory, kidney, liver, or heart failure may occur. Babesiosis is generally not contagious

between humans, although rare mother-to-child transmission has been reported. Treatment typically involves antimicrobial therapy, most commonly a combination of atovaquone (antiparasitic) and azithromycin (antibiotic).

11. SPORTS NEWS

86. FIDE chess joins World Games Association

The International Chess Federation has joined the International World Games Association at its Annual General Meeting held in Lausanne.

Key Details:

With FIDE's inclusion, IWGA's membership has expanded to 40 federations, broadening the scope of sports represented in the World Games movement. The decision was taken during the AGM at the Olympic Museum.



FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich highlighted that chess, as a global mind sport, promotes strategy, discipline, and creativity. Its inclusion in IWGA signifies increasing recognition of mind sports alongside traditional physical sports at the international level.

87. Archery World Cup 2026

India Reaches Women's Recurve Final

India's women's recurve team reached the final of the Archery World Cup Stage 2 held in Shanghai, China, after defeating South Korea 5–1 in the semifinal. The Indian team included Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat, and Kumkum Mohod. Recurve archery is the only archery discipline included in the Olympic Games, and team matches are decided through a set-point system. South Korea is one of the strongest nations in women's recurve archery with 10 Olympic gold medals, making India's victory a significant achievement.

Archery World Cup and Other Facts

The Archery World Cup is conducted in multiple stages across different host cities and includes individual, team, and mixed team events in recurve and compound archery. India was scheduled to face China in the women's recurve final after its semifinal victory. Meanwhile, India's men's recurve team, comprising Tarundeep Rai, Dhiraj Bommadevara, and Yashdeep Bhoge, lost the opening round and tournament.



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exited the

12. IMPORTANT DAYS

88. International Nurses Day



International Nurses Day was observed on 12 May 2026, marking the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, whose contributions laid the foundation of modern nursing practices worldwide. The day recognises the dedication and continuous efforts of nurses in supporting patients, families, and healthcare institutions.

Theme of 2026

The theme for International Nurses Day 2026 was “Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives.” The theme highlighted the importance of empowering nurses through safe working conditions, equal opportunities, and stronger leadership roles to strengthen healthcare systems and improve patient care.

Significance

Nurses play a vital role in healthcare delivery by balancing patient care, clinical responsibilities, and healthcare management. International Nurses Day serves as an occasion to honour their service, acknowledge their contribution to public health, and raise awareness about the need for better support and recognition for the nursing profession globally.

History and Observance

International Nurses Day is celebrated annually across the world to commemorate Florence Nightingale’s legacy and contributions to nursing. Healthcare institutions, governments, and organisations observe the day through awareness campaigns, award ceremonies, educational programmes, and appreciation initiatives dedicated to nursing professionals.

89. National Technology Day 2026

National Technology Day was observed on 11 May 2026 to commemorate Operation Shakti, during which India successfully conducted five nuclear tests at Pokhran in Rajasthan in 1998. The tests were carried out under the leadership of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, showcasing India’s scientific capability and strategic self-reliance.



Historical Significance

Operation Shakti reinforced India's strategic autonomy and led to India being declared a nuclear-weapon state. The tests followed the earlier Pokhran-I, also known as Operation Smiling Buddha. On the same day in 1998, India successfully tested the Trishul surface-to-air missile and conducted the test flight of the indigenous Hansa-3 aircraft, marking major achievements in defence and aerospace technology.

Theme and Focus

The theme for National Technology Day 2026 was "Responsible Innovation for Inclusive Growth." The theme emphasised ethical, sustainable, and inclusive technological development aligned with the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and innovation-driven national progress.

Major Science and Technology Initiatives

India's major science and technology initiatives include the National Quantum Mission, India Semiconductor Mission 2.0, Deep Ocean Mission, Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), and Vigyan Dhara Scheme. Other initiatives such as Biotech-KISAN, iDEX, and the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems aim to strengthen indigenous scientific research and technological innovation.

90. International Day for Biological Diversity 2026

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, along with Dr. Mohan Yadav, Chief Minister (Madhya Pradesh), presided over the National-Level Celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) 2026 and an Event on Cheetah Conservation at the Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal today. The event was based on the theme 'Acting Locally for Global Impact', highlighting India's commitment towards biodiversity conservation, community participation and ecological restoration. The event was organised by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh, National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). On the occasion, the following publications, initiatives and outreach materials were released:

- a. Customised MyStamp
- b. India's Biodiversity Report 2026: Insights from the 7th National Report to CBD
- c. India's Progress in Implementing ABS: Insights from India's First National Report on the Nagoya Protocol
- d. ABS End-to-End Portal
- e. Film on Access and Benefit Sharing
- f. Film on Amarkantak Biodiversity Heritage Site

91. Abhilekh Patal Portal



The Prime Minister of India recently encouraged citizens to explore the 'Abhilekh Patal' portal to better understand India's historical legacy.

About Abhilekh Patal:

The Abhilekh Patal portal is a digital repository developed by the National Archives of India, providing online access to over 7 million historical records. It includes public records from government departments, private papers of eminent personalities, and archival materials such as photographs, maps, microfilms, and rare documents. The portal aims to make historical data easily accessible to users worldwide.

National Archives of India (NAI):

Established in 1891 at Kolkata as the Imperial Record Department, the NAI is the largest archival repository in South Asia. It preserves non-current government records and valuable collections like public records, private papers, and cartographic materials. Headquartered in New Delhi, it operates under the Ministry of Culture and has regional and record centres across India.

92. E-PRAAPTI (EPF Aadhaar-Based Portal)

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation is set to launch E-PRAAPTI, a digital platform to help users trace and activate old, inoperative EPF accounts.

About E-PRAAPTI:

E-PRAAPTI is an Aadhaar-enabled portal designed to link legacy EPF accounts with the Universal Account Number (UAN). It has been developed under the guidance of Mansukh Mandaviya. The platform aims to ensure that users can easily access and claim funds from inactive accounts without procedural hurdles.

Key Features:

- **Aadhaar Authentication:** Secure login and verification using Aadhaar.
- **Phased Rollout:** Initially requires Member ID; later expanded to users without it.
- **Profile Update & Linking:** Enables updating details and seamless UAN integration.
- **Minimal Manual Work:** Reduces paperwork and eliminates the need for employer or office visits.
- **System Upgrade:** Existing EPFO systems will undergo a brief migration phase.

The portal addresses over 31 lakh inoperative EPF accounts, some inactive for decades. It benefits retirees and inactive contributors by simplifying claim processes and improving accessibility. It also strengthens EPFO's digital governance by enabling faster, Aadhaar-based claim settlements.



14. ENVIRONMENT

93. Tamil Nadu & Kerala conducting synchronized Nilgiri Tahr survey



The Tamil Nadu Forest Department, in collaboration with Kerala, conducted the third synchronised census of the Nilgiri Tahr in April 2026.

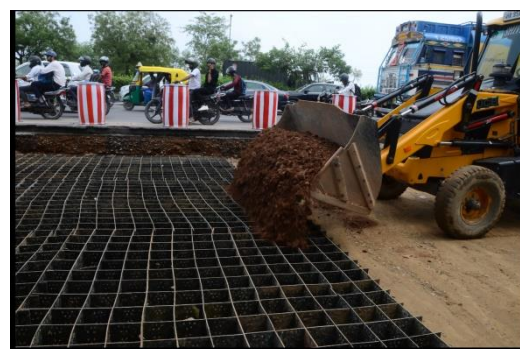
About Nilgiri Tahr:

The Nilgiri Tahr is the state animal of Tamil Nadu and the only mountain ungulate found in southern India. It inhabits the high-altitude regions of the Western Ghats and is listed as **Endangered** on the IUCN Red List, making it an important indicator of ecosystem health.

This was the third coordinated census across Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The species is mainly found in protected areas such as Eravikulam National Park and the Nilgiri hills. The exercise helps monitor population trends and supports conservation planning for this ecologically significant species.

94. Phoenix Plastic Waste Geocell

CSIR-Central Road Research Institute in collaboration with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited developed India's first technical textile geocell made entirely from end-of-life mixed plastic waste. Named "Phoenix Geocell," the innovation converts difficult-to-recycle plastic waste into road construction material and has been recognised by the India Book of Records and Asia Book of Records.



About Phoenix Geocell

Phoenix Geocell uses mixed municipal plastic waste that is usually unsuitable for conventional recycling due to contamination and mixed plastic composition. Through an advanced mechanical recycling process, the waste is converted into structural strips and

assembled into honeycomb-like geocells used for soil stabilisation and pavement engineering. The technology offers performance comparable to traditional HDPE geocells while reducing dependence on virgin plastic materials.

Field Demonstration and Features

The technology was demonstrated on a road section at the DND–Faridabad–KMP Expressway near Delhi with support from the National Highways Authority of India. It was also tested under extreme climatic conditions in Leh and Bikaner to assess durability and engineering performance. The system showed effective load transfer, thermal stability, structural resilience, and minimal environmental leaching, making it suitable for sustainable infrastructure development.

95. Global Forest Goals Report 2026



The Global Forest Goals (GFG) Report 2026 was released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat. The report reviewed progress towards the six Global Forest Goals set under the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (2017–2030), adopted during the 21st session of UNFF.

About UNFF and Global Forest Goals

The United Nations Forum on Forests was established in 2000 to promote sustainable management, conservation, and development of forests worldwide. The six Global Forest Goals include reversing forest loss, improving forest-based livelihoods, expanding protected forests, increasing financial support, strengthening governance, and enhancing global cooperation.

Key Findings of the Report

The report highlighted that global forest area declined by more than 40 million hectares between 2015 and 2025. Major causes of forest loss include agricultural expansion and increasing demand for fuelwood and charcoal. The report also noted worsening forest degradation due to climate-related factors such as droughts, wildfires, heatwaves, pests, and diseases. Weak governance, insecure land tenure, illegal trade, and limited institutional capacity were identified as major barriers to sustainable forest management.

Finance Gap and Recommendations

Although forest-related financing reached a record US\$84 billion in 2023, it remains significantly below the estimated annual requirement of US\$300 billion needed by 2030. The report recommended stronger international coordination, increased forest financing, promotion of deforestation-free supply chains, and wider access to cleaner energy alternatives to reduce dependence on fuelwood and charcoal.

96. India's 1st Satellite-Tagged Ganges Soft-Shell Turtle

India's first satellite-tagged Ganges soft-shell turtle (*Nilssononia gangetica*), an endangered freshwater reptile, was released into the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve in Assam, marking a significant milestone in wildlife conservation that coincided with Endangered Species Day. This marks India's very first instance of satellite-tagging a Ganges soft-shell turtle to track seasonal movement, home range, and critical nesting or breeding habitats within the Brahmaputra river basin.

The project was executed by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department and funded by the National Geographic Society.



Ganges soft-shell Turtle: It is distinguished from other riverine turtles by unique arrowhead-shaped markings on the top of its head. It primarily inhabits large rivers, lakes, and reservoirs. As a major river predator that feeds on dead and decaying animal matter, this species acts as a vital scavenger, helping to naturally clean and maintain the river ecosystem.

Protection & Conservation Status:

Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972: Schedule I.

IUCN Red List Status: Endangered.

CITES: Appendix I

Assam's Biodiversity Significance: Assam is home to 21 species of turtles, making it one of Asia's richest turtle habitats. It is also a global priority region for freshwater turtle conservation, with five of India's eight softshell turtle species found in the Kaziranga landscape.

97. 2026 Goldman Prize: Historic All-Women Winners

The 2026 Goldman Environmental Prize, popularly known as the "Green Nobel," made history by honoring six women environmental activists from different regions of the world. Presented in San Francisco, the award recognizes grassroots leaders working to protect the environment. Each winner received \$200,000 for her contribution. The recognition highlights the crucial role women play in addressing environmental challenges and promoting climate action globally.

Key Contributions and Background

Among the winners were Iroro Tanshi of Nigeria, who protected the habitat of the endangered short-tailed roundleaf bat through wildfire prevention efforts; Alannah Acaq Hurley of the United States, who helped stop a major mining project threatening Alaska's forests and salmon habitats; and Theonila Roka Matbob of Papua New Guinea, who pushed mining giant Rio Tinto to acknowledge and address environmental damage from the Panguna mine. Established in 1989 by philanthropists Richard and Rhoda Goldman, the prize has also recognized Indian environmentalists such as Alok Shukla, Medha Patkar, and M.C. Mehta.



15. OBITUARY

98. Olympic Bronze Medallist Gurbax Singh Grewal Passed Away

Former Indian hockey player Gurbax Singh Grewal, a member of the bronze medal-winning team at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, passed away at the age of 84 in Zirakpur near Chandigarh.

Career Highlights:

Born in 1942 in Lyallpur (now Faisalabad, Pakistan), Grewal was a fast forward who represented India at the 1968 Olympics, where the team secured a bronze medal. He made history along with his brother Balbir Singh Grewal as one of the rare sibling pairs to represent India in the same Olympic Games. He later played for Western Railways and built a notable domestic career.

Contribution Beyond Playing:

After retirement, he remained closely associated with hockey as a coach, mentoring teams in Mumbai. He also served as Honorary Secretary of the Mumbai Hockey Association, contributing to the sport's development at the grassroots and administrative levels.

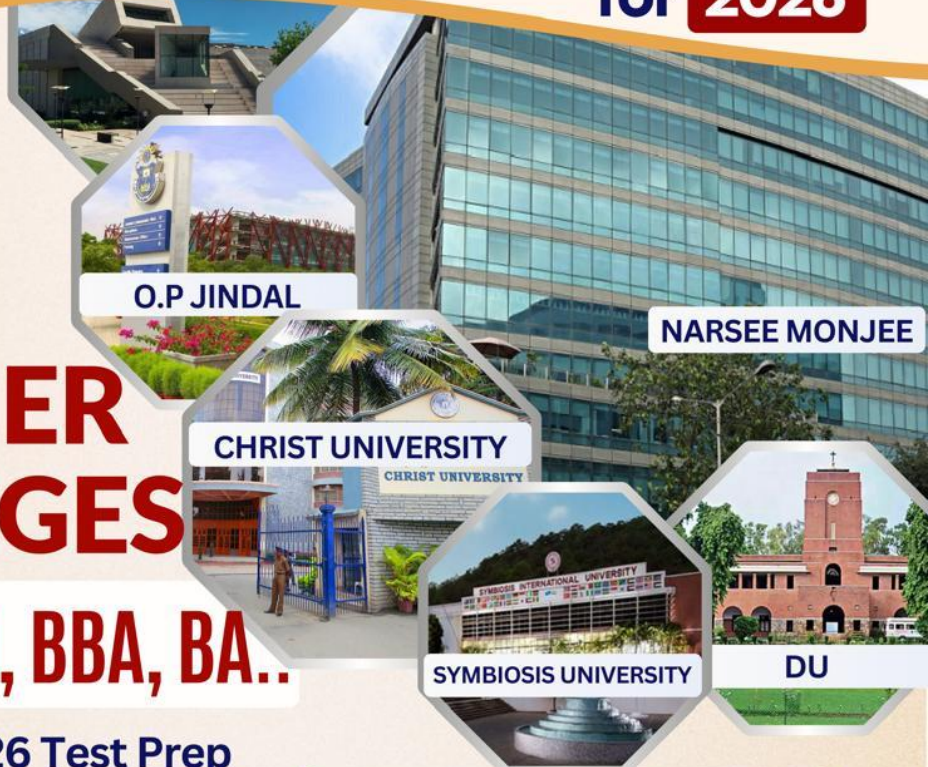
Legacy:

Grewal is remembered not only for his Olympic achievement but also for his lifelong dedication to Indian hockey, both on and off the field.

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