

Weekly One Liners 12th to 18th May, 2025

President Murmu Invokes Article 143 Over Governors' Bill Assent Powers

In a rare constitutional move, President Droupadi Murmu has invoked Article 143 of the Constitution to seek the Supreme Court's advisory opinion on a range of legal questions concerning the powers and conduct of Governors and the President in relation to State legislation under Articles 200 and 201. This Presidential Reference stems from a recent Supreme Court judgment criticizing delays by the Tamil Nadu Governor in granting assent to Bills passed by the State Legislature.

Why in News?

On May 13, 2025, President Murmu referred 14 constitutional questions to the Supreme Court after a two-judge Bench judgment (April 8, 2025) deemed the Tamil Nadu Governor's delay in Bill assent as unconstitutional. The move is significant as it seeks to resolve long-standing ambiguities regarding the discretionary powers of Governors and the President, and the limits of judicial intervention under Article 142.

Key Questions Raised in the Presidential Reference

1. What are the Constitutional options before a Governor when a Bill is presented to him under Article 200 for assent?
2. Is the Governor bound by the aid and advice tendered by the Council of Ministers?
3. Is the exercise of Constitutional discretion by the Governor under Article 200 justiciable?
4. Is Article 361 of the Constitution (immunity given to President and Governors from legal action while in office) an absolute bar to judicial review in relation to the actions of a Governor under Article 200?
5. In the absence of any Constitutionally prescribed time limit or manner of exercise of powers by a Governor, can time limits be imposed and manner of exercise of powers be prescribed through judicial orders?
6. Is the exercise of Constitutional discretion by the President under Article 201 (dealing with Bills reserved by a Governor for consideration by the President) justiciable?
7. Can judicial orders impose timelines and manner of exercise of powers by the President under Article 201?
8. Is the President required to take advice from the Supreme Court when a Bill is reserved by a Governor for the President's assent?
9. Are decisions of the Governor and the President under Articles 200 and 201, respectively, justiciable at a stage prior to even the Bill in question becoming a law. Is it permissible for the courts to undertake judicial adjudication over the contents of a Bill, in any manner, before it becomes law?
10. Can the Constitutional powers of the President/Governors be substituted by a judicial order exercising Article 142?

11. Is a law made by the State Legislature a law in force without the assent of the Governor?
12. Is it not mandatory for a Supreme Court Bench to examine if a case involved substantial questions of law regarding interpretation of the Constitution and refer the case to a Bench of a minimum five judges under Article 145(3)?
13. Is Article 142 limited to matters of procedural law or does it extend to issuing directions "contrary to or inconsistent with existing substantive or procedural provisions of the Constitution"?
14. Is there a bar on the Supreme Court from deciding between the Centre and States other than by way of filing an original suit under Article 131?

Background and Trigger

- The issue arises from a petition by the Tamil Nadu government against Governor R.N. Ravi's delay in acting on 10 re-passed Bills.
- The Supreme Court, invoking Article 142, held the Governor's inaction illegal and deemed the Bills to have received assent.
- This verdict prompted the Presidential Reference to test the validity and scope of Article 142 and assess the boundaries of judicial overreach.

Static & Legal Provisions Discussed

- **Article 200:** Governor's options on State Bills — assent, withhold assent, or reserve for President.
- **Article 201:** Bills reserved for the President's consideration.
- **Article 143:** President's power to refer legal questions to SC for advisory opinion.
- **Article 142:** Supreme Court's power to do complete justice.
- **Article 145(3):** Cases involving interpretation of the Constitution must be heard by at least a 5-judge Bench.
- **Article 361:** Immunity to President and Governors from legal proceedings during tenure.



Significance of the Reference

- Clarifies constitutional roles of President and Governors in the lawmaking process.
- May set binding timelines for assent to prevent legislative paralysis.
- Addresses the balance of power between executive discretion and judicial activism.
- Influences future Centre-State relations and cooperative federalism.

India and European Union Will Restart FTA Talks

India and the European Union (EU) have resumed negotiations for a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA), with the 11th round of talks beginning on May 12, 2025, in Brussels. This round is expected to advance the interim phase of the deal, part of a two-stage agreement framework aimed at concluding the pact by the end of the year. The initiative follows significant progress in India's trade diplomacy, including its near-finalisation of an FTA with the United Kingdom.

Why in News?

The India-EU Free Trade Agreement negotiations have entered a crucial phase with both sides agreeing to a two-stage approach. This marks a renewed push by India to wrap up key trade deals in 2025, including ongoing talks with the UK, US, and Australia. Minister Piyush Goyal's recent visit to Brussels underlines India's urgency to reduce trade barriers and expand market access in Europe amid global economic uncertainties.

Key Objectives and Aims

- Finalise the interim agreement as early as possible.
- Achieve a comprehensive FTA by the end of 2025.
- Enhance market access and reduce non-tariff barriers (NTBs).
- Implement trade liberalisation in low-conflict sectors first.
- Build on momentum from other recent trade deals (UK, Australia).

Background & Static Information

- Negotiations on the India-EU FTA have been ongoing in multiple phases, with the 11th round currently underway from May 12–16, 2025.
- India had signed a limited Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) with Australia in 2022.
- India-UK FTA talks recently reached a key milestone.
- India is also exploring a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) with the United States.
- EU is one of India's largest trading partners, and a successful FTA would significantly benefit India's export-oriented sectors like textiles, IT, pharmaceuticals, and automobiles.

Significance of the Agreement

- Will deepen economic integration between India and the 27-member EU bloc.
- Accelerated talks reflect India's strategic shift to secure multiple FTAs in 2025.
- Addresses challenges posed by Trump-era protectionist tariffs and global trade uncertainty.
- Encourages mutual investment, technology transfer, and geopolitical alignment on trade.
- Boosts India's image as a reliable global trade partner.

CAQM Issues Fresh Directions to Curb Stubble Burning in North India

In a decisive step to combat seasonal air pollution, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has issued a set of mandatory directions to Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh to prevent incidents of paddy stubble burning. This move comes in compliance with the Supreme Court's order in the M.C. Mehta vs. Union of India case and is aimed at improving the air quality in the National Capital Region (NCR) and its adjoining states during the paddy harvesting season.

Why in News?

The CAQM directive is significant as stubble burning continues to be one of the primary contributors to hazardous air pollution in North India, especially during winter months. With the air quality in Delhi-NCR deteriorating annually due to biomass burning, CAQM's comprehensive directions aim to institutionalize preventive and sustainable agricultural practices to curb farm fires effectively.

Key Directions by CAQM

- Formation of a Dedicated Parali Protection Force:
- To include police officers and agriculture department officials for strict vigilance and enforcement.
- Mandatory Use of Paddy Straw Pellets/Briquettes in Brick Kilns:
- Similar to their usage in thermal power plants for co-firing, reducing raw straw burning.

Mapping of Each Farm

- To determine appropriate stubble management techniques like in-situ (on-field) or ex-situ (off-field) processing and crop diversification.

Common Procurement Rate for Paddy Straw

- Punjab and UP to fix a uniform rate for straw purchase, in line with Haryana's model, incentivizing farmers.

Promotion of Ex-Situ Management Practices

- Encouraging the use of balers, rakers, and other machinery to remove and utilize crop residue efficiently.

Technology Integration

- Establishing a real-time data platform for consistent monitoring and reporting of stubble burning incidents.

Inventory Review of Crop Residue Management (CRM) Machines

- States to conduct detailed assessment of available equipment and ensure optimal deployment.

India's Total Fertility Rate Remains at 2.0: SRS 2021 Report

India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) stood at 2.0 in 2021, the same as in 2020, as per the Sample Registration System (SRS) report 2021 released by the Registrar General of India (RGI). The report provides vital insights into the country's changing demographic patterns, including fertility, ageing population, and marriage trends. Notably, Bihar reported the highest TFR at 3.0, while Delhi and West Bengal recorded the lowest at 1.4.

Why in News?

The SRS 2021 report, released on May 7, 2025, provides updated demographic estimates at the national and state levels, a crucial resource in the absence of the 2021 Census, which has been delayed. The report gains added relevance amid the announcement in the 2024 interim budget regarding a high-power committee to address population growth and demographic shifts in India.

Key Highlights of the SRS 2021 Report

Total Fertility Rate (TFR)

- National average:** 2.0, same as 2020.
- Bihar:** Highest TFR at 3.0.
- Delhi & West Bengal:** Lowest TFR at 1.4.

TFR Below Replacement Level (2.1) in many states

- Includes:** Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, etc.

TFR at or above Replacement Level

- Assam (2.1), Gujarat (2.0), Haryana (2.0).

Age Structure Shift

Decline in 0–14 years population

- From 41.2% (1971) to 24.8% (2021).
- Rise in 15–59 years (working age group):
- From 53.4% to 66.2%.

Increase in elderly population

- 65+ age group: From 5.3% to 5.9%.
- 60+ age group: From 6% to 9%.

Elderly Population by State

Highest

- Kerala: 14.4%
- Tamil Nadu: 12.9%
- Himachal Pradesh: 12.3%

Lowest

- Bihar: 6.9%
- Assam: 7%
- Delhi: 7.1%

Marriage Trends

- Mean age at effective marriage for females:
- Increased from 19.3 years (1990) to 22.5 years (2021).

About SRS Survey

- Conducted by:** Registrar General of India (RGI).
- Largest demographic survey in India after the Census.
- Covers 8,842 sample units across states.
- Sample population:** ~84 lakh individuals.

Ashwini Vaishnaw Inaugurates First 3nm Semiconductor Design Hubs in Noida and Bengaluru

In a landmark moment for India's semiconductor ambitions, Union Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated the country's first 3nm chip design centres in Noida and Bengaluru. Set up by Renesas Electronics India, these state-of-the-art facilities represent a transformative leap in India's chip design capabilities, aligning with the nation's vision of becoming a global semiconductor powerhouse under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat mission.

Why in News?

India has entered a new frontier in semiconductor design with the inauguration of its first 3nm chip design centres. The move highlights the country's growing prowess in advanced chip technology and supports its efforts to build a robust, end-to-end semiconductor ecosystem. This also supports India's ambition to meet rising global and domestic demand for electronics through self-reliance and innovation.

Key Objectives and Highlights

- Launch of 3nm Chip Design Centres:** Two facilities were inaugurated in Noida and Bengaluru by Union Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw.
- First-of-its-kind in India:** These centres are the first in India to design chips at the advanced 3nm node—marking significant technological progress from earlier 5nm and 7nm designs.
- Powered by Renesas Electronics India Pvt. Ltd.:** A leading global embedded semiconductor solutions provider.

Government's Semiconductor Push

- Holistic Strategy:** India's approach includes chip design, fabrication, ATMP (Assembly, Testing, Marking, and Packaging), and supply chain development.
- Global Recognition:** Industry optimism has grown, evidenced by support from companies like Applied Materials and Lam Research.
- Academic Support:** Over 270+ institutions have received EDA software tools and will now receive semiconductor learning kits to foster hands-on learning.
- Skill Development:** A new semiconductor learning kit is being launched to develop industry-ready engineers.

Strategic Importance

- **Geopolitical and Economic Value:** The chip centres align with India's strategic interests and Indo-Japan collaboration.
- **Sustainable Growth:** The initiative aims to build a self-reliant chip ecosystem, supporting manufacturing in smartphones, medical devices, automobiles, defense, and more.

Renesas' Role and Vision

- **Global Expertise:** Renesas excels in embedded systems and system-level innovation.
- **India Strategy:** Plans to expand design capabilities from architecture to testing in India.
- **Partnership with Academia and Startups:** Through schemes like Design Linked Incentive (DLI) and Chips to Startup (C2S).

Cabinet Approves Rs 3,706 Cr HCL-Foxconn Chip Plant in Jewar

In a significant push towards self-reliance in semiconductor manufacturing, the Union Cabinet has approved a ₹3,706 crore joint venture (JV) between HCL and Foxconn to establish a semiconductor assembly and packaging plant in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh. This marks the sixth semiconductor project under India's ₹76,000 crore Semiconductor Mission, and the first of its kind in UP. Scheduled to begin production in 2027, the facility is expected to create 2,000 jobs and contribute to meeting nearly 40% of India's local chip demand.

Why in News?

The Union Cabinet recently approved a new semiconductor plant under the India Semiconductor Mission. This is a JV between HCL and Foxconn, focused on chip assembly and packaging. The plant will be set up in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh, and is expected to start operations by 2027. It will significantly boost local production, employment, and strengthen India's chip supply chain.

Objectives and Aim

- Establish a semiconductor assembly and testing unit under the India Semiconductor Mission.
- Reduce reliance on imported chips by meeting 40% of domestic demand.
- Promote self-reliance (Aatmanirbhar Bharat) in electronics and semiconductor sectors.
- Create employment opportunities and develop industrial infrastructure in UP.

Major Highlights

- **Investment:** ₹3,706 crore total, ₹1,500 crore from Government incentives.
- **Plant Type:** Assembly and packaging of display driver chips for devices like phones, laptops, cars, and PCs.
- **Capacity:** 20,000 wafers/month; 36 million units/month output.
- **Location:** Near Jewar Airport, Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority, Uttar Pradesh.
- **Jobs Expected:** 2,000 direct jobs.
- **Production Start:** 2027.

Background & Context

- Foxconn's Second Attempt: Earlier JV with Vedanta collapsed in 2023 due to lack of a viable tech partner.
- The plant is a key part of the India Semiconductor Mission, launched in 2021 with an initial outlay of \$10 billion (₹76,000 crore).
- India has already attracted \$18 billion worth of investment in this space, with multiple facilities being developed by Tata-PSMC, Micron, Kaynes, and CG Power-Renesas.
- The first made-in-India chips are expected to roll out later in 2025.

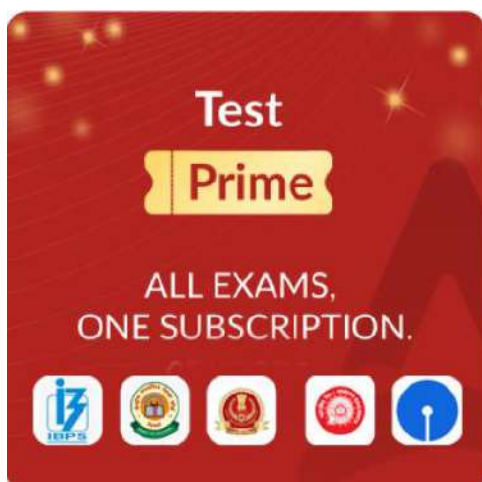
Significance

- Boosts India's semiconductor ecosystem and reduces dependence on foreign chips.
- Supports Make in India and Digital India goals.
- Generates local employment and develops UP as a manufacturing hub.
- Contributes to economic development and strengthens strategic autonomy in critical electronics.

National Affairs

- On **May 10, 2025**, Union Minister Manohar Lal inaugurated the **Bharat Bodh Kendra** at **India Habitat Centre (IHC)** in **New Delhi**. Developed as part of the **Habitat Library and Resource Centre**, the Kendra is aimed at promoting **India's cultural and civilisational heritage** through resources on **art, philosophy, spirituality, and history**. The Minister praised IHC's **green initiatives** and encouraged broader replication of its **sustainable practices**. The Kendra is expected to become a vital centre for **cultural research, heritage education**, and public learning. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Indian government is **revisiting the "safe harbour" clause** under **Section 79 of the IT Act, 2000**, to make **social media intermediaries** more accountable for **fake news and misinformation**. Triggered by national security concerns following the **Pahalgam terror attack**, the move aims to **reform intermediary liability** and possibly incorporate changes into the upcoming **Digital India Act (DIA)**. The government's plan includes granting statutory recognition to the **PIB Fact Check Unit**, which has faced judicial scrutiny. The issue also mirrors global concerns, especially debates around **Section 230 in the US**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Donald Trump's new MFN drug pricing policy**, aimed at ensuring Americans pay the **lowest global prices**, has triggered concerns in **India's pharmaceutical sector**. While the move may bring **immediate relief** to US consumers, it could lead to **global price hikes**, especially in **low-cost drug markets like India**. The Indian industry fears **pressure from global pharma** to raise prices and adopt **TRIPS-plus IP provisions**. Stock markets reacted negatively, reflecting worries about **profit margins** and **trade negotiations** affecting affordable access to medicines. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On **May 12, 2025**, India extended a helping hand to the **Maldives** by **rolling over a \$50 million treasury bill** for one more year through the **State Bank of India (SBI)**. This move, aimed at easing the **Maldivian debt crisis**, highlights India's commitment to **regional stability**, its '**Neighbourhood First**' policy, and **economic cooperation** despite recent **diplomatic tensions**. The assistance not only provides **financial relief** but also reinforces India's role as a **reliable strategic partner** in the **Indian Ocean** region. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Government of India** has sanctioned an **additional 2.8 million tonnes of FCI rice** for **ethanol production** under the **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme**, raising total allocation to **5.2 million tonnes** for **ESY 2024–25**. With a blending target of **20% ethanol in petrol by 2025–26**, the move supports clean energy goals but raises concerns about **food security**, **biofuel sustainability**, and the use of **first-generation (1G) feedstocks** like rice. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Neeraj Chopra**, India's javelin star and Olympic gold medallist, has been conferred the **honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel** in the **Territorial Army**, as per a May 13, 2025 government notification. The honour acknowledges his sports excellence and military service as Subedar Major. A former world and Olympic champion, Neeraj joins the ranks of personalities like M.S. Dhoni, reflecting India's respect for civilian achievements in nation-building. The **Territorial Army**, a crucial support wing of the Indian Army, celebrates its **75 years of service**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India has positioned itself among the **top six countries in 6G patent filings**, according to Minister **Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani**, who made the announcement at the **Bharat 6G 2025 Conference**. The nation's ambitious **Bharat 6G Vision** targets **global leadership by 2030**, powered by over **₹300 crore** in **research investments**, **strategic global partnerships**, and a focus on cutting-edge technologies like **terahertz communication**, **AI-native networks**, and **sub-millisecond latency** capabilities. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Supreme Court of India**, while addressing a **suo motu petition** on the **rise in child rape incidents**, has ordered the **Centre and State governments** to urgently set up **exclusive POCSO courts**. It underlined that trial delays violate the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012**, which mandates speedy justice. States like **Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Maharashtra, UP, Odisha, and West Bengal** have been flagged for judicial backlog. This move is critical to ensure **timely justice**, strengthen **child protection mechanisms**, and uphold **child rights**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Exercise Raahat 2025**, conducted jointly by the **Indian Army** and **NDRF** in **Assam**, marks a significant milestone in India's **humanitarian disaster preparedness**. Featuring **live simulations** across **flood scenarios**, the exercise aimed at improving **synergy between military, civilian, and relief agencies**. This large-scale **HADR drill** is particularly critical for **Assam** and surrounding regions, aligning with India's national commitment to **disaster resilience** and **effective emergency response**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS)** has taken a decisive step by **revoking the security clearance** of **M/s Celebi** and its associated companies over **national security** concerns. **Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu** emphasized that **public safety is non-negotiable**. To ensure **seamless airport operations**, the Ministry has activated coordination with **airport operators** and deployed **special monitoring teams**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Justice **Bela M. Trivedi**, the **eleventh woman judge** of the **Supreme Court of India**, retired on **May 16, 2025**, concluding a **trailblazing career** that began in **1995**. Known for her **landmark judgments** in the **EWS quota case**, **POCSO Act interpretation**, and **SC sub-classification**, Justice Trivedi also held various key administrative positions in Gujarat. Her **judicial legacy** stands out for promoting **gender representation**, upholding **constitutional values**, and delivering **progressive verdicts** on **child protection**, **reservation**, and **economic justice**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Government of India has launched a significantly **revamped Multi Agency Centre (MAC)** under the Intelligence Bureau to reinforce national security and strengthen counter-terrorism coordination. The new MAC, inaugurated by **Amit Shah**, links **28 major agencies** across the country and integrates **AI, ML, and GIS** capabilities. It promises **seamless data sharing**, **advanced threat prediction**, and a **unified response mechanism** to tackle complex threats including **terrorism, Naxalism, organised crime**, and **cyber warfare**. This strategic upgrade is seen as a vital move in securing India's internal security ecosystem. ([Click here to read article](#))



States in the News

- On **May 11, 2025**, **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** virtually inaugurated the **BrahMos supersonic cruise missile** production facility at the **Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor** in **Lucknow**. Built with an investment of **₹300 crore**, the facility aims to produce **80–100 BrahMos missiles annually**, boosting **India's self-reliance in defence manufacturing** amid growing **regional security concerns**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Delhi Police** has initiated '*Nayi Disha – A Path Back to Learning*', a community outreach programme designed to bring **school dropouts** back into the **education system**. With the help of **NGOs, schools, and counsellors**, the initiative offers **admission support, emotional guidance, and academic aid**. It highlights a paradigm shift in policing from traditional enforcement to **social empowerment**. The project is already yielding results and is set to **expand citywide**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Uttar Pradesh government** has expanded its **One District One Product (ODOP)** scheme by adding **12 new products**, raising the total to **74 items** across 75 districts. Launched in **2018**, the ODOP scheme aims to **promote indigenous crafts, generate employment, and enhance exports**. The scheme supports artisans through **financial aid, marketing, and GI tagging**, with a long-term goal of achieving a **\$1 trillion state economy by 2029**. This latest inclusion strengthens **local economies**, aligns with **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**, and encourages **Make in India**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Andhra Pradesh government**, under the leadership of **Pawan Kalyan**, has declared a **property tax waiver** for homes owned by **active defence personnel** in **gram panchayat areas**. This move, supported by the **Sainik Welfare Department**, expands existing benefits and pays tribute to fallen heroes like **Agniveer Murali Naik**, who was killed in **Jammu and Kashmir**. The policy applies to properties jointly owned with spouses and includes personnel from the **Army, Navy, Air Force, CRPF**, and other **paramilitary forces**, reflecting a broader commitment to **national defence and rural welfare**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Maharashtra government** has approved a landmark policy mandating the use of **artificial sand (m-sand)** for all **government and semi-government construction projects**, aiming to curb **illegal river sand mining** and promote **environmental sustainability**. Key features include **mandatory m-sand use**, installation of **1,500 crushers statewide**, **MSME status** for producers, **reduced royalty (₹200/brass)**, and a **3-year transition** for existing stone crushers. The move aligns with **NGT directives**, encourages use of **rocky terrain**, and supports **water conservation** by converting pits into ponds. ([Click here to read article](#))

- In a **strategic move** to promote **sustainable transport** and **eco-tourism** in **Jammu & Kashmir**, the **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** has opened a **regional office** in **Srinagar** to develop **inland navigation infrastructure** along **Chenab (NW-26), Jhelum (NW-49), and Ravi (NW-84)**. This initiative, under the **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways**, aims to enhance **river-based connectivity**, reduce **logistics costs**, and boost **employment and economic growth** in the Union Territory. ([Click here to read article](#))
- ReNew Power** is establishing **India's largest single-site renewable energy complex** in **Andhra Pradesh's Anantapur district**, with a planned investment of **₹22,000 crore**. The project's **Phase-I** includes **587 MW solar, 250 MW wind, and 415 MWh of battery storage**. This development aligns with the state's **72 GW RE target by 2029** and marks **ReNew's re-entry** into the state, backed by **favorable policies and ministerial support**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Maharashtra government** has secured a **₹5,127 crore FDI deal** with **Blackstone Group** for the construction of **logistics and industrial parks** across the state. This initiative will be executed by **Horizon Industrial Parks** on nearly **794.2 acres**, spanning **1.85 crore sq ft** of infrastructure. The parks, to be developed in locations like **Nagpur, Chakan, Bhiwandi**, and others, are expected to create **27,510 jobs**. The plan aligns with the **Maharashtra Logistics Policy 2024**, aiming to build **sustainable, tech-driven, and employment-generating infrastructure**, reinforcing Maharashtra's role in **industrial and supply chain growth**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Pushkar Kumbh 2025** began at **Keshav Prayag**, located in **Mana village of Chamoli district, Uttarakhand**, after a **12-year gap**, coinciding with the **entry of Jupiter into Gemini**. The event is a major spiritual gathering for **Vaishnavite devotees**, especially from **South India**, at the **confluence of the Alaknanda and Saraswati rivers**. The **district administration**, led by **DM Sandeep Tiwari**, has made key **infrastructure improvements and management provisions** to accommodate the rising number of pilgrims. The event not only enhances **spiritual tourism** but also reinforces **India's diverse cultural fabric**. ([Click here to read article](#))

International Affairs

- India and the European Union** have entered the **11th round of FTA negotiations**, adopting a **two-phase strategy** to fast-track trade liberalisation. With a focus on **reducing non-tariff barriers** and **expanding market access**, this effort aims to finalise an **interim agreement** before moving to more contentious issues. India's recent diplomatic push, including agreements with **the UK, US, and Australia**, underscores its **commitment to global trade integration** and **economic resilience** amid **global protectionist trends**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- The **United States** and **China** reached a **trade deal** on **May 11, 2025**, after two days of high-level talks in **Geneva**, aimed at resolving a prolonged **tariff war**. Officials including **Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent** and **USTR Ambassador Jamieson Greer** confirmed “**substantial progress**” had been made. The talks focused on reducing the **\$1.2 trillion US trade deficit** and restoring **economic stability**. The agreement, though details are pending, marks a significant milestone in **international trade relations** and is expected to have a **positive global impact**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In a pioneering move, **Bhutan** has partnered with **Binance Pay** and **DK Bank** to roll out a **crypto payment system** in its **tourism sector**, allowing visitors to use **over 100 cryptocurrencies** for services like **flight bookings**, **SDF fees**, and **local shopping**. This system, using **QR code technology**, automatically converts payments to the **Bhutanese Ngultrum (BTN)**, ensuring price stability for vendors. With **over 100 local businesses** already onboard—many in **rural areas**—the initiative marks a milestone in **financial inclusion**, **digital innovation**, and global crypto adoption. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **US-China trade war** has entered a cooling phase with both countries agreeing to a **115% reciprocal tariff reduction** and a **90-day truce** on further measures. The agreement, reached after **talks in Geneva**, halts years of trade hostilities that had disrupted global supply chains and markets. The truce is expected to bring **economic relief**, boost **global trade stability**, and provide countries like **India** with strategic export opportunities. Key players include **US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent** and **China's Vice Premier He Lifeng**, who labeled the discussions as **candid and productive**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **May 14, 2025**, **Anita Anand**, a distinguished **Indian-origin politician**, was appointed **Canada's new Minister of Foreign Affairs** by Prime Minister **Mark Carney**, making her the **first Hindu woman** to hold the post. A former **Minister of Defence**, **Transport**, and **Treasury Board President**, Anand previously planned to return to **academia** but was persuaded to stay amidst **strained India-Canada ties** and sensitive **US relations under Donald Trump**. She took oath on the **Bhagavad Gita**, symbolizing her **Hindu faith** and marking a historic moment in Canadian diplomacy. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **United States** and **Saudi Arabia** have signed a **\$142 billion arms deal** during President **Donald Trump's** visit to **Riyadh** in May 2025. The deal, deemed the **largest in history**, includes **advanced air-to-air missiles**, military systems, and **commercial exports**. The agreement, coupled with previous approvals for a \$3.3 billion missile sale, is aimed at **boosting defence ties**, ensuring **regional security**, and **increasing Gulf investments** into the US economy. Major defence contractor **RTX Corp** will oversee missile production, marking a significant step in US-Saudi relations. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **78th Festival de Cannes** opened with a rich celebration of **cinema**, honoring artists like **Robert De Niro** and paying tribute to voices like **Fatima Hassouna**. The event emphasized the power of **art**, **freedom**, and **democracy**, featuring stirring speeches by **Juliette Binoche**, **Leonardo DiCaprio**, and **De Niro**. With cultural figures like **Quentin Tarantino**, the festival champions **inclusivity**, **representation**, and cinema as a medium for **resistance** and **hope**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **U.S. decision to remove sanctions** on **Syria**, announced by **Donald Trump** in **May 2025**, marks a crucial shift toward ending years of **economic** and **political isolation** for the **war-affected nation**. With a new **transitional government** in place, this **policy change** aims to foster **peace**, support **humanitarian aid**, and accelerate Syria's **economic recovery**. This development could reshape **Middle Eastern geopolitics** and **international relations** by encouraging **cooperation** and **rebuilding** in a country long ravaged by **conflict** and **sanctions**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Honduras** officially **opened its embassy in New Delhi**, reflecting growing diplomatic and economic engagement with **India**. This move strengthens ties in **trade**, **development**, **climate resilience**, and **technology**. India has consistently supported Honduras through **humanitarian aid**, **medical supplies**, and developmental projects like the **IT Centre at UNAH** and **irrigation initiatives**. With increasing trade and the presence of Indian companies like **Bajaj** and **TVS**, Honduras offers India a **strategic gateway** to the **Central American market**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **May 16, 2025**, **Russia** and **Ukraine** resumed **direct peace talks** in **Istanbul**, resulting in a **prisoner exchange agreement** involving 1,000 individuals from each side. While **Turkey mediated** the dialogue, the two nations failed to reach a **ceasefire**, largely due to **Russia's territorial demands** and **Ukraine's firm rejection**. Despite the obstacles, both delegations committed to **further negotiations**, marking a **tentative step toward diplomacy** in a war that has lasted over three years. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Nepal's **Yala Glacier**, once a vital research site, has been declared **dead** due to **rapid melting caused by climate change**. Scientists, monks, and local communities from **HKH countries** gathered to pay tribute. The event featured **memorial plaques**, Buddhist ceremonies, and speeches emphasizing the glacier's scientific and symbolic importance. The loss of Yala is part of a broader trend of **accelerating glacier retreat and snow loss**, threatening **water security** for nearly **2 billion people** in Asia. ([Click here to read article](#))

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- The **Tapti Basin Mega Recharge Project**, launched through an MoU between **Madhya Pradesh** and **Maharashtra**, aims to provide **irrigation and drinking water** to water-stressed districts using **31.13 TMC of Tapti river water**. Estimated at **₹19,244 crore**, the project will cover over **3.57 lakh hectares** and is likely to receive **90% Central funding**. This inter-State effort is seen as the **world's largest recharge scheme** and reflects a significant move toward **sustainable water management** and **cooperative federalism**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- HCLTech** has signed the **European Commission's AI Pact**, reinforcing its commitment to **responsible AI development** in anticipation of the **EU AI Act**. Through this pact, the company will enhance **AI governance**, promote **AI literacy**, and identify **high-risk AI systems**. Its dedicated **Office of Responsible AI and Governance** supports these goals. With a global presence and a revenue of **\$13.8 billion**, HCLTech aims to lead in the ethical use of **AI technologies**, ensuring **transparency, fairness, and security**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** has partnered with **Synergy Quantum India** to jointly develop **drone-based Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)** systems. Using the **BB84 protocol** with **polarization encoding**, this MoU aims to achieve **Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 6 or above**. The initiative aligns with **Atmanirbhar Bharat**, promoting **quantum-secure communication** for **defence, emergency services, and critical infrastructure**. The partnership strengthens **India's innovation ecosystem in quantum technology**, facilitating **secure mobile communication** via drones. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India and the **European Union (EU)** have jointly launched two critical **research calls** under the **India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC)** to tackle **Marine Plastic Litter (MPL)** and develop **Waste to Green Hydrogen (W2GH)** solutions. With a combined investment of **₹391 crore (~€41 million)**, the initiatives are aimed at fostering **sustainable technologies** through international **scientific collaboration**. These programs align with the **EU's Zero Pollution Action Plan**, **India's National Green Hydrogen Mission**, and the **UN Decade of Ocean Science**, and they signify a major boost in the **India-EU strategic partnership** toward **climate action, clean energy, and environmental conservation**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Books and Authors

- The book **"PMO: Prime Minister's Office Through the Years"** by **Himanshu Roy**, published by **Rupa** on **April 15, 2025**, offers a deep dive into the **evolution, structure, and significance of the PMO** in India. It discusses how successive **Prime Ministers**, from **Nehru to Modi**, have shaped the PMO's influence on **governance and policy-making**. Designed for both **general readers and scholars**, the book explores key themes such as **bureaucratic control,**

centralization of power, and the **changing dynamics** of executive leadership. It serves as a vital resource for understanding one of India's most powerful administrative institutions. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On **May 9, 2025**, Vice-President **Jagdeep Dhankhar** released **'Janta Ki Kahani – Meri Aatamkatha'**, the **autobiography** of **Bandaru Dattatraya**, Governor of Haryana. The book recounts significant events from his **personal and political life**, emphasizing **service, humility, and social welfare**. The ceremony also featured tributes to victims of the **Pahalgam terror attack** and was attended by senior ministers and public figures. The book aims to **inspire future generations** through stories of **resilience, character, and commitment**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Government of Nagaland** released a **Coffee Table Book** on May 16, 2025, titled **"Transforming Lives"**, showcasing the impact of **PMAY-U** in the state. The publication highlights success stories of **affordable housing, urban development, and community empowerment** under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban**, launched in **2015** by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**. The mission has significantly improved the lives of thousands of urban poor in Nagaland through its inclusive and sustainable approach. ([Click here to read article](#))

Banking/Economy/Business News

- India's banking sector has seen its **largest foreign acquisition**, with Japan's **Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC)** buying a **20% stake** in **Yes Bank** for **₹13,482 crore** from **SBI and seven private Indian banks**. This **cross-border banking deal** not only strengthens **India-Japan economic ties** but also reflects growing confidence in **Yes Bank's transformation** and the robustness of **India's banking regulations**. With **regulatory approvals pending**, this deal positions **SMBC** as a key strategic partner in India's financial landscape. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **RBI's new mandate** under the **Digital Lending Directions, 2025**, requires all regulated entities to **report their digital lending apps (DLAs)** on the newly launched **CIMS portal** starting **May 13, 2025**, with a deadline of **June 15, 2025**. A **public directory** of DLAs will be released by **July 1, 2025**. These measures aim to **protect borrowers**, promote **transparency**, and ensure **stricter oversight** of digital lending service providers, particularly in light of rising complaints about **unethical practices and unregulated apps**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Ant Group**, via **Antfin Netherlands**, has announced the sale of a **4% stake** in **Paytm** (One97 Communications) for **₹2,066 crore** through a **bulk deal** on the **BSE and NSE**. The shares will be sold at a **6.5% discount** to the market price, with **Goldman Sachs and Citigroup** acting as placement agents. This move is part of Ant's broader **portfolio adjustment** and marks a significant foreign exit from the Indian **fintech ecosystem**, where Ant and Alibaba have invested **\$851 million** since 2015. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Canara Bank and Union Bank of India** launched **special deposit schemes** to counter **slowing deposit growth** in the banking sector. While Canara Bank introduced **Canara TruEdge**, a personalized account solution linked to **Monthly Average Balance (MAB)**, Union Bank unveiled the **Union Wellness Deposit**, a term deposit offering **6.75% interest**, bundled with **health insurance** and **lifestyle benefits**. These initiatives reflect a strategic move by public sector banks to **attract high-value customers**, strengthen **resource mobilization**, and align with the goals of **customer-centric banking**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's coal import contraction during April 2024–February 2025 marks a notable advancement in its journey toward **energy independence**. With a **9.2% drop** in imports and **\$6.93 billion saved in foreign exchange**, the success is credited to targeted schemes such as **Commercial Coal Mining** and **Mission Coking Coal**. Additionally, the **5.45% rise in domestic production** reaffirms the country's commitment to building a **sustainable and secure energy future**, in alignment with the **Atmanirbhar Bharat** and **Viksit Bharat 2047** visions. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Canara Bank's **Q4 FY25 results** indicate a **strong performance** with a **33.19% YoY rise in net profit** to ₹5,004 crore. The bank also reported a **7.62% increase in total interest income** and a **12% growth in operating profit**, despite a marginal decline in **net interest income** and **net interest margin**. Notably, **gross and net NPAs** dropped significantly, suggesting improved asset quality. The bank's **global business** and **domestic operations** witnessed healthy double-digit growth, and a **₹4 dividend per share** was recommended. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has agreed to sell its entire stake in **India SME Asset Reconstruction Company (ISARC)** for **₹34.04 crore**, marking a strategic step to **streamline its portfolio** and **prioritize core banking operations**. The transaction includes **2.09 crore shares** and follows **RBI approval** for the new investor, **Authum Investment and Infrastructure Ltd.** ISARC specializes in **recovering distressed SME assets** and reported solid financials for FY24. PNB's decision is aligned with **regulatory trends** and received a positive response in the **stock market**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Headline inflation** dropped to **3.16%** in **April 2025**, the **lowest since July 2019**, while **food inflation** fell sharply to **1.78%**, largely due to a **decline in vegetable, fruit, and cereal prices**. Both **rural and urban areas** witnessed easing price trends, supporting macroeconomic **stability** and **consumer reliefs**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's outward FDI in April 2025 nearly doubled to **\$6.8 billion**, up from \$3.58 billion a year earlier, driven by substantial growth in **equity investments, loans, and guarantees**, according to the **Reserve Bank of India**. This reflects a rising appetite among Indian firms to expand globally amid improving investment sentiment. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)** Monthly Bulletin for **April 2025** introduces a revamped methodology delivering high-frequency estimates of key labour indicators such as **LFPR, WPR, and UR** under the **Current Weekly Status (CWS)**. With an overall LFPR of **55.6%**, WPR of **52.8%**, and unemployment at **5.1%**, the data reveals critical insights into India's labour market dynamics. The **female workforce participation**, especially in urban areas, remains significantly lower, spotlighting gender gaps. The survey covered **over 89,000 households**, using a **monthly rotational panel design** for increased statistical robustness and policy relevance. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **United Nations** has cut **India's 2025 GDP growth forecast** to **6.3%**, down from **7.1% in 2024**, while still recognizing India as one of the **fastest-growing large economies**. Key drivers include **strong private consumption, public investment, and services exports**. The **UN report** also warns of **global headwinds** like **trade tensions, tariff hikes, and investment uncertainty**, affecting overall global growth. **Inflation** in India is projected to remain within the **RBI's target range**, enabling **monetary easing**. Despite global risks, **India's macroeconomic fundamentals remain strong**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- RBI Governor **Sanjay Malhotra** has indicated a positive **inflation outlook** for **FY26**, citing declining **crude oil prices** and strong **domestic demand**. During the **April 2025 MPC meeting**, the committee reduced the **repo rate** to **6%** and adopted an **accommodative policy stance** to stimulate **economic growth**. Despite risks from **global trade tensions**, most **MPC members** echoed optimism on **inflation** but cautioned against potential **external shocks**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **export sector** recorded a strong start to FY2025, with **merchandise exports** growing by **9%** in April, led by **engineering and electronics goods**. The spike was largely driven by **tariff uncertainty** in the **US**, resulting in a **27% surge in exports to Washington**. Despite a rise in **imports** widening the **trade deficit**, the growth in **services exports**, along with solid performance in **gems and jewellery, pharmaceuticals, and textiles**, indicates **resilience and diversification** in India's trade strategy. ([Click here to read article](#))

Appointments/Resignations

- Justice **Surya Kant** has been appointed as the new **Executive Chairman** of the **National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)**, effective **May 14, 2025**. His nomination under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**, aligns with judicial tradition and marks a step forward in ensuring **free legal aid** and **access to justice** under **Article 39-A** of the **Indian Constitution**. As the **second senior-most Supreme Court judge**, his leadership is expected to enhance legal reforms and expand NALSA's outreach. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Ajay Kumar**, former **Defence Secretary** and **1985-batch IAS** officer of the **Kerala cadre**, has been appointed as the **UPSC Chairman** by **President Droupadi Murmu**. Known for spearheading **defence reforms**, **Digital India initiatives**, and reviving public sector units, his leadership is expected to bring innovative changes to India's premier recruitment body. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Harvansh Chawla's appointment as **Chairman** of the **BRICS Chamber of Commerce & Industry** marks a strategic step to boost **economic cooperation** among the **BRICS nations**. Leveraging his extensive **legal and trade experience**, Chawla aims to promote stronger **trade ties**, **policy advocacy**, and **sustainable development**. The **Chamber**, representing **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**, plays a crucial role in fostering **business-government collaboration**, making this **leadership change** significant for the **global economy**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Former Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud** has been appointed as a **Distinguished Professor** at **NLU Delhi**, marking a significant shift from judicial leadership to academic mentorship. Known for his **progressive rulings** on **constitutional morality**, **fundamental rights**, and **social justice**, his involvement will bolster legal scholarship through the **Centre for Constitutional Studies** and a unique **lecture series** on contemporary legal challenges. His legacy will now shape the **next generation of legal minds** in India. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India has appointed **Anurag Bhushan** as its new **Ambassador to Sweden**, marking a significant diplomatic move amid growing bilateral cooperation. The **India-Sweden partnership** has expanded across **clean technology**, **innovation**, **sustainable development**, and **climate change**. With over a decade of high-level engagement, this appointment reinforces India's commitment to **Nordic diplomacy**. Mr. Bhushan's experience will be instrumental in elevating cooperation through platforms like **LeadIT 2.0** and in forging new **economic and technological collaborations**. ([Click here to read article](#))



Defence News

- India's **Bhargavastra** represents a groundbreaking **indigenous anti-drone system** that effectively counters the growing menace of **drone swarms** using a mix of **hard-kill micro rockets**, **soft-kill jamming**, and **advanced sensors**. Developed by **Solar Defence and Aerospace Limited (SDAL)**, it can operate across diverse terrains and integrates seamlessly with India's **network-centric warfare** infrastructure. This innovation is pivotal in enhancing **national security** amid evolving **aerial threats** and recent hostile drone incursions near India's borders. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has successfully designed a **high-pressure nanoporous polymeric membrane** for **sea water desalination**, marking a breakthrough in India's drive for **self-reliance** in defence and marine technology. Developed by **DMSRDE** in just **eight months**, the membrane was successfully tested on an **Offshore Patrolling Vessel (OPV)** of the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)**. The innovation addresses challenges posed by **chloride ions in saline water** and is a critical step under the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** initiative. After 500 hours of testing, it is set to be operationally deployed, with future scope for civilian coastal use. ([Click here to read article](#))

Awards and Recognitions

- **Bhuwan Ribhu**, a veteran **child rights lawyer**, has made history by becoming the **first Indian lawyer** to receive the **World Jurist Association's Medal of Honour**. The award, presented at the **World Law Congress 2025** in the **Dominican Republic**, recognises his tireless legal work spanning **two decades**. His efforts have led to **landmark judicial reforms in child protection laws**, including **criminalising trafficking**, mandating **FIRs for missing children**, and banning **child labour** in hazardous industries. Ribhu's work through the **Just Rights for Children (JRC)** network has united over **250 organisations** globally, reinforcing India's growing leadership in the fight for **child justice**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Mariangela Hungria's 2025 World Food Prize** win highlights her transformative work in **biological nitrogen fixation**, reducing the need for harmful **chemical fertilizers** in agriculture. Her research has enabled **Brazil** to become the top **soybean producer** worldwide while fostering **sustainable farming methods** that enhance **soil health** and mitigate **environmental damage**. This breakthrough is crucial amid global efforts to balance **food security** with **ecological preservation**, making her contribution highly significant in the contemporary **agricultural landscape**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Summits and Conferences News

- India was recognized as a **Country Champion** at the **World Bank Land Conference 2025** for its digital rural land governance models. **SVAMITVA** and **Gram Manchitra** showcased **technology-driven, inclusive** planning. The initiatives contribute to **economic empowerment, climate resilience, and infrastructure development**, and serve as a template for the **Global South**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Western Regional Power Conference** on **May 13, 2025**, focused on **smart prepaid metering, green energy zones, nuclear power goals, AT&C loss reduction, and financial sustainability** of **DISCOMs**. The **Union Power Minister** emphasized coordination to achieve **Viksit Bharat by 2047** and **Net Zero emissions** targets. States were urged to ensure **smart meter rollout, enhance grid security, and adopt resource adequacy planning**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Inclusive India Summit 2025**, organized by **DEPwD** on the occasion of **GAAD**, brings together stakeholders to enhance **digital accessibility and inclusive development** for persons with disabilities. Through panel discussions, partnerships, the launch of an AI chatbot, and a new accessibility-focused curriculum, the summit highlights India's push for **technological equity**. This collaborative effort underscores the nation's vision for a digitally inclusive future. ([Click here to read article](#))

Ranks and Reports

- The **IEA's Global Methane Tracker 2025** reveals that **methane emissions from the energy sector remain high and underreported**, with **abandoned infrastructure and fossil fuel operations** driving much of the pollution. Although technological solutions and international pledges exist, their **implementation is weak, and satellite data continues to expose hidden emissions**. The report urges immediate action to **enhance monitoring, enforce policies, and unlock energy security benefits** by reducing leaks and flaring. ([Click here to read article](#))

Sports News

- Deepika Kumari** secured a **bronze medal** at the **Archery World Cup Stage 2** in **Shanghai**, overcoming a semifinal loss to **Lim Sihyeon**. Her victory in the **bronze medal** playoff against **Kang Chae Young** contributed to **India's growing medal count**, with a strong performance in both **recurve and compound archery** events. **India's** success at this global event highlights the nation's rising stature in **archery**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- Virat Kohli** has announced his retirement from **Test cricket**, ending a remarkable **14-year career** marked by **9230 runs, 30 centuries**, and a transformative stint as **India's most successful Test captain**. His leadership saw India achieve milestones like the **2018–19 Test series win in Australia** and the rise to **No. 1 in ICC rankings**. With **Rohit Sharma** also retiring, Indian cricket enters a new phase, with **Shubman Gill** likely to take over leadership as India prepares for the upcoming **England Test series**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- At the **Archery World Cup 2025 – Shanghai, India** secured a total of **7 medals**, including **2 golds, 1 silver, and 4 bronze**. **Deepika Kumari** marked her **18th individual podium** with a bronze in recurve, while **Parth Salunkhe**, the **U21 world champion**, earned his **first senior medal**. India dominated the **compound events**, winning medals across **individual, team, and mixed** categories, reinforcing its global stature in archery. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Bangladeshi cricketer **Mehidy Hasan Miraz** has been named **ICC Men's Player of the Month** for **April 2025** due to his brilliant **all-round performance** against **Zimbabwe** in a two-Test series. He made a remarkable impact with both **bat and ball**, scoring **116 runs** and claiming **15 wickets**, including a century and multiple **five-wicket hauls**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Srihari LR**, a 19-year-old chess player from **Chennai**, has officially become **India's 86th Grandmaster** after securing his third norm at the **Asian Individual Chess Championship** in **Al-Ain, UAE**. Trained by GM **Shyamsundar** at **Chess Thulir Academy**, Srihari has shown consistent growth, defeating top-rated players and showing the strength of India's chess talent pipeline. His achievement comes nearly a year after India's previous GM title and reflects the **nation's rapid progress in global chess**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- FIFA** has lifted its **three-month suspension** on the **Republic of Congo's football federation (FECOFoot)** after resolving issues related to **third-party interference** by the **sports ministry**. The conflict, which resulted in the closure of key facilities, was settled when the government agreed to restore **full administrative autonomy** to the federation. This move reaffirms FIFA's commitment to maintaining the **independence of national football bodies** and ensuring **non-political interference** in global sports governance. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **ICC** has announced that the winners of the **WTC Final 2025**, contested by **South Africa** and **Australia**, will earn a record **USD 3.6 million**, more than double the previous prize. The **runners-up** will receive over **USD 2.1 million**, while even lower-placed teams like **India** and **New Zealand** are set for substantial payouts. This major financial boost highlights ICC's efforts to promote **Test cricket**, reward **consistency**, and sustain global interest in the **longest format** of the game. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Pankaj Advani** claimed his third **CCI Billiards Classic** title in 2025 by overcoming **Dhruv Sitwala** with a 5-2 score in the final held in **Mumbai**. The tournament ran from **April 25 to May 4**, with Advani receiving **₹2.5 lakh** in prize money. This win continues his historic dominance in cue sports, with a total of **28 world championships** to his name. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **May 16, 2025**, the **Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA)** unveiled the **Rohit Sharma Stand** at **Wankhede Stadium**, commemorating the cricketer's Test and T20I retirement and his achievements, including leading India to **T20 World Cup 2024** and **Champions Trophy 2025** victories. The MCA also honoured **Ajit Wadekar**, India's 1971 series-winning captain, and **Sharad Pawar**, former MCA, BCCI, and ICC president. The **MCA Office Lounge** was dedicated to **Amol Kale**, further celebrating cricketing contributions. The ceremony was attended by the **Mumbai Indians squad**, dignitaries, and past players. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Neeraj Chopra**, **India's Olympic champion**, achieved a **career-defining milestone** by breaching the **90m barrier** in javelin with a **90.23m throw** at the **2025 Doha Diamond League**. He became the **first Indian** and **third Asian** to do so, joining an elite group of **global athletes**. Despite his historic effort, Chopra finished **second**, as **Germany's Julian Weber** produced a **world-leading throw** of 91.06m in the final round. Chopra, expressing **satisfaction and hope**, aims to achieve **more 90m+ throws** in future events. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **FaceAge**, a new **AI tool** trained on over **58,000 portraits**, estimates a person's **biological age** using a **selfie**. It has shown the ability to improve **cancer survival predictions** and guide doctors on treatment intensity by identifying physiological frailty. The study, published in **The Lancet Digital Health**, noted that cancer patients appear **biologically older** than their real age, which links directly to worse outcomes. While promising for **personalized care**, the algorithm also raises **ethical questions** about potential **bias, misuse**, and the psychological impact of knowing one's biological age. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India has strengthened its **space surveillance infrastructure** by signing an **MoU between ARIES (DST) and IRDE (DRDO)**. This collaboration aims to enhance **Space Situational Awareness (SSA)** through the use of **observational telescopes, Electro-Optical systems, and AI/ML-based analytics**. By integrating **scientific research and defense technologies**, the initiative is a key milestone in India's goal of becoming self-reliant in **space security and satellite tracking**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India has initiated a major **green transition** in the **cement sector** by launching five **Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU) testbeds** through a collaborative **academia-industry approach**. Spearheaded by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**, this **national initiative** targets **industrial emissions** by capturing **CO₂** and transforming it into **valuable products**. The effort aligns with India's **Net Zero 2070 goals** and **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**, offering **scalable and innovative pathways** for **decarbonizing** one of the most **polluting industrial sectors**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India and Japan's **Chandrayaan-5** (also called **LUPEX**) mission is advancing to the **design phase**, aiming to detect **water and water-ice** at the Moon's **south pole**. Scheduled for launch in **2027–28** on Japan's **H3 rocket**, the 6.5-tonne lander and a **350-kg rover** equipped with **seven instruments** (from **ISRO, JAXA, ESA, and NASA**) will perform **in-situ scientific experiments**. The project marks a strong symbol of **global collaboration** and follows India's successful **Chandrayaan-3** mission. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Samudrayaan** mission marks a **historic step for India** in the field of **deep-sea exploration**, combining **advanced indigenous technology** and **scientific research** to explore ocean depths of **6,000 meters**. With objectives spanning **resource exploration, marine biodiversity study, and strategic maritime presence**, the mission positions India among a handful of nations with **manned ocean exploration capabilities**. This initiative is a vital component of the broader **Deep Ocean Mission**, supporting **sustainable development** and the **Blue Economy**, while showcasing India's growing expertise in **ocean technology and engineering**. ([Click here to read article](#))

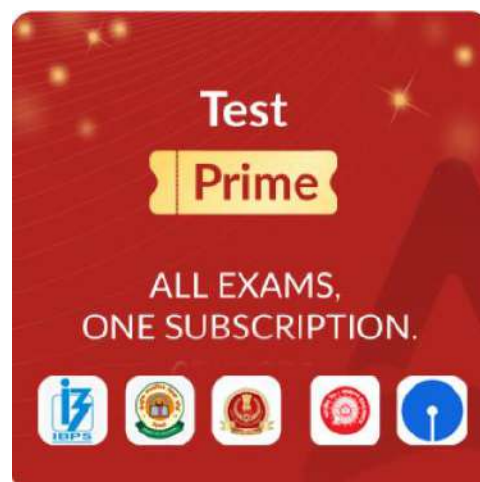
Science and Technology News

- **Sarvam AI** has launched **Bulbul-v2**, an advanced **text-to-speech model** supporting **11 Indian languages** with **natural Indian accents**. Built for **real-time speech synthesis**, the model includes features like **pitch, pace, and loudness control, smart text preprocessing, and multiple audio sample rates**. As the **first Indian startup** chosen to build a **sovereign LLM** under the **IndiaAI mission**, Sarvam AI is contributing significantly to **linguistic accessibility** and **AI innovation** in India. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Scientists have created the **first-ever pangenome** of **Asian rice** by analyzing **144 varieties** using advanced **HiFi sequencing**. This new genome map provides a **broader genetic base**, helping researchers design better **rice cultivars** with traits such as **drought resistance, disease tolerance, and climate resilience**. The study highlights rice's **evolutionary roots in Or-Illa wild rice**, offering pathways to improve crop **adaptation, yields, and food security**, especially in vulnerable regions like **India**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- India has announced its **first-ever biological space experiments** aboard the **International Space Station (ISS)** as part of the **AXIOM-4 mission**, conducted by **ISRO** and the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)**. The initiative focuses on studying **microalgae** and **cyanobacteria** under **microgravity conditions** to evaluate their viability as **sustainable food sources** for future **long-duration space missions**. This scientific advancement aligns with the government's **BioE3 Policy (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment, and Employment)**, showcasing India's rising capabilities in **space biosciences** and **biomanufacturing innovation**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Important Days News

- National Technology Day 2025**, celebrated on **May 11**, marks the anniversary of India's 1998 nuclear tests in Pokhran and celebrates the country's growing strength in science and technology. With the theme "**Empowering a Sustainable Tomorrow Through Innovation**", the day promotes sustainable tech solutions, encourages youth engagement in STEM, and honors milestones like the **Hansa-3 flight** and **Trishul missile test**, all of which symbolize India's progress toward technological sovereignty and a greener future. ([Click here to read article](#))
- International Nurses Day 2025**, celebrated on **May 12**, focused on the theme "**Our Nurses. Our Future. Caring for nurses strengthens economies**". It emphasizes the **well-being, support, and funding** required for nurses to sustain **strong healthcare systems** and enhance **economic resilience**. The day, established by the **International Council of Nurses**, also commemorates **Florence Nightingale's** contributions. It raises awareness about **nurse shortages, burnout**, and advocates for **policy changes** to improve nurse conditions worldwide. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **8th UN Global Road Safety Week (12–18 May 2025)** is a significant global initiative urging stakeholders to enhance **road safety for pedestrians and cyclists**. With the focus on **safe infrastructure, reduced urban speed limits, and responsible driving behavior**, the campaign supports the larger goal of halving road traffic deaths by 2030 under the **Decade of Action for Road Safety**. Through social media outreach and advocacy events, the initiative emphasizes the **critical role of safe walking and cycling** in promoting **public health, environmental sustainability, and transport equity**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **International Day of Plant Health (IDPH)**, celebrated on **May 12**, emphasizes the protection of plants as a key to achieving **food security, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable agriculture**. Plants provide essential resources like **oxygen and nutrition**, yet nearly **40% of crops** are lost annually due to pests and diseases. With increasing risks from **climate change, global trade, and invasive species**, the IDPH calls for **international cooperation, investment in innovation, and adoption of sustainable practices**. The observance is part of a broader **One Health** approach, linking plant well-being with **human, animal, and environmental health**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Government of India's decision to shift **Ayurveda Day** to a fixed date—**23rd September**—represents a strategic and symbolic move to promote Ayurveda as a globally acknowledged, **evidence-based, and holistic** medical system. The change not only eliminates calendar-related uncertainty but also connects the celebration to the **autumnal equinox**, reinforcing Ayurveda's **philosophy of balance and harmony**. The initiative is poised to boost **international participation**, strengthen India's **soft power**, and institutionalize Ayurveda as a **sustainable and preventive healthcare system** in the global arena. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **International Day of Families**, observed on **May 15**, was established by the **United Nations** in **1994** to highlight the **importance of families** as the foundation of society. It aims to raise **awareness** about the **challenges families face** and promote efforts that ensure their **well-being, development, and social stability** across the globe. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Sikkim, a former **Buddhist kingdom** ruled by the **Chogyal dynasty**, became a protectorate of India in 1947 with internal monarchy but Indian control over defense and foreign affairs. Following political changes in the early 1970s, a **historic referendum in 1975** led to the abolition of the monarchy and Sikkim's formal merger as the **22nd state of India** through the **36th Constitutional Amendment** and the introduction of **Article 371F**, granting special protections. Strategically located bordering **China (Tibet), Nepal, Bhutan, and West Bengal**, Sikkim is culturally diverse with languages like **Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha, and English**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- National Dengue Day**, observed on **May 16** every year, is a public health initiative by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** to raise awareness about **dengue fever, a mosquito-borne viral disease**. It focuses on **early diagnosis, timely treatment, and mosquito control** to reduce illness and deaths, especially during the **monsoon season**. Introduced under the **National Health Mission**, this day promotes **community participation, education on symptoms, and breaking stigma** to combat the disease effectively. ([Click here to read article](#))



- The **International Day of Light**, celebrated on **May 16** each year, marks the anniversary of **Theodore Maiman's** first successful laser operation in **1960**. Organized by **UNESCO**, it aims to promote **science, culture, education, and sustainable development** through the appreciation of **light-based technologies** such as lasers, solar energy, fiber optics, and medical imaging. First celebrated in **2018**, the day encourages **global cooperation**, supports **STEM education**, and contributes to achieving the **UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals**, with the 2025 theme being "**Light, Innovation, Society**." ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **International Day of Living Together in Peace (16 May)** encourages global solidarity, peace, and reconciliation by promoting unity in diversity. Established by the UN in 2017, the day supports activities that foster understanding and eliminate discrimination. It draws from the legacy of past UN efforts to build a **culture of peace** through education, service, dialogue, and community involvement. ([Click here to read article](#))

Obituaries News

- **Padma Shri scientist Dr. Subbanna Ayyappan**, aged 70, was found dead under mysterious circumstances in the **Cauvery river**, three days after being reported missing from **Mysuru**. Widely hailed as the **father of India's Blue Revolution**, he had revolutionized **aquaculture and rural livelihoods**.

Concerns surrounding his death have prompted calls for a **court-monitored CBI investigation**, with allegations of **corruption** and **institutional vendetta** within **ICAR and ASRB**. Tributes have poured in from across the **scientific and agricultural communities**, recognizing his pivotal contributions to **fisheries science and food security** in India. ([Click here to read article](#))

- Jose Mujica, the former **Uruguayan president** known worldwide as the "**poorest president**," died in **2025** after battling **cancer**. His life story—from **Tupamaros guerrilla fighter** to a **transformative political leader**—epitomized **humility** and **progressive values**. Mujica's presidency brought landmark reforms like **legalizing abortion, same-sex marriage, and recreational cannabis**. He famously lived simply on his **farm**, donating most of his **salary to charity**, which earned him **global admiration**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Miscellaneous News

- Bill Gates has committed to donating **99% of his fortune by 2045**, focusing on **health, poverty, and disease eradication**. This includes an additional **\$200 billion** over the next two decades, advancing efforts through the **Gates Foundation**. Inspired by Andrew Carnegie, Gates emphasizes the **urgency** of addressing global challenges before his death. ([Click here to read article](#))

Static Takeaways

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
State/Country		
1	Delhi	L. Governor - Vinai Saxena CM - Rekha Gupta
2	Maharashtra	Governor - C. P. Radhakrishnan CM - Devendra Fadnavis
3	Andhra Pradesh	Governor - Abdul Nazeer CM - Chandrababu Naidu
4	Uttar Pradesh	Governor - Anandiben Patel CM - Yogi Adityanath
5	Uttarakhand	Governor - Gurmit Singh CM - Pushkar Dhami
6	Jammu and Kashmir	L. Governor - Manoj Sinha CM - Omar Abdullah
State/Country		
7	USA	President - Donald Trump Capital - Washington D.C. Currency - USD
8	China	President - Xi Jinping Capital - Beijing Currency - Yuan

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
9	Bhutan	PM - Tshering Tobgay Capital - Thimpu Currency - Ngultrum
10	Japan	President - Shiegru Ishiba Capital - Tokyo Currency - Yen
11	Canada	President - Mark Carney Capital - Ottawa Currency - Canadian Dollar
12	Saudi Arabia	President - Mohammed Bin Salman Capital - Jeddah Currency - Saudi Riyal
13	Honduras	President - Xiomara Castro Capital - Tegucigalpa Currency - Lempira
Organizations		
14	Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation India	CEO - Shantanu Mitra
15	Yes Bank	MD - Prashant Kumar HQ - Mumbai
16	RBI	Governor - Sanjay Malhotra
17	PNB	MD - Ashok Chandra HQ - New Delhi
18	Union Bank	MD - Manimekhalai HQ - Mumbai
19	Canara Bank	MD - Satyanarayan Raju HQ - Bengaluru
20	UPSC	Chairman - Ajay Kumar
21	Supreme Court	CJI - Justice Gavai
22	ISRO	Chairman - V Narayanan