

## Weekly One Liners 31st March to 6th April 2025

### MGNREGS Wage Hike for 2025-26: Detailed Analysis

The Government of India has notified an increase in wage rates under the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)** for the financial year **2025-26**. The hike ranges from **2.33% to 7.48%**, with wages increasing by **Rs 7 to Rs 26 per day** depending on the state. This marks the first time NREGS wages have reached **Rs 400 per day** in any state, with **Haryana** recording the highest increase.

#### NREGS Wage Hike: Key Highlights

##### 1. Overview of the Wage Increase

- The NREGS wage hike ranges from **Rs 7 to Rs 26 per day**.
- **Haryana** has seen the highest absolute increase of **Rs 26**, taking its wage rate to **Rs 400 per day**.
- The lowest increase of **Rs 7 per day** has been recorded in **Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, and Telangana**.
- The new wage rates will come into effect from **April 1, 2025**.

#### State-wise NREGS Wage Rates for 2025-26

SN	State/UT	2024-25 Wage (Rs)	2025-26 Wage (Rs)	Increase (Rs)	Increase (%)
1	Andhra Pradesh	300	307	7	2.33
2	Arunachal Pradesh	234	241	7	2.99
3	Assam	249	256	7	2.81
4	Bihar	245	255	10	4.08
5	Chhattisgarh	243	261	18	7.41
6	Goa	356	378	22	6.18
7	Gujarat	280	288	8	2.86
8	Haryana	374	400	26	6.95
9	Himachal Pradesh (Non-Scheduled Areas)	236	247	11	4.66
9	Himachal Pradesh (Scheduled Areas)	295	309	14	4.75
10	Jammu & Kashmir	259	272	13	5.02
11	Ladakh	259	272	13	5.02
12	Jharkhand	245	255	10	4.08
13	Karnataka	349	370	21	6.02
14	Kerala	346	369	23	6.65
15	Madhya Pradesh	243	261	18	7.41
16	Maharashtra	297	312	15	5.05
17	Manipur	272	284	12	4.41
18	Meghalaya	254	272	18	7.09
19	Mizoram	266	281	15	5.64
20	Nagaland	234	241	7	2.99
21	Odisha	254	273	19	7.48

##### 2. Wage Determination Under NREGS

The **NREGS wage rates** are fixed based on changes in the **Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL)**, which reflects inflation in rural areas. This ensures that wages under the scheme keep pace with the **cost of living**.

##### 3. How NREGS Ensures Employment?

Under the **MGNREGA Act, 2005**, every **rural household** with adult members willing to undertake **unskilled manual work** is entitled to **at least 100 days** of wage employment in a financial year. However, in certain conditions, an additional **50 days** of work is provided:

- **Scheduled Tribe households in forest areas** (as per the Forest Rights Act, 2016).
- Areas affected by **drought or natural calamities**, as notified by the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.

##### 4. Performance of NREGS in 2024-25

During the current financial year (**2024-25**), **5.66 crore households** have availed employment under the **rural job guarantee scheme** till **March 19, 2025**.

SN	State/UT	2024-25 Wage (Rs)	2025-26 Wage (Rs)	Increase (Rs)	Increase (%)
22	Punjab	322	346	24	7.45
23	Rajasthan	266	281	15	5.64
24	Sikkim	249	259	10	4.02
24	Sikkim (Gnathang, Lachung, Lachen)	374	389	15	4.01
25	Tamil Nadu	319	336	17	5.33
26	Telangana	300	307	7	2.33
27	Tripura	242	256	14	5.79
28	Uttar Pradesh	237	252	15	6.33
29	Uttarakhand	237	252	15	6.33
30	West Bengal	250	260	10	4.00
31	Andaman & Nicobar (Andaman)	329	342	13	3.95
31	Andaman & Nicobar (Nicobar)	347	361	14	4.03
32	Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu	324	340	16	4.94
33	Lakshadweep	315	336	21	6.67
34	Puducherry	319	336	17	5.33

**Parliament Passes Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 - Key Changes Introduced**

On March 26, 2025, **Parliament passed the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024**, which introduces **several key reforms in India's banking sector**. The bill, approved by the Rajya Sabha through a voice vote, was earlier passed by the Lok Sabha in December 2024. A major amendment allows bank account holders to have up to four nominees, providing greater flexibility in financial planning. Additionally, the bill redefines 'substantial interest' in a bank by increasing the limit from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore, a change made after nearly six decades. It also extends the tenure of directors in cooperative banks, revises statutory auditor remuneration policies, and modifies bank reporting dates for regulatory compliance.

**Key Highlights**

**Up to Four Nominees**

- Bank account holders can now appoint up to four nominees instead of just one.
- Applies to cash and fixed deposits.
- For lockers, only simultaneous nominations are permitted.

**Redefining 'Substantial Interest'**

- The financial threshold for substantial interest in a bank is increased from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore.

**Cooperative Banks' Governance**

- Directors (excluding chairman & whole-time director) can now serve for 10 years, up from 8 years.
- Directors of Central Cooperative Banks can now be on the board of State Cooperative Banks.

**Banking Sector Oversight & Compliance**

- Banks can decide auditor remuneration with more flexibility.
- Regulatory reporting dates changed from the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month to the 15th and last day of each month.

**Stringent Action Against Wilful Defaulters**

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman emphasized the government's commitment to reducing NPAs (Non-Performing Assets) and punishing wilful defaulters.
- 112 bank fraud cases handled by the Enforcement Directorate in the last five years.

**Public Sector Banks' Performance**

- Highest-ever profit of ₹1.41 lakh crore recorded in the last fiscal year.
- Expectations of further profitability growth in 2025-26.



### Comprehensive Banking Reform

- The amendments impact five different banking laws, making it a landmark reform.

### Sagarmala Programme Completes 10 Years Since Implementation

Launched in **March 2015**, the **Sagarmala Programme is the flagship initiative of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways** aimed at transforming India's maritime sector. With a 7,500 km coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways, and a strategic location on global trade routes, India has immense potential for port-led economic growth. Sagarmala focuses on modernizing ports, enhancing connectivity, promoting industrial development, and boosting coastal shipping and inland waterways to reduce logistics costs and improve trade competitiveness.

As a key pillar of the **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 (MAKV)**, Sagarmala plays a vital role in **India's goal to become a global maritime leader**. Through strategic investments, the program supports port modernization, industrialization, sustainability, and coastal community development. The Sagarmala 2.0 initiative and the Sagarmala Startup Innovation Initiative (S2I2) are expected to further drive maritime infrastructure, shipbuilding, innovation, and economic expansion, aligning with India's vision for Viksit Bharat and Atmanirbhar Bharat 2047.

### Key Highlights of the Sagarmala Programme

- **Total Projects:** 839 projects identified, worth ₹5.79 lakh crore.
- **Completed Projects:** 272 projects completed, with an investment of ₹1.41 lakh crore.
- **Coastal Shipping Growth:** 118% increase in coastal shipping over the last decade, reducing logistics costs.
- **Inland Waterways Boom:** 700% surge in inland waterway cargo movement, easing road and rail congestion.
- **Ro-Pax Ferries:** 40 lakh+ passengers benefited, improving coastal connectivity.
- **Global Port Rankings:** 9 Indian ports among the world's top 100, with Vizag ranking in the top 20 container ports globally.
- **Sagarmala 2.0 Investment:** ₹40,000 crore budgetary support to unlock ₹12 lakh crore investments over the next decade.
- **Sagarmala Startup Innovation Initiative (S2I2):** Launched to support Research, Innovation, Startups, and Entrepreneurship (RISE) in maritime technology.

### Components of the Sagarmala Programme

- **Port Modernization & Development** – Upgrading and mechanizing ports to improve efficiency.
- **Port Connectivity Enhancement** – Strengthening road, rail, and waterway links to reduce logistics costs.
- **Port-Led Industrialization** – Developing industrial clusters near ports to promote economic growth.

- **Coastal Community Development** – Enhancing livelihoods through skill development, fisheries, and tourism.
- **Coastal Shipping & Inland Water Transport** – Boosting environmentally friendly transportation alternatives.

### Funding & Implementation

- **Public-Private Partnership (PPP):** Encouraging private investment in port infrastructure.
- **Internal & Extra Budgetary Resources (IEBR):** Utilizing existing financial resources of port authorities.
- **Government Grants:** Funding for projects with high social impact, including coastal skill development and tourism.
- **Sagarmala Development Company Limited (SDCL):** Supporting project Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) for implementation.

### Future Roadmap: Sagarmala 2.0 & S2I2

#### Sagarmala 2.0

- Focus on shipbuilding, repair, recycling, and port modernization.
- ₹40,000 crore budgetary support to unlock ₹12 lakh crore investments.
- Aligning with Viksit Bharat & Atmanirbhar Bharat 2047.

#### Sagarmala Startup Innovation Initiative (S2I2)

- Supporting startups in green shipping, smart ports, maritime logistics, and coastal sustainability.
- Providing funding, mentorship, and industry collaborations.

### Uttarakhand Government Renames 15 Places to Reflect Indian Culture and Heritage

Uttarakhand Chief Minister **Pushkar Singh Dhama** announced the renaming of **15 places** across **Haridwar, Dehradun, Nainital, and Udham Singh Nagar** districts, aiming to align with **public sentiment** and **Indian cultural heritage**. The move seeks to honor **great historical figures** and inspire the people of the state.

### The Decision: A Cultural and Sentimental Shift

Chief Minister Dhama emphasized that the renaming of these locations is intended to honor personalities who contributed to the **preservation of Indian culture**. This step is seen as an effort to instill a sense of **pride and historical awareness** among the people of Uttarakhand.

According to the state government, these changes have been made based on **public demand and historical significance**. The decision aligns with similar renaming efforts seen in different parts of the country.

### List of Renamed Places in Uttarakhand

The places renamed are distributed across **four major districts**, namely **Haridwar, Dehradun, Nainital, and Udham Singh Nagar**.

**Renamed Places in Haridwar District**

1. Aurangzebpur → Shivaji Nagar
2. Gajiwali → Arya Nagar
3. Chandpur → Jyotiba Phule Nagar
4. Mohammadpur Jat → Mohanpur Jat
5. Khanpur Kursli → Ambedkar Nagar
6. Indrishpur → Nandpur
7. Khanpur → Shri Krishna Pur
8. Akbarpur Fazalpur → Vijayanagar

**Renamed Places in Dehradun District**

9. Miyanwala → Ramji Wala
10. Pirwala → Kesari Nagar
11. Chandpur Khurd → Prithviraj Nagar
12. Abdullah Nagar → Daksh Nagar

**Renamed Places in Nainital District**

13. Nawabi Road → Atal Marg
14. Panchakki to ITI Road → Guru Golwalkar Marg

**Renamed Place in Udham Singh Nagar District**

15. Sultanpur Patti Municipal Council → Kaushalya Puri

**Reason Behind the Renaming**

**1. Honoring Historical Figures**

Many of the renamed locations now bear names of **great Indian leaders and social reformers**, such as **Shivaji, Jyotiba Phule, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**. This serves as a **tribute to their contributions** towards Indian society.

**2. Restoring Cultural Identity**

The renaming process is part of the Uttarakhand government's initiative to **revive and restore India's rich cultural heritage** by eliminating colonial and Mughal-era names.

**3. Public Sentiment and Demand**

The government stated that these changes were made in response to **long-standing public demand**. Local communities had been requesting these alterations, citing the need to **reflect India's history and traditions more accurately**.

**4. Political and Social Impact**

The move has received mixed reactions. Supporters view it as a **positive step towards cultural revival**, while critics argue that renaming places alone does not address deeper issues like **infrastructure development and governance**.

**Impact of the Name Changes**

- **Cultural Revival:** Encourages a deeper connection to India's historical roots.
- **Educational Value:** Helps younger generations recognize the contributions of historical figures.
- **Political Influence:** Strengthens the image of the ruling government as a **protector of Indian culture**.
- **Local Sentiment:** Boosts **regional pride** and historical awareness among the people.

**Parliament Passed The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025**

The Indian Parliament recently passed significant legislative measures aimed at reforming the management of Waqf properties and strengthening their oversight. **The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, and the Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill, 2024**, were debated and approved in both houses of Parliament. It was passed by the **Rajya Sabha** in the early hours of Friday after a marathon 12-hour debate. **With 128 votes in favor and 95 against**, the bill received approval from the upper house, following the **Lok Sabha's clearance on Thursday with a 288-232 vote**. In addition, the Rajya Sabha also passed the Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill, 2024, after a 17-hour sitting that was adjourned at 4 a.m.

**Key Points**

**Purpose of the Bill**

- The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, aims to **streamline the functioning of Waqf properties and improve transparency and accountability**.
- It seeks to strengthen the administrative mechanisms overseeing Waqf properties and enhance their legal framework.

**Passed in Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha**

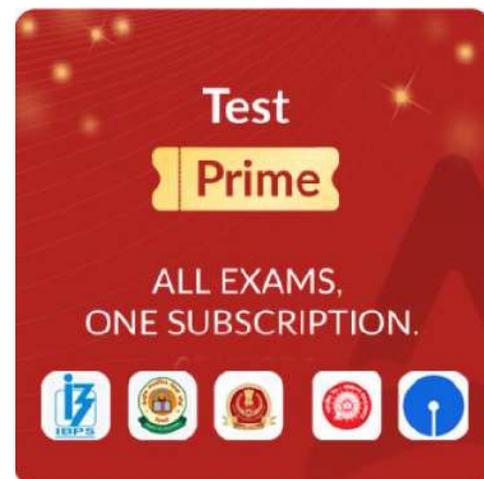
- Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025 renamed as **Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency, and Development (UMEED) Bill**.
- Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill 2024 approved, repealing the Mussalman Wakf Act, 1923.

**Parliamentary Process**

- **The Bill passed with a 128-95 vote in the Rajya Sabha** after a 12-hour debate, following the **Lok Sabha's approval with a 288-232 vote**.
- The debate saw active participation from lawmakers, with discussions centered around the management and use of Waqf assets and the role of tribunals in resolving conflicts.

**Ministerial Statements**

- Amit Shah, the Union Home Minister, and Kiren Rijiju, the Union Minister for Minority Affairs, played a significant role in defending the Bill and its provisions during the parliamentary debates.



**Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025 & Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill 2024****Background****Two Bills Introduced,**

1. Waqf (Amendment) Bill
2. Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill

**Objectives****Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025**

- Amend the Waqf Act, 1995 to address challenges in managing Waqf properties.
- Improve administration and efficiency of Waqf boards.

**Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill, 2024**

- Repeal the Mussalman Wakf Act, 1923, an outdated colonial-era law.
- Ensure uniformity, transparency, and accountability in Waqf property management under the Waqf Act, 1995.
- Eliminate inconsistencies and ambiguities created by the old law.

**Meaning of 'Waqf'**

- Properties dedicated for religious or charitable purposes under Islamic law.
- Sale or other use of the property is prohibited.
- Ownership is transferred to Allah, making it irrevocable.
- Managed by a mutawalli on behalf of the wakif (creator).

**Origin of the Concept of 'Waqf'**

- Traces back to the Delhi Sultanate when Sultan Muizzuddin Sam Ghaor dedicated villages to the Jama Masjid of Multan.
- Waqf properties grew with the rise of Islamic dynasties in India.
- Mussalman Waqf Validating Act of 1913 protected Waqf in India.

**Constitutional Framework and Governance**

- Charitable and religious institutions fall under the Concurrent List of the Constitution.
- Both Parliament and State Legislatures can frame laws on it.
- Waqf Governance: Governed by the Waqf Act, 1995, replacing earlier laws from 1913, 1923, and 1954.

**Creation of Waqf**

Created via,

- Declaration (oral or written deed).
- Long-term use of land for religious or charitable purposes.
- Endowment after the end of a line of succession.

**States with highest Waqf properties**

- Uttar Pradesh (27%)
- West Bengal (9%)
- Punjab (9%)

**Evolution of Waqf Laws**

- **1913 Act:** Validated Waqf deeds.
- **1923 Act:** Made registration of Waqf properties mandatory.
- **1954 Act:** Established Central Waqf Council and State Waqf Boards.
- **1995 Act:** Introduced Tribunals for dispute resolution, with elected members and Islamic scholars.

**Key Amendments in the New Bill****Central Waqf Council Composition**

- Union Minister in charge of waqf is the ex-officio chairperson.

**Members include**

- Members of Parliament (MPs).
- Persons of national eminence.
- Retired Supreme Court/High Court judges.
- Eminent scholars in Muslim law.
- New Provision: Non-Muslim members required (two).

**Composition of Waqf Boards**

- Empower state governments to nominate one person from each group.
- Non-Muslim members required (two).
- Includes one member each from Shias, Sunnis, and Backward Muslim classes.
- Two Muslim women members required.

**Composition of Tribunals**

- Removes expert in Muslim law.
- District Court judge as chairman.
- Joint Secretary rank officer.

**Appeals Against Tribunal Orders**

- **Previous Act:** No appeals allowed.
- **New Bill:** Allows appeals against Tribunal decisions to the High Court within 90 days.

**Survey of Properties**

- Replaces Survey Commissioner with District Collector or senior officers to oversee the survey of Waqf properties.

**Government Property as Waqf**

- Government property identified as Waqf will cease to be Waqf.
- Revenue records updated by the Collector.

**Audits**

- Waqf institutions earning over ₹1 lakh will undergo audits by state-sponsored auditors.

**Centralized Portal**

- Automated Waqf property management via a centralized portal for enhanced efficiency and transparency.

**Property Dedication**

- Practicing Muslims (at least five years) can dedicate property to Waqf, restoring pre-2013 rules.

### Women's Inheritance

- Women must receive inheritance before Waqf declaration.
- Special provisions for widows, divorced women, and orphans.

### Need for the Bill

- Unified Digital Listing of Waqf properties to reduce litigation and ensure transparency.
- Ensures gender justice by mandating women's inclusion in Waqf Boards.

### Concerns

#### Non-Muslim Members in Waqf Boards

- Mandates inclusion of non-Muslim members in State Waqf Boards and Central Waqf Council.
- Concern that these bodies could be majorly composed of non-Muslims, unlike similar boards for Hindu and Sikh endowments.

#### Impact on Waqf Tribunals

- Removal of experts in Muslim law from Waqf Tribunals may affect dispute resolution.

#### Creation of Waqf

- Limiting Waqf creation to Muslims practicing Islam for at least five years.
- Ambiguity about the rationale behind this five-year criterion.

#### Conclusion

- The Bill represents a significant step towards reforming Waqf property management in India.
- Proposed reforms ensure better governance, accountability, and a more inclusive approach, benefiting all involved communities.

### BIMSTEC: Full Form, Member Countries, Objectives, and Significance of Regional Cooperation

The 6<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC Summit was held on **April 4, 2025**, in **Bangkok, Thailand**. During this summit, leaders from BIMSTEC member nations approved **six key outcomes** aimed at regional development and integration, with a shared vision to achieve these goals by **2030**.

#### What is BIMSTEC?

**BIMSTEC** stands for **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation**. It is a regional organization that brings together countries from **South Asia** and **Southeast Asia**, aiming to promote cooperation in multiple areas including economic development, security, connectivity, and sustainable growth.

#### Historical Background

##### Date of Formation:

June 6, 1997

##### Original Name:

**BIST-EC** – Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation

#### Current Name:

**BIMSTEC** – Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (The name was changed in **July 2004** during the first summit in Bangkok.)

#### Founding Member Countries (1997)

The organization was established with **four founding countries**:

- **Bangladesh**
- **India**
- **Sri Lanka**
- **Thailand**

These countries signed the **Bangkok Declaration** on June 6, 1997.

#### Key Signatories:

- **Abul Hasan Chowdhury** (Bangladesh)
- **Saleem Iqbal Shervani** (India)
- **D.P. Wickremasinghe** (Sri Lanka)
- **Pitak Intrawitayanunt** (Thailand)

#### Expansion of Membership

##### Myanmar

- Joined on **December 22, 1997**
- With Myanmar's inclusion, the name was changed to **BIMST-EC**

##### Nepal and Bhutan

- Both joined in **February 2004**
- The final name **BIMSTEC** was adopted during the **first summit in July 2004**

#### Current Member Countries

As of now, BIMSTEC consists of **seven member countries**:

1. **Bangladesh**
2. **Bhutan**
3. **India**
4. **Myanmar**
5. **Nepal**
6. **Sri Lanka**
7. **Thailand**

These countries are located around the **Bay of Bengal** and represent a strategic and economically vital region.



### Main Objectives of BIMSTEC

The primary objective of BIMSTEC is to promote **regional cooperation** and accelerate **economic and social development** through collaboration among its members.

### Key Objectives in Detail:

- **Economic Growth:** Promote faster economic growth among member countries by collaborating in sectors like trade, investment, technology, transport, tourism, energy, and agriculture.
- **Social Progress:** Work towards improving the living standards of people in the region by ensuring inclusive and sustainable development.
- **Technical Cooperation:** Encourage collaboration in science and technology to foster innovation and digital advancement.
- **Connectivity:** Strengthen physical, digital, and people-to-people connectivity to boost regional integration.
- **Energy Cooperation:** Ensure energy security by promoting cooperation in energy exploration, trade, and development of renewable resources.
- **Disaster Management and Climate Change:** Enhance collaboration in tackling shared challenges like natural disasters and climate change.
- **Security and Counterterrorism:** Work jointly on matters of regional security, including counterterrorism and combating transnational crimes.

### Significance of BIMSTEC

- **Strategic Location:** The Bay of Bengal region links South and Southeast Asia, making BIMSTEC a bridge between two dynamic regions.
- **Alternative to SAARC:** Due to challenges faced by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), BIMSTEC has emerged as a more active platform for regional cooperation.
- **Focus on Development:** Unlike many other regional groups, BIMSTEC emphasizes both economic growth and sustainable development across multiple sectors.

### PM Narendra Modi Conferred Sri Lanka's Highest Civilian Honour - Mithra Vibhushana

On April 5, 2025, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** was awarded **Sri Lanka's highest civilian honour**, the **Mithra Vibhushana**, for his contributions to strengthening the historic ties between India and Sri Lanka. The honour was conferred upon him by President Anura Kumara Disسانayake during a ceremony held at the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo. This prestigious recognition is a reflection of the deep-rooted friendship and cooperation between the two nations.

### Key Points

#### Award Details

- **Mithra Vibhushana is Sri Lanka's highest civilian award, first introduced in 2008.**
- Previous recipients include former **Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom** and **Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat**.

- The award includes a citation and a silver medal adorned with nine types of Sri Lankan gems.
- The medal's design features symbols like the lotus, globe, sun, moon, and sheaves of rice, reflecting the shared cultural heritage of India and Sri Lanka.

### Historical Significance

- The Dharma Chakra on the medal represents the shared Buddhist heritage that has shaped the cultural traditions of both countries.
- The Pun Kalasa or ceremonial pot with sheaves of rice symbolizes prosperity and renewal.
- The Navarathna (nine precious gems) is depicted inside a globe encircled by lotus petals.

### Modi's Remarks

- Modi expressed that the award was a reflection of the strong historic ties and the deep friendship between India and Sri Lanka.
- He mentioned that receiving the Mithra Vibhushana is an honour not only for him but for the 1.4 billion Indians as well.

### Modi's International Recognition

- Modi has been conferred state honours by over 15 countries, including,
- Saudi Arabia's Order of King Abdul Aziz
- Order of the State of Palestine
- United Arab Emirates' Order of Zayed
- Order of Fiji
- Egypt's Order of the Nile
- In March 2025, Mauritius awarded Modi its highest civilian honour, the Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean during his visit to the country.

### Ceremony Details

- The ceremony took place at the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo.
- President Anura Kumara Disسانayake personally conferred the award to PM Modi.

### National Affairs

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** assured **Myanmar's Senior General Min Aung Hlaing** of **India's humanitarian assistance** following a **devastating earthquake**. India swiftly launched '**Operation Brahma**', deploying **disaster relief, search and rescue teams, and medical aid**. A **C-130 IAF aircraft** delivered **critical supplies to Yangon**, followed by two more aircraft. India also announced a **field hospital** in the affected region. The **MEA** confirmed that **no Indian casualties** have been reported so far. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **37th Kathak Mahotsav 2025**, organized by **Kathak Kendra, New Delhi**, concluded successfully, featuring the world's **first-ever Kathak Literary Festival**, along with **seminars, exhibitions, and performances** showcasing all major **Kathak gharanas—Lucknow, Jaipur, Banaras, and Raigarh**. Key discussions focused on **royal patronage, evolution of Kathak bols, and literary documentation**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On **March 30, 2025**, PM **Narendra Modi** launched a **summer vacation calendar** under the **MY-Bharat Initiative**, encouraging children to develop **new hobbies and skills**. In his **Mann Ki Baat** address, he highlighted opportunities like **tech camps, environmental courses, and leadership programs**. The calendar includes **study tours to Jan Aushadhi Kendras, visits to border villages (Vibrant Village Campaign), and cultural and sports activities**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** launched development projects and welfare schemes worth over **Rs 800 crore** in **Bihar** on **International Cooperative Day**. The initiatives include **Rs 111 crore** for **cooperative sector development**, focusing on **cooperative banking, agricultural credit, and PACS**. **Rs 421 crore** was allocated for **urban development and affordable housing**, while **Rs 181 crore** was dedicated to **law enforcement infrastructure**, including **133 new police stations**. Additionally, **Rs 109 crore** was invested in **road transport and highway projects** to enhance **connectivity and trade**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India recorded **4,515 child adoptions in FY 2024-25**, the highest in **12 years**, driven by **strengthened adoption mechanisms, digital transparency, and awareness campaigns**. The **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** streamlined the process by adding **8,598 newly identified children** to the **adoption pool**, establishing **245 new adoption agencies**, and leveraging **digital interventions**. The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** also promoted **foster care and alternate family-based care**, while **legal frameworks and training initiatives**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** launched the "**NITI NCAER States Economic Forum**" portal in **New Delhi**, developed by **NITI Aayog** in collaboration with the **National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)**. The portal serves as a comprehensive repository of data on **social, economic, and fiscal parameters** of Indian states from **1990-91 to 2022-23**. It aims to provide a data-driven approach to managing state **finances**, including **debt management, revenue generation**, ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone and inaugurated **development projects worth ₹33,700 crore** in **Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh**, focusing on **infrastructure, housing, healthcare, education, energy, and tribal welfare**. Key initiatives include **three lakh new homes** for the poor, many registered under **women's names**, improved **connectivity** through roads and railways, **renewable energy projects**, and **special schemes for tribal empowerment**. PM Modi reiterated the government's commitment to **sustainable development** and uplifting **underprivileged communities**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On the **75th anniversary** of diplomatic relations between **China and India**, **President Xi Jinping** and **President Droupadi Murmu** exchanged messages emphasizing the importance of a **strategic partnership**. Xi highlighted the metaphor of a "cooperative pas de deux of the dragon and the elephant," calling for cooperation in modernization efforts. The **commemorative event**, organized by the **Chinese Embassy in India**, focused on rebuilding trust and enhancing cooperation in areas like **border security, defense, and people-to-people exchanges**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Union Government** is expanding the **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** initiative to provide quality education to tribal children, with plans to establish **440 new schools** in areas with over **50% ST population** and at least **20,000 tribal individuals**. This expansion aims to create a total of **728 EMRSs**, benefiting around **3.5 lakh students**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- As of **February 2025**, **Indian Railways** has installed **209 MW** of solar power across **2,249 railway stations** and service buildings, marking a **2.3 times increase** in installations over the past five years. This expansion, powered by **Round The Clock (RTC) hybrid models** and **Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs)**, highlights the railways' commitment to **renewable energy and sustainability**. **Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and West Bengal** lead in installations, with **275, 270, and 237** units, respectively. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)**, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, has approved two significant infrastructure projects to enhance **connectivity and agricultural irrigation** in **Bihar**. The **Patna-Arrah-Sasaram Corridor (NH-119A)**, a **120.10 km 4-lane access-controlled highway**, will reduce travel time, decongest highways, and link **Patna, Arrah, and Sasaram**, boosting **employment** and regional **growth**. The **Kosi-Mechi Intra-State Link Project**, under the **PMKSY-AIBP**, aims to improve **irrigation** with an estimated cost of **₹6,282.32 crore**, enhancing **agriculture** in Bihar by March 2029. Both projects align with the vision of "**Atmanirbhar Bharat**." ([Click here to read article](#))
- As of **March 27, 2025**, **Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal** have not received any funds from the central share under the **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**, despite approved allocations for the financial year 2024-25. SSA, a flagship education scheme by the Ministry of Education, aims to improve school infrastructure, teacher training, and provide textbooks. While a total of **₹45,830.21 crore** was allocated to 36 states and UTs, **Kerala (₹328.90 crore), Tamil Nadu (₹2,151.60 crore), and West Bengal (₹1,745.80 crore)** have not received funds. The release of funds depends on **compliance-based criteria** like expenditure pace, matching share, and submission of **audited accounts**. ([Click here to read article](#))

### States in the News

- The **Punjab Government**, under **CM Bhagwant Singh Mann**, has launched key initiatives to boost **tourism and wildlife conservation**. **Nangal** will be developed into a **major tourist hub** with an initial **₹10 crore** budget, while **Jhajjar Bachauli Wildlife Sanctuary** in **Sri Anandpur Sahib** will become **Punjab's first leopard safari**. Part of the '**Badalda Punjab**' Budget 2025-26. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **March 31, 2025**, **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** unveiled a **statue of Maharaja Agrasen**, inaugurated an **ICU facility**, and laid the **foundation stone for a PG hostel** in **Hisar, Haryana**, alongside **CM Nayab Singh Saini**. He praised **Haryana's historical contributions**, **Maharaja Agrasen's economic cooperation model**, and **PM Modi's development policies**. Shah highlighted the **Modi government's efforts in poverty alleviation, healthcare, and infrastructure**, commending **Haryana's double-engine government for transparent governance, job creation, and agricultural growth**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Naini Lake**, a crucial water source for **Nainital**, is facing a **critical decline** in water levels, hitting a five-year low of **4.7 feet**, raising concerns about potential **drinking water scarcity**. The lake provides **76%** of the town's water demand, but factors like **decreased rainfall, reduced snowfall, unplanned development, and pollution** have worsened the situation. Experts emphasize the need for a **holistic conservation approach**, including **natural rejuvenation and sustainable development** practices to address the challenges. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Sarhul Festival**, celebrated by **Adivasi communities** in the **Chhotanagpur** region, particularly in **Jharkhand**, marks the arrival of **spring** and the start of the new year. Held on **April 1, 2025**, it honors the **Sal tree**, revered as the abode of **Sarna Maa**, the village deity. The festival symbolizes the **union of the Sun and Earth**, essential for life, and holds deep cultural, ecological, and political significance, particularly for asserting **Adivasi identity and rights**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Jammu and Kashmir** government launched a **free bus service** for women, aimed at promoting **gender-inclusive mobility**. Flagged off by **Chief Minister Omar Abdullah**, the service allows women to travel for free on **smart city e-buses** and **JKRTC buses** across the Union Territory. The initiative includes **200 e-buses** in urban areas and **235 JKRTC buses** in the Kashmir and Jammu regions. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **62nd National Maritime Day** and **Merchant Navy Week** were inaugurated by **Maharashtra Governor C P Radhakrishnan** at **Raj Bhavan, Mumbai**, on **April 5, 2024**, emphasizing India's maritime sector's role in **Viksit Bharat (Developed India)**. The Governor highlighted the need for **port modernization** and better **coordination** among key organizations like the

**Directorate General of Shipping, SCI, Indian Railways, and exporters** to boost **global trade** and strengthen India's **maritime infrastructure**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Rongali Bihu**, also known as **Bohag Bihu**, is being celebrated across **Assam in mid-April 2025**, marking the **Assamese New Year** and the start of the **agricultural season**. As the most vibrant of the three Bihus, it celebrates **spring, harvest, and Assamese cultural identity**, fostering **community spirit and family bonding** through dance, music, and traditional festivities. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Tamil Nadu** recorded the **highest real economic growth rate** in India for **2024-25 at 9.69%**, the state's **best in 10 years**, reflecting strong and steady economic progress. **Real growth** excludes inflation, while the **nominal growth rate** stood at **14.02%**, also the **highest among Indian states**. The **GSDP at constant prices** rose from **Rs.15.71 lakh crore (2023-24)** to **Rs.17.23 lakh crore (2024-25)**. Despite challenges like **COVID-19** (0.07% growth in 2020-21), Tamil Nadu's economy has shown **resilience and rapid recovery**. ([Click here to read article](#))

### International Affairs

- **Japan's Financial Services Agency (FSA)** plans to **revise the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act by 2026** to classify **crypto assets as financial products**, enhancing **regulatory oversight** and introducing **insider trading restrictions**. Japan, a pioneer in **crypto regulation** since **legalizing Bitcoin in 2017**, aims to strengthen **investor protection** and **market stability** following security breaches and money laundering concerns. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Russia** has launched the **Perm**, its first **nuclear submarine** equipped with the **Zircon hypersonic missile**, marking a significant step in strengthening its **naval capabilities**. The **Yasen-M class** submarine, set to join the **Pacific Fleet** in 2026, will replace the **Akula** and **Oscar-class** submarines. The **Zircon missile**, with a speed of **Mach 8** and a range of **500-1,000 km**, is seen as a **game-changer**, making it nearly impossible to intercept due to its **radar-evading plasma cloud**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Former US President **Donald Trump's** proposed **"reciprocal tariff"** policy would impose a **26% adjusted tariff on Indian exports** to the United States, significantly increasing the cost of Indian goods. This policy is based on the principle of imposing tariffs on other countries similar to what they charge on **US goods**. Currently, India faces an average tariff of **2.7%** on exports to the US, while US goods face **10.5%** tariffs in India. The proposed tariffs could result in **price hikes**, reduced **competitiveness**, and loss of market share in the US, India's largest export destination. However, the tariffs will also affect other major trading partners, influencing the relative impact on India's exports. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Agreements/MoUs Signed

- India Post has partnered with **Nippon India Mutual Fund** through a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to offer **door-to-door KYC verification** services for mutual fund investors, enhancing **financial inclusion**. This initiative aims to make mutual fund investments more accessible, particularly for **rural populations, elderly** citizens, and individuals with mobility issues. India Post's extensive **nationwide network** has already facilitated over **5 lakh KYC verifications** for UTI and SUUTI, and this partnership supports the **Jan Nivesh initiative** to empower citizens with secure, convenient financial services. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Books and Authors

- Sanjeev Chopra's** book, *The Great Conciliator: Lal Bahadur Shastri and the Transformation of India*, delves into the life and legacy of India's second Prime Minister, **Lal Bahadur Shastri**. Chopra highlights Shastri's often overlooked contributions, including the formation of the **Border Security Force (BSF)** and the iconic "**Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan**" slogan. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Women's Prize for Non-Fiction 2025** has shortlisted six remarkable books exploring diverse themes. These include **Helen Scales' *What the Wild Sea Can Be***, focusing on ocean history and climate threats; **Chloe Dalton's *Raising Hare***, about human-wild interaction during the pandemic; **Neneh Cherry's** memoir *A Thousand Threads*, highlighting identity and rebellion in her creative journey; **Rachel Clarke's *The Story of A Heart***, exploring organ donation and emotional healing; **Yuan Yang's *Private Revolutions***, detailing the resilience of women in post-1990s China; and **Clare Mulley's *Agent Zo***, remembering **Elzbieta Zawacka**, a WWII Polish resistance heroine. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Banking/Economy/Business News

- Axis Bank**, in partnership with **J.P. Morgan** and its blockchain unit **Kinexys**, has launched **India's first 24/7 US dollar payment service** for commercial clients, operating from **GIFT City**. This real-time **dollar clearing facility** enhances **liquidity management**, reduces costs, and ensures **full payment transfers** without deductions. It also supports **same-day settlements** and benefits trade with **Middle Eastern countries** where Sundays are business days. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Renault Group** will acquire the remaining **51% stake** in **Renault Nissan Automotive India Private Ltd (RNAIPL)** from **Nissan Motor Corp**, gaining **100% ownership** of the **Chennai manufacturing facility**. This follows a **2023 agreement** where Renault and Nissan invested **\$600 million** to develop **six new models** for the Indian market. RNAIPL, established in 2010 as a joint venture, saw Nissan reduce its stake to 51% in 2023. This

acquisition strengthens Renault's control over its **Indian manufacturing** and supports its broader **global restructuring strategy**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- UPI transactions** hit a **record high in March 2025**, reaching **Rs 24.77 trillion** in value and **19.78 billion** in volume, marking a **13% increase in value** and **14% rise in volume** from February. This milestone reflects **strong digital payment adoption** in India. For FY25, UPI saw **Rs 260.56 trillion in transaction value (+30% YoY)** and **131.14 billion transactions (+42% YoY)**, reinforcing its **dominance in India's digital economy**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **GST collections** surged **9.9% YoY in March 2025**, reaching **Rs 1.96 lakh crore**, driven by **economic activity** and **increased compliance**. The breakdown includes **CGST (Rs 38,100 crore)**, **SGST (Rs 49,900 crore)**, **IGST (Rs 95,900 crore)**, and **GST Cess (Rs 12,300 crore)**. **Net GST collections** after refunds stood at **Rs 1.76 lakh crore (7.3% YoY growth)**. For FY25, total **GST revenue hit Rs 22.08 lakh crore (9.4% YoY growth)**, aligning with the **government's 11% GST revenue projection**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** celebrates its **90th anniversary in 2025**, marking nine decades of **financial governance** and **monetary policy regulation**. Established on **April 1, 1935**, under the **RBI Act, 1934**, it was **nationalized in 1949**. Key milestones include **economic liberalization in 1991**, and recent advancements in **digital payments** and **financial inclusion**. The first Governor was **Sir Osborne Smith**, while **Sir C.D. Deshmukh** was the first Indian Governor. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Nidhi Tiwari**, an **Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer** from **Mahmoorganj, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**, currently serves as the **Private Secretary to PM Narendra Modi**. She secured the **96th rank in the UPSC 2013 exam**, marking her entry into the **Indian government**. With a strong academic background and a commitment to **diplomatic relations** and **national security**, she has played a vital role in India's **public service**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **EY Economy Watch report** projects **India's GDP growth at 6.5% for FY26**, stressing the need for a **balanced fiscal strategy** that promotes **economic expansion while maintaining fiscal prudence**. It highlights the importance of **government investment in education and healthcare**, a higher **revenue-to-GDP ratio**, and **equalization transfers** to reduce regional disparities. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2020** has strengthened **RBI's oversight on co-operative banks** by expanding its powers in **management, audit, capital requirements, and restructuring**. Effective from **June 26, 2020**, it applies key provisions of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949**, to **Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)**, ensuring **financial stability** and **depositor protection**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On April 2, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that **98.21%** of **Rs 2000 banknotes** have been returned to the banking system, with only **Rs 6,366 crore** still in public hands. Following the RBI's decision to **withdraw Rs 2000 notes** from circulation, first announced on **May 19, 2023**, the notes' circulation has significantly declined since their introduction in **November 2016** post-demonetization. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will transition **500 financially weak Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** from the **Supervisory Action Framework (SAF)** to the **Prompt Corrective Action (PCA)** framework starting **April 1, 2025**. This shift aims to **enhance regulatory oversight, ensure early intervention, and restore financial stability**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued new guidelines for **Government of India-guaranteed Security Receipts (SRs)** by **Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs)** to enhance **bad loan resolution and financial stability**. Key provisions include **reversal of excess provisions to P&L accounts, stricter capital treatment** by deducting **non-cash SRs from CET1 capital**, and a **revised valuation methodology** requiring periodic valuation based on **Net Asset Value (NAV)** and **recovery ratings**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL)** has successfully **amalgamated** its NBFC subsidiary **Aditya Birla Finance Ltd. (ABFL)**, effective **April 1, 2025**, after approvals from **SEBI, RBI, NCLT, shareholders, and creditors**. The merger aims to **simplify the corporate structure, enhance financial stability, and improve efficiency**. **Vishakha Mulye** has been appointed as **MD & CEO**, while **Rakesh Singh** will serve as **Executive Director & CEO (NBFC)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised **ATM withdrawal charges**, increasing the fee from **Rs 21 to Rs 23 per transaction** for withdrawals exceeding the **monthly free limit**, effective **May 1, 2025**. Customers will still get **five free transactions** at their own bank's ATMs, **three at other banks' ATMs in metros**, and **five in non-metros**. The revised charges also apply to **cash recycler machines**, except for **cash deposits**. This change aims to **compensate banks for rising ATM maintenance costs**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced it will **retain the existing Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) investment limits** for the financial year 2025-26. The caps include **6%** for **Central Government Securities (G-Secs)**, **2%** for **State Development Loans (SDLs)**, and **15%** for **corporate bonds**. This decision aims to maintain a stable and predictable investment environment for foreign investors in India's debt markets. For **April - September 2025**, the investment limits are set at **₹2.79 trillion** for G-Secs and **₹8.22 trillion** for corporate bonds. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **HIL Ltd** has rebranded itself as **BirlaNu Limited**, aligning its identity with its core values of **innovation, quality, and sustainability** in the **building materials** industry. With a strong presence in **India and Europe**, the company aims to better serve **homeowners, builders, and designers**. Having been operational for over **eight decades**, BirlaNu is deeply rooted in **Hyderabad, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh**. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Appointments/Resignations

- On **March 25, 2025**, **Dr. Jay Bhattacharya**, an **Indian-American scientist**, was confirmed as **Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)** by the **U.S. Senate (53-47 vote)** after being **nominated by President Donald Trump** in **November 2024**. A **Stanford professor of Health Policy**, he holds an **MD and PhD in Economics** and has contributed to **economics, public health, medical research, and health policy**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **IFS officer Nidhi Tiwari** has been appointed as **Private Secretary to PM Narendra Modi**, as confirmed by the **DoPT on March 29, 2025**. A seasoned diplomat, she previously served as **Deputy Secretary at the PMO (2022-2025)**, handling **high-level administrative and diplomatic affairs**. She also worked in the **MEA's Disarmament and International Security Affairs Division**, focusing on **global security and diplomatic relations**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Ambuj Chandna**, a **veteran banker** with over **16 years of experience** at **Kotak Mahindra Bank**, has joined **DBS Bank India** as **Managing Director (MD)** and **Head of Consumer Banking Group**. His move follows **Rajat Verma's** appointment as **CEO of DBS India** in **March 2025**. Chandna previously served as **President and Head of Consumer Bank (Products)** at **Kotak Mahindra** and has a background in **retail banking and lending** from roles at **Deutsche Bank** and **Standard Chartered Bank**. He replaces **Prashant Joshi**, who had joined **DBS** in **2020**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **SBI Cards and Payment Services (SBI Card)** appointed **Salila Pande** as its new **Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**, effective **April 1, 2025**. With nearly **30 years** of experience in the **banking sector**, primarily with **State Bank of India (SBI)**, Pande brings expertise in **retail banking, credit services, and financial management**. Her appointment marks a new leadership phase for **SBI Card** as it continues to expand its presence in **India's credit card market**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **N Chandrasekaran**, Chairman of **Tata Sons**, has been appointed to the **IMF Managing Director's Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth**, aimed at providing insights into **macroeconomic and financial policies** to foster **innovation, entrepreneurship**, and long-term **economic growth**. The council, led by **Kristalina Georgieva**, will focus on improving **macroeconomic conditions** for sustainable development. Chandrasekaran's inclusion underscores his influence in **global business strategy and economic policy**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On 1st April 2025, **Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey** became the **7th Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations**, marking a historic moment as the **first African woman** to hold the position. She succeeded **Patricia Scotland** of Dominica, the first woman to serve in this role. Botchwey was elected during the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2024** in Apia, Samoa, for a four-year term. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Government of India** has approved the appointment of **Swaminathan S. Iyer** as a **Whole-time Member (Life) of IRDAI** for a **5-year tenure** or until he turns 62, whichever is earlier. Approved by the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on March 25, 2025**, his role involves overseeing the **life insurance segment**, focusing on **regulation, policy development, and industry growth**. His **expertise in legal and regulatory affairs** is expected to strengthen **India's insurance sector**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has appointed **Poonam Gupta** as its new **Deputy Governor**, succeeding **Michael Patra**, ahead of the **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting (April 7-9, 2025)**. With extensive experience in **macroeconomic policy, IMF, World Bank, and central banking**, she previously served as **Director General of NCAER, EAC-PM member, and convener of the 16th Finance Commission Advisory Council**. Her appointment is expected to play a crucial role in shaping **India's monetary and financial policies**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **H Shankar** has officially assumed the role of **Managing Director (MD) of CPCL**, after holding additional charge since **July 16, 2024**. A **Mechanical Engineer with an MBA**, he has extensive experience in the **oil and gas industry**. Inducted as **Director (Technical) in October 2020**, Shankar has led **key infrastructure projects**, modernized **refining operations**, and introduced **value-added, sustainable products**, aligning CPCL with **global energy sustainability goals**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has appointed **Sivasubramanian Ramann** as the new **Chairperson of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** for a **five-year tenure**. Currently serving as **Deputy CAG and Chief Technology Officer at CAG of India**, Ramann will oversee **India's pension sector**, including the **National Pension System (NPS) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Kamal Haasan** has been appointed as the **Chairperson of FICCI's Media and Entertainment Committee South**, announced at the **FICCI Media and Entertainment Business Conclave South Connect 2025** in Chennai. He envisions transforming India's **Media & Entertainment sector** into a **\$100 billion industry**, emphasizing **bold storytelling, cultural representation**, and global resonance in the **digital era**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Sohini Rajola** has been appointed as the **Executive Director of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**, as part of its strategy to enhance leadership and drive the adoption of its payment solutions. Rajola will oversee **business development, go-to-market strategies**, and manage **strategic alliances** with banks, fintechs, and regulatory bodies. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Mohsin Naqvi** has officially taken over as the new **President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC)**, succeeding **Shammi Silva**, who served a brief tenure from December 2024. Naqvi, also the **Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB)** since February 2024 and **Pakistan's Interior Minister**, expressed his commitment to strengthening Asian cricket's global influence. His appointment marks a significant leadership transition in the region's cricket diplomacy. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Seema Agrawal**, a senior **IPS officer**, has been appointed as the new **DGP/Director of Fire and Rescue Services** following the retirement of **Abhash Kumar**. Earlier, she served as **DGP of Civil Supplies**. Alongside her appointment, **seven other IPS officers** were transferred in routine administrative reshuffling. ([Click here to read article](#))



### Defence News

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** will participate in **Exercise INIOCHOS-25**, a **multi-national air exercise** hosted by the **Hellenic Air Force** at **Andravida Air Base, Greece**, from **March 31 to April 11, 2025**. The IAF will deploy **Su-30 MKI fighters, IL-78 aerial refuelers, and C-17 transport aircraft** alongside **15 nations** to enhance **combat interoperability, joint air operations, and tactical expertise**. The **biennial exercise** features **realistic combat scenarios**, strengthening **India's defense cooperation** and reinforcing **strategic partnerships** through mutual learning and operational planning. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Exercise Tiger Triumph 2025**, the **fourth edition** of the **India-US bilateral Tri-Service HADR exercise**, will take place from **April 1-13, 2025**, on the **Eastern Seaboard**. Aimed at **enhancing interoperability in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations**, it will focus on developing **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** and a **Combined Coordination Center (CCC)** for joint crisis response. The exercise includes a **Harbour Phase in Visakhapatnam (April 1-7)** and a **Sea Phase off Kakinada (April 8-13)**, featuring **joint maritime, amphibious, and medical aid operations**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Navika Sagar Parikrama II (NSP-II)**, a **global circumnavigation expedition** by **Indian Navy women officers Lt Cdr Dilna K and Lt Cdr Roopa A**, reached **Cape Town, South Africa**, marking the fourth leg of its **23,400-nautical-mile journey**. **Flagged off on October 2, 2024, from Goa**, the expedition aims to **promote women empowerment, marine research, and maritime cooperation**. The vessel **INSV Tarini** previously stopped at **Fremantle (Australia), Lyttelton (New Zealand), and Port Stanley (Falklands, UK)** and will return in **May 2025**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **defence exports** hit a record **Rs 23,622 crore (US\$ 2.76 billion)** in **FY 2024-25**, marking a **12.04% growth** from the previous year. This surge, driven by **Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and private industry**, reflects India's growing self-reliance and **global competitiveness** in defence manufacturing. **DPSUs recorded a 42.85% rise**, contributing **Rs 8,389 crore**, while the **private sector** accounted for **Rs 15,233 crore**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Indian Army** organized the **Batalik Cricket League** at **Jubar Stadium, Batalik** in **April 2025** to celebrate **Kargil Vijay Diwas**. The event aimed to promote **sports, engage local youth, and support regional development**. **13 teams** participated, with **Batalik A** winning by **47 runs**. A unique initiative involved purchasing locally made **Ladakhi Willow Cricket bats** from a young entrepreneur, supporting **local artisans**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- The **INDRA 2025** exercise, held from **March 28 to April 2, 2025**, was the 14th edition of the bilateral naval drill between the **Indian Navy and Russian Navy**. The exercise focused on strengthening **interoperability**, simulating **coordinated manoeuvres**, and countering **maritime security threats**. Key activities included complex **combat drills**, enhancing joint operational readiness, and exchanging **best practices** to improve mutual understanding and effectiveness in addressing contemporary maritime challenges. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM)**, developed by **DRDO and Israel Aerospace Industries**, has successfully passed critical trials, proving its operational readiness for the **Indian Army**. Designed to target and destroy a wide range of **aerial threats**, the missile system underwent four successful flight tests at **Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island**, targeting **long-range, short-range, high-altitude, and low-altitude** threats. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Awards and Recognitions

- The **Andhra Pradesh government** will honor **renowned historian and archaeologist MyNaa Swamy** with the **prestigious Ugadi Award** for his **exceptional contributions to historical research and social service**. Conferred by **Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu**, the award includes the **'Kalaratna' title, 'Hamsa' medal, a certificate of appreciation, and a cash prize**. The ceremony will be held at **Tummalapalli Kalakshetram, Vijayawada**, on **Sunday**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Dalai Lama** was awarded the **Gold Mercury Award for Peace and Sustainability** on **April 1, 2025**, at his residence in **Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh**. Presented by **Gold Mercury International**, a global think tank, the award recognizes his lifelong commitment to **non-violence, human dignity, interfaith dialogue, and environmental conservation**. This honor comes as the Dalai Lama nears his **90th birthday** and celebrates his advocacy for peace and leadership. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Nikhil Singhal**, Founder of **Vigor Media Worldwide** and President of the **Noida High Rise Federation**, received the **Uttar Pradesh Anmol Ratan Award** at the **Taj Lucknow** on **March 31, 2025**, organized by the **Tapasya Foundation Trust**. The award, presented by **Akhilesh Yadav**, recognized his **leadership in PR and strategic communication**. In his speech, he credited his **team's dedication** and commitment to **excellence**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Akarsh Shroff**, founder of **YuvaSpark**, was awarded the **National Youth Award** on **April 3, 2025**, for his impactful work in **early childhood education**, especially through **anganwadi digitisation** and **rural education innovation**. Presented by **Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya** at **Parliament House, New Delhi**, the award, given by the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**, honors individuals under 30 for their **exemplary social service** and **national development** efforts, with **22 young changemakers** recognized this year. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Summits and Conferences News

- President **Droupadi Murmu** inaugurated the **National Conference on 'Environment - 2025'** in **New Delhi (March 29, 2025)**, emphasizing **environmental protection as a daily responsibility** and urging efforts toward **sustainability for future generations**. Organized by the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)**, the event discussed **environmental challenges, best practices, and policy collaborations**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Army Commanders' Conference (ACC) 2025** is being held in **New Delhi from April 1-4, 2025**, serving as a **biannual platform** for senior Army leadership to **review national security, operational priorities, and emerging challenges**. Key discussions include **military preparedness, technological integration, and soldier welfare**. **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh**, along with the **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** and **NITI Aayog CEO**, will provide strategic insights on **India's defence vision** and the **armed forces' role in nation-building**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** hosted a conference for **large NBFCs** on **March 28, 2025, in Chennai**, under the theme "**Shared Vision, Shared Responsibility: Strengthening the NBFCs**." Attended by **over 200 participants**, including **RBI Deputy Governor Swaminathan J** and **ICAI President Charanjot Singh Nanda**, the event focused on **regulatory supervision, risk management, fair lending practices, and audit transparency**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** arrived in **Thailand** on **April 3, 2025**, for a **two-day visit** to attend the **6th BIMSTEC Summit**, aiming to enhance **trade, connectivity, and economic collaboration** among BIMSTEC countries. The summit will focus on the **Bay of Bengal region's growth**, with discussions involving leaders from **Thailand, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Bhutan**. PM Modi highlighted **India-Thailand cultural ties** and emphasized the strategic importance of the region. After the summit, he is scheduled to visit **Sri Lanka** to continue diplomatic engagement. ([Click here to read article](#))

- At the **11th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting** in **Brasilia (April 3, 2025)**, **India** called for stronger climate cooperation, emphasizing the **Baku to Belem Roadmap** to mobilize **USD 1.3 trillion** for **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**. Represented by **Amandeep Garg** from **MoEFCC**, **India** highlighted **sustainable development, energy security, and a Just Transition**. India stressed **BRICS' global role**, covering **47% of the world's population** and **36% of GDP**, and advocated for enhanced **climate finance, energy diversification, and the Green Grids Initiative**. The meeting also emphasized **resource efficiency** and **circular economy** principles. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Bangladesh** became the new **Chair of BIMSTEC** for the next two years, taking leadership from **Thailand**. **Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus** emphasized making BIMSTEC more **inclusive** and **action-oriented**. **BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) is a regional organization comprising **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand**, focusing on **trade, economy, and regional cooperation**. The **Sixth BIMSTEC Summit** in **Bangkok** had the theme "**Prosperous, Resilient and Open BIMSTEC**," with a moment of silence for victims of the **March 28 earthquake** in Myanmar and Thailand. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Ranks and Reports

- The '**Nutrition for Growth**' event, hosted by **France** on **March 27-28, 2025**, highlighted concerns over the **nutritional quality of school meals** worldwide. According to a **UNESCO report**, while **47% of primary school pupils** received meals in 2024, many lacked **adequate nutrition**, impacting **child health and academic performance**. Key findings include **27% of school meals lacking nutritionist input**, **only 93 out of 187 countries** having school food legislation, and **65% setting food standards**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India has made significant strides in adopting frontier technologies, improving its rank from **48th** in 2022 to **36th** globally in the **2025 Technology and Innovation Report** by **UNCTAD**. The country's progress is attributed to advancements in **ICT deployment, research and development (R&D), industrial capacity, and finance**, particularly in **AI and nanotechnology**. India is now part of a group of **developing countries** exceeding expectations in **technology readiness**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- According to **Ookla's Speedtest Global Index (Feb 2025)**, **Mumbai** recorded the **lowest fixed broadband speed** among Indian cities, ranking **123rd globally** with a **download speed of 58.24 Mbps**, while **Delhi** topped nationally at **89th rank** with **91.11 Mbps**. This disparity contributed to **India's overall slip** in global broadband rankings from **94 to 95**, with national averages at **61.66 Mbps download, 57.89 Mbps upload, and 7 ms latency**. Mumbai's poor performance is attributed to **dense population and challenging terrain**. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Sports News

- The **Indian Open 2025 PSA Copper** event, held at **Bombay Gymkhana, Mumbai** (March 24-28, 2025), saw **Anahat Singh** win her **11th PSA title**, reaffirming her status as **India's top-ranked women's squash player**, while **Kareem El Torkey (Egypt, World No. 64)** triumphed in the **men's singles final** against **Abhay Singh (India)**. With **\$53,500 prize money**, this was **India's highest-rated PSA event since 2018** and the **first-ever PSA Copper event hosted in the country**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- World No. 1 **Aryna Sabalenka** claimed her first **Miami Open title** by defeating **Jessica Pegula** 7-5, 6-2 in the final, completing the tournament without dropping a set. This victory marked her **19th WTA title**, including **8 WTA 1000 titles** and **3 Grand Slam titles**. Sabalenka's dominance was evident as she broke Pegula's serve to love in the first set and showcased aggressive shot-making in the second. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Vandana Katariya**, a stalwart of **Indian women's hockey**, announced her retirement from international hockey on **April 2, 2024**, after an illustrious 15-year career. The **32-year-old striker**, with a record of **320 international appearances** and **158 goals**, retires as the **most capped female hockey player** in India's history. Katariya shared her emotional farewell on **Instagram**, emphasizing her decision to step away at the "zenith" of her career, choosing to leave the sport while still performing at her best. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Aditya Birla Memorial Polo Cup 2025** concluded with **Rajnigandha Achievers** defeating **Jindal Panther** in a thrilling final in **New Delhi**. The winning team, featuring **Dino Dhankhar, Shamsheer Ali, Abhimanyu Pathak, and Daniel Otamendi**, secured the prestigious trophy, presented by **Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Rajashree Birla, and Askaran Agarwala**. The tournament, honoring **Aditya Vikram Birla's passion for polo**, also saw participation from **Cavalry Royal Enfield**, showcasing top international polo talent. ([Click here to read article](#))

- India won 10 medals** at the **2025 Senior Asian Wrestling Championship** in **Amman**, showcasing strong performances in **freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling**. **Manisha Bhanwala (62kg)** won gold, while **Deepak Punia (92kg), Udit (61kg), and Reetika Hooda (76kg)** secured silver. Six wrestlers, including **Antim Pangal (53kg) and Dinesh (125kg)**, won bronze. The **30-member squad** featured top talents like **Mansi Lather and Mukul Dahiya**, reinforcing India's dominance in continental wrestling. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Francesco Bagnaia** secured victory at the **Grand Prix of the Americas** after **Marc Marquez** crashed out on lap nine at the **Circuit of the Americas (COTA)**. **Ducati** dominated the podium with **Alex Marquez in second** and **Fabio Di Giannantonio in third**, marking **Ducati's 20th consecutive grand prix win**, just **two wins shy of Honda's record (22)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Niharika Singhania**, a young Indian equestrian, secured **first place** in the **Azelhof CSI Lier equestrian competition** in Belgium, held from **March 25-30, 2025**. Competing in the **CSI2-1- YH - LIER - Spring Tour\*\*** category, Niharika demonstrated exceptional skill and determination. Riding **Hotese Charboniere**, she finished with **penalty points of 34.48 and 31.95** in the final **Two-Phase Special** event to clinch the gold. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Schemes and Committees News

- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has funded the **Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) Program** to enhance **India's logistics infrastructure**, reduce costs, and improve efficiency. Supporting the **National Logistics Policy (NLP)** and **PM Gati Shakti**, SMILE promotes **multimodal transportation, warehousing standardization, and digital trade logistics**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation** successfully completed training for the first batch of **Cyber Commandos**, a specialized program aimed at enhancing **cybersecurity** skills among law enforcement officers in India. The **Cyber Commandos Programme**, initiated by the **Union Ministry of Home Affairs**, trained **37 officers** in advanced cybersecurity techniques to combat growing **cyber threats**. ([Click here to read article](#))



- As part of the **Swarna Andhra-2047** vision, Andhra Pradesh will launch the '**Zero Poverty - P4 Policy**' on **Ugadi (March 30, 2025)** to eradicate poverty by 2047. Based on the '**P4 (Public, Private, People Partnership) model**', the initiative fosters **government-private-public collaboration** for **sustainable socio-economic development**. It focuses on **housing, sanitation, tap water, LPG connections, reliable power (including rooftop solar), high-speed internet, and entrepreneurship** to empower underprivileged families. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Assam government has launched the **Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan**, its largest initiative to promote **women entrepreneurship**. Launched by **Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** on **April 1, 2025**, the scheme aims to empower **30 lakh women** by providing **₹10,000 seed capital** to establish or expand **micro-businesses**. The initiative follows a phased financial assistance model, offering **₹25,000** in the second year and **₹50,000** in the third year for successful entrepreneurs. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Stand-Up India Scheme**, launched on **April 5, 2016**, has empowered marginalized entrepreneurs, particularly **SC, ST, and women**, by providing financial support for new enterprises. With over **Rs. 61,000 crore** sanctioned in loans, the scheme has seen significant growth, with **loan accounts** for SCs rising from **9,399 to 46,248**, for STs from **2,841 to 15,228**, and for women entrepreneurs from **55,644 to 1,90,844**. The initiative has been instrumental in fostering **entrepreneurship, job creation, and financial inclusion** across India. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Science and Technology News

- Microsoft** celebrates its **50th anniversary** on **April 4, 2025**, marking its evolution from a **PC software pioneer** to a **global tech leader** in **cloud computing and AI**. Founded in **1975** by **Bill Gates and Paul Allen**, Microsoft revolutionized computing with **MS-DOS**, later dominating with **Windows** and productivity tools. Now, it is focusing on **AI innovation** to drive future growth, solidifying its position as a **technology powerhouse**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- SpaceX** successfully launched the **Fram2 mission**, marking the **first-ever human spaceflight to orbit Earth from pole to pole**. Aboard the **Falcon 9** rocket from **NASA's Kennedy Space Center**, the **all-civilian crew** will conduct **22 experiments** during their **3 to 5-day mission** in a **90-degree polar orbit (430 km altitude)**. Historic firsts include the **first x-ray in space, mushroom growth in microgravity, and Dragon crew recovery on the U.S. West Coast**. The crew features **Chun Wang (Commander), Jannicke Mikkelsen (Vehicle Commander), Rabea Rogge (Pilot), and Eric Philips (Medical Officer & Specialist)**. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Important Days News

- Rajasthan Day** is celebrated on **March 30** to mark the state's formation in **1949**, when **Jodhpur, Jaipur, Bikaner, and Jaisalmer** merged with the **United State of Rajasthan**, creating **Greater Rajasthan**. Formerly known as **Rajputana**, Rajasthan has a rich history, from **Mauryan rule** to **Rajput clans** like the **Pratiharas, Chalukyas, Parmars, and Chauhans**, followed by **Mughal and Maratha influences** before British rule. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In his **Mann Ki Baat** address, **PM Narendra Modi** announced the **International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2025** theme: "**Yoga for One Earth, One Health**", emphasizing yoga's role in **global wellness**. The **Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY)** is leading the celebrations, launching a **100-day countdown** at **Yogamahotsav**. This marks **10 years since the UN recognized June 21 as IDY (2014)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Utkal Divas (Odisha Day)** is celebrated annually on **April 1** to commemorate **Odisha's formation in 1936** as India's first **linguistic state**, separating from the **Bengal Presidency**. The region, historically known as **Kalinga**, was famed for its **prosperity, Kalinga War (261 BCE), and cultural advancements**. Under **British rule**, Odisha was divided, fueling the **statehood movement** led by **Madhusudan Das, Gopabandhu Das, and Fakir Mohan Senapati**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Samata Diwas**, celebrated on **April 5**, marks the birth anniversary of **Babu Jagjivan Ram**, a renowned **freedom fighter, social reformer, and champion of social justice**. Known as "**Babuji**," he dedicated his life to fighting **untouchability, casteism, and promoting equality**. With a remarkable **50-year tenure as an MP and 30 years as Union Minister**, he remains a record-holder in Indian politics. This day, observed as a **public holiday in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh**, inspires people to stand against **discrimination** and uphold **justice and equal rights** for all. ([Click here to read article](#))
- International Mine Awareness Day** is observed annually on **April 4** to raise awareness about the dangers of **landmines** and promote **demining efforts**. The 2025 theme, "**Safe Futures Start Here**," emphasizes the importance of addressing the impact of landmines, particularly in war-affected regions. Landmines, including **Anti-Personnel Mines (APM), Anti-Vehicle Mines (AVM), and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)**, cause civilian casualties long after conflicts end. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **April 2, 2025**, the **United Nations (UN)** observes **World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD)** under the theme "**Advancing Neurodiversity and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**." Organized by the **Institute of Neurodiversity (ION)** and the **UN Department of Global Communications**, the event highlights the role of **inclusive policies** in supporting **autistic individuals** and contributing to the **SDGs**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **World Health Day 2025**, observed on April 7, marks the anniversary of the **World Health Organization (WHO)**'s founding in 1948. The theme "**Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures**" focuses on improving **maternal and newborn health**, launching a year-long global campaign to reduce preventable deaths and enhance health outcomes for women and infants. The campaign aims to **intensify efforts** against maternal and newborn deaths, promote **quality healthcare** for pregnant women and newborns, and prioritize the **long-term well-being** of mothers, particularly in **developing regions**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **National Maritime Day**, celebrated on **April 5** each year, honors India's maritime heritage and the crucial role of the **shipping industry** in trade, economy, and security. First observed in **1964**, it commemorates the **maiden voyage** of the **Scindia Steam Navigation Company** in 1919, marking India's shift away from British dominance over sea routes. The day acknowledges the contributions of **seafarers** and maritime professionals and serves as a platform for discussions on **maritime safety, sustainable shipping, and technological advancements**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Swaminarayan Jayanti** celebrates the birth of **Shri Swaminarayan** (born Ghanshyam in 1781), a revered spiritual leader and yogi. He is believed to be an avatar of **Lord Krishna** and taught values like **truth, non-violence, and celibacy**. The day falls on the **ninth day of Shukla Paksha** in the Hindu month of **Chaitra**, coinciding with **Ram Navami**. Shri Swaminarayan's journey included learning holy texts and performing spiritual travels across India. His teachings continue to inspire millions even after his passing at age 49. **Swaminarayan Jayanti 2025** will be observed on **April 6**. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Obituaries News

- **Richard Chamberlain**, renowned as the "king of the miniseries", passed away at **90** on **March 30, 2024**, in **Waimanalo, Hawaii**, due to **stroke complications**. Born on **March 31, 1934**, in **Beverly Hills**, he initially pursued painting before shifting to acting post-**Korean War** service. He rose to fame as **Dr. James Kildare** in NBC's **Dr. Kildare (1961-66)**, becoming a **teen heartthrob** and winning **Most Popular Male Star (1963-65)**. His rendition of the show's **theme song** also became a **Top 40 hit**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Renowned **American actor Val Kilmer** passed away at the age of **65** due to **pneumonia**, as confirmed by his daughter **Mercedes Kilmer**. Known for iconic roles in

**Top Gun, The Doors, Tombstone, and Batman Forever**, Kilmer had battled **throat cancer** for years. Born on **December 31, 1959**, in **Los Angeles**, he was the **youngest student** admitted to **Juilliard's Drama Division**. His career began on stage before his Hollywood debut in **Top Secret! (1984)**, which earned him a devoted fan base. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Manoj Kumar**, the legendary **Bollywood actor**, passed away at the age of **87** due to **heart-related complications** and **liver cirrhosis**. Born as **Harikrishan Giri Goswami** in **Pakistan**, he moved to **Delhi** after the **Partition of India**. He rose to stardom in the late 1950s, with notable films like **Hariyali Aur Raasta (1962)**, **Woh Kaun Thi? (1964)**, and **Patthar Ke Sanam (1967)**. Known for his iconic **patriotic films**, Manoj Kumar became a beloved figure in Indian cinema. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Veteran actor Ravikumar**, known for his **romantic roles** in **Malayalam and Tamil films** of the 1970s and 1980s, passed away on **April 4, 2025**, at age **71** in **Chennai**. Son of actor **Bharathi** and producer **K.M.K. Menon**, founder of **Sreekrishna Studio**, Ravikumar grew up in a film-centric environment. He rose to fame with **Ullasa Yaathra (1975)** and made his Tamil debut in **Avargal (1977)** directed by **K. Balachander**, leaving a lasting legacy in **South Indian cinema**. ([Click here to read article](#))

### Miscellaneous News

- **Sindbad submarine** sank off **Hurghada, Egypt's Red Sea**, killing **six Russian tourists** during a **routine excursion** with 45 tourists and five crew members. The vessel, designed for **underwater exploration**, likely **struck a coral reef**, causing **pressure loss and flooding**. This incident raises concerns for **Egypt's tourism industry**, a major revenue source generating **\$14.1 billion in 2024**, with key attractions like the **Pyramids of Giza, Luxor, Aswan, and Red Sea resorts**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Saudagari block print**, a traditional craft from **Jamalpur, Ahmedabad**, has received a **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag, recognizing it as an important part of **Gujarat's cultural heritage**. This **300-year-old** textile art involves hand-carving wooden blocks, dipping them in **natural dyes**, and creating intricate designs on fabric, traditionally used for items like **kurtis, chunris, shawls, and dhotis**. The **Chhipa community** has played a crucial role in preserving this art, which was once widespread but declined due to industrialization. ([Click here to read article](#))

- The **Kumbakonam Betel Leaf** of **Thanjavur** and the **Thovalai Flower Garland** of **Kanyakumari** were granted **Geographical Indication (GI) Tags** by the **Government of India**, increasing Tamil Nadu's total GI products to 62. The GI Tag protects these products from **commercial misuse**, ensures **authenticity**, and enhances **market recognition**. The **Kumbakonam Betel Leaf**, grown in the fertile **Cauvery river basin**, is expected to boost exports, while the **Thovalai Flower Garland**, crafted with white, red, and green flowers, is renowned for its artistic floral arrangements in **southern Tamil Nadu** and **Kerala**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Chapata Chilli (Tomato Chilli)** from **Warangal, Telangana**, has received the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**, benefiting around **20,000 farmers** by boosting income and market demand. Known for its **bright red color and mild pungency**, it is widely used in **pickles and as a natural coloring agent**. Cultivated for **over 80**

years across **3,000 hectares** in **Warangal, Hanmakonda, Mulugu, and Bhupalpally**. ([Click here to read article](#))



### Static Takeaways

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
<b>Organization</b>		
1	<b>Asian Development Bank</b>	<b>President</b> - Masato Kanda <b>HQ</b> - Mandaluyong, Manila, Philippines
2	<b>RBI</b>	<b>Governor</b> - Sanjay Malhotra <b>HQ</b> - Mumbai
3	<b>SBI</b>	<b>Chairman</b> - Challa Sreenivaalu Setty <b>HQ</b> - Mumbai
4	<b>SBI card &amp; Payment Services</b>	<b>MD &amp; CEO</b> - Salila Pande
5	<b>DBS Bank India</b>	<b>MD &amp; CEO</b> - Rajat Verma
6	<b>TATA Sons</b>	<b>Chairman</b> - Natarajan Chandrasekaran
7	<b>Axis Bank</b>	<b>MD &amp; CEO</b> - Amitabh Chaudhary
8	<b>FICCI</b>	<b>Chairman</b> - Harsha Vardhan Agarwal
9	<b>Aditya Birla Capital Limited</b>	<b>CEO</b> - Vishakha Mulye
10	<b>Renault Group</b>	<b>CEO</b> - Venkatram Mamillapalle
11	<b>Nissan India</b>	<b>CEO</b> - Saurabh Vatsa
12	<b>Space X</b>	<b>CEO</b> - Elon Musk
13	<b>Microsoft</b>	<b>CEO</b> - Satya Nadella
14	<b>Asian Cricket Council</b>	<b>President</b> - Mohsin Naqvi <b>HQ</b> - Dubai
<b>Countries</b>		
15	<b>USA</b>	<b>President</b> - Donald Trump <b>Currency</b> - US Dollar <b>Capital</b> - Washington D.C.
16	<b>Brazil</b>	<b>President</b> - Lula Da Silva <b>Currency</b> - Brazilian Real <b>Capital</b> - Brasilia
17	<b>Myanmar</b>	<b>President</b> - Min Aung Hlaing (Acting) <b>Currency</b> - Kyat <b>Capital</b> - Naypidaw

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
18	Singapore	<b>PM</b> - Lawrence Wong <b>Currency</b> - Singapore Dollar <b>Capital</b> - Singapore
19	Thailand	<b>President</b> - Paetongtarn Shinawatra <b>Currency</b> - Thai Baht <b>Capital</b> - Bangkok
20	Japan	<b>PM</b> - Ishiba Shigeru <b>Currency</b> - Yen <b>Capital</b> - Tokyo
21	Russia	<b>President</b> - Vladimir Putin <b>Currency</b> - Russian Ruble <b>Capital</b> - Moscow
<b>Indian States</b>		
22	Assam	<b>Governor</b> - Lakshman Prasad Acharya <b>CM</b> - Hemanta Biswa Sarma <b>Capital</b> - Dispur
23	Punjab	<b>Governor</b> - Gulab Chand <b>CM</b> - Bhagwat Man <b>Capital</b> - Chandigarh
24	Chattisgarh	<b>Governor</b> - Ramen Deka <b>CM</b> - Vishnu Deo Sai <b>Capital</b> - Raipur
25	West Bengal	<b>Governor</b> - C. V. Ananda Bose <b>CM</b> - Mamta Banerjee <b>Capital</b> - Kolkata
26	Maharashtra	<b>Governor</b> - C. P. Radhkrishnan <b>CM</b> - Devendra Fadnavis <b>Capital</b> - Mumbai
27	Telangana	<b>Governor</b> - Jishnu Dev Varma <b>CM</b> - Revanth Reddy <b>Capital</b> - Hyderabad
28	Andhra Pradesh	<b>Governor</b> - S. Abdul Nazeer <b>CM</b> - Chandrababu Naidu <b>Capital</b> - Amrawati
29	Odisha	<b>Governor</b> - Hari Babu Kambhupati <b>CM</b> - Mohan Charan Majhi <b>Capital</b> - Bhubneshwar