

THE HINDU REVIEW

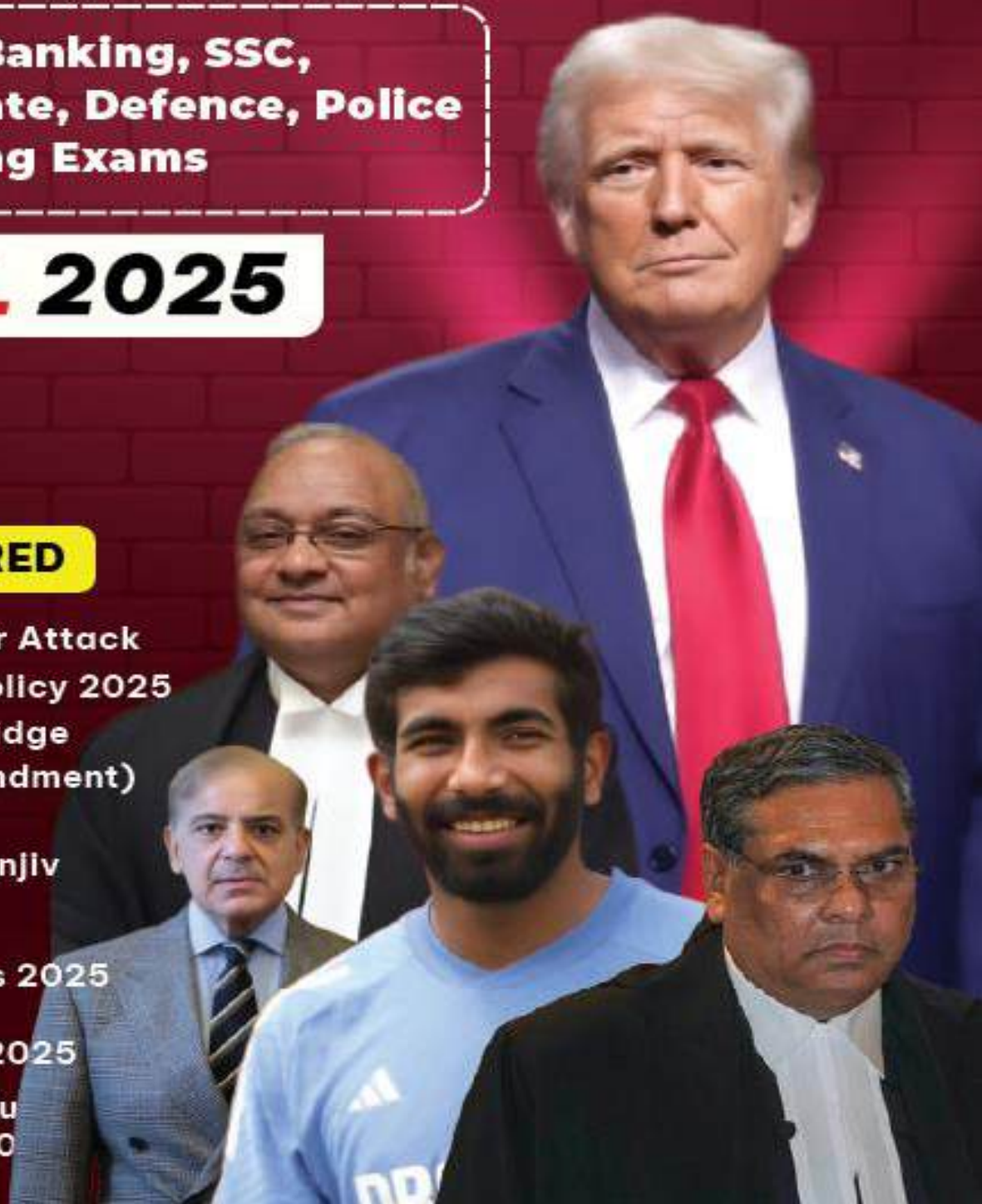


**Useful For Banking, SSC,
Railway, State, Defence, Police
and Teaching Exams**

APRIL 2025

NEWS COVERED

- Pahalgam Terror Attack
- RBI Monetary Policy 2025
- New Pamban Bridge
- The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025
- Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna
- Yashraj Bharti Samman Awards 2025
- Laureus World Sports Awards 2025
- Times Higher Education Asia Rankings 2025



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National News

Important News of Month

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.

Uttarakhand Government Renames 15 Places to Reflect Indian Culture and Heritage

Uttarakhand Chief Minister **Pushkar Singh Dhami** 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 Dhami 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

- Aurangzebpur → Shivaji Nagar
- Gajiwali → Arya Nagar
- Chandpur → Jyotiba Phule Nagar
- Mohammadpur Jat → Mohanpur Jat
- Khanpur Kursli → Ambedkar Nagar
- Indrishpur → Nandpur
- Khanpur → Shri Krishna Pur
- Akbarpur Fazalpur → Vijayanagar

Renamed Places in Dehradun District

- Miyanwala → Ramji Wala
- Pirwala → Kesari Nagar
- Chandpur Khurd → Prithviraj Nagar
- 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 Muizuddin 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.

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 Dissanayake 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 Dissanayake personally conferred the award to PM Modi.

India-Sri Lanka Sign Historic Defense Pacts For The Future

India and Sri Lanka have taken a historic step in **strengthening their bilateral relations by signing a landmark defence cooperation pact, the first of its kind between the two nations.** This comes almost 40 years after the deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka during the civil conflict. The pact, signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Colombo and his discussions with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, reflects a shared strategic vision and growing interdependence on security and development matters. The pact is part of a wider framework of ten major agreements focusing on defence, energy, digital cooperation, and health, aimed at deepening the partnership between the two neighbouring countries.

Key Highlights of the India-Sri Lanka Defence Pact & Other Agreements

Defence Cooperation

- A first-ever framework MoU on defence cooperation.
- Includes joint military exercises, training programmes, and high-level exchanges.
- Reinforces the idea that the security of both countries is interconnected.
- PM Modi highlighted the sensitivity of Sri Lanka towards India's security concerns.
- President Dissanayake reassured that Sri Lankan soil will not be used against India.

Energy & Infrastructure

Sampur Power Project

- Groundbreaking ceremony held virtually.
- Will aid in Sri Lanka's energy security.
- Multi-product energy pipeline project:
- Tripartite MoU involving India, Sri Lanka, and UAE.
- To develop Trincomalee as an energy hub.

Grid Interconnectivity MoU

- Connects India and Sri Lanka's electricity grids.
- Facilitates power trade and potential electricity exports.

Digital Transformation

- MoU signed for India to share digital governance solutions.
- Aims to accelerate Sri Lanka's digital transformation.

Renewable Energy Initiatives

Solar Rooftop Project

- Installation of rooftop solar panels on 5,000 religious institutions.
- Funded with \$17 million Indian credit assistance.
- Will generate 25 MW of green energy.
- Inclusive of Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim religious places.

Health & Medicine

MoU between

- India's Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and
- Sri Lanka's Ministry of Health & Mass Media.
- Focuses on cooperation in healthcare services and medicine.

Separate MoU between

- Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission and
- Sri Lanka's National Medicines Regulatory Authority.
- To ensure cooperation in pharmacopoeial standards and practices.

Regional Support & Development

- India announces a support package worth 2.4 billion Sri Lankan rupees.
- Focuses on social and economic development of Sri Lanka's eastern provinces.

New Pamban Bridge Inaugurated by PM Modi

On April 6, 2025, Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **New Pamban Bridge in Tamil Nadu**, marking a historic milestone in India's infrastructure development. **This first vertical-lift sea bridge in the country replaces the century-old Pamban Bridge and stands as a marvel of modern engineering.** The bridge, which connects **Rameswaram Island to Mandapam on the mainland**, is designed for both durability and technological excellence. The inauguration coincided with Ram Navami and PM Modi's return from Sri Lanka, where he also had a divine aerial view of Ram Setu, symbolically linking the spiritual and structural achievements of the day.

Key Highlights

New Pamban Bridge

- **Inauguration Date:** April 6, 2025 (Ram Navami)
- **Inaugurated by:** PM Narendra Modi
- **Location:** Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu
- **Purpose:** Connects Rameswaram Island with Mandapam on the Indian mainland

Bridge Specifications & Engineering Features

- **Total Length:** 2.07 km
- **Cost of Construction:** Over ₹700 crore
- **Executing Agency:** Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) – A Navratna PSU

- **Design Type:** Vertical-lift bridge
- **Lift Span:** 72.5 metres (can be vertically lifted to 17 metres)
- **Function:** Allows ships to pass underneath safely
- **Track Capacity:** Designed for two railway tracks, currently operating one
- **Train Speed Supported:** Up to 80 km/h
- **Projected Lifespan:** 100 years

Advanced Construction Materials & Techniques

- Use of stainless steel reinforcement
- Fully welded joints for enhanced durability
- High-grade protective paint
- Polysiloxane coating to resist marine corrosion
- Minimal maintenance design

Significance and Global Comparisons

Compared with iconic global bridges,

- Golden Gate Bridge (USA)
- Tower Bridge (UK)
- Oresund Bridge (Denmark–Sweden)
- Represents India's visionary infrastructure progress
- A symbol of modern engineering and national pride

Other Events During the Visit

PM Modi flagged off

- A new Coast Guard ship (which passed under the bridge)
- The Rameswaram–Tambaram (Chennai) train
- Foundation stones laid for rail and road projects worth ₹8,300 crore
- Puja performed at Ramanathaswamy Temple, Rameswaram

Spiritual Significance: Ram Setu Darshan

- PM Modi had aerial Darshan of Ram Setu (Adam's Bridge) while returning from Sri Lanka
- Shared the video on social media platform X (formerly Twitter)
- Coincided with the Surya Tilak ceremony in Ayodhya, calling it a "divine coincidence"
- Highlighted Ram Setu's religious and cultural importance

About Ram Setu (Adam's Bridge)

- A chain of shoals linking Rameswaram Island (India) with Mannar Island (Sri Lanka)
- **Length:** ~48 km

Geographical Division

- **North:** Palk Strait (Bay of Bengal inlet)
- **South:** Gulf of Mannar (Indian Ocean inlet)

RBI Monetary Policy 2025: Bi-Monthly Highlights

The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has announced the outcome of its first policy review of the new financial year. RBI MPC voted unanimously for the repo rate to be reduced by 25 bps to 6%, effective immediately. The RBI MPC reduces the SDF rate to 5.75% and the MSF rate to 6.25%.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held its 54th meeting from **April 7 to 9, 2025** under the chairmanship of Shri Sanjay Malhotra, Governor, Reserve Bank of India. The MPC members Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Shri Saugata Bhattacharya, Prof. Ram Singh, Dr. Rajiv Ranjan, and Shri M. Rajeshwar Rao attended the meeting. The remaining meetings for this year are scheduled for June 4–6, August 5–7, September 29–October 1, December 3–5, and February 4–6.

Current Rate

Policy	Rate
Policy Repo Rate	6.00%
Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) Rate	5.75%
Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate	6.25%
Bank Rate	6.25%
Fixed Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%

RBI Gov Announces Six Additional Measures

- Propose to enable the securitisation of stressed assets;
- Guidelines on co-lending are to be extended to all regulated entities on all loans.
- Regulations for loans against collateral against gold;
- Comprehensive guidelines on partial credit enhancement by regulated entities;
- NPCI, in consultation with banks and stakeholders, to get the freedom to revise the transaction limit for UPI in person-to-merchant transactions from Rs 2,00,000.
- Regulatory sandbox to be theme-neutral, on-tap.

Check out the latest GDP growth projections by the RBI

GDP Growth Projections	Previous	Now
FY26	6.7%	6.5%
Q1FY26	6.7%	6.5%
Q2FY26	7.0%	6.7%
Q3FY26	6.5%	6.6%
Q4FY26	6.5%	6.3%

Check out the latest CPI inflation projections by RBI

CPI Inflation Projections	Previous	Now
FY26	4.2%	4.0%
Q1FY26	4.5%	3.6%
Q2FY26	4.0%	3.9%
Q3FY26	3.8%	3.8%
Q4FY26	4.2%	4.4%

India-UAE Strengthen To Enhance Strategic Partnership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum held high-level discussions in New Delhi on April 8, 2025, aimed at enhancing the **India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**. Their talks focused on strengthening cooperation in defence, coast guard operations, trade, technology, space, and people-to-people ties. Sheikh Hamdan's first official visit to India as crown prince marked a significant milestone in bilateral relations, underscoring shared strategic priorities and mutual economic interests.

Key Highlights

Defence and Security Cooperation

- India and UAE agreed to deepen defence and Coast Guard cooperation.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to formalise Coast Guard collaboration.
- Talks between Sheikh Hamdan and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh emphasised scaling defence ties to match trade growth.

Key focus areas include

- Joint training exchanges
- Co-production and co-development projects
- Defence manufacturing collaborations
- Both sides welcomed the India-UAE Defence Partnership Forum.
- Complementarity between Make-in-India and Make-in-Emirates initiatives was discussed.

High-Level Diplomatic Engagements

- PM Modi described Sheikh Hamdan's visit as a reaffirmation of the "deep-rooted friendship".
- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also met with Sheikh Hamdan, expressing appreciation for the strong ties.
- Sheikh Hamdan described India-UAE relations as being "built on trust, shaped by history."

Trade and Economic Cooperation

- Dubai Chamber hosted the Dubai-India Business Forum in Mumbai with 200 Indian business leaders.

Key trade stats,

- India-UAE non-oil trade in 2023: \$54.2 billion
- Dubai-India bilateral trade:** \$45.4 billion
- Dubai's investment in India:** \$4.68 billion

In 2024

- 16,623 Indian companies joined the Dubai Chamber of Commerce.
- Indian companies in Dubai now total over 70,000.

Connectivity and People-to-People Ties

- Dubai welcomed 3.14 million South Asian visitors in 2024, with India as the largest source.
- Leaders emphasized the role of connectivity, culture, and historical links in bolstering bilateral ties.

Telangana Becomes First State to Implement SC Sub-Categorisation

The **Telangana government** has become the **first in India to implement Scheduled Castes (SC) sub-categorisation**, following the Supreme Court's approval. On April 14, 2025—**coinciding with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's birth anniversary**—the state issued a Government Order (GO) enforcing the **Telangana Scheduled Castes (Rationalization of Reservations) Act, 2025**. The move aims to rationalize the existing 15% SC reservation by dividing 59 SC sub-castes into three groups based on inter-se backwardness, thus ensuring more equitable distribution of benefits. This initiative aligns with historical efforts like the **Lokur Committee (1965)** and more recent **Justice Ramachandra Raju and Usha Mehra Commissions**, reflecting a shift toward targeted affirmative action.

Key Highlights of the SC Sub-Categorisation in Telangana

Legislative and Legal Framework

- The Telangana Assembly passed the Act on March 18, 2025.
- The Act received Governor's assent on April 8, 2025.
- The GO was issued on April 14, Ambedkar Jayanti.
- Based on the Supreme Court's judgment on August 1, 2024, which permitted SC sub-categorisation.
- Justice Shamim Akhtar led the one-man commission appointed in October 2024.

Structure of SC Sub-Categorisation

- Total SC Reservation:** 15% (based on 2011 Census).
- SCs divided into 3 Groups based on social and educational backwardness.

Group No. of Communities

Group 1

- Communities:** 15 (most disadvantaged)
- Population Share:** 3.288% (~1.71 lakh)
- Reservation Allocation:** 1%

Group 2

- Communities:** 18 (moderately backward)
- Population Share:** 62.74% (~34 lakh)
- Reservation Allocation:** 9%

Group 3

- Communities:** 26 (relatively better-off)
- Population Share:** 33.963% (~17 lakh)
- Reservation Allocation:** 5%

Key Basis for Categorisation

- Population size, literacy rates, employment, education access, financial assistance, and political participation.
- The Shamim Akhtar Commission received over 8,600 representations from communities.
- Final report submitted after extended consultation period.

Major Statements and Justifications

Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha

- Said it's not a final solution, but a tool for upliftment.
- Emphasized the need for education, skill training, industrial support, and financial aid.
- Highlighted the Budiga Janga caste as an example of disproportionate disadvantage.

Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy

- Chaired final meeting on April 13, 2025.
- Rejected the creamy layer within SCs.
- Clarified no existing benefits will be diluted.
- Mentioned Telangana's SC population now stands at 17.5%, so reservations may be increased after 2026 Census.

Political and Social Responses

- CPI MLA Kunamneni Sambasiva Reddy:** Questioned downgrading of Rella community to Group 3.
- AIMIM MLA Majid Hussain:** Suggested increasing SC reservation to 18% and creating 4 categories instead of 3.
- The government maintained 3 groups as optimal—2 would cause imbalance, 4 would be excessive.

SC Laid Down 3 Month Deadline For President To Assent Bill Reserved By Governor

In a **landmark judgment in State of Tamil Nadu vs. Governor of Tamil Nadu (2023)**, the Supreme Court of India addressed a critical void in the legislative process—delays in **Presidential assent to State Bills reserved under Article 201**. For the first time, the Court established a 3-month deadline for the President's decision, ensuring accountability and protecting the principles of federalism and democratic governance. Additionally, the Court advised that the President ought to seek the opinion of the Supreme Court under Article 143 in cases where a Bill is reserved for perceived unconstitutionality. This judgment is a significant step toward safeguarding the spirit of cooperative federalism and curbing executive arbitrariness.

Key Highlights on SC Verdict

Constitutional Articles Involved

- Article 201:** Deals with President's powers on State Bills reserved by the Governor.
- Article 143:** Provides the power to the President to seek advisory opinion of the Supreme Court.

SC Interpretation of Article 201

- When a Governor reserves a Bill for the President's consideration, the **President must act within 3 months**.
- Earlier, no timeline existed, causing legislative paralysis and uncertainty.
- The Court held that indefinite delay is unconstitutional and violates the principle of non-arbitrariness.

Time-Bound Decision

- 3-month deadline is now established for the President to assent or withhold assent.
- The decision must be reasoned and communicated to the concerned State Government.

No "Absolute Veto"

- The President cannot indefinitely withhold assent—this would amount to an unconstitutional "absolute veto".
- The withholding must be justified with sound legal reasoning, not political considerations.

Recourse to Judiciary

- **States may approach courts if there is prolonged inaction.**
- They can file a writ petition seeking a Mandamus to compel Presidential action.

Article 143: Seeking SC Opinion

- If the Governor reserves a Bill citing unconstitutionality, the President ought to consult the SC.
- Though not binding, SC's advisory opinion holds high persuasive value.
- Prevents enactment of patently unconstitutional laws, saving public resources.

Difference Between Governor & President

- If the Governor returns a Bill, and it is re-passed by the State Legislature, he must assent.
- The President is not bound similarly under Article 201.

Policy vs Constitutionality

- SC will only advise if the issue is a purely legal/constitutional question.
- It will not intervene if the matter pertains to policy, socio-economic or political questions.

Supporting References

- Sarkaria Commission (1988) & Punchhi Commission (2010) recommended,
- Time-bound Presidential decisions.
 - Article 143 consultation in cases of constitutional doubts.
 - MHA Office Memorandums (2016) also prescribed a 3-month timeline.

Justice BR Gavai Next CJI of India as Successor to Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna

On April 16, 2025, **Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna** named **Justice B R Gavai**, the **second-most senior judge of the Supreme Court**, as his successor. This announcement was made through a letter to the Union Law Ministry, and after government approval, Justice Gavai is set to become the 52nd CJI of India. Justice Gavai, who was appointed to the Supreme Court in 2019, will take office as CJI after the retirement of CJI Khanna on May 13, 2025. Justice Gavai's legal journey spans decades, with significant contributions to Indian jurisprudence, particularly in constitutional and administrative law.

Career Overview of Justice B R Gavai

Background and Early Career

- Born in Amravati, Maharashtra, Justice Gavai began his legal career by joining the Bar in 1985.
- Initially, he worked under Raja S Bhonsale, a former Advocate General and Judge of the Bombay High Court, until 1987.
- He practiced primarily before the Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court, focusing on constitutional and administrative law.

Government Roles

- Appointed as Assistant Government Pleader and Additional Public Prosecutor for the Nagpur Bench in 1992-93.
- Later promoted to Government Pleader and Public Prosecutor from 2000 onwards.

Judicial Career

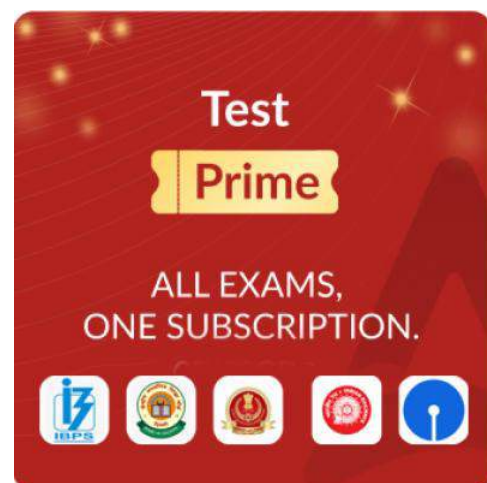
- Elevated to Additional Judge of the Bombay High Court in November 2003.
- Became a permanent judge of the Bombay High Court in November 2005.
- Appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court in May 2019.

Key Judicial Contributions of Justice BR Gavai

- Justice Gavai has been involved in several landmark rulings, which have had significant implications on India's legal and constitutional landscape. Some of his notable contributions include,

Demonetization Verdict (January 2023)

- Justice Gavai was part of the majority verdict that upheld the Government of India's decision to demonetize Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 currency notes in 2016.
- Sub-Categorization of Scheduled Castes and Tribes (August 2024):
- In the landmark case concerning the sub-categorization of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), Justice Gavai advocated for applying the "creamy layer" principle to these communities. This would ensure that only those truly in need benefit from affirmative action.



Abrogation of Article 370 (2019)

- As part of a five-judge bench, Justice Gavai upheld the Centre's decision to revoke Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

Critique of Bulldozer Demolitions (November 2024)

- In a two-judge bench, Justice Gavai criticized the use of bulldozers to demolish properties of crime suspects, asserting that such demolitions without due process violated the rule of law.

Bhagavad Gita & Natyashastra Added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register

India has added another feather to its civilisational cap with the inclusion of the **Bhagavad Gita manuscripts** and **Bharat Muni's Natyashastra** in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. This move globally acknowledges India's rich intellectual and cultural heritage. The Prime Minister and Union Culture Minister have celebrated this moment as a significant milestone. With these additions, India now has 14 documentary heritages inscribed on the prestigious list.

Key Highlights

What is the Memory of the World Register?

- Established in 1992, UNESCO's Memory of the World (MoW) Programme aims to preserve and provide access to documentary heritage of global significance. It safeguards manuscripts, archives, oral traditions, audio-visual content, and library collections.

India's Inclusion in 2025

- On April 17, 2025, Bhagavad Gita manuscripts and Natyashastra by Bharat Muni were added to the register.
- India's total entries in the list now stand at 14.

Bhagavad Gita's Significance

- A core spiritual text of Hinduism, part of the Mahabharata's Bhishma Parva.
- Considered a universal guide to philosophy, dharma (duty), and spirituality.
- Translated into nearly 80 languages globally.

Natyashastra's Significance

- An ancient treatise on dramaturgy, theatre, and performance arts, attributed to Bharat Muni.
- Covers various aspects like acting, stage design, music, dance, and aesthetics (rasa theory).
- A foundational text for classical Indian dance and drama traditions.

Official Reactions

- PM Narendra Modi hailed the announcement as a "proud moment for every Indian" and acknowledged the Gita and Natyashastra for nurturing civilisation and consciousness.
- Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat called it a "historic moment" for Bharat's civilisational heritage.

Global Perspective

- A total of 74 new collections were added in 2025, bringing the global total to 570.
- 14 of the new entries are related to scientific documentary heritage, including contributions by women and multilateral institutions.

UNESCO's Statement

- UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay emphasized that documentary heritage is fragile but essential to human memory.
- The register supports preservation efforts, knowledge sharing, and serves as a global archive.

UNESCO's Broader Programme

- UNESCO supports the creation of regional and national registers.
- Over 100 countries now have Memory of the World committees.
- The programme promotes the universal access to heritage documents.

Maharashtra Governor Presents Yashraj Bharti Samman Awards 2025

Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan conferred the 3rd edition of the 'Yashraj Bharti Samman' awards to three notable grassroots-level organizations for their exemplary contributions in the fields of healthcare, education for sustainable development, and governance. The award ceremony, held in Mumbai, recognized the impact of Jan Swasthya Sahayog (Chhattisgarh), Pratham Education Foundation, and the Services Plus platform developed by the National Informatics Centre. The event witnessed the presence of dignitaries such as former Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Dilip Walse Patil and India's G-20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant. Governor Radhakrishnan highlighted the pressing need to improve education quality, enhance healthcare in tribal areas, and promote ethical governance to drive true social change.

Key Highlights of the Yashraj Bharti Samman 2025

Award Overview

- The Yashraj Bharti Samman is presented to individuals or organizations contributing meaningfully at the grassroots level.
- This is the 3rd edition of the award.

Awardees and Their Contributions

Jan Swasthya Sahayog (Chhattisgarh)

- Recognized for delivering expert-led healthcare services in remote and tribal regions.
- Focuses on equity in health services and access to affordable care.

Pratham Education Foundation

- Honored for promoting sustainable development through education.
- Known for innovative programs like ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) to monitor and improve learning outcomes across India.

Services Plus Platform (NIC)

- Developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- A digital platform aimed at enhancing good governance by providing citizen-centric e-services efficiently and transparently.

Event Insights

- Held in Mumbai, organized by the Raj Bhavan.

Attended by key dignitaries including,

- Dilip Walse Patil, Former Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Speaker.
- Amitabh Kant, India's G-20 Sherpa.

Governor's Address

- **Education:** Expressed concern over falling standards of education despite the large number of schools in Maharashtra.
- **Healthcare:** Stressed the importance of specialist-led care to improve the quality of life in tribal areas.
- **Governance:** Emphasized the need to combat corruption through public awareness and to achieve ethical governance as a foundation for social transformation.

Laureus World Sports Awards 2025: Check Complete Winners List

The **2025 Laureus World Sports Awards** celebrated its 25th anniversary with a grand ceremony in Madrid, honoring outstanding athletes and teams for their exceptional performances over the past year. The event recognized both individual brilliance and collective achievements across various sports disciplines.

The **Laureus World Sports Awards**, often dubbed the "Oscars of Sports", celebrated the most remarkable athletes and sporting achievements of the past year. Held in the vibrant city of **Madrid**, the 2025 edition of the event brought together legends, rising stars, and game-changers across various disciplines.

Mondo Duplantis: The Vaulting Legend

Mondo Duplantis, the 25-year-old **Swedish-American pole vaulter**, was named **Laureus World Sportsman of the Year**, a title he clinched for the **first time** after being nominated three years in a row.

- Duplantis is hailed as the **greatest pole vaulter of all time**. He surpassed top contenders like:
- **Carlos Alcaraz** (Tennis – Spain)
- **Léon Marchand** (Swimming – France)
- **Tadej Pogačar** (Cycling – Slovenia)
- **Max Verstappen** (Formula 1 – Netherlands)

In 2024, Duplantis:

- Won **his second World Indoor Championship gold**.
- **Broke his own world record for the ninth time**.
- Won **Olympic gold in Paris**.

His award was even more memorable with **Usain Bolt**—the only other track-and-field athlete to win this honour—paying a special tribute to him.

Simone Biles: The Queen Returns

After a period of absence from competition, **Simone Biles** made a heroic comeback at the **Paris Olympics**, winning:

- **Three gold medals**
- **One silver medal**

She was honoured with the **Laureus World Sportswoman of the Year Award**, making it her **fourth win**, a feat that **equals Serena Williams' record**.

- This win affirms her status as **one of the most decorated gymnasts in history**.
- Biles and Duplantis both previously earned the **Comeback of the Year** honour, showcasing their resilience.

Full List of Laureus World Sports Awards 2025 Winners

Category	Winner
World Sportsman of the Year	Mondo Duplantis
World Sportswoman of the Year	Simone Biles
World Team of the Year	Real Madrid
Breakthrough of the Year	Lamine Yamal
Comeback of the Year	Rebeca Andrade
Sportsperson with a Disability	Jiang Yuyan
Action Sportsperson of the Year	Tom Pidcock
Sport for Good Award	Kick4Life
Sporting Icon Award	Rafael Nadal
Lifetime Achievement Award	Kelly Slater

IISc Tops Times Higher Education Asia Rankings 2025

The **Times Higher Education (THE) Asia University Rankings 2025** were unveiled on **April 23**, showcasing the top universities in Asia. With 853 universities from 35 countries and territories included in this year's rankings, the list highlights the leading institutions excelling in research, teaching, and innovation across the continent. **The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) continues to shine, securing the top spot for Indian universities, ranked 38th overall in Asia**. However, many Indian institutions saw a drop in their rankings compared to last year, signaling the evolving competition in higher education.

Key Highlights of THE Asia Rankings 2025

- IISc is the highest-ranked Indian university at 38th position, despite a drop from 32nd place in 2024.
- Anna University and IIT Indore follow at 111th and 131st positions, respectively, marking a slight decline from their previous rankings.

- Mahatma Gandhi University ranks at 140th, slightly down from 134th last year.
- Other prominent Indian universities such as Shoolini University, Saveetha Institute, and Jamia Millia Islamia also feature in the rankings.
- In the broader regional context, China continues to dominate the rankings, with Tsinghua University and Peking University leading the charge at first and second places. Universities from Singapore, Japan, and Hong Kong also make up significant portions of the top 10 spots.

Detailed Breakdown of Indian Universities in the Rankings

- 38th – Indian Institute of Science (IISc)
- 111th – Anna University
- 131st – Indian Institute of Technology Indore
- 140th – Mahatma Gandhi University
- 146th – Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences
- 149th – Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences
- 161st – Jamia Millia Islamia
- 184th – Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati
- 184th – KIIT University
- 188th – Aligarh Muslim University
- 188th – UPES
- 191st – Indian Institute of Technology Patna
- 191st – National Institute of Technology Rourkela
- 200th – International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad

International Trends in the Rankings

- **China's dominance:** Tsinghua University and Peking University retain the top two positions.
- **Singapore's rise:** National University of Singapore ranks 3rd, followed by Nanyang Technological University at 4th.
- **Japan and Hong Kong:** Universities such as The University of Tokyo and The University of Hong Kong continue to perform well in the rankings.
- **New entrants:** Four countries, including Uzbekistan, Bahrain, Mongolia, and Syria, are featured for the first time in the rankings.

Justice Dinesh Maheshwari Appointed Chairperson of the 23rd Law Commission of India

In a significant development in the Indian legal landscape, **Justice (Retd.) Dinesh Maheshwari**, a former **Supreme Court judge**, has been appointed as the **Chairperson of the 23rd Law Commission of India** in **April 2025**. The announcement marks a crucial step in the government's ongoing efforts to review and recommend reforms in various aspects of Indian law, particularly the long-debated **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)**.

Tenure and Composition of the 23rd Law Commission

The **23rd Law Commission** was formally constituted on **September 1, 2024**, with its term extending until **August 31, 2027**. It comprises a total of **seven members**, including:

- **One Chairperson:** Justice (Retd.) Dinesh Maheshwari
- **Four full-time members:** Including **Hitesh Jain** (a lawyer) and **P. Verma** (an academician who was also part of the 22nd Law Commission)
- **Two ex-officio members:** From the **Department of Legal Affairs and Legislative Department**

In addition, the government may appoint up to **five part-time members**, and **serving judges**, if included, will function as **full-time members** until their **retirement or end of the Commission's term**.

Focus on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC)

A major agenda for the 23rd Commission will be to **examine the feasibility of implementing a Uniform Civil Code (UCC)**—a politically and socially sensitive subject in India. The UCC aims to **replace personal laws based on religion or community** with a **common set of civil laws** applicable to all citizens.

Background of UCC Consultations:

- The **22nd Law Commission**, formed earlier, initiated **nationwide consultations** on the UCC in **2023**, collecting **public input** from **over 70 consultations**.
- It had **drafted a 749-page preliminary report**, but the process was **incomplete** after its then-chairperson, **Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi**, was appointed as **Lokpal**.
- The **21st Law Commission**, in its **2018 report**, had opined that **UCC was "neither necessary nor desirable at this stage"**, creating a divergence in policy direction.

The **23rd Commission** is now expected to **revisit and finalize recommendations** on this contentious issue, taking into account the changing **socio-legal environment** in the country.

Political Significance of the UCC Agenda

The **Uniform Civil Code** has long been a part of the **Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) core agenda**, along with:

- The **abrogation of Article 370** (granted special status to Jammu & Kashmir)
- The **construction of the Ram Mandir** in Ayodhya

Both of these promises were **fulfilled during BJP's second term (2019–2024)**. The **UCC** now remains the **final pillar** of the party's ideological roadmap.

Developments in States

- **Uttarakhand** became the **first Indian state to implement a UCC**, passing its own **Uniform Civil Code Bill**.
- **Gujarat** has also formed a **drafting committee** to explore the adoption of a similar code.

In **2022**, the **Central Government** told the **Supreme Court** that the existence of different personal laws is an **"affront to the nation's unity"**, indicating its strong support for legal uniformity.

Financial and Operational Structure

To support its functioning, the **23rd Law Commission** has a well-defined compensation and operational structure:

- The **Chairperson (Retired)** will receive a **monthly honorarium of ₹2.5 lakh**, inclusive of pension benefits.
- The **Retired full-time members** are entitled to **₹2.25 lakh per month**, also inclusive of pension.

The Commission is expected to work independently but in close coordination with the **Ministry of Law and Justice**, as well as other legal stakeholders and civil society organizations, to ensure **inclusive and practical legal recommendations**.

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2025: Resumption After Five Years

The Kailash Mansarovar Yatra (KMY) is a significant annual pilgrimage symbolizing deep religious and cultural ties between India and China. It holds immense importance for Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and followers of the Bon religion. Circumambulating Mount Kailash is believed to bring spiritual merit, and bathing in Lake Mansarovar is thought to cleanse one's sins. The pilgrimage was suspended in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and border tensions. Its resumption after five years marks a positive development in religious tourism and bilateral cooperation.

Why in News?

- On April 26, 2025, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.
- The pilgrimage will be conducted between June and August 2025.
- A total of 750 pilgrims will be allowed, divided into batches traveling via Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand) and Nathu La Pass (Sikkim).

What is Kailash Mansarovar Yatra?

The Kailash Mansarovar Yatra is an annual government-organized pilgrimage for Indian citizens to visit Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar in Tibet Autonomous Region, China. It has deep religious significance:

- **Hindus** consider Mount Kailash as the abode of Lord Shiva.
- **Buddhists** regard it as the dwelling of Buddha Demchok.
- **Jains** believe it is where their first Tirthankara attained liberation.
- **Bon religion** followers worship it as a sacred mountain.

The main objective of the yatra is to promote religious pilgrimage and cultural exchange between India and China.

Key Details or Features

There are two official routes for the pilgrimage:

- **Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand):** Traditional route operational since 1981.
- **Nathu La Pass (Sikkim):** Motorable route introduced in 2015.

Pilgrim details:

- Five batches of 50 pilgrims each will travel via Lipulekh Pass.
- Ten batches of 50 pilgrims each will travel via Nathu La Pass.

The registration process is fully computerized through <https://kmy.gov.in>, ensuring a fair, random, and gender-balanced selection. The yatra is coordinated by multiple agencies, including the MEA, Ministry of Home Affairs, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), and the state governments of Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Delhi, along with Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN).

Impact/Significance

The resumption of the yatra carries several important implications:

- **Religious and Cultural:** Reinforces spiritual traditions and the faith of devotees.
- **Diplomatic Relations:** Symbolizes improving India-China ties through people-to-people interaction.
- **Economic Benefits:** Boosts tourism in Uttarakhand and Sikkim, generating local employment in hospitality, transport, and logistics sectors.
- **Strategic Value:** Enhances border infrastructure and connectivity, strengthening national security in sensitive regions.

Challenges or Concerns

Despite the positive developments, several challenges persist:

- **Security:** Continued tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) pose risks.
- **Logistics and Safety:** Harsh terrain, high altitudes, and unpredictable weather endanger pilgrims' health.
- **Diplomatic Sensitivity:** Fragile relations with China mean that adverse incidents could escalate tensions.
- **Environmental Concerns:** Increased pilgrim traffic may lead to ecological degradation in the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

Way Forward/Solutions

A holistic approach is needed to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of the yatra:

- **Enhance Safety Measures:** Strengthen medical screening, emergency facilities, and rescue operations.
- **Maintain Diplomatic Dialogue:** Sustain engagement with China to avoid misunderstandings and promote cooperation.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure Development:** Improve roads, communication, and shelter facilities with minimal ecological damage.
- **Ecological Protection:** Enforce strict waste management and promote eco-friendly tourism practices.
- **Pilgrim Training:** Provide high-altitude acclimatization and environmental awareness programs to participants.

Cabinet Approvals

Cabinet approves "Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II) for financial years 2024-25 to 2028-29

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, today approved the Vibrant Villages Programme -II (VVP-II) as a Central Sector Scheme (100% Centre funding), furthering its commitment for the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047 for 'Safe, Secured & Vibrant land borders'. The Programme would help in the comprehensive development of the villages located in the blocks abutting international land borders (ILBs), other than the Northern border already covered under VVP-I.
- With a total outlay of Rs.6,839 crore, the programme shall be implemented in select strategic villages in the States/UTs of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, J&K (UT), Ladakh (UT), Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal till the FY 2028-29.
- The objective of the programme is to create better living conditions and adequate livelihood opportunities to ensure prosperous and safe borders, control trans-border crime and assimilate the border population with the nation and inculcate them 'as eyes and ears of the border guarding forces', crucial for internal security.
- The programme shall provide funds for infrastructure development within the village or a cluster of villages, value chain development (through cooperatives, SHGs, etc), border specific outreach activity, education infrastructure like SMART classes, development of tourism circuits and works/projects to create diverse & sustainable livelihood opportunities in the border areas.
- The interventions would be border-specific, state and village specific, based on Village Action Plans prepared in a collaborative approach. All-weather road connectivity for these villages shall be undertaken under the already approved PMGSY-IV under the MoRD. A High-Powered Committee chaired by the Cabinet Secretary shall consider suitable relaxations in schematic guidelines for effective implementation of schemes in the border areas.
- The programme aims to achieve saturation in existing individual and household level welfare schemes in the identified villages under convergence as per scheme norms. The programme also aims to saturate all villages in such blocks in 4 thematic areas, namely all-weather road connectivity, telecom connectivity, television connectivity and electrification through convergence under existing scheme norms.
- The programme emphasizes enhancing vibrancy in these villages by organizing activities including fairs & festivals, awareness camps, celebration of National days, regular visits by Ministers, senior Government officers from Central and State/UT Government & night stays in such villages. This would boost the tourism potential and promote the local culture and heritage of these villages.

- Technology would be leveraged and information databases like PM Gati Shakti shall be used for effective implementation of the project.
- VVP-II along with VVP-I is a transformative initiative to make the border villages self-reliant and vibrant.

Cabinet approves four multitracking projects across Indian Railways

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved Four projects of Ministry of Railways with total cost of Rs. 18,658 crore (approx.). The Four projects covering 15 Districts in 3 States i.e., Maharashtra, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 1247 Kms.

These projects include:

- Sambalpur – Jarapda 3rd and 4th Line
- Jharsuguda – Sason 3rd and 4th Line
- Kharsia – Naya Raipur – Parmalkasa 5th and 6th Line
- Gondia – Balharshah doubling

The enhanced line capacity will improve mobility, providing enhanced efficiency and service reliability for Indian Railways. These multi-tracking proposals will ease operations and reduce congestion, providing the much-required infrastructural development on the busiest sections across Indian Railways. The projects are in line with the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Vision of a New India which will make people of the region "Atmanirbhar" by way of comprehensive development in the area which will enhance their employment/ self-employment opportunities.

The projects are result of PM-Gati Shakti National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity which have been possible through integrated planning and will provide seamless connectivity for movement of people, goods and services.

With these projects 19 New Stations will be constructed, enhancing connectivity to Two Aspirational Districts (Gadchiroli and Rajnandgaon). Multi-tracking project will enhance connectivity to approx. 3350 villages and about 47.25 lakh population.

- Kharsia – Naya Raipur – Parmalkasa will provide direct connectivity to new areas such as Baloda Bazar, this will create possibilities for setting up of new industrial units including cement plants in the region.
- These are essential routes for transportation of commodities such as agriculture products, fertilizer, coal, iron ore, steel, cement, limestone etc. The capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of magnitude 88.77 MTPA (Million Tonnes Per Annum). The Railways being environment friendly and energy efficient mode of transportation, will help both in achieving climate goals and minimizing logistics cost of the country, reduce oil import (95 Crore Litres) and lower CO₂ emissions (477 Crore Kg) which is equivalent to plantation of 19 Crore trees.

Parliament News

State-wise April Month Important Events

Andhra Pradesh

- The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet on April 15, 2025, approved a draft ordinance for sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes (SCs), enabling “reservation within reservation” to ensure equitable distribution of benefits based on degree of backwardness. Based on the Rajeev Ranjan Mishra Commission report, 59 SC sub-castes are divided into three groups—Group 1 (Most Backward – 1.0%), Group 2 (Backward – 6.5%), and Group 3 (Less Backward – 7.5%). Backed by the Supreme Court verdict, this move promotes inclusive development and better representation in education, jobs, and governance.
- Amaravati, the planned capital of Andhra Pradesh, is set to become the world’s first city powered entirely by renewable energy, with a focus on solar, wind, and hydropower. Covering 217 sq km along the Krishna River, the project, costing ₹65,000 crore, aims to generate 2,700 MW of clean energy by 2050, with at least 30% from solar and wind.

Arunachal Pradesh

- SJVN Ltd has released ₹269.97 crore as land compensation for the 3,097 MW Etalin Hydro Electric Project in Dibang Valley, Arunachal Pradesh, marking a major boost for India’s renewable energy goals. The payment, made on March 26, 2025, supports the construction of two dams on the Dri and Talo Rivers, along with an underground powerhouse, with commissioning set for December 2033. CM Pema Khandu praised SJVN’s efforts and affirmed full state support for project clearances.

Assam

- 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.

Bihar

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar launched the “Mahila Samvad” campaign, a state-wide initiative focused on empowering rural women by connecting them with welfare schemes and amplifying their voices in policy discussions. The campaign aims to educate women about government schemes, encourage their active use of public resources (healthcare, education, livelihood), and establish a two-way communication channel with government officials.

Gujarat

- The GP-DRASTI (Drone Response and Aerial Surveillance Tactical Interventions) program by Gujarat Police introduces quadcopters for real-time surveillance, quick crime response, and evidence gathering across 33 police stations in Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Surat, and Vadodara. Equipped with HD cameras, night vision, and 1 km zoom, drones can track targets, provide live footage, and assist in facial recognition during criminal events.

Haryana

- 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.
- Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced key initiatives to support Agniveers under the Agnipath Scheme, including a 20% reservation in Haryana Police jobs, making it the first state in India to offer such a guarantee. Additionally, provisions for affordable loans for self-employment and priority in gun licenses for private security roles were introduced, aiming to ensure the future welfare of Agniveers post-service. These steps reflect Haryana’s commitment to securing the livelihoods of Agniveers.
- The Haryana government has officially declared two Harappan civilization sites located in Bhiwani district — Mitathal and Tighrana — as protected archaeological sites and monuments. These sites, dating back over 4,400 years, hold immense historical and cultural value, shedding light on the evolution of early agricultural societies, town planning, craft industries, and trade during the Harappan and post-Harappan periods. The sites have now been brought under legal protection through a notification issued by the Haryana Heritage and Tourism Department under the Haryana Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1964. The move aims to safeguard these ancient settlements from encroachment and damage, with fencing and security arrangements to be implemented.

Maharashtra

- 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.

- Under **NEP 2020 reforms**, **Maharashtra** will implement a **new curriculum framework** from **2025–26**, making **Hindi mandatory** as a **third language** for **Classes 1 to 5** in **English and Marathi-medium schools**. This aligns with the **three-language formula** aimed at **multilingual proficiency** and **national integration**, and follows the **5+3+3+4 education structure** outlined in NEP.
- The **Maharashtra State Wildlife Board** has declared **DPS Flamingo Lake** as a **conservation reserve**, marking the first formal protection for a wetland linked to the **Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary**. This significant move aims to preserve the **fragile wetland ecosystem** of **Navi Mumbai**, reflecting the state government's commitment to **wildlife conservation** amidst rapid **urban development**.

Madhya Pradesh

- The **Cheetah Project Steering Committee** under the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** has approved relocating cheetahs from **Kuno National Park** to **Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary** in **Madhya Pradesh**, about **300 km apart**, as part of a long-term plan to establish a **meta-population** of **60–70 cheetahs** across a connected landscape. This move, under **Project Cheetah** (launched in 2022 with cheetahs from **Namibia** and **South Africa**), addresses concerns over space, **prey availability**.

Odisha

- **Similipal**, a rich ecological region in **Odisha**, was officially declared the **107th National Park of India** and **second in Odisha** on **April 24, 2025**, covering **845.70 sq km** across **11 forest ranges**. Known for its **biodiversity**—including **55 mammals**, **361 bird species**, and being a **major tiger reserve**—this move marks a milestone in **conservation**. Proposed in **1980**, the park's core area was cleared of human habitation, except for **Bakua village**, which was excluded. The new status ensures **stronger protection laws**, more **funding**, and aligns with the vision of "**Viksit Odisha**" and "**Viksit Bharat**", as noted by **CM Mohan Charan Majhi**.

Punjab

- 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**.

Telangana

- The **Telangana Bhu Bharati (Record of Rights) Act, 2025** introduces a landmark reform in land governance, addressing issues from the earlier **Dharani portal** system. The Act focuses on **decentralisation**, **citizen participation**, and **transparency** to improve land administration. It aims to correct errors in land records, decentralise **grievance redressal**, and ensure **accurate documentation** of ownership.

Tamil Nadu

- **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**.
- **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin** announced the formation of a **high-level committee** on **April 15, 2025**, to review **Centre-State relations** and propose measures to enhance **State autonomy**. The committee, chaired by **Justice Kurian Joseph** (Retired Supreme Court Judge), includes **K. Ashok Vardhan Shetty** and **M. Naganathan**. It will review constitutional provisions, laws, and policies, recommend restoring subjects from the **State List to Concurrent List**, and suggest reforms to improve **States' administrative capacity**.

Tripura

- The '**Garia and Borsho Boron Utsav 2025**' was inaugurated by **Tripura CM Manik Saha** on **April 21, 2025**, at **Swami Vivekananda Maidan, Agartala**. The two-day festival celebrates the **Garia Puja**, a key religious event for the **Tripuri and Reang communities**, dedicated to **Lord Shiva** for peace and prosperity. The festival features **traditional dances**, **folk songs**, **Rabindra Sangeet**, and **magic shows**, alongside **local food stalls** showcasing regional cuisine.

Uttarakhand

- **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.
- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami** launched the **Bhagirath mobile app** as part of the **Jal Sanrakshan Abhiyan 2025** (Water Conservation Campaign). The app allows citizens to report endangered water sources like **Naulas**, **Dharaas**, and rain-fed rivers, enabling prompt government action for their conservation. The campaign's theme, "**Dhara Mera, Naula Mera, Gaon Mera, Prayas Mera**," emphasizes collective action for preserving water resources.

West Bengal

- **West Bengal** is set to host a major **religious and cultural event** with the **inauguration of the Jagannath Dham Temple** in **Digha** on **April 30, 2025**, by **Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee**. The high-profile ceremony will see attendance from around **12,000–14,000 people**, including **VIP guests** like **chief ministers, political leaders, celebrities, and industrialists**.

Union Territories

- **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.

Launches & Inaugurations:

- 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**.
- 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**.
- **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**,

Important Festival

- 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**.
- The **11th edition of the Pondicherry Heritage Festival** kicked off with the vibrant **'Veedhi Vilayattu' (Street Games)** in **Puducherry's Tamil Quarter**, attracting over **250 children** and numerous residents. Held between **Easwaran Koil** and **Anna Salai**, the festival celebrated the city's **culture and history**, featuring traditional games like **Pallanguzhi, Pambaram, Dhayam, and Pacha Kuthirai**. Co-hosted by **People for Pondicherry's Heritage** and **PondyCAN**, the event successfully engaged the community, with the streets coming alive with traditional activities, food, and fun.
- The **Madhavpur Mela** was inaugurated by **Chief Minister Bhupendrabhai Patel** on **April 6, 2025**, during **Ram Navami**, celebrating the divine union of **Lord Krishna and Rukmaniji**. This **cultural and religious** festival, held in **Madhavpur, Porbandar**, symbolizes **unity and cultural harmony** across regions of India. Since its elevation to a **national event** in 2018, the fair has gained significance, attracting dignitaries like **Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**. Chief Minister Patel also launched new **pilgrimage facilities** at the **Rukmani Temple**, supporting **religious tourism** and infrastructure development.

Miscellaneous National News

- **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.
- 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**.

- 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**.
- 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**.
- 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**.
- 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**.
- 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.
- 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**."
- 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**.
- The **Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025**, which received **Presidential assent on April 5, 2025**, marks a pivotal change in the **administration of Waqf properties in India**. Passed after **intense three-day debates** in both the **Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha**, the Act has sparked **nationwide discussions and legal challenges**. While the government highlights its aim to enhance **transparency and accountability**, critics argue it may **infringe on constitutional rights** concerning **religious freedom**.
- On **April 7, 2025**, the **Central Government of India** announced a **₹2 per litre hike in excise duties on petrol (₹13/litre) and diesel (₹10/litre)**, effective from **April 8, 2025**. Despite the increase, the **Ministry of Petroleum** confirmed that **retail prices** will remain unchanged as **public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs)** like **IOCL, BPCL, and HPCL** will absorb the cost. The hike comes amid global **oil price fluctuations** caused by **US tariff policies** and increased **OPEC+ output**.
- On **April 9, 2025**, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will attend the **Navkar Mahamantra Divas** at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**, organized by the **Jain International Trade Organization (JITO)**. This global spiritual event, held on the eve of **Mahavir Jayanti**, aims to promote **peace, unity, and spiritual awakening**. With participation from **over 108 countries** and **1.08 crore devotees**, the event focuses on chanting the **Navkar Mahamantra** to foster **non-violence, tolerance, and ethical reflection**, with observances at **6,000+ venues** across India and internationally.
- The **7th edition of Poshan Pakhwada**, launched on **April 8, 2025**, by **Union Minister Savitri Thakur** in **New Delhi**, is a key initiative under **Poshan Abhiyaan** aimed at tackling **malnutrition** and improving **nutrition outcomes** for **children, pregnant women, lactating mothers, and adolescent girls**. Running till **April 22**, the campaign emphasizes **healthy lifestyles, malnutrition management, and awareness on the Poshan Tracker**, with the **Ministry of Women and Child Development** as the **nodal agency**, supported by ministries like **Health, Education, Rural Development, and Jal Shakti**, along with **State/UT governments**.

- According to the **PLFS 2024**, India's **unemployment rate** (15+ age group) dipped slightly from **5.0% to 4.9%**, showing modest gains in **employment opportunities**. **Rural unemployment** fell to **4.2%**, while **urban female unemployment** dropped from **8.9% to 8.2%**, even as **urban male unemployment** rose marginally. The **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** declined slightly to **59.6%**, though **urban LFPR** increased to **51.0%**. The **Worker Population Ratio (WPR)** fell marginally to **57.7%**, with a notable drop in **rural female WPR** due to fewer **unpaid female helpers**.
- In a **landmark move toward global expansion**, **IIM-Ahmedabad** is set to open its **first overseas campus in Dubai** following an **MoU with the UAE government**. The campus will launch in **September 2025** in **Dubai International Academic City (DIAC)**, offering a **one-year full-time MBA program** for **global professionals and entrepreneurs**.
- Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda** launched the **Inter-AIIMS Referral Portal**, developed by **AIIMS New Delhi**, to streamline **patient referrals** and enhance **healthcare delivery** using **facial recognition** and **automated workflows**. Initially piloted between **AIIMS New Delhi** and **AIIMS Bilaspur**, the portal aims for a **nationwide rollout** across **AIIMS hospitals**. Key benefits include **reduced waiting times**, **enhanced security**, and a **patient-centric approach**, with integration into the **Vishram Sadan portal** for affordable accommodation—marking a major leap toward **digital healthcare transformation** in India.
- The **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** has introduced a **Blue Category** for industries providing **Essential Environmental Services (EES)**, such as **waste-to-energy plants**, **biomining**, and **compressed biogas (CBG) plants**. These industries will receive **extended consent validity** (an additional 2 years, totaling 7 years) to incentivize their role in managing **pollution** and promoting **sustainable practices**. The **Pollution Index (PI)** categorizes industries into **Red, Orange, Green**, and now **Blue**, with **waste-to-energy plants** and **agro-residue-based CBG plants** moved to the **Blue Category** due to their environmental benefits.
- The **Ministry of Ayush** organized a special session of the **Rashtriya Karmayogi Jan Seva Programme** on **April 16, 2025**, at **Ayush Bhawan, New Delhi**, under the **Mission Karmayogi** framework in collaboration with the **Capacity Building Commission (CBC)**. The programme aimed to enhance **service orientation**, **professional capacity**, and **public service efficiency** among ministry personnel. The **first phase**, inaugurated by **Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha**, focused on creating a **responsive workforce**.
- In a **landmark judgment on April 15, 2025**, the **Supreme Court of India**, led by **Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan**, issued strong directives on **child trafficking**, urging **parental vigilance** and warning of **organized trafficking gangs** exploiting children for **sexual exploitation**, **forced labour**, **illegal adoptions**, and **child marriage** using **technology** for coordination. The court held **hospitals accountable** for newborn safety, exposed **loopholes in the Juvenile Justice Act**, **cancelled bail** of 13 accused, and ordered **trial completion within six months**, with **strict warnings to state authorities and High Courts** for any **non-compliance**.
- India is set to become the **world's fastest-growing large aviation market** by 2026, surpassing **China** in growth rate, with a projected **10.5% passenger traffic growth** compared to China's 8.9%. Key drivers include **low trips per capita**, a **rising middle class**, enhanced **aviation infrastructure**, expanding **airline networks**, and supportive policies like **UDAN** and **Gati Shakti**. India's **CAGR (2023–2027)** is projected at **9.5%**, higher than China's **8.8%**, positioning India as the **third-largest aviation market** globally by the next three decades.
- Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya** inaugurated India's first **Athlete Passport Management Unit (APMU)** at the **National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL)**, **New Delhi**, on **April 17, 2025**, marking a major stride in anti-doping efforts. As the **17th APMU globally**, it will manage **Athlete Biological Passports (ABP)** by tracking **biological markers over time** to detect **doping patterns** without identifying banned substances directly. This initiative aligns India with **global anti-doping standards** and strengthens its role as a **leader in ethical sports**, especially within the **Global South**.
- A **landmark study** in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* highlights the success of **Surat's cap-and-trade programme** for **particulate matter (PM) emissions**—the **world's first ETS for PM** and India's first **pollution trading system**. Launched in **September 2019** by the **GPCB** and the **University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute**, the scheme used **CEMS**, **emission permits**, and **auctions** to regulate 318 industrial plants.
- A **Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour**, led by **BJP MP Basavaraj Bommai**, has urged the **Ministry of Labour and Employment** to complete the **first-ever third-party evaluation** of the **Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS)**—administered by **EPFO**—by **end of 2025**. Launched in **November 1995**, the scheme has never been independently assessed. The panel also stressed the urgent need to **revise the minimum pension of ₹1,000**, citing the **rising cost of living** and long-overdue policy updates.
- The **Department of Consumer Affairs** has notified rules for the use of **radar equipment** to measure vehicle speed under the **Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011**, effective from **July 1, 2025**. The rules mandate that all radar equipment must be **verified** and **calibrated** by **Legal Metrology authorities** to ensure accuracy, compliance with international standards (OIML R 91), and prevent tampering.

- The **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH)** and **NHAI** have clarified that **no satellite-based tolling** will be launched from **May 1, 2025**. Instead, a **pilot project** of a **Barrier-Less Tolling System** using **ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition)** and **FASTag (RFID)** is being introduced at **selected toll plazas**. This system aims for **seamless toll collection** without stopping, with **E-notices** and **penalties** for non-compliance. A **nationwide rollout** will depend on pilot outcomes.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the **Vizhinjam International Seaport** on **May 2, 2025**, near **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**. It is **India's first semi-automated deep-water international container transshipment port**, developed under a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)** between the **Kerala Government** and **Adani Ports**, with an investment of over **₹18,000 crore**. Strategically located near **global shipping routes**, the port boosts **India's trade**, supports the **Make in India** initiative, and enhances **Kerala's role as a maritime hub**.
- On **April 20, 2025**, two male cheetahs (likely **Prabhas and Pavak**) from **Kuno National Park (KNP)** be relocated to **Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary (GSWS)** in **Madhya Pradesh**, marking a major step in **India's Cheetah Reintroduction Project**. This expansion aims to establish **GSWS as a second home** for cheetahs, with **64 sq.km enclosures** and a boosted **prey base**. While plans to bring 6–8 cheetahs from **South Africa** are delayed, **4 cheetahs from Botswana** are expected in May.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** visit **Saudi Arabia** on **April 22–23, 2025**, marking his first visit during his **third term**. The trip aims to deepen ties in **trade, energy, defence**, and the **India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEEC)**. Modi will meet **Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman** in **Jeddah**, with discussions expected on **regional stability, Houthi disruptions**, and **IMEEC revival** as a counter to **China's BRI**. In **FY 2023–24**, **bilateral trade** stood at **USD 42.98 billion**, with **India importing 14.3% of crude oil** and **18.2% of LPG** from **Saudi Arabia**. **Defence cooperation** is growing, including naval exercises like **'Al Mohed Al Hindi'**.
- **India's Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** system has significantly boosted welfare efficiency, saving **₹3.48 lakh crore** from 2009 to 2024. The system reduced subsidies from **16% to 9%** of total government expenditure, while the number of beneficiaries surged **16-fold**. Key programs like **PDS, MGNREGS, PM-KISAN**, and fertilizer subsidies saw major savings, with a strong **correlation** between beneficiary growth and savings.
- On **April 22, 2025**, a **terrorist attack** in **Baisaran, Pahalgam (Anantnag, South Kashmir)** claimed **26 lives** and injured many, targeting **tourists** during the **peak season** in a major blow to **J&K's tourism revival**. The attackers, believed to be **2–3 terrorists**, opened **indiscriminate fire** at the scenic, foot-access-only meadow. This first such **tourist-targeted attack in 2025** has triggered **travel cancellations**, jeopardized the **local economy**, and raised serious **security and political concerns**, with condemnation from **national and regional leaders** and intensified calls for policy reassessment.
- The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**, in collaboration with **Microsoft**, launched the **'AI Careers for Women'** initiative on **April 22, 2025**, aiming to train **20,000 women** from **Tier-II and Tier-III towns** across **six states** in **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**. Through a **240-hour curriculum** developed with **NCVET**, and delivered via a **Hub-and-Spoke model** (**30 Centres of Excellence** and **150 spoke centers**), the program promotes **digital inclusion, leadership, and entrepreneurship** among rural women.
- **US Vice President JD Vance** began his **first official visit to India** on **April 21, 2025**, receiving a **Guard of Honour** at **Palam Airport, New Delhi**, accompanied by **Second Lady Usha Vance** and their children. Welcomed by **Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw**, the **four-day visit** aims to enhance **India-US strategic ties** in **trade, defence, and economic cooperation**. A key meeting with **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** on **April 21 at 6:30 PM** at **7, Lok Kalyan Marg** is set to explore deeper **bilateral relations** and a potential **trade agreement**. The itinerary also includes cultural visits to **Jaipur and Agra**.
- **India's largest cruise terminal**, the **Mumbai International Cruise Terminal (MICT)**, was inaugurated by **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** on **April 21, 2025**, marking a major boost to **cruise tourism** and **maritime infrastructure**. With an annual **capacity of 1 million passengers** and the ability to handle **five ships simultaneously**, the **Rs 556 crore** terminal supports ships up to **300 meters** in length.
- In response to the **Pahalgam terror attack** that killed **26 people**, including a **foreign national**, the **Indian government** has implemented a **5-point action plan** targeting **Pakistan**. Key measures include the **suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty**, **closure of the Attari-Wagah border**, **cancellation of the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme** for Pakistani nationals, **expulsion of Pakistani military advisors**, and a **reduction in diplomatic staff** at the **Indian High Commission** in **Islamabad**. These steps aim to **isolate Pakistan diplomatically** and curb cross-border terrorism. The attack, executed by **Pakistani nationals**, is under investigation, with a **massive manhunt** launched for the perpetrators.



- In a major diplomatic fallout after the **Pahalgam terror attack**, Pakistan has suspended the **1972 Simla Agreement**, closed the **Wagah border**, banned Indian airlines from its airspace, and halted all trade with India, citing alleged Indian involvement in terrorism. This follows India's suspension of the **Indus Waters Treaty**, downgrade of diplomatic ties, visa cancellations, and closure of the **Attari post**. With all bilateral agreements now effectively frozen, tensions between the nuclear neighbors have sharply escalated, with Pakistan warning that any diversion of **Indus water would be an "Act of War."**
- India is set to allow **49% foreign investment** in its **nuclear power sector**, marking a major **policy shift** to boost **clean energy**, reduce **coal dependency**, and achieve its **carbon reduction goals**. The government aims to **amend the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (2010)** and the **Atomic Energy Act (1960)** by the **Monsoon Session 2025**, enabling **foreign and private firms** to invest, build, and operate nuclear facilities.

GOVT SCHEMES

CENTRAL GOVT SCHEMES

Name of Initiative	Purpose
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.
"One State, One RRB" policy	- The Indian government is launching the "One State, One RRB" policy to enhance operational efficiency and reduce competition by consolidating the existing 43 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) into 28. - This move aims to improve credit flow and service delivery, particularly in rural areas, by merging smaller, less efficient banks. - The consolidation builds on previous efforts that reduced the number of RRBs from 196 to 43, with states like Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal most affected by the restructuring. - The policy focuses on cost rationalisation and strengthening the financial and operational frameworks of RRBs.
Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY),	- On April 5, 2025, Delhi became the 35th state or Union Territory to implement the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), providing healthcare coverage to economically disadvantaged residents. - Chief Minister Rekha Gupta hailed the move as historic, while Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh criticized the previous government's delays, announcing that registrations would begin on April 10, 2025. - The scheme, already operational in 34 states, covers 50 crore people and includes 36 lakh frontline workers. An MoU between the National Health Authority (NHA) and the Delhi government formalized the implementation.
Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana	- On 8th April 2025, India celebrates 10 years of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)—a flagship initiative launched in 2015 to fund the unfunded by offering collateral-free loans to micro and small enterprises. - PMMY has democratized access to finance, transformed livelihoods, and shifted the economic narrative from job-seeking to job-creating, especially in semi-urban and rural India. Today, over 52 crore loans worth ₹32.61 lakh crore have been sanctioned under this transformative scheme, empowering entrepreneurs from all walks of life.
Sagarmala Programme	- 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.

Name of Initiative	Purpose
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)	- 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.

STATE GOVT SCHEMES

Swarna Andhra-2047 vision	- 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.
Assam government	- 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.
Stand-Up India Scheme	- 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.
Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath	- On Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's 135th birth anniversary (April 14, 2025), Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath announced that the upcoming 'Zero Poverty' Mission will be named after Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, aiming to uplift every deprived citizen above the poverty line. - Launched at the Ambedkar Mahasabha campus, Lucknow, the mission focuses on a saturation approach to deliver all government benefits to marginalized communities like Musahar, Vantangia, Tharu, Sahariya, Gond, and Kol.
Pink E-Rickshaw Initiative	- The Pink E-Rickshaw Initiative, launched by Maharashtra Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, empowers women (aged 20–50)—especially widows, divorcees, and low-income groups—by providing 10,000 electric rickshaws across 8 districts, following a successful pilot in Pune. - With ₹1 lakh in subsidies (₹25,000 Central + ₹75,000 State), 10% down payment, and 70% low-interest bank loans, the scheme ensures affordable ownership.
Yeshasvini Health Insurance Scheme	- The Yeshasvini Health Insurance Scheme in Karnataka is set for a major overhaul, with an expert committee recommending a 15%–25% increase in medical procedure rates and a 50% hike for complex treatments like paediatric heart surgeries and oncology. - The scheme, relaunched in 2022–23 to boost rural health access, may also see the addition of 69 new procedures and removal of 6 outdated ones. - With 45.6 lakh members and only 782 empanelled hospitals, the updates aim to attract more hospitals, enhance financial sustainability, and improve universal health coverage, with an estimated cost of ₹127.5 crore and a proposed budget boost of ₹40 crore.

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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Saudi Arabia has imposed a temporary visa ban on individuals from 14 countries, including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, to control overcrowding during the Hajj pilgrimage. The ban affects Umrah visas, business visit visas, and family visit visas and aims to regulate the flow of visitors, prevent illegal overstaying, and ensure a smooth and secure Hajj season. The ban will remain in place until the end of the Hajj pilgrimage in mid-June 2025.
- Kazakhstan has discovered its largest-ever reserve of rare earth metals at the Kuirektykol site in the Karaganda region, with an estimated reserve of 1 million tons and potential reserves exceeding 20 million tons in the broader Zhana Kazakhstan zone. This discovery, located about 300 km southeast of Astana, positions Kazakhstan as a potential major player in the global critical minerals sector, especially as the world shifts toward green technology and aims to reduce reliance on suppliers like China.
- Gabon will hold a crucial presidential election on April 12, 2025, marking a key step in its transition from military to civilian rule after the August 2023 coup that ended the 56-year Bongo dynasty. Brice Oligui Nguema, the junta chief and frontrunner, is contesting as the "candidate of the people", having suspended his military duties under a new electoral code adopted in January 2025. He faces 7 other candidates, with main challenger Alain-Claude Bilie By Nze, the last PM under Ali Bongo.
- In a major shift in global trade policy, Donald Trump announced a 90-day pause on higher tariffs for most nations, offering a 10% "reciprocal tariff" instead, especially sparing countries like the EU, Vietnam, and South Africa. However, China faced a steep escalation, with tariffs on Chinese goods rising to 125%, in response to its 84% tariffs on US imports. Trump cited China's "lack of respect" and warned of further action.
- The US-China trade war intensified after the Trump administration imposed 104% tariffs on Chinese imports, prompting China to retaliate with 84% tariffs on US goods, up from 34%. In a sharp response, China blacklisted 12 US companies, added six to its unreliable entities list, enforced export controls on rare earths, and filed a WTO complaint, accusing the US of disrupting global trade stability.
- India and Italy have strengthened their Strategic Partnership by advancing cooperation in trade, defence, clean energy, and connectivity, notably through the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) and the Joint Strategic Action Plan (JSAP) 2025–29. During Italian Deputy PM Antonio Tajani's visit, both sides focused on boosting high-tech collaboration, space and digital innovation, and promoting a free Indo-Pacific. Key outcomes include tech transfer, youth mobility, and Italy's appointment of a special envoy for IMEEC, reaffirming deepening ties since their Strategic Partnership declaration in 2023.
- In April 2025, the Trump administration froze \$2.3 billion in federal funding to Harvard University after it rejected a list of controversial demands including dismantling DEI programs, enforcing merit-based policies, and restricting student activism. This unprecedented move has triggered a national debate over academic freedom, executive overreach, and constitutional rights of private institutions.
- Amid escalating US-China trade tensions, China has instructed its major airlines to halt the purchase and delivery of Boeing aircraft following President Trump's 145% tariff on Chinese goods. The move affects 179 aircraft orders from Air China, China Eastern, and China Southern, and suspends the import of US aircraft parts, hitting Boeing hard. Meanwhile, Airbus and China's COMAC emerge as key beneficiaries, gaining ground in the Asian aviation market.

- In Ecuador's **2025 presidential run-off**, **right-wing incumbent Daniel Noboa** secured a **full 4-year term** with **55.8%** of the vote, defeating **left-wing rival Luisa Gonzalez** (44.2%). Amid rampant **drug cartel violence** and a **28% poverty rate**, Noboa's tough-on-crime "**mano dura**" strategy, military deployments, and **U.S. anti-narcotics cooperation** resonated with voters. Gonzalez alleged **electoral fraud** and demanded a recount, though the **National Electoral Council** confirmed Noboa's clear win. His presidency focuses on **security, economic revival, and restoring public trust**.
- In **2024**, **Tanzania** recorded its hottest year since **1970**, with an average national temperature of **24.3°C**, 0.7°C above normal, surpassing the previous record set in **2023**. The year saw a significant rise in **nighttime temperatures**, with the **minimum temperature** averaging **19.3°C**, 1.1°C above the long-term average. In contrast, the **maximum temperature** averaged **28.8°C**.
- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has finalized a **Pandemic Treaty** proposal, set to be presented at the **78th World Health Assembly** on **May 19, 2025**. The agreement, drafted by the **Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB)**, aims to strengthen **pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR)** through a **binding international instrument** under the WHO Constitution.
- **General Brice Oligui Nguema** won Gabon's **2025 presidential election** with over **90% of the vote**, following a **military coup** in 2023 that ended the **Bongo family's 40-year rule**. Nguema, previously head of the **Republican Guard**, ran under a new **electoral code** allowing military officers to contest elections. Despite his promise to relinquish power after the coup, he secured the presidency in a **largely peaceful election**.
- The **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** has been elected as **Chair of INTERPOL's Committee on Governance**, with **Lt. Col. Dana Humaid Al Marzouqi** securing **67% of member state votes** during the election held at **INTERPOL HQ, Lyon** on **April 11, 2025**. This marks the **UAE's first leadership role** on this key platform, enhancing its **global influence in policing and law enforcement diplomacy**.
- In a landmark move, **India signed an agreement with the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** to host its **headquarters and secretariat**, reaffirming its leadership in **global wildlife conservation**. Launched by **PM Modi** in **April 2023** during the **50th anniversary of Project Tiger**, the **IBCA** focuses on the protection of **seven major big cats—tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma**. Now a **treaty-based intergovernmental body** (from 2024), with **India, Liberia, Eswatini, Somalia, and Nicaragua** ratifying it, the alliance will receive **₹150 crore support (2023–2029)** from India for infrastructure and operations.
- **China** has imposed **export restrictions** on seven key **Rare Earth Elements (REEs)—Samarium (Sm), Gadolinium (Gd), Terbium (Tb), Dysprosium (Dy), Lutetium (Lu), Scandium (Sc), and Yttrium (Y)**—citing **national security and non-proliferation concerns**, escalating global trade tensions following new **U.S. tariffs**. As a global leader in **REE mining and refining**, China's move threatens supply chains for industries reliant on REEs' **magnetic and optical properties**, such as **electronics, clean energy, defense, and EV manufacturing**, urging nations to **diversify sourcing** and reduce **dependence on Chinese exports**.
- In a **historic move**, **New York City Mayor Eric Adams** proclaimed **April 14, 2025**, as **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Day**, honoring the **135th birth anniversary** of the **architect of the Indian Constitution**. The announcement, made at the **United Nations Headquarters**, featured a keynote by **Union Minister Ramdas Athawale**, who highlighted Ambedkar's contributions to **social justice, human rights, and the 2030 SDGs**.
- **Klaus Schwab**, the **87-year-old founder** of the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**, has **resigned as Chairman** after leading the institution since **1971**. Known as the face of the **Davos Summit**, Schwab's departure on **April 21, 2025**, marks the end of an era as WEF faces criticism of **elitism, internal workplace issues, and a broader globalisation backlash**. **Peter Brabeck-Letmathe** has taken over as **interim Chair**.
- **Operation ATALANTA**, launched by the **European Union** in 2008, is a key maritime security initiative focused on the **Western Indian Ocean and Red Sea** regions. Initially created to combat the rise in **piracy** off the coast of **Somalia**, the operation has since evolved to address broader security challenges. A notable development includes a proposed **joint exercise** with the **Indian Navy** in May 2025 to strengthen cooperation and combat regional piracy threats.
- **UNESCO added 16 new Global Geoparks**, bringing the total to **229 across 50 countries**, covering **855,000 km²**. These geoparks span **Asia, Europe, Africa, and Latin America**, showcasing exceptional **geological heritage—from volcanic formations and fossil sites to glacial landscapes**. Notable new entries include **Mt Paektu (North Korea), Kanbula (China), Arran (UK), and Tungurahua Volcano (Ecuador)**. While **India has no UNESCO Global Geoparks yet**, these sites support **conservation, education, and sustainable development**, under the **Global Geoparks Network (GGN)** launched in **2015** by UNESCO.
- **China's testing of a fissile-free hydrogen bomb** using **magnesium hydride-based fusion** marks a radical shift in nuclear weaponry, bypassing traditional **uranium/plutonium fission** and exploiting **Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF)** and **magnetic compression (Z-pinch)**. This raises serious **arms control, proliferation, and legal challenges**, as it circumvents **NPT and CTBT** definitions.

BANKING & FINANCE

S. No.	Bank Name	Purpose
1.	Axis Bank	- 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.
2.	Bandhan Bank	- In April 2025, several significant announcements were made in India's banking sector. Bandhan Bank launched the Elite Plus Savings Account for High Net-worth Individuals (HNIs), offering benefits like unlimited cash deposits and enhanced insurance coverage. - Bank of Baroda introduced the bob Square Drive Deposit Scheme, providing attractive interest rates (up to 7.80% p.a.) for senior citizens and general customers.
3.	SBI Card	- SBI Card has partnered with Tata Digital to launch the Tata Neu SBI Card, available in two variants: Tata Neu Plus and Tata Neu Infinity. - Both cards offer rewards (NeuCoins), with up to 10% on purchases from Tata Neu and partner brands, redeemable for groceries, fashion, and travel. Benefits include lounge access, spend-based annual fee reversal, and cashback on bill payments.
4.	State Bank of India	- The State Bank of India (SBI) has reintroduced its 'Amrit Vrishti' FD Scheme from April 15, 2025, with revised interest rates targeting mainly senior (7.55%) and super-senior citizens (7.65%), while the general public will earn 7.05% on a unique 444-day tenure. - Originally launched in July 2024 and closed in March 2025, the scheme returns with no fixed deadline, aiming to ensure secure, high-return investment options for the elderly under SBI's senior citizen-focused financial products.
5.	Punjab National Bank	- On its 131st Foundation Day (April 12, 2025), Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched 34 new products and services to enhance financial inclusion, digital banking, and cybersecurity awareness. - Key highlights include 12 deposit schemes for diverse groups like women, farmers, NRIs, and pensioners, and 10 digital tools such as the AI-powered assistant "Pihu" and QR-based feedback system. - The "Cyber Run" Half Marathon promoted safe digital practices under the theme "Empowering a Secure Digital India."
6.	State Bank of India	The State Bank of India (SBI) has introduced a new customer engagement initiative by deploying 'Grahak Mitras' at select branches. These trained personnel, from SBI's subsidiary State Bank Operations Support Services (SBOSS), assist customers with digital banking and self-service platforms, aiming to decongest branches and promote alternate banking channels.

RBI News

Current Affairs related to Regulatory authorities

S.No.	Name	Purpose
1.	Reserve Bank of India	- 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.
2.	Reserve Bank of India	- 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.

Current Affairs related to Regulatory authorities		
S.No.	Name	Purpose
3.	Reserve Bank of India	- 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.
4.	Reserve Bank of India	- 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.
5.	Reserve Bank of India	- 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.
6.	Reserve Bank of India	- 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.
7.	Reserve Bank of India (RBI)	- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) authorized NPCI to revise UPI Person-to-Merchant (P2M) transaction limits, allowing greater flexibility for evolving user needs and merchant use cases, while keeping the P2P limit unchanged at ₹1 lakh. - Banks can set internal limits within NPCI's range, with exceptions for P2M transactions in sectors like education, healthcare, and credit card bill payments, now permitted up to ₹2–5 lakh. The move supports fintech innovation and digital payment adoption, with risk safeguards in place.
8.	Reserve Bank of India	- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched its official and verified WhatsApp channel as part of the 'RBI Kehta Hai' campaign to promote financial literacy, digital safety, and fraud prevention. - This initiative delivers real-time financial updates, enhances digital trust, and ensures inclusive outreach by tapping into WhatsApp's vast user base, especially in rural and remote areas.
9.	Reserve Bank of India	- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cancelled the license of Ajantha Urban Co-operative Bank Maryadit, Aurangabad, effective April 22, 2025, due to inadequate capital, poor earnings, and its inability to safeguard depositors' interests. - The Registrar of Cooperative Societies has been directed to initiate liquidation, with depositor protection ensured under the DICGC scheme, offering up to ₹5 lakh per depositor, covering 91.55% of the bank's depositors.
10.	Reserve Bank of India (RBI)	- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated all banks to migrate their web domains to the new '.bank.in' domain by October 31, 2025, to enhance cybersecurity and reduce fraud in digital banking. The migration aims to address threats like phishing attacks and increase trust in digital banking services. - The Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) will serve as the exclusive registrar for the new domain, while the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) will support the initiative.
11.	Reserve Bank of India	- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued revised guidelines permitting minors aged 10 and above to independently open and operate savings and term deposit accounts, aiming to foster early financial literacy. - While guardian-operated accounts remain an option for all minors, banks may allow independent operation based on their risk management policy, ensuring no overdraft and maintaining a credit balance at all times.

SEBI News

S.No	Announcement	Key Details
1.	SEBI	- SEBI has revised the cut-off timings for redemption in overnight and liquid mutual fund schemes, effective June 1, 2025, under its Upstreaming Framework (Dec 2023) to enhance client fund safety. - For offline mode, the cut-off is 3:00 PM, while for online mode (overnight funds only), it's extended to 7:00 PM for same-day NAV. - This move, backed by AMFI and SEBI's Mutual Funds Advisory Committee, ensures smoother collateral use and tighter fund security, directly impacting returns based on redemption timing.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

GDP & GROWTH RATE as per April 2024

- 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**.
- 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.
- India's **Wholesale Price Inflation (WPI)** eased to **2.05% in March 2025**, down from **2.38% in February**, mainly due to a steep **15.88% deflation in vegetable prices**, leading to a drop in **food inflation to 1.57%**. However, **manufactured product inflation** rose to **3.07%**, indicating a **mixed inflation trend**, with **food prices softening** while **fuel, power, and manufactured goods** witnessed **price increases**.
- Morgan Stanley** has **lowered India's FY26 GDP growth forecast to 6.1%** (from 6.5%) and slashed its **Sensex year-end target to 82,000** (from 93,000), citing **global uncertainty** triggered by **US President Donald Trump's new tariffs**. Announced on **April 2, 2025**—dubbed "**Liberation Day**"—these **protectionist tariffs** impacted 70 nations, including a **26% tariff on India**, stoking fears of a **global slowdown**. Other brokerages like **UBS, Goldman Sachs, and Citi** also trimmed India's growth outlook.
- India is projected to remain the **fastest-growing major economy in 2025** with a **6.5% GDP growth**, according to **UNCTAD's Trade and Development Foresights 2025** report, driven by **robust public spending** and **supportive RBI monetary policies**. While the **global economy** faces a potential **recession** amid **geopolitical tensions, sluggish trade, and tight financial conditions**, **China** is expected to grow at **4.4%**, and the **US and EU** at **1%**.
- The **World Bank** has revised **India's GDP growth forecast for FY26** downward to **6.3%**, citing **global economic weakness** and **domestic policy uncertainty**. This follows a similar move by the **IMF**, which reduced its forecast for **FY26 to 6.2%** and **FY27 to 6.3%**. These revisions reflect concerns about a **slowing global economy** and an **uncertain investment climate**, despite **supportive domestic measures** like **monetary easing**. The **RBI's growth projection of 6.5%** for **FY26** also indicates a slowdown across the year.
- The **IMF** has **revised India's FY26 GDP growth forecast** down to **6.2%** (from 6.5%) and **FY27 to 6.3%**, citing **US-imposed 26% tariffs** and **trade tensions** as key factors. Despite the downgrade, **India remains the fastest-growing major economy**, outperforming **China (4%)** and the **US (1.8%)**. The **global growth forecast for 2025** was also lowered to **2.8%** (from 3.3%), with **tariffs contributing to rising inflation** and **slowing economies worldwide**. **Strong domestic consumption**, especially in **rural India**, is expected to **cushion India** against global headwinds.

ECONOMY NEWS

- Effective **April 22, 2025**, the **Income Tax Department** has mandated a **1% Tax Collected at Source (TCS)** on the sale of **luxury goods priced above ₹10 lakh** under **Section 206C of the Income Tax Act**, as announced in the **Finance Act (Union Budget)**. This move aims to **enhance transparency and tax compliance** in high-value retail. Covered items include **luxury watches, handbags, antiques, yachts, and more**. The **seller collects 1% TCS**, deposits it under the buyer's **PAN**, and buyers can **claim it as tax credit** while filing their **ITR**.
- The **Indian life insurance industry** recorded a **5.13% growth** in **new business premium** for **FY25**, collecting **₹3,97,336 crore**, up from **₹3,77,960 crore** in **FY24**. The **individual new business premium** rose sharply by **11.17%** to **₹1,66,590.81 crore**, driven by increased **first-time policyholder participation**. **LIC** led the sector with **₹2,26,669 crore** in total new business premium and a **record ₹62,404 crore** in individual premium, capturing a **57.05% market share**.

BUSINESS NEWS

- **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**.
- **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**.
- **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)**.
- **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**.
- **Juspay**, a Bengaluru-based **payments infrastructure provider**, became India's first **unicorn of 2025** after raising **\$60 million** in a **Series D funding round**, led by **Kedaara Capital**, with participation from **SoftBank and Accel**. This funding pushed Juspay's valuation past the **\$1 billion** mark. The company plans to enhance its technology through **AI** and expand into international markets, including **APAC, Latin America, Europe, UK, and North America**. Despite facing challenges like the **loss of major clients** such as **Razorpay and PhonePe**, Juspay aims to focus on **AI-led productivity and global expansion** to maintain growth momentum.
- **BlackRock**, along with other US and European investors, participated in a **\$750 million private bond issue** by the **Adani Group** to fund **Renew Exim's acquisition of ITD Cementation**. This marks a cautious return of investor confidence despite ongoing legal challenges, including a **\$256 million bribery case** involving **Gautam Adani**.
- **Milkfed Punjab** has launched a new mascot '**Veera**'—a smiling Sikh boy with folded hands—for its flagship dairy brand **Verka**, aiming to boost national recognition similar to the **Amul Girl**. The launch, symbolizing **Punjabi warmth and hospitality**, coincided with a **₹135 crore dairy expansion project** in **Amritsar**, enhancing Verka's production of **flavored milk and fermented dairy products**. As the **7th largest milk cooperative** in India, Milkfed also announced **e-commerce integration** to expand Verka's **global market reach**.
- In **March 2025**, India's **exports** grew marginally by **0.7%** to **\$41.97 billion**, while **imports** surged by **11.3%** to **\$63.51 billion**, widening the **trade deficit** to **\$21.54 billion**. For the **fiscal year 2024–25**, **merchandise exports** saw a slight **0.08% increase** to **\$437.42 billion**, while **imports** rose by **6.62%** to **\$720.24 billion**. Overall **exports (goods + services)** grew by **5.5%** to **\$820.93 billion**, indicating resilience in **service exports**, despite a growing **trade deficit** driven by rising import demand.
- India's **foreign trade** for **FY2024–25** showed contrasting trends with key global partners. **Exports to the United States** rose by **11.59%** to **\$86.5 billion**, leading to a **trade surplus** of **\$41.2 billion**. Meanwhile, **exports to China** fell by **14.49%** to **\$14.25 billion**, while **imports from China** grew by **11.52%** to **\$113.45 billion**, deepening the **trade deficit** with China to **\$99.2 billion**. Key import drivers from China included **electronics, EV batteries, solar cells, and industrial inputs**, with **PLI schemes** boosting demand for imported components.
- India's **pharmaceutical exports** hit a historic high of **\$30.47 billion in FY25**, surpassing the target of **\$29.38 billion**, driven by a **31.21% YoY surge in March 2025**. Key contributors included **drug formulations and biologicals** (**\$20.12 billion**) and robust demand from the **United States** (**\$8.95 billion**, up **14.29%**), with **NAFTA accounting for 36.6%** of exports.
- To **protect India's domestic steel industry**, the government has imposed a **12% provisional safeguard duty** on specific **steel imports** effective **April 21, 2025**, targeting low-cost inflows from **China, South Korea, and Japan**. Triggered by a **DGTR investigation** into **unfairly priced imports** causing "**serious injury**" to local manufacturers, this move addresses a surge in steel imports—**9.5 million metric tons** in **FY 2024–25**—making India a **net importer for the second year**.
- India's **smartphone exports** crossed a record **₹2 lakh crore** in **FY25**, marking a major milestone driven by the **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme**. Announced by **Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw**, this **54% export growth** highlights India's rising role in **global supply chains**, with **Apple's iPhone exports** being a key contributor.
- **Zepto**, a leading **quick-commerce startup** in India, has rebranded its parent company from **Kiranakart Technologies Private Limited** to **Zepto Private Limited**. This name change, approved by the **Registrar of Companies (RoC)** in Mumbai, aligns the company's **corporate identity** with its **consumer-facing brand** in preparation for a potential **Initial Public Offering (IPO)**.

- **South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL)** has made history as the first coal PSU in India to implement **paste fill technology** for **underground coal mining**, marking a significant leap in **sustainable mining practices**. This initiative, aimed at minimizing environmental impact while extracting coal in surface-constrained areas, is backed by a ₹7040 crore partnership with **TMC Mineral Resources Private Limited**.
- **Campbell Wilson** is stepping down as **Chairman of Air India Express** as part of a broader **Tata Group airline restructuring**

to boost operational and commercial synergy. **Nipun Aggarwal, Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) of Air India**, will take over as Chairman, aligning both airlines' strategies. **Captain Basil Kwauk** is set to replace Wilson on the board, pending approval. The move follows Tata's **January 2022 acquisition of Air India and Air India Express** and aims to optimize **fleet, routes, and loyalty programs** across the group.

MoU's & AGREEMENTS

MoUs WITH COUNTRY

Country	MoU's With	Field/Purpose
India	Russia	• At the 8th Session of the India-Russia Working Group on Priority Investment Projects (IRWG-PIP) in New Delhi, India and Russia agreed on six new strategic projects to boost bilateral investment. • Co-chaired by Amardeep Singh Bhatia (India) and Vladimir Ilichev (Russia), the session emphasized trade, technological collaboration, and economic development. The 2nd India-Russia Investment Forum, with 80+ participants, showcased growing interest in joint ventures.

MoUs WITH STATE

State	MoU's With	Field/Purpose
Kerala State Electricity Board	IIT Bombay	• The Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB), in collaboration with IIT Bombay, is launching a pilot project to integrate Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) technology, which enables EV batteries to both draw and supply electricity to the power grid. • This initiative aims to support renewable energy integration, enhance grid stability, and promote clean energy by using EVs as decentralized energy storage. • The project involves financial incentives, such as premium tariffs for EV owners feeding energy during peak hours.

MoUs BETWEEN ORGANIZATION

Organization	MoU's With	Field/Purpose
India Post	Nippon India Mutual Fund	• 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.
Ministry of Labour & Employment	Swiggy	• The Ministry of Labour & Employment signed an MoU with Swiggy to enhance gig and logistics employment opportunities through the National Career Service (NCS) portal. • This partnership aims to create 12 lakh job opportunities over the next 2–3 years by integrating real-time job postings and fostering inclusive hiring for youth, women, and individuals seeking flexible work. • Swiggy will post gig jobs, delivery roles, and support roles, contributing to digital empowerment and worker welfare schemes.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

APPOINTMENTS NATIONAL

Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Dr. Jay Bhattacharya	Director of the National Institutes of Health	- 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.
Nidhi Tiwari	Private Secretary to PM Narendra Modi	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.
Ambuj Chandna	DBS Bank India as Managing Director (MD) and Head of Consumer Banking Group	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.
Salila Pande	SBI Cards and Payment Services (SBI Card)	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.
N Chandrasekaran	Chairman of Tata Sons	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.
Swaminathan S. Iyer	Whole-time Member (Life) of IRDAI	- 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.

Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Poonam Gupta	Deputy Governor of RBI	- 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.
H Shankar	Managing Director (MD) of CPCL	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.
Sivasubramanian Ramann	Chairperson of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)	- 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).
Kamal Haasan	Chairperson of FICCI's Media and Entertainment Committee South	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.
Sohini Rajola	Executive Director of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)	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.
Mohsin Naqvi	President of the Asian Cricket Council	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.
Seema Agrawal	DGP/Director of Fire and Rescue Services	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.

Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Balaji Nuthalapadi	Equitas Small Finance Bank	- Equitas Small Finance Bank, India's second-largest SFB, has appointed Balaji Nuthalapadi as Executive Director – Technology and Operations, effective 29 March 2025, with approvals from the RBI and the Bank's Board. - A seasoned leader with 20+ years of experience in operations, digital banking, and wealth management, Balaji previously served as MD at Citi Bank, leading a 1,100-member global controls testing team and overseeing Operations and Technology for South Asia.
Justice Arun Palli	Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh High Court	- The Supreme Court collegium has recommended Justice Arun Palli as the next Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh High Court, following the retirement of Chief Justice Tashi Rabtan on April 9, 2025. - Justice Palli, a senior judge from the Punjab and Haryana High Court, brings extensive experience in civil, criminal, constitutional, industrial, and labor laws.
Satish Chavva	CEO of the Oman India Joint Investment Fund (OIJIF)	- Satish Chavva has been appointed as the CEO of the Oman India Joint Investment Fund (OIJIF) on April 8, 2025. With over 20 years of experience in private equity and finance, Chavva is set to lead the fund in enhancing portfolio performance and driving sustainable growth in India. - OIJIF is a private equity fund jointly promoted by the Oman Investment Authority (OIA) and the State Bank of India (SBI).
Viral Davda	Deputy Chief Information Officer (CIO)	- The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has appointed Viral Davda as its new Deputy Chief Information Officer (CIO) to drive technological advancements and strengthen its IT infrastructure. - With over 20 years of experience, including as CTO at NCDEX, Davda has led key digital projects like hybrid cloud transitions and was honored as CTO of the Year in 2022.
Dr. Mohan Rajan	Chairman and Medical Director of Rajan Eye Care Hospital	- Dr. Mohan Rajan, Chairman and Medical Director of Rajan Eye Care Hospital, has been elected Vice-President of the All India Ophthalmological Society (AIOS), which represents over 29,000 ophthalmologists across India. - Announced on April 5, 2025, at the Asia Pacific Academy Congress in New Delhi, Dr. Rajan is the fifth ophthalmologist from Tamil Nadu to hold this position in AIOS's 84-year history.
Saikhom Mirabai Chanu	Chairperson of the IWLF Athletes Commission	- Chairperson of the IWLF Athletes Commission by the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWLF). - Her appointment marks a pivotal step in promoting athlete-led governance, gender representation, and empowering Indian sports with experienced leadership.
Santosh Kumar	Deputy CFO of IndusInd Bank	- IndusInd Bank, India's 5th-largest private lender, has appointed Santosh Kumar as Deputy CFO effective April 18, 2025, following the exit of Arun Khurana as acting CFO. - This leadership change comes amid regulatory scrutiny, driven by rising bad loans in the microfinance sector and accounting discrepancies in derivative transactions. The appointment of a full-time CFO is still pending.
T. Rabi Sankar	Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)	- The Indian government has re-appointed T. Rabi Sankar as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a one-year term starting May 3, 2025. His re-appointment, marking his second term extension, reflects the government's confidence in his leadership. - Mr. Sankar, who was initially appointed in May 2021, oversees key RBI functions including foreign exchange, currency management, and government accounts. - His leadership has been instrumental in ensuring economic stability, managing monetary policy, and driving financial reforms in India.

Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Judge Kaveri Baweja	Registrar (Vigilance),	In a major reshuffle at the Delhi High Court, Special Judge Kaveri Baweja has been appointed Registrar (Vigilance), while Special Judge Arun Bhardwaj will take over as Registrar General from May 1, 2025.
Ajay Bhushan Prasad Pandey	Vice-President at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) .	Ajay Bhushan Prasad Pandey, former Finance Secretary of India and ex-chief of the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA), has been appointed Vice-President at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). In this role, he will oversee three key departments: Investment Solutions, Sustainability and Fiduciary Solutions, and Portfolio Management.
Jitendra Mishra	President of CIFEJ (International Centre of Films for Children and Young People)	Jitendra Mishra, Festival Director of the Smile International Film Festival for Children and Youth (SIFFCY), has been unanimously elected as the President of CIFEJ (International Centre of Films for Children and Young People) for the 2025–2027 term. - CIFEJ, supported by UNESCO and headquartered in Athens, focuses on promoting educational and culturally diverse films for young audiences globally.
Dr. Mangi Lal Jat	Secretary of DARE and Director General of ICAR	Dr. Mangi Lal Jat has taken charge as the Secretary of DARE and Director General of ICAR for a three-year term, succeeding Dr. Himanshu Pathak. With 25+ years of expertise in agronomy, conservation agriculture, and climate-resilient farming, his leadership is expected to boost sustainable agricultural practices and research innovation in India.
Stacie Sire	Vice President and Managing Director of the Boeing India Engineering & Technology Center (BIETC) and Chief Engineer for Boeing India	Stacie Sire has been appointed as the new Vice President and Managing Director of the Boeing India Engineering & Technology Center (BIETC) and Chief Engineer for Boeing India. With 28 years of experience at Boeing, she succeeds Ahmed Elsherbini and brings expertise from her roles in the 787, 767, and 777 aircraft programs. Sire's new responsibilities include overseeing engineering strategy, operations, and innovation for Boeing in India, aiming to support the company's long-term growth.
Anant Ambani	the Executive Director (Whole-time) of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)	Anant Ambani has been appointed as the Executive Director (Whole-time) of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) for a five-year term starting May 1, 2025, marking a key step in the generational leadership transition. A graduate of Brown University, Anant currently serves as a non-executive director and leads RIL's energy vertical, focusing on green energy initiatives.
Dr. Neelam Dhungana Timsina	Acting Governor	Dr. Neelam Dhungana Timsina, Senior Deputy Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), was appointed as the Acting Governor following the completion of Maha Prasad Adhikari's five-year term on April 6, 2025. - The appointment was made by the Ministry of Finance, led by Deputy Prime Minister Bishnu Prasad Paudel, under the Nepal Rastra Bank Act.

BRAND & CAMPAIGN AMBASSADORS

Person Name	Brand / Campaign	Key Notes
Ananya Panday	Chanel	Bollywood actress Ananya Panday has been named Chanel's first-ever Indian brand ambassador , marking a significant moment for both the actress and the Indian fashion industry . This milestone follows her attendance at the Chanel Spring/Summer 2025 show in Paris, strengthening her ties with the brand.
Kriti Sanon	Dreame Technology,	Dreame Technology , a leading Chinese smart home appliance brand, has appointed Bollywood actress Kriti Sanon as its first-ever Indian brand ambassador , marking a key step in expanding its Indian market presence . Founded in 2017 , Dreame is known for innovative products like robotic vacuum cleaners , cordless stick vacuums , and hair styling tools , emphasizing AI-driven smart living and user convenience .

AWARDS

Other Important Awards

Award Name	Award Winner	Key Notes
Prestigious Ugadi Award	Archaeologist MyNaa Swamy	- The Andhra Pradesh government 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
Gold Mercury Award for Peace and Sustainability	The Dalai Lama	- 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.
Uttar Pradesh Anmol Ratan Award	Nikhil Singhal	- 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.
National Youth Award	Akarsh Shroff	- 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.
Fred Darrington Award for Excellence in Art and Culture	Sudarsan Pattnaik	- Sudarsan Pattnaik made history by winning the inaugural Fred Darrington Award for Excellence in Art and Culture for his Lord Ganesha sand sculpture, which conveys the message of "World Peace". - The sculpture, standing 10 feet tall, is on display at SandWorld in Weymouth, Dorset, until November 2025. Pattnaik, a Padma Shri awardee, is the first Indian sculptor to exhibit at SandWorld. - The award, launched to mark 100 years since Fred Darrington's first sand sculpture in 1925, includes a gold medal with Darrington's caricature and a glass wave containing sand from Pattnaik's sculpture.
'Master Humor Award'	Bollywood icon Aamir Khan	- Bollywood icon Aamir Khan made headlines at the Macau International Comedy Festival 2025 in China, where he was honored with the 'Master Humor Award' from April 9-13, 2025. - Known as 'Uncle Mi' in China, Aamir has enjoyed immense popularity, with his films like 3 Idiots (2009), PK (2014), and Dangal (2016) earning huge success in the country, particularly the latter, which grossed over ₹1000 crore (~\$193M).

Award Name	Award Winner	Key Notes
Verchol Dalit Literary Award	Renowned writer, retired IAS officer, and social activist P. Sivakami	- Renowned writer, retired IAS officer, and social activist P. Sivakami received the Verchol Dalit Literary Award from Neelam Cultural Centre, founded by Pa. Ranjith, in Chennai, along with a ₹1 lakh prize. - In her speech, Sivakami emphasized Dalit identity, the resistance and power of Dalit literature, its role in challenging dominant narratives, and the importance of writing in English for broader impact, while celebrating the rise of Dalit voices in literature.
'Legends of Endoscopy' award	Dr. D. Nageshwar Reddy	Dr. D. Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman of AIG Hospitals, Hyderabad, was honored with the prestigious 'Legends of Endoscopy' award by the Japanese gastroenterology community at the Tokyo Live Global Endoscopy 2025 event held at SHOWA Medical University, Tokyo. - Recognized for his pioneering contributions in Gastrointestinal (GI) Endoscopy.
Best-performing state in two categories: mandatory biometric updates of children and verification of adult Aadhaar enrolment	Meghalaya	Meghalaya was recognized by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) as the best-performing state in two categories: mandatory biometric updates of children and verification of adult Aadhaar enrolment. - The awards were presented in New Delhi, with Shai Kupar War, Aadhaar nodal officer from the General Administration Department, receiving the honors on behalf of the state.
MacGregor Memorial Medal	Wing Commander D. Panda and Electrical Artificer Rahul Kumar Pandey for 2023, and Chief Electrical Aircraft Artificer Ram Ratan Jat, Sergeant Jhumar Ram Poonia, and Colonel Ranvir Singh Jamwal (Director, NIMAS) for 2024.	- The MacGregor Memorial Medal was awarded to five distinguished military personnel for 2023 and 2024 in recognition of their exceptional contributions to military reconnaissance, exploration, and adventure. - The awards, conferred by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan at a ceremony hosted by the United Service Institution of India (USI), honored Wing Commander D. Panda and Electrical Artificer Rahul Kumar Pandey for 2023, and Chief Electrical Aircraft Artificer Ram Ratan Jat, Sergeant Jhumar Ram Poonia, and Colonel Ranvir Singh Jamwal (Director, NIMAS) for 2024.
Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award 2025	Achyuta Samanta	Achyuta Samanta, founder of KIIT and KISS, was conferred the Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award 2025 in Kokrajhar, Assam, for his exceptional work in education and social empowerment. Instituted by the Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Trust to honor contributions aligned with the legacy of Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma—the "Mech Gandhi of Assam"—the award includes a citation, memento, and ₹1 lakh cash prize, which Samanta generously donated back to the Trust.
Global Vanguard Honor for her impactful 25-year career bridging Bollywood and Hollywood	Priyanka Chopra	The 4th Annual Gold House Gold Gala will take place on May 10, 2025, at the Music Centre, Los Angeles, celebrating cultural changemakers under the theme "First Light", which honors pioneers who've opened paths for others. Priyanka Chopra will receive the inaugural Global Vanguard Honor for her impactful 25-year career bridging Bollywood and Hollywood.
Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2024	Ministry of Women and Child Development	The PoshanTracker Application, developed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), received the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2024 under the Innovation (Centre) category at the 17th Civil Services Day on April 21, 2025. Accepted by Secretary Shri Anil Malik, the award recognizes the app's impact on tech-driven nutrition governance under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0, promoting community empowerment, inter-departmental convergence, and data-centric service delivery.

Award Name	Award Winner	Key Notes
Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award 2024	Kumar Mangalam Birla	Kumar Mangalam Birla, Chairman of the Aditya Birla Group and Padma Bhushan awardee, will receive the prestigious Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award 2024 on April 24 in Mumbai, recognizing his visionary leadership and contributions to India's economic growth. The award, presented by RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat, coincides with the 83rd Memorial Day of Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar, organized by the Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Smruti Pratishthan.
Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres' (Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters) by the French Government	Payal Kapadia	Payal Kapadia, a Mumbai-based filmmaker, has been awarded the prestigious 'Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres' (Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters) by the French Government. The ceremony, held at the French Consulate in Mumbai, recognizes her significant contribution to cinema. Kapadia's breakthrough came with her film 'All We Imagine As Light', which won the Grand Prix at the 77th Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for a Golden Globe.
National Maritime Varuna Award	Rajesh Unni	Rajesh Unni, founder of Synergy Marine Group, was honored with India's highest maritime recognition, the National Maritime Varuna Award, during the 62nd National Maritime Day celebrations in Mumbai. - The award, presented by the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS), acknowledges individuals for their extraordinary contributions to the maritime sector.

SUMMITS, EVENTS & CONFERENCE

Category	Event	Key Points
Summits	9th Global Technology Summit (GTS) 2025	- The 9th Global Technology Summit (GTS) 2025, co-hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs and Carnegie India, will be held in New Delhi from April 10-12 with the theme "Sambhavna" (Possibilities). - The summit will explore how emerging technologies can drive inclusive growth, digital governance, and global cooperation, featuring 150+ speakers from 40+ countries.
Summits	IDF World Diabetes Congress	WHO and International Diabetes Federation (IDF) co-hosted a hybrid side event at the IDF World Diabetes Congress in Bangkok, themed "Bridging gaps: Integrated strategies to address TB and diabetes". - The event addressed the dual burden of TB (10.8M cases, 1.25M deaths in 2023) and diabetes (828M adults in 2024), highlighting their 15% co-morbidity rate. - WHO launched new guidance for integrated, people-centered care, focusing on early diagnosis, bidirectional screening, and primary health care strengthening to support UHC, SDG 3, and the End TB & Global Diabetes Compact goals.
Events	11th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting	- 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.

Category	Event	Key Points
Events	United Nations Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR)	- India has been appointed to the United Nations Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) for the 2025–2027 term, marking a significant step in shaping global financial reporting frameworks. - This appointment underscores India's growing influence and trust in its capabilities, particularly in enhancing transparency, accountability, and corporate governance. - As a member of ISAR, India will contribute to the development of international standards for financial and non-financial reporting, including areas like corporate social responsibility, environmental issues, and governance, under the umbrella of UNCTAD.
Events	Global Climate Action Council	Brazil has proposed the creation of a Global Climate Action Council under the UNFCCC to enhance global coordination and accelerate climate action, ahead of COP30 in Belem, Brazil (November 2025). - Aimed at simplifying complex climate negotiations, the proposal seeks to boost effective decision-making. While it has received mixed international reactions, it highlights Brazil's proactive role in addressing the climate crisis.
Events	Buddha Dhamma and the Culture of Northeast India	- A two-day conclave titled 'Buddha Dhamma and the Culture of Northeast India' will be held in Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh, from April 21-22, 2025, organized by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) and the Ministry of Culture. - The event will explore Buddhism's influence on the region's art, culture, and history, with a special focus on Theravāda Buddhism practiced by the Tai Khamti tribe.
Conference	National Conference on 'Environment – 2025'	- 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.
Conference	Army Commanders' Conference (ACC) 2025	- 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.
Conference	Conference for large NBFCs	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.
Conference	6th BIMSTEC Summit	- 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.

Category	Event	Key Points
		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.
Conference	GITEX Africa 2025	GITEX Africa 2025 in Marrakesh, Morocco served as a major platform for global discussions on fostering inclusive growth in the digital economy. Shri Jayant Chaudhary, India's Minister of State for Skill Development and Education, highlighted India's achievements in Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), particularly Aadhaar, UPI, ONDC, and healthcare initiatives.

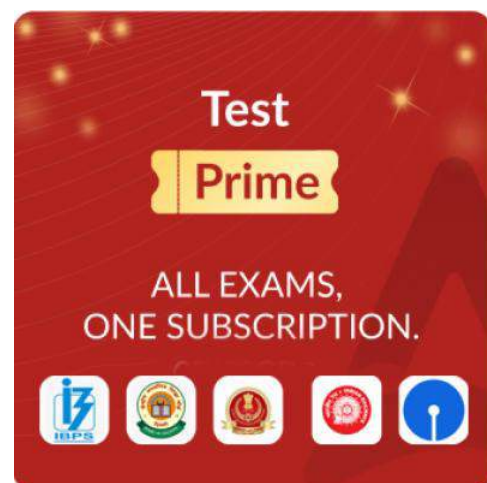
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RANKING

- India ranks **10th globally** with a **private AI investment of Rs. 11,943 crore (US\$ 1.4 billion)** in 2023, marking significant progress in the global AI landscape. It improved its position in the **UNCTAD 'Readiness for Frontier Technologies' Index**, moving from 48th in 2022 to 36th in 2024. India faces competition from nations like **Germany** in **wind energy**, **Japan** in **electric vehicles**, and **South Korea** in **5G**. With 13 million **software developers**, India is a leader in **AI research** and **nanotechnology**, but to maintain its position, continued investment in **R&D** and workforce **skill development** is essential. The **economic impact** of AI is projected at **Rs. 4,09,48,800 crore (US\$ 4.8 trillion)** by 2033.
- On **April 7, 2025**, **MeitY**, through **CERT-In**, along with **CSIRT-Fin** and **SISA**, released the **Digital Threat Report 2024** for the **BFSI** sector, offering a deep analysis of **cyber threats** and a roadmap for **cybersecurity resilience**. Launched by top officials from **DFS**, **MeitY**, and **SISA**, the report highlights the risks from **AI-driven attacks**, **expanded digital attack surfaces**, and **compliance challenges**. It emphasizes a **unified cybersecurity strategy** and recommends measures across **People, Process, and Technology**, aiming to **anticipate threats**, **strengthen defenses**, and **build a secure digital economy** through **collaborative intelligence-sharing**.
- 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**.
- Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport** has been ranked the **9th busiest airport in the world** in **2024** by **Airports Council International (ACI) World**, handling **77 million passengers**. This marks a steady rise from **17th** in

2019 to 10th in 2023, showcasing India's growing **aviation footprint**, world-class **infrastructure**, and expanding **international connectivity**. IGI remains the **only Indian airport** in the global top 10. Operated by **Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL)** under the **GMR Group**, IGI joins a list topped by **Atlanta** and **Dubai** amidst **9.5 billion global passengers** in 2024.

- NITI Aayog's report titled '**Unlocking \$25+ Billion Export Potential - India's Hand & Power Tools Sector**' explores how India can tap into the global **hand and power tools** market, currently valued at **\$100 billion** and expected to grow to **\$190 billion by 2035**. India's export potential is significant, with targets to reach **\$25 billion in exports** and generate **35 lakh jobs** over the next decade. However, India faces **cost disadvantages** due to higher raw material and logistics costs.
- The **2025 TIME 100 Most Influential People** list features global figures like **U.S. President Donald Trump**, **Tesla CEO Elon Musk**, **UK PM Keir Starmer**, and **Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus**, recognized for their significant impact on **politics, innovation, and social entrepreneurship**. Notably, **no Indian personalities** were included this year, unlike 2024 when **Alia Bhatt** and **Sakshi Malik** were featured.



REPORT

Report Name	Submitted By	Key Notes
UNESCO report	UNESCO report	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.
2025 Technology and Innovation Report	2025 Technology and Innovation Report	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.

DEFENCE

EXERCISE

EXERCISE NAME	VENUE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES	KEY NOTES
INIOCHOS-25	Greece	- The Indian Air Force (IAF) 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.
Exercise Tiger Triumph 2025		- 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.
INDRA 2025 exercise		- 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.
Exercise DUSTLIK (DUSTLIK-VI)		- The 6th edition of Exercise DUSTLIK (DUSTLIK-VI) between India and Uzbekistan commenced on April 16, 2025, at the Foreign Training Node, Aundh, Pune, and will run until April 28, 2025. - The exercise focuses on enhancing bilateral military cooperation, tactical interoperability, and coordination between the armed forces of both nations.

EXERCISE NAME	VENUE / PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES	KEY NOTES
Exercise 'Aakraman'		- The Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted Exercise 'Aakraman', a major military drill involving Rafale and Su-30MKI fighter jets to simulate attacks on mountainous and ground targets, test electronic warfare, and conduct live fire operations. - With cutting-edge systems like the Meteor and Rampage missiles, and the S-400 air defense system, the exercise aimed to enhance combat readiness amid rising India-Pakistan tensions following the Pahalgam terror attack.

DEAL & MoU's

- 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**.
- India and France** are set to finalize a **₹63,000-crore G-to-G deal** on **April 28, 2025**, for **26 Rafale-Marine (Rafale-M) jets**—**22 single-seaters** and **4 twin-seater trainers**—to enhance **India's naval aviation**. These jets will be deployed on **INS Vikramaditya** and **INS Vikrant**, bridging the capability gap until the indigenous **Twin Engine Deck-Based Fighter (TEDBF)** is ready. **Deliveries will begin in 3.5 years**, with full delivery in **6.5 years**, strengthening **India-France strategic defence ties**.

ARMY, NAVY & AIR FORCE NEWS

- 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**.
- 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**.
- 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.

- India has approved a **₹63,000 crore (\$7+ billion)** deal with **France** for **26 Rafale Marine fighter jets** under a **Government-to-Government (G2G)** agreement, enhancing **naval aviation** and **carrier-based air power** on **INS Vikrant**. Cleared by the **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)**, the deal includes **22 single-seaters**, **4 twin-seater trainer jets**, along with **fleet maintenance, weapon systems, training, and offset obligations** to boost indigenous manufacturing and the **defence ecosystem**.
- The **Defence Literature Festival 'Kalam & Kavach 2.0'** was held on **April 15, 2025**, at the **Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi**, organized by **CENJOWS** and **HQ IDS**, with the theme '**Securing India's Rise through Defence Reforms**'. The event focused on **defence technology**, including **AI, cyber technologies, quantum computing, drones, space tech, and semiconductors**. It emphasized **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** (self-reliance) in **defence manufacturing**.
- The **Indian Navy** hosted the **3rd edition of Meghayan-25** on **April 14, 2025**, at **Nausena Bhawan, New Delhi**, to celebrate **World Meteorological Day 2025** under the theme "**Closing the Early Warning Gap Together**." The symposium aimed to enhance awareness and collaboration in **Marine Meteorology and Oceanology**.
- Under **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh**, India is setting ambitious goals for **defence production**, targeting **₹1.60 lakh crore** in 2025 and **₹3 lakh crore** by 2029, with a focus on **Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India)**. The country aims to increase **defence exports** to **₹30,000 crore** in 2025 and **₹50,000 crore** by 2029, reducing dependency on imports, fostering **indigenous innovation**, and enhancing global **supply chain resilience**. This strategic vision seeks to establish India as a self-reliant leader in **defence manufacturing**.
- During **President Droupadi Murmu's April 2025 visit to Slovakia**, **India and Slovakia** signed their **first-ever defence MoU**, marking a major step in boosting **India's indigenous defence manufacturing**. The deal involves **JCBL Group's defence arm, ADSL**, collaborating with Slovakia to **co-develop advanced technologies** for **light tanks**, including **turrets, protection systems, and remote weapon systems**.

- **INS Sunayna** docked at **Nacala Port**, Mozambique, on April 17, 2025, as part of India's **IOS SAGAR mission**, strengthening **maritime partnerships** in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**. Launched on April 5, 2025, by India's **Defense Minister**, the mission features multinational participation, with 44 naval personnel from nine countries, including **Mozambique, Kenya, and South Africa**, aboard the ship.
- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has deployed a contingent to **Al Dhafra Air Base**, UAE, for **Exercise Desert Flag-10**, running from April 21 to May 8, 2025. This multinational **air combat exercise** underscores India's commitment to **enhancing military cooperation** and operational capabilities.
- In a major breakthrough for **India's hypersonic weapons programme**, **DRDL (a DRDO unit)** successfully conducted a **1,000+ second ground test** of an **Active Cooled Scramjet Subscale Combustor** on **April 25, 2025**, at the **Scramjet Connect Test Facility in Hyderabad**. This long-duration test of the **air-breathing scramjet engine**, which enables speeds above **Mach 5**, validates key technologies for future **hypersonic cruise missiles** and marks a leap in **indigenous defence capabilities**, with **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** calling it a testament to India's advanced research commitment.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NATIONAL

- **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**.
- India's first **Agentic AI Hackathon**, organized by **Techvantage.ai** in collaboration with **CrewAI**, concluded during **Agentic AI Week** with over **1,500 participants** nationwide. Held across multiple cities and culminating at **Technopark, Kerala**, the month-long event focused on **autonomous AI solutions** for the **BFSI sector**, tackling challenges like **fraud detection, credit scoring, and regulatory compliance**, marking a major leap in India's **AI innovation ecosystem**.
- In a major boost to India's biodiversity documentation, scientists have discovered **six new species of scarab beetles** (Subfamily: **Sericinae**) in **Northeast India** and the **Western Ghats**, as published in **Zootaxa**. Species like **Maladera champhaiensis** (Mizoram), **Maladera onam** (Kerala), and **Serica subansiriensis** (Arunachal Pradesh) reflect the rich endemism of the **Eastern Himalayas** and **Western Ghats**, both key **biodiversity hotspots**.
- India has achieved a **major milestone** in secure communication with the successful testing of the country's **first Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)** over a **4-core Multi-Core Fibre (MCF)** by **C-DOT** and **Sterlite Technologies Ltd. (STL)**. The test sustained QKD transmission over **100 km**, using **one core for quantum signals** and the **other three for high-speed classical data**, showcasing the **cost-effective, interference-free advantages of MCF** for building a **national quantum communication network**.
- **Aryabhata**, launched on **April 19, 1975**, was India's **first indigenously developed satellite**, marking a **historic milestone** in the nation's space journey. Developed by **ISRO** with a team of just **25 engineers**, it was launched aboard the

Soviet Kosmos-3M rocket from **Kapustin Yar, Russia**, due to India's lack of indigenous launch capabilities. Named after the **5th-century mathematician and astronomer**.

- India is set to establish its **first Quantum Computing Village** in **Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh**, led by the **Real-Time Governance Society (RTGS)** with key collaborators **IBM, TCS, and L&T**. Spanning **50 acres**, the facility will feature the **IBM Quantum System Two**, a cutting-edge quantum computer, housed in an **iconic building** designed by **L&T** and conceptualized by **IBM**.
- India marked a major **medical breakthrough** with its **first-in-human gene therapy trial** for **Haemophilia**, led by **BRIC-inStem** and **CMC Vellore**, as highlighted during **Dr. Jitendra Singh's** visit to **BRIC-inStem, Bengaluru**. Emphasizing **biotechnology as a national pillar**, he noted the sector's rapid rise to **\$165.7 billion in 2024** (target: **\$300 billion by 2030**), powered by **10,000+ startups**, innovations like **anti-viral masks** and **Kisan Kavach**, and infrastructure such as the **Biosafety Level III Lab** and **CRaTE Centre**.

INTERNATIONAL

- **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**.
- On **April 6, 2025**, **Meta**, led by CEO **Mark Zuckerberg**, launched its **next-gen Llama-4 AI suite**, featuring three cutting-edge models — **Scout** (a top-tier **multimodal model**), **Maverick** (Meta's **flagship AI assistant**), and **Behemoth** (its **most powerful LLM**, designed as a **teacher model**). This strategic move intensifies Meta's position in the **global AI race**, directly challenging **OpenAI's ChatGPT**, **Google's Gemini**, and rising players like **China's DeepSeek**.

- **Bangladesh** became the **54th** country to sign the **Artemis Accords**, promoting **peaceful, sustainable, and transparent space exploration**. The signing, led by **Ashraf Uddin**, Bangladesh's **Secretary of Defense**, emphasizes the country's commitment to **safe space exploration** and **international collaboration**. The **Artemis Accords**, based on frameworks like the **Outer Space Treaty**, guide nations in **cooperative space activities**, with **NASA's Artemis program** aiming to return humans to the **Moon** and explore **Mars**. Bangladesh's participation enhances its role in **space exploration**, fostering ties with spacefaring nations and **NASA**.
- **Colossal Biosciences**, a biotech firm based in **Dallas**, has made history by **reviving the extinct dire wolf (Canis dirus)** after 12,500 years using **CRISPR gene-editing** and DNA from ancient fossils. Three **dire wolf puppies—Romulus, Remus, and Khaleesi**—were born using **gray wolf cells** and **domestic dog surrogates**. Though hailed as a major **de-extinction milestone**, the breakthrough faces **ecological and ethical concerns** over authenticity and modern adaptability.
- On **April 14, 2025**, coinciding with **World Quantum Day** and the **International Year of Quantum Science and Technology (IYQST 2025)**, the **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA)** released India's first **International Technology Engagement Strategy for Quantum (ITES-Q)**. Launched by **Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood**, the strategy aligns with the **National Quantum Mission (NQM)** and marks India's first **outward-facing roadmap** in **Quantum Science, Technology & Innovation (QSTI)**, aiming to **accelerate innovation, enhance strategic autonomy, and promote global partnerships and standards** in quantum technology.
- **Blue Origin's New Shepard** rocket completed a **historic 10-minute suborbital spaceflight** from **Van Horn, Texas**, featuring the **first all-female crew** since **1963**. The crew included **Katy Perry, Gayle King, Lauren Sánchez, Aisha Bowe, Amanda Nguyen, and Kerianne Flynn**, symbolizing **diversity, empowerment, and the fusion of science and pop culture**. The mission crossed the **Kármán line (100 km)**, showcased **microgravity activities**, and was witnessed by celebrities like **Oprah Winfrey** and **Mae Jemison**. It marked a milestone in **reusable commercial spaceflight, gender representation, and inclusive exploration**.
- In a **breakthrough discovery**, scientists from **Cambridge University** using **NASA's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)** have detected potential **biosignature molecules—Dimethyl Sulphide (DMS) and Dimethyl Disulphide (DMDS)**—in the atmosphere of **exoplanet K2-18b**, located **124 light-years** away in the **Leo constellation**. These molecules, produced by **marine phytoplankton and bacteria** on Earth, suggest possible **extraterrestrial life**, marking a significant advancement in **astrobiology**.
- The **NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar)** mission, a landmark **Earth observation collaboration** between **ISRO and NASA**, is now expected to **launch in June 2025** aboard a **GSLV**. Designed to monitor **glacier retreat, vegetation change, earthquakes, and ground deformation** with **1 cm precision**, it will advance climate and disaster models. Originally set for 2024, the launch was delayed due to a **12-metre antenna issue**, which required upgrades in the **US**. NISAR marks the **first major NASA-ISRO Earth science mission**, showcasing joint space innovation.
- NASA is developing the **Quantum Gravity Gradiometer Pathfinder (QGGPf)**, a **compact (125 kg) and highly sensitive quantum sensor** that will map **Earth's gravity field** with **ten times** more precision than traditional methods. Designed for **space deployment**, the QGGPf will detect tiny gravitational shifts linked to **subsurface features** like **moving water, earthquakes, and mineral deposits**, with space tests targeted by the **end of this decade**.
- The **Bullseye Galaxy (LEDA 1313424)**, located **567 million light-years** away in the **Pisces constellation**, is a **giant elliptical galaxy** about **2.5 times** larger than the Milky Way, spanning **250,000 light-years**. It features an unprecedented **nine glowing star rings**, likely formed after a **blue dwarf galaxy** collided with its core **50 million years ago**, triggering ripple effects and **new star formation**.
- The **Spaghetti Bowl Phenomenon**, coined by economist **Jagdish Bhagwati** in **1995**, describes the confusing, overlapping network of **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)** that complicate global trade instead of simplifying it. Caused largely by differing **Rules of Origin (ROO)** in each agreement, this tangled system creates inefficiencies and challenges for businesses navigating multiple FTAs.
- **Beijing** hosted the world's first **Humanoid Robot Half-Marathon**, where **robots and humans** ran in parallel lanes, marking a symbolic blend of **sport and technology**. Featuring **20 robot teams** with machines ranging from **120 cm to 180 cm**, the event highlighted innovations in **robot design, AI endurance, and engineering support** like **battery pit stops**. While the fastest human clocked **1:02 hrs**, the top robot, **Tiangong Ultra**, finished in **2:40 hrs**.
- **Don Pettit**, the oldest serving U.S. astronaut, returned to Earth on **April 21, 2025**, marking his **70th birthday**. His spacecraft, **Soyuz MS-26**, landed in **Kazakhstan** after completing a **220-day mission** aboard the **International Space Station (ISS)**. Pettit, a **chemical engineer**, has now logged **590 days in space** over four missions, reinforcing his legacy as one of NASA's most seasoned astronauts.

SPORTS

CRICKET

- **Virat Kohli** made history by becoming the **first Indian cricketer to score 13,000 runs in T20 cricket** during an IPL 2025 clash between RCB and MI at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. At **36**, the RCB icon became the **fifth player globally** and the **second-fastest ever** to reach this milestone, reinforcing his legendary status in the **shortest format** of the game.
- In a **landmark move** for **inclusivity** and **athlete rights**, the **International Cricket Council (ICC)** has formed a **dedicated task force** to support **displaced Afghan women cricketers**, in collaboration with **BCCI**, **ECB**, and **Cricket Australia (CA)**. The initiative includes the creation of a **monetary support fund**, a **high-performance programme** offering **advanced coaching, training facilities**, and **mentorship**. ICC Chair **Jay Shah** stressed the role of cricket as a **unifying force** and reaffirmed the ICC's commitment to **global unity** and **equal opportunities** in cricket.
- **Virat Kohli** achieved a historic milestone in **IPL 2025**, scoring his **100th T20 half-century** with a match-winning **unbeaten 62 off 45 balls** against **Rajasthan Royals** in **Match 28** at **Sawai Mansingh Stadium, Jaipur**. This also marked his **66th 50+ score in the IPL**, tying with **David Warner** for the most in league history.
- **Shreyas Iyer** has been named the **ICC Men's Player of the Month for March 2025** for his outstanding role in **India's Champions Trophy 2025 victory**, scoring **243 runs** in 3 matches with an average of **57.33** and a **strike rate of 77.47**. He edged out **Jacob Duffy** and **Rachin Ravindra** of New Zealand, delivering key performances including **79 vs NZ**, **45 vs AUS**, and **48 in the final vs NZ**. This marks a **back-to-back win for Indian players**, following **Shubman Gill's February 2025 win**.
- In the **Wisden Cricketers' Almanack 2025**, **Jasprit Bumrah** and **Smriti Mandhana** were named the **Leading Cricketers of the Year** for their exceptional performances. Bumrah, with **200 Test wickets** and a stellar year in **2024**, was hailed for his dominance in **Test cricket** and his role in India's **T20 World Cup victory**. Mandhana set a **record** for women with **1659 runs** across formats, including **four ODI centuries**.
- **Virat Kohli** set a new record in **IPL history** by surpassing **David Warner** for the most **fifty-plus scores** with his 67th score, achieved during **RCB's victory over PBKS**. Kohli's **unbeaten 73 off 54 balls** guided RCB to chase down 158, marking his **fourth fifty** of the season. With **322 runs** in 8 innings at an average of **64.40** and a strike rate of **140.00**, Kohli continues his dominance in the IPL, boasting **8,326 runs in 190 matches** overall.
- **Rohit Sharma** has become the **second Indian** after **Virat Kohli** and the **eighth player overall** to score **12,000 runs in T20 cricket**, achieving the milestone during an **IPL 2025 match** against **Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH)**. His consistent

performances, especially for **Mumbai Indians (MI)** and earlier **Deccan Chargers**, have been crucial in his team's success.

BADMINTON & TENNIS

- 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**.
- 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.

Hockey

- **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.

Racing

- **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)**.
- **Max Verstappen** won his first race of the **2025 Formula 1 season** at the **Japanese Grand Prix**, securing his **fourth consecutive win**. After a close battle with **McLaren's Lando Norris** and **Oscar Piastri**, Verstappen held onto the lead, aided by strategic pit stops and tire choices. He edged out Norris by just **0.012 seconds** in qualifying for **pole position**. This race was also significant for **Red Bull**, marking their last race with **Honda power**. **Verstappen** extended his lead in the standings, now just **one point ahead of Norris**. Other notable finishes included **Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)** in fourth and **George Russell (Mercedes)** in fifth.

- **Oscar Piastri** clinched his **third win of the 2025 season** at the **Saudi Arabian Grand Prix** held on **April 20, 2025**, at the **Jeddah Corniche Circuit**, overtaking **Max Verstappen** in the **Drivers' Championship** standings. Piastri, driving for **McLaren**, capitalized on a **5-second penalty** for Verstappen, finishing with a time of **1:21:06.758**.

ATHLETIC & FOOTBALL

- India made a historic debut at the **2025 World Boxing Cup** in **Foz Do Iguacu, Brazil**, with **Hitesh Gulia** becoming the first-ever Indian boxer to win a **gold medal**. His victory came after his opponent, **Odel Kamara** from England, withdrew due to an injury. **Abhinash Jamwal** secured a **silver medal** in the 65kg category, while **Jadumani Singh Mandengbam**, **Manish Rathore**, **Sachin**, and **Vishal** each won **bronze medals**. India finished with a total of six medals, marking a strong performance in their first participation at the **World Boxing Cup**, providing a significant boost ahead of the **2028 Olympics**.
- 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.

OTHER SPORTS NEWS

- 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.
- **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 **CSI/2-1- 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.
- India's recurve men's archery team—**Dhiraj Bommadevara**, **Atanu Das**, and **Tarundeep Rai**—clinched a **silver medal** at the **Archery World Cup 2025, Stage 1** in **Auburndale, Florida**, after a **1-5 loss to China** in the final. Despite being

the **world number two** team, India fell short against the **third-seeded Chinese trio—Li Zhongyuan, Kao Wenchao, and Wang Yan**. India had earlier defeated **Spain** in the semi-finals.

- **Oscar Piastri** of **McLaren** triumphed at the **2025 Bahrain Grand Prix**, securing his **second win of the season** by a dominant **15.499 seconds**. Starting from pole, Piastri's performance marked **McLaren's first-ever victory** at the **Bahrain Circuit** and his **50th Formula One** race. He now sits **second in the championship**, just 3 points behind teammate **Lando Norris**, who finished third on the podium.
- India made a **strong start** to the **2025 ISSF World Cup**, finishing **2nd overall** with **8 medals** (4 **Gold**, 2 **Silver**, 2 **Bronze**) across **rifle, pistol, and shotgun** events. The standout performers included **Sift Kaur Samra**, **Rudranksh Patil**, **Suruchi**, and **Vijayveer Sidhu**, each clinching gold. Held ahead of the **Paris Olympics**, the event highlighted India's **growing shooting prowess** and blend of **youth and experience**, with **China** topping the medal table.
- **Carlos Alcaraz** clinched the **Rolux Monte Carlo Masters 2025** title with a stunning **comeback victory** over **Lorenzo Musetti**, winning **3-6, 6-1, 6-0** in a **1-hour 54-minute** final. Despite losing the first set, Alcaraz capitalized on **Musetti's leg injury** in the deciding set to dominate and secure his **6th ATP Masters 1000** and **18th career title**. The reigning **French Open champion** now rises to **World No. 2**, further cementing his status among tennis's elite ahead of his **22nd birthday**.
- The **Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2025** will be held for the **first time in Bihar** from **May 4 to May 15**, with **PM Narendra Modi** inaugurating the event in **Patna**. The **launch ceremony** on **April 14** at **Samvad Hall** featured the unveiling of the **logo, mascot, and theme song** by **CM Nitish Kumar** and **Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya**. The mascot **Gajsingh**, inspired by **Pala-period temples**, and design elements like the **Mahabodhi Temple**, **Nalanda University**, **Peepal Tree**, **Gangetic Dolphin**, and **Madhubani art**, highlight Bihar's **rich heritage, cultural vibrancy, and environmental awareness**.



- **Mohun Bagan Super Giant** made history by winning the **2024-25 Indian Super League (ISL)** title with a **2-1 victory** over **Bengaluru FC** at the **Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan** in **Kolkata**. This win marked a significant achievement as it was the first time an ISL final was won at home, and **Mohun Bagan** became the first team to secure both the **ISL title** and the **ISL League Shield** in the same season.
- **Saurabh Chaudhary**, a **22-year-old shooter** from **Uttar Pradesh**, made a stunning **comeback** by winning the **bronze medal** in the **10m Air Pistol** event at the **ISSF World Cup 2025** in **Lima, Peru**. Competing after a **2+ year break**, he showed great **resilience** in a closely contested final, outperforming top shooters like **Yu Xie** and **Christian Reitz**. With a final score of **219.1**, he marked his **first World Cup medal in over two years**, signaling a strong **return to international form**.
- **16-year-old Nishchay** from **Haryana** clinched a **silver medal** in the **boys' shot put** at the **Asian U-18 Athletics Championship** in **Dammam, Saudi Arabia**, with a **personal best throw of 19.59 meters**, surpassing his previous best of 18.93m. His stellar performance on the **third day** of the championship highlights his **rapid progress** and **international promise**.
- The **South Asian Senior Athletics Championships 2025**, set for **May 3–5** in **Ranchi**, has been **postponed again** due to **visa clearance issues** for **Pakistani athletes**, including **Olympic javelin champion Arshad Nadeem**. Originally scheduled for **October 2024**, the event is now tentatively moved to **mid-June 2025**, pending resolution. Hosted at the **Birsa Munda Athletics Stadium**, top athletes from **India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka**, and other South Asian nations were expected, including **sprinter Yupun Abeykoon** and **400m medallist Aruna Darshana** of Sri Lanka.
- **India** delivered a stellar performance at the **2025 ISSF World Cup** in **Lima, Peru** (April 13–22), clinching **7 medals—2 Gold, 4 Silver, and 1 Bronze**—to finish **third** in the overall medal tally behind **China** and the **USA**. Standout shooters like **Suruchi Singh** (Women's 10m Air Pistol, Mixed Team with **Saurabh Chaudhary**) and **Manu Bhaker** helped secure spots for the **ISSF World Cup Final 2025** in **Doha**. With over **400 shooters from 43 nations**, India's **42-member squad** was one of the largest and most successful at the event.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Book Name	Author	Key Notes
The Great Conciliator: Lal Bahadur Shastri and the Transformation of India	Sanjeev Chopra's	• Sanjeev Chopra's book, <i>The Great Conciliator: Lal Bahadur Shastri and the Transformation of India</i>, 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.
The India I Saw	S. Ambujammal	• S. Ambujammal (1899–1981), born into a prestigious Iyengar family in Madras, overcame early struggles, including emotional neglect, an unwanted birth, and a troubled marriage, to become a prominent Gandhian and social reformer. • Her autobiography, <i>Naan Kanda Bharatham</i> (translated as <i>The India I Saw</i>), chronicles her journey through India's freedom movement and her commitment to women's welfare. A dedicated follower of Gandhi's ideals, her life is a testament to resilience, personal transformation, and social service.
Sarah Wynn-Williams'	Careless People	• Sarah Wynn-Williams' memoir, <i>Careless People</i>, exposes the toxic inner workings of Facebook (now Meta) during its global rise. As a former director of global public policy, Wynn-Williams reveals the unethical leadership and personal misconduct within the company, particularly under Mark Zuckerberg, Sheryl Sandberg, and Joel Kaplan. • The book highlights Facebook's involvement in the 2016 U.S. election, its role in the Myanmar crisis, and its controversial push into China.
I Am Circular'		• The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), in collaboration with the International Council for Circular Economy (ICCE), launched the 'I Am Circular' Coffee Table Book on 23 April 2025, showcasing 30 groundbreaking Indian innovations in the circular economy. • Curated around core themes—Design to Last, Work with Nature, and Use Existing Resources—the book highlights innovations like e-waste recycling, IoT-enabled circular systems, and biodegradable packaging.

Book Name	Author	Key Notes
Sanskriti Ka Paanchva Adhyay'		- On April 18, 2025, the book 'Sanskriti Ka Paanchva Adhyay' (The Fifth Chapter of Culture), a compilation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speeches, was launched at the IGNCA in New Delhi. - The event, attended by prominent figures such as Acharya Mahamandaleshwar Pujya Swami Avdheshanand Giri Maharaj, Shri Harivansh, and Shri Ram Bahadur Rai, celebrated India's cultural, spiritual, and traditional heritage.

OBITUARY

NATIONAL

S.No	PERSON NAME	KEY NOTES
1.	Manoj Kumar	- 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.
2.	Ravikumar	- 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.
3.	Padma Shri Ram Sahay Pandey	- Padma Shri Ram Sahay Pandey, a legendary exponent of Rai folk dance, passed away at the age of 92 in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh. - Despite facing poverty, orphanhood, and caste-based taboos, Pandey dedicated his life to revitalizing and promoting Rai dance, transforming it from a stigmatized art form into a celebrated cultural symbol.
4.	Dadi Ratan Mohini	- Dadi Ratan Mohini, born Lakshmi on March 25, 1925 in Hyderabad, Sindh (now in Pakistan), passed away at age 100 on April 8, 2025 in Ahmedabad. - As the Chief Administrator of the Brahma Kumaris since 2021, she succeeded Dadi Janki after her passing in 2020. - A global spiritual leader, Dadi Ratan Mohini represented the Brahma Kumaris at the World Peace Conference in 1954 and traveled extensively to promote peace, values.
5.	Kumudini Lakhia	- Kumudini Lakhia (1930–2024), the trailblazing Kathak exponent, revolutionized the classical form by challenging its reliance on narrative (katha) and literary content (sahitya), introducing abstraction, ensemble choreography, and contemporary themes. - Trained under legends like Pt Sundar Prasad, Pt Shambhu Maharaj, and Pt Birju Maharaj, she brought a global perspective after touring Europe with Ram Gopal at 18.
6.	Dr. K. Kasturirangan	- Dr. K. Kasturirangan, former ISRO Chairman, passed away at 84 on April 25, 2025, in Bengaluru. A visionary scientist, he led ISRO from 1994 to 2003, overseeing key achievements like the operationalisation of PSLV, development of GSLV, and launch of IRS-1A. - He also directed India's first earth observation satellites, BHASKARA-I & II. His four-decade association with ISRO left a lasting impact on India's space and remote sensing programs.
7.	M G S Narayanan	- M G S Narayanan, a towering figure in Indian historiography, passed away at the age of 92. Born on August 20, 1932, in Ponnani, Kerala, he made profound contributions to the study of Kerala's ancient and medieval history and broader South Indian history. - Narayanan served as Member Secretary and later Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) and was closely associated with the University of Calicut, strengthening its research and academic excellence.

INTERNATIONAL

S.No	PERSON NAME	KEY NOTES
1.	Richard Chamberlain	- 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.
2.	Val Kilmer	- 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.
3.	Jean Marsh	- Jean Marsh, renowned British actress and co-creator of the iconic period drama Upstairs, Downstairs, passed away on April 13, 2025, at the age of 90 in London due to complications from dementia. - Best known for her Emmy-winning role as Mrs. Rose Buck, a parlormaid, Marsh's performance left a lasting impact on British television. As both a talented actress and screenwriter, her legacy is marked by creativity, resilience, and a pivotal contribution to classic British drama.
4.	Pope Francis	- Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Argentina, passed away at 88 after battling double pneumonia. Elected as the first Latin American, Jesuit, and non-European pope in 2013, he led the Catholic Church through significant reform and challenges, including Vatican dysfunction and child abuse scandals. - Known for his progressive views on same-sex couples, climate action, and migrants, he promoted interfaith dialogue and social justice.
5.	Mario Vargas Llosa	- Mario Vargas Llosa, the celebrated Peruvian novelist, essayist, and journalist, passed away on April 14, 2025, at age 89. A Nobel Laureate (2010), he was known for his incisive works exploring power structures and the individual's struggle against them. - Author of over 30 novels, including The Time of the Hero and The Green House, Vargas Llosa's influential literary style and political activism cemented his legacy as a towering figure in Spanish-language literature and global intellectual thought.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
April 1	Utkal Divas (Odisha Day)	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.
April 2	World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD)	- 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.
April 4	International Mine Awareness Day	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.

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
April 5	Samata Diwas	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.
April 5	National Maritime Day	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.
April 6	Swaminarayan Jayanti	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.
April 7	World Health Day 2025	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.
April 7	World Health Day 2025	World Health Day 2025, observed globally on April 7, commemorates the founding of the WHO in 1948 and focuses on the theme "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures." - This year's theme highlights the urgent need to improve maternal and newborn health, launching a year-long WHO campaign aimed at reducing preventable deaths and enhancing health outcomes for women and infants, while raising awareness on global health issues and promoting international action and policy change.
April 6th	International Day of Sport for Development and Peace	- The International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP), celebrated annually on April 6th, highlights sport's potential in fostering social change, peace, and equality. The 2025 theme, "Leveling the Playing Field: Sport for Social Inclusion," focuses on using sport to address challenges like gender, racial equality, and marginalized groups. - The UN will host a major event in New York, emphasizing gender equality, healthy aging, and racial equality in sport. The Olympism365 strategy by the IOC supports 550 social impact programmes worldwide, advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through sport.
April 7th	International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide	- The International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda is observed annually on April 7th, commemorating the systematic murder of over 1 million Tutsi, alongside moderate Hutu and others, by the extremist Hutu-led government. - Established by the UN General Assembly in 2003, the day serves to honor the victims, reflect on the horrific events, and educate the world on the causes and impact of genocides. UNESCO plays a key role in promoting education to prevent such atrocities in the future and raise awareness about the consequences of hatred, discrimination, and violence.

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
April 10	Mahavir Jayanti	Mahavir Jayanti, celebrated on April 10, 2025, marks the 2623rd birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir, the 24th Tirthankara of Jainism. The festival, observed with devotion, highlights key Jain principles such as Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truth), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (celibacy), and Aparigraha (non-attachment). - Lord Mahavir, born as Vardhamana in 599 BC in Kundalagrama (modern-day Vaishali), renounced his kingdom at 30 and attained Kevala Jnana (supreme knowledge) after 12 years of penance. He passed away in 527 BC, achieving Moksha.
April 10th	World Homeopathy Day	World Homeopathy Day is celebrated annually on April 10th to honor the birth of Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy. - This day promotes awareness of homeopathy's contributions to holistic healthcare, emphasizing its principle of "like cures like," where diluted substances from plants, minerals, and animals are used to treat illnesses.
April 13	Siachen Day	Siachen Day, observed annually on April 13, commemorates Operation Meghdoot (1984), when the Indian Army preemptively secured the Siachen Glacier—the world's highest battlefield—against Pakistan's intrusion. - Marking its 41st anniversary in 2025, the day honors the unmatched bravery of Indian soldiers who endure extreme conditions to guard strategic passes like Sia La and Bilafond La at 20,000 feet in the Karakoram Range.
April 14	Ambedkar Jayanti	Ambedkar Jayanti, observed on April 14, commemorates Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the chief architect of India's Constitution and a pioneering social reformer who championed equality, social justice, and human rights, especially for marginalized communities. - First celebrated in 1928 in Pune by Janardan Sadashiv Ranapisay, it marked Dr. Ambedkar's growing influence even before independence. In 1990, he was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, recognizing his transformative legacy in shaping a just and inclusive society.
April 14	World Chagas Disease Day 2025	World Chagas Disease Day 2025 highlights the global impact of Chagas disease, a "silent and silenced" parasitic illness caused by Trypanosoma cruzi, and stresses the need for equitable healthcare and collective responsibility in its prevention, control, and care. - Also known as American trypanosomiasis and discovered by Carlos Chagas in 1909, the disease primarily affects poor populations in Latin America.
April 15	Himachal Day	Himachal Day, celebrated on April 15 each year, marks the creation of Himachal Pradesh as a province in 1948 and commemorates its 78th celebration in 2025. Known as the "Apple State of India", Himachal showcases rich cultural heritage, scenic Himalayan landscapes, and tourism. - Formed by merging 30 princely states, it gained full statehood on January 25, 1971, becoming India's 18th state. CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu highlighted tribal development in regions like Pangi Valley.
April 15	World Art Day	World Art Day is observed annually on April 15 to celebrate the universal language of art and honor the birth anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci, symbolizing creativity, peace, and freedom of expression. - Initiated by the International Association of Art (IAA) in 2012, in collaboration with UNESCO, the day promotes art education, cultural diversity, and emotional well-being. - The 2025 theme, "Art for Unity and Healing," emphasizes art's role in fostering social harmony and mental health.
April 18	World Heritage Day	World Heritage Day, also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites, is observed on April 18 annually to promote the preservation of cultural and natural heritage, organized by ICOMOS and recognized by UNESCO since 1983. - The 2025 theme, "Heritage under Threat from Disasters and Conflicts," highlights the need for preparedness and resilience.

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
April 19	World Liver Day	World Liver Day, observed on April 19, raises awareness about liver health and disease prevention. - The 2025 theme, "Food is Medicine," emphasizes the role of nutrition in preventing liver disorders. - The liver performs critical functions like detoxification, metabolism, and immune regulation, making its care essential. - Poor diet, alcohol abuse, and infections like hepatitis can lead to conditions such as fatty liver, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.
April 21	National Civil Service Day 2025	National Civil Service Day 2025 will be observed on April 21, 2025, to honor the commitment and excellence of civil servants. - The day traces its roots to April 21, 1947, when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel referred to civil servants as the "steel frame of India" in his speech to the first batch of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers. - The celebration aims to recognize exceptional performances, promote ethical governance, encourage best practices in public administration, and inspire youth to pursue civil services. The Father of the Indian Civil Service, Charles Cornwallis.
April 21	World Creativity and Innovation Day	World Creativity and Innovation Day (WCID), observed annually on April 21st, was established by the United Nations to raise awareness about the critical role of creativity and innovation in human development. The day emphasizes that creativity extends beyond artistic expression to include problem-solving skills essential for transforming economic, social, and sustainable development structures.
April 22	Earth Day 2025,	Earth Day 2025, observed on Tuesday, April 22, carries the theme "Our Power, Our Planet", highlighting the collective responsibility of individuals and nations to drive environmental change. - The day promotes renewable energy, sustainable practices, and climate action policies, reinforcing the global commitment to protecting our planet and fostering environmental stewardship.
April 23	World Book and Copyright Day 2025	World Book and Copyright Day 2025, observed on April 23, celebrates literature, authors, and the protection of intellectual property. - Established by UNESCO in 1995, the day honors literary legends like Shakespeare and Cervantes, and promotes reading, literacy, and cultural diversity. - The 2025 theme, "<i>The Role of Literature in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</i>".
24 April	National Panchayati Raj Day	- On 24 April 2025, National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated to honor grassroots democracy, marking the enforcement of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993. - Declared in 2010 by PM Manmohan Singh, the day emphasizes local self-governance and rural development. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Madhubani, Bihar, launching projects worth over ₹13,480 crore, including an LPG plant in Gopalganj, power infrastructure, and rail connectivity like the Amrit Bharat Express and Namo Bharat Rapid Rail. - Key schemes highlighted were PMAY-G, PMAY-U, and DAY-NRLM, alongside Panchayat awards and a push for digital governance through initiatives like e-Panchayat and SVAMITVA.
April 25	World Malaria Day	World Malaria Day, observed on April 25 every year, raises awareness about malaria, a deadly yet preventable disease. - In 2023, there were 263 million cases and nearly 600,000 deaths globally, primarily in tropical and low-income regions. The theme for 2025, "Malaria Ends With Us: Reinvest, Reimagine, Reignite," calls for renewed efforts in prevention, treatment, and innovation. - Established by the WHO in 2007, the day honors those fighting malaria and encourages policy action and investment.

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
April 25	International Delegate's Day	- International Delegate's Day, observed annually on April 25, celebrates the pivotal role of delegates in fostering global cooperation, peace, and diplomacy. - It commemorates the 1945 San Francisco conference, where 50 countries' delegates met to draft the UN Charter, marking the foundation of the United Nations. - The day highlights the importance of multilateral diplomacy in addressing global challenges like climate change, poverty, and conflict.
(April 24–30)	World Immunization Week 2025	World Immunization Week 2025 (April 24–30), led by WHO, promotes the theme "Immunization for All is Humanly Possible", stressing universal access to vaccines for all ages. - Since 1974, immunization has saved 154 million lives, including 6 lives every minute, with the measles vaccine alone accounting for 60% of these. - Despite progress, challenges remain—22 million children missed measles shots in 2023, and vaccine misinformation threatens global health gains.

Miscellaneous

- 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**.
- 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.
- 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**.
- 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**.
- West Bengal has achieved a milestone by securing **Geographical Indication (GI)** tags for **seven new products**, including the iconic **Nolen Gurer Sandesh** and **Baruipur guavas**. These GI tags will provide global recognition to traditional items, boosting the local economy and enhancing the state's cultural identity. The tagged products span food items like **Kamarpukur's White 'Bonde'**, **Murshidabad's 'Chhanabora'**, and **Bishnupur's 'Motichur Laddoo'**, as well as agricultural products like **Radhunipagal Rice** and **Malda's Nistari Silk Yarn**. This recognition safeguards traditional products and opens up new market opportunities, though challenges like the short shelf life of sweets remain. West Bengal now boasts 33 GI-tagged items.
- Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ)*, the iconic 1995 romantic film, will be commemorated with a **bronze statue** of **Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol** at **Leicester Square, London**, in **Spring 2025**. The statue, inspired by a memorable scene from the film, will be placed outside the **Odeon Cinema**, a location featured in the movie.
- The **Banaras Shehnai** has been conferred with the prestigious **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag in **April 2025**, recognizing its cultural and spiritual significance. Originating from **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**, this traditional wind instrument is deeply tied to ceremonies and rituals. The recognition, awarded by **PM Modi**, highlights the **artisan craftsmanship** involved in creating shehnai using **Sheesham and Sagwan wood and reed from Dumraon**.

Static Takeaways

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
Organization		
1	Asian Development Bank	President - Masato Kanda HQ - Mandaluyong, Manila, Philippines
2	RBI	Governor - Sanjay Malhotra HQ - Mumbai
3	SBI	Chairman - Challa Sreenivaalu Setty HQ - Mumbai
4	SBI card & Payment Services	MD & CEO - Salila Pande
5	DBS Bank India	MD & CEO - Rajat Verma
6	TATA Sons	Chairman - Natarajan Chandrasekaran
7	Axis Bank	MD & CEO - Amitabh Chaudhary
8	FICCI	Chairman - Harsha Vardhan Agarwal
9	Aditya Birla Capital Limited	CEO - Vishakha Mulye
10	Renault Group	CEO - Venkatram Mamillapalle
11	Nissan India	CEO - Saurabh Vatsa
12	Space X	CEO - Elon Musk
13	Microsoft	CEO - Satya Nadella
14	Asian Cricket Council	President - Mohsin Naqvi HQ - Dubai
Countries		
15	USA	President - Donald Trump Currency - US Dollar Capital - Washington D.C.
16	Brazil	President - Lula Da Silva Currency - Brazilian Real Capital - Brazilia
17	Myanmar	President - Min Aung Hlaing (Acting) Currency - Kyat Capital - Naypidaw
18	Singapore	PM - Lawrence Wong Currency - Singapore Dollar Capital - Singapore
19	Thailand	President - Paetongtarn Shinawatra Currency - Thai Baht Capital - Bangkok
20	Japan	PM - Ishiba Shigeru Currency - Yen Capital - Tokyo
21	Russia	President - Vladimir Putin Currency - Russian Ruble Capital - Moscow
Indian States		
22	Assam	Governor - Lakshman Prasad Acharya CM - Hemanta Biswa Sarma Capital - Dispur
23	Punjab	Governor - Gulab Chand CM - Bhagwat Man Capital - Chandigarh

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
24	Chattisgarh	Governor - Ramen Deka CM - Vishnu Deo Sai Capital - Raipur
25	West Bengal	Governor - C. V. Ananda Bose CM - Mamta Banerjee Capital - Kolkata
26	Maharashtra	Governor - C. P. Radhkrishnan CM - Devendra Fadnavis Capital - Mumbai
27	Telangana	Governor - Jishnu Dev Varma CM - Revanth Reddy Capital - Hyderabad
28	Andhra Pradesh	Governor - S. Abdul Nazeer CM - Chandrababu Naidu Capital - Amrawati
29	Odisha	Governor - Hari Babu Kambhupati CM - Mohan Charan Majhi Capital - Bhubneshwar

Sr. No	Static Name	Details
Organizations		
1	UNESCO	HQ - Paris, France
2	SEBI	Chairman - Tuhin Kanta Pandey Head Office - Mumbai
3	Swiggy	Founder - Sriharsha Majesty, Nandan Reddy, Rahul Jaimini
4	Blue Origin	CEO - Dave Limp
5	Adani Ltd.	Chairman - Gautam Adani
6	WHO	DG - Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
7	Principal Scientific Advisor of India	Ajay Kumar Sood
8	IndusInd Bank	MD - Sumant Kathpalia Head office - Mumbai
Countries		
9	United States of America	President - Donald Trump Capital - Washington D.C. Currency - USD
10	China	President - Xi Jinping Capital - Beijing Currency - Yuab
11	Gabon	President - Brice Oligui Ngoma Capital - Libreville Currency - CFA Franc
12	Ecuador	President - Daniel Noboa Capital - Quito Currency - USD
13	Tanzania	President - Samia Suluhu Capital - Dodoma Currency - Tanzanian Shilling Equals
14	UAE	President - Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Capital - Abu Dhabi Currency - UAE Dirhum

Sr. No	Static Name	Details
Indian States		
15	Kerala	Governor - Arlekar CM - Pinarayi Vijayan Capital - Thiruvananthpuram
16	Tamil Nadu	Governor - R. N. Ravi CM - M. K. Stalin Capital - Chennai
17	Meghalaya	Governor - C. Vijayshankar CM - Conrad Snagma Capital - Shillong
18	Arunachal Pradesh	Governor - Kaiwalya Parnaik CM - Pema khandu Capital - Itanagar
19	Telanagana	Governor - Jishnu Dev Verma CM - Revanth Reddy Capital - Hyderabad
20	Gujarat	Governor - Acharya Devvrat CM - Bhupendra Patel Capital - Gandhinagar
21	Madhya Pradesh	Governor - Mangubhai Patel CM - Mohan Yadav Capital - Bhopal
22	West Bengal	Governor - C. V. Ananda Bose CM - Mamta Banerjee Capital - Kolkata

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
Organizations		
1	ISRO	Chairman - V Narayanan
2	RBI	Governor - Sanjay Malhotra
3	SEBI	Chairman - Tuhin Kanta Pandey
4	SBI	Chairman - Challa Sreenivasalu Setty
5	PNB (Punjab National Bank)	MD/CEO - Ashok Chandra
6	UNESCO	HQ - Paris
7	IMF	President - Kristalina Georgieva
8	World Bank	President - Ajay Banga
9	Boeing	CEO - Kelly Ortberg
10	Air India	CEO - Campbell Wilson
11	Reliance Industries	Chairman - Mukesh Ambani
Countries		
12	USA	President - Donald Trump Capital - Washington D.C. Currency - USD
13	China	President - Xi Jinping Capital - Beijing Currency - Yuan
14	Kazakhstan	President - Kassam Tokayev Capital - Tenge Currency - Astana

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
15	Saudi Arabia	President - Mohammed Bin Salman Capital - Riyadh Currency - Saudi Riyal
16	South Africa	President - Cyril Ramaphosa
17	Kenya	President - William ruto Capital - Nairobi Currency - Shilling
18	Russia	President - Vladimir Putin Capital - Moscow Currency - Ruble
19	France	President - Emmanuel Macron Capital - Paris Currency - Euro
Indian States		
20	Andhra Pradesh	Governor - S. Abdul Nazeer CM - Chandrababu Naidu Capital - Amravati
21	Telangana	Governor - Jishnu Dev Verma CM - Revanth Reddy Capital - Hyderabad
22	Bihar	Governor - Arif Khan CM - Nitish Kumar Capital - Patna
23	Maharashtra	Governor - C. P. Radhakrishnan CM - Devendra Fadnavis Capital - Mumbai
24	Odisha	Governor - Hari Babu Kambhupati CM - Mohan Charan Majhi Capital - Bhubneswar
25	Karnataka	Governor - Thawar Chand Gehlot CM - Siddharamaiya Capital - Bengaluru

