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PM Launches National Makhana Board In Bihar

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Makhana Board in Purnea, Bihar as part of the Union Budget 2025 initiative.
- **About:** This new board aims to strengthen the makhana sector, enhance its production and processing, and expand its export reach globally.
- **Cost:** The government has approved a Rs 475 crore development package to support these efforts.
- Makhana, or fox nut, comes from the aquatic plant *Euryale ferox*, which grows in freshwater ponds across South and East Asia.
- Often called the ‘Black Diamond’ in its raw dark seed form, it turns white once popped.



India Gets ISA License to Explore Polymetallic Sulphides in Carlsberg Ridge

- India has received a license from the International Seabed Authority located in Jamaica for exploration of polymetallic sulphides in the Carlsberg Ridge of the Indian Ocean.

India's New Exploration Rights:

- The agreement, signed in September 2025 with the Jamaica-based ISA, permits India to Explore polymetallic sulphur nodules spread across 3,00,000 sq. km in the Carlsberg Ridge.
- These nodules are rich in manganese, cobalt, nickel, and copper, minerals critical for batteries, renewable energy infrastructure, and high-tech manufacturing.
- This marks the first licence globally for such exploration in the Carlsberg Ridge, making India a pioneer in accessing this untapped mineral wealth.

Polymetallic sulphides (PMS):

- These deposits are rich sources of metals like copper, zinc, gold and silver found on the seabed. These deposits occur in areas where hot, mineral-rich fluids from the Earth's mantle are released into the sea, causing precipitation of metal sulphides.



Indian Navy Receives 2nd Indigenously Built Anti-Submarine Warfare Ship 'Androth' from GRSE

- INS Androth is the second of the 8 anti-submarine warfare-shallow watercraft (ASWSWC).
- INS Arnala (named after the historic Arnala coastal fort in Vasai, Maharashtra), the first ASW-SWC was commissioned in June 2025.
- Built by: Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Kolkata.
- The name 'Androth' is derived from the Androth Island in the Lakshadweep archipelago

Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Watercraft:

- The ASW SWCs are part of a Rs 12,500 crore programme to build 16 shallow water antisubmarine warfare vessels under two contracts awarded in 2019.
- RSE is building 8 vessels, while Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) will build the other eight.
- The vessels from GRSE will form the Arnala-class. The CSL-built ships will be classified as Mahe-class.
- The ASW-SWC ships are being inducted into the Navy to strengthen its anti-submarine and coastal surveillance capabilities.



PFRDA Extends One-time option for Central Government employees (who Joined services between 01.04.2025 and 31.08.2025) to opt for Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)

- The Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for eligible Central Government employees was notified by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India
- The Central Government has now decided to extend a one-time option to Central Government employees who joined services on or after 01.04.2025 and up to 31.08.2025, and who have opted for National Pension System, to migrate to the Unified Pension Scheme.
- This option may be exercised on or before 30.09.2025, in alignment with the cut-off date already prescribed for other eligible categories under UPS.
- The last date for eligible employees and past retirees under NPS to opt for UPS is September 30, 2025.

Recent UPS related news:

- The Ministry of Finance introduced a one-time, one-way switch facility allowing central government employees to move from the Unified Pension Scheme to the National Pension System. The option will remain open until September 30, 2025.



National Award-Winning Film 'Chalo Jeete Hain' Set for Special Nationwide Re-release

- National Award-winning film “Chalo Jeete Hain” a moving cinematic tribute to Swami Vivekananda’s philosophy “Bas wahi jeete hain, jo doosro ke liye jeete hain” (Only those are truly successful who live for others) is set for a special re-release across India from September 17 to October 2, 2025.
- The critically acclaimed film, among the most viewed short films of 2018.
- The film is inspired by a childhood incident from the life of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. It tells the story of young Naru, who, deeply influenced by Swami Vivekananda’s philosophy.
- Winner of the National Award for Best Non-Feature Film on Family Values, “Chalo Jeete Hain”. Directed by Mangesh Hadawale and presented by Aanand L. Rai and Mahaveer Jain.



Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog's Mega Tinkering Day Creates History with Record Participation, Recognised by India Book and Asia Book of Records

- The Hon'ble Prime Minister had launched the Atal Innovation Mission with the objective of inculcating a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across India.
- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, is rated amongst the world's largest grassroots innovation movements and has achieved a historic milestone as its flagship initiative, Mega Tinkering Day 2025, entered the prestigious India Book of Records and Asia Book of Records.
- This is a new record for the maximum number of students participating in a tinkering activity in a single day.
- On August 12, 2025, 4,73,350 students from 9,467 Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) schools came together to design a solution for Swachh Bharat and built their own DIY vacuum cleaners through a live, step-by-step instructional session streamed online.
- The record was officially confirmed and formally announced on September 15, 2025, by both the India Book of Records and Asia Book of Records. This recognition stands as a testament to AIM's mission of fostering innovation and scientific temperament among India's youth at an unprecedented scale.



Women's Hockey Asia Cup 2025

- The 11th edition of Women's Hockey Asia Cup 2025 took place at the Gongshu Canal Sports Park in Hangzhou, China
- India lost to China in the final
- China claimed their third Asia Cup title and secured direct qualification to the World Cup
- Hosts of FIH Women's World Cup 2026: Belgium & Netherlands
- With this win, China became the seventh team to qualify for the FIH Women's World Cup 2026 in Belgium and the Netherlands.
- Other qualified teams include the hosts and USA, Germany, Argentina and Spain.
- India's next chance to qualify for the 2026 Women's Hockey World Cup is at the upcoming World Cup Qualifiers.



SEBI Launches SWAGAT-FI to Attract Long-Term Foreign Investment

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has launched the SWAGAT-FI (Simplified Way of Access and Gateway for Investors in Trusts – Foreign Investors) framework to make foreign investment in India more seamless, transparent, and attractive.
- This initiative primarily targets long-term, low-risk investors such as sovereign wealth funds and pension funds.
- Under SWAGAT-FI, the registration validity for eligible foreign investors has been extended from 3 years to 10 years, ensuring stability and long-term confidence in Indian markets.
- SWAGAT-FI aims to enhance transparency and attract long-term global capital, making foreign investment in India faster, simpler, and more appealing while aligning with India's economic growth vision.

Recent SEBI News:

- The new framework, which will take effect from October 1, sets an intraday net position limit of ₹5,000 crore per entity in index options, compared with an end-of-day limit of ₹1,500
- SEBI renewed the recognition of Multi Commodity Exchange Clearing Corporation Ltd (MCXCCL) as a clearing corporation for a three-year term, effective from July 31, 2025 to July 30, 2028.



NITI Aayog Launches 'AI for Viksit Bharat Roadmap' & 'Frontier Tech Repository' at Road to India AI Impact Summit 2026

- Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman and Union Minister of Railways & Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw jointly launched two landmark Artificial Intelligence (AI) initiatives of NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog during the Road to India AI Impact Summit 2026 held in New Delhi.
- The AI for Viksit Bharat Roadmap is a comprehensive national action plan that emphasizes two key levers: (i) accelerating adoption of AI across industries to enhance productivity, efficiency, and
- Competitiveness and (ii) transforming Research & Development (R&D) with generative AI to position India as an innovation-driven economy.
- The roadmap aligns with India's Vision@2047 for economic transformation.
- The roadmap is based on a NITI Aayog report that outlines sector-specific strategies in agriculture, manufacturing, logistics, finance, and healthcare.
- It highlights AI's potential to add USD 500 billion to India's GDP by 2030, and identifies steps to build scalable data ecosystems, digital infrastructure, and AI-ready skilled workforce



Amazon Pay and ICICI Bank renew partnership, enhance India's most-adopted co-branded credit card

- Amazon Pay & ICICI Bank have renewed their partnership for the Amazon Pay ICICI Bank Credit Card, which has over 5 million customers and is India's most-adopted co-branded credit card.
- As of July 2025, ICICI Bank has over 18 million credit cards in force, according to RBI data.
- ICICI Bank is the third-largest credit card issuer in India after HDFC Bank and State Bank of India (SBI)
- Amazon Pay is an online payments processing service owned by Amazon.
- Launched in 2007, Amazon Pay uses the consumer base of Amazon.com and focuses on giving users the option to pay with their Amazon accounts on external merchant websites.
- As of October 2024, the service was available to businesses based in 18 countries.



Goa Shipyard Ltd Hands Over Fast Patrol Vessel 'Akshar' to the Indian Coast Guard

- Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) handed over ICGS Akshar — the second in a series of eight Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) being built under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative — to the Indian Coast Guard.
- The vessel is 51.43 metres long, 8 metres wide, displacement 330 tonnes, draught 2.5 metres.
- It has twin marine diesel engines with controllable pitch propellers (CPP). Top speed is over 27 knots, and endurance is about 1,500 nautical miles.
- The ship will be crewed by 6 officers and 35 sailors. It is designed for operations like fisheries protection, EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) surveillance, coastal patrol, anti-smuggling, anti-piracy, and search & rescue.
- It is the first in its class of FPVs with controllable pitch propellers (CPP), which improves propulsion efficiency and maneuverability.

