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# NATIONAL

## **NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020 COMPLETES 5 YEARS SINCE IMPLEMENTATION -**

- The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 — the country's third such policy since Independence — has completed five years.

### **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**

- NEP 2020, India's first comprehensive education policy in the 21st century and third NEP since Independence, aims to transform India into a knowledge society and global knowledge superpower.
- The policy emphasizes the holistic development of students, blending traditional values with modern education demands.
- It was proposed by a committee headed under Dr. K Kasturirangan.

### **Key Objectives of NEP 2020**

- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER):** Target to increase GER from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035.
- Focus on enhancing both quantity and quality of education.
- **Curricular and Pedagogical Reforms:** Flexible, multidisciplinary education replacing traditional silos.
- Four-Year Undergraduate Program (FYUP) and Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) introduced.
- **Research and Innovation:** National Research Foundation (NRF) to foster cross-disciplinary research.
- **Research Funding Targets:** ₹50,000 crore (2023-28).
- **Internationalisation:** Attracting global universities to set up campuses in India.
- Collaboration to improve global research standing.
- Teacher Capacity Building: Teacher training programs to enhance quality of teaching.

## **LOK SABHA APPROVES EXTENSION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE IN MANIPUR -**

- The Lok Sabha has passed a statutory resolution approving the extension of President's Rule in Manipur for another six months beyond August 13, 2025. The

decision, supported by the Union government, was aimed at ensuring that peace and stability continue in the northeastern state which has faced ethnic tensions in the past.



### **Government Emphasizes Return of Peace**

- During the discussion in the House, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai assured members that peace was prevailing in Manipur since the imposition of President's Rule.
- Peace returning there than the fact that since President's Rule was imposed, there has been only one fatality and no casualties in the last four months.
- Also law and order situation is under control, and efforts are ongoing to resolve differences between the two ethnic communities through dialogue and mutual understanding. The government is working towards establishing permanent peace in the state.

## **INDIA'S FIRST HINDI-MEDIUM MBBS COLLEGE TO OPEN -**

- **In a landmark step towards promoting regional language education in medical studies, Jaba Ipur in Madhya Pradesh is set to become home to India's first Hindi-medium MBBS college. The institution, expected to commence in the 2027-28 academic session, will offer medical education, examinations, and clinical training entirely in Hindi, making it a historic move in the country's medical education system.**



### **The Historic Decision**

- Approval in University Executive Council Meeting
- The proposal to set up the Hindi-medium MBBS college was approved in the executive council meeting of Madhya Pradesh Medical University. Officials confirmed that a

Detailed Project Report (DPR) will soon be prepared and submitted to the state government for final clearance.

- Once approved at the state level, the project will be forwarded to the National Medical Commission (NMC) for mandatory permissions.

### WHAT ARE BHISHM CUBES ? -

- India recently gifted two BHISHM cubes to the Maldives on its 60th Independence Day. This gesture marks India's regional cooperation and healthcare diplomacy in the Indian Ocean. The BHISHM



cubes are portable medical units designed for rapid emergency response. They enhance disaster preparedness in vulnerable island nations like the Maldives.

### BHISHM Initiative and Its Purpose

- BHISHM stands for Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog, Hita & Maitri. It is part of India's Aarogya Maitri mission launched in 2024. The initiative aims to provide timely healthcare support in disaster-hit and developing countries. The cubes are self-contained medical units ready for quick deployment in emergencies and conflict zones.

### INDIA'S FIRST WOODEN GURDWARA OPENS IN FAZILKA, SYMBOL OF DEVOTION AND DESIGN -

- **The Gurdwara has gained national attention as India's first wooden Sikh shrine, constructed using sustainable and durable imported wood, showcasing how individual initiative and devotion can shape inclusive public spaces. Its growing popularity has made it a spiritual and architectural landmark in Punjab's Fazilka district, boosting local religious tourism and community engagement.**

### Objectives and Vision

- To provide a place of worship within the police quarters for families and personnel.
- To build a distinct and durable structure reflecting Sikh values of openness, humility, and service.

- To showcase architectural innovation while retaining religious tradition.



### Key Highlights

- Built entirely from Finnish Deodhar wood, known for its resistance to weather and pests.
- Measures 40 ft x 40 ft with four entrances, embodying Sikh ideals of inclusivity.
- Built in just three months, inaugurated on February 16, 2023.
- Designed and crafted by Iqbal Singh, a Ludhiana-based master carpenter skilled in wooden homes abroad.

### INDIA'S FIRST MOBILE E-VOTING IN BIHAR -

- **Bihar became the first Indian state to pilot mobile phone-based e-voting in municipal elections using the E-SECBHR app developed by C-DAC. The initiative aimed to improve voting access for senior citizens, pregnant women, and persons with disabilities.**



- To ensure security and transparency, the system used blockchain technology, facial recognition, biometric scanning, voter ID verification, and limited 2 voters per mobile number.

### Recent ECI Electoral Reforms & Privacy Safeguards

- **Restriction on Public Access to Polling Booth CCTV Footage:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) has restricted public access to CCTV, webcast, and videography footage of polling stations citing voter privacy and security. **As per new rules:**
- Destruction of footage is mandated 45 days after result declaration, unless a petition is filed.
- Footage can only be submitted to a High Court hearing an election petition & no other authority or individual may access it as public release may violate Section 128 of

the Representation of People Act, 1951 (secrecy of voting) and Supreme Court rulings that uphold ballot secrecy.

- ECI clarified that videography is not legally mandated, and is used only as an internal management tool.
- In December 2024, Rule 93(2)(a) of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 was amended to exclude CCTV and electronic footage from public inspection.

### BIHAR RESERVES 35% GOVERNMENT JOBS FOR DOMICILE WOMEN -

- In a major policy shift aimed at empowering women, the Nitish Kumar-led Bihar government has approved a proposal granting 35% reservation in government jobs exclusively for women who are native to Bihar. This decision was taken on July 8, 2025, during a meeting of the State Cabinet chaired by the Chief Minister.



### Domicile Policy in Women's Reservation Comes into Effect

- Previously, 35% horizontal reservation for women was available to all female applicants irrespective of their state of origin. However, with the new approval, only women who are domiciled in Bihar will now be eligible for this quota in direct recruitment across all cadres of state government jobs.
- The decision has been formalized through a proposal from the General Administration Department (GAD) and is the first implementation of a domicile-based policy in women's reservation by the state in recent years.

### ARTICLE 326 AND BIHAR ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION -

- The Election Commission of India recently initiated a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar ahead of state elections. This move sparked controversy with opposition parties and activists alleging potential disenfranchisement of certain communities and new voters.

- The Commission justified the revision by citing its constitutional mandate under Article 326 of the Constitution of India. This article guarantees universal adult suffrage and forms the legal basis for such electoral roll updates.



### What Is Article 326?

- Article 326 guarantees every Indian citizen aged 18 or above the right to vote in Lok Sabha and state assembly elections. It establishes universal adult suffrage, ensuring no citizen is denied voting rights except on grounds defined by law.
- These grounds include non-residence, unsoundness of mind, criminal conviction, or corrupt electoral practices. The article mandates that eligible citizens must be registered as voters for elections to be valid and representative.

### HARYANA TO BUILD ASIA'S BIGGEST JUNGLE SAFARI -

- The Haryana government has announced that it will build Asia's largest jungle safari in the Aravalli Hills. The project was shared on July 6, 2025, and it will cover around 10,000 acres of forest land.



- The main goal is to protect animals and nature, while also boosting tourism and creating new jobs for people. This is an important step for both environmental conservation and eco-tourism in India.

### MEGHALAYA CELEBRATES SACRED BEHDEINKHLAM FESTIVAL -

- The sacred Behdeinkhlam Festival was recently celebrated with great joy in Jowai, a town in Meghalaya. This yearly event is important for the Pnars, a tribal group from the state. The festival is held in July to pray for a good harvest and to drive away

diseases and evil from society. It also helps in keeping their traditional faith alive.

### Festival With Deep Meaning

- The word Behdeinkhlam means “driving away the plague,” showing that the festival is about protecting people from sickness, especially after the sowing season. For the Pnars, a sub-tribe of the Jaintia community, this festival is not just a tradition—it’s a way to hold on to their old religion called Niamtre.

### Rituals and Sacred Events

- The festival goes on for three days. During this time, men perform special dances and rituals, while women prepare and offer food to the spirits of their ancestors. A main part of the festival is when a sacred wooden post called Symbud Khnong is carried around the town and then placed in a special spot to keep away evil spirits.

## **INDIA’S SECOND LONGEST CABLE-STAYED BRIDGE OPENS IN SHIVAMOGGA**

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the Sigandur bridge, India’s second longest cable-stayed bridge, on July 16, 2025, in Shivamogga district, Karnataka. This new bridge stretches 2.44 km across the Sharavathi backwaters and will help improve road connectivity between Sagara town and Sigandur, where the famous Chowdeshwari Temple is located.



### Major Bridge Brings New Hope

- The Sigandur bridge is 16 meters wide and has been built at a cost of over ₹470 crore. It connects Sagara with Marakutika, reducing travel time and improving access to nearby villages and religious places. After the Linganamakki dam was built in the 1960s, many areas lost road links. This bridge now restores that vital connection.
- At the inauguration, Nitin Gadkari named the bridge after Goddess Chowdeshwari Devi and said it would greatly help local people and pilgrims visiting the temple.

## **DOWRY DEATHS IN INDIA -**

- A surge in dowry-related deaths across states like Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, and Tamil Nadu shows the persistent grip of this illegal practice. Women continue to face harassment, assault, and suicide over dowry, while investigations drag on and convictions remain rare.

### Dowry Death and Cruelty

- **Dowry Death:** According to the Section 80 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) A woman's death by burns, injury, or in unnatural circumstances within 7 years of marriage is considered dowry death if she faced cruelty or harassment over dowry soon before her death.
- **Punishment:** Minimum 7 years imprisonment, extendable to life.
- **Cruelty:** Under Section 86 of the BNS, cruelty is defined as any willful conduct likely to drive a woman to commit suicide or cause serious harm to her physical or mental health.
- It also includes harassment intended to force her or her family to meet unlawful demands for money or property, or harassment due to their failure to meet such demands.

### What are the Reasons for the Persistence of Dowry-related Deaths in India?

- **Cultural Entitlement and Deep-rooted Traditions:** Dowry, though illegal since 1961 under the Dowry Prohibition Act, continues to be treated as a social practice.
- Cultural and societal pressures push families to meet rising dowry demands, which often leads to harassment, abuse, and even deaths.
- **Extent of the Dowry Problem in India:** Between 2017 and 2022, India saw an average of 7,000 dowry deaths annually, based on reports from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

## **GOVERNMENT TO INITIATE REMOVAL MOTION AGAINST JUSTICE YASHWANT VARMA -**

- The government will soon initiate the process to remove Justice Yashwant Varma, following the discovery of burnt currency at his residence and subsequent inquiry findings.

**Key Highlights of the Case and Court Rulings**

- Supreme Court's In-House Inquiry: A Supreme Court-appointed committee, led by then CJI Justice Sanjiv Khanna, found sufficient grounds to recommend the judge's removal after examining witness statements, including Justice Varma's.
- **No Formal Indictment:** The fact-finding committee clarified that its report did not indict Justice Varma but recommended that constitutional procedures for his removal be pursued.
- **Government's Planned Action:** The Government is set to pass the motion in the Parliament though the House for introduction of the motion (Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha) is yet to be finalised.

**Constitutional Provision for Impeachment of Judges**

- While the constitution does not use the word 'impeachment', it is colloquially used to refer to the proceedings under Article 124 for the removal of a Supreme Court judge.
- The removal of High Court judges is governed by Article 217(1)(b) and Article 218 of the Constitution of India.
- These articles provide that a judge of a High Court may be removed only by an order of the President of India, based on a motion passed by both Houses of Parliament.

**THE SUPREME COURT (SC) IS REVIEWING THE ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA'S SPECIAL INTENSIVE REVISION (SIR) OF ELECTORAL ROLLS IN BIHAR AND SUGGESTED ACCEPTING AADHAAR, VOTER ID, AND RATION CARDS AS VALID DOCUMENTS FOR VOTER ENUMERATION**

- However, the SC rejected the argument made by petitioners that the ECI lacked the authority to carry out the revision.
- What are Key Facts Regarding the Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls?
- **About Electoral Rolls:** An Electoral Roll (also known as a Voter List or Electoral Register) is the official list of all eligible and registered voters within a specific

constituency.

- It is used to verify voter identities and ensure a fair and transparent electoral process during elections.
- The Electoral Rolls are prepared by the ECI under the Representation of the People Act (RP Act), 1950.
- It excludes non-citizens (Section 16) and includes citizens aged 18 or above who are ordinarily resident in the constituency (Section 19).
- **About Special Intensive Revision:** SIR is a focused, time-bound house-to-house voters' verification process conducted by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to update and correct the electoral rolls before major elections.
- It ensures that the voter list is accurate, inclusive, and free from discrepancies by allowing new registrations, deletions, and modifications.
- Section 21 of the RP Act, 1950 empowers the ECI to prepare and revise electoral rolls, including conducting a special revision at any time with recorded reasons.

**AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BUREAU -**

- **The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) of India recently released a preliminary report on the Air India flight AI 171 crash in Ahmedabad. The report revealed that both engine fuel control switches changed from 'RUN' to 'CUTOFF' within seconds after take-off.**



- This unexpected switch-off led to the loss of engine power and the crash that killed 241 of the 242 onboard. The investigation has raised questions about cockpit procedures and the functioning of aircraft controls. This incident marks the critical role of the AAIB in probing aviation accidents and improving safety standards.

**PUNJAB INTRODUCES ANTI-SACRILEGE BILL 2025 -**

- The Punjab Government has introduced the Prevention of Offences Against Holy Scriptures Bill, 2025. This legislation aims to protect religious harmony by criminalising acts of sacrilege against sacred texts.
- It proposes stringent punishments including life imprisonment and heavy fines. The Bill covers scriptures revered by multiple faiths in Punjab, reflecting the region's diverse religious fabric.
- **The Bill was introduced amid rising concerns over incidents of sacrilege targeting holy scriptures such as the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Quran Sharif, and Holy Bible. These acts had disturbed peace and communal harmony in Punjab. The government seeks to deter such offences and restore public confidence through strict legal measures.**



being conducted along the Yatra route and the holy cave. High-resolution PTZ cameras and live drone feeds are tracking convoys for early threat detection.

**INDIA PLANS TO BUILD MORE OIL RESERVES FOR A SAFER FUTURE -**

- **India is working on a smart plan to make sure it never runs out of oil, even in times of trouble. The government wants to build three new strategic oil reserves. These are very large storage areas where the country can keep crude oil safe for future use.**
- This extra oil can help the country if there is a problem with supply from other countries or if prices go too high. With more oil saved, India will be better prepared for emergencies.

**INDIAN ARMY LAUNCHES OPERATION SHIVA 2025 FOR AMARNATH YATRA SECURITY -**

- As part of Operation SHIVA 2025, the Army has deployed over 8,500 troops along the northern and southern routes of the Yatra. This effort is in close coordination with the civil administration and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs). A multi-layered counter-terror grid, supported by advanced surveillance, has been set up to monitor any suspicious activity.
- **To prevent drone threats, a counter-unmanned aerial system (C-UAS) grid of over 50 systems has been activated. Continuous drone and UAV surveillance is**

**Where the Oil Reserves Will Be Built**

- The new oil reserves will be built in Chandikhole in Odisha, Bikaner in Rajasthan, and Rajkot in Gujarat. These places were chosen because they are good locations for storing oil and can be connected easily to other parts of the country.
- The new reserves will be added to the ones India already has. Right now, India has oil storage in places like Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, and Padur. With the new ones, the country will be able to store much more oil.

# INTERNATIONAL

## KAMCHATKA PENINSULA: 8.8 MAGNITUDE QUAKE TRIGGERS TSUNAMI ALERTS ACROSS PACIFIC REGION -

- A powerful undersea earthquake on a Richter scale 8.8 magnitude quake off Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula has triggered tsunami alerts across the Pacific region, affecting countries from Japan to the United States.
- It is the strongest quake in the region since 1952, according to the Russian Academy of Sciences.
- Tsunami waves hit Russia's Kuril Islands and Japan's Hokkaido island shortly after the earthquake.
- Indonesia, and the Philippines issued tsunami alerts for vulnerable coastal zones.

### About Kamchatka Peninsula

- **Location:** Far eastern Russia
- Between the Sea of Okhotsk (west) and Pacific Ocean & Bering Sea (east)
- At the junction of the Pacific and North American tectonic plates

### Geographical Features:

- It is about 1,200 km long north-south and about 480 km across at its widest.
- **River:** Kamchatka River
- **Highest Point:** Klyuchevskaya Sopka – tallest & most active volcano
- **Climate:** Tundra – cold, snowy winters; cool, wet summers
- **Environment:** Harsh terrain; rich biodiversity; low population density (<1 person/sq. km)

## INDIA-MALDIVES RELATIONS -

- Recently, the prime minister visited the Maldives at the invitation of Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu.
- The Prime Minister will be the 'Guest of Honour' at the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the Independence of Maldives on July 26, 2025.
- This will be the Prime Minister's third visit to Maldives, and the first visit by a Head of State or Government to

Maldives during the Presidency of H.E. Dr. Mohamed Muizzu.

### Key Highlights of PM Modi's Maldives Visit

- Economic Cooperation
- **Line of Credit (LoC):** India announced a ₹4,850 crore (\$565 million) LoC to Maldives to support development projects.
- **Debt Relief:** India reduced Maldives' annual debt repayment obligations on GoI-funded LoCs.
- **India-Maldives Free Trade Agreement (IMFTA):** Both countries initiated negotiations for a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- **Bilateral Investment Treaty:** Discussions to finalise a treaty to boost investments.
- **Digital Transformation:** MoUs signed for digital cooperation and other sectors.



### Defence & Security Cooperation

- India assured continued support to strengthen Maldives' defence capabilities.
- 72 vehicles provided to the Maldivian Defence Ministry.
- Mutual trust highlighted in defence and security collaboration.
- Diplomatic & Cultural Ties
- PM Modi described ties as "older than history, deep as the ocean".
- Maldives is India's "neighbour and co-traveller".

## INDIA RESUMES TOURIST VISAS FOR CHINESE CITIZENS AFTER FIVE YEARS -

- India has officially resumed the issuance of tourist visas to Chinese nationals after a five-year pause, marking a significant diplomatic and people-to-people development. This step reflects a cautious yet



positive recalibration in India-China bilateral ties, especially in the realm of tourism, soft diplomacy, and regional engagement.

- The move also coincides with India's broader efforts to revive inbound tourism and follows the reopening of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, a symbolic spiritual pilgrimage that draws many Chinese-origin followers.

#### **Background**

- India had suspended tourist visas for Chinese citizens in 2020 during the global COVID-19 outbreak, and tensions between India and China—particularly after the Galwan Valley clash in 2020—led to a continued freeze. Before COVID, travel between the two nations included tourism, business, academic exchanges, and pilgrimages, including visits to Buddhist and Hindu religious sites.

#### **INDIA-PAKISTAN PRISONER EXCHANGE -**

- India and Pakistan conducted their biannual exchange of prisoner lists. This exchange is part of the Agreement on Consular Access established in 2008. It aims to enhance transparency and cooperation regarding humanitarian issues between the two nations. The lists included number of civilian prisoners and fishermen from both sides.



#### **Background of the Agreement**

- The Agreement on Consular Access was signed in 2008. It mandates both countries to share lists of prisoners in their custody twice a year. This initiative aims to address humanitarian concerns and improve relations. The agreement reflects a commitment to uphold human rights and ensure the welfare of prisoners.

#### **Recent Exchange Details**

- On July 1, 2025, Pakistan provided a list of 246 Indian prisoners. This included 53 civilians and 193 fishermen. In return, India shared a list of 463 Pakistani prisoners, comprising 382 civilians and 81 fishermen. The exchange took place simultaneously through diplomatic channels in New Delhi and Islamabad.

#### **PAKISTAN ASSUMES UN SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENCY FOR JULY 2025 -**

- **Pakistan's UNSC presidency for July 2025 is a key global development because It represents Pakistan's growing role in international diplomacy. The country will chair crucial meetings amid escalating global conflicts and humanitarian crises.**



#### **Objectives and Vision**

- Uphold UN Charter principles, international law, and multilateral cooperation.
- Promote peaceful resolution of conflicts through diplomacy and dialogue.
- Ensure a transparent, inclusive, and responsive UNSC leadership.
- Key Roles During Presidency
- Presiding Officer: Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN.

#### **NATO SUMMIT 2025 -**

- **The NATO summit of 2025 marked shift in defence policy and international relations. Under the leadership of President Donald Trump, NATO members agreed to a controversial target of 5% of their GDP for defence spending. This decision has far-reaching implications for the alliance and its approach to global security.**



#### **5% Defence Spending Target**

- NATO allies reached a consensus to increase defence spending to 5% of GDP. This ambitious target includes 3.5% for core defence spending and 1.5% for defence-related expenditures.
- The latter encompasses infrastructure and innovation to boost national security. Each member country must

submit annual plans to meet this target, with progress reviews scheduled after the 2029 US presidential election.

### TESLA OPENS FIRST INDIA SHOWROOM AT MUMBAI'S BKC -

- Tesla marked a major milestone by opening its first India showroom at Maker Maxity Mall in Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC). The grand entry of the American electric vehicle (EV) leader signals a transformative moment for India's automotive and clean mobility landscape, introducing two variants of the Model Y with a starting price of ₹59.89 lakh.



#### Background

- After years of policy negotiations and anticipation, Tesla's arrival in India comes as the world's third-largest automobile market sharpens its focus on sustainable transportation. Despite global challenges, India's rising EV demand and progressive state policies attracted Tesla's initial investment, with the Mumbai experience centre chosen for its location in a high-end commercial hub.

#### Significance

- Tesla's debut in India is not just a business expansion but a boost to the country's EV ecosystem. The entry brings global attention to India's push for clean mobility and strengthens Maharashtra's role as an EV hub. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis called the showroom launch a market-changing event, highlighting Mumbai's entrepreneurial spirit and the state's robust EV policies.

### UK LOWERS VOTING AGE TO 16 -

- The UK government has announced a major reform to its electoral system. The voting age will be lowered from 18 to 16 for the next general election, expected in 2029. This change brings



**UK-wide elections in line with Scotland and Wales, which already allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote.**

- Alongside this, the government plans to expand voter ID requirements to include UK-issued bank cards. These reforms aim to modernise democracy, increase participation, and protect electoral integrity.

#### Lowering the Voting Age

- The government's decision to reduce the voting age to 16 is democratic shift. It fulfils a Labour Party manifesto promise and aligns voting rights across the UK. This move is expected to boost youth engagement in politics and restore public trust in democratic institutions. It recognises young people as active participants in shaping the nation's future.

### US LISTS 'THE RESISTANCE FRONT' AS GLOBAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

- India welcomed the US decision to officially designate The Resistance Front (TRF) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) group.



- **Note:** After the Pahalgam attack, India launched a diplomatic push urging global action against TRF.
- While the UN Security Council condemned the attack, it didn't name TRF. India later carried out Operation Sindoor, 2025 and lobbied the UN for stricter measures.

#### What is the 'The Resistance Front' (TRF)?

- **About:** TRF is a Pakistan-based designated terrorist group, active in Jammu and Kashmir. It emerged in 2019 after the abrogation of Article 370.
- It is widely seen as a proxy for the Pakistan-based group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).
- **Creation of TRF:** TRF was formed after LeT's leadership was decimated, to revive militancy in Kashmir under a new, local-seeming banner.

- TRF was created to give militancy in Kashmir an “indigenous” look and to avoid international scrutiny, especially from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which had greylisted Pakistan.
- **Modus Operandi of TRF:** TRF began as a social media-based group and evolved into a militant outfit with a strong online presence.
- TRF avoids fideyeeen (suicide) attacks, unlike its parent group LeT.
- **India’s and TRF:** In 2023, the Ministry of Home Affairs declared the TRF a terrorist organisation under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, for its involvement in terror propaganda, recruitment, infiltration, and smuggling of arms and narcotics from Pakistan into Jammu and Kashmir.

### INDIA ALLOWS PAKISTANI ATHLETES AMID VISA SUSPENSION

- India suspended visa services for Pakistani nationals following terror attacks in Pahalgam. Despite this, the government clarified that Pakistani athletes would still be allowed to participate in multi-nation sports tournaments hosted in India. This move separates sports diplomacy from political tensions and reflects adherence to international sports regulations.



#### Background

- The visa suspension was a response to security concerns after terror attacks. However, Indian officials confirmed that this ban would not extend to Pakistani athletes in multi-nation events. This policy aims to maintain India’s commitments to international sports bodies and ensure uninterrupted hosting of major tournaments.

### 17TH BRICS SUMMIT -

- India’s Prime Minister took part in the 17th BRICS Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, under the theme "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance," and signed the Rio de Janeiro Declaration.

- **Indonesia officially joined BRICS, while Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Nigeria, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda, and Uzbekistan were welcomed as BRICS partner countries.**



- India will assume the BRICS Chairship and host the 18th BRICS Summit in 2026.

### What are the Key Outcomes of the 17th BRICS Summit?

- **Global Governance Reform:** BRICS backed expansion of the UN Security Council to include more permanent members from Asia, Africa, and Latin America for greater Global South representation, urged IMF and World Bank reforms to reflect Emerging Markets and Developing Countries’ (EMDCs) role, and supported a rules-based WTO.
- **Sustainable Development:** BRICS adopted the Leaders’ Framework Declaration on Climate Finance to mobilize resources for developing countries and endorsed an MoU on the BRICS Carbon Markets Partnership to enhance cooperation in carbon pricing and emissions trading.
- **Peace and Security:** BRICS reaffirmed “African Solutions to African Problems”, called for a Gaza ceasefire and two-state solution. BRICS leaders condemned the Pahalgam attack, and India stressed that terrorism must be rejected on principle, not treated as a matter of convenience.
- **Financial Cooperation:** BRICS advanced talks on a Cross-Border Payments Initiative to reduce US dollar reliance, supported the New Development Bank’s expansion, and the BRICS Multilateral Guarantees (BMG) pilot to de-risk investments.

### RUSSIA BECOMES FIRST COUNTRY TO OFFICIALLY RECOGNISE TALIBAN GOVERNMENT -

- **On July 3, 2025, the Russian Foreign Ministry announced that it had removed the Taliban from its list of banned organisations, clearing the way for full diplomatic recognition. As part of this step,**

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Russia formally accepted the credentials of Afghanistan's new ambassador, Gul Hassan Hassan, appointed by the Taliban-led government in Kabul.



- In an official statement, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the move would promote productive bilateral cooperation between the two nations. It added that the recognition was made after considering the current realities in Afghanistan and the need for practical engagement.

### MASS DISPLACEMENT IN WEST BANK HITS HISTORIC HIGHS -

- The United Nations has reported an unprecedented surge in displacement in the West Bank in 2025. This marks the highest levels since Israel's occupation began nearly six decades ago. The spike follows an Israeli military operation launched in January, causing widespread forced movement of Palestinian residents. Concerns about ethnic cleansing and violations of international law have intensified amid rising violence and demolitions.



#### Background

- The West Bank has been under Israeli occupation since the 1967 Six-Day War. Over the years, military actions and settlement expansions have led to repeated displacements. The recent military operation, named "Iron Wall," is the longest since the early 2000s second Intifada. It has displaced tens of thousands of Palestinians, impacting refugee camps in the northern West Bank.

#### Scale and Impact of Recent Displacements

- Since January 2025, approximately 30,000 Palestinians remain forcibly displaced. Israeli authorities have issued demolition orders for about 1,400 homes in this period. Since late 2023, demolitions displaced nearly 3,000 Palestinians across the West Bank. Additionally, settler violence has forced another 2,400 Palestinians, half of them children, to flee their homes. The combined effect has emptied large areas of their Palestinian population.

### INDIA AND TRINIDAD & TOBAGO SIGN SIX NEW AGREEMENTS TO BOOST TIES -

- This is the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Trinidad & Tobago since 1999. PM Narendra Modi met with Trinidad & Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and held important talks to improve cooperation. The two leaders discussed future work in agriculture, education, digital payments, and healthcare. They also shared views on major global issues like climate change, cyber security, and disaster response.
- Both leaders showed great warmth and respect during the visit. PM Bissessar said that Mr. Modi's visit was a "landmark moment" that will give new energy to the friendship between the two countries.



#### Six Agreements Signed

- The two nations signed six Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). These deals cover cooperation in,
- Pharmaceutical standards
- Quick development projects
- Cultural exchange
- Sports promotion

# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## INDIA'S FIRST HYDROGEN-POWERED TRAIN COACH SUCCESSFULLY TESTED -

- India has entered a new era of green transportation with the successful testing of its first hydrogen-powered train coach at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, on July 25, 2025.



- This breakthrough marks a critical step toward sustainable mobility in railways and places India among a handful of countries adopting hydrogen-based rail technology. The initiative is part of a broader push to meet India's net-zero emissions targets and modernize its railway infrastructure with clean energy alternatives.

### Background

- The concept of hydrogen trains emerged globally as an alternative to diesel-powered locomotives, especially on non-electrified tracks. Countries like Germany, France, and Japan have already deployed hydrogen trains in limited routes. India began exploring hydrogen-based rail technology under its "Hydrogen for Heritage" initiative in 2023.
- The Railway Ministry proposed retrofitting DEMUs (Diesel Electric Multiple Units) and developing new hydrogen-powered trains to support clean transport in heritage and hill routes.

## INDIA WITNESSES 44% SURGE IN IP FILINGS OVER FIVE YEARS -

- Recently, the Minister of State for Commerce & Industry informed the Lok Sabha that India has recorded a significant increase in Intellectual Property (IP) filings in recent years.
- Filings increased by 44%, from 4.77 lakh in 2020–21 to 6.89 lakh in 2024–25



- Category-wise surge:** a 380% increase in Geographical indications, followed by Designs (266%), Patents (180%), Copyright (83%), and Trademarks (28%).

### Drivers of the Surge in IP Filings

- Procedural Reforms
- Timelines fixed for processing and granting of patents
- Number of trademark forms reduced from 74 to 8
- Simplified filing procedures for patents, trademarks, and copyrights
- Introduction of 'Certificate of Inventorship' to recognize inventors
- Fee Concessions:** 80% fee reduction for Startups, MSMEs, and Educational Institutions for Patents, 75% for Designs, 50% for Trademarks and Discounts for Advance Patent Renewals.

## DELHI TO GET FIRST PLASTIC ROAD USING GEOCELLS TECHNOLOGY BY BPCL & CRRI FOR SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE -

- Delhi is set to get its first plastic road, marking a major step forward in sustainable infrastructure.
- Developed by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) and Central Road Research Institute (CRRI).



- It involves construction technique involving 9x9x9 inch box-like cells filled with bitumen mix and plastic.

### What is Geocells Technology?

- Geocells are cellular confinement systems that create a three-dimensional structure, resembling a honeycomb, when expanded.
- They are typically made from high-density polyethylene (HDPE) or other durable polymers.
- Geocells are designed to confine and stabilize infill materials like soil, gravel, or sand, preventing lateral movement and enhancing overall stability.

**How Geocells Work?**

- Geocells are expanded on-site and filled with the chosen infill material.
- The confinement of the infill within the cells prevents lateral spreading and movement, leading to increased load-bearing capacity.

**ANANTH TECH TO START INDIA'S FIRST PRIVATE SATELLITE INTERNET -**

- Ananth Technologies has made history by becoming the first private Indian company to get approval for providing satellite-based internet using a satellite made in India.



- **This service will be launched by 2028, and it will deliver broadband internet directly from space to users across the country, including in rural and remote areas where internet is often weak or missing.**
- The service will use a satellite in geostationary orbit, which is placed more than 35,000 km above Earth. This orbit allows the satellite to stay fixed over one point, helping provide steady internet service.

**DELHI LAUNCHES CLOUD SEEDING TO COMBAT POLLUTION -**

- Delhi is set to conduct its first cloud seeding operation between August 30 and September 10, 2025. This initiative aims to reduce air pollution by triggering artificial rainfall.
- The project was postponed from July following expert advice from the India



Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune. The Rs 3.21 crore project will use five modified Cessna aircraft to seed clouds over northwest and outer Delhi.

**What Is Cloud Seeding?**

- **Cloud seeding is a weather modification technique. It involves adding substances like silver iodide, dry ice, or salt particles to clouds. These materials encourage cloud droplets to form and fall as rain or snow. The process requires existing clouds and can increase rainfall by 5-15 per cent. It is used to address water scarcity, reduce hail, or clear fog.**

**JIO BECOMES WORLD'S LARGEST FIXED WIRELESS ACCESS PROVIDER -**

- Jio has officially crossed 20 million FWA subscribers as of mid-2025, surpassing T-Mobile's 19.8 million, marking a historic shift in the global broadband market. The achievement showcases India's rise as a digital powerhouse and Jio's innovation in delivering high-speed internet to underserved regions through 5G-based fixed wireless solutions.

**Key Highlights**

- Jio's FWA Journey
- Launched Jio AirFiber in September 2023.
- Offers plug-and-play broadband via 5G technology.
- Entry-level plans start at ₹599/month.
- Over 20 million FWA subscribers in less than 2 years.

## ECONOMY & FINANCE

### INDIA'S GIG ECONOMY GROWTH -

- India's gig economy has expanded rapidly in recent years. By FY 2024-25, gig workers numbered about 12 million, up from 7.7 million in 2020-21. This sector now comprises over 2% of the total workforce. Growth is driven by digital connectivity, urbanisation, and a shift towards flexible work. This change marks a structural shift in India's labour market.



#### Defining Gig Workers

- Gig workers are individuals earning income without formal employment benefits. They include cab drivers, food delivery personnel, home cleaners, and other service providers working through digital platforms.
- Unlike traditional informal workers, gig workers operate in a semi-structured system where tasks and payments are documented. This formalisation brings transparency and some recognition to their work.

### INDIA-UK COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT (CETA) -

- Recently, India and the United Kingdom have signed the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), marking a historic milestone in their bilateral trade relations.
- Key objective of the agreement:** To double bilateral trade between the two countries by 2030.



#### About CETA (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement)

- It is a type of FTA that covers a wide range of economic cooperation, including goods, services, investment, and non-tariff barriers.
- Key Highlights of the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

- Tariff Elimination & Market Access:** 99% tariff elimination covering 100% trade value for Indian exports.
- Sensitive sectors protected:** Dairy, apples, oats, edible oils retain tariffs.
- Double Contribution Convention (DCC):** 3-year exemption on UK social security contributions for Indian workers.
- Prevents double taxation, enhances take-home pay & cost competitiveness.

### UPI'S POWER: INDIA NOW LEADS THE WORLD IN FAST PAYMENTS -

- India has become the global leader in fast payments, as noted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its report "Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability," highlighting Unified Payments Interface's (UPI's) transformative impact.



- #### Key Highlights of the Report
- Global Leadership in Digital Payments:** India's Unified Payments Interface is also now the world's number one real-time payment system.
  - Massive Transaction Volume:** UPI handles more than 640 million transactions every day, compared to Visa's 639 million.
  - Latest Figures (June 2025):** UPI processed over 18 billion transactions monthly.
  - In June alone, UPI processed transactions worth ₹24.03 lakh crore, a 32% rise in transaction volume compared to the same month last year.
  - Dominant Force:** UPI now handles a huge 85% of all digital payments in India and nearly half of all real-time digital transactions across the world.
  - Massive Reach:** The platform now serves 491 million individuals and 65 million merchants.

**INDIA'S GST COLLECTIONS HIT RECORD ₹22.08 LAKH CRORE IN FY25 -**

- India has achieved its highest-ever annual GST revenue in FY25, marking eight years since the GST rollout.



The consistent rise in monthly and yearly GST collections demonstrates the system's growing effectiveness and transparency. As the GST regime completes eight years on July 1, 2025, this achievement underscores its pivotal role in strengthening India's fiscal framework.

**GST Collection Milestones**

- **FY25 Gross Collection:** ₹22.08 lakh crore — highest ever.
- **Growth over FY24:** 9.4% YoY (₹20.18 lakh crore in FY24).
- **Growth over FY21:** Doubled from ₹11.37 lakh crore.
- **Average Monthly Collection:** ₹1.84 lakh crore in FY25.
- **April 2025:** Highest-ever monthly GST of ₹2.37 lakh crore.
- **May 2025:** ₹2.01 lakh crore.
- **June 2025 data:** To be released soon

**PM MODI SETS \$20 BILLION TRADE TARGET WITH BRAZIL BY 2030 -**

- During a state visit to Brazil on July 9, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi set a bold goal to increase India-Brazil bilateral trade to \$20 billion by 2030, up from the current \$12.2 billion.



- Speaking at a Joint Press Conference alongside Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in Brasilia, PM Modi outlined a roadmap to deepen economic cooperation and strategic ties between the two major Global South economies.

**Expanding Trade Through Mercosur**

- Widening the Mercosur Preferential Trade Agreement

- PM Modi emphasized India's intent to expand the Mercosur preferential trade agreement. Mercosur, a regional trade bloc comprising Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay, currently has limited coverage with India.

- Modi stressed the need to include more products and enhance market access for Indian exporters.

**The Prime Minister also highlighted sectors ripe for expansion such as:**

- Agriculture and food processing
- Agri-tech and value-added food exports
- Digital public infrastructure
- Space technology and research collaboration

**NVIDIA ON TRACK TO BECOME THE WORLD'S MOST VALUABLE COMPANY IN HISTORY -**

- Nvidia, the global leader in high-end AI chips, is set to make history by becoming the most valuable company in the world. On Thursday, its market capitalisation soared to 3.92 trillion dollars, surpassing Apple's record of 3.915 trillion dollars set on December 26, 2024. This marks a groundbreaking moment not just for Nvidia, but for the entire technology and financial world.

**Driving Force: The AI Boom**

- The massive growth in Nvidia's value is fueled by its dominance in artificial intelligence (AI) chip technology. The company's newest chips are essential in training large AI models, and the demand for them has skyrocketed as global tech giants race to build AI data centers.
- Microsoft, Amazon, Meta, Alphabet, and Tesla are all heavily investing in AI, creating a surge in demand for Nvidia's powerful processors. This has put Nvidia at the center of a global AI revolution, pushing its stock price up by over 68% since April.

**CABINET APPROVES ₹1 LAKH CRORE EMPLOYMENT-LINKED SCHEME -**

- Union Cabinet approved a major employment-linked incentive (ELI) scheme worth ₹1 lakh crore to create over 3.5 crore jobs across India. The scheme, part of the Union Budget 2024–25, aims to provide financial support to employers and social security to workers, especially in the manufacturing sector.

**Boosting Job Creation Across Sectors**

- **The new ELI scheme will benefit jobs created between August 1, 2025, and July 31, 2027. Out of the targeted 3.5 crore new jobs, around 1.92 crore will be for first-time workers. The scheme focuses on giving social security and creating more formal jobs in all sectors, with extra support for the manufacturing industry.**
- Employers will receive up to ₹3,000 per new employee per month for a period of two years, provided the job lasts at least six months. For the manufacturing sector, incentives can continue for another two years. New employees will also get one month's wage (up to ₹15,000) as part of the benefits.

**8 YEARS OF GST -**

- **As Goods and Services Tax (GST) completes 8 years since its launch on 1st July 2017, experts acknowledge its success in tax integration and digitisation, while emphasizing the need for simplification, rate rationalisation, and reduced compliance burden.**

**What are the Key Achievements of GST over the Past 8 years?**

- **Record Revenue Growth:** GST revenues have consistently grown, crossing Rs 1.8 lakh crore in FY 2024-25, with an average monthly collection of Rs 1.67 lakh crore.
- This growth has outpaced nominal GDP, reflecting better compliance, reduced tax evasion, and increased economic formalization.
- **Digital Transformation & Compliance Efficiency:** GST has undergone digitization—from manual filings to e-invoicing, real-time credit matching, automated returns, and e-way bills—reducing errors and fraud.
- While MSMEs, once hesitant, now see it as a gateway to credit, government procurement, and national market access.
- **Expanded Taxpayer Base:** As of 30th April, 2025, India boasts over 1.51 crore active GST registrations, marking a significant increase from 65 lakh in 2017.
- This growth underscores the success of GST in formalizing the economy and enhancing tax compliance.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** GST has removed inter-state tax barriers, lowering logistics costs and enhancing supply chain efficiency, while the elimination of entry taxes and octroi has led to further business cost savings.
- GST's 'One Nation, One Tax' framework replaced the multi-layered tax system, reducing cascading effects while the Input Tax Credit (ITC) mechanism ensured seamless credit flow, lowering business costs and boosting competitiveness.



# IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

## 26TH KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS 2025 KEY INITIATIVES LAUNCHED BY INDIAN ARMY -

- To mark the 26th Kargil Vijay Diwas (July 26, 2025), the Indian Army is launching three key initiatives to honour the valour of soldiers and raise public awareness about the sacrifices made during the 1999 Kargil War.



### About Kargil Diwas 2025

- Observed annually on July 26, it commemorates the success of Operation Vijay in 1999.
- Indian armed forces recaptured strategic high-altitude posts in Kargil from Pakistani intruders after nearly three months of intense combat.
- Key battlegrounds:** Tololing, Tiger Hill, and Batalik sector.
- Initiatives Launched On Kargil Diwas 2025

### e-Shradhanjali Portal:

- A digital platform for citizens to pay virtual tribute to martyrs.
- Enables participation from any location without visiting physical memorials.
- Aims to foster a culture of national gratitude and raise awareness of the hardships faced by soldiers.

### QR Code-based Audio Application:

- Provides audio narratives of key battles during the Kargil War.
- Operates like a museum audio guide, allowing visitors to hear first-hand accounts of bravery and sacrifice.
- Designed to educate and emotionally connect people with the events of 1999.

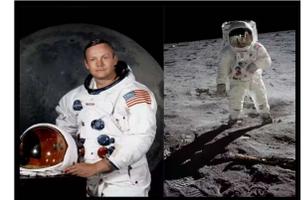
### Indus Viewpoint – Batalik Sector

- A new viewpoint offering controlled civilian access to the LoC in the Batalik sector.
- Aims to showcase the challenging terrain and conditions soldiers face in frontline areas.

- Located at over 10,000 feet altitude, Batalik was one of the critical battlegrounds during the war.

## INTERNATIONAL MOON DAY -

- 20th July is observed annually as International Moon Day to mark the historic first human landing on the Moon by the Apollo 11 mission in 1969.
- The United Nations General Assembly officially recognised this observance in 2021, following a recommendation by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), to promote global cooperation in space exploration.



### Apollo 11 Mission

- Apollo 11, launched by NASA on 16th July 1969, was the first successful crewed mission to land on the Moon and return safely to Earth.
- On 20th July 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to set foot on the lunar surface, while Michael Collins remained in lunar orbit aboard the Command Module.
- In total, there were six successful lunar landings under the Apollo program: Apollo 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, and 17.

### India's Lunar Mission

- India's Moon missions began with Chandrayaan-1 (2008), which discovered water on the Moon, followed by Chandrayaan-2 (2019), whose orbiter remains active despite a failed landing.
- Chandrayaan-3 (2023) achieved a historic soft landing at the South Pole, making India the first to do so (fourth nation to land on the Moon).
- Upcoming missions include Chandrayaan-4 (2027) for sample return, and Chandrayaan-5 (LUPEX), a joint mission with Japan (JAXA) to explore lunar water and ice, planned for 2027–28.

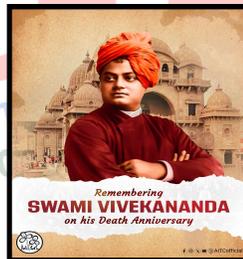
## INCOME TAX DAY (JULY 24): A SYMBOL OF FISCAL EVOLUTION AND DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT -

- Income Tax Day, celebrated annually on July 24, commemorates the historic introduction of income tax in India in 1860 by Sir James Wilson. Over the decades, this day has evolved from being a marker of tax imposition to a celebration of India's fiscal growth, voluntary compliance, and digital transformation.
- Income tax, once seen as merely a revenue collection tool, now symbolizes economic self-reliance, transparency, and nation-building. For aspirants of civil services and government exams, understanding the evolution and significance of Income Tax Day provides insights into India's taxation system, policy reforms, and digital governance.



## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA DEATH ANNIVERSARY 2025 -

- Every year, 4th July is observed as the Punyatithi (death anniversary) of Swami Vivekananda, a great Indian saint philosopher and spiritual teacher. He is known as the Father of Modern Indian Nationalism and played a big role in taking Hinduism and Indian values to the world. His teachings continue to guide the youth and society even today.



### About Swami Vivekananda

- Swami Vivekananda was born as Narendranath Datta on 12th January 1863 in Calcutta (now Kolkata). He became a disciple of Ramakrishna Paramhansa, who changed his life and gave him deep spiritual direction. In 1893, on the request of Maharaja Ajit Singh of Khetri, he took the name Vivekananda. He passed away on 4th July 1902 at Belur Math, the headquarters of Ramakrishna Mission, in West Bengal.

## INDIA OBSERVED NATIONAL FLAG DAY (TIRANGA ADOPTION DAY), ON 22ND JULY 2025, TO MARK THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL FLAG'S OFFICIAL ADOPTION BY THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IN 1947.

### What are the Key Facts About the Indian National Flag?

Evolution of the Indian National Flag:

- 1904:** Designed by Sister Nivedita, it featured red and yellow with a Vajra (strength), a white lotus (purity), and "Bande Mataram" inscribed.
- Sister Nivedita was an Irish social activist and a disciple of Swami Vivekananda.
- 1906 (Swadeshi Movement Flag):** Considered the first tricolour, it was hoisted in Calcutta with green, yellow, and red horizontal stripes. It featured lotuses, a sun, a crescent moon, and the words "Vande Mataram".
- 1907 (Saptarishi Flag):** Hoisted by Madam Bhikaji Cama in Germany. It had green, saffron, and red stripes with lotuses, "Vande Mataram", a sun, and a crescent moon.
- 1917 (Home Rule Movement Flag):** Introduced by Annie Besant and Tilak. It had red and green stripes, the Union Jack, crescent and star, and stars in the Saptarishi pattern.
- 1921:** Pingali Venkayya (an Indian freedom fighter, linguist, and polymath from Andhra Pradesh), proposed a red, white, and green flag with a spinning wheel, symbolising unity and self-reliance. The design of the present Indian flag is largely attributed to him.



- **In 1931 Saffron replaced red:** The flag had saffron, white, and green with a spinning wheel in the centre. It was adopted by the Indian National Congress.
- **1947 (Present Flag):** Adopted by the Constituent Assembly. The spinning wheel was replaced with the Ashoka Chakra.
- **Common name:** Tiranga, meaning Tricolour.
- **Design:** Three horizontal stripes: saffron (kesari) (top), White (middle), Green (bottom), with a navy blue Ashoka Chakra in the centre.
- **Ashoka Chakra:** The Ashoka Chakra, with 24 spokes, is based on the wheel from the Sarnath Lion Capital made by the 3rd-century BC Mauryan Emperor Ashoka and fits within the width of the white band.

**KASHMIR MARTYRS DAY 2025 -**

- The politics of Jammu and Kashmir in 2025 is tense around Martyrs' Day on July 13. This day, once an official holiday, honours those killed in 1931 during protests against the Dogra regime. Since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, the holiday was scrapped.
- With an elected government now in power, political parties planned to visit the Martyrs' Cemetery. The BJP opposed this. To prevent visits, the police placed many leaders under house arrest. The controversy marks deep political divides and the complex legacy of Kashmir's struggle.

**Historical Background of Martyrs' Day**

- **Martyrs' Day commemorates the killing of 22 Kashmiri Muslims on 13 July 1931. They were shot by Dogra police outside Srinagar Central Jail during a protest. The protest was against the Dogra rulers'**

**autocratic rule. The victims were buried at the shrine of Khawja Bahaudin Naqashbandi.**

- Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah declared this day as Martyrs' Day to honour their sacrifice. The event marked the start of political awakening and identity assertion in Kashmir.

**WORLD POPULATION DAY, OBSERVED ON 11TH JULY, WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE UN IN 1989 TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT POPULATION ISSUES AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS -**

- **The theme for World Population Day 2025 is "Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world," which focuses on empowering youth to make informed choices about sexual and reproductive health.**

**What is the Status of Youth in India?**

- **Youth Demographic Profile:** According to UNICEF, India has the world's largest youth population, with 371 million people in the 15 to 29 age group.
- As per the Technical Group on Population Projections (2021), youth (15–29 years) accounted for 27.2% of the population in 2021, but are projected to decline to 22.7% by 2036.
- **Demographic Significance:** A large youth population enhances workforce participation and reduces dependency ratios, creating a demographic dividend for growth.
- **Policy & Governance:** Department of Youth Affairs, under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, is the nodal agency for youth-related policies and programs.
- Its twin objectives are personality development and nation-building.

# AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

## SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA BECOMES 634TH ASTRONAUT TO REACH SPACE -

- **Shubhanshu Shukla**, a pilot from the Indian Air Force, has become the latest Indian to enter space, joining an elite group of global astronauts. His successful docking at the ISS marks a significant event in India's expanding participation in international human space missions, especially as it anticipates future missions like Gaganyaan.



### Key Details of the Axiom-4 Mission

- **Mission Name:** Axiom-4 (Ax-4)
- **Launch Date:** June 25, 2025
- **Docking at ISS:** June 26, 2025
- **Duration:** 14 days
- **Launch Vehicle:** SpaceX Crew Dragon
- **Partner Organization:** Axiom Space (U.S.)
- **Destination:** International Space Station (ISS)

## THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA PRESENTED PADMA VIBHUSHAN, PADMA BHUSHAN AND PADMA SHRI AWARDS FOR THE YEAR 2025 TO 139 DISTINGUISHED PERSONS WHOSE NAMES WERE ANNOUNCED ON THE EVE OF THE 76TH REPUBLIC DAY 2025 -

### What are Padma Awards-

- **About:** Instituted in 1954, the Padma Awards are among India's highest civilian honours, announced annually on Republic Day (26th January).
- Their objective is to honour excellence in various fields involving public service.
- **Categories:** The Awards are given in 3 categories:
- **Padma Vibhushan:** For exceptional and distinguished service
- **Padma Bhushan:** For distinguished service of high order
- **Padma Shri:** For distinguished service.

- The Padma Vibhushan is the highest among the Padma Awards, followed by the Padma Bhushan and then the Padma Shri.



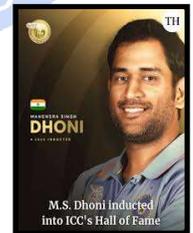
- **Presentation and Recognition:** Padma

Awards are conferred by the President of India in March/April, with recipients receiving a Sanad, medallion, and a replica for ceremonial use.

- **Disciplines:** The awards are presented across diverse fields such as art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, and more.
- **Eligibility:** All persons without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex are eligible for these Awards.

## MS DHONI INDUCTED INTO ICC HALL OF FAME -

- In a moment that further cements his place among cricket's all-time greats, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, former India captain and one of the most iconic cricketers of his generation, was officially inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame during a prestigious event held in London.



- **With this honour, Dhoni becomes the 11th Indian cricketer, and the ninth Indian male player, to be recognised by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for his extraordinary contributions to the game.**

### A Career Built on Calm, Leadership, and Glory

- Debuting for India in 2004, Dhoni's rise to stardom was swift and impactful. He took over as India's captain in 2007, ushering in a golden era marked by major ICC tournament victories:
- 2007 ICC T20 World Cup (India's first-ever win in the format)
- 2011 ICC ODI World Cup (after 28 years, on home soil)
- 2013 ICC Champions Trophy (India remained unbeaten)

under his leadership)

- These victories made him the only captain in world cricket to win all three major ICC trophies, a feat still unmatched.

### PM MODI CONFERRED WITH CYPRUS ' HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOUR — ORDER OF MAKARIOS III -

- PM Narendra Modi received Cyprus' top civilian award during his first-ever official visit to the Mediterranean nation. The award, Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III, recognizes his efforts in strengthening India-Cyprus relations and promoting global cooperation.



- Modi's visit marks a historic milestone, as he is the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Cyprus.

#### About the Award

- **Name:** Order of Makarios III
- **Country:** Republic of Cyprus
- **Named after:** Archbishop Makarios III, first President of Cyprus.
- **Purpose:** Awarded for meritorious service to the nation and strengthening diplomatic ties.

### PM MODI MAKES HISTORY: BREAKS INDIRA GANDHI'S RECORD AS INDIA'S 2ND LONGEST SERVING PM! -

- On July 25, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi achieved a major milestone by surpassing Indira Gandhi's record of 4,077 consecutive days in office. With this, he became India's second-longest serving Prime Minister in a single uninterrupted term, solidifying his position in India's political history.



#### Background

- Indira Gandhi served continuously from January 1966 to March 1977. PM Modi, who first took office on May 26,

2014, crossed this record on July 25, 2025, completing 4,078 days in office. His political journey began in 2001 as Gujarat's Chief Minister, and he has since led governments at both the state and national levels for nearly 24 years.

#### Key Achievements

- Modi is the first non-Congress Prime Minister to serve two full terms with a clear majority in the Lok Sabha. He is also the first post-independence born Prime Minister to hold the office and the longest-serving PM from a non-Hindi-speaking state. He led the BJP to three consecutive general election victories, a record only matched by Jawaharlal Nehru before him.

### MID-TERM RESIGNATION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT -

- On the first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar resigned with immediate effect due to medical reasons, also stepping down as Rajya Sabha Chairman.
- He is only the third Vice-President in Indian history to resign before completing his term.
- Before Dhankhar, only V.V. Giri and R. Venkataraman had resigned mid-term as Vice-President. Both stepped down to contest presidential elections.



#### Vice-President of India

- He holds the second-highest constitutional office in India.
- He is ranked next to the President in the order of precedence.
- His office is modelled on that of the American Vice-President.
- Election Process for Vice-President
- **Electoral College:** Members of both Houses of Parliament (elected + nominated).
- **Voting System:** Proportional representation by single transferable vote; secret ballot.

**SANJAY KAUL APPOINTED CEO OF GIFT CITY, GANDHINAGAR -**

- Sanjay Kaul, a 2001-batch IAS officer from the Kerala cadre, has been appointed as the Managing Director and CEO of GIFT City Company Limited in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The announcement was made on July 15, 2025, through a government order. He will take charge on deputation for three years, or until further notice.
- Sanjay Kaul is currently working as a Joint Secretary in the Union Ministry of Culture. He handles areas like international cultural relations, UNESCO affairs, intangible cultural heritage, and several cultural institutes. He has rich administrative experience and has earlier worked in Gujarat as Managing Director of both the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd and Gujarat Informatics Ltd.

**INDIAN ASTRONAUT SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA'S ISS EXPERIMENTS 2025 -**

- Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla made history by becoming the first Indian to conduct scientific research aboard the International Space Station (ISS). During the 18-day Axiom-4 mission, Shukla and his team carried out over 60 experiments focused on microgravity's effects on biology, agriculture, technology and human physiology. These studies aimed to advance space exploration and offer insights applicable to life on Earth.

**Microgravity and Biological Resilience**

- Shukla's research included studying Indian strains of tardigrades, microscopic organisms known for surviving extreme conditions. The experiments tested their growth and resilience in space. About these effects helps develop strategies to protect living organisms during long-duration space missions.

**NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO RAJYA SABHA -**

- Recently, the President of India has nominated four distinguished individuals to the Rajya Sabha.

**About Recent Nominations to the Rajya Sabha****Members Nominated: These include:**

- Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Former Foreign Secretary
  - Ujjwal Nikam, the Special Public Prosecutor in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack case
  - C. Sadanandan Master, a BJP leader from Kerala
  - Dr. Meenakshi Jain, a noted historian
- The nomination of members to the Rajya Sabha by the President of India is taken from the Irish Constitution.
  - **Article 80(1) of the Constitution:** This article mandates that the Rajya Sabha shall consist of not more than 250 members, of which 12 are to be nominated by the President.
  - **Clause (3) of Article 80:** It specifies that the President may nominate individuals who possess special knowledge or practical experience in literature, science, art, or social service.
  - **E.G.:** Rakesh Sinha (Literature), Ilaiyaraaja (Arts) etc.
  - While Article 80(1)(a) identifies that 12 members are to be nominated, it is Article 80(3) that explicitly lays out the criteria for these nominations.
  - **Tenure:** Nominated members in the Rajya Sabha have a tenure of six years, and one-third of the members retire every two years, aligning with the tenure of elected members.
  - **Rights and Privileges:** Nominated members in the Rajya Sabha enjoy equal rights and privileges as elected members. They are allowed to join a political party within six months of taking their seat in the House. They can participate in debates, vote on bills, and serve on parliamentary committees.
  - However, they are not entitled to vote in the election of the President, though they can vote in the election of the Vice-President.



# PROGRAMMES, SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES

## 10 YEARS OF ATAL PENSION YOJANA -

- Recently Atal Pension Yojana crossed 8 crore enrolments with 39 lakh new subscribers added in the current financial year.
- The Government of India launched the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) on 9th May 2015 and was operationalized from 1st June 2015.



### About Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

- APY was designed to encourage voluntary savings for retirement by offering defined pension benefits, linked to the age of joining and amount of contribution
- **Administered by :** Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- Managed under the National Pension System (NPS) architecture.
- **Objective:** To build a universal social security system for all Indians, especially the poor, underprivileged, and unorganised sector workers.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Finance
- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme

### Key Features

- **Guaranteed Pension:** Ensures a monthly pension of ₹1,000 to ₹5,000 post-60 years of age.
- **Pension slabs available:** ₹1,000, ₹2,000, ₹3,000, ₹4,000, and ₹5,000 per month.
- **Tax exemption:** It is available on contributions made by individuals towards the Atal Pension Yojana under Section 80CCD of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- Under Section 80CCD (1), the maximum exemption allowed is 10% of the concerned individual's gross total income up to a limit of Rs. 1,50,000.
- **Family Security:** After the subscriber's demise, the same pension is provided to the spouse, and the accumulated corpus is returned to the nominee after the death of both.

## PM VIKSIT BHARAT ROZGAR YOJANA -

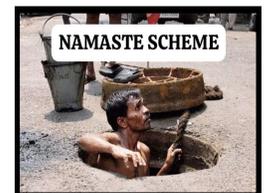
- The Government of India has introduced the PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY), a major employment-linked incentive scheme starting from 1 August 2025. The scheme aims to generate over 3.5 crore new jobs in two years.
- It focuses on inclusive and sustainable employment, especially in the manufacturing sector. With a budget of Rs 99,446 crore, the scheme targets first-time workers and supports employers to boost job creation.

### Overview of PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana

- PM-VBRY is designed to accelerate economic growth through job-led development. It incentivises both employees and employers to create and sustain employment. The scheme runs from August 2025 to July 2027. It is divided into two parts – Part A for first-time employees and Part B for employers generating additional jobs.

## NAMASTE SCHEME -

- On the occasion of NAMASTE (National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem) Day (16th July), the Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment inaugurated the helpline number (14473) for waste pickers and distributed PPE kits and Ayushman cards to Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) and Waste Pickers.



### What is the NAMASTE Scheme?

- **About :** NAMASTE is a human-centric, rights-based initiative aimed at eliminating hazardous manual scavenging of sewers and septic tanks, launched in 2023 as a Central Sector Scheme for a period of 3 years (2023–24 to 2025–26).
- It replaces the earlier Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS), and covers 4800+ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across India.

- The scheme aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 8 (Decent Work), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality).
- **Implementation:** Jointly launched by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and being implemented by the National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC).

### INAUGURATION OF NATIONAL TURMERIC BOARD IN NIZAMABAD -

- The Union Home Minister inaugurated the National Turmeric Board in Nizamabad, Telangana, to develop a complete value chain for turmeric, including packaging, branding, marketing, and export.
- **Operating under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the board aims to reduce middlemen, promote GI-tagged organic turmeric, and train farmers in best practices.**
- Previously, the Spices Board managed turmeric promotion along with over 50 other spices.



### Turmeric

- **About:** Turmeric is an underground stem (rhizome) of the *Curcuma longa* plant, which is part of the ginger family (Zingiberaceae).
- Curcumin, the active compound in turmeric, gives it its yellow color and is known for its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antimicrobial benefits.
- **Cultivation:** India cultivates 30+ turmeric varieties across 20+ states, with major producers being Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.
- Turmeric requires a tropical climate with 20–30°C temperature, 1500+ mm annual rainfall, and well-drained sandy or clay loam soils for optimal growth.
- **Global Standing:** India is the world's largest producer, consumer, and exporter of turmeric.
- In 2022–23, it contributed over 75% of global production and held a 62% share in global exports.

- **Export Data:** India exported turmeric and related products worth USD 207.45 million in 2022–23, mainly to Bangladesh, UAE, USA, and Malaysia, and aims to reach USD 1 billion in turmeric exports by 2030.
- **GI Tags:** GI-certified varieties include Lakadong turmeric (Meghalaya), Kandhamal turmeric (Odisha), Erode turmeric (Tamil Nadu).
- **Health Benefits:** Curcumin helps in reducing inflammation, fighting oxidative stress, and aiding digestion by enhancing bile production, making turmeric significant in traditional and modern medicine.

### PM DHAN-DHAANYA KRISHI YOJANA APPROVED FOR 6 YEARS TO BOOST AGRICULTURE IN 100 DISTRICTS -

- The Union Cabinet approved the “Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana” for a period of six years, beginning with 2025–26 to cover 100 districts.
- The PM-DDKY, announced in the Budget earlier this year, aims at increasing agricultural productivity and sustainable practices with an annual outlay of ₹24,000 crore.
- The scheme draws inspiration from NITI Aayog's Aspirational District Programme.
- The scheme will be implemented through the convergence of 36 existing schemes across 11 Central Departments.



### About Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana

- **Aim:** To uplift 100 districts with low agricultural productivity, low cropping intensity, and limited credit access.

### Objectives:

- Enhance agricultural productivity.
- Promote crop diversification and sustainable agricultural practices.
- Augment post-harvest storage at the panchayat and block levels.
- Improve irrigation infrastructure.
- Facilitate availability of long-term and short-term credit.

- It is the first scheme focused exclusively on agriculture and allied sectors.
- Implementation Strategy:
- It will also involve State schemes and local partnerships with the private sector.

### 36 SCHEMES OF CENTRAL GOVT. MERGES INTO IN PRIME MINISTER DHAN-DHAANYA KRISHI YOJANA -

- India's agricultural sector, vital to livelihoods and food security, has long grappled with inefficiencies due to fragmented schemes and disjointed implementation. In response, the Union Cabinet approved the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY)—a transformative initiative announced in the Union Budget 2025–26, aimed at enhancing productivity, sustainability, and economic viability for farmers by converging multiple central schemes into one coherent framework.



#### **Background**

- Despite numerous schemes across ministries, Indian agriculture remains plagued by low productivity, fragmented land holdings, and climate vulnerabilities. Existing overlaps and lack of synergy have reduced the overall impact. To address these issues, PMDDKY merges 36 schemes under 11 ministries, promoting decentralised, data-driven interventions modeled after the Aspirational Districts Programme.

### PM VIRASAT KA SAMVARDHAN (VIKAS) SCHEME -

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) launched a skill training and women entrepreneurship development project under the Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) scheme.
- **Under this project, 150 youth candidates will be trained in Internet of Things (IoT) and 300 women candidates will receive entrepreneurship training,**

**with stipends and industry linkages for employment opportunities.**

#### **What is PM-VIKAS Scheme?**

- It is a skilling initiative from MoMA focusing on the skilling, entrepreneurship and leadership training requirements of the minority and artisan communities across the country.
- The scheme is intended to be implemented in convergence with the Skill India Mission and through integration with the Skill India Portal (SIP).
- The PM VIKAS scheme integrates the Ministry's earlier skilling and education initiatives into a unified platform to support the socio-economic development of India's six notified minority communities - Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, and Zoroastrians (Parsis).
- The scheme also provisions to facilitate credit linkages by connecting beneficiaries with loan programs offered by the National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC).



### PRIME MINISTER DHAN-DHAANYA KRISHI YOJANA -

- **The Union Cabinet approved the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) in 2025. This new agricultural scheme aims to develop 100 districts through the convergence of 36 schemes across 11 ministries.**
- It has an annual budget of Rs 24,000 crore and will run for six years starting from the financial year 2025-26. The scheme focuses on improving agricultural productivity, sustainability, and credit availability in selected districts.



### INDIA LAUNCHES E-TRUCK INCENTIVE SCHEME UNDER PM E-DRIVE -

- **Recently, India launched its first financial incentive scheme for electric trucks under the PM E-DRIVE initiative, targeting green freight transition.**

#### **About e-Truck Incentive Scheme**

- e-Truck Incentive provides financial incentives for purchase of electric trucks under the PM E-Drive initiative.
- **Green Freight Vision:** It supports the vision of sustainable freight mobility and aims to cut transport-related greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Net-Zero Goal:** Aligns with India's target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 and creating a Viksit Bharat by 2047
- **Significance of the Scheme**
- **Boost to Indigenous Industry:** Tata Motors, Ashok Leyland, Volvo Eicher already engaged in manufacturing e-trucks.
- SAIL has set an internal target to ensure that at least 15% of all vehicles hired across its units are electric
- **Wider Goal:** Enhances air quality, reduces logistics costs, and supports Atmanirbhar Bharat through green mobility transition.

**About PM E-DRIVE Scheme**

- **Introduction:** Launched in 2024, PM E-DRIVE is a national scheme to accelerate electric vehicle (EV) adoption across multiple vehicle categories.
- **Nodal Ministry & Budget:** Implemented by the Ministry of Heavy Industries, the scheme has a total outlay of ₹10,900 crore over two years.
- **Focus Areas:** Provides ₹3,679 crore in demand incentives for e-2Ws, e-3Ws, e-trucks, e-ambulances, and other emerging EVs.

**VIRUDHUNAGAR TO BECOME GLOBAL TEXTILE HUB UNDER PM MITRA SCHEME**

- The PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park in Tamil Nadu recently received final approval and funding from the Central Government. This development is significant as it positions Tamil Nadu as a key player in value-added textile production and supports India's broader goal of becoming a global textile manufacturing leader.

**Key Features**

- **Location:** Virudhunagar district, Tamil Nadu
- **Area:** 1,052 acres
- **Central Government Investment:** ₹1,900 crore
- **Target Year for Completion:** By 2026

**UNION MINISTER C.R. PATIL LAUNCHES C-FLOOD, INDIA'S FIRST UNIFIED FLOOD FORECASTING PLATFORM -**

- The C-FLOOD platform was officially launched by Union Minister Shri C.R. Patil in New Delhi on July 2, 2025. Its launch marks a significant technological advancement in India's flood forecasting capabilities, enabling early warnings and real-time inundation mapping.
- This tool is expected to support national and state disaster management authorities in planning timely evacuations and reducing flood-induced losses.

**Objectives and Features of C-FLOOD**

- Offers two-day advance flood forecasts up to the village level.
- Disseminates forecasts through flood inundation maps and water level predictions.
- Acts as a unified platform integrating flood modelling from national and regional agencies.
- Designed to serve as a decision-support system for disaster management authorities.

**CHINA'S MEGA DAM ON BRAHMAPUTRA -**

- China has officially begun constructing a massive hydropower dam on the Yarlung Zangbo (Brahmaputra) in Tibet's Medog county near the Arunachal Pradesh border.
- It will be the world's largest hydropower project and has raised strategic, ecological, and diplomatic concerns in India and Bangladesh.



**About the Tsangpo Project**

- Located near the Great Bend in Medog County, Tibet, where the Yarlung Tsangpo drops ~2,000 metres, creating ideal conditions for hydropower generation
- **Objective:** To generate 60,000 MW, thrice the capacity of China's Three Gorges Dam.
- It will significantly control flow of the Siang (Brahmaputra) before it enters Arunachal Pradesh.

**Course of the River Brahmaputra**

- **Origin:** Rises as the Yarlung Tsangpo in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China.
- Enters India through Arunachal Pradesh (as Siang/Dihang), flows through Assam, and then enters Bangladesh.
- Merges with the Ganges (Padma) and empties into the Bay of Bengal.

**CENTRAL GOVT. FORMS PANEL FOR COP-33 IN 2028 -**

- India has initiated preparations to host the 33rd United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP33) in 2028, marking a significant step in its climate leadership efforts. The Union Environment Ministry has set up a dedicated COP33 Cell to manage the requirements of this global event.

**Background**

- The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the supreme decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), adopted in 1992. These annual meetings assess global progress in combating climate change, especially after the Paris Agreement of 2015, which aims to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

**Significance**

- Hosting COP33 would strengthen India's position as a key player in international climate negotiations. It would allow India to showcase its climate initiatives, renewable energy progress, and commitment to sustainable development while also influencing global policy directions.

**Objectives**

- The primary aim of hosting COP33 is to provide a platform for multilateral cooperation on climate action. It seeks to mobilize commitments, enhance accountability, and accelerate the transition towards low-carbon, climate-resilient economies across the globe.

**CHINA BEGINS WORLD'S LARGEST HYDROPOWER DAM PROJECT -**

- China has initiated construction of the world's largest hydropower dam on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau. The project, costing over \$170 billion, is set to become China's most ambitious hydropower venture since the Three Gorges Dam.
- **It aims to generate 300 billion kilowatt-hours annually, matching the electricity consumption of the United Kingdom in 2024. The dam is located on the Yarlung Zangbo River, which flows into India and Bangladesh as the Brahmaputra. The project has sparked environmental and geopolitical concerns while also boosting Chinese markets.**

**INDIA'S FIRST HORNBILL CONSERVATION CENTRE -**

- The Tamil Nadu government has initiated India's first Centre of Excellence for Hornbill Conservation at the Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR) in Coimbatore district. This pioneering effort aims to protect hornbills, vital seed dispersers in tropical forests, threatened by habitat loss and climate change. Funded with ₹1 crore under the Endangered Species Conservation Corpus Fund, the Centre will focus on research, habitat restoration, and community involvement to safeguard four hornbill species native to the Western Ghats.
- **Ecological Importance of Hornbills**



- Hornbills are crucial for forest regeneration. They disperse seeds of native trees, maintaining biodiversity and forest health. Known as farmers of the forest, these birds support the growth of species like fig and canarium trees. Their decline affects entire ecosystems and other wildlife dependent on forest habitats.

### INDIA ACHIEVES 20% ETHANOL BLENDING IN PETROL WAY AHEAD OF TARGETED YEAR -

- India has reached a historic milestone in its energy transition journey by achieving 20% ethanol blending in petrol in 2025, five years ahead of its original 2030 target. This breakthrough, announced by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, marks a transformative shift in India's fuel strategy, enhancing energy security, promoting sustainability, and empowering rural economies.

#### **Background:** Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP)

- The Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) was initiated in 2003 with the aim to reduce India's dependence on imported crude oil, promote the use of renewable energy, and support the domestic sugar and agriculture sectors. Over time, the programme has evolved, with a consistent rise in blending targets, reaching 10% in 2022 and now achieving the 20% blending goal in 2025, well ahead of the set timeline.

#### **Significance of the Achievement**

- The jump from 1.5% ethanol blending in 2014 to 20% in 2025 highlights an 13-fold increase in just 11 years. This significant leap brings multiple benefits,
- **Energy Security:** Reduces dependency on imported fossil fuels.
- **Foreign Exchange Savings:** India has saved ₹1.36 lakh crore by lowering crude imports.
- **Environmental Gains:** A reduction of 698 lakh tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions contributes directly to India's climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.
- **Economic Impact:** Boosts income for farmers and distillers, strengthens the biofuel economy, and incentivizes agro-based industries.

### HUMAN-INDUCED EARTHQUAKES -

- According to an estimate discussed by researchers in the Seismological Research Letters (2017), over 700 human-induced earthquakes have been recorded globally in the past 150 years.



- With growing water and energy demands, scientists are increasingly concerned about such quakes in sensitive regions like Delhi-NCR, the Gangetic plains, the Himalayas, and the Western Ghats.

#### **What Are Human-Induced Earthquakes?**

- These are earthquakes triggered by human actions that alter natural geological processes.

#### **Common triggers include:**

- Groundwater extraction
- Mining
- Large dam construction and operation
- Fluid injection
- Tall structures or coastal engineering
- Over 700 such quakes have been recorded globally in the past 150 years.
- **Delhi NCR:** Prone to Human Induced Earthquakes – Key Reasons
- **Location of Seismic Fault Line:** Delhi lies in Seismic Zone IV, one of India's most earthquake-prone zones. The region is intersected by active fault lines, making it inherently vulnerable to seismic disturbances.
- **Over-Extraction of Groundwater:** Excessive withdrawal of groundwater for agriculture and drinking leads to a drop in the water table. This reduces subsurface pressure that supports the crust, potentially triggering tremors.
- **Example:** A study observed a rise in seismic activity between 2003 and 2012 when groundwater levels declined sharply. After 2014, as water levels stabilized, earthquake frequency dropped.

# REPORTS & INDICES

## HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX 2025: INDIA MOVES UP 8 SPOTS, NOW RANKED 77TH -

- Recently, the Indian passport has climbed 8 spots, reaching the 77th rank in the Henley Passport Index 2025, reflecting improved global mobility.
- As of July 2025, Indian passport holders can travel to 59 countries without a prior visa, up from 57 earlier.
- This includes a mix of visa-free, visa-on-arrival, and e-visa access without pre-departure approval.

### The two newly added countries that Indian passport holders can now access without a prior visa are:

- Vietnam (visa-free for up to 15 days)
- Thailand (extended visa-free access for up to 30 days)

### About Henley Passport Index

- **Introduction:** It is a global ranking of countries based on the number of destinations their passport holders can access without a prior visa.
- **Significance:** It is regarded as a benchmark for global mobility, reflecting the strength of a country's diplomatic ties and international agreements.
- **Compilation:** The index is compiled by Henley & Partners and uses data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), along with independent research.
- It is updated quarterly, providing insights into trends in travel freedom and visa regulations worldwide.

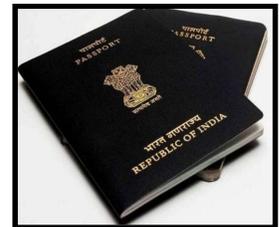
Top Ten Rank		
Rank	Countries (Grouped by Equal Score)	Visa-Free Destinations
1	Singapore	193
2	Japan, South Korea	190
3	Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain	189
4	Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden	188
5	Greece, New Zealand, Switzerland	187

6	United Kingdom	186
7	Australia, Czechia, Hungary, Malta, Poland	185
8	Canada, Estonia, United Arab Emirates	184
9	Croatia, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia	183
10	Iceland, Lithuania, United States	182

Year	India's Rank
2025	77
2024	85
2023	84
2022	87
2021	90

## INDIA'S PASSPORT SEES ITS BIGGEST JUMP EVER : HERE'S WHAT CHANGED -

- The Henley Passport Index is a globally recognized ranking of the world's most powerful passports, based on visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to destinations. It is updated quarterly using International Air Transport Association (IATA) data. The index is compiled by Henley & Partners, a London-based advisory firm specializing in citizenship and global mobility.



### Significance of India's Ranking Jump

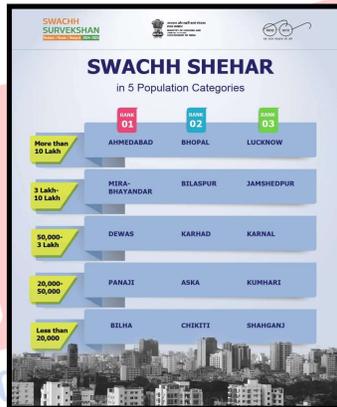
- India climbed from 85th to 77th — an 8-place rise, the largest annual improvement for the country.
- Indian citizens can now travel to 59 countries without a pre-approved visa.
- This improvement enhances India's global mobility, boosts tourism and trade, and symbolizes growing diplomatic influence.

**Visa-Free and Visa-on-Arrival Destinations for Indians (2025)**

- **Visa-Free Entry**
- Includes major Asian tourist hotspots,
- Malaysia
- Indonesia
- Thailand
- Maldives
- Philippines
- Sri Lanka (new additions)
- **Visa-on-Arrival Access**
- Macau
- Myanmar

**SWACHH SURVEKSHAN 2024-25 -**

• The Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 results have reaffirmed Indore, Surat, and Navi Mumbai as India’s cleanest cities. These cities topped the newly introduced Super Swachh League, which honours sustained excellence in urban sanitation. This year’s survey brought new innovations to promote inclusivity and competition among cities of all sizes.



**Top Cities and Awards**

- Indore secured first place, followed by Surat and Navi Mumbai. Vijayawada ranked fourth. Ahmedabad, Bhopal, and Lucknow emerged as the leading Swachh Shehars in the new generation category.
- The survey recognised 78 entities including cities, cantonments, and institutions for their sanitation achievements. Prayagraj was awarded Best Ganga Town. Secunderabad Cantonment Board earned praise for sanitation efforts. Visakhapatnam, Jabalpur, and Gorakhpur were honoured for prioritising sanitation worker safety and dignity.

**MEASURING INEQUALITY IN INDIA: WORLD BANK RANKS INDIA 4TH MOST EQUAL SOCIETY WITH GINI INDEX OF 25.5 -**

- According to the World Bank report, India is the 4th most equal society globally with a Gini Index of 25.5, indicating broad-based sharing of economic growth despite its large economy.
- **India ranked behind Slovak Republic (24.1), Slovenia (24.3), and Belarus (24.4) in equality.**

**Key Highlights from the Report**

- **Global Ranking:** India is more equal than all G7 and G20 countries, including China (35.7), USA (41.8), and the UK (34.4).
- The term “most equal country” describes a nation where income and consumption are distributed more evenly among its population
- **India’s Position:** Out of 167 countries assessed, India falls into the “moderately low” inequality category — and is very close to the “low inequality” group.
- **Inequality Category:** Globally, just 30 countries fall into the “moderately low” inequality category, including several European countries with strong welfare systems.
- **Significance:** This is a significant achievement for a country of India’s size and diversity, reflecting policies focused on reducing inequality and poverty.
- **Poverty Reduction:** India lifted 171 million people out of extreme poverty.
- **Decline in Extreme Poverty:** The share of the population living on less than \$2.15/day dropped from 16.2% in 2011–12 to just 2.3% in 2022–23.

**INDIA BECOMES 4TH ‘MOST EQUAL’ COUNTRY GLOBALLY -**

- India is not only the world’s fourth-largest economy but is also ranked among the most equal societies today. According to the World Bank, India’s Gini Index stands at 25.5, making it the fourth most equal country globally.

**What is the Gini Index ?**

- **About:** The Gini index, or Gini coefficient, was developed in 1912 by Italian statistician Corrado Gini. It measures income inequality within a population.

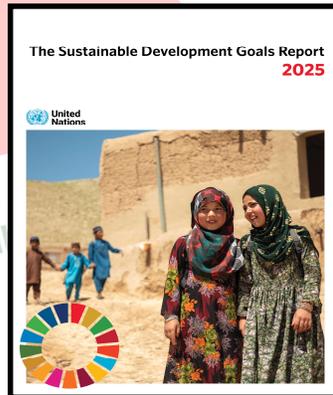
- The index is derived from the Lorenz curve, which plots the cumulative percentage of total income received against the cumulative percentage of recipients, starting with the poorest.
- **The Gini coefficient quantifies the area between the Lorenz curve and the line of perfect equality (a 45-degree line), with values ranging from 0 (perfect**



equality) to 1 (maximum inequality), or 0 to 100 when expressed as a percentage (where 0 indicates perfect equality and 100 indicates maximum inequality). A lower Gini value reflects a more equitable society.

### UN SDG REPORT 2025 -

- The 2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Report reveals a worrying slowdown or reversal in progress across 35 per cent of targets. With only five years remaining to meet the 2030 Agenda, critical goals such as Zero Hunger, Quality Education, and Clean Water are most affected. The report puts stress on the urgent need for



multilateral cooperation and financial reforms to reinvigorate global efforts.

### Current Status of SDG Targets

- The report shows that 35 per cent of measurable targets under 14 of the 17 SDGs have stalled or moved backward. Particularly affected are SDG2 (Zero Hunger), SDG4 (Quality Education), SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities).
- Between 50 and 57 per cent of targets in these areas are off-track. Other goals like Responsible Consumption (SDG12), Life Below Water (SDG14), and Peace and Justice (SDG16) also face setbacks.

### DELHI RANKED WORLD'S MOST AFFORDABLE STUDENT CITY IN QS 2026 RANKINGS -

- In a significant recognition of India's growing status in global education, the QS Best Student Cities Rankings 2026 saw four major Indian cities—Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Chennai—make strong upward progress.
- **Most notably, Delhi was named the world's most affordable student city, marking a major boost to India's reputation as an attractive destination for higher education. The rankings reflect improvements in factors such as university quality, cost of living, and graduate employability.**



# DEFENCE

## EXERCISE DRONE PRAHAR -

- The Indian Army recently conducted Exercise Drone Prahar in Arunachal Pradesh's East Siang district. This high-tech military drill validated the use of drone technology in tactical battlefield scenarios. The exercise demonstrated the effective application of drones for intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and precision targeting under realistic operational conditions.



### Objective of Exercise Drone Prahar

- The primary aim was to enhance command reach and situational awareness for tactical commanders. Drones provided layered surveillance and supported dynamic decision-making on the ground. This marked step towards modernising combat capabilities by integrating emerging technologies into battlefield operations.

## INDIA-SINGAPORE JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE 'BOLD KURUKSHETRA 2025' -

- India and Singapore commenced the joint military exercise 'Bold Kurukshetra 2025' in the desert region of Jodhpur, Rajasthan, with a focus on enhancing combat interoperability, especially in urban warfare and counter-terrorism. The exercise underscores the deepening strategic partnership between the two nations and represents a crucial step in preparing both armies for contemporary battlefield challenges.



### Background

- 'Bold Kurukshetra' is a bilateral military exercise between the Indian Army and the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), initiated under the framework of enhanced defence cooperation. The exercise is part of a broader defence engagement that includes naval and air exercises

like SIMBEX (naval) and Joint Air Training. Previous editions of Bold Kurukshetra have been held in both India and Singapore, with each iteration building on lessons from the last.

### Objectives

- Enhance Interoperability:** To ensure seamless joint operations during multi-nation deployments.
- Improve Urban Warfare Skills:** Focused training in urban combat tactics, vital for modern military engagements.
- Strengthen Counter-Terrorism Preparedness:** Real-time drills on neutralising threats in complex environments.
- Boost Tactical Coordination:** Joint planning, intelligence sharing, and real-time decision-making in simulated conditions.

## DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRES DRONE-LAUNCHED MISSILE ULPGM-V3 -

- India has made a significant leap in indigenous defence capabilities with the successful flight trials of the UAV-Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). This marks an important milestone in India's efforts toward self-reliance in high-end military technology.



### Background

- The ULPGM project is part of India's broader push to integrate advanced missile systems with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). The recent trial was conducted at the National Open Area Range (NOAR) in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh. The missile has been developed in collaboration with Indian private sector partners including MSMEs, start-ups, and Defence Capital Procurement Partners (DcPPs).

### Significance

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- The successful test of ULPGM-V3 highlights India's growing competence in drone warfare and precision strike technologies. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh hailed the test as proof of Indian industry's readiness to absorb and produce critical defence technologies, enhancing the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

**Key Features**

- The ULPGM-V3, also called ULM-ER (Extended Range), is a fire-and-forget air-to-surface missile.
- It weighs 12.5 kg and uses passive homing with an imaging infrared seeker, making it effective both day and night.
- The missile has a dual-thrust solid propulsion unit and a maximum range of 4 km (day) and 2.5 km (night).
- It supports a two-way datalink and offers multiple warhead options for engaging static and moving targets.
- The missile is manufactured in partnership with Adani and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), while DRDO leads the design and testing.

**BRICS STRONGLY CONDEMNS PAHALGAM ATTACK AT RIO SUMMIT – RIO DE JANEIRO DECLARATION –**

- In a strong message, the BRICS nations condemned the terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, describing it as a crime against humanity. They supported India's position on having zero tolerance towards terrorism.
- The Rio Declaration clearly stated that cross-border terrorism, terror financing, and safe havens for terrorists must be opposed globally and without any double standards. BRICS also stressed that each country has the main responsibility to stop terrorism within its borders, following international law.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while speaking at the summit, thanked the leaders for their strong support and called for strict global actions against terrorism.



**He reminded the world that the Global South, including India, has often suffered due to double standards in the fight against terrorism.**

**AMETHI-MADE AK-203 RIFLES -**

- The Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) is set to complete the delivery of 6.01 lakh AK-203 rifles nearly 22 months ahead of the planned schedule. The contract, valued at Rs 5,200 crore, was initially set to end by October 2032. However, IRRPL aims to finish by December 2030. This development marks milestone in India's defence manufacturing capabilities.

**About the AK-203 Rifle**

- The AK-203 is a modernised version of the Kalashnikov assault rifle series. It is designed to be the primary weapon for Indian soldiers deployed along the northern and western borders.
- This includes sensitive zones like the Line of Control (LoC) and the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Each rifle undergoes 120 manufacturing processes and is made up of approximately 50 components and 180 sub-parts. The weapon has a service life of 15,000 rounds, ensuring durability in varied combat conditions.

**PRITHVI-II AND AGNI-I TESTS -**

- India recently conducted successful test-firings of two nuclear-capable short-range ballistic missiles, Prithvi-II and Agni-I, from the Integrated Test Range off Odisha's coast. These tests confirm the missiles' readiness and reinforce India's strategic deterrence. Alongside, the Akash Prime missile was tested in the high-altitude region of Ladakh, marking step in indigenous air defence technology near the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

**Prithvi-II Missile Test**

- The Prithvi-II missile has a range of approximately 350 km. It can carry a warhead weighing up to 500 kg. This missile supports both nuclear and conventional payloads. The recent test confirmed that it meets all operational and technical standards. Prithvi-II is a critical part of India's short-range ballistic missile arsenal.

**Agni-I Missile Test**

- Agni-I has a longer range between 700 and 900 km. It can deliver a payload of up to 1,000 kg. This missile enhances India's capability to strike targets at greater distances. The successful test validates its performance and reliability under operational conditions. Agni-I plays a vital role in India's nuclear deterrence strategy.

**INDIA COMMISSIONS SECOND PROJECT 17A STEALTH FRIGATE IN RECORD TIME**

- **INS Udaygiri's induction has made headlines due to its record delivery time of 37 months, showcasing fast-track indigenous shipbuilding. Being part of the Project 17A initiative, which is the next-generation warship project following the successful Shivalik-class frigates.**



- A strategic milestone in India's defence indigenisation drive, with over 200 MSMEs contributing to its construction. Its symbolic naming after a decommissioned warship, reviving naval legacy with modern technology.

**Key Features of INS Udaygiri**

- **Project:** Part of Project 17A, a class of stealth-guided missile frigates.
- **Design & Build:** Designed by Warship Design Bureau; built by MDSL, Mumbai.
- **Delivery Time:** Delivered in record 37 months from its launch.
- **Stealth Capabilities:** Advanced stealth shaping and sensors to reduce radar signature.

**INS TAMAL COMMISSIONED IN KALININGRAD -**

- **INS Tamal was officially commissioned on July 1, 2025, in Kaliningrad, Russia. It is the last foreign-built**

**major warship being inducted into the Indian Navy. The ship signifies a strategic shift towards indigenisation of defence production under India's national initiatives. It**



**also marks the continuation of the Indo-Russian defence partnership, as Tamal is the 51st ship built under this collaboration over the last 65 years.**

**Key Highlights**

- **Ship Name:** INS Tamal (F71)
- **Project:** 1135.6 / Talwar-class
- **Commissioned on:** July 1, 2025
- **Location:** Yantar Shipyard, Kaliningrad, Russia
- **Commanding Officer:** Captain Sridhar Tata
- **Fleet:** Indian Navy's Western Fleet
- **Indigenous content:** 26% (includes BrahMos missiles, HUMSA-NG sonar)

**Specifications and Capabilities**

- Stealth Multi-role Frigate
- Four-Dimensional Warfare Capability: Air, Surface, Sub-surface, and Electronic warfare

**INDIAN NAVY SET TO PARTICIPATE IN SIMBEX 2025 -**

- **The Indian Navy is participating in the 32nd edition of SIMBEX (Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise) in Singapore, continuing a long-standing tradition of maritime cooperation with the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN). This exercise reflects India's growing naval engagements in Southeast Asia under its Act East Policy and Vision SAGAR, aligning defence and diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific.**

**Background**

- SIMBEX began in 1994 and is one of India's longest uninterrupted naval bilateral exercises. Originally named Exercise Lion King, this engagement has evolved into a

complex and high-value maritime coordination effort. The partnership emphasizes operational cooperation, technical exchange, maritime domain awareness, and regional security between India and Singapore. It reflects decades of joint work in promoting regional stability and ensuring a safe maritime commons in the Indo-Pacific.

### INS UDAYGIRI DELIVERED UNDER PROJECT 17A TO INDIAN NAVY -

- The Indian Navy recently received INS Udaygiri, the second stealth frigate of Project 17A, delivered in a record time of 37 months, strengthening India's naval capabilities.



#### About Stealth Frigate

- A stealth frigate is a modern naval warship designed to evade enemy detection by minimizing various signatures.
- Radar Cross-Section Reduction:** Stealth frigates have specially designed hulls and superstructures that deflect and absorb radar waves, reducing their radar visibility.
- Signature Management:** These ships use advanced technologies to manage electromagnetic emissions, minimizing detection by enemy electronic sensors.
- Low Infrared and Acoustic Signatures:** Stealth frigates employ thermal masking materials and sound-reducing designs to lower infrared and acoustic footprints, making them harder to detect by heat-seeking and sonar systems.
- Multi-role Capability:** Stealth frigates are equipped for anti-submarine, anti-air, maritime patrol, and escort missions, offering strategic flexibility in modern naval warfare.

#### About Udaygiri Frigate

- Udaygiri is the modern avatar of the erstwhile INS Udaygiri (a steam-powered ship decommissioned in 2007).

### INDIAN NAVY COMMISSIONS INDIGENOUS DSV NISTAR -

- The Indian Navy commissioned its first indigenously designed and built Diving Support Vessel (DSV) named Nistar on 18 July 2025. The event took place at the



Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam, with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in attendance. This ship marks milestone in India's defence self-reliance and enhances the Navy's deep-sea diving and submarine rescue capabilities.

#### Design and Construction

- Nistar was designed and constructed by Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam. Over 120 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) contributed to the project, achieving more than 80% indigenous content. The vessel is approximately 120 metres long and displaces over 10,000 tonnes. It features a Dynamic Positioning System that allows it to maintain precise positioning at sea.

### INDIGENOUS MALE DRONES-

- India is accelerating the procurement of 87 indigenously developed Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) drones, featuring at least 60% indigenous content, to reduce dependence on foreign suppliers and strengthen surveillance along its sea and land borders.
- This is the first instance of Indian private manufacturers being tasked to supply MALE drones under the Make in India initiative replacing earlier imports from Israel.
- These drones will offer over 30 hours of flight endurance at altitudes of up to 35,000 feet, providing ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance) support in varied terrains.



# SPORTS

## QATAR AND INDIA COMPETE TO HOST 2036 OLYMPICS -

- The race to host the 2036 Olympic Games has officially begun with Qatar announcing its bid last week. India, which has been preparing its bid for nearly two years, now faces competition from Qatar alongside Turkey, Indonesia, Hungary, and Germany.
- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is currently reviewing its host selection process, making it difficult to predict which nation holds an advantage. Both Qatar and India have presented ambitious visions for the Games, reflecting their regional identities and strategic goals.



## INDIA TO BID FOR 2029 AND 2031 WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS -

- **India will submit bids to host either the 2029 or 2031 World Athletics Championships. Both editions will be awarded at the same time by World Athletics in September 2026. According to Adille Sumariwalla, who is also a vice-president of World Athletics, India is preparing a “strategic” bid, meaning it is open to hosting whichever year is available.**
- The deadline to express interest is October 1, 2025, followed by a detailed application due on April 1, 2026. Final bid documents must be submitted by August 5, 2026.

### Why 2031 May Be a Better Chance

- India originally planned to bid only for the 2029 edition, but now wants to include 2031 as well. This is because Asia is already hosting the 2025 edition in Tokyo and the 2027 edition in Beijing.
- Hosting again in 2029 would mean three Asian editions in a row, which may reduce India’s chances. So, India sees 2031 as a more likely option.
- This move is part of India’s long-term plan to host big sports events and eventually the 2036 Olympics. The AFI is actively working on creating strong bids to show India’s

readiness for such global events.

## NEERAJ CHOPRA WINS FIRST NEERAJ CHOPRA CLASSIC IN BENGALURU -

- **Neeraj Chopra, India’s Olympic and World Champion in javelin, once again showed why he is among the best in the world. Competing on home soil, he delivered his winning throw of 86.18 metres in his third attempt. His performance drew loud cheers from the local crowd in Bengaluru.**
- He had a strong start, reaching 82.99 metres in his second throw. His third throw sealed the win. He made a foul in his fourth throw but came back with 84.07 metres in his fifth and 82.22 metres in his final attempt.



### Others on the Podium

- Kenya’s Julius Yego, a former world champion, gave a tough fight and secured second place with a season-best throw of 84.51 metres. Sri Lanka’s Rumesh Pathirage finished third with 84.34 metres.
- The competition was close among the top three, but Neeraj maintained a clear lead with his best throw.

## 10 YEARS OF SKILL INDIA MISSION -

- The 10th anniversary of Skill India Mission was observed on 15th July, World Youth Skills Day.

### About Skill India Mission

- **Launch and Vision:** Launched in 2015, Skill India aims to create a skilled workforce across sectors through short-term training, apprentice-ships, and vocational education.
- **Nodal Ministry:** The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)

### Objectives of Skill India

- Enhance employability of youth
- Bridge the industry-skill gap
- Promote entrepreneurship and traditional crafts
- Ensure inclusion of women, SCs/STs, and other marginalized groups

- Prepare a future-ready workforce aligned with new-age technologies.

**Restructuring:** In February 2025, the restructured ‘Skill India Programme’ was approved for 2022-23 to 2025-26 the restructured ‘Skill India Programme’ was approved for 2022-23 to 2025-26, merging Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 (PMKVY 4.0), the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS), and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) Scheme into a single Central Sector Scheme.

### GUKESH WINS RAPID CHESS TITLE IN ZAGREB -

- D Gukesh, the current World Chess Champion, showed excellent form during the three-day rapid section of the tournament. He played especially well on the second day, winning five games in a row. On the final day, he had two draws—against Anish Giri (Netherlands) and Ivan Saric (Croatia)—before ending with a win over Wesley So from the USA. This final win helped him finish at the top of the standings with 14 points.



### Other Key Players and Final Standings

- Jan-Krzysztof Duda, who had beaten Gukesh in the first round, came second with 11 points. Magnus Carlsen, the world’s top-ranked player from Norway, finished third with 10 points. He started strong with a win against Fabiano Caruana, but a draw against Nodirbek Abdusattorov prevented a stronger finish.
- India’s R Praggnanandhaa also performed well. He defeated Ivan Saric in round 7 and drew with both Wesley So and Duda in the final two rounds. He finished with 9 points, the same as Caruana. Other notable players like Firouzja, Giri, and So scored 8 points each.

### HARIKRISHNAN A BECOMES INDIA’S 87TH GRANDMASTER -

- Harikrishnan A. Ra., a 23-year-old chess player from Chennai, has officially become India’s 87th Grandmaster. He earned his final Grandmaster (GM) norm at the La Plagne International Chess Festival in

France on July 11, 2025, completing a long seven-year journey from International Master (IM) to GM.



- Harikrishnan had been an International Master for seven years, chasing the Grandmaster title by competing in many tournaments. Despite coming close multiple times, he could not complete all three GM norms until now. Coached by Shyam Sundar, he kept working hard and stayed committed to his goal.

### WORLD’S OLDEST MARATHON RUNNER FAUJA SINGH DIES AT 114 -

- Fauja Singh, the world’s oldest marathon runner, died at the age of 114 after being hit by an unknown vehicle on the Jalandhar-Pathankot highway in Punjab on July 14, 2025. Known as the ‘Turbaned Tornado’, Fauja Singh inspired people across the globe with his fitness and spirit. His sudden death has shocked the nation, and tributes are pouring in.



### Tragic Accident on Punjab Highway

- Fauja Singh was out for a walk near his village, Bias, around 3:30 PM when he was struck by an unidentified vehicle. The accident happened on the Jalandhar-Pathankot highway. His death was confirmed by writer Khushwant Singh, who shared the news online after speaking with Singh’s family. A police investigation into the accident is ongoing.

### A Life of Inspiration and Strength

- Born on April 1, 1911, Fauja Singh took up running after the death of his wife and son. He ran his first marathon at the age of 89 in London in 2000. He went on to complete nine full marathons in London, New York, and Toronto. He also carried the Olympic torch for the 2004 Athens and 2012 London Olympics.
- He was featured in global sports campaigns with legends like Muhammad Ali and David Beckham. Singh stood out for his strong will and was a living example of fitness at any age.



- Q17. Which institution has launched the Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI) ?  
a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)  
b) National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)  
c) Department of Telecommunications 'Digital Intelligence Unit (DoT-DIU)  
d) Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)
- Q18. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its June 2025 Financial Stability Report (FSR). What is the projected GDP growth rate for India in FY 2025-26 as per the RBI's June 2025 FSR ?  
a) 5.8%    b) 6.3%    c) 6.5%    d) 6.7%
- Q19. In which Indian state is NTPC Simhadri, the first coastal-based thermal power plant, located ?  
a) Tamil Nadu                      b) Gujarat  
c) Odisha                              d) Andhra Pradesh
- Q20. What is the primary objective of the India Green Finance Facility (IGFF) supported by the GCF and led by ADB ?  
a) To promote fossil fuel exploration in remote areas  
b) To fund India's defence-related green technologies  
c) To catalyse investment in emerging clean energy technologies and strengthen DFIs  
d) To support infrastructure for coal-based power plants
- Q21. Which Indian state has announced plans to develop Asia's largest jungle safari over 10,000 acres ?  
a) Rajasthan                      b) Gujarat  
c) Madhya Pradesh              d) Haryana
- Q22. Which country was welcomed as a full member of BRICS at the 17th Summit ?  
a) Kazakhstan                      b) Nigeria  
c) Malaysia                          d) Indonesia
- Q23. Where was India's first water technology park named 'Aqua Tech Park' inaugurated ?  
a) Odisha                              b) Sikkim  
c) Assam                                d) Karnataka
- Q24. Which country has launched the communication satellite, Dror-1 ?  
a) China                                b) Israel  
c) France                                d) Germany
- Q25. Which ministry organized the Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 awards ceremony ?  
a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
b) Ministry of Jal Shakti  
c) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs  
d) Ministry of Urban Development
- Q26. Astra is an indigenous Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) developed by which organization ?  
a) Defence Research and Development Organisation  
b) Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)  
c) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)  
d) Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)
- Q27. Which organization has launched the TALASH initiative ?  
a) Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India  
b) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment  
c) Organization For Rights Of Tribal (OFROT)  
d) National Education Society for Tribal Students
- Q28. Which state government has launched the Gaja Mitra Scheme to reduce human-elephant conflict ?  
a) Tripura                              b) Sikkim  
c) Manipur                              d) Assam
- Q29. C-FLOOD platform is jointly developed by which two organizations ?  
a) Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)  
b) Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) Pune and Central Water Commission (CWC)  
c) India Meteorological Department (IMD) and Indian Institute of Technology Delhi  
d) National Informatics Centre (NIC) and National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO)
- Q30. On July 1, 2025 the Indian Navy commissioned INS Tamal (F 71) at Yantar Shipyard, Kaliningrad, Russia. Who currently commands INS Tamal (F 71) ?  
a) VAdm Sanjay Jasjit Singh  
b) RAdm Vineet McCarty  
c) Capt Sridhar Tata  
d) Cmde Arun Prakash





- a) Countering China's presence in the Indo-Pacific  
 b) Strengthening maritime military alliances  
 c) Promoting historical and cultural linkages with Southeast Asia  
 d) Facilitating oil and gas trade in the region
- Q62. Who was sworn in as the 19th Governor of Haryana on July 21, 2025 ?  
 a) Bandaru Dattatraya                      b) Sheel Nagu  
 c) Jagdish Mukhi                              d) Ashim Kumar Ghosh
- Q63. Recent in news, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar resigned from office citing health concerns and need for medical advice. Jagdeep Dhankhar became the \_\_\_ Vice President of India when he took office in August 2022.  
 a) 12th                      b) 13th                      c) 11th                      d) 14th
- Q64. What is the primary objective of the Bima Sakhi Scheme launched on December 9, 2024, by the Government of India in collaboration with LIC ?  
 a) Providing health insurance to rural women  
 b) Training women as Mahila Career Agents for rural insurance outreach  
 c) Offering micro-loans to rural SHGs  
 d) Launching a pension scheme for women above 60
- Q65. The National Broadcasting Day is celebrated annually in India on \_\_\_\_\_  
 a) July 20                                      b) July 23  
 c) August 15                                      d) June 23
- Q66. The NISAR satellite is scheduled to be launched on July 30, 2025, by which Indian launch vehicle ?  
 a) PSLV-C58                                      b) GSLV-F10  
 c) LVM3-M6                                      d) GSLV-F16
- Q67. National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was launched by which ministry ?  
 a) Ministry of Education  
 b) Ministry of Home Affairs  
 c) Ministry of Tribal Affairs  
 d) Ministry of Science and Technology
- Q68. Mount Kilimanjaro, that was recently seen in news, is located in which country ?  
 a) Australia                                      b) Kenya  
 c) Russia    d) Tanzania
- Q69. What is Baby Grok ?  
 a) A new humanoid robot  
 b) A kid-friendly version of the Grok AI chatbot  
 c) Elon Musk's book on AI safety  
 d) A Tesla app for children
- Q70. Where has DRDO successfully test-fired the UAV-Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 ?  
 a) Pokhran, Rajasthan  
 b) Balasore, Odisha  
 c) Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh  
 d) Chandipur, Odisha

## ANSWERS

1- d	2-c	3-c	4-b	5-c	6-b	7-d	8- c	9- d	10- c
11- d	12-b	13-b	14-c	15-d	16- a	17-c	18-c	19-d	20-c
21-d	22-d	23-c	24-b	25-c	26-a	27-d	28-d	29-b	30-c
31-d	32-c	33-a	34-b	35-b	36-b	37-c	38-d	39-d	40-b
41-c	42-d	43-a	44-c	45-a	46-b	47-c	48-d	49-d	50-b
51-a	52-b	53-d	54-d	55-b	56-c	57-d	58-b	59-c	60-d
61-c	62-d	63-d	64-b	65-b	66-d	67-a	68-d	69-b	70-c