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Current Affairs

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1. Zhang Damo received MACA 2025

- **Historic Achievement for the Arts:** Zhang Damo made history as the first painter to receive the MACA award since its inception. While the award has traditionally recognized scientists, engineers, and national heroes, his win signals a growing international recognition of the contemporary value of traditional Chinese arts.
- **Innovation in "Combined Meticulous and Freehand" Technique:** The award specifically recognized his mastery and innovation in Chinese ink painting. He is celebrated for his unique "combined meticulous and freehand" style, which bridges the gap between traditional precision and the modern, expressive "freehand" spirit, infusing his work with deep Eastern philosophy.
- **Role as a Global Cultural Ambassador:** The selection committee highlighted Zhang's role as a "cultural bridge." Since the 1990s, he has served as the Chief Artist of the United Nations Peace Boat, traveling through Europe and Asia to hold exhibitions and promote cultural dialogues that explain the peaceful philosophy of Chinese culture to the Western world.
- **Leadership in Contemporary Art:** Zhang currently serves as the Co-President of the Future Living Art Institute at One Heung Kong. His work is credited with elevating Chinese ink painting from a "national treasure" to a globally recognized cultural asset that is now evaluated and respected by international comprehensive authority systems.



2. Indian Origin JayshreeUllal Ranks First on Hurun India Rich List 2025

- **Richest Indian-Origin Professional:** JayshreeUllal has been crowned the wealthiest Indian-origin executive globally for 2025. With a net worth of \$5.7 billion (approximately ₹ 50,170 crore), she has overtaken famous tech titans like Microsoft's SatyaNadella and Google's SundarPichai.
- **Significant Wealth Gap:** Her net worth is substantially higher than her peers in the professional category. While Ullal stands at \$5.7 billion, SatyaNadella ranks second with roughly \$1.1 billion, and SundarPichai follows at approximately \$1.5 billion (notably, Pichai saw a decline in wealth during this period while Ullal's wealth grew).
- **Driven by Equity Ownership:** Unlike many CEOs who rely on traditional compensation, 100% of Ullal's billionaire status is driven by her long-term equity participation. She owns nearly 3% of Arista Networks, a company that has seen its valuation soar due to the global demand for AI and cloud infrastructure.
- **Leader in "Deep Tech" Infrastructure:** The ranking highlights a shift in wealth creation from consumer-facing "Big Tech" (like search and social media) to the back-end infrastructure that powers the AI economy. Under her 17-year leadership, Arista Networks has become a dominant force in high-speed cloud networking.



3. INSV Kaundinya Begins Maiden Voyage to Oman

- **Ancient Construction (The "Tankai" Method):** The vessel is built using the "stitched-ship" technique, where wooden planks are stitched together with coconut coir rope and sealed with natural resins. It uses no metal nails or modern welding, a method dating back to at least the 5th century CE.
- **Historical Inspiration:** Its design is based on ancient iconography, specifically a merchant ship depicted in the Ajanta Cave paintings (Cave No. 17). It serves as a "living replica" of the ships that once dominated the Indian Ocean trade routes.
- **Symbolic Route:** The voyage to Muscat symbolically retraces ancient transoceanic trade routes that connected India's western coast with the Gulf region, emphasizing centuries of cultural and civilizational exchange between India and Oman.
- **Collaborative Heritage Project:** The project is a unique tripartite collaboration between the Ministry of Culture, the Indian Navy, and Hodi Innovations. It



aimed to rediscover indigenous knowledge systems and was supported by technical validation from IIT Madras.

- **Cultural Significance:** Named after the legendary Indian mariner Kaundinya, the ship features traditional symbols including the Gandabherunda (two-headed eagle) and sun motifs on its sails, a SimhaYali (mythical lion) on the bow, and a Harappan-style stone anchor.

4. Sharadchandra Pawar Centre of Excellence in AI Launched

- **Inauguration & Funding:** The centre was inaugurated by Gautam Adani, Chairman of the Adani Group, who also fully funded the project with an investment of ₹ 25 crore.
- **Institutional Framework:** It has been established under Vidya Pratishthan, a prominent educational trust governed by the Pawar family. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the trust and the Adani Group to support R&D, student placements, and technical training.
- **Core Objectives:** The facility is designed to promote AI-driven education, research, and innovation. It aims to equip students from rural areas and smaller towns with high-tech skills in data science and machine learning, reducing the need for them to relocate to major cities.
- **Focus on Local Impact:** While a global technology hub, the centre has a specific strategic focus on providing innovative AI solutions for agriculture and rural development, aligning with the regional needs of Baramati.
- **Vision of Sovereignty:** During the launch, Gautam Adani emphasized the need for "India-made AI models," arguing that a nation of 1.4 billion cannot rely solely on foreign algorithms to protect its data, culture, and job security.



5. Vaidehi Chaudhary Clinches Women's singles title at W35 Solapur Tennis tournament

- **Championship Victory:** The 25-year-old Vaidehi Chaudhary, seeded sixth in the tournament, defeated Japan's Michika Ozeki in a hard-fought final. She made a strong comeback after losing the first set, winning with a scoreline of 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.
- **Fourth ITF Singles Title:** This win marks the fourth career International Tennis Federation (ITF) singles title for Vaidehi. It is her first title since June 2024, when she won the W35 Taipei Formosa Cup in Chinese Taipei.
- **Path of Resilience:** Her journey to the final was marked by "comeback" wins. She defeated national champion Vaishnavi Adkar in the semifinals and notably overcame World Junior No. 9 Ksenia Efremova of France in a tense quarterfinal match.



- **Double Triumph for India:** The tournament was a major success for Indian tennis overall; while Vaidehi won the singles, the duo of Ankita Raina and Vaishnavi Adkar clinched the women's doubles title, defeating an Indo-Russian pair in the final.
- **Ranking & Impact:** The tournament carried a prize pool of \$25,000 (W35 category). With this win, Vaidehi is expected to significantly improve her WTA ranking, moving her closer to direct entries for higher-tier WTA events in 2026.

6. Former New Zealand Cricketer Doug Bracewell retires

- **Career Statistics:** Bracewell represented the Black Caps in 28 Tests, 21 ODIs, and 20 T20Is between 2011 and 2023. He finished his international career with a total of 120 wickets and 915 runs across all formats.
- **The Hobart Heroics:** His most iconic moment came in just his third Test in 2011, where he took 6/40 in the second innings (9 wickets in the match) to lead New Zealand to a historic 7-run victory over Australia. This remains New Zealand's last Test win on Australian soil.
- **Injury-Led Retirement:** The decision to step away from the game was primarily driven by a persistent rib injury that had already ruled him out of the 2025/26 domestic season for his long-time team, Central Districts.
- **Rare Domestic Milestone:** Bracewell retires as one of the few players in New Zealand history to achieve the "first-class double" of 4,000 runs and 400 wickets. He holds the record for the best all-round statistics in the history of the Central Districts team.
- **Cricketing Lineage:** He comes from a famous cricketing family; he is the son of Brendon Bracewell, nephew of John Bracewell, and cousin of current New Zealand international Michael Bracewell, all of whom have represented the country at the Test level.



7. Neeru Dhanda Clinches gold at National Shooting Championship

- **Championship Performance:** Neeru Dhanda clinched the gold medal by hitting 41 out of 50 targets in a high-pressure final. She narrowly defeated Delhi's Kirti Gupta, who secured the silver medal with 40 hits.
- **Double Gold Success:** Representing Madhya Pradesh, Neeru also led her state to the Women's Trap Team gold. Alongside teammates Pragati Dubey and Manisha Keer, the team posted a combined score of 339 to finish ahead of Delhi and Punjab.



- **A "Golden Year" (2025):** This national title follows Neeru's stellar international performance earlier in the year, where she won the individual and team gold medals at the 2025 Asian Shooting Championships in Kazakhstan.
- **Consistent Excellence:** In November 2025, she also achieved a rare feat by winning her fourth consecutive individual gold at the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) in Rajasthan, representing Guru Nanak Dev University.
- **Madhya Pradesh's Dominance:** Neeru's victory was part of a broader success story for Madhya Pradesh shooters; her teammate Pragati Dubey, who topped the qualification round with a score of 117, also secured the individual bronze medal.

8. MoU signed between National Test House and DRDO's DMSRDE

- **Core Objective:** The primary goal is to strengthen institutional cooperation in three key areas: Research, Testing, and Training. This synergy aims to accelerate the development and validation of advanced materials for both defense and industrial use.
- **Infrastructure Sharing:** Both organizations will provide mutual access to specialized laboratory and instrumentation facilities. This is particularly vital for high-end material testing where one institution might lack specific in-house equipment, thereby optimizing resource utilization.
- **Focus on Speciality Materials:** The partnership leverages DMSRDE's expertise in non-metallic materials (such as polymers, composites, ceramics, and technical textiles) and NTH's century-old legacy in multi-disciplinary industrial testing and quality assurance.
- **Capacity Building:** The MoU emphasizes human resource development through joint seminars, workshops, and structured training programs. This is designed to upskill scientific and technical personnel in the latest material characterization and evaluation methodologies.
- **Support for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat':** By integrating NTH's NABL-accredited testing network with DRDO's R&D capabilities, the collaboration directly supports indigenous technology development and self-reliance, ensuring that homegrown products meet rigorous national and international quality standards.



9. Veerendra Kumar Mishra appointed as Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs

- **Background and Cadre:** Veerendra Kumar Mishra is a senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the 2012 batch belonging to the Madhya Pradesh (MP) cadre.



- **Central Deputation:** He has been selected for appointment as Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, under the Central Staffing Scheme (CSS).
- **Tenure Details:** His appointment is for a period of four years from the date he takes charge of the post. He is required to join the ministry on or before December 31, 2025.
- **Automatic Promotion (Director-level):** In a strategic move, the government has already cleared his re-designation as Director in the Ministry of Home Affairs effective from January 1, 2026.
- **Long-term Role:** His tenure in the MHA will extend until December 31, 2029 (the date of his superannuation) or until further orders, placing him in a significant position for internal security and administrative policy-making for the next four years.

10. Khaleda Zia, Bangladesh's First Woman Prime Minister passed away

- **Historic First:** Khaleda Zia was the first woman Prime Minister of Bangladesh and only the second female leader to be democratically elected in a Muslim-majority nation (after Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto). She served three terms: 1991–1996, a brief period in 1996, and 2001–2006.
- **The "Uncompromising" Leader:** Known by the epithet Aporshio (Uncompromising), she rose to power after leading a decade-long pro-democracy movement against the military dictatorship of Hussain Muhammad Ershad in the 1980s.
- **Educational Reformist:** Her tenure is credited with transformative educational policies, including making primary education free and compulsory and providing stipends for female students until the 10th grade, which significantly boosted female literacy in Bangladesh.
- **Political Rivalry:** Her political life was defined by a decades-long "Battle of the Begums" with Sheikh Hasina. This rivalry shaped Bangladesh's modern history, with power alternating between their respective parties for over 20 years.
- **Final Years and Acquittal:** After years of legal battles and imprisonment on corruption charges (which she maintained were politically motivated), she was released from house arrest in 2024 following the ouster of the Hasina government.



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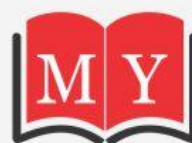
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