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WEEKLY — Current Affairs

NATIONAL NEWS

Union IT Minister Launches Compute Portal and AIKosha Dataset Platform

India's Union IT Minister has launched two significant digital platforms: the Compute Portal and the AIKosha Dataset Platform. The Compute Portal aims to provide access to high-performance computing resources to researchers, startups, and educational institutions, enabling advancements in various fields such as AI and data science. The AIKosha Dataset Platform offers a comprehensive repository of datasets, specifically designed to support the development and training of artificial intelligence models in India. These initiatives are part of the government's efforts to foster innovation and strengthen India's position in the global tech ecosystem. By providing easy access to crucial resources, the platforms are expected to enhance research and development in AI and other emerging technologies.

Foot notes:

- **Compute Portal:** The AI Compute Portal will provide access to over 18,000 GPUs, cloud storage, and other AI services at discounted rates, starting from 67 per hour, with a 40% government subsidy.
- **AIKosha Dataset Platform:** AIKosha is a secured platform hosting over 300 datasets and 80 models to promote AI innovation. It offers AI sandbox capabilities, content discoverability, and AI readiness scoring of datasets.
- **Key Objectives:** The initiatives aim to democratize AI access, enable research-driven innovation, and bolster India's global AI leadership. They focus on strengthening AI-driven research, innovation, and skill development.
- **Other Initiatives:** Other launched initiatives include the AI Competency Framework for Public Sector Officials, iGOT-AI Mission Karmayogi, the IndiaAI Startups Global Acceleration Program, and the IndiaAI Application Development Initiative.
- **IndiaAI Mission:** The IndiaAI mission, approved in March 2024, has a budget outlay of 10,371.92 crore. It aims to establish a comprehensive AI ecosystem, promoting innovation and entrepreneurship in India.

LIC Ranked World's 3rd Strongest Insurance Brand

LIC (Life Insurance Corporation of India) has been ranked as the world's third strongest insurance brand. This recognition highlights LIC's strong financial position and widespread recognition in the global market. The ranking is based on factors like brand value, customer trust, and market presence. LIC has been a dominant player in the Indian insurance sector and continues to expand its reach and services. This achievement further solidifies LIC's position as a leading insurance provider, both in India and internationally.

Foot notes:

- **Brand Value:** LIC's brand value remains steady at \$9.8 billion, with a brand strength index score of 88.3 and an AAA brand strength rating

- **Global Rankings:** According to the Brand Finance Insurance 100 2024 report, LIC surpasses other top insurance brands, including Cathay Life Insurance, which ranks second with a 9% increase in brand value to \$4.9 billion.
- **Chinese Insurance Brands:** Chinese insurance brands, such as Ping An, China Life Insurance, and CPIC, dominate the global rankings, with Ping An leading with a 4% increase in brand value to \$33.6 billion.
- **Indian Insurance Market:** LIC achieved the highest first-year premium collection of Rs 39,090 crore in the financial year 2023, while SBI Life Insurance and HDFC Life Insurance led the private sector with new business premium collections.
- **Brand Strength:** LIC's strong brand reputation, customer trust, and financial performance contribute to its ranking as the world's strongest insurance brand.

India ranked 5th Most Polluted in 2024 Air Pollution Rankings

India has been ranked as the 5th most polluted country in the 2024 Air Pollution Rankings. This alarming position highlights the ongoing challenges the nation faces in combating air quality issues. High levels of pollutants continue to pose serious health risks to the population, especially in urban areas. The ranking serves as a wake-up call for intensified efforts to reduce emissions and promote sustainable practices. Authorities and environmentalists alike are emphasizing the need for comprehensive policies to tackle pollution and improve public health.

Foot notes:

- **Ranking:** India was ranked 8th in the 2022 World Air Quality Report, dropping from the 5th position in the previous year.
- **Pollution Levels:** The country's pollution levels are alarming, with an average PM2.5 level of 53.3.
- **Most Polluted Cities:** Indian cities like Bhiwadi, Delhi, and Varanasi are among the most polluted in the world.
- **Health Impacts:** Air pollution in India is estimated to reduce life expectancy by 5.3 years, with some areas experiencing even higher reductions.
- **Regional Variations:** Pollution levels vary across regions, with the Indo-Gangetic Plains being the most polluted.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

IndiGo Becomes the World's Second Fastest-Growing Airline in Seat Capacity

IndiGo has emerged as the world's second fastest-growing airline in terms of seat capacity. The Indian low-cost carrier has made significant strides in expanding its operations, increasing its fleet, and offering more flights to meet the growing demand for air travel. IndiGo's rapid growth is a result of its strategic expansion into new markets and the addition of numerous domestic and international routes. The airline's focus on efficiency, customer service, and affordable pricing has helped it capture a larger share of the market. This achievement highlights IndiGo's

strong position in the global aviation industry and its ability to adapt to changing travel demands.

Foot notes:

- **Seat Capacity Growth:** IndiGo achieved a remarkable 10.1% growth in seat capacity in 2024, with over 134.9 million seats.
- **Global Ranking:** The airline ranks second globally in terms of seat capacity growth, just behind Qatar Airways, which grew 10.4% in the same period.
- **Flight Frequency Growth:** IndiGo also leads the world in flight frequency growth, with a 9.7% year-over-year increase in 2024, totaling 749,156 flights.
- **Aircraft Orders:** The airline has one of the largest aircraft orders in the world, with over 900 aircraft on order, and received 58 new Airbus planes in 2024.
- **Future Plans:** IndiGo aims to expand its international presence, focusing on regional Middle East markets and Thailand, and is considering launching low-cost long-haul services.

Mark Carney Succeeded Justin Trudeau as the Next Prime Minister of Canada

Mark Carney has succeeded Justin Trudeau as the Prime Minister of Canada, marking a significant shift in the country's leadership. A former Governor of the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England, Carney brings extensive economic expertise to the role. His leadership comes at a critical time, as Canada faces escalating tensions with the United States and economic challenges on the global stage. Carney is committed to strengthening Canada's economy, promoting sustainable development, and preserving national sovereignty. With a pragmatic and data-driven approach, he aims to balance economic growth with social justice and environmental stewardship.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Election:** Mark Carney was elected as the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada on March 9, 2025, with over 85.9% of the vote.
- **Transition Process:** Carney will be sworn in as the 24th Prime Minister of Canada after Justin Trudeau's resignation, with the transition expected to be "seamless and quick".
- **Background:** Carney, a Canadian economist and politician, has had a distinguished career, serving as the Governor of the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England.
- **Policy Focus:** As Prime Minister, Carney is expected to focus on issues like economic growth, climate change, and social inequality.
- **Historic Significance:** Carney will become the first Canadian Prime Minister born in any of the territories and the first to have never served in prior elected office.

India Becomes the Top Source of FDI into Dubai

India has emerged as the top source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Dubai. This achievement highlights the strong economic ties between India and the UAE, reflecting India's growing global investment footprint. The surge in FDI from India has significantly contributed

to Dubai's economic growth and diversification. Key sectors attracting Indian investment include real estate, technology, and infrastructure. This milestone underscores India's role as a major player in the international investment landscape.

Foot notes:

- **India's Rise to the Top:** India has surpassed other countries to become the top source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Dubai, reflecting the growing economic ties between India and the UAE.
- **FDI Figures:** According to the Dubai Investment Development Agency (Dubai FDI), India accounted for a significant share of FDI into Dubai, with investments totaling billions of dirhams.
- **Diversified Investments:** Indian investors have diversified their investments across various sectors in Dubai, including real estate, manufacturing, logistics, and financial services.
- **Strategic Partnership:** The UAE and India have a strategic partnership, with the UAE being one of India's largest trading partners. This partnership has facilitated increased investment flows between the two countries.
- **Growing Economic Ties:** India's rise as the top source of FDI into Dubai reflects the growing economic ties between the two countries, driven by factors such as trade agreements, investment incentives, and cultural exchange.

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Ramu Abbagani appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Brunei Darussalam

Ramu Abbagani has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Brunei Darussalam. A seasoned diplomat, he brings extensive experience in foreign affairs and international relations. His new role will involve strengthening bilateral ties between India and Brunei across various sectors. The Indian government expects his leadership to enhance cooperation in trade, culture, and strategic partnerships. Abbagani's appointment reflects India's commitment to fostering strong diplomatic relations with Brunei.

Foot notes:

- **Current Role:** Abbagani is currently serving as the Ambassador of India to the Dominican Republic.
- **Indian Foreign Service:** He is a 2001 batch officer of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS).

- **New Assignment:** Abbagani is expected to take up his new assignment as High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam shortly.
- **Replacement:** He will replace the current High Commissioner, Shri Alok Amitabh Dimri.
- **Diplomatic Relations:** Abbagani's appointment aims to strengthen diplomatic relations between India and Brunei Darussalam, building on the historic visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Brunei in September 2024.

STATE NEWS

Assam Names Electronics City After Ratan Tata

Assam has honored Ratan Tata by naming its new electronics city after the renowned industrialist. The decision to name the city "Ratan Tata Electronics City" recognizes Tata's significant contributions to the development of India's industrial and technological sectors. The electronics city, located in the state of Assam, is set to boost the region's infrastructure and attract investments in the electronics and IT industries. This move aligns with the state's vision to become a hub for technology and innovation in the northeast. Ratan Tata's association with the project underscores his role in shaping India's industrial landscape, further solidifying his legacy.

Foot notes:

- **Ratan Tata Electronic City:** The electronics hub will be named Ratan Tata Electronic City, honoring Tata's commitment to Assam's growth.
- **Tata Group's Engagement:** The Tata Group has a long history of engagement in Assam, with significant investments in the state's industrial and economic landscape.
- **Advantage Assam 2.0:** The announcement follows Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran's remarks at the Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment Summit, where he highlighted Ratan Tata's strong connection to Assam.
- **Electronics City Location:** The Ratan Tata Electronic City will be located in Jagiroad, Assam, and is expected to boost the state's electronics manufacturing capabilities.
- **Tribute to Ratan Tata:** The naming of the electronics city after Ratan Tata is a testament to his enduring legacy and contributions to Assam's development.

Bangalore City University to be Renamed After Dr. Manmohan Singh

The Karnataka government has announced that Bangalore City University will be renamed Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University in honor of the late former Prime Minister's contributions to the nation. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah made this announcement during the presentation of the 2025-26 state budget. To enhance the university's stature, Government Arts College and Government R.C. College will be integrated as constituent colleges. Additionally, the government plans to invest 2,500 crore over the next four years, with assistance from the

World Bank, to bolster infrastructure and establish Centres of Excellence in first-grade colleges state wide.

Foot notes:

- **Renaming Announcement:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced that Bangalore City University will be renamed as Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru University in honor of the former Prime Minister.
- **Model University:** The government aims to make it a model university, incorporating Government Arts College and Government RC College as constituent colleges.
- **Budget Announcement:** The renaming announcement was made while presenting the budget for the financial year 2025-26.
- **Tribute to Dr. Manmohan Singh:** The university is being renamed to pay tribute to Dr. Manmohan Singh's contributions to the country.
- **Education Initiatives:** The Karnataka government also announced various education initiatives, including expanding school nutrition programs and upgrading women's higher education institutions.

Madhav National Park Declared as India's 58th Tiger Reserve

Madhav National Park, located in the state of Madhya Pradesh, has been declared India's 58th Tiger Reserve. The park, known for its rich biodiversity and scenic landscapes, is now part of India's growing network of protected tiger habitats. This designation aims to enhance conservation efforts for the endangered Bengal tiger while promoting eco-tourism. The reserve is home to a variety of wildlife, including leopards, deer, and numerous bird species. With this new status, authorities plan to strengthen anti-poaching measures and improve habitat management to support the tiger population.

Foot notes:

- **Location and Area:** Madhav National Park is located in the Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh, covering an area of 354.85 sq km.
- **Conservation Significance:** This declaration is a testament to India's commitment to tiger conservation and environmental protection. Madhya Pradesh already has eight tiger reserves, and this addition will further strengthen conservation efforts in the state.
- **Biodiversity Hotspot:** Madhav National Park is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, including antelopes, deer, leopards, and wolves.
- **Tourism and Community Engagement:** The park's new status as a tiger reserve is expected to boost eco-tourism in the region, creating opportunities for local communities and supporting conservation efforts.
- **Government Support:** The declaration was made possible by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with Union Minister Bhupender Yadav hailing the decision as a significant step forward for India's environmental protection and wildlife conservation.

Delhi Govt Launches Mahila Samridhi Yojana

The Delhi government has launched the Mahila Samridhi Yojana, aimed at empowering women by promoting entrepreneurship and financial independence. The scheme provides financial assistance, training, and support to women entrepreneurs, especially from underprivileged backgrounds. It focuses on skill development, easy access to loans, and creating sustainable income opportunities. The government aims to boost women-led businesses and enhance socio-economic development through this initiative. This scheme is part of Delhi's ongoing efforts to support women's empowerment and economic self-reliance.

Foot notes:

- **Monthly Assistance:** The scheme promises to pay ₹2,500 per month to eligible women in Delhi.
- **Eligibility:** The scheme is directed towards women from economically weaker sections of the national capital.
- **Launch and Registration:** The scheme was launched on March 8, 2025, and registration for the scheme began on the same day.
- **Implementation:** The full process of providing financial assistance is expected to be completed within one-and-a-half months after registration.
- **Similar Schemes:** The Mahila Samridhi Yojana is similar to financial assistance schemes for women in other NDA-ruled states, such as the 'Ladli Behna Yojana' in Madhya Pradesh and the 'Ladki Bahin Yojana' in Maharashtra.

BANKING NEWS

Axis AMC appoints Nandik Mallik as Head

Axis Asset Management Company (AMC) has appointed Nandik Mallik as its new Head. In this role, Mallik will oversee the company's operations and lead its strategic initiatives in the asset management sector. With a wealth of experience in the financial industry, he is expected to drive growth and innovation for Axis AMC. His appointment comes as the company seeks to expand its portfolio and strengthen its position in the competitive market. Mallik's leadership is anticipated to bring fresh perspectives and enhance the company's offerings for investors.

Foot notes:

- **Experience and Background:** Nandik Mallik is a seasoned financial services professional with over two decades of experience, primarily in the asset management space.
- **Role and Responsibilities:** As the Head of Equity and Hybrid for SIFs, Mallik will spearhead Axis AMC's efforts in this emerging category, leveraging his expertise in managing large AUMs across risk-adjusted funds.
- **Previous Achievements:** Mallik has successfully launched the Long Short Fund at ICICI Prudential AMC and served as the CIO at Avendus Capital Public Markets Alternate Strategies LLP.

- **Education and Qualifications:** Mallik holds a BTech degree from IIT Kharagpur, a PGDM in Finance from IIM Calcutta, and a Master's degree in Finance from London Business School.
- **Axis AMC's Growth Plans:** The appointment highlights Axis AMC's commitment to providing innovative solutions and maximizing value for investors, with a focus on growing its equity and hybrid offerings in the SIFs space.

Canara HSBC Life Insurance partners with GIC Housing Finance

Canara HSBC Life Insurance has partnered with GIC Housing Finance to provide comprehensive insurance solutions to home loan customers. This strategic collaboration aims to offer life insurance cover to borrowers, ensuring financial protection for families in case of unforeseen events. Through this partnership, GIC Housing Finance customers can now avail tailored insurance plans from Canara HSBC Life Insurance, including term plans and savings-oriented products. The initiative enhances financial security while promoting affordable housing through integrated insurance offerings. This collaboration reflects the commitment of both organizations to support customers' financial well-being and homeownership aspirations.

Foot notes:

- **Strategic Alliance:** The partnership aims to provide enhanced financial security solutions to GIC Housing Finance's home loan customers.
- **Comprehensive Credit Life Insurance:** Canara HSBC Life Insurance will offer its 'Group Asset Secure' product, a comprehensive credit life insurance plan designed to protect borrowers and their families against loan liabilities in the event of unforeseen circumstances.
- **Financial Protection:** The partnership underscores the importance of financial protection alongside loan offerings, creating a more resilient and financially secure ecosystem for borrowers.
- **Customer-Centric Approach:** Both companies have reiterated their commitment to customer-centric financial solutions, with Canara HSBC Life Insurance's 'Promises ka Partner' philosophy and GIC Housing Finance's focus on responsible lending.
- **Increased Accessibility:** The partnership will unlock a viable financial protection provision for GIC Housing Finance's diversified customer pool, promoting homeownership while mitigating financial risks for borrowers.

HDFC Bank, Indian Army and CSC Academy Expand Project NAMAN

HDFC Bank, in collaboration with the Indian Army and CSC Academy, has expanded Project NAMAN, an initiative aimed at supporting veterans and their families. The project focuses on providing financial literacy, skill development, and livelihood opportunities to ex-servicemen, war widows, and their dependents. Through this expansion, HDFC Bank will set up more NAMAN Centers across the country to offer specialized services, including banking assistance, vocational training, and entrepreneurship support. The partnership with CSC Academy ensures that digital and financial literacy programs reach rural and semi-urban areas where many

veterans reside. This initiative reflects HDFC Bank's commitment to honoring the sacrifices of armed forces personnel while empowering them economically.

Foot notes:

- **Expanded Reach:** The project has been expanded to 26 new Directorate of Indian Army Veterans (DIAV) locations across India, including Rajasthan, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Bihar, Odisha, and New Delhi.
- **Services Offered:** The Common Service Centres (CSCs) established under Project NAMAN offer pension-related services, Government-to-Citizen (G2C) services, and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) services.
- **Entrepreneurial Opportunities:** Each CSC is managed by a Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE), selected from among veterans or their next of kin, providing entrepreneurial opportunities and a monthly monetary grant of 20,000 for the first 12 months.
- **Partnership and Funding:** The project is a result of a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between HDFC Bank, the Indian Army's Directorate of Indian Army Veterans, and CSC Academy, with HDFC Bank providing the necessary IT infrastructure and funding support.

Atul Kumar Goel Assumes Charge as Chief Executive of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA)

Atul Kumar Goel has assumed charge as the Chief Executive of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA). With his extensive experience in the banking sector, he aims to enhance the role of IBA in shaping policies and improving the operational efficiency of Indian banks. Goel brings a wealth of knowledge in strategic banking and financial management, which will aid in strengthening IBA's initiatives. His leadership is expected to focus on fostering collaboration between banks, regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders. As the new CEO, Goel is set to play a crucial role in addressing the evolving challenges and opportunities in the banking sector.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Experience:** Goel has previously served as the Managing Director and CEO of Punjab National Bank (PNB) from February 2022 to December 2024, and as Chairman of the IBA for two terms 2021-22 and 2022-23.
- **Selection Process:** A three-member search committee, comprising CS Setty, MV Rao, and N Kamakodi, was formed to identify a suitable successor to Sunil Mehta, who retired in September 2024.
- **Top Contender:** Goel was considered the top candidate for the role, given his extensive experience and leadership in the banking sector.
- **IBA's Expectations:** As the new Chief Executive, Goel is expected to lead the IBA at a crucial time when India's banking industry is evolving rapidly.

- **Industry Impact:** With his strong track record and expertise, Goel is poised to make a significant impact on the Indian banking industry, driving growth, innovation, and collaboration among member banks.

ICICI Bank Appoints Kamal Wali as Head of Security Operations

ICICI Bank has appointed Kamal Wali as the Head of Security Operations to strengthen its cybersecurity framework. With extensive experience in security management, Wali is expected to enhance the bank's digital defense mechanisms. His role will involve overseeing threat monitoring, incident response, and risk mitigation strategies. ICICI Bank aims to leverage his expertise to ensure robust protection against evolving cyber threats. This appointment reflects the bank's commitment to maintaining a secure and resilient banking environment.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Role:** Kamal Wali has been appointed as the Head of Security Operations at ICICI Bank, overseeing the bank's security operations.
- **Expertise:** Wali brings over 18 years of cybersecurity and IT operations expertise to the institution, having held leadership positions at prominent organizations like Jio Platforms Limited, Wipro, IBM, Intex Technologies, and Spanco Telesystems.
- **Responsibilities:** As Head of Security Operations, Wali will focus on risk mitigation and enhancing digital resilience, ensuring the bank's security operations are robust and effective.
- **Industry Experience:** Wali's extensive experience encompasses managing security frameworks, implementing complex projects, and developing operational security strategies.
- **Commitment to Cybersecurity:** ICICI Bank's appointment of Wali underscores its commitment to strengthening its cybersecurity infrastructure, safeguarding customer data, and ensuring secure banking operations.

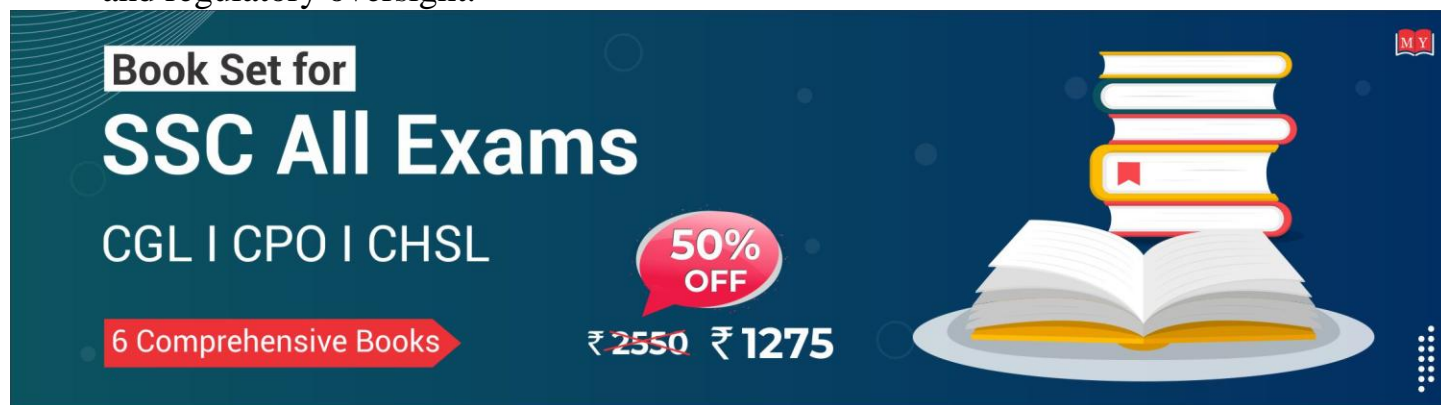
HDFC Securities appoints Anand Mathur as Chief Financial Officer

HDFC Securities, a leading stockbroking firm and wholly owned subsidiary of HDFC Bank, has appointed Anand Mathur as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Anand is a Chartered Accountant with over 20 years of experience in financial strategy, regulatory compliance, and operational efficiency. Prior to joining HDFC Securities, he served as Senior Vice President for Finance at HDFC Bank, where he led strategic initiatives in collaboration with the bank's leadership. He also held the position of Assistant Vice President - Finance at Citibank India, overseeing financial strategy and regulatory reporting. Expressing his enthusiasm for the new role, Anand stated, "I'm thrilled to join HDFC Securities as CFO at such an exciting time."

Foot notes:

- **New Role:** Anand Mathur has been appointed as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of HDFC Securities, a wholly-owned subsidiary of HDFC Bank.

- **Experience:** Mathur brings over 20 years of experience in financial management and strategy, having worked at HDFC Bank and Citibank India.
- **Responsibilities:** As CFO, Mathur will lead the company's financial strategy and operations, contributing to its ongoing success and sustainable growth.
- **Background:** Mathur is a Chartered Accountant with expertise in optimizing financial frameworks, streamlining operations, and ensuring regulatory adherence.
- **Leadership:** Dhiraj Relli, Managing Director & CEO of HDFC Securities, expressed optimism about Mathur's appointment, citing his deep experience in financial strategy and regulatory oversight.



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DEFENCE NEWS

Eyal Zamir Appointed as Israel's New Military Chief

Eyal Zamir has been appointed as Israel's new military chief, succeeding Lieutenant General Aviv Kochavi. Zamir, a seasoned officer with extensive experience, is known for his leadership in various operational roles within the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). He has served as the deputy chief of staff and held command positions in the IDF's intelligence and operations divisions. His appointment comes at a critical time as Israel faces significant security challenges in the region. Zamir's leadership is expected to shape the future of Israel's defense strategy, emphasizing readiness and modernization.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Roles:** Zamir has held several key leadership positions, including serving as Netanyahu's military secretary, Head of Southern Command, and Deputy Chief of Staff. He has also led significant defense procurements as Director of the Defence Ministry.
- **Strategic Challenges:** Zamir takes command at a critical time, with Israel facing ongoing conflicts with Hamas and Iran. He has advocated for a tougher stance on Iran and has proposed offensive action against Iran's nuclear ambitions.
- **Israel-Hamas Conflict:** Zamir is expected to lead efforts for a "total victory" against Hamas, aligning with Netanyahu's military vision. He has already drafted a detailed plan to conquer all of Gaza during his tenure in Southern Command.

- **Leadership Style:** Zamir is known for being mission-oriented, detail-oriented, and strict. He aims to restore public trust in the military following Israel's security lapses on October 7, 2023.

SPORTS NEWS

India Won ICC Champions Trophy for the Third Time

India won the ICC Champions Trophy for the third time in 2017, defeating Pakistan in the final. The Indian team, led by Virat Kohli, displayed remarkable performances throughout the tournament. Their all-around brilliance, with strong batting from players like Shikhar Dhawan and Rohit Sharma, and exceptional bowling from Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami, guided them to the title. The final, held at The Oval in London, saw India dominate Pakistan in all departments. This victory cemented India's position as one of the most successful teams in the history of the Champions Trophy.

Foot notes:

- **Third Time's the Charm:** India previously won the Champions Trophy in 2002 (shared with Sri Lanka) and 2013 (defeating England).
- **Rohit Sharma's Leadership:** Rohit Sharma led the Indian team to victory, also earning the Player of the Match award.
- **Thrilling Final:** India chased down New Zealand's total of 251 runs, winning by 4 wickets with an over to spare.
- **Dominant Performance:** Throughout the tournament, India displayed remarkable skill, resilience, and teamwork, reaffirming their dominance in world cricket.
- **Historic Moment:** This win marks India's third ICC Champions Trophy title, solidifying their position as one of the greatest cricketing nations in the world.

India Clinch 5th Asian Women's Kabaddi Title, Defeat Iran in Final

On March 8, 2025, the Indian women's kabaddi team clinched their fifth Asian Women's Kabaddi Championship title by defeating Iran 32-25 in the final. This victory was significant, especially as it coincided with International Women's Day. In the semi-finals, India triumphed over Nepal, while Iran secured their spot by overcoming Bangladesh. This win further solidifies India's dominance in women's kabaddi, adding to their previous titles in the sport.

Foot notes:

- **Dominant Performance:** The Indian women's team remained undefeated throughout the tournament, showcasing their dominance in the sport.
- **Final Match Highlights:** India defeated Iran 32-25 in the final, with the team's strategic gameplay and teamwork paying off.
- **Previous Titles:** This is India's fifth Asian Women's Kabaddi title, solidifying their position as a powerhouse in the sport.

- **Tournament Format:** The 6th Asian Women's Kabaddi Championship was held in Tehran, Iran, featuring seven teams from across Asia.
- **India's Kabaddi Supremacy:** With this win, India has further cemented its reputation as a kabaddi powerhouse, with both the men's and women's teams consistently performing well in international competitions.

India Bags Four Medals Including Two Gold At Special Olympics World Winter

India has achieved a remarkable feat by bagging four medals, including two gold, at the Special Olympics World Winter Games. The athletes showcased outstanding performance in various winter sports, bringing pride to the nation. The two gold medals reflect the hard work and dedication of the Indian contingent. Along with the golds, India also secured silver and bronze medals, highlighting the diverse talent of the team. This accomplishment marks a significant milestone in India's journey in international winter sports.

Foot notes:

- **Gold Medal Winners:** Bharti and Sameer stood atop the podium, winning gold medals in the Snowboarding event in Bardonecchia.
- **Silver Medal Winners:** Hem Chand and Harshita Thakur captured silver medals in the Novice Giant Slalom Final.
- **Indian Contingent:** A 49-member contingent, comprising 30 athletes and 19 support staff, is representing India at the tournament.
- **Global Participation:** The event features around 1,500 athletes with intellectual disabilities from 102 countries, promoting inclusivity and representation in the sporting world.
- **Sports Disciplines:** The Indian athletes are competing across six disciplines: Alpine Skiing, Cross Country Skiing, Floorball, Short-track Speed Skating, Snowboarding, and Snowshoeing.
- **India's Past Record:** India has a strong track record at the Special Olympics World Winter Games, having won a total of 167 medals in previous editions, including 73 gold, 49 silver, and 45 bronze medals.

Batsman Shubman Gill Retains Top Position in ODI Ranking

Indian batsman Shubman Gill has retained his top position in the ICC ODI rankings. His consistent performances and remarkable batting skills have kept him at the pinnacle of the list. Gill's dominance in the format reflects his dedication and talent on the field. Fans and cricket experts alike have praised his ability to perform under pressure. Maintaining the top spot is a testament to his hard work and commitment to the game.

Foot notes:

- **Career-Best Ranking:** Gill has reached a career-best ranking of number one in the ICC ODI batting rankings, surpassing notable players like Babar Azam.

- **Consistent Performance:** Gill's consistent performance in ODIs has earned him a total of 2450 runs, with a batting average of 59.76.
- **Rise to the Top:** Gill overtook Babar Azam to become the number one ranked ODI batter, with 830 points.
- **Indian Batters in the Rankings:** Apart from Gill, other Indian batters like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma also feature in the top 10 of the ICC ODI batting rankings.
- **Gill's Impressive Record:** Gill has had an impressive record in ODIs, scoring 1449 runs in 2023 at an average of 63 and a strike rate of 103.72, including 7 centuries and 5 half-centuries.

Nat Sciver-Brunt becomes WPL's leading run-scorer, surpassing Ellyse Perry

Nat Sciver-Brunt has emerged as the leading run-scorer in the Women's Premier League (WPL), surpassing the previous record held by Ellyse Perry. Known for her consistent performances and aggressive batting style, Sciver-Brunt has been a vital asset to her team. Her ability to anchor innings and accelerate when needed has earned her widespread acclaim. The achievement marks a significant milestone in her WPL career, solidifying her position as one of the league's top performers. Fans and cricket experts alike have praised her remarkable consistency and dedication to the game.

Foot notes:

- **Record-Breaking Performance:** Sciver-Brunt has broken Ellyse Perry's record, although the exact number of runs she has scored is not specified.
- **Consistency:** She has been in stellar form, scoring five 50s in the current season, the most by any batter in a single WPL edition.
- **Orange Cap Holder:** Sciver-Brunt currently holds the Orange Cap, awarded to the leading run-scorer in the WPL.
- **Team Performance:** Her impressive batting has helped Mumbai Indians reach new heights, including scoring the highest total ever in a knockout game.
- **Individual Accolades:** Sciver-Brunt was also recognized as the Leading Women's Cricketer in the World in 2023 by Wisden.

Nitin Gupta improves national youth 5,000m race walk record

Nitin Gupta has set a new national youth record in the 5,000m race walk, showcasing his exceptional talent and dedication to athletics. Competing at a national-level event, Gupta clocked an impressive time that surpassed the previous record, marking a significant milestone in Indian race walking. His achievement highlights the growing potential of young athletes in track and field sports. Coaches and sports enthusiasts have praised his disciplined training and commitment to excellence. Gupta's record-breaking performance is expected to inspire aspiring race walkers across the country.

Foot notes:

- **New Record Time:** Gupta clocked an impressive 19:24.48 seconds, surpassing his previous national record of 20:01.64 seconds set in December last year.
- **First Indian to Break 20-Minute Barrier:** With this achievement, Gupta became the first Indian to break the 20-minute barrier in the men's under-18 5,000m race walk event.
- **Third-Fastest Time in the World:** Gupta's record time is also the third-fastest in the world in the under-18 category.
- **Qualification for Asian Youth Athletics Championships:** Gupta's performance has earned him qualification for the Asian Youth Athletics Championships, scheduled to take place in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, from April 15 to 18.
- **Training and Guidance:** Gupta trains under Basant Rana at ASI Pune, where he practices alongside top racewalkers Ram Babu and Servin Sebastian.



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Deepti Sharma Climbs to 5th in ICC Women's All-rounders Rankings

Indian cricketer Deepti Sharma has climbed to the 5th position in the ICC Women's All-rounders Rankings. Her consistent performances with both bat and ball have earned her this well-deserved spot among the top all-rounders in the world. Deepti's remarkable contributions on the field have been instrumental in India's recent successes in international cricket. Fans and experts alike have praised her versatility and dedication to the game. As she continues to shine, expectations are high for her to reach even greater heights in the rankings.

Foot notes:

- **Surpassing Amelia Kerr:** Sharma has edged past New Zealand's Amelia Kerr to secure her spot in the top five.
- **Consistent Performance:** Her rise in the rankings reflects her consistent performance in both T20 and ODI formats.
- **Current Rankings:** Sharma currently holds 344 points, with Australia's Ashleigh Gardner topping the list.
- **Other Indian Players:** Smriti Mandhana is the only other Indian player in the top 10 of the ODI batting rankings, holding the 2nd position.
- **Sharma's Overall Rankings:** She also ranks third in the T20 all-rounder rankings and fourth in the ODI bowling charts.

AWARD NEWS

Dr. Sridhar Mitta Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Sridhar Mitta has been honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of technology and innovation. As a visionary leader and pioneer in the IT industry, he has played a significant role in shaping India's technological landscape. Throughout his illustrious career, Dr. Mitta has inspired countless professionals and driven transformative advancements in the sector. His dedication and innovative spirit have left a lasting impact on both the industry and the next generation of tech leaders. The award celebrates his remarkable achievements and enduring legacy.

Foot notes:

- **Pioneering Work:** Dr. Mitta has been recognized for his pioneering work in technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship, spanning over five decades.
- **Leadership Roles:** He has held various leadership roles, including serving as the first CTO of Wipro, where he introduced the "Lab on Hire" model, transforming Wipro's R&D division into a global profit center.
- **Entrepreneurial Ventures:** Dr. Mitta has co-founded several companies, including e4e Inc. and NextWealth Entrepreneurs, focusing on cross-border collaboration, community empowerment, and job creation in small towns.
- **Awards and Recognition:** He received the Dataquest Lifetime Achievement Award 2024, a testament to his outstanding contributions to the Indian IT industry.
- **Impact on Indian IT:** Dr. Mitta's work has significantly impacted the Indian IT landscape, inspiring future generations of entrepreneurs and technologists.

Jayshree Vencatesan, first Indian to Receive Ramsar Award for Wetland Wise Use

Jayshree Vencatesan has become the first Indian to receive the prestigious Ramsar Award for Wetland Wise Use. The award recognizes her remarkable contributions to the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands in India. As a passionate environmentalist, Vencatesan has played a crucial role in promoting community participation and scientific approaches to wetland preservation. Her efforts have significantly impacted the protection of vital wetland ecosystems, ensuring their sustainable use for future generations. This global recognition highlights her dedication to environmental stewardship and inspires others to follow in her footsteps.

Foot notes:

- **Ramsar Award Recipient:** Jayshree Vencatesan became the first Indian to receive the prestigious Ramsar Award for Wetland Wise Use.
- **Conservation Efforts:** Vencatesan has been instrumental in conserving the Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu, India.
- **Wetland Expertise:** Her work focuses on wetland conservation, management, and wise use, highlighting the importance of these ecosystems for biodiversity and human well-being.

- **International Recognition:** The Ramsar Award recognizes Vencatesan's outstanding contributions to wetland conservation and management, both nationally and internationally.
- **Inspiring Others:** Vencatesan's achievement serves as an inspiration to conservationists, researchers, and policymakers, promoting the importance of protecting wetlands and their ecosystem services.

ICC announced Shubman Gill and Alana King Shine as ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month Awards for February 2025

The ICC has announced Shubman Gill and Alana King as the winners of the ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month awards for February 2025. Gill's exceptional performances with the bat have earned him recognition on the global stage. Meanwhile, Alana King's remarkable contributions in women's cricket have secured her the prestigious honor. Both players have demonstrated outstanding skills and consistency throughout the month. Their achievements reflect their dedication and impact on the game.

Foot notes:

- **Shubman Gill Wins ICC Men's Player of the Month:** India's Shubman Gill has been awarded the ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2025, thanks to his outstanding performances in the ODI series against England and the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.
- **Gill's Exceptional Form:** Gill scored 406 runs in five ODIs at an average of 101.50 and a strike rate of 94.19, including three consecutive half-centuries against England.
- **Alana King Wins ICC Women's Player of the Month:** Australia's Alana King has been named the ICC Women's Player of the Month for February 2025, following her impressive bowling spells in the standalone Ashes Test match victory over England in Melbourne.
- **King's Ashes Heroics:** King took 9 wickets in the Ashes Test, including a career-best spell of 5/53 in the second innings, leading Australia to victory.
- **Gill Outshines Strong Contenders:** Gill beat out strong contenders like Australia's Steve Smith and New Zealand's Glenn Phillips to secure his third ICC Player of the Month title.

Delhi International Airport Wins Prestigious ASQ Award for Best Airport in Asia-Pacific

Delhi International Airport has been honored with the prestigious ASQ Award for being the best airport in the Asia-Pacific region. This recognition highlights the airport's exceptional services, passenger experience, and operational efficiency. The award is a testament to the continuous efforts made to enhance facilities and maintain high standards. It showcases Delhi Airport's commitment to providing a world-class experience to travelers. This achievement further cements its reputation as a leading aviation hub in the region.

Foot notes:

- **Award Category:** Delhi Airport won the award in the category of over 40 Million Passengers Per Annum (MPPA).
- **Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Program:** The ASQ program is a global benchmarking program that measures passenger satisfaction through surveys.
- **Passenger Satisfaction:** Delhi Airport's win is based on passenger surveys that rated their satisfaction with the airport's services, including ease of navigation, check-in, shopping, and dining.
- **Cleanest Airport:** In addition to being named the Best Airport, Delhi Airport was also recognized as the Cleanest Airport in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Previous Wins:** Delhi Airport has consistently been ranked among the best airports in Asia-Pacific, winning the ASQ Award for five consecutive years prior to this sixth win.
- **Operational Excellence:** The airport's win is a testament to its commitment to operational excellence, customer satisfaction, and adherence to global aviation standards.

Muthoot Microfin Won Double Gold at SKOCH Awards 2025

Muthoot Microfin has won double gold at the SKOCH Awards 2025, recognizing its excellence in the financial sector. The awards highlight the company's commitment to financial inclusion and innovative microfinance solutions. Muthoot Microfin's efforts in empowering women entrepreneurs and rural communities played a key role in this achievement. The recognition reinforces its position as a leader in the microfinance industry. This milestone reflects the company's dedication to social impact and sustainable growth.

Foot notes:

- **Double Gold Awards:** Muthoot Microfin won two Gold Awards for its excellence in digital financial inclusion and insurance solutions.
- **Award Categories:** The company received awards in two categories: Corporate Excellence for "Best Customer Application on Digital Financial Inclusion" and BFSI Award for "Best Insurance Scheme".
- **Mahila Mitra Initiative:** Muthoot Microfin's Mahila Mitra initiative, a digital platform for women in rural India, has achieved 1.73 million downloads and a 4.2-star rating.
- **Griha Raksha Insurance Scheme:** The company's Griha Raksha Insurance Scheme has provided coverage to 2.66 million beneficiaries, promoting financial security and social empowerment.
- **Commitment to Empowerment:** Muthoot Microfin's win underscores its commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs and bridging the financial inclusion gap in rural India.

Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton honored with 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award

Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton have been honored with the 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award for their groundbreaking contributions to artificial intelligence. Their pioneering work in reinforcement learning has significantly advanced the field of machine learning. Their research laid the foundation for modern AI systems, influencing robotics, decision-making algorithms,

and autonomous systems. The award recognizes their profound impact on both theoretical advancements and real-world applications. This achievement highlights their lasting legacy in the evolution of intelligent computing.

Foot notes:

- **Contributions:** Barto and Sutton's work laid the conceptual and algorithmic foundations for RL, significantly influencing artificial intelligence (AI) and other fields.
- **Reinforcement Learning:** RL is a process where an agent learns to behave successfully by receiving rewards for actions in a stochastic environment.
- **Impact:** Their contributions have enabled breakthroughs like AlphaGo and ChatGPT, and have applications in robotics, network congestion control, chip design, and global supply chain optimization.
- **Awards and Recognition:** The ACM A.M. Turing Award is named after Alan M. Turing, the British mathematician who articulated the mathematical foundations of computing.
- **Background:** Barto is Professor Emeritus of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, while Sutton is a Professor of Computer Science at the University of Alberta.

AGREEMENT & MOU NEWS

DPIIT and Mercedes-Benz India Sign MoU to Boost Manufacturing

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Mercedes-Benz India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance India's manufacturing ecosystem, promote road safety, and advance environmental sustainability. This collaboration aims to support startups, innovators, and entrepreneurs by providing infrastructure, mentorship, funding opportunities, and market linkages. The initiative also seeks to facilitate international collaborations and knowledge exchange to drive long-term impact.

Foot notes:

- **Boosting Manufacturing:** The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Mercedes-Benz India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance India's manufacturing capabilities, promote road safety, and support environmental sustainability.
- **Supporting Startups:** The partnership aims to provide startups with infrastructure, mentorship, funding opportunities, and market linkages, focusing on innovation, sustainability, and entrepreneurship.
- **Key Focus Areas:** The collaboration will prioritize road safety, environmental sustainability, and advanced manufacturing, aligning with Mercedes-Benz India's focus areas.
- **Industry-Academia Linkages:** The partnership seeks to strengthen industry-academia linkages, creating an ecosystem that drives impactful technological advancements.

- **Driving Societal Impact:** Through this initiative, Mercedes-Benz India will work closely with incubators and institutions to drive meaningful societal impact, supporting technological advancements and sustainable development.

India Signs MoU for Multi-Modal Logistics Park in Varanasi

India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop a Multi-Modal Logistics Park in Varanasi. This initiative aims to enhance the city's logistics infrastructure and promote efficient cargo movement across various modes of transport. The project is expected to boost trade connectivity and support economic growth in the region. By integrating road, rail, and waterways, the logistics park will streamline freight handling and reduce transportation costs. This strategic development aligns with the government's vision of modernizing India's logistics network.

Foot notes:

- **Strategic Location:** The MMLP will be spread over 150 acres and strategically connected to NH7 via a 650-meter access road, just 1.5 km from the NH7-NH2 junction.
- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** The park will seamlessly integrate with the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor through a 5.1 km railway line from Jeonathpur Station and National Waterway-1, and is located 30 km from Lal Bahadur Shastri Airport.
- **Investment and Job Opportunities:** The project is expected to attract significant investment and create employment opportunities, boosting India's logistics and trade efficiency, and reinforcing its economic growth ambitions.
- **Government Collaboration:** The MoU was signed between National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) and Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), with Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari and Sarbananda Sonowal witnessing the signing.
- **National Logistics Ecosystem:** The MMLP in Varanasi is part of India's larger plan to develop a robust logistics ecosystem, with 35 Multi-Modal Logistic Parks planned across the country under the Bharatmala Pariyojana.

CCRH Signs MoU to Promote Research in Homoeopathy

The Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote research and development in homoeopathy. This collaboration aims to enhance scientific studies and evidence-based practices in the field. The MoU will facilitate joint research initiatives, capacity building, and knowledge exchange among stakeholders. It marks a significant step towards integrating homoeopathy into mainstream healthcare through rigorous research. The partnership is expected to boost innovation and credibility in homoeopathic treatment approaches.

Foot notes:

- **Partnership Details:** The Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Adamas University, Kolkata, to enhance academic and research collaboration in Homoeopathy.
- **Objectives:** The MoU aims to promote scientific research, knowledge exchange, and interdisciplinary studies in Homoeopathy, as well as to integrate Homoeopathy into mainstream healthcare.
- **Key Areas of Focus:** The partnership will focus on fostering academic and research collaboration, promoting scientific advancements, and encouraging evidence-based research in Homoeopathy.
- **Benefits:** The MoU is expected to contribute to the broader acceptance and integration of Homoeopathy in mainstream healthcare, ultimately benefiting the masses.
- **Previous Collaborations:** CCRH has previously collaborated with other institutions, such as AIIMS Bhubaneswar, to promote research in Homoeopathy and integrate it into existing healthcare systems.

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APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS

Vidya Balan Becomes Federal Bank's First Brand Ambassador

Vidya Balan has been appointed as Federal Bank's first-ever brand ambassador. The renowned actress will represent the bank in its various marketing campaigns and initiatives, helping to enhance its brand image. Federal Bank aims to leverage her popularity and positive public image to strengthen its connection with a broader audience. Balan's association with the bank is expected to boost its visibility and appeal, especially among younger and more diverse customers. The collaboration marks a significant milestone for Federal Bank as it continues to grow and innovate in the financial sector.

Foot notes:

- **Strategic Choice:** Vidya Balan was chosen for her versatility, mass appeal, and ability to transcend demographics, making her the perfect fit to champion Federal Bank.
- **Brand Transformation:** This association is part of Federal Bank's focus on brand transformation, aiming to enhance its market position and connect with diverse geographies, generations, and genders.

- **Pan-India Appeal:** As a renowned actress, Vidya Balan brings her powerful presence and commitment to meaningful causes, aligning with Federal Bank's ethos of supporting communities while pursuing business excellence.
- **Marketing Initiatives:** The multi-year partnership will see Vidya Balan lead various marketing initiatives, including TV commercials and digital campaigns, to elevate Federal Bank's connection with its audiences.
- **Empathy and Excellence:** Vidya Balan's values of empathy, commitment, and excellence resonate with Federal Bank's approach, emphasizing the importance of understanding and servicing customers.

Zeta appoints Mehul Mistry as Senior Vice President

Zeta has appointed Mehul Mistry as its new Senior Vice President. In this role, Mistry will play a crucial part in driving the company's growth and innovation in the digital banking and payments space. With his extensive experience in the fintech industry, he is expected to bring valuable insights and strategic direction to Zeta. Mistry's appointment reflects the company's commitment to strengthening its leadership team and expanding its offerings in the global market. Zeta aims to enhance its capabilities and continue providing cutting-edge solutions under Mistry's leadership.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Expertise:** Mehul brings over 20 years of leadership expertise from his stints at Wibmo (a PayU company), IDFC First Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, and Barclays Bank.
- **Role and Responsibilities:** As Senior Vice President, Mehul will oversee Zeta's strategic relationships with major clients in India, develop new partnerships, and create growth strategies for the company's India growth plans.
- **Industry Transformation:** Mehul's appointment comes at a time when the banking sector in India is poised for significant transformation, driven by modern banking platforms, digital-natives, and advancements in AI.
- **Zeta's Growth Plans:** Zeta has recently been valued at \$2 billion following a \$50 million fundraise from a strategic investor, and Mehul's appointment is expected to support the company's growth plans in India.
- **Mehul's Vision:** Mehul believes that Zeta, with its next-gen processing platform, Tachyon, exceptional talent pool, and proven track record, is uniquely positioned to support banks in their transformation journey.

Amitava Mukherjee appointed as NMDC CMD

Amitava Mukherjee has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of NMDC (National Mineral Development Corporation). With his vast experience in the mining and public sector industries, Mukherjee is expected to lead NMDC towards further growth and innovation. His leadership will focus on enhancing the company's operations and expanding its

presence in the global mineral market. Mukherjee's appointment comes at a pivotal time as NMDC looks to strengthen its position in the mining sector and contribute to India's economic growth. His strategic vision will be crucial in guiding the company through its future challenges and opportunities.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Experience:** Mukherjee has served as the Director (Finance) of NMDC since November 2018 and has held the additional charge of CMD since March 2023.
- **Achievements:** Under his leadership, NMDC achieved a historic milestone by surpassing 45 million tonnes of iron ore output in FY24, becoming the first iron ore mining company in India to do so.
- **Expansion Plans:** Mukherjee aims to expand NMDC's mining capacity to 100 million tonnes by 2030, with a focus on responsible mining practices.
- **Other Roles:** He also serves as the Chairman of NMDC Steel Ltd and Legacy Iron Ore Ltd, showcasing his expertise in the mining and steel sectors.
- **Term:** Mukherjee's appointment as CMD is effective from March 6, 2025, and will continue until February 29, 2028, or until further orders.

Emids appoints Abhishek Shankar as Chief Executive Officer

Emids, a leading provider of digital transformation solutions in the healthcare and life sciences sectors, has appointed Abhishek Shankar as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This strategic move aligns with Emids' commitment to enhancing AI-driven healthcare solutions. He also held the position of Senior Vice President at HCL, overseeing the Technology and Life Sciences Americas business.

Foot notes:

- **Extensive Experience:** Abhishek Shankar brings over two decades of experience in driving innovation and delivering enterprise-wide technology modernization at the intersection of healthcare and technology.
- **Previous Roles:** Shankar previously served as President, Communications Business, Americas at Tech Mahindra and Senior Vice President at HCL, leading the Technology and Life Sciences Americas business.
- **Emids' Future Plans:** Under Shankar's leadership, Emids aims to deepen its role as a premier technology partner for healthtech, payer, provider, and life science organizations.
- **Digital Transformation:** Shankar emphasized the rapid evolution of digital solutions in healthcare and life sciences, and Emids' position to guide organizations through this transformation.
- **Growth and Innovation:** Emids is set to accelerate digital adoption and transformation across the healthcare ecosystem by strengthening its AI, interoperability, and cloud-driven solutions.

Sony India names Karan Aujla as brand ambassador for its audio products

Sony India has appointed renowned Punjabi singer Karan Aujla as the brand ambassador for its audio product category. This partnership aims to enhance Sony's presence in the audio market by associating with an artist who resonates with a wide audience. The collaboration is launched with a comprehensive promotional campaign across digital platforms, outdoor advertising, and retail activations.

Foot notes:

- **New Brand Ambassador:** Sony India has appointed Karan Aujla, a renowned music sensation, as its new brand ambassador for audio products, reinforcing its commitment to delivering premium sound experiences.
- **Multi-Platform Campaign:** The partnership launches with a multi-platform campaign across digital, outdoor, and retail spaces, featuring Karan Aujla.
- **ULT Power Sound Expansion:** The announcement coincides with Sony India's expansion of its ULT Power Sound sub-brand, which has seen 2X year-on-year growth, offering high-quality headphones and speakers.
- **Immersive Audio Experience:** The ULT Power Sound products are designed to deliver an immersive audio experience with advanced technologies such as noise cancellation, enhanced bass, and high-clarity audio.
- **Partnership Goals:** The collaboration aims to elevate the way music is experienced, delivering immersive sound that truly connects with fans everywhere, while strengthening Sony India's position in the audio market.

Jujhar Group appoints Amarpreet Singh Dua as CEO of Fastway Group

Jujhar Group, a diversified conglomerate based in Ludhiana, Punjab, has appointed Amarpreet Singh Dua as the Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of its subsidiary, Fastway Group. This strategic move aims to drive innovation and foster growth within the organization.

Foot notes:

- **Extensive Experience:** Amarpreet Singh Dua brings over two decades of experience in national operations, P&L management, and pioneering services in the telecom and internet industries.
- **Strategic Leadership:** Dua has a proven track record of launching and managing advanced technological solutions, including 3G, 4G, FTTH, and AirFiber nationally.
- **Growth and Innovation:** Under Dua's leadership, Fastway Group is poised to create new benchmarks in operational excellence, innovation, and market expansion.
- **Alignment with Jujhar Group's Mission:** Dua's extensive industry experience, leadership skills, and dedication to excellence align with Jujhar Group's mission for growth and change.
- **Future Plans:** Dua aims to create extraordinary value for customers and stakeholders by focusing on innovation, operational efficiency, and market expansion.

Vikas Kaushal Appointed as HPCL CMD

Vikas Kaushal has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL). His appointment marks a significant step for the organization as he brings a wealth of experience in the oil and gas sector. Kaushal's leadership is expected to steer HPCL towards achieving its strategic goals and enhancing operational efficiency. As CMD, he will be responsible for overseeing the company's operations and driving growth initiatives. His vision focuses on sustainable development and innovation within the petroleum industry.

Foot notes:

- **First Private Sector Executive:** Kaushal is the first private sector executive to lead a state-run oil refinery, marking a significant shift in India's oil sector.
- **Extensive Experience:** He brings over 30 years of experience in the energy, oil & gas, and power sectors, having worked with top Indian energy companies, including Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum, and GAIL.
- **Previous Roles:** Kaushal served as the Global Leader for Energy and Process Industries at Kearney and was the Managing Director and Country Head for Kearney India.
- **Education and Credentials:** He holds a chemical engineering degree from Panjab University and an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad.
- **Leadership and Vision:** Kaushal's appointment is expected to drive HPCL's growth and innovation, with his expertise in digital transformation, refinery maintenance, and net-zero strategies.

Network18 appoints Angad Bhatia as CEO of Firstpost and Creator18

Network18 has appointed Angad Bhatia as the CEO of Firstpost and Creator18. With extensive experience in digital media and content strategy, Bhatia is expected to lead both platforms towards greater audience engagement and innovative content solutions. His vision focuses on strengthening Firstpost's position as a leading digital news platform while expanding Creator18's reach in the creator economy. As CEO, Bhatia aims to drive growth through cutting-edge content strategies and strategic partnerships. This appointment underscores Network18's commitment to enhancing its digital footprint and creator-driven initiatives.

Foot notes:

- **New Role:** Angad Bhatia has been appointed as the CEO of Firstpost and Creator18, a new venture by Network18.
- **Responsibilities:** He will oversee Firstpost and lead the development of a creator network across Network18's digital platforms.
- **Background:** Bhatia has over 15 years of experience in media, content, and digital commerce, having built and scaled influential brands like MensXP, iDiva, and Hypp.
- **Previous Roles:** Before joining Network18, Bhatia was CEO of India Lifestyle Network and led brand and marketing growth for other Mensa Brands.
- **Reporting Structure:** He will report to Rahul Joshi, Managing Director and Group Editor-in-Chief, Network18.

Honda Motor appoints Takashi Nakajima as President and CEO of Honda Cars India

Honda Motor Co. has appointed Takashi Nakajima as the new President and CEO of Honda Cars India. Nakajima brings extensive experience from his previous roles within Honda's global operations and is expected to strengthen the company's presence in the Indian market. His leadership will focus on enhancing product offerings, boosting sales, and aligning with Honda's global vision of sustainable mobility. The appointment marks a strategic move to revitalize Honda's growth trajectory in India amid increasing competition and evolving consumer preferences. Nakajima succeeds the outgoing CEO and aims to leverage his global expertise to steer Honda Cars India toward a more resilient and customer-centric future.

Foot notes:

- **Predecessor:** Nakajima will succeed Takuya Tsumura, who will move to Japan to take up a new role at Honda's head office.
- **Background:** Nakajima has over 30 years of experience with Honda, having worked in various international markets, including Japan, China, Spain, Czech Republic, and Russia.
- **Previous Role:** Before his appointment, Nakajima was serving as President of Honda Motor Russia since 2021 and was also in charge of Product Planning, Marketing, and Corporate Communication for Honda's automobile business in Japan.
- **Expectations:** As President and CEO of Honda Cars India, Nakajima is expected to build on the company's premium brand positioning, strengthen customer-centric solutions, and drive profitable growth.

Justice Joymalya Bagchi Appointed to Supreme Court

Justice Joymalya Bagchi has been appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court of India. Known for his profound legal acumen and extensive experience, Justice Bagchi previously served as a Judge of the Calcutta High Court. His appointment to the apex court reflects his consistent dedication to justice and his contributions to significant legal judgments. As a Supreme Court judge, he is expected to play a crucial role in shaping landmark decisions and upholding the Constitution. This appointment further strengthens the judiciary with his expertise and commitment to the rule of law.

Foot notes:

- **Background and Experience:** Justice Bagchi was born in Calcutta on October 2, 1966, and enrolled as an advocate in November 1991. He has over a decade of judicial experience, starting his career at the Calcutta High Court in 2011.
- **Appointment and Recommendation:** The Central Government approved his appointment, following a recommendation by the Supreme Court Collegium on March 6, 2025.

- **Future Role:** Justice Bagchi is in line to become the Chief Justice of India in May 2031, succeeding Justice K V Viswanathan, although his tenure will be relatively brief, ending on October 2, 2031.
- **Calcutta High Court Connection:** Justice Bagchi's appointment strengthens Calcutta's representation in the top court, joining Justice Dipankar Datta.
- **Supreme Court Bench Strength:** His appointment helps bring the Supreme Court bench to its sanctioned strength of 34 judges, after functioning with 32 judges.

Saina Nehwal Joins Naarica as Strategic Investor & Brand Ambassador

Indian badminton star Saina Nehwal has joined Naarica as a Strategic Investor and Brand Ambassador. Naarica, a women-centric fitness and wellness brand, aims to empower women through holistic health solutions. With Saina's association, the brand seeks to inspire women to prioritize fitness and well-being. As a strategic investor, Saina will also play a role in guiding the brand's vision and growth strategy. This collaboration reflects her commitment to promoting a healthy and active lifestyle among women across the country.

Foot notes:

- **Empowerment through Menstrual Hygiene:** Saina Nehwal emphasizes that menstrual hygiene is a critical yet often overlooked issue in India, and this collaboration is a step toward empowerment and change.
- **Sustainable Menstrual Care Solutions:** Naarica offers eco-friendly, reusable, and scientifically designed menstrual products, including period underwear developed in France.
- **Expanding Access:** The partnership aims to bridge the gap in access to proper sanitary products for nearly 50% of menstruating women in India.
- **Market Growth:** The Indian menstrual hygiene market is projected to grow at a 16% CAGR, reaching \$522 million by 2025.
- **Naarica's Mission:** The brand aims to redefine intimate wear and provide sustainable menstrual care solutions for women across India.

Vikas Purohit takes charge as CEO of The Times of India

Vikas Purohit has joined The Times of India as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). With his vast experience in leadership and business management, he is expected to play a pivotal role in steering the organization toward new growth opportunities. His appointment comes at a crucial time as the media landscape continues to evolve rapidly. Purohit's strategic vision and industry insights are anticipated to strengthen the company's position in the competitive market. The Times of India is optimistic that his leadership will drive innovation and success in the years to come.

Foot notes:

- **New Appointment:** Vikas Purohit has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of The Times of India.

- **Leadership Role:** As CEO, Purohit will lead the organization's strategic growth initiatives and oversee its operations.
- **Media Expertise:** Vikas Purohit brings extensive experience in the media industry, having worked with prominent organizations in the past.
- **Growth Plans:** Under Purohit's leadership, The Times of India aims to expand its reach, enhance its digital presence, and drive innovation.
- **Industry Impact:** Purohit's appointment is expected to have a positive impact on the Indian media landscape, given his expertise and vision for growth.



NeoNiche appoints Sandeep Mishra as Chief Creative Officer

NeoNiche has appointed Sandeep Mishra as the Chief Creative Officer (CCO). With his extensive experience in creative strategy and brand communication, Mishra is set to lead the company's creative vision and innovation. His appointment is expected to strengthen NeoNiche's creative capabilities and drive impactful brand experiences. Known for his creative acumen and leadership skills, he brings a fresh perspective to the team. The company is optimistic that his expertise will enhance their strategic approach to creative solutions and client engagement.

Foot notes:

- **Experience and Expertise:** Sandeep Mishra brings 25 years of diverse experience in the events and advertising sectors, with a passion for pushing creative boundaries and delivering exceptional results.
- **Previous Roles:** Before joining NeoNiche, Mishra held leadership roles at Join Ventures, Toast Events, and Laqshya Media Group, where he served as National Creative Director.
- **Impact on NeoNiche:** As Chief Creative Officer, Mishra aims to enhance NeoNiche's creative direction and redefine the future of brand storytelling.
- **Company's Expectations:** Prateek N. Kumar, Founder & CEO of NeoNiche, expressed excitement about Mishra's appointment, citing his ability to transform bold ideas into impactful realities.
- **NeoNiche's Goals:** With Mishra on board, NeoNiche seeks to elevate brand experiences and explore innovative pathways to achieve extraordinary heights.

Arun Kumar Sahu accredited as the Ambassador of India to the Republic of North Macedonia

Arun Kumar Sahu has been accredited as the Ambassador of India to the Republic of North Macedonia. A seasoned diplomat with extensive experience in foreign affairs, Sahu is expected to strengthen bilateral relations and enhance cooperation between the two countries. His appointment reflects India's commitment to fostering diplomatic ties and collaboration with North Macedonia. Sahu's expertise and leadership are anticipated to play a pivotal role in promoting mutual interests and partnerships. The Ministry of External Affairs congratulated him on his new role and expressed confidence in his abilities to represent India effectively.

Foot notes:

- **Concurrent Accreditation:** Sahu will continue to be based in Sofia, Bulgaria, and will take up his new assignment shortly.
- **India-North Macedonia Ties:** India and North Macedonia share historical ties, democratic values, and cultural connections, including a shared admiration for Mother Teresa, who was born in Skaxo.
- **Diplomatic Relations:** India established diplomatic relations with North Macedonia in 1996 and has since maintained a strong partnership, with growing cooperation in areas like tourism, education, and culture.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Yoga has gained popularity in North Macedonia, with International Yoga Day being celebrated annually, fostering deeper cultural connections between the two nations.
- **Indian Community:** Although the Indian community in North Macedonia is small, consisting of around 50 individuals, including IT professionals and executives, cultural ties remain strong.

Ather Energy appoints Saurabh Sharma as Head of Marketing

Ather Energy has appointed Saurabh Sharma as the new Head of Marketing. With his extensive experience in brand strategy and marketing, Sharma is expected to drive the company's growth and strengthen its market presence. His leadership will play a key role in enhancing brand visibility and customer engagement. Ather Energy aims to leverage his expertise to accelerate its journey as a leading electric vehicle manufacturer. This appointment reflects the company's commitment to innovation and expansion in the EV sector.

Foot notes:

- **Experience:** He brings over 15 years of experience in brand building and strategic marketing across industries, having worked with Nerolac Paints and Mahindra SUVs prior to joining Ather.
- **Responsibilities:** As Head of Marketing, Saurabh will lead Ather's marketing strategy, focusing on brand positioning, customer engagement, and long-term growth.

- **Achievements:** Saurabh has been instrumental in scaling operations, expanding Ather's market presence, and driving business strategy in his previous roles.
- **Leadership Expectations:** His leadership is expected to drive innovative marketing strategies and strengthen Ather Energy's position in the EV industry.

Salman Khan becomes brand ambassador for Indian Supercross Racing League

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan has been appointed as the brand ambassador for the Indian Supercross Racing League. His association with the league is expected to boost its popularity and attract a wider audience to the thrilling sport of supercross racing. As a passionate supporter of sports and fitness, Salman Khan's involvement aligns well with the league's dynamic and adventurous spirit. His presence is likely to enhance the league's brand value and inspire young enthusiasts to participate. This collaboration marks a significant step in promoting supercross racing in India.

Foot notes:

- **Ambassador Role:** Salman Khan has been appointed as the brand ambassador for the Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL), aiming to elevate the sport's popularity in India.
- **Motorsport Passion:** Khan's passion for motorcycles and motorsports makes him an ideal fit for this role, and he's excited to be part of something he's truly passionate about.
- **League's Vision:** The ISRL aims to revolutionize motorsports in India with a long-term vision, and Khan's association is expected to boost the league's reach and make Supercross a household name.
- **Family Entertainment Experience:** ISRL Season 2 promises to be a complete family entertainment experience, with Khan at the forefront, making the sport more accessible and engaging for fans of all ages.
- **Game-Changer for Motorsports:** Khan's endorsement represents a game-changer for motorsports in India, taking the league into a new age of mainstream sports entertainment.
- **Global Recognition:** The ISRL has firmly placed India on the global motorsports map, and Khan's presence is expected to elevate Indian riders to the global stage.

Arun Mammen Elected as Chairman of ATMA

Arun Mammen has been elected as the Chairman of the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA). As a prominent industry leader, he brings valuable experience to the role. His leadership is expected to drive innovation and growth in the Indian tyre industry. ATMA aims to strengthen its initiatives under his guidance, focusing on sustainability and technological advancements. Mammen's appointment reflects the industry's commitment to progress and global competitiveness.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Role:** Mammen, Vice Chairman & Managing Director of MRF Ltd, will lead ATMA, which is celebrating its Golden Jubilee Year in 2025.

- **New Vice-Chairman:** Hiroshi Yoshizane, Managing Director of Bridgestone India, has been appointed as the new Vice-Chairman of ATMA.
- **Industry Expertise:** Mammen brings extensive experience in the automotive tyre industry, having held various leadership positions at MRF Ltd.
- **Focus Areas:** As Chairman, Mammen will focus on policy enablers to make the industry more competitive and technologically superior, as well as reducing carbon footprint in manufacturing and supply chain.
- **Future Plans:** Mammen aims to upgrade the quality and training of stakeholders in the industry over the next five years.

Axar Patel Appointed as Delhi Capitals Captain for IPL 2025

Axar Patel has been appointed as the captain of Delhi Capitals for the IPL 2025 season. The all-rounder replaces the previous skipper and is expected to bring his experience and leadership skills to the team. Patel has been a key player for Delhi Capitals, contributing with both bat and ball in crucial matches. Under his captaincy, the team aims to strengthen its performance and compete for the championship. His appointment reflects the franchise's confidence in his abilities to lead from the front.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Role:** Patel, a 31-year-old all-rounder, takes over the leadership role after serving as vice-captain for two seasons.
- **Experience and Performance:** He has been with the franchise since 2019, playing 82 matches, scoring 967 runs, and picking up 62 wickets with an economy rate of 7.09.
- **Captaincy Experience:** Patel has captained Gujarat in 23 matches across formats and led the Capitals in one IPL match previously. He was also named India's T20I vice-captain earlier this year.
- **Team Dynamics:** The Capitals have assembled a balanced squad, including experienced players like KL Rahul, Faf du Plessis, and Mitchell Starc, who will support Patel in his new role.
- **Season Ahead:** Delhi Capitals will begin their IPL 2025 campaign on March 24, 2025, in Visakhapatnam against Lucknow Super Giants.

Havells India onboards Nayanthara and Vignesh Shivan as brand ambassadors

Havells India has onboarded actress Nayanthara and filmmaker Vignesh Shivan as its brand ambassadors. The power couple will represent the brand across various campaigns, enhancing its connection with consumers. Their association aligns with Havells' vision of innovation, quality, and trust in household electrical products. With their strong influence, the company aims to strengthen its presence in key markets. This collaboration reflects Havells' commitment to engaging with a diverse and dynamic audience.

Foot notes:

- **Regional Focus:** The couple will promote Havells' diverse product lineup, including premium fans, home appliances, lighting solutions, and more, specifically targeting the South Indian market.
- **Brand Representation:** Nayanthara and Vignesh Shivan's association with Havells aims to strengthen the brand's presence in the South and tap into new avenues of growth.
- **Marketing Campaign:** A new communication campaign featuring the couple will be launched soon, with extensive support across TV, print, digital, outdoor, and BTL platforms.
- **Brand Ethos:** Havells believes the couple's credibility and appeal align with the brand's values, making them ideal representatives for the company.
- **First Joint Endorsement:** This is the first time Nayanthara and Vignesh Shivan will be endorsing a brand together, making it a unique and exciting partnership.

IMPORTANT DAY NEWS

International Women's Day is observed on 8th March

International Women's Day is observed on March 8th every year, celebrating the achievements, contributions, and progress of women across the globe. The day also serves as a reminder of the ongoing efforts needed to address gender inequality and empower women in all spheres of life. It is marked by various events, discussions, and campaigns advocating for women's rights, equality, and opportunities. Each year, International Women's Day is associated with a specific theme to focus attention on pressing issues related to women's rights and gender justice. It is celebrated worldwide, with individuals, organizations, and governments coming together to honor women's achievements and promote gender equity.

Foot notes:

- **Celebrating Women's Achievements:** IWD is a global day to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.
- **Accelerating Gender Parity:** The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity, with the 2025 campaign focus being "Accelerate Action".
- **History and Significance:** IWD has its roots in the early 20th-century women's rights movement, with the first National Woman's Day observed in the United States on February 28, 1909.
- **Global Observance:** IWD is observed in many countries, with the United Nations designating March 8 as a day to celebrate women's rights and achievements.
- **Empowering Women:** The day is an opportunity to recognize the progress made towards gender equality and to empower women to demand their rights and challenge discriminatory norms.

CISF Raising Day observed on 12th March

CISF Raising Day is observed annually on 12th March to commemorate the establishment of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in India. The day honors the dedication and service of CISF personnel in safeguarding critical infrastructure and ensuring public safety. Established in 1969, CISF plays a crucial role in providing security to vital installations, including airports, seaports, and industrial units. The celebration includes ceremonial parades, awards, and recognition of outstanding contributions by CISF officers and staff. It serves as a reminder of the force's unwavering commitment to the nation's security.

Foot notes:

- **Founding:** The CISF was raised on March 12, 1969, under an Act of Parliament, with the primary objective of providing integrated security cover to the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- **Mandate:** The CISF is responsible for providing security to various critical infrastructure installations, including airports, seaports, nuclear power plants, space installations, and sensitive government buildings.
- **Evolution:** Over the years, the CISF has evolved into a premier multi-skilled security agency, with a strength of over 1.4 lakh personnel, and has expanded its services to include disaster management, crowd control, and law and order duties.
- **Awards and Recognition:** The CISF has received numerous awards and recognition for its exceptional service, including the President's Colour, which is the highest honor bestowed upon a security force in India.
- **Celebrations:** On its Raising Day, the CISF organizes various events, including parades, ceremonies, and social events, to commemorate its founding and pay tribute to its personnel who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

World Consumer Rights Day observed on 15th March

World Consumer Rights Day is observed annually on 15th March to raise awareness about consumer rights and protection. The day highlights the importance of fair trade, ethical business practices, and consumer empowerment. Various organizations and governments conduct campaigns, discussions, and initiatives to promote consumer awareness. It also serves as a reminder of the need for strong consumer protection laws and policies. The global observance reinforces the significance of safeguarding consumer interests in an evolving marketplace.

Foot notes:

- **Theme:** Each year, WCRD is celebrated with a specific theme; the theme for 2025 focuses on "Empowering Consumers Through Better Digital Access".
- **History:** The first WCRD was observed in 1983, inspired by President John F. Kennedy's address to the US Congress on March 15, 1962, in which he outlined the basic rights of consumers.
- **Objectives:** The day aims to promote consumer rights, raise awareness about consumer protection, and mobilize consumer movements worldwide.

- **Celebrations:** WCRD is celebrated through various events, campaigns, and activities, such as rallies, seminars, and workshops, organized by consumer organizations, governments, and other stakeholders.
- **Global Significance:** WCRD is an opportunity to recognize the importance of consumer rights and protection, and to promote a fair and just marketplace for all consumers worldwide.

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OBITUARY NEWS

Classical singer Garimella Balakrishna Prasad passed away

Renowned classical singer and composer Garimella Balakrishna Prasad has passed away, leaving behind a rich legacy in Carnatic music. Known for his soulful renditions of Annamacharya kritis, he dedicated his life to preserving and popularizing the devotional compositions of Sri Tallapaka Annamacharya. His melodious voice and profound understanding of classical music earned him immense respect and recognition in the music community. Throughout his career, he composed and sang numerous devotional songs that touched the hearts of countless listeners. His passing marks the end of an era, and he will be remembered as one of the stalwarts of Carnatic music.

Foot notes:

- **Contributions to Music:** Garimella Balakrishna Prasad was a prolific composer and singer who set tunes for over 1,000 compositions of saint-poet Annamacharya.
- **Asthana Vidwan of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams:** He served as the Asthana Vidwan (court musician) of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) from 1978 to 2006.
- **Musical Style:** Prasad was known for his expertise in Carnatic, folk, and classical music, and his ability to blend these styles to create unique compositions.
- **Awards and Recognition:** He received numerous awards and accolades for his contributions to music, including recognition from the Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- **Legacy:** Garimella Balakrishna Prasad's music and legacy continue to inspire and influence generations of musicians and music lovers, and his contributions to the preservation and promotion of Annamacharya's compositions are immeasurable.

Former Minister and Senior BJD Leader Ananta Das passed away

Former Minister and senior BJD leader Ananta Das has passed away, leaving behind a legacy of dedicated public service. Known for his significant contributions to the development of Odisha, Das was a respected figure in the state's political landscape. As a senior leader of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), he played a pivotal role in various social and infrastructural initiatives. His passing is a great loss to the political community and his supporters. Leaders and citizens alike are mourning his demise and remembering his valuable contributions to the state.

Foot notes:

- **Administrative Career:** Before entering politics, Das had an illustrious career in the Odisha Administrative Service (OAS), serving in various capacities, including Executive Officer of Balasore Municipality and Additional District Magistrate of Bhadrak.
- **Political Career:** Das joined the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and was elected four times (2004, 2009, 2014, 2019) as the MLA from the Bhogarai constituency in Balasore district. He served as the Minister for Higher Education and Industries from 2017 to 2019.
- **Legacy:** Ananta Das is remembered as a dedicated leader, administrator, and public servant who contributed significantly to Odisha's development, particularly in the areas of education, infrastructure, and industrial growth.
- **Tributes:** Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi, BJD leader Naveen Patnaik, and other leaders paid tribute to his contributions in governance and politics.

Former Indian cricket, allrounder Syed Abid Ali, a key player during the 1960s and 70s, passed away

Former Indian cricketer Syed Abid Ali, a prominent all-rounder during the 1960s and 70s, has passed away. Known for his exceptional contributions with both bat and ball, he played a crucial role in several memorable matches for India. Abid Ali's dynamic performances made him a vital part of the team during his cricketing career. His passing marks the end of an era and leaves a void in the cricketing community. Fans and fellow cricketers mourn the loss of this talented sportsman.

Foot notes:

- **Career Span:** Abid Ali played for India from 1967 to 1975, featuring in 29 Test matches and 5 One Day Internationals (ODIs).
- **All-Rounder:** He was a versatile player who contributed to the team as a lower-order batsman, medium-pace bowler, and exceptional fielder.
- **Test Debut:** Abid Ali made his Test debut against Australia in Brisbane in 1967-68, taking 6 wickets for 55 runs.
- **Notable Performances:** He scored 78 and 81 runs in the same series against Australia and later top-scored with 70 runs against New Zealand in the 1975 World Cup.
- **Coaching Career:** After retiring from cricket, Abid Ali went on to coach the junior team of Hyderabad and later coached the Maldives and the UAE.
- **Legacy:** Abid Ali's contributions to Indian cricket have been remembered fondly, with former cricketer Sunil Gavaskar praising his skills and sportsmanship.

RSS Pracharak Dr. Shankar Rao Tatwawadi passed away

RSS Pracharak Dr. Shankar Rao Tatwawadi has passed away, marking the loss of a dedicated figure in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). He played a significant role in the organization's ideological and social initiatives. Throughout his life, he was actively involved in various nationalist and service-oriented activities. His contributions to social work and nation-building efforts were widely respected. His passing is a great loss to the RSS and its followers.

Foot notes:

- **Dedicated Life:** Dr. Tatwawadi dedicated his entire life to the RSS, contributing significantly to nation-building and India's cultural regeneration.
- **Global Outreach:** As the International Coordinator of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, he expanded the organization's global footprint, promoting its heritage and values worldwide.
- **Academic Pursuits:** Dr. Tatwawadi was a renowned scholar, holding a Ph.D. from Banaras Hindu University. He taught pharmacy at BHU and was a distinguished academician.
- **Tributes:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have paid tributes to Dr. Tatwawadi, acknowledging his immense contributions to the nation and the RSS.
- **Legacy:** Dr. Tatwawadi's legacy will be remembered for his selfless dedication to the RSS, his academic pursuits, and his efforts to promote India's cultural heritage globally.



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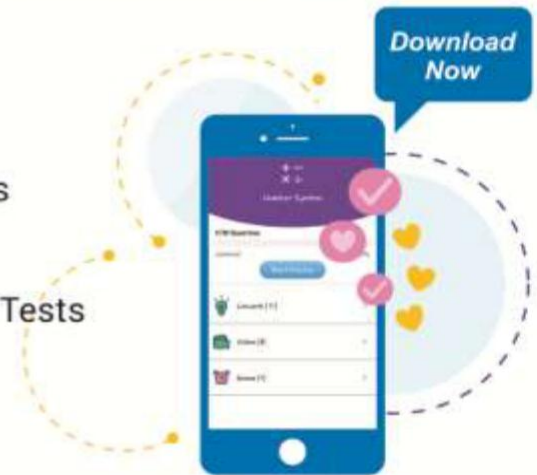
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