



Current Affairs

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Rajesh Unni Honored With National Maritime Varuna Award



1. Rajesh Unni Honored With National Maritime Varuna Award

Captain Rajesh Unni, Founder and Executive Chairman of Synergy Marine Group, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Informa Marine Fuels 360 Awards in Singapore on November 30, 2023. This accolade recognizes his significant contributions to maritime technology and his efforts in championing decarbonization within the shipping industry. Under his leadership, Synergy Marine Group has expanded its fleet to over 640 vessels and employs more than 25,000 seafarers. The company was also named Ship Manager of the Year at the same event, praised for its technical performance, sustainability initiatives, and readiness to manage net-zero ships. Captain Unni expressed deep gratitude upon receiving the award, highlighting Singapore's role as a central hub in Synergy's achievements.



Foot notes:

- **Rajesh Unni's Contribution:** Unni's efforts have significantly advanced the Indian maritime sector, focusing on innovation and sustainability through his company, Synergy Marine Group.
- **Synergy Marine Group:** The company is a leading third-party ship manager for Indian-flagged vessels, providing comprehensive maritime solutions and managing a fleet of vessels.
- **Award Significance:** The award acknowledges professionals who have contributed to the growth and development of the maritime industry, highlighting their capacity to lead the future of shipping.

- **Event Details:** The award was presented on April 5, 2025, during the 62nd National Maritime Day celebrations in Mumbai.
- **Industry Impact:** This recognition comes as India pushes to modernize its maritime infrastructure, with plans to complete 150 critical infrastructure projects and invest in digital innovation and sustainability initiatives.

2. Juspay Becomes India's First Unicorn of 2025

Juspay, a Bengaluru-based fintech company, has become India's first unicorn of 2025 after raising \$110 million in its latest funding round. The round was led by Falcon Edge Capital along with participation from existing investors like Accel and SoftBank. With this investment, Juspay's valuation has soared past the \$1 billion mark, cementing its status in the elite unicorn club. The company specializes in payment processing solutions and is known for powering digital payments for major platforms like Amazon, Swiggy, and Flipkart. Juspay plans to use the new capital to expand its product portfolio, invest in AI-based fraud prevention, and explore international markets. CEO Vimal Kumar expressed confidence in India's growing digital economy and reiterated Juspay's mission to make online payments safer and faster.



Foot notes:

- **Funding Details:** Juspay secured \$60 million in a Series D funding round led by Kedaara Capital, with participation from existing backers SoftBank and Accel.
- **Valuation:** The funding round pushed Juspay's valuation past the \$1 billion mark, making it a unicorn.
- **Company Background:** Founded in 2012 by Vimal Kumar and Sheetal Lalwani, Juspay specializes in payment orchestration software, simplifying checkout experiences for users across e-commerce, fintech, and UPI platforms.
- **Innovations:** Juspay developed the BHIM app in partnership with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and created innovative OTP read software, transforming mobile checkout experiences.
- **Growth and Expansion:** Juspay plans to enhance its technology stack through AI and expand into international markets, including Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Europe, UK, and North America.

3. Gabon Elects New President Junta Chief Brice Oligui Nguema

In August 2023, Gabon's military, led by General Brice Oligui Nguema, seized power in a coup, deposing President Ali Bongo Ondimba, whose family had ruled for over five decades. The coup leaders annulled the recent election results, citing a serious

institutional crisis, and subsequently appointed General Nguema as the transitional president. He was officially sworn in on September 4, 2023, pledging to preserve democratic gains and fundamental freedoms. In March 2025, Nguema announced his candidacy for the upcoming presidential election scheduled for April 12, 2025. His leadership has been marked by significant political changes, including the adoption of a new constitution aimed at preventing dynastic rule and limiting presidential terms. These developments have reshaped Gabon's political landscape, reflecting a shift towards more democratic governance.



Foot notes:

- **Nguema's Background:** A 50-year-old career soldier, Nguema served as aide-de-camp to Omar Bongo and head of the presidential guard, before leading the coup that ended the Bongo dynasty's 56-year rule.
- **Campaign Strategy:** Nguema has adopted a populist approach, using social media and viral dance trends to garner public support, with the campaign slogan "C'BON" – a play on the French phrase "C'est bon" and his initials.
- **Main Challenger:** Alain-Claude Bilie By Nze, the last Prime Minister under Ali Bongo, is Nguema's main rival, positioning himself as a "clean break" candidate despite his links to the previous administration.
- **Election Challenges:** Gabon faces significant issues, including poverty, with 1 in 3 citizens living below the poverty line, poor infrastructure, and a heavy debt burden, projected to reach 80% of GDP in 2025.
- **Transparency and Stability:** The Interior Ministry has assured a transparent and inclusive process, with results expected by April 16, and analysts hope for democratic stability and a peaceful transition.

4. Suruchi Shines with Gold in Women's Air Pistol at ISSF World Cup

Indian shooter Suruchi Phogat clinched her first ISSF World Cup gold medal in the women's 10m Air Pistol event in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The 18-year-old displayed remarkable composure, scoring 244.6 points in the final to surpass China's Qian Wei, who secured silver with 241.9 points, and double Olympic medallist Jiang Ranxin, who took bronze with 221.0 points. Suruchi's journey to gold was marked by a steady ascent; after initially trailing, she surged ahead during the elimination rounds with impressive shots of 10.7 and 10.8, ultimately maintaining her lead to the end. This victory adds to



India's growing tally at the World Cup and highlights Suruchi's emergence as a formidable talent in international shooting. Her achievement is particularly noteworthy given her recent transition from wrestling to shooting, a decision influenced by an injury that redirected her athletic pursuits. Suruchi's gold medal performance underscores her potential and sets a promising trajectory for her future in the sport.

Foot notes:

- **Suruchi's Victory:** 18-year-old Suruchi Inder Singh clinched the gold medal, overcoming a strong field of Chinese shooters, including Qian Wei and Jiang Ranxin.
- **Qualification Round:** Suruchi topped the qualification round with a score of 583, ahead of China's Qian Wei (582-23x) and Jiang Ranxin (582-17x).
- **Final Round Performance:** In the final, Suruchi trailed behind Qian Wei until the ninth shot but bounced back with impressive scores of 10.7 and 10.8 to take the lead.
- **Medal Standings:** Suruchi finished with a total score of 244.6, followed by Qian Wei with 241.9, and Jiang Ranxin securing the bronze medal with 221.0.
- **India's Medal Tally:** This win contributed to India's strong performance in the tournament, with the country now having 4 gold, 1 silver, and 1 bronze medal.
- **Suruchi's Background:** The Haryana teenager has been making waves in the shooting world, having won seven gold medals at the National Championships in New Delhi last year.

5. Neelam Dhungana Appointed Acting Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank

Dr. Neelam Dhungana Timsina has been appointed as the Acting Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) following the completion of Maha Prasad Adhikari's five-year term on April 6, 2025. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Timsina served as the Senior Deputy Governor of NRB, a position she has held since March 9, 2021. Her appointment comes as the government continues its search for a permanent governor, with a recommendation committee formed under Finance Minister Bishnu Prasad Poudel to propose candidates for the role. Dr. Timsina's extensive experience in the banking sector positions her well to lead NRB during this interim period. She is the first woman to hold the position of Acting Governor in Nepal's central bank. The government aims to finalize the appointment of a new governor promptly to ensure continued stability and effective leadership within the institution.



Foot notes:

- **NRB Act:** The appointment was made under Section 27 of the Nepal Rastra Bank Act, 2058, which allows the government to designate an acting governor when the post becomes vacant or the sitting governor is unable to fulfill their duties.
- **Previous Governor's Term:** Dhungana's appointment follows the completion of the five-year term of previous Governor Maha Prasad Adhikari.
- **Key Responsibilities:** As Acting Governor, Dhungana will oversee Nepal's monetary policy and ensure financial stability until a permanent appointment is made.
- **Experience:** Dhungana is one of the most experienced officials at the central bank, making her a suitable candidate for the role.
- **Government Decision:** The Ministry of Finance, led by Paudel, assigned Dhungana to take on this role amid the ongoing process of selecting a new governor for the NRB.

6. Antara Cruises appoints Vineet Arora as Chief Operating Officer

Antara Cruises has appointed Vineet Arora as its new Chief Operating Officer (COO). With over 22 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Arora previously served as Vice President at Antara Cruises, where he played a key role in developing the world's longest river cruise project and enhancing the brand's presence in the luxury river cruise market. Prior to rejoining Antara



Cruises, he was instrumental in building a hospitality company that operates 25 resorts, showcasing his leadership and strategic capabilities. Arora's expertise spans operations, sales, marketing, and business development across both established brands and startups. In his new role, he aims to enhance guest experiences, promote sustainability, and contribute positively to the local community.

Foot notes:

- **Background:** Arora has over 22 years of experience in the hospitality industry, with expertise spanning operations, sales, marketing, and business development across established brands and emerging startups.
- **Previous Role:** Arora previously served as Vice President at Antara Cruises, where he led the development of the world's longest river cruise project and contributed to the brand's growth and positioning in the luxury river cruise segment.

- **Leadership:** Arora has demonstrated remarkable leadership and strategic foresight, successfully building a hospitality company that operates 25 resorts from the ground up.
- **Mission:** As COO, Arora aims to enhance guest experiences, promote sustainability, and make a meaningful impact on the local community and the company.
- **Company Overview:** Antara Cruises is committed to sustainable and community-enhancing river cruise tourism, offering unique experiences along India's majestic rivers while preserving local cultures and environments.

7. Dr. Mohan Rajan Elected Vice-President of All India Ophthalmological Society (AIOS)

Dr. Mohan Rajan, Chairman and Medical Director of Rajan Eye Care Hospital, has been elected as the Vice-President of the All India Ophthalmological Society (AIOS), representing over 29,000 ophthalmologists. He will assume the presidency of AIOS in 2027, becoming the fifth individual from Tamil Nadu to hold this position in the society's 84-year history. Dr. Rajan has previously served as Vice President of the Indian Intraocular Implant & Refractive Society (IIRS) and as Secretary of the Madras Medical College Alumni Association. His election was formally announced during the AIOS general body meeting held at the Asia Pacific Academy Congress in New Delhi on April 10, 2025. Dr. Rajan has expressed his commitment to fostering academic growth and collaborative progress within AIOS. His extensive experience and dedication to the field are expected to contribute significantly to the advancement of ophthalmology in India.



Foot notes:

- **Current Position:** He is currently the Chairman and Medical Director of Rajan Eye Care Hospital in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, showcasing his expertise and leadership in the field of ophthalmology.
- **AIOS Background:** The All India Ophthalmological Society was established in 1930 and has grown to become one of the largest professional medical bodies in India, with over 26,791 life members.
- **Election Announcement:** Dr. Rajan's election was formally announced on April 5, 2025, during the AIOS general body meeting at the Asia Pacific Academy Congress in New Delhi.

- **Historical Significance:** He is the fifth ophthalmologist from Tamil Nadu to hold this position in AIOS's 84-year history, highlighting his achievements and contributions to the field.
- **Future Leadership:** Dr. Rajan is expected to take over as President of AIOS in 2027, marking a significant leadership milestone and underscoring his commitment to the organization and the field of ophthalmology.

8. Swaraj Tractors continues partnership with MS Dhoni as brand ambassador

Swaraj Tractors, a subsidiary of the Mahindra Group, has announced the continuation of its partnership with former Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni as its brand ambassador. This renewed collaboration underscores Swaraj's commitment to delivering innovative and reliable mechanization solutions to Indian farmers. Since the partnership began in June 2023, Dhoni's association has strengthened the brand's connection with the farming community, leveraging his personal experience and passion for agriculture. Gaganjot Singh, CEO of Swaraj Division at Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., expressed delight in continuing the partnership, emphasizing that Dhoni's values align with Swaraj's mission of driving agricultural innovation. Dhoni shared his enthusiasm, noting that farming is a way of life for him and that Swaraj has been a trusted partner in his agricultural journey.



Foot notes:

- **Dhoni's Role:** As a brand ambassador, Dhoni will continue to promote Swaraj Tractors' products, leveraging his influence to encourage farmers, especially the younger generation, to adopt modern farming practices and technologies.
- **Farming Background:** Dhoni's personal experience as a farmer and his connection to agriculture make him a suitable fit for the brand, allowing for authentic storytelling and promotion of Swaraj's products.
- **Campaigns and Promotions:** The partnership will feature Dhoni in upcoming campaigns showcasing Swaraj's latest tractors, smart features, and benefits for farmers, further strengthening the brand's connection with its audience.
- **Brand Values:** Swaraj Tractors' CEO, Gaganjot Singh, emphasized that Dhoni's values align with the brand's mission to empower farmers and promote agricultural innovation, reinforcing their commitment to the farming community.
- **Dhoni's Endorsement:** MS Dhoni expressed his pride in continuing to work with Swaraj Tractors, highlighting the brand's trusted position in his agricultural journey and its impact on Indian farming.

9. World Homeopathy Day observed on April 10th

World Homeopathy Day is observed every year on April 10th to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy. The day aims to raise awareness about the benefits of homeopathic medicine and its role in holistic healthcare. In 2025, the theme focused on integrating homeopathy with modern medical practices to enhance public health outcomes. Various seminars, awareness drives, and medical camps were organized across India and globally to promote scientific research and education in the field. The Ministry of AYUSH in India also marked the occasion by highlighting successful homeopathy case studies and launching new initiatives. World Homeopathy Day serves as a reminder of the growing acceptance of alternative medicine in addressing both chronic and acute health conditions.



Foot notes:

- **Dr. Hahnemann's Legacy:** Born on April 10, 1755, Dr. Hahnemann is considered the visionary founder of homeopathy, which is now practiced globally, with India having the largest number of homeopathic doctors.
- **Global Recognition:** Homeopathy is recognized as a system of medicine in countries like the US, UK, Germany, and France, with a significant following in India, where over 10 crore people rely on it.
- **History:** The first homeopathic hospital opened in Europe in 1832, and the system gained popularity during the cholera epidemic in Europe in the 1830s.
- **Practices:** Homeopathic practitioners recommend avoiding strong-tasting foods and drinks during treatment to ensure effective absorption of medication.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Various events and awareness campaigns are organized globally to educate people about homeopathy's benefits and science, promoting holistic and natural healing.

10. Dadi Ratan Mohini, Brahma Kumaris Leader, passed away

Rajyogini Dadi Ratan Mohini, the esteemed head of the Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwavidyalaya, passed away on April 8, 2025, at the age of 101. Born on March 25, 1925, in Hyderabad, Sindh (now in Pakistan), she dedicated her life to spiritual service, joining the Brahma Kumaris at the age of 13. Her leadership was marked by unwavering commitment to spreading peace, love, and enlightenment. Dadi Ratan Mohini's passing elicited



condolences from prominent figures, including President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who acknowledged her profound impact on countless lives. Her final rites were scheduled for April 10 at the organization's headquarters in Shantivan, Abu Road, Rajasthan. Her legacy continues to inspire spiritual seekers worldwide.


Foot notes:

- **Joining Brahma Kumaris:** At just 13, she joined the Brahma Kumaris, marking the beginning of her lifelong commitment to spiritual service and promoting peace and values globally.
- **Leadership Role:** In 2021, she took on a key administrative role, guiding the organization with her wisdom and experience.
- **Global Impact:** As a respected spiritual leader, Dadi Ratan Mohini traveled extensively, sharing her insights and promoting spiritual consciousness on international platforms like the World Peace Summit.
- **Tributes:** Rajasthan Governor Haribhau Bagde and Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma condoled her passing, acknowledging her significant contributions to the spiritual world.
- **Funeral Arrangements:** Her mortal remains were taken to the Brahma Kumaris' international headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan, for final darshan.

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