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WEEKLY — Current Affairs

NATIONAL NEWS

PM Narendra Modi Conferred Sri Lanka's Highest Civilian Honour

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with the Sri Lanka Mitra Vibhushana, the nation's highest honor for foreign leaders. This prestigious award recognizes exceptional and distinguished service by foreign heads of state or government, reflecting the deepening ties between India and Sri Lanka. During his visit, Prime Minister Modi and Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake inaugurated the construction of a 120-megawatt solar power plant and signed key defense and energy agreements. These initiatives aim to bolster India's strategic and economic influence in Sri Lanka, especially amid concerns over China's expanding presence in the region. The agreements mark a significant step in India-Sri Lanka relations, highlighting mutual interests in regional security and economic cooperation.

Foot notes:

- **Award Details:** The Mithra Vibhushana was introduced in 2008 and is awarded to global leaders who have maintained friendly relations with Sri Lanka. Previous recipients include former Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.
- **Recognition:** The award reflects the deep-rooted friendship and cooperation between India and Sri Lanka, recognizing PM Modi's efforts to enhance bilateral relations and promote regional peace and development.
- **Medal Design:** The award features a silver medal adorned with nine types of Sri Lankan gems, including symbols like the lotus, globe, sun, moon, and sheaves of rice, representing the shared cultural heritage of both nations.
- **Ceremony:** The award was conferred by Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake during a ceremony at the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo on April 5, 2025. PM Modi expressed gratitude, stating that the honor is not just a personal recognition but also a testament to the strong ties between the two nations.

First Indian Sand Artist Sudarsan Pattnaik to receive Fred Darrington Sand Master

Award

Renowned Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik has become the first Indian to receive the prestigious Fred Darrington British Sand Master Award at the Sandworld 2025 International Sand Art Festival in Weymouth, UK. To commemorate the occasion, Pattnaik crafted a 10-foot-high sand sculpture of Lord Ganesha bearing the message "World Peace." The award, named in honor of legendary British sand sculptor Fred Darrington, holds special significance this year as it marks his centenary. The Mayor of Weymouth, Jon Orell, presented the award to Pattnaik during the festival's opening ceremony.

Foot notes:

- **Award and Recognition:** Pattnaik was honored at the Sandworld 2025 International Sand Art Festival in Weymouth, UK, for his exceptional contributions to sand artistry.

- **Sculpture:** He created a stunning 10-foot sand sculpture of Lord Ganesha, symbolizing world peace, which impressed the judges and attendees.
- **First Indian Recipient:** Pattnaik is the first Indian artist to receive this award, marking a significant milestone in his career and for Indian sand art globally.
- **International Experience:** With over 65 international sand art events under his belt, Pattnaik has established himself as a leading figure in the field, earning numerous accolades and recognition.
- **Commemoration:** The award coincides with the 100th birth anniversary of legendary sand sculptor Fred Darrington, adding to its significance.
- **Global Celebration:** The ceremony was attended by international dignitaries, including the Mayor of Weymouth and representatives from the Indian High Commission in London, highlighting Pattnaik's impact on cultural heritage worldwide.

India Becomes World's Third Largest Solar and Wind Power Generator, Surpassing Germany

India has become the world's third-largest generator of electricity from solar and wind energy, surpassing Germany. This achievement marks a significant milestone in India's transition to renewable energy and its commitment to sustainable development. According to recent data, wind and solar now contribute to about 10% of the country's total electricity generation. The growth is attributed to strong policy support, large-scale installations, and technological advancements. India now trails only China and the United States in renewable energy output from these sources. This progress reinforces India's global standing in clean energy leadership and its efforts to combat climate change.

Foot notes:

- **Renewable Energy Capacity:** India's non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity reached 217.62 GW, with solar energy accounting for 47% of the installed renewable capacity.
- **Record Additions:** In 2024, India added a record 24.5 GW of solar capacity and 3.4 GW of wind capacity, driven by government incentives and policy reforms.
- **Global Ranking:** India now ranks third globally in wind and solar energy production, with wind and solar accounting for 10% of the country's electricity generation and 15% globally.
- **Renewable Energy Potential:** India's renewable energy potential stands at approximately 21 lakh MW, with wind power accounting for 55% of this potential.
- **Government Initiatives:** The Indian government has implemented policies to boost renewable energy adoption, including tax incentives, subsidies for solar panel manufacturers, and targets for renewable capacity additions.
- **Future Goals:** India aims to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based energy by 2030 and enhance domestic manufacturing of solar and wind technologies to reduce dependence on imports.

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.

India's Exports Reach Record \$820 Billion in 2024-25

India achieved a historic milestone in the fiscal year 2024–25 by surpassing \$820 billion in total exports, marking a nearly 6% increase over the previous year. This growth was driven by merchandise exports totaling \$395.63 billion and service exports reaching \$354.90 billion during April–February 2024–25. The achievement is particularly noteworthy given global challenges such as high U.S. tariffs, the Red Sea crisis, and ongoing geopolitical tensions. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal commended exporters for their resilience and assured continued government support to navigate the evolving trade landscape. This record-setting performance underscores India's strengthening position in global trade and its commitment to expanding its export footprint.

Foot notes:

- **Trade Growth:** India's exports to the Netherlands surged by 48% to \$18.52 billion in 2022-23, indicating a significant growth in trade relations.

- The Indian government, led by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, is actively engaging with export promotion councils and industry bodies to explore new opportunities and address emerging trade scenarios.
- With India's exports reaching new heights, the country's trade landscape is expected to continue evolving. Key areas of focus may include:
- Diversifying Export Markets: Exploring new markets and strengthening existing trade relationships to sustain growth.
- Promoting Export-Oriented Industries: Encouraging industries that drive export growth, such as textiles, pharmaceuticals, and IT services.
- Trade Policy Reforms: Implementing policies that facilitate trade, reduce barriers, and enhance competitiveness.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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.

Japan Builds World's First 3D-Printed Train Station in Record Time

Japan has unveiled the world's first 3D-printed train station at Hatsushima Station in Arida City, Wakayama Prefecture. Developed by West Japan Railway Company (JR West) in collaboration with construction firm Serendix, the compact 10-square-meter structure was assembled in just six hours using prefabricated 3D-printed components. The station's exterior features decorative reliefs of local specialties, including mandarin oranges and beltfish, paying homage to the region's culture. This innovative approach addresses challenges posed by Japan's aging population and labor shortages, offering a sustainable solution for modernizing rural infrastructure. JR West views this project as a potential model for future developments across its network.

Foot notes:

- **Construction:** The components were 3D-printed elsewhere and assembled on-site, showcasing the potential of 3D printing in revolutionizing public infrastructure.
- **Time-Efficiency:** The station was built in just six hours, minimizing disruptions to train schedules.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** The 3D printing method is expected to reduce construction costs by half compared to traditional methods.
- **Addressing Labor Shortages:** This innovative approach can help address Japan's labor shortages in the construction industry, particularly with its aging population.
- **Interior Work:** The station still requires interior work, including the installation of ticketing machines and other equipment.
- **Completion:** The West Japan Railway Company expects to complete the project by July 2025.

DEFENCE NEWS

Bilateral Naval Exercise INDRA-2025 Concluded

The 14th edition of the India-Russia bilateral naval exercise, INDRA-2025, successfully concluded on April 2, 2025, off the coast of Chennai in the Bay of Bengal. This exercise, held from March 28 to April 2, aimed to enhance interoperability and strengthen maritime cooperation between the two navies. The event was divided into two phases: the Harbour Phase in Chennai from March 28 to 30, featuring professional interactions and sports activities, and the Sea Phase from March 31 to April 2, involving advanced naval drills. The Indian Navy participated with INS Rana and INS Kuthar, while the Russian Navy was represented by the destroyers Pechanga, Rezkiiy, and Aldar Tsydenzhapov.

Foot notes:

- **Exercise Overview:** The 14th edition of INDRA was held from March 28 to April 2, 2025, featuring complex naval maneuvers and tactical drills to enhance interoperability and address shared security challenges.
- **Objectives Achieved:** The exercise aimed to strengthen maritime cooperation, promote global peace and stability, and enhance the ability of both navies to jointly counter maritime security challenges.
- **Phases of the Exercise:** INDRA 2025 was conducted in two phases Harbour Phase, Sea Phase.
- **Enhanced Interoperability:** The exercise facilitated the exchange of best practices, fostering a deeper understanding of each other's operational doctrines and enhancing the ability to operate seamlessly in complex maritime environments.
- **Strategic Partnership:** INDRA-2025 reinforces the strategic partnership between India and Russia in maritime defense, symbolizing their commitment to collaborative maritime security and mutual cooperation.

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STATE NEWS

Arun Palli appointed as Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh HC

The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the appointment of Justice Arun Palli, currently serving on the Punjab and Haryana High Court, as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. This recommendation follows the impending retirement of the current Chief Justice, Tashi Rabstan, on April 9, 2025. He was appointed as the Additional Advocate General of Punjab from September 2004 to March 2007 and was designated a Senior Advocate in April 2007. Elevated to the bench on December 28, 2013, Justice Palli has also served as the Executive Chairman of the Haryana State Legal Services Authority since May 31, 2023.

Foot notes:

- **Recommendation:** The Supreme Court Collegium, in its meeting on April 4, 2025, resolved to recommend Justice Palli's appointment as Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

- **Experience:** Before becoming a judge, Justice Palli was designated as a Senior Advocate on April 26, 2007, and has extensive experience as Amicus Curiae in various contentious matters before the High Court and Supreme Court.
- **NALSA Involvement:** He was nominated as a Member of the Governing Body of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) on October 31, 2023, for a tenure of two years.
- **Transfer Proposal:** The Collegium also proposed the transfer of Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari, Judge of Madhya Pradesh High Court, to the Kerala High Court.
- **Decision Timeline:** The Collegium's decision was made after three meetings held on March 20, 24, and April 3, 2025.

Khultabad to be Renamed 'Ratnapur'

The Maharashtra government has announced plans to rename the historic town of Khultabad back to its original name, Ratnapur. This decision, declared by Social Justice Minister Sanjay Shirsat on April 8, 2025, aims to restore the town's pre-Mughal identity, as it was renamed Khultabad during Emperor Aurangzeb's rule. Khultabad, located approximately 25 km from Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, houses the tombs of Aurangzeb, his son Azam Shah, and Nizam Asaf Jah I. The renaming is part of a broader initiative to reclaim historical names altered during the Mughal era, with plans also underway to construct a memorial honoring Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Sambhaji Maharaj in the town. This move reflects the state's efforts to emphasize indigenous heritage and Maratha legacy.

Foot notes:

- **Name Change:** Khultabad will be renamed Ratnapur, its original name, as part of the state's efforts to reclaim and preserve its cultural identity.
- **Cultural Significance:** The move is seen as a step towards reconnecting with the town's rich history and cultural roots.
- **Government Initiative:** The renaming is part of the Maharashtra government's broader efforts to revive original names of towns and cities across the state.
- **Implementation:** The renaming process is expected to be completed soon, with the new name being officially recognized and used in all government records and documents.
- **Local Reaction:** While some locals may have mixed feelings about the name change, many are expected to welcome the move as a way to reconnect with their cultural heritage.
- **Historical Context:** Khultabad has a rich history dating back to the Mughal era, and the renaming is seen as a way to preserve and promote its cultural legacy.

SPORTS NEWS

Hitesh becomes 1st Indian boxer to reach Boxing World Cup 2025 final

Hitesh Gulia made history by becoming the first Indian boxer to reach the final of the World Boxing Cup 2025. He secured his spot in the 70kg final by defeating France's Makan Traore with a unanimous 5:0 decision. In the final, Hitesh clinched the gold medal after his opponent, England's Odel Kamara, withdrew due to injury. This victory contributed to India's overall tally of six medals at the tournament. Hitesh credited a 10-day preparatory camp in Brazil for enhancing his tactical skills and boosting his performance.

Foot notes:

- **Historic Win:** Hitesh defeated France's Makan Traore 5:0 in the semifinals, showcasing his tactical brilliance and controlled aggression.
- **First Indian Finalist:** He is the first Indian boxer to reach the final of the World Boxing Cup, a testament to India's growing presence in global boxing.
- **Gold Medal Opportunity:** Hitesh will face England's Odel Kamara in the 70kg final, where a win would make him the first Indian to claim a gold medal in the World Boxing Cup.
- **Impressive Campaign:** Hitesh's journey to the final included a 5:0 win over Italy's Gabriele Guidi Rontani in the quarterfinals, demonstrating his skill and dominance in the ring.
- **India's Medal Haul:** Hitesh's achievement is part of India's successful campaign in the World Boxing Cup 2025, where the country won a total of six medals, including one gold, one silver, and four bronze medals.

Indian hockey icon Vandana Katariya announces retirement

Indian women's hockey stalwart Vandana Katariya has announced her retirement from international hockey, concluding an illustrious 15-year career. Debuting in 2009, she amassed 320 international caps and scored 158 goals, making her the most-capped player in Indian women's hockey history. Vandana played a pivotal role in India's historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, where she became the first Indian woman to score a hat-trick at the Games. Her contributions were recognized with prestigious honors, including the Arjuna Award in 2021 and the Padma Shri in 2022. In her retirement announcement, Vandana expressed a desire to step away at the peak of her career, stating, "I want to bow out at my zenith, while I'm still at my very best." Her departure marks the end of a significant chapter in Indian women's hockey.

Foot notes:

- **Record-Breaking Career:** Vandana retires as the most capped player in Indian women's hockey history with 320 international appearances and 158 goals to her name.
- **Olympic Experience:** The forward has represented India in two Olympic Games, showcasing her skills on the global stage.
- **Recent Match:** Her last match for India was in the Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League 2024-25 in February.

- Emotional Farewell: Vandana expressed that her decision to retire wasn't easy, but she knew it was the right time, cherishing the memories of wearing the Indian jersey.
- Legacy: Her retirement marks the end of an era, but her contributions to Indian women's hockey will be remembered for years to come.

Hitesh Gulia bags Gold medal at World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025

Hitesh Gulia made history by becoming the first Indian boxer to clinch a gold medal at the World Boxing Cup 2025 in Brazil. Competing in the men's 70kg category, he secured the top podium position after his opponent, Odel Kamara of England, withdrew from the final due to injury. Prior to this, Gulia showcased his prowess by defeating French Olympian Makan Traore in the semifinals. His journey in boxing began in 2014, initially as a means to lose weight, but he quickly displayed exceptional talent in the sport. After being scouted by the Indian Navy in 2022, Gulia's dedication led him to train rigorously, culminating in this landmark achievement. This victory not only marks a personal milestone for Gulia but also signifies a proud moment for Indian boxing on the international stage.

Foot notes:

- Hitesh's Journey: He won against France's Makan Traore 5:0 in the semifinals, showcasing exceptional tactical awareness and a cautious approach.
- Other Indian Medalists: Abhinash Jamwal secured a silver medal in the men's 65kg category, while Manish Rathore took home a bronze medal in the men's 55kg category.
- Tournament Details: The World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025 took place in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil, with 24 fights happening on April 3, 2025, at the Rafain Palace Hotel.

Former World Champion Rudranksh Balasaheb won gold medal in men's 10m air rifle shooting event

Former world champion Rudranksh Balasaheb Patil clinched the gold medal in the men's 10m air rifle event at the ISSF World Cup 2025 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This marks his second individual gold at an ISSF World Cup, following his victory at the 2023 Cairo edition. In the final, Patil led throughout and secured the top spot by defeating Hungary's Istvan Peni, while Argentina's Marcelo Julian Gutierrez claimed bronze. His compatriot, Arjun Babuta, who topped the qualification round, finished seventh in the final. This achievement contributes to India's joint lead with China in the medal standings, both nations having secured two golds, one silver, and one bronze each. Patil's consistent performance reaffirms his status as a prominent figure in international shooting sports.

Foot notes:

- Consistent Performance: He led the competition from start to finish, only faltering once until securing the gold medal, showcasing his exceptional skills and consistency.
- Indian Dominance: Indian shooters dominated the qualification round, with Arjun Babuta scoring 634.5 and Rudranksh Patil closely following with 633.7 points.

- **Medal Standings:** This win helped India match China in the medal tally, with both countries having two golds, a silver, and a bronze each.
- **Previous Wins:** Rudranksh Patil has previously won gold medals, including at the ISSF World Cup 2023 in Cairo, where he defeated Germany's Maximilian Ullbrich 16-8 in the gold medal match.
- **Rising Star:** With his recent wins, Patil is solidifying his position as a top shooter, bringing attention to India's growing presence in international shooting competitions.

Max Verstappen Triumphs at the Japanese GP for Fourth Consecutive Win

Max Verstappen secured his fourth consecutive victory at the Japanese Grand Prix, leading a Red Bull one-two finish with teammate Sergio Pérez. Starting from pole position, Verstappen maintained his lead throughout the race, finishing over 12 seconds ahead of Pérez. This win marks Verstappen's third triumph in the first four races of the season, reinforcing his dominance in the championship standings. The race was briefly halted on the first lap due to a collision between Daniel Ricciardo and Alex Albon, but upon restart, Verstappen showcased his control and pace. His performance at Suzuka highlights his exceptional skill and Red Bull's competitive edge in the current Formula 1 season. This victory also ties Verstappen with Michael Schumacher for consecutive wins at the Japanese Grand Prix.

Foot notes:

- **Pole Position:** Verstappen started strong, claiming pole position with a record-breaking lap time and holding off McLaren drivers Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri.
- **Flawless Performance:** He delivered a flawless performance, maintaining his lead throughout the race and crossing the finish line 1.4 seconds ahead of Norris.
- **Tribute to Honda:** The win was a perfect farewell tribute to Honda, which has supplied engines to Red Bull since the team's inception. Verstappen praised the partnership, saying it was an emotional victory.
- **Championship Standings:** The win keeps Verstappen firmly in contention for the championship, with only one point separating him from Norris in the Drivers' standings.
- **Red Bull's Strategy:** Red Bull ran a special livery inspired by the classic Honda RA272, marking their final home race together.
- **Impressive Streak:** Verstappen's victory extends his consecutive win streak at Suzuka to four, demonstrating his dominance at the circuit.
- **Next Challenge:** With McLaren drivers Norris and Piastri pushing hard, Verstappen's next challenge will be to maintain his lead and navigate the competitive field in upcoming races.

Virat Kohli became the first Indian to score 13,000 runs in T20 cricket

On April 7, 2025, during an IPL match against Mumbai Indians at Wankhede Stadium, Virat Kohli became the first Indian cricketer to surpass 13,000 runs in T20 cricket. He achieved this

milestone upon reaching 17 runs in his innings, eventually scoring 67 off 42 balls, including eight fours and two sixes. This accomplishment places him among the elite group of players who have crossed the 13,000-run mark in T20s, alongside Chris Gayle, Alex Hales, Shoaib Malik, and Kieron Pollard. Notably, Kohli reached this landmark in 386 innings, making him the second-fastest to do so after Chris Gayle, who achieved it in 381 innings. Throughout his T20 career, Kohli has amassed 13,050 runs, featuring nine centuries and 99 half-centuries. His consistent performance continues to solidify his status as one of the premier batsmen in the shortest format of the game.

Foot notes:

- **Milestone Achievement:** Kohli reached 13,000 T20 runs during the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and Mumbai Indians (MI) at Wankhede Stadium.
- **Fastest to 13,000 T20 Runs:** Chris Gayle holds the record for the fastest 13,000 T20 runs, achieved in 381 matches. Kohli achieved this feat in 386 matches.
- **Elite Group:** Kohli joins an elite group of T20 run-scorers, including Gayle, Alex Hales, Shoaib Malik, and Kieron Pollard.
- **Impressive Form:** Kohli has shown promising form in IPL 2025, accumulating 97 runs at an average of 48.50 and a strike rate of 134.72 in the first three matches.
- **RCB's Performance:** Kohli's innings helped RCB comfortably chase down targets, including a brilliant unbeaten 59 off 36 balls against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR).
- **Consistency:** Kohli has consistently performed well in the IPL, holding the record for the highest runs in IPL history with 7,284 runs.

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.

India's Arya Borse & Rudrankksh Patil clinched silver medal at ISSF World Cup 2025

India's shooters Arya Borse and Rudrankksh Patil clinched the silver medal at the ISSF World Cup 2025. The duo showcased exceptional skill and coordination in the 10m air rifle mixed team event. Their consistent performance helped India secure a podium finish against tough international competition. This medal adds to India's growing success in shooting sports on the global stage. Both athletes are being celebrated for their dedication and composure under pressure.

Foot notes:

- **Event Details:** The Indian duo competed against China's Wang Zifei and Song Buhan in the final, ultimately losing 17-9.
- **Qualification Round:** Borse and Patil combined for a score of 630.5, securing their spot in the gold medal match.
- **Medal Count:** This silver medal takes India's tally to seven medals at the ISSF World Cup 2025, with four gold, two silver, and one bronze.
- **Rudrankksh Patil** also won an individual gold medal in the 10m Air Rifle men's event, marking his second medal at the competition.
- **Arya Borse** secured her maiden World Cup medal on senior debut.
- **Other Indian Competitors:** Arjun Babuta and Narmada Nithin Raju finished fourth in the bronze medal match, losing to Argentina's Fernanda Russo and Marcelo Julian Gutierrez 17-13.

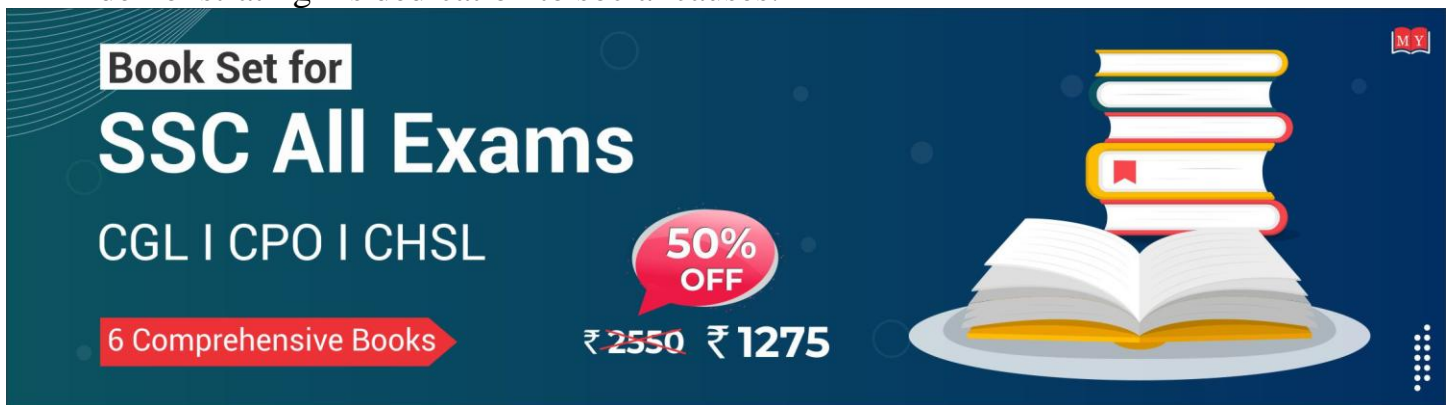
AWARD NEWS

YuvaSpark Founder Akarsh Shroff Conferred with National Youth Award

Akarsh Shroff, founder of the Bengaluru-based NGO YuvaSpark, has been honored with the National Youth Award for his significant contributions to youth development and social service. Established in 2018 during his final year of high school, YuvaSpark focuses on enhancing education and child welfare, impacting over 346,000 individuals across more than ten states in India. The organization has mobilized over 600 volunteers from 35 institutions to improve foundational literacy for underserved children and those with special needs.

Foot notes:

- **Transformative Work:** Akarsh's organization, YuvaSpark, has digitized learning in over 600 anganwadi centers across rural India, benefiting more than 346,000 children in 10 states.
- **Innovative Approach:** YuvaSpark provides custom-curated academic content in vernacular languages, enhancing teacher training and child engagement in these centers.
- **Youth-Led Initiative:** Akarsh started YuvaSpark at 17, and it has grown into a nationwide movement for educational equity and innovation, involving over 700 volunteers from 35 institutions.
- **Recognition and Funding:** Akarsh received the National Youth Award from Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya at Parliament House in New Delhi. His organization has also secured funding from prominent institutions like Amazon, Boston Consulting Group, and Indian Oil, totaling 2.5 crore.
- **Commitment to Social Impact:** Akarsh opted out of campus placements after graduating from BITS Pilani to focus on his mission to improve education quality across India, demonstrating his dedication to social causes.



Professor Willis Earns top Australian Science Award

Emeritus Professor George Willis from the University of Newcastle has been awarded the prestigious Thomas Ranken Lyle Medal by the Australian Academy of Science. Recognized as the creator of 'Willis Theory,' he developed 'the scale,' providing new insights into the structure and classification of totally disconnected locally compact groups. This groundbreaking work has significantly advanced the understanding of symmetry and networks within mathematics. The Thomas Ranken Lyle Medal is awarded every two years for outstanding achievements in mathematics or physics. Professor Willis's contributions have had far-reaching implications across various mathematical disciplines. His recognition highlights the impact of his research on both theoretical and applied mathematics.

Foot notes:

- **Advancements in Mathematics:** His research has progressed understanding of symmetry and networks, contributing significantly to the field of pure mathematics.
- **Recognition:** He was elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science in 2014 and is among 22 scientists recognized by the Academy in 2025 for their outstanding contributions.

- Impact: His work extends beyond theoretical mathematics, with potential applications in growing industries such as computer systems and global social networks.
- Early Research: Professor Willis' early work focused on the theory of totally disconnected locally compact groups.
- International Collaboration: He has collaborated with international researchers, contributing to advancements in mathematics.
- The Thomas Ranken Lyle Medal: This prestigious award recognizes outstanding achievements by scientists in Australia for research in mathematics or physics.
- Legacy: Professor Willis' work is expected to have a lasting impact on the field of mathematics, inspiring future generations of researchers.

Dr. Touseef Ahmed receives JK Garav Samman Award 2025

Dr. Touseef Ahmed has been honored with the JK Garav Samman 2025 Award for his outstanding socio-environmental contributions. The award ceremony took place on April 6, 2025, at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar. This accolade recognizes individuals who have made significant impacts in society, culture, and the environment. Dr. Ahmed's dedication to environmental conservation and social upliftment has been instrumental in fostering sustainable change in Jammu & Kashmir. Expressing his gratitude, Dr. Ahmed stated, "This recognition is not just a personal honor but a testament to the collective efforts of everyone working toward a greener and more just world."

Foot notes:

- Uttarakhand Gaurav Samman: This award is one of the highest civilian honors in Uttarakhand, recognizing extraordinary contributions in various fields. Recipients include notable figures like NSA Ajit Doval and writer Praseen Joshi.
- Bharat Gaurav Samman: This award honors individuals who have made significant contributions to society, promoting social welfare, cultural heritage, and national pride. Recipients include Sree Kumar N, Ranjini Sreekumar, and Mohammad Yousuf.
- Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards: Recognizing bravery and selfless acts.
- Sagar Samman Award: Honoring outstanding contributions in the field of ports, shipping, and waterways.
- National Awards for e-Governance: Acknowledging excellence in digital governance.

Dr. Panthi to receive Janaki Literature Award

Dr. Tanka Panthi, a renowned poet and critic, has been selected to receive the Janaki Literature Award for 2025. The award is presented by Kiran Library, located in Tamghas, Gulmi, Nepal, in recognition of outstanding contributions to literature. Dr. Panthi's extensive body of work has significantly influenced Nepali literary discourse. The Janaki Literature Award is esteemed for acknowledging individuals who have enriched Nepali literature. This accolade serves as a testament to Dr. Panthi's dedication and impact in the field of literature. The award ceremony is

scheduled to take place later this year in Tamghas. Dr. Panthi expressed his gratitude, stating that this recognition motivates him to continue his literary endeavors.

Foot notes:

- **Literary Achievements:** The award likely recognizes outstanding literary works, such as novels, poetry, or essays, that have made a profound impact on the literary world.
- **Janaki Inspiration:** The award might be inspired by S. Janaki, a renowned Indian playback singer known for her expressive and melodious voice, symbolizing the essence of artistic excellence.
- **Awardee Profile:** Dr. Panthi's background and achievements would be highlighted, showcasing their literary journey, notable works, and the impact of their writing on readers and the literary community.
- **Award Significance:** The Janaki Literature Award could be a prestigious recognition in the literary world, acknowledging the awardee's dedication to their craft and their influence on contemporary literature.
- **Ceremony and Reception:** The award ceremony would likely feature notable literary figures, cultural icons, and dignitaries, celebrating Dr. Panthi's accomplishment and their contributions to literature.

President Murmu Receives City Key of Honour

President Droupadi Murmu was recently honoured with the prestigious "City Key of Honour" during her official visit to [City Name]. The ceremony was held in recognition of her exceptional leadership and contribution to the nation. The city's mayor presented the symbolic key, expressing gratitude for her visit and service. In her address, President Murmu emphasized the importance of unity, development, and inclusive growth. She also appreciated the city's cultural heritage and active civic participation. The event was attended by local dignitaries, students, and citizens, making it a memorable occasion for all.

Foot notes:

- **Ceremonial Reception :** The President was warmly received by the Mayor and people of Lisbon, reflecting the city's open-mindedness and tolerance for diversity.
- **Cultural Ties :** President Murmu highlighted the centuries-old cultural connections between India and Portugal, evident in their shared architecture, historical sites, languages, and cuisines.
- **Bilateral Relations :** The President emphasized the significance of the 50th anniversary of India-Portugal bilateral relations, marking a major milestone in their diplomatic ties.
- **Economic Partnership :** She expressed India's interest in collaborating with Portugal to harness its strengths in science, technology, and innovation, promoting inclusive and sustainable development.
- **EU-India Relations :** Portugal's role in fostering India's relations with the European Union was appreciated by President Murmu, underscoring the potential for broader cooperation.

- Future Cooperation : The President expressed confidence that India-Portugal bilateral relations will become even stronger and more comprehensive, benefiting both nations and the world at large.

MSRDC Wins SKOCH 2025 Award for Samruddhi Mahamarg

This recognition was awarded for the successful implementation of the Hindu Hrudaysamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg project. Dr. Anil Kumar Gaikwad, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of MSRDC, accepted the award during the 100th SKOCH Summit at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. The Samruddhi Mahamarg is a high-speed greenfield expressway connecting 392 villages across 26 talukas in 10 districts of Maharashtra. This project has significantly reduced travel time between Nagpur and Mumbai from 16-18 hours to approximately 7-8 hours.

Foot notes:

- Award Recognition: The Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) received the prestigious SKOCH 2025 Award for its flagship project, the Hindu Hrudaysamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg.
- Project Impact: The Samruddhi Mahamarg expressway connects 392 villages, enhancing connectivity and economic growth in the region, particularly in Vidarbha and Marathwada.
- Award Ceremony: The award was presented to MSRDC Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Dr. Anilkumar Gaikwad, at the 100th SKOCH Summit held at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi.
- Infrastructure Excellence: The project showcases infrastructure excellence, reducing travel times and spurring economic development in the region.
- MSRDC's Achievement: The award is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the MSRDC team, recognizing their efforts in successfully implementing the Samruddhi Mahamarg project.

Werner Herzog to Receive Golden Lion at Venice Festival

Renowned German filmmaker Werner Herzog will be honored with the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival, scheduled from August 27 to September 6, 2025. Herzog, aged 81, has an extensive career spanning over six decades, during which he has directed, produced, and written approximately 70 films, including notable works like "Fitzcarraldo" and "Grizzly Man." In addition to his filmmaking endeavors, he has accumulated more than 30 acting credits in film and television.

Foot notes:

- Lifetime Achievement: Herzog will be recognized for his contributions to cinema, solidifying his status as a master filmmaker.
- Festival Dates: The 82nd Venice International Film Festival will take place from August 27 to September 6, 2025.

- **Current Projects:** Despite this recognition, Herzog remains active, having recently finished a documentary in Africa, "Ghost Elephants," and currently shooting his next feature film, "Bucking Fastard," in Ireland.
- **Influential Works:** Herzog is known for films like "Aguirre, the Wrath of God," "Fitzcarraldo," "Nosferatu the Vampyre," and "Grizzly Man," showcasing his innovative storytelling and filmmaking style.
- **Previous Recipients:** Past Golden Lion recipients include notable filmmakers and actors such as David Cronenberg, Jane Fonda, Julie Andrews, David Lynch, and Pedro Almodóvar.

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.

APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS

Mohsin Naqvi Appointed as President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC)

Mohsin Naqvi, Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), has been appointed as the new President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), succeeding Shammi Silva of Sri Lanka Cricket. Naqvi has been serving as PCB Chairman since February 2024. In his new role, he aims to accelerate the growth and global influence of cricket in Asia by fostering collaboration among member boards. The ACC, established in 1983, comprises 30 member associations dedicated to promoting and developing cricket across the continent. Naqvi's appointment is expected to usher in a new era of leadership focused on unity, innovation, and strategic growth within Asian cricket.

Foot notes:

- **New Leadership:** Naqvi, who is also the Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and Pakistan's Interior Minister, has taken over as ACC President, marking a significant leadership transition in Asian cricket.
- **Background:** Naqvi was elected PCB Chairman in February 2024 and brings his experience and vision to the ACC, aiming to enhance Asian cricket's global impact.
- **Predecessor's Tenure:** Shammi Silva had a brief three-month tenure as ACC President, starting in December 2024, before Naqvi's succession.
- **Key Challenges:** Naqvi will face challenges such as deciding the venue for the T20 Asia Cup 2025, with India set to host, and navigating diplomatic complexities, particularly regarding Pakistan's matches.
- **Vision and Goals:** Naqvi has pledged to foster growth, collaboration, and innovation in Asian cricket, while praising his predecessor's contributions and thanking Jay Shah for his leadership as former ACC President and current ICC Chair.

Casagrand onboards Venkatesh Daggubati as brand ambassador for Hyderabad region

Casagrand, a prominent real estate developer in South India, has appointed Tollywood actor Venkatesh Daggubati as its brand ambassador for the Hyderabad region. This strategic partnership aligns with Casagrand's plans to develop 2.74 million square feet of premium residential space in Hyderabad, including projects like Casagrand Evon in Kompally and Casagrand Windsor Court in Mankhal. The collaboration aims to enhance Casagrand's brand visibility and connect with homebuyers in Hyderabad's competitive real estate market. Venkatesh Daggubati's association is expected to embody the company's values of trust and excellence. The partnership will be supported by a comprehensive marketing campaign across digital media, print, radio, and outdoor advertising. This initiative underscores Casagrand's commitment to delivering innovative and customer-centric residential projects in Hyderabad.

Foot notes:

- **Strategic Partnership:** Casagrand, a leading real estate developer in South India, has partnered with Tollywood superstar Venkatesh Daggubati to strengthen its presence in Hyderabad's competitive real estate market.

- **Brand Ambassadorship:** Venkatesh Daggubati's appointment as brand ambassador aligns with Casagrand's values of trust, excellence, and customer-centricity, leveraging his popularity and credibility to promote the brand.
- **Marketing Campaign:** The partnership will be supported by a comprehensive marketing campaign across digital media, print, radio, and outdoor advertising, aiming to create an immersive brand experience and enhance visibility.
- **Expansion Plans:** Casagrand has ambitious plans to develop 2.74 million sq. ft. of premium residential space in Hyderabad, with projects like Casagrand Evon, Casagrand Windsor Court, and villa communities in Gowdavalli.
- **Commitment to Quality:** Venkatesh Daggubati praised Casagrand for its commitment to quality, innovation, and affordability, stating that the brand's focus on creating thoughtfully designed homes aligns with his values.



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Seema Agrawal Named DGP of Fire and Rescue Services

Seema Agrawal, a 1990-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, has been appointed as the Director General of Police (DGP)/Director of Fire and Rescue Services in Tamil Nadu, succeeding Abhash Kumar, who retired on March 31. Prior to this role, she served as the DGP of Civil Supplies-CID in Chennai. This appointment is part of a broader reshuffle involving eight IPS officers in the state. Notably, Seema Agrawal had previously held the position of Director of the State Fire & Rescue Services. Her extensive experience in various capacities within the Tamil Nadu police force is expected to bring valuable leadership to the Fire and Rescue Services department.

Foot notes:

- **New Role:** Seema Agrawal, a senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, has taken over as DGP of Fire and Rescue Services, replacing Abhash Kumar who retired on March 31, 2025.
- **Previous Position:** Before this role, Agrawal served as DGP of Civil Supplies, bringing vast experience and leadership skills to her new position.
- **Transfer and Postings:** Her appointment is part of a major reshuffle involving seven IPS officers in Tamil Nadu, aimed at enhancing administrative efficiency in key areas like traffic, economic offenses, and enforcement.

- Responsibilities: As DGP of Fire and Rescue Services, Agrawal will oversee fire safety and emergency response services across the state, working to strengthen these services and improve public safety.
- Background: This reshuffle reflects the state government's efforts to optimize police administration and improve service delivery, with Agrawal's leadership expected to play a key role in this endeavor.

Puma appoints Arthur Hoeld as CEO

Puma has announced the appointment of Arthur Hoeld as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), effective July 1, 2025. Hoeld, a former Adidas executive, succeeds Arne Freundt, who will step down on April 11, 2025, due to differing views on strategy execution. During the interim period, Puma's management board will oversee operations until Hoeld assumes his role. Arthur Hoeld brings over two decades of experience from Adidas, where he held various leadership positions, including overseeing the successful transformation of the "Originals" division to generate more than 7 billion Euros in sales. His appointment is viewed positively by analysts, who believe his strategic vision and focus on product and brand will lead Puma into a new chapter of strength and growth.

Foot notes:

- Background: Hoeld, a seasoned sports industry leader, brings over 26 years of experience to Puma, previously serving as an Executive Board member at Adidas, where he transformed the "Originals" division, generating over 7 billion Euros in sales.
- New Role: As CEO, Hoeld will lead Puma's growth, focusing on product and brand strategy, with Matthias Bäumer appointed as Chief Commercial Officer to oversee sales subsidiaries and global market organizations.
- Interim Period: From April 12 to July 1, 2025, Bäumer, Maria Valdes (Chief Product Officer), and Markus Neubrand (Chief Financial Officer) will lead Puma through the transition period.
- Hoeld's Vision: He aims to leverage Puma's authentic brand legacy, emphasizing sports authenticity and exciting brand propositions to drive growth.
- Puma's Performance: Despite a caution for 2025, Puma achieved sales growth on a currency-adjusted basis and improved its gross profit margin for fiscal year 2024.
- Leadership Team: The new management board, set to take over on July 1, 2025, includes Hoeld, Neubrand, Valdes, and Bäumer, marking a new era for the global sportswear brand.

NPCI appoints Sohini Rajola as Executive Director

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has appointed Sohini Rajola as Executive Director – Growth. In this role, she will drive the adoption of NPCI's payment solutions, lead product enhancement initiatives, and manage strategic alliances with banks, fintech firms, government authorities, and regulatory institutions. Rajola brings over two decades of

experience in the payments and banking sectors, having previously served as the Asia Pacific Regional Head at Western Union and as Head of Digital Banking and Cards at Axis Bank. Dilip Asbe, MD & CEO of NPCI, expressed confidence that her expertise will be invaluable in advancing the organization's mission to provide secure, seamless digital payment solutions.

Foot notes:

- **New Role:** As Executive Director - Growth, she will focus on expanding NPCI's payment ecosystem, enhancing product offerings, and implementing market-driven innovations.
- **Key Responsibilities:** Rajola will lead strategic business development, marketing initiatives, and go-to-market strategies, while forging key partnerships with banks, fintech firms, government bodies, and regulatory institutions.
- **Previous Experience:** Before joining NPCI, she served as Asia Pacific Regional Head at Western Union and held leadership roles at Axis Bank, including Digital Banking Head and Cards Head.
- **NPCI's Goals:** The appointment aligns with NPCI's mission to build a robust, inclusive, and forward-looking payments ecosystem for India, with a focus on digital payment adoption and financial inclusion.
- **Industry Context:** The appointment comes as NPCI's flagship product, Unified Payments Interface (UPI), continues to achieve record-breaking milestones, processing 24.77 trillion in value across 19.78 billion transactions in March 2025.

Narendra Bharindwal elected as President of IBAI

The Insurance Brokers Association of India (IBAI) has appointed Mr. Narendra Kumar Bharindwal as its new President during a recent board meeting. With over two decades of experience in insurance broking, risk advisory, regulatory compliance, and industry advocacy, Mr. Bharindwal is well-equipped to lead the association. In his new role, he aims to strengthen the position of insurance brokers in the Indian market and foster successful partnerships among brokers, insurers, and regulatory authorities to ensure a transparent and customer-centric insurance environment. The newly elected board also includes Mr. Mohan Sriraman and Mr. Surender Kumar Tonk as Vice Presidents, Mr. Nirmal Bazaz as Director & Honorary Secretary, and Mr. Ashok Kumar Jain as Director & Honorary Treasurer. Mr. Bharindwal expressed his gratitude for the opportunity, emphasizing the importance of addressing the industry's rapid transformation driven by technology, regulatory changes, and evolving customer needs.

Foot notes:

- **Background:** Bharindwal brings over 20 years of experience in insurance broking, risk advisory, regulatory compliance, and industry advocacy to his new role.
- **Election:** He was elected as the President of IBAI, with Mohan Sriraman and Surender Kumar Tonk serving as Vice Presidents.
- **Industry Impact:** Bharindwal's leadership will focus on strengthening the role of insurance brokers in the Indian market, which manages over Rs 50,000 crore of premiums annually.

- Vision: Under his guidance, IBAI aims to foster successful partnerships and navigate the industry's rapid growth, driven by technological advancements, regulatory changes, and evolving customer needs.
- Expertise: Bharindwal's expertise spans insurance broking, risk advisory, and regulatory compliance, making him well-suited to lead IBAI.
- Industry Context: The Indian insurance industry is undergoing significant transformations, with technology and changing customer requirements driving growth and innovation.

Vaibhav Saxena inducted as Superintendent of Police in National Investigation Agency

Vaibhav Saxena, a 2016 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer from the Kerala cadre, has been appointed as Superintendent of Police in the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on a deputation basis for five years. Prior to this appointment, he served as the District Police Chief in Ernakulam Rural, Kerala. Born on August 3, 1984, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, Saxena began his IPS career on December 19, 2016, and was confirmed in service on December 19, 2018. His induction into the NIA reflects his significant experience in law enforcement and counter-terrorism operations. The NIA is India's premier agency tasked with investigating and combating terrorism-related activities nationwide. Saxena's expertise is expected to contribute substantially to the agency's mission in safeguarding national security.

Foot notes:

- Appointment Details: Saxena's appointment was approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on April 7, 2025, and he will serve on a deputation basis.
- NIA's Role: The NIA is India's federal counter-terrorism law enforcement agency, established in 2008 to investigate terror activities across the country.
- Background: Saxena's induction strengthens the NIA's capabilities in combating terrorism and related crimes.
- Agency's Powers: The NIA has extensive powers to investigate scheduled offenses, including terrorism, human trafficking, and cyber-terrorism.
- Recent Reforms: The NIA has undergone reforms, including the establishment of new branch offices and divisions, to enhance its capacity to tackle emerging threats.
- Jurisdiction: The NIA can investigate offenses committed outside India, subject to international treaties and domestic laws of other countries.

Adarsh Khare appointed PED (R&T), RDSO

Adarsh Khare, an officer of the Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers (IRSME), has been appointed as the Principal Executive Director of Research & Testing (R&T) at the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO). Prior to this, he served as the Chief Administrative Officer at the Modern Coach Factory (MCF) in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh. In addition to his new role, Khare will also assume the responsibilities of Principal Executive Director at the Centre for Advanced Maintenance Technology (CAMTECH) until further

orders. His extensive experience in railway engineering and management is expected to contribute significantly to RDSO's mission of enhancing research and testing standards.

Foot notes:

- **Background:** Khare, an IRSME officer from the 1991 batch, previously served as Chief Administrative Officer at Modern Coach Factory in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh.
- **New Role:** As Principal Executive Director (R&T), Khare will oversee research and testing at RDSO, driving innovation in railway systems and standards.
- **Additional Charge:** He will also hold the position of Principal Executive Director at the Centre for Advanced Maintenance Technology (CAMTECH) until further orders.
- **Transfer Details:** Khare's transfer was approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and he will serve on a deputation basis.
- **RDSO's Significance:** As the research and development arm of Indian Railways, RDSO plays a crucial role in modernizing railway infrastructure and improving operational efficiency.
- **Khare's Expertise:** With his extensive experience in the railway sector, Khare is well-equipped to lead RDSO's research and development initiatives.

ITC's Aashirvaad Masalas announces Nani as brand ambassador for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

As of April 8, 2025, there is no publicly available information confirming that ITC's Aashirvaad Masalas has appointed actor Nani as their brand ambassador for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Recent initiatives by Aashirvaad Masalas in these regions include the launch of 'Masala Karam,' a spice blend inspired by Andhra's culinary heritage, aimed at enhancing the flavor of traditional dishes. Additionally, the brand has collaborated with the advertising agency PAD for digital marketing campaigns tailored to the cultural preferences of consumers in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka. While actor Nani is a prominent figure in Telugu cinema, no official announcements have been made regarding his association with Aashirvaad Masalas as a brand ambassador.

Foot notes:

- **Brand Values Alignment:** Nani's magnetic screen presence and deep connection with Telugu audiences align with Aashirvaad Masalas' core values of powerful, flavor-packed, and authentic spice blends.
- **Regional Campaign:** The partnership includes a new TV commercial campaign, "Dammu Meede, Star Meere," celebrating the culinary expertise of Telugu homemakers.
- **Market Presence:** Aashirvaad Masalas aims to strengthen its connection with Telugu homemakers through this collaboration, expanding its market presence in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- **Nani's Endorsement:** Nani expressed his happiness about the partnership, looking forward to collaborating with Aashirvaad Masalas and promoting their products.

- **Brand Recognition:** Aashirvaad Masalas is known for its bold flavors and authentic spice blends, making it a prominent player in the Indian spice market.

Glenmark Pharmaceuticals appoints Anurag Mantri as President

As of April 8, 2025, there is no publicly available information confirming the appointment of Anurag Mantri as President of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals. The company's executive team includes individuals such as Glenn Saldanha serving as Chairman & Managing Director, and V. S. Mani as Executive Director and Global Chief Financial Officer. Other key executives include Alok Malik, President and Business Head – India Formulations; Christoph Stoller, President and Business Head – Europe and Emerging Markets; and Brijlal Motwani, President and Global Head – Formulation Operations. For the most accurate and up-to-date information regarding executive appointments, it is advisable to consult Glenmark Pharmaceuticals' official communications or reputable financial news outlets.

Foot notes:

- **Background:** Mantri joins Glenmark from Jindal Stainless Limited, where he served as Executive Director and Group Chief Finance Officer since 2016.
- **Experience:** He has over 30 years of management experience, leading large-scale enterprise value creation, managing global compliance, mergers, and acquisitions, and corporate finance.
- **Previous Roles:** Mantri held impactful positions at HCL Technologies, SRF Limited, Cairn Energy, ACME Group, and Schneider Electric Infrastructure Limited.
- **Qualifications:** He is a qualified chartered accountant and holds a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from the University of Rajasthan.
- **Additional Appointment:** Mantri's candidature for Executive Director and Global Chief Financial Officer will be put up for approval in upcoming committee meetings.
- **Transition:** VS Mani, the current Executive Director and Global Chief Financial Officer, has opted for early retirement, effective May 26, 2025, and will remain with the company for a smooth transition.

Viral Davda Appointed as Deputy CIO at Bombay Stock Exchange

Viral Davda has been serving as the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at the National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) since 2021. Prior to this role, he held various positions within NCDEX, including Assistant Vice President - Technology and Executive Vice President and Head - Technology. His career also includes experience as a Senior Executive in Information Systems at Aditya Birla Minacs. Viral Davda earned a degree in Strategic Leadership from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay.

Foot notes:

- **Experience:** Davda brings over two decades of experience in the tech and financial sectors to his new role.

- **Responsibilities:** As Deputy CIO, he will lead key technology strategies, drive large-scale transformation initiatives, and spearhead BSE's commitment to technology excellence and innovation in capital markets.
- **BSE's Vision:** His appointment aligns with BSE's vision to modernize and scale its IT infrastructure in response to the rapidly evolving financial ecosystem.
- **Career Milestone:** This appointment is a major career milestone for Davda, highlighting his expertise and the value he can bring to a prestigious financial institution like BSE.
- **Market Needs:** Davda's role will help BSE keep pace with changing market needs, ensuring the exchange remains competitive and efficient.
- **Institutional Significance:** BSE is one of Asia's oldest and most prestigious financial institutions, making Davda's appointment a notable development in the financial sector.

Vanesa onboards Kiara Advani as Brand Ambassador

The Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) was honored with the prestigious SKOCH 2025 Award in the Gold category for infrastructure. This recognition was awarded for the successful implementation of the Hindu Hrudaysamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg project. Dr. Anil Kumar Gaikwad, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of MSRDC, accepted the award during the 100th SKOCH Summit at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. The Samruddhi Mahamarg is a high-speed greenfield expressway connecting 392 villages across 26 talukas in 10 districts of Maharashtra. This project has significantly reduced travel time between Nagpur and Mumbai from 16-18 hours to approximately 7-8 hours.

Foot notes:

- **Brand Alignment:** Kiara Advani embodies the essence of Vanesa, celebrating individuality and modern femininity through her elegance, charm, and relatable appeal.
- **Confidence and Self-Expression:** Advani's association with Vanesa aims to inspire confidence and self-expression among women, reflecting the brand's philosophy of empowerment.
- **New Product Line:** Vanesa plans to leverage this partnership to launch a new line of products tailored to the modern Indian woman, focusing on versatility and elegance in fragrances.
- **Marketing Strategy:** The brand will increase awareness through social media and influencer collaborations, targeting consumers seeking refined and sophisticated fragrances.
- **Kiara's Endorsement:** Kiara Advani expressed her excitement, stating that Vanesa's celebration of individuality aligns with her own values of confidence and authenticity.

Satish Chavva Appointed as CEO of OIJIF

Satish Chavva has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Oman India Joint Investment Fund (OIJIF), effective April 1, 2025. He brings over 20 years of experience in

private equity investing and finance, having previously served as Director of Investments at OIIF from 2016 to 2022. Prior to rejoining OIIF, Chavva held various roles at British International Investment (BII), including heading Direct Private Equity for South Asia. His earlier career includes over nine years at Citi Group in India and the UK, particularly with Citi Venture Capital International (CVCI). Chavva holds a Bachelor of Technology from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, a Master of Science in Computational and Applied Mathematics from the University of Texas.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Role:** Chavva brings over 20 years of experience in private equity and finance to his new role, focusing on strategic growth and long-term value creation.
- **Previous Experience:** He previously held leadership positions at British International Investment (BII), including heading Direct Private Equity for South Asia.
- **Educational Background:** Chavva holds a Bachelor of Technology from IIT Bombay, a Master of Science in Computational and Applied Mathematics from the University of Texas, and an MBA from INSEAD.
- **Investment Portfolio:** OIIF has invested in several successful companies, including Stanley Lifestyles, Divgi TorqTransfer Systems, Annapurna Finance, Senco Gold, Prince Pipes, Capital Small Finance Bank, and HomeLane.
- **Future Directions:** Under Chavva's leadership, OIIF aims to scale its investments across high-growth sectors, enhancing portfolio performance and delivering increased returns and stability for investors.

Network18 appoints Mitul Sangani as CEO

Network18 appointed Mitul Sangani as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of News18 Digital. In this role, Sangani will oversee product development, technology, audience growth, and revenue for News18 and Local18. Prior to this, he served as the CEO for Indian languages businesses within the group, managing both television channels and digital properties in Hindi and regional languages. The sales teams for News18.com and Local18 will now report directly to him. Sangani will collaborate closely with Rahul Joshi, Managing Director at Network18 Media, and will continue reporting to Avinash Kaul, CEO of Network18 (Broadcast), for digital revenues.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Roles:** Sangani and Singhvi will work closely with Rahul Joshi, Managing Director at Network18 Media, to drive the company's digital and strategic initiatives.
- **Reporting Structure:** Mitul Sangani will continue to report to Avinash Kaul for digital revenues, ensuring a smooth transition and alignment with the company's goals.
- **Digital Focus:** As CEO of News18 Digital, Sangani will lead the company's digital efforts, building on the success of News18's online presence and expanding its reach.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Puneet Singhvi, as CSO, will focus on developing strategic partnerships and collaborations to drive growth and innovation for Network18.

- **Industry Experience:** Both Sangani and Singhvi bring significant industry experience and expertise to their new roles, positioning Network18 for continued success in the media landscape.

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.

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.

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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.

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.

Elastic appoints Sanjay Deshmukh as Vice President for Asia-Pacific and Japan

Elastic has appointed Sanjay Deshmukh as Vice President for Asia-Pacific and Japan (APJ), aiming to bolster its growth in the AI-driven market. Deshmukh, formerly with Snowflake, brings extensive experience in enterprise software to his new role, where he will focus on enhancing customer connections and strengthening the partner ecosystem in the region. His appointment aligns with Elastic's strategy to capitalize on the escalating demand for AI-powered solutions across APJ. Elastic's leadership believes that Deshmukh's expertise will be instrumental in supporting customers seeking to leverage their data for generative AI use cases and consolidate their search, security, and observability needs onto a single platform.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Role:** Deshmukh will lead Elastic's regional business, focusing on scaling operations, expanding the partner ecosystem, and strengthening customer relationships in APJ.
- **Background:** Deshmukh joins Elastic from Snowflake, bringing a successful track record of delivering significant growth for enterprise software organizations in APJ.
- **Market Growth:** The APJ region is a high-growth market driven by demand for meaningful AI innovation, with Asia Pacific poised to be the fastest-growing market for generative AI.
- **Key Objectives:** Deshmukh aims to empower developers, IT teams, and organizations across APJ to transform data into answers, actions, and outcomes with Search AI.
- **Industry Experience:** With his expertise in leading enterprise software organizations through periods of rapid growth, Deshmukh is well-positioned to drive Elastic's success in APJ.
- **Company Vision:** Elastic's solutions for search, observability, and security are built on the Elastic Search AI Platform, used by thousands of companies, including over 50% of the Fortune 500.

TCS appoints Aarthi Subramanian as President and COO

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has appointed Aarthi Subramanian as Executive Director, President, and Chief Operating Officer, effective May 1, 2025, for a five-year term, pending shareholder approval. Subramanian, currently the Group Chief Digital Officer at Tata Sons, brings over three decades of experience within the Tata Group, including leadership roles at TCS. Her appointment marks the reinstatement of the COO position at TCS, which was last held before 2009. In her new role, she will focus on enhancing operational efficiency and driving digital transformation across the organization. Subramanian's extensive experience is expected to play a pivotal role in TCS's strategic growth and innovation initiatives.

Foot notes:

- **Background:** She currently serves as Group Chief Digital Officer at Tata Sons, leveraging digital technologies to enhance operational capabilities of Tata Group enterprises.

- **Experience:** Subramanian has over three decades of experience within the Tata Group, holding various leadership roles, including Executive Director and Global Head of Delivery Excellence, Governance, and Compliance at TCS.
- **Qualifications:** She holds a Bachelor of Technology in Computer Science from the National Institute of Technology, Warangal, and a Master's degree in Engineering Management from the University of Kansas.
- **Board Positions:** Subramanian holds several board positions across the Tata Group, including Director roles at Tata Capital Limited, Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Ltd, and Infiniti Retail.
- **Strategic Appointment:** This appointment reflects TCS's focus on succession planning and long-term growth strategy, positioning the company for its next phase of innovation and leadership in the Indian IT industry.

Sri Chaitanya Group appoints Gukesh Dommaraju as brand ambassador

Sri Chaitanya Educational Group has appointed Indian chess grandmaster and reigning World Chess Champion Gukesh Dommaraju as its brand ambassador. This strategic partnership aims to inspire students preparing for competitive exams like JEE and NEET by integrating Gukesh's expertise in strategic thinking and mental resilience. As brand ambassador, Gukesh will engage with students through interactive sessions and mentorship programs, sharing insights from his journey to the pinnacle of the chess world. Sri Chaitanya's leadership believes that Gukesh's disciplined approach and composure under pressure align with the qualities needed for academic excellence. This collaboration underscores the institution's commitment to providing holistic education that combines academic rigor with essential life skills.

Foot notes:

- **Strategic Alliance:** This partnership aims to provide invaluable mentorship and ignite aspirations among students nationwide, aligning with Sri Chaitanya's mission to nurture JEE and NEET champions.
- **Mentorship Programs:** Gukesh will engage in interactive sessions and mentorship, focusing on crucial aspects like time management, composure under pressure, and analytical thinking.
- **Empowering Students:** By integrating academic knowledge with strategic thinking, Sri Chaitanya Group aims to empower young minds, shaping future champions in engineering, medicine, and beyond.
- **Brand Ambassador Role:** Gukesh's extraordinary achievements and youthful energy make him a perfect role model for students, from school learners to JEE and NEET aspirants.
- **Sri Chaitanya's Legacy:** Founded in 1986, Sri Chaitanya Educational Group is a premier educational institution in Asia, renowned for producing top-ranking students across diverse academic disciplines.

IMPORTANT DAY NEWS

National Maritime Day observed on 5th April

India observed its 62nd National Maritime Day on April 5, 2025, commemorating the historic voyage of the SS Loyalty, the first Indian-owned steamship, which sailed from Mumbai to London on April 5, 1919. This milestone marked India's entry into international shipping, breaking the British monopoly in maritime trade. The 2025 theme, "Prosperous Seas – Developed India and Youth for Blue Economy and Green Growth," emphasizes the importance of sustainable maritime development and the role of youth in fostering innovation within the blue economy. Union Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, highlighted the transformative era of India's maritime sector, driven by advancements in port infrastructure and a focus on sustainable shipping practices.

Foot notes:

- **Commemoration:** The day commemorates the maiden voyage of SS Loyalty in 1919, marking India's entry into international shipping and breaking British dominance in maritime trade.
- **Significance:** National Maritime Day recognizes the maritime sector's contribution to India's economy and trade, with 95% of the country's trade volume and 70% of trade value dependent on maritime transport.
- **Celebrations:** The day is celebrated with award ceremonies, workshops, seminars, port visits, and educational programs focused on maritime security, sustainability, and technological advancements.
- **Government Initiatives:** Key initiatives like Maritime India Vision 2030 and the Sagarmala Programme aim to improve port infrastructure, shipbuilding, and coastal trade, enhancing India's global maritime presence.
- **Awards and Recognition:** The "NMD Award of Excellence" is presented to individuals who have significantly contributed to India's maritime industry, acknowledging their hard work and dedication.

World Health Day observed on April 7th

World Health Day is observed annually on April 7th to commemorate the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948. Each year, the day highlights a specific health theme of global importance. In 2025, the theme is "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures," focusing on maternal and newborn health. This initiative aims to encourage governments and health organizations to intensify efforts to reduce preventable maternal and infant deaths and to promote the long-term well-being of mothers and their children. According to WHO, approximately 300,000 women die annually due to pregnancy or childbirth complications, and over 2 million babies die within their first month of life. The 2025 campaign seeks to address these challenges by advocating for improved healthcare services and support systems for mothers and newborns.

Foot notes:

- **Global Celebrations:** Events and activities are organized worldwide, including health fairs, seminars, workshops, and campaigns, to raise awareness and promote action on global health issues.
- **WHO's Role:** The World Health Organization plays a crucial role in coordinating global health efforts, providing technical assistance, and setting standards for health care.
- **Health for All:** World Health Day emphasizes the importance of ensuring access to quality health care for everyone, regardless of their background, location, or socio-economic status.
- **Key Health Issues:** The day highlights pressing global health concerns, such as infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, mental health, and climate change.
- **Call to Action:** World Health Day serves as a call to action, encouraging governments, organizations, and individuals to work together to address health challenges and promote a healthier, more equitable world.

International Pageant Day observed on April 8th

International Pageant Day is celebrated annually on April 8th to honor women worldwide who participate in beauty pageants. Established in 2018, this observance recognizes the dedication and hard work of contestants who showcase not only their physical beauty but also their intelligence, talent, and commitment to various causes. The day serves to encourage young women to consider the personal and professional growth opportunities that pageantry can offer. Activities on this day may include attending local pageants, supporting contestants, or watching films that highlight the pageant experience.

Foot notes:

- **Purpose:** The day encourages young women to participate in pageants, highlighting their benefits, such as developing confidence, self-discipline, and social connections.
- **Global Reach:** International pageants like Miss World, Miss Universe, Miss International, and Miss Earth have become prominent, providing opportunities for women to showcase their talents and advocate for causes.
- **Benefits:** Participating in pageants can lead to scholarships, modeling opportunities, and career advancement, while also promoting cultural understanding and exchange.
- **Celebrations:** To mark the occasion, people can watch pageant-themed movies, learn about current beauty queens, or attend local pageants.
- **Inspiring Women:** The day acknowledges the hard work and dedication of women competing in pageants, promoting a positive and empowering environment for self-expression.

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.

World Parkinson's Day is observed on April 11

World Parkinson's Day is observed annually on April 11 to raise awareness about Parkinson's disease and support those affected by it. This date marks the birth anniversary of Dr. James Parkinson, who first described the condition in 1817. The day is dedicated to promoting research, spreading knowledge, and advocating for better care and treatment for patients. Organizations and communities worldwide host events, seminars, and campaigns to highlight the challenges faced by those living with Parkinson's. The red tulip, symbolizing hope and solidarity, is commonly associated with this global observance.

Foot notes:

- **Awareness:** World Parkinson's Day highlights the global rise in Parkinson's cases, early symptoms like tremors and rigidity, and the importance of exercise and medication management in controlling symptoms.
- **Global Events:** Various events and campaigns are organized worldwide, including walks, runs, and fundraising activities to support research and awareness.
- **Support:** The day emphasizes the need to support people living with Parkinson's, providing resources like counseling, educational programs, and neurological nurses.

- **Research:** It's an opportunity to drive research and funding towards finding a cure and improving treatment options for Parkinson's disease.
- **Community Engagement:** People can get involved by sharing their stories, donating to organizations, and spreading awareness on social media using hashtags like #WorldParkinsonsDay.



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OBITUARY NEWS

Veteran Actor Ravikumar passed away

Veteran Tamil and Malayalam actor Ravikumar Menon passed away on April 4, 2025, at the age of 71, in Chennai. He had been undergoing treatment for lung cancer at Prashanth Hospital in Velachery. Born in Thrissur, Kerala, Ravikumar began his film career with the Malayalam movie 'Lakshaprabhu' in 1968 and went on to act in over 100 films across Malayalam and Tamil cinema during the 1970s and 1980s. He was known for his versatility, portraying both lead and antagonist roles, and also appeared in several television serials. His contributions to South Indian cinema have left a lasting legacy. The funeral was scheduled for Saturday, April 5, 2025, in Chennai.

Foot notes:

- **Early Life and Career:** Born in Thrissur, Kerala, to renowned film producer KMK Menon and celebrated actress Bharathi Menon, Ravikumar was destined for the silver screen. He began his acting journey with the 1968 Malayalam film "Lakshaprabhu".
- **Notable Roles:** Ravikumar's versatility shone brightly in films like "Ullasa Yaathra" (1975), "Avargal" (1977), "Allaiddinum Albhutha Vilakkum", "Aarattu", "CBI 5: The Brain", and "Veetla Vishesham". He seamlessly transitioned between Malayalam and Tamil cinema.
- **Collaborations and Legacy:** Ravikumar worked with industry stalwarts like Mohanlal, Mammooty, Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan, and K. Balachander, showcasing his dynamic range as an actor. His contributions to Indian cinema have left an indelible mark.
- **Television Career:** In addition to his film work, Ravikumar made significant contributions to television, debuting with the series "Iyandhira Paravai" in 1997 and later appearing in "Jannal: Marabu Kavithaigal" and "Kannedhirey Thondrinal".

Hollywood Icon Val Kilmer passed away

Val Kilmer, the esteemed actor celebrated for his roles in films like "Top Gun," "Batman Forever," and "The Doors," passed away on April 1, 2025, at the age of 65. His daughter, Mercedes Kilmer, confirmed that the cause of death was pneumonia. Kilmer had previously battled throat cancer, diagnosed in 2014, which led to significant health challenges, including multiple tracheotomies that affected his voice. Despite these obstacles, he continued to engage with his passion for acting, making a poignant return as Iceman in the 2022 film "Top Gun: Maverick." Throughout his career, Kilmer was known for his intense dedication to his craft, earning a reputation as both a versatile and complex performer.

Foot notes:

- **Early Life:** Born on December 31, 1959, in Los Angeles, California, Kilmer grew up in Chatsworth and attended Hollywood Professional School before being admitted to Juilliard's drama division.
- **Career Challenges:** Kilmer faced health issues after being diagnosed with throat cancer in 201 and subsequently lost part of his vocal capability. Despite this, he continued acting, leveraging advancements in technology to aid his performances.
- **Notable Comeback:** Kilmer made a successful return to the film industry with his role in Top Gun: Maverick (2021), reprising his iconic character Iceman.
- **Legacy:** Throughout his career, Kilmer demonstrated his versatility as an actor, taking on diverse roles and earning recognition for his talent and dedication.
- **Tributes:** The Hollywood community has paid tribute to Kilmer, with notable figures like Michael Mann, Francis Ford Coppola, Nicolas Cage, and Cher honoring his memory and contributions to the film industry.

Ram Sahay Pandey Folk Dancer passed away

Renowned Rai folk dancer Ram Sahay Pandey passed away on April 8, 2025, at the age of 92 in Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh, following a prolonged illness. Born on March 11, 1933, in Maddhar Patha village, Pandey dedicated his life to popularizing the Rai dance, a traditional art form of the Bundelkhand region. Over his six-decade-long career, he performed in more than 100 events across 18 countries, earning international acclaim. In recognition of his significant contributions to the arts, he was awarded the Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian honor, in 2022. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav expressed deep sorrow over Pandey's demise, highlighting his role in bringing global recognition to Bundelkhand's folk art. Pandey is survived by his wife and son.

Foot notes:

- **Legendary Folk Dancer:** Pandey was a master of Rai folk dance, which he elevated from a stigmatized art form to a globally recognized tradition.
- **Breaking Social Barriers:** Born into a farming Brahmin family, Pandey defied societal norms by practicing Rai dance, traditionally performed by the marginalized Bedia community.

- Awards and Recognition: He received the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2022 and the title 'Nritya Shiromani' in 1980 for his contributions to folk art.
- International Performances: Pandey represented India on global stages, performing in Japan (1984) and Dubai (2006), and founded the Bundelkhandi Lok Nritya Natya Kala Parishad to promote regional culture.

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.

Former Tamil Nadu Congress president Kumari Ananthan passed away

Veteran Congress leader Kumari Ananthan passed away in Chennai on April 9, 2025, at the age of 93 due to age-related illness. A prominent figure in Tamil Nadu politics, he served as a Member of Parliament from Nagercoil in 1977 and was elected to the state assembly five times. Ananthan was renowned for his advocacy of the Tamil language, notably becoming one of the first to address Parliament in Tamil. He was the father of BJP leader and former Telangana Governor Tamlisai Soundararajan, and his family includes other political figures such as his nephew Vijay Vasanth, the current MP from Kanyakumari. Leaders across the political spectrum, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, paid tribute to his contributions to public service and Tamil culture.

Foot notes:

- Member of the Legislative Assembly, representing various constituencies, including Thiruvottiyur, Radhapuram, and Sathankulam
- Founded the Gandhi Kamaraj National Congress and Thondar Congress, although both parties eventually merged with the Indian National Congress
- Married to Krishnakumari, with a daughter, TAMILISAI Soundararajan, who is the current Governor of Telangana and Puducherry
- Remembered for his service to society and passion for Tamil Nadu's progress, as well as efforts to popularize Tamil language and culture.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep grief over his passing, acknowledging his contributions to society and Tamil Nadu's progress.



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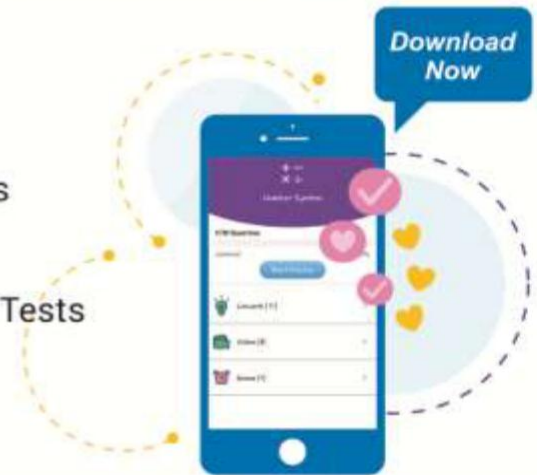
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