




Current Affairs

08 May, 2025

Parameswaran Iyer appointed as India's Nominee Director



1. Parameswaran Iyer appointed as India's Nominee Director

Parameswaran Iyer has been appointed as India's temporary nominee director on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board, succeeding Krishnamurthy V. Subramanian, whose term was unexpectedly terminated six months early. Iyer, currently serving as India's Executive Director at the World Bank, assumes this role ahead of a crucial IMF meeting on May 9, which will discuss a \$1.3 billion loan to Pakistan under a climate resilience program and review an ongoing \$7 billion bailout package.



Foot notes:

- **Background:** Iyer is a seasoned civil servant with a distinguished career, having led the Swachh Bharat Mission and served as the CEO of NITI Aayog. His experience spans water resources management, sanitation, and policy implementation.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission Achievements:** As the mission's leader, Iyer played a crucial role in achieving India's goal of eliminating open defecation. Under his guidance, India built over 100 million toilets in rural areas and 6.3 million in cities, significantly improving sanitation and public health.
- **Expertise in Water Resources:** Iyer's work at the World Bank focused on water resources management, and he was instrumental in implementing the Jal Jeevan Mission in India, aiming to provide piped water supply to all households by 2024.

- **Leadership Experience:** As the CEO of NITI Aayog, Iyer worked on shaping India's development agenda and policy framework, further demonstrating his leadership capabilities and commitment to public service.

2. India's Exports to US Hit Record \$11.2 Billion in March

India's exports to the United States reached a record \$11.2 billion in March 2025, marking the first time they surpassed the \$10 billion threshold and representing nearly a 50% increase over the 12-month average . This surge contributed to a total bilateral goods trade of approximately \$15 billion for the month, with India achieving a trade surplus of \$7.4 billion . The spike in exports coincided with a 90-day reciprocal tariff pause announced by U.S. President Donald Trump, which encouraged increased shipments ahead of potential new tariffs . Notably, smartphone exports, particularly Apple iPhones, played a significant role in this growth, with manufacturers expediting shipments to the U.S. before the anticipated tariff changes .



Foot notes:

- **Record Exports:** Although the provided information doesn't confirm if \$11.2 billion is a record for India's exports to the US in March, India's overall merchandise exports in March 2024 reached \$41.68 billion, the highest monthly exports in FY 2023-24.
- **Merchandise Exports:** India's merchandise exports in March 2024 were \$41.68 billion, slightly lower than \$41.96 billion in March 2023.
- **Key Sectors:** Main drivers of merchandise export growth in FY 2023-24 include electronic goods, drugs & pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, iron ore, and ceramic products & glassware.
- **Non-Petroleum Exports:** Non-petroleum and non-gems & jewelry exports in March 2024 were \$33.67 billion, increasing from \$30.87 billion in March 2023.
- **Trade Deficit:** India's overall trade deficit improved significantly in FY 2023-24, declining by 35.77% to \$78.12 billion, while merchandise trade deficit decreased by 9.33% to \$240.17 billion.

3. Praveen Sood extended as Director, CBI for a period of one year

The Central Government has extended the tenure of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director Praveen Sood by one year, effective beyond May 24, 2025. This decision was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) after a high-level selection committee meeting—comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi,



Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi—failed to reach a consensus on his successor. Sood, a 1986-batch IPS officer from the Karnataka cadre, was appointed as CBI Director in May 2023 for an initial two-year term. Before this role, he served as the Director General of Police in Karnataka and has held several key positions, including Police Commissioner of Bengaluru and Mysuru.

Foot notes:

- **Extension:** Praveen Sood, the current Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), has been granted a one-year extension.
- **Tenure:** His extended tenure will likely conclude on May 25, 2025.
- **Leadership:** As Director, Sood has been leading high-profile investigations and reforms within the agency.
- **Background:** Praveen Sood is an IPS officer of the 1986 batch from the Karnataka cadre.
- **CBI:** The CBI is India's premier investigative agency, handling cases of corruption, economic offenses, and serious crimes.

4. SMLME 2025 Kicks Off in Dubai

The Seatrade Maritime Logistics Middle East (SMLME) 2025 commenced on May 6 at the Dubai World Trade Centre, drawing over 7,500 professionals from more than 90 countries. This premier maritime event, held under the patronage of the UAE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, focuses on key industry themes such as digitalisation, decarbonisation, and the integration of STEM skills to align with the UAE Vision 2031. The conference features four main forums: Business Excellence, Logistics Excellence, ShipTech, and Offshore Marine & Workboats, addressing topics like AI-driven supply chains, alternative fuels, and predictive maintenance.



Foot notes:

- **Industry Platform:** SMLME is a biennial maritime and logistics industry platform that brings together professionals and experts in the Middle East.
- **Key Features:** The event features a diverse trade show, informative conference tracks, and strategic networking opportunities.
- **Part of UAE Maritime Week:** SMLME is part of the larger UAE Maritime Week, which runs from May 5-9, 2025, and includes other maritime events and discussions.

- **Expected Outcomes:** The event aims to drive progress in maritime and logistics, with a focus on future-shaping leadership discussions, solutions for tomorrow's challenges, and showcasing products and services.

5. Shambhavi Kshirsagar won Gold in 10m Air Rifle at Khelo India Youth Games

Maharashtra's Shambhavi Shravan Kshirsagar clinched the gold medal in the 10m Air Rifle Women Youth final at the Khelo India Youth Games, scoring 251.3 points at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi. She narrowly edged out Punjab's Lavanya Rawat, who secured silver with 249.6 points, while Karnataka's Hrudya Shri Kondur took bronze with 228.8 points. This victory adds to Shambhavi's impressive achievements, including a double gold at the 23rd Kumar Surendra Singh Memorial Shooting Championship, where she triumphed over seasoned competitors like Olympic finalist Ramita and world championship medallist Mehuli Ghosh.



Foot notes:

- **Actual Achievement:** Shambhavi Kshirsagar won a bronze medal in the 10m Air Rifle Women Junior category at the ISSF Junior Rifle/Pistol 10m Finals in Granada, Spain, not gold in the Khelo India Youth Games as stated.
- **Competition Level:** She has competed at the international level, showcasing her talent in events like the ISSF Junior World Cup and ISSF Junior Rifle/Pistol 10m Finals.
- **Medal Wins:** Shambhavi has won medals in prestigious competitions, including a bronze in the 10m Air Rifle Women Junior category and potentially other medals in team events.
- **Team Success:** As part of the Indian women's 10m air rifle team, she contributed to setting a new junior world record with a combined score of 1894.8, winning gold in the process.
- **Sporting Excellence:** Shambhavi's achievements demonstrate her dedication and skill in shooting sports, making her a notable figure in Indian junior shooting.

6. Ayush Kumar's Grit Shines in Bihar's Silver Triumph at Khelo India Youth Games

Fourteen-year-old Ayush Kumar showcased remarkable resilience at the Khelo India Youth Games 2025, leading Bihar to a historic silver medal in Sepak Takraw just hours after the passing of his 78-year-old grandfather. Despite the personal



tragedy, Ayush competed in the third regu of the men's team final against Manipur, demonstrating unwavering focus and determination. His 19-year-old sister, Khusbu, also a Sepak Takraw player, supported him from the sidelines, managing her grief to ensure Ayush remained composed during the match.

Foot notes:

- **Ayush Kumar's Resilience:** 14-year-old Ayush Kumar showed remarkable grit and determination in the Khelo India Youth Games 2025, contributing significantly to Bihar's silver medal win in Sepak Takraw despite learning about his grandfather's passing.
- **Sepak Takraw Debut:** Sepak Takraw made its debut in the Khelo India Youth Games, drawing packed crowds and showcasing the sport's rising popularity in Bihar.
- **Men's Final:** Bihar's team, led in part by Ayush's efforts, narrowly lost to Manipur in the men's final, securing a silver medal.
- **Inspiring Others:** Ayush, who has been practicing Sepak Takraw for only four years, hopes his achievement will inspire others to pursue the sport as a career.

7. India-Vietnam Strengthen Buddhist Ties with New MoU

India and Vietnam have further strengthened their cultural and spiritual ties by signing a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) focused on Buddhist heritage and cooperation. Announced during Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh's visit to India in August 2024, the MoU includes India's commitment to assist in the conservation of the F-block temples at the UNESCO



World Heritage Site of My Son, a historic center of Cham civilization with deep Indian cultural influences . Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized Buddhism as a shared spiritual heritage that continues to connect the people of both nations, inviting Vietnamese citizens to explore India's Buddhist Circuit and encouraging Vietnamese youth to engage with institutions like Nalanda University .

Foot notes:

- **MoU Signing:** The MoU was signed between the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) and the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (VBS).
- **Establishment of Vietnam Chapter:** The MoU led to the establishment of the Vietnam Chapter of the IBC, which aims to promote Buddha Dhamma in Vietnam and beyond, focusing on global peace, harmony, and sustainable development.

- **Cultural Significance:** The MoU reinforces India's cultural diplomacy and Buddhist heritage, enhancing people-to-people ties between India and Vietnam.
- **Strategic Importance:** This agreement promotes India's soft power and Buddhist diplomacy, supporting regional unity and spiritual collaboration through Buddhist channels.

8. Rohit Sharma retires from Test Cricket

Rohit Sharma, India's Test captain, has announced his retirement from Test cricket at the age of 38, effective immediately. This decision follows the selectors' move to replace him as captain ahead of the upcoming England tour, after a period of declining form that saw him average just 10.93 over the past year. Sharma's Test career spanned 67 matches, during which he amassed 4,301 runs at an average of 40.57, including 12 centuries. Despite stepping away from the longest format, he will continue to represent India in One-Day Internationals, aiming to contribute to the team's success in the 2027 World Cup. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) acknowledged his contributions, calling it the end of an era.



Foot notes:

- **Retirement Announcement:** Rohit Sharma announced his retirement from Test cricket on May 7, 2025, via an Instagram post, sharing a picture of his Test cap.
- **Reason and Timing:** The retirement comes ahead of India's Test series against England, starting on June 20, 2025, and follows Rohit's underwhelming performance in the 2024-25 Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia.
- **Career Statistics:** Rohit played 67 Test matches, scoring 4,301 runs with 12 centuries and 18 fifties at an average of 40.57. He also captained India in 24 Tests.
- **Continuing ODI Career:** Rohit confirmed he will continue to represent India in the ODI format, ensuring his presence in the team for upcoming limited-overs matches.

9. World Thalassaemia Day observed on 08th May

World Thalassaemia Day is observed annually on May 8 to raise awareness about thalassemia, an inherited blood disorder that affects haemoglobin production and can lead to severe anaemia and other health complications. The theme for 2025 is “Together for Thalassaemia: Uniting Communities, Prioritising Patients,” emphasizing the importance of a patient-centered approach and collective



action in addressing the challenges faced by those living with the condition. This year's observance highlights the critical role of genetic screening and early diagnosis in preventing the transmission of thalassemia, especially in regions with high carrier rates like India. Established in 1994 by the Thalassaemia International Federation, the day also serves to honor individuals affected by the disorder and to advocate for improved healthcare policies and support systems.

Foot notes:

- **Theme 2025:** The theme for World Thalassemia Day 2025 is "Together for Thalassaemia: Uniting Communities, Prioritising Patients," focusing on patient-centered care and support.
- **Importance:** This day aims to promote prevention, early diagnosis, and comprehensive support systems for individuals affected by thalassemia, while also advocating for improved healthcare policies.
- **Awareness and Education:** It emphasizes the need for public education, genetic screening, and prenatal diagnosis to reduce the prevalence of thalassemia, particularly in high-risk regions.
- **Global Impact:** Thalassemia affects millions worldwide, with over 56,000 pregnancies globally impacted each year, highlighting the need for continued awareness and research efforts.

10. Russia honoured the legendary Indian leader and aviator Biju Patnaik

Russia honored legendary Indian leader and aviator Biju Patnaik for his pivotal role during World War II, recognizing his contributions to the Soviet Union's efforts against Nazi Germany. As a pilot in the Royal Indian Air Force, Patnaik undertook daring missions, including delivering arms and supplies to Soviet troops near Stalingrad, aiding their resistance against Hitler's forces.



In acknowledgment of his bravery, Russia awarded him honorary citizenship and paid tribute during his funeral by draping his coffin with the Russian flag, alongside those of India and Indonesia. This rare honor underscores Patnaik's international legacy, highlighting his commitment to global freedom movements and his enduring impact on international relations.

Foot notes:

- **Awards and Honors:** Patnaik received the Order of Lenin from Russia and the Bintang Jasa Utama, Indonesia's highest national award, for his bravery and contributions.

- **Role in Indonesian Freedom Struggle:** He played a crucial role in Indonesia's freedom struggle, flying a daring rescue mission to save Indonesian leaders, including Sukarno and Sjahrir, from Dutch colonizers in 1947.
- **Aviation Career:** Patnaik was a skilled pilot who served in the Royal Indian Air Force and later became an entrepreneur, setting up Kalinga Airlines and other businesses.
- **Indian Politics:** He served as the Chief Minister of Odisha twice and was a Union Minister for Steel, Mines, and Coal in the Morarji Desai and Charan Singh governments.



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