



Current Affairs

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Raahul VS Clinches 91st Grandmaster Title at 6th ASEAN Individual Championship



1. Raahul VS Clinches 91st Grandmaster Title at 6th ASEAN Individual Championship

- **India's 91st Grandmaster:** Raahul V S officially became the 91st player from India to achieve the prestigious Grandmaster (GM) title, the highest honor in chess.
- **Tournament Victory:** He secured this milestone by winning the 6th ASEAN Individual Championship (Governor Henry S. Oaminal Cup).
- **Clinched Early:** His performance was dominant, as he clinched the tournament championship with an impressive round to spare.
- **Final Norm Confirmed:** The victory and his strong showing in the Philippines event confirmed his final Grandmaster norm, successfully completing the requirements for the title.
- **Tamil Nadu Contribution:** The 21-year-old player is from Chennai, making him one of the numerous Grandmasters produced by Tamil Nadu, a state known as the powerhouse of Indian chess.



2. Karnataka Becomes India's First State with Paid Menstrual Leave

- **First-of-its-Kind Coverage:** Karnataka is the first state in India to officially mandate a paid menstrual leave policy that applies to both government and private sector employees across the state.
- **Leave Entitlement:** The policy grants women employees one paid leave day per month, totaling 12 days of paid



menstrual leave annually.

- **Broad Application:** The policy is groundbreaking for its comprehensive coverage, applying to women in government offices, IT firms, multinational companies (MNCs), and garment factories.
- **Promotes Health and Inclusion:** The decision was taken to recognize the genuine physiological challenges women face during menstruation and to promote a more humane, understanding, and inclusive workplace environment.
- **Setting a New Precedent:** While states like Bihar and Odisha offer similar benefits, their policies are limited to government employees; Karnataka's decision to include the private sector sets a significant new standard for women's health in India's workforce.

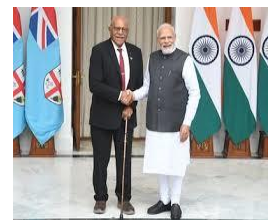
3. China Launches Third Aircraft Carrier 'Fujian' with Cutting-Edge Tech

- **Electromagnetic Catapult System (EMALS):** The Fujian is China's first carrier to use an Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS), making it only the second navy in the world (after the US) to field this cutting-edge technology.
- **Catapult-Assisted Take-Off (CATOBAR):** Unlike China's first two carriers, which use a ski-jump, EMALS enables CATOBAR operations, allowing planes to launch with full fuel and weapons loads for extended range and firepower.
- **First Domestically Designed Carrier:** It is the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) first aircraft carrier that was entirely designed and built in China, marking a significant national achievement in naval engineering.
- **New Advanced Air Wing:** The flat-deck design and EMALS allow it to operate heavier, more advanced aircraft, including the J-35 stealth fighter and the KJ-600 Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft, significantly enhancing its combat capability.
- **Increased Size and Range:** With a full-load displacement of over 80,000 tons, the Fujian is much larger than its predecessors, positioning it as China's first "supercarrier" designed to project naval power deep into the Western Pacific.



4. India and Ecuador Signed Pact to Boost Diplomatic Cooperation

- **Diplomatic Boost:** The MoU was signed during Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita's meeting with Ecuador's Minister of Foreign and Human Mobility Affairs Gabriela Sommerfeld, aiming to deepen collaboration in key sectors.
- **Key Areas of Cooperation:** The discussions focused on



boosting cooperation in areas like trade, pharmaceuticals, training, and capacity building, highlighting the potential for mutual growth.

- **Existing Ties:** India and Ecuador established diplomatic relations in 1969 and have been working together on various fronts, including trade, investment, IT, agriculture, and education.
- **Economic Ties:** The bilateral trade between India and Ecuador reached \$142 billion in 2022-23, with India exporting pharmaceuticals, vehicles, and machinery, and importing crude oil, wood, and cocoa.
- **Future Prospects:** The MoU is expected to enhance cooperation in diplomatic training, people-to-people exchanges, and economic partnerships, further solidifying India-Ecuador relations.

5. India's Banking Giant SBI Reaches \$100 Billion Mark

- **\$100 Billion Market Cap Club:** SBI became the sixth Indian company and the third bank (after HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank) to join the elite \$100 billion market capitalization club.
- **Strong Quarterly Performance:** This valuation surge was primarily driven by the bank's robust financial results for the September 2025 quarter (Q2 FY26), which significantly beat market expectations.
- **Dual ₹100 Trillion Milestone:** The market cap milestone coincided with a second major achievement: SBI's total business (deposits plus advances) crossed the ₹100 lakh crore (\$120+ billion) mark.
- **Improved Financial Health:** The growth is underpinned by strong fundamentals, including record-low non-performing assets (NPAs), healthy credit growth fueled by retail and festive demand, and enhanced profitability.
- **Global Ambition:** This valuation solidifies SBI's position as India's largest and most valuable public sector bank, leading the Chairman to declare an ambition for SBI to become one of the world's top 10 most valued banks by 2030.



6. PM Modi Launches NexCAR19 India's First Homegrown CAR T-Cell Therapy

- NexCAR19 is a CAR T-cell therapy designed to treat B-cell blood cancers like leukemia and lymphoma. It's a cutting-edge treatment where a patient's T-cells are genetically modified to attack cancer cells.
- **Development and Collaboration:** Developed by ImmunoACT, an IIT Bombay spin-off, in collaboration with Tata Memorial Hospital, and supported by DBT and BIRAC, showcasing India's capability in biotech innovation.



- **Significance:** NexCAR19 positions India among countries with advanced cell and gene therapies, offering hope for relapsed patients and reducing dependence on expensive international treatments.
- **Affordability:** Expected to cost around ₹50,000, making it more accessible compared to international prices of ₹3-4 crore.
- **Impact on Cancer Care:** Offers personalized cancer treatment, potentially transforming oncology care in India, especially for middle-income families and public hospitals.

7. Padma Awardee Mohanlal to be Conferred Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2023

- **Highest Cinema Honour:** Mohanlal was conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2023, which is the highest recognition in Indian cinema, for his iconic contribution to the field.
- **Five-Decade Career:** The legendary actor, director, and producer is being honored for his remarkable cinematic journey spanning almost five decades and over 350 films across multiple languages.
- **Iconic Contribution:** He is widely referred to as "The Complete Actor" for his unparalleled versatility and ability to seamlessly portray a vast range of roles.
- **National Recognition:** The award was officially presented to him by the President of India at the 71st National Film Awards ceremony.
- **Civilian Honors:** This prestigious film award adds to his prior major civilian recognitions from the Government of India: the Padma Shri (2001) and the Padma Bhushan (2019).



8. HAL & GE Ink \$1 Billion Deal to Power LCA Tejas Mk 1A Jets

- **Engine Procurement:** HAL signed a deal with GE Aerospace for the supply of 113 F404-GE-IN20 engines along with a comprehensive support package.
- **Powering Tejas Mk 1A:** These engines are specifically intended to power the 97 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mk 1A fighter jets ordered by the Indian Air Force (IAF) in September 2025.
- **Value and Scope:** The agreement is valued at over \$1 billion and is essential for ensuring a smooth and uninterrupted production schedule for the indigenous fighter jet.
- **Delivery Timeline:** The deliveries of the F404 engines are scheduled to commence in 2027 and are anticipated to be completed by 2032.



- **'Make in India' Boost:** This deal is a vital part of the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India) initiative, ensuring that the necessary component supply chain is stabilized to induct the advanced Mk 1A variant into the IAF's fleet.

9. Legal Services Day observed on 09th November

- **Date and Origin:** The day is observed annually on November 9th to commemorate the coming into force of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, which was formally implemented on November 9, 1995.
- **Constitutional Mandate:** The Act was enacted to fulfill the obligation of Article 39A of the Indian Constitution, which mandates the State to secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity.
- **Core Objective:** The primary goal is to provide free and competent legal services to the poor and weaker sections of society who cannot afford legal representation due to economic or other disabilities.
- **Institutional Framework:** The day highlights the work of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), along with its networks like the State (SLSAs) and District (DLSAs) Legal Services Authorities, which implement the free legal aid schemes.
- **Awareness and Access:** Legal Services Day serves as a platform to spread legal awareness among the public, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas, and to promote Lok Adalats (People's Courts) for the amicable settlement of disputes.



10. Veteran Singer-Actor Sulakshana Pandit passed away

- **Dual Talent and Passing:** Veteran artist Sulakshana Pandit, known for her contributions as both a playback singer and actress in the 1970s and 1980s, passed away on November 6, 2025, at the age of 71 after suffering a cardiac arrest.
- **Musical Lineage and Career:** She hailed from the illustrious Mewati Gharana and was the niece of legendary classical vocalist Pandit Jasraj and the sister of the music director duo Jatin-Lalit.
- **Acclaimed Songs and Debut:** Sulakshana Pandit delivered many memorable songs, including the acclaimed "Tu Hi Saagar Hai Tu Hi Kinara" from Sankalp (1975). She made her acting debut in the 1975 film Uljhan opposite Sanjeev Kumar.



- **Notable Filmography:** Throughout her career, she starred opposite many of Bollywood's leading men of the era in notable films like Hera Pheri, Apnapan, and Khandaan, establishing herself as a graceful leading lady.



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