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Current Affairs

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India Finishes 2nd at Asian Athletics Championships 2025



1. India Finishes 2nd at Asian Athletics Championships 2025

India delivered a remarkable performance at the Asian Athletics Championships 2025, finishing in 2nd place overall. The Indian contingent showcased strong talent across various track and field events, securing numerous medals. Athletes impressed with gold medals in sprinting, long-distance running, and field events like javelin and long jump. This achievement marks a significant improvement from previous editions and reflects the country's growing investment in athletics.



Foot notes:

- **Strong Medal Haul:** India secured a total of 24 medals (8 Gold, 10 Silver, 6 Bronze), marking one of their best performances in the championships held outside India.
- **Top Individual Golds:** Key gold medalists included Gulveer Singh (double gold in Men's 5000m and 10,000m), Avinash Sable (Men's 3000m Steeplechase), and Jyothi Yarraji (Women's 100m Hurdles).
- **Relay Dominance:** Both the Mixed 4x400m Relay and Women's 4x400m Relay teams won gold, showcasing India's strength in team events.
- **Emerging Talent:** The championships saw impressive performances and national records from young athletes like Animesh Kujur (Men's 200m bronze, national record) and Pooja Singh (Women's High Jump gold), indicating a bright future.

2. India to Conduct Population Census 2027 in Two Phases with Caste Enumeration

India is set to conduct its Population Census 2027 in two distinct phases, marking a significant step in national data collection. This will be the first census after a gap of more than a decade, as the 2021 census was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the key highlights of the 2027 census is the inclusion of caste enumeration, which has been a long-standing demand by various social and political groups. The two-phase approach will help ensure more comprehensive and accurate data collection across urban and rural areas.



Foot notes:

- **The census will be conducted in two distinct phases:** Phase I: House Listing Operations, Phase II: Population Enumeration.
- **Caste Enumeration (First Since 1931):** For the first time since 1931, the census will officially include caste enumeration for all individuals, not just Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).
- **Digital Census:** The 2027 Census will be India's first digital census, leveraging mobile applications for data collection and a central portal for management. There may also be an option for citizens to self-enumerate online.
- **Reference Dates:** The reference date for the majority of the country will be March 1, 2027. However, for snow-bound areas like Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, the reference date will be October 1, 2026.
- **Implications for Policy and Delimitation:** The data from this census, especially the caste enumeration, is expected to have significant implications for:
- **Informed Policy-Making:** Providing granular socio-economic data to design targeted welfare schemes and social justice programs.

3. Citi names Bank of America veteran Zhang as new China country head

Citigroup has appointed Wenjie Zhang as its new Country Officer and Head of Banking for China, effective July 2025, pending regulatory approval. Zhang will also serve as President and Executive Director of Citibank (China) Co., Ltd. Based in Shanghai, Zhang will report to Marc Luet, Citi's Head of Japan, Asia North, and Australia and Banking. He will act as Citi's lead representative in mainland China, overseeing operations, strengthening regulatory relationships, and enhancing risk controls.



Foot notes:

- **Experienced Leadership:** Wenjie Zhang brings 30 years of extensive experience in corporate and institutional banking, having previously served as President of China and Shanghai Branch Manager for Bank of America China.
- **Strategic Market Importance:** Citi views China as one of its largest global markets, with a long-standing presence dating back to 1902. This appointment underscores Citi's continued commitment to its corporate and institutional clients in China and supporting their cross-border banking needs.
- **Enhancing Growth:** Zhang's "depth and breadth of experience and on-ground expertise and knowledge" are expected to enhance Citi's growth in China, especially in supporting clients' cross-border banking requirements.

4. Kiran Pandit appointed Spokesperson of Nepal Rastra Bank

Mr. Kiran Pandit, Executive Director of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), has been appointed as the bank's official spokesperson, effective from Jestha 21, 2082 BS (June 4, 2025). Mr. Pandit joined NRB in 2062 BS and has accumulated extensive experience across various departments, including Bank Supervision, Regulation of Banks and Financial Institutions, Financial Inclusion, and Consumer Protection. He is currently serving in the Payment Systems Department. His appointment as spokesperson is expected to enhance the bank's communication strategies and public engagement.



Foot notes:

- **Extensive Experience:** Pandit brings a wealth of experience, having joined the central bank in 2062 BS and worked in various key departments including Bank Supervision, Regulation of Banks and Financial Institutions, Financial Inclusion, and Consumer Protection.
- **Key Communication Role:** As spokesperson, Pandit will be the primary point of contact for media and the public regarding the NRB's policies, decisions, and financial updates, ensuring transparency and clear communication.
- **Continuity in Leadership:** His appointment comes as the central bank's newly appointed Governor, Bishwanath Poudel, is setting up his core team and changing responsibilities of high officials, including the spokesperson.

5. AIIMS Delhi, IIT Delhi to establish Center of Excellence for AI in healthcare

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare (AI-CoE).

This initiative is supported by a 330 crore grant from the Ministry of Education under the "Make AI in India, Make AI Work for India" program. The AI-CoE aims to develop AI-driven solutions to support key national health programs, focusing on enhancing healthcare access and delivery across India. The center will function as a Section 8 company (non-profit organization), serving as the executing body for the grant.



Foot notes:

- **Purpose of the Center:** The AI-CoE aims to develop cutting-edge AI-driven solutions to support key national health programs, enhance healthcare delivery, improve accessibility, and upskill healthcare providers.
- **Focus Areas:** The center will concentrate on developing AI-based tools for crucial areas like early disease detection, chronic disease management, enhancing diagnostic accuracy, and improving patient care. This includes addressing issues related to cancer, tuberculosis, blindness, and maternal & child health.
- **Collaboration of Expertise:** This partnership leverages IIT Delhi's strengths in computer science, data analytics, and AI modeling with AIIMS Delhi's expertise in clinical insights, real-world health data, and public health systems, creating a powerful synergy for innovation.
- **Indigenous Solutions for National Impact:** The initiative emphasizes developing indigenous AI solutions that are affordable and scalable, with the goal of revolutionizing the national public health system and benefiting every citizen, particularly those in underserved communities.

6. Indian achieved a cargo movement of 145.5 million tonnes on inland waterways in FY 2024-25

India's inland water transport (IWT) sector achieved a record cargo movement of 145.5 million tonnes in the fiscal year 2024–25. This marks a substantial increase from 18.10 million tonnes in FY 2013–14, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 20.86% over the past decade. The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) attributes this growth to strategic investments, policy reforms, and the implementation of digital tools. The number of operational waterways increased from 24 to 29, enhancing connectivity and transportation efficiency.



Foot notes:

- **Record-Breaking Volume:** India moved an unprecedented 145.5 MMT of cargo on its inland waterways in FY 2024-25, demonstrating substantial growth compared to previous years (e.g., 18.1 MMT in FY 2013-14).
- **Infrastructure Expansion:** This achievement is attributed to significant infrastructure development. The number of National Waterways has increased from 5 to 111 (under the 2016 Act), with operational length growing to nearly 4,900 km.
- **Key Commodities:** Over 68% of the total cargo moved consisted of five major commodities: coal, iron ore, iron ore fines, sand, and fly ash, indicating IWT's importance for bulk cargo movement.

7. IOCL to Set Up India's Largest Green Hydrogen Plant

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) is advancing India's clean energy transition by establishing the nation's largest green hydrogen plant at its Panipat Refinery & Petrochemical Complex in Haryana. This facility is designed to produce 10,000 tonnes of green hydrogen annually, utilizing electrolysis powered entirely by renewable energy sources. The green hydrogen generated will replace fossil-derived hydrogen in refinery operations, significantly reducing carbon emissions and aligning with IOCL's decarbonization strategy.



Foot notes:

- **Location and Capacity:** IOCL is establishing India's largest green hydrogen plant at its Panipat Refinery and Petrochemical Complex in Haryana. The plant is designed to produce 10,000 tonnes per annum (TPA) of green hydrogen.
- **Replacement of Fossil Hydrogen:** The green hydrogen produced at this facility will replace the fossil-derived hydrogen currently used in the refinery's operations, leading to a substantial reduction in carbon emissions. This aligns with IOCL's decarbonization roadmap.
- **Commissioning Timeline:** The project is slated for commissioning by December 2027, indicating a relatively swift timeline for a project of this scale.
- **Alignment with National Mission:** This initiative is fully aligned with the National Green Hydrogen Mission envisioned by the Indian government, which aims to position India as a global hub for green hydrogen production and utilization.

8. Dettol welcomes 'captain cool' MS Dhoni as brand ambassador

Dettol, India's leading germ protection brand, has announced cricket legend Mahendra Singh Dhoni as the brand ambassador for its Dettol Soaps, Bodywash, and Handwash range. This collaboration introduces the new Dettol Icy Cool product, designed to provide consumers with protection from skin infection-causing germs and an instant icy burst of cooling refreshment, especially during the extreme summer heat.



Foot notes:

- **Iconic Partnership:** Dettol has onboarded MS Dhoni as the brand ambassador for its range of soaps, bodywash, and handwash, a significant move to leverage his widespread popularity and image.
- **Focus on Dettol Icy Cool:** A key aspect of this association is the launch of Dettol Icy Cool, a new product designed to offer intense cooling along with germ protection, particularly relevant for the summer months.
- **"Captain Cool" Synergy:** The choice of MS Dhoni aligns perfectly with the brand's new campaign theme, "Body cool toh mind cool... aur game ho ya exam performance cool!"
- **Campaign Launch:** The partnership kicked off with a new TV commercial (TVC) conceptualized by McCann Worldgroup, featuring Dhoni offering Dettol Icy Cool as a solution to a nervous young cricketer, emphasizing staying cool and protected.

9. Microsoft & Yotta Partner to Accelerate AI Innovation in India

Microsoft and Yotta Data Services have partnered to accelerate AI innovation in India by integrating Microsoft's Azure AI services with Yotta's Shakti Cloud platform. This collaboration aims to provide developers, startups, enterprises, and public sector organizations across India with advanced AI capabilities, all within a sovereign cloud infrastructure. The partnership supports the IndiaAI Mission, which has received over 500 proposals for developing indigenous AI models, by enhancing local AI capabilities and fostering innovation. By combining Microsoft's advanced AI models, applications, and agents with Yotta's robust GPU infrastructure, the initiative enables real-time AI applications with ultra-low latency compute across sectors like agriculture, healthcare, education, finance, manufacturing, retail, and media.



Foot notes:

- **Integration of Azure AI and Shakti Cloud:** The core of the partnership involves Microsoft integrating its advanced Azure AI services (including models, applications, and development tools) with Yotta's Shakti Cloud, a high-performance, sovereign AI cloud platform based in India.
- **Supporting IndiaAI Mission:** This collaboration directly aligns with and aims to accelerate the IndiaAI Mission, a government initiative focused on establishing India as a global leader in AI by fostering indigenous AI development and infrastructure.
- **Sovereign & Secure AI:** A crucial aspect is the emphasis on data sovereignty and security. By hosting Microsoft's AI services on Yotta's India-based infrastructure, the partnership ensures that data remains within national borders, addressing privacy and compliance concerns.

10. World Environment Day observed on 05th June

World Environment Day is observed every year on 5th June to raise global awareness about environmental protection and encourage actions to preserve the planet. Established by the United Nations in 1974, this day serves as a platform for promoting sustainable development and addressing pressing environmental issues such as pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss. Each year, World Environment Day focuses on a specific theme to highlight critical environmental challenges and inspire positive change. Governments, organizations, and individuals worldwide participate through campaigns, tree planting drives, clean-up activities, and educational events.



Foot notes:

- **Date and Significance:** World Environment Day is celebrated every year on June 5th, marking the opening day of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (the Stockholm Conference), which led to the creation of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
- **Global Awareness and Action:** It is the largest global platform for public outreach on the environment, celebrated by millions of people across the world, promoting awareness and action for the protection of our planet.
- **Annual Theme and Host Country:** Each year, World Environment Day has a specific theme that addresses a pressing environmental concern, and a host country where the main international celebrations take place. The theme for

2025 is "Land Restoration, Desertification and Drought Resilience", with Saudi Arabia being the global host.

- **Urgency of Environmental Issues:** The day highlights the urgency of environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and unsustainable consumption, urging individuals, communities, governments, and businesses to take responsibility.



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