

THE DAILY GK DOSE

IAF TO EQUIP MIG-29 FLEET WITH ADVANCED ASRAAM MISSILES

- **Significant Range Boost:** The ASRAAM (Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile) will replace the Soviet-era R-73 missile. It offers an engagement range of over 25 km, effectively doubling the 10–15 km reach of the legacy system.
- **Advanced Combat Tech:** Developed by MBDA, the ASRAAM is a "fire-and-forget" heat-seeking missile. It can travel at speeds exceeding Mach 3 and features Lock-On After Launch (LOAL) capability, allowing pilots to engage agile targets with high precision in close-combat dogfights.
- **Standardization & Indigenization:** The IAF is standardizing the ASRAAM across multiple platforms, including the LCA Tejas, Sukhoi Su-30MKI, and Jaguar. Under the "Make in India" initiative, Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) has partnered with MBDA to assemble and test these missiles at a facility in Hyderabad.

JAPAN LAUNCHES WORLD'S FIRST FREIGHT-ONLY SHINKANSEN

- **High-Speed Logistics:** Launched on March 23, 2026, by East Japan Railway Co. (JR East), this is the world's first dedicated freight-only bullet train. Reaching speeds of 275 kmph, it operates on the Tohoku Shinkansen line between Morioka and Tokyo, covering the distance in approximately 3–4 hours.
- **Repurposed Design:** The service uses converted E3 series trains, which were formerly passenger carriages. All 394 seats across seven cars were removed to accommodate up to 1,000 cargo boxes (approx. 17.4 tonnes). The

interiors feature reinforced flooring and specialized securing systems to handle high-value, time-sensitive goods like semiconductors, medical supplies, and fresh seafood.

- **Addressing the "2024 Problem":** The initiative aims to solve Japan's severe truck driver shortage and logistics delays caused by new labor regulations on driver overtime. By shifting freight to high-speed rail, Japan is also reducing carbon emissions compared to road and air transport.

DELHI GOVT SIGNS MOU WITH PRASAR BHARATI TO DEVELOP CAPITAL AS MEDIA HUB



- **Integrated Media Hub:** The Delhi Government (via DTTDC) and Prasar Bharati signed an MoU on March 27, 2026, to establish a world-class media and entertainment hub. The project, named "Delhi Film City," will be developed on 486.7 acres in north Delhi's Khampur.
- **Focus on Emerging Tech:** The hub is designed as a state-of-the-art ecosystem for the AVGC sector (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics), OTT content, and AI-driven production. It aims to provide comprehensive infrastructure, including modern studios, post-production facilities, and research centers.

IMPORTANT FACTS

- *Primary waves are called P-waves, and they are longitudinal in nature.*
- *S-waves are transverse waves, while L-waves are both transverse and longitudinal.*
- *L-waves are surface waves limited to the Earth's surface.*
- *P-waves have the highest velocity, while L-waves have the lowest.*
- *L-waves are the most destructive waves.*

KIMI ANTONELLI WINS JAPANESE GRAND PRIX 2026

- **Youngest Championship Leader:** By winning the Japanese Grand Prix on March 29, 2026, 19-year-old Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli became the youngest driver in Formula 1 history to lead the World Drivers' Championship.
- **Strategic Masterclass:** Despite a slow start from pole position, Antonelli secured his second consecutive victory of the season (after China). He capitalized on a Safety Car on Lap 22 (caused by Ollie Bearman's crash) to pit from the provisional lead and re-emerge in P1, eventually finishing 13.7 seconds ahead of Oscar Piastri.
- **Historic F1 Milestone:** Antonelli's victory marked the 500th win from pole position in the history of the F1 World Championship, dating back to the first-ever race in 1950.

OLYMPIC & WORLD BADMINTON CHAMPION CAROLINA MARÍN ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

- **Injury-Forced Retirement:** The 32-year-old Spanish legend announced her retirement on March 26, 2026, via an emotional social media message titled "My journey ends here." The decision follows her inability to fully recover from a third major knee injury (ACL rupture) sustained during the Paris 2024 Olympic semifinals.
- **Unprecedented Career Legacy:** Marín retires as one of the greatest ever, being the only woman from outside Asia to win an Olympic singles gold (Rio 2016). Her trophy cabinet includes three World Championship titles (2014, 2015, 2018) and a record seven European Championship titles, alongside 66 weeks spent as World No. 1.
- **Farewell in Huelva:** Although she will not compete in the upcoming 2026 European Championships (April 6–12) in her hometown of Huelva due to health risks, she will attend the event to "close the circle".

JUPALLY KRISHNA RAO HONORED WITH 'GRAND PRIZE' FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO WORLD PEACE

- **Prestigious Recognition:** Telangana's Minister for Tourism, Culture, and Archaeology, Jupally Krishna Rao, was conferred with the "Grand Prize for Contribution to World Peace" on March 27, 2026. The award was presented by the International Interchange Development Association (IIDA) during the International Buddhist

Peace Conference held in Hyderabad.

- **Focus on Buddhist Heritage:** The award recognizes Rao's significant efforts in preserving spiritual heritage and promoting international cultural exchange. He has been a key driver in developing Buddhavanam (Nagarjuna Sagar) into a global center for Buddhist learning and a "World Peace Centre".
- **Global Participation:** The conference featured over 150 delegates and monks from 22 countries, including Sri Lanka and Vietnam. During the event, the Minister emphasized that the teachings of Gautama Buddha—specifically compassion and non-violence—remain the most viable path to resolving modern global conflicts.

BENGALI WRITER RAMKUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY SELECTED FOR SARASWATI SAMMAN 2025



- **Prestigious Honor:** Eminent Bengali writer Ramkumar Mukhopadhyay has been selected for the 35th Saraswati Samman (2025). Instituted by the K.K. Birla Foundation in 1991, it is one of India's highest literary awards, carrying a cash prize of ₹15 lakh, a citation, and a plaque.

- **Award-Winning Work:** He is being recognized for his 2020 novel "Hara Parbati Katha." The book is noted for reinterpreting Indian mythology through a modern lens, blending spiritual depth with contemporary social and environmental themes through the journey of the deities Shiva and Parvati.
- **Prolific Literary Career:** Born in 1956 in Kolkata, Mukhopadhyay is a highly decorated author with a body of work including nine novels and 11 short story collections

FORMER SURINAME PRESIDENT CHANDRIKAPERSAD SANTOKHI PASSED AWAY

- **Sudden Demise:** The former President of Suriname, Chandrikapersad "Chan" Santokhi, passed away at the age of 67 on March 30, 2026. He died following a sudden medical emergency at his home in Paramaribo, as confirmed by current President Jennifer Geerlings-Simons.
- **Political Legacy:** Known by the nickname "The Sheriff" for his tough stance on crime as a former police commissioner and Justice Minister, Santokhi served as the 9th President of Suriname from 2020 to 2025. He was credited with leading the country toward economic stabilization following a period of bankruptcy.
- **Indian Diaspora Connection:** Born into an Indo-Surinamese Hindu family, Santokhi maintained deep ties with India.

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

31.03.2026 / TUESDAY

- **International Transgender Day of Visibility is celebrated every year on March 31 to recognize and celebrate the lives, achievements, and contributions of transgender people.**
- **It also aims to raise awareness about the discrimination and challenges faced by the transgender community worldwide.**